



BANYULE
UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE

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Minutes of Annual General Meeting Thursday 15 August, 2019

Attendance:

Maureen Adkins, Elizabeth Ainsworth; Howard Ainsworth; Sandra Andrzejewski; Maria Axarlis-Coulter, Janet Bell; Diann Bennett; Christine Bowen; Jan Brown; Margaret Buescher; Cate Callanan; Fiona Campbell; June Cherrey; Maureen Coates; Helen Cochrane; Jan Connor; Elaine Craddock; Janet Creed; Helen Crook; Audrey Davies; Diane Dawson; Judy Elsworth; Sue Eva; Owen Evans; Rita Ferguson; Frances Fernandez; Jacques Fievez; Valerie Fletcher; Cherri Fox; Noel Griffith; Pamela Griffith; Judy Grikepelis; Del Groves; Jack Hanlin; Robert Happel; Robyn Heims; Janine Hill; Allan Hong; Fawzia Isaac; Pat Jankus; Roger Jones; Wendy Kellock; Janice Kelly; Len Kelly; Margaret King; Mara Kobec; Joan Learmont; Lois Lee; Patricia Leech; Juliette Lewis; Sue Lockwood; Valerie MacPhee; Milena Maranville; Alan Marks; Maxine Marks; Julie Marshall; Lindsay Martin; Gilda May; Judy McCall; Diana McCormack; Robyn McIver; Graeme McKinnon; Helen McKinnon; Jennifer McLean; Elizabeth Meagher; John Metcalf; Margaret Miller; Aruna Morris; Leonie Morris; Chris Morrison; Dietmar Mueller; Diane Murphy; Jim Murphy; Kay Ozanne; Marina Paniz; Rhoda Parker; Catherine Pearson; Irene Perry; Bryce Phillips; Kevin Portch; Anne Power; Cheryl Pritchard; Brendan Quirke; Chinniah Ragunathan; Vasantha Ragunathan; Jan Ramp; Adrian Ramp; Susan Richardson; Jen Rippon; Maree Ryan; Therese Ryan; Anna Scariot; Rosemary Sceats; Wallace Scott; Russell Scoular; Cheryl Searle; Lorna Sherwood; Elaine Sproules; Madeleine Stamatopoulos; Moira Styles; Sam Terranova; Jo Towler; Toni Tyers; Judith Vaughan; Joyce Watson; June Watson; Kevin Whiting; Anthony Whitmarsh; Tricia Willett; Fiona Wilson; Mary Wilson; Ian Wright.

1. Welcome by Chairperson: Helen McKinnon

Helen acknowledged that the meeting is being held on the traditional lands of the Wurundjeri people and paid respect to their Elders, past and present.

1.1 Apologies: Pat Amor; Denise Barclay; MaryAnne Bennie; Sue Beshara; Gwenda Betchell; Anthony Buykx; Connie Carter; Nancy Cornwallis; Sue Course; Ian Cox; Campbell Cuming; Ruth Cuming; Margaret Fievez; Tina Fuchs, Ruth Gazzola; Pat Gropel; Cheryl Heskett; Jack Ings; Meaghan Johnstone; Pat Leech; Mary Lovatt; Lois Maguire; Michael Maguire; Phillipa Merchant; Ros Marshall; Patricia Martin; Lorraine Mattson; Karen Mills; Rita Raspa; Elaine Rees; Ruth Richardson; Pat Rojas; Deidre Roodenburg; Willem Roodenburg; Phyllis Setchell; June Sharp; Helen Shinkfield; Jill Smith; Valerie Wake; Elizabeth Ward; Barbara Williams, Dianne Williamson.

2. Confirmation of Minutes of the Previous Annual General Meeting, 17 August 2018:

Moved: Bryce Phillips **Seconded:** Valerie MacPhee **Carried.**

3. Business Arising from the Minutes: Nil.

4. Annual Report 2018/19 presented by President, Helen McKinnon

It gives me great pleasure to present this Annual Report on behalf of the Committee of Management. It has been another very busy and successful year for U3A Banyule, and we are now 33 years old.

Membership

As of yesterday, our total membership stood at 701, being 641 full members, 54 Associate members, and 6 life members. There are 156 new members to date this year. Our membership has grown by 7.5% since this time last

year, and by 28% since 2016. Looking at the bigger picture, we are one of 108 U3As in Victoria, and the total number of members in Victoria is a little over 36,000. There are 15 U3As of a similar size to Banyule, while another 9 have between 1,000 and 1,500 members, and 2 have over 1,500. The smallest U3A has just 24 members, and the largest has 2,052.

The age range of our membership is from 50 to 90 plus. Over half of the membership is in the age range 66 – 75, and we are pleased and proud to say that we have 16 members who are nonagenarians. One of these is the amazing Jack Ings, who is an active member of the Committee of Management, as well as being one of our Tutors.

Looking at the ratio of male and female members, 25% are males. Victoria-wide, 27% of U3A membership is male, so we are slightly lower. In the City of Banyule, 46% of people aged over 50 are males, so theoretically we could have more male members. Consequently, the Membership Working Party has been documenting and analyzing gender imbalance in our U3A. Vigorous steps are being taken to address this situation, including targeting courses that may be of special interest to male members, using more photos of men on our website, recruiting more males for volunteer roles, and increasing the number of male Tutors. An ambitious target has been set for October 2021 – to increase our percentage of members who are males to 30%.

The annual membership fee was increased from \$40 to \$45 at last year's AGM. Our annual fee is still one of the lowest charged by the 108 U3As in Victoria, and represents amazingly good value for money. Class enrolment statistics show that the average member does 7 courses or classes each year.

Course Program

We are justifiably proud of the broad, diverse program we offer our members. In Semester 1 this year, we ran a total of 84 classes, being 29 single sessions, 9 excursions and 47 courses of two or more sessions, including 24 courses meeting every week. These classes were presented by a total of 70 Tutors/Facilitators.

The areas covered were languages (French, Italian, Spanish and German), philosophy, history, archaeology, science, geology, technology, literature, writing, music appreciation, current affairs, book groups, art (including visits to Art Galleries), Tai Chi, Yoga, leisure pursuits (walking, Mahjong, Scrabble, Cryptic Crosswords, Trivia, Bridge, Lawn Bowls, Croquet, Line Dancing, photography, creative knitting, dining out), health related issues, travel, film appreciation, theatre, U3A choir, recorder group, play reading, and a range of excursions to many places of interest. A popular addition to the program was Wine Discovery, courtesy of Dan Murphy's, Alphington, and this is now being extended to Gin and Whisky Discovery sessions.

Our popular monthly Public Lectures cover a diverse range of topics, and are an effective drawcard to encourage the wider community to become aware of what is on offer by U3A.

Perhaps the most noteworthy of these was the well-attended and thought-provoking talk given by Gerard Mansour, Commissioner for Senior Victorians, in February. **Jan and Adrian Ramp**, the efficient Coordinators of the Public Lecture series, are retiring from this role. We extend to them our sincere thanks for a job very well done.

Semester 2 is now underway, and the number of classes has increased even more.

Members old and newer have enrolled enthusiastically in all classes in the program, and it is exciting to see the U3A Hall filled to capacity for some of the most popular classes that are offered. Our history Tutor, **Jane Davies**, is deserving of special mention. She offers ongoing multi-session courses almost without a break throughout the year, and attracts a large, devoted following of members enthralled by her outstanding presentations.

We all owe a huge debt of thanks to our outstanding **Course Coordinator, Joan Learmont** and her team, who have put so much work into arranging the program. As you are aware, Joan is retiring after four strenuous years in this role, and there are really no words that are adequate to express how much we all appreciate everything she has done. Remarkably, Joan will not be retiring from the Committee, but is nominating for another significant role. Thank you Joan!

We also want to thank the Course Coordination team: **Margaret Fievez** (who has the dual role of Course Information Manager and Venues Coordinator), **Barbara Williams, Del Groves, Elaine Rees, Elaine Sproules, Lois Lee**, (who take responsibility for different days of the week), **June Molnar and Diana McCormack** (excursions organizers), plus **Helen Walker** (Tutor Coordinator) for your dedication, creativity, and generous sharing of your time and energy. And deepest thanks to all our **Tutors and Facilitators**, both those who are members and those who contribute their knowledge and skills as guests. Obviously, without you, U3A would not function.

Accommodation

The U3A Hall is used for classes every Monday and Friday afternoons, and all day every Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, for which we pay Banyule City Council \$4 per hour. We also lease the U3A Office space from Banyule City Council at a subsidized rate and we are deeply appreciative of this support.

To accommodate all our classes, in Semester 2 we are using a total of 14 other venues, plus the homes of some members. These include “Our Hub”, Shop 48 in the Harmony Centre, Bellfield Community Centre, and the Old Shire Hall; bowling and croquet clubs; the Ivanhoe Uniting Church Hall; La Trobe University; Watsonia and Rosanna Libraries; and facilities at a Retirement Village and a Nursing Home. For some of these, we pay rent, and for some there is no charge. The considerable task of coordinating our use of all these venues is done extremely competently by **Margaret Fievez**, in her role as Venues Coordinator, and we thank her very sincerely.

We are watching with interest progress in the building of the Ivanhoe Library and Cultural Hub, expected to be completed by the end of 2020. The “Turning of the Sod” ceremony took place on 3 March. The building will include a dedicated office space for U3A, and two large meeting rooms which will be available to be used for classes every day of the week. This facility will be an enormous boon to us, and we are most grateful to **Banyule City Council**. There has been much detailed consultation with Council about our needs as the project has been developed, and we appreciate the significant contribution that **Janice Kelly**, as our liaison person with them, has made and will continue to make. The Committee’s **Facilities Working Party** is paying close attention to all aspects of the fit out of the U3A space. It will be very exciting to have state of the art equipment and furniture; hopefully Semester 1 in 2021 will see us established in our new home.

Support

Grant money is no longer made available from the Department of Health and Human Services directly to individual U3As, as it was in the past. Rather funding goes to the umbrella body, U3A Network, and is used to support a variety of projects and activities that can be of benefit to U3As across the state. It is arguable that the amount of this support is inadequate, in the light of the number of senior members of the community whose lives are enhanced by being part of U3A. The Network Committee is committed to advocacy and publicity to raise the profile of U3A, so that its work can be better supported by Government.

Valued support has been received by us from the offices of **Jenny Macklin MP**, and **Anthony Carbines, MP**, with the printing of our June and December newsletters.

Innovations

Firstly, a significant innovation in the past year has been the introduction of “Enrol and Pay” for events and activities where a fee is payable. Members have responded well to this new procedure, which has streamlined administration, and in particular made the tasks of the Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer much more straightforward.

In conjunction with this was training for our team of Office Volunteers in accessing MyU3A when on duty in the office, so that membership applications, course enrolment and financial transactions could all be entered online. A team of very tech-savvy volunteers known as “**Super Users**” has been responsible for providing this training and ongoing support as needed, and they deserve our sincere thanks. Thanks also go to the Office Volunteers who have been willing to move out of their comfort zones and learn new skills

A huge vote of thanks is due to our Communications Coordinator, **Mary Wilson**, who was the initiator and driver of both Enrol and Pay and the team of Super Users. Over the past four years, Mary has made a huge contribution to every aspect of the functioning of our U3A, drawing on expertise gained in her career prior to retirement, and ensuring that our administration is carried out in an efficient, professional manner. Mary’s intelligent and logical approach to every situation, her grace, patience and commonsense, and her dedication to U3A, have been a wonderful gift to our organisation. Mary is stepping down from this role today, and I personally want to thank her for her unfailing and generous support for me as President; I could not have carried out that role without her.

Secondly, an innovation last year, also put in place by Mary, was the capacity for members to access **PowerPoint presentations** from some courses on the website; not all members may be aware of this. A link to the presentation is placed on a “hidden” page on the website, and information is emailed to class members who attended the course. Access is available for a limited time.

Thirdly, last April, 23 some of our members participated in the Premier’s Active April. They logged a combined total of 676 hours and 24 minutes, by walking, gardening, gym, cycling and Tai Chi, and reported that it was fun, and very motivational. This involvement was efficiently coordinated by **Cheryl Pritchard**, who is also the Editor of the bi-monthly Newsletters, and we thank her for her sterling contribution in both these roles.

Special Events

The **Annual Forum** in November 2018 saw a full house of over 100 members and people from the wider community in attendance. The topic of population growth was addressed by three speakers: Dr Ernest Healey spoke about the politics of immigration, Dr Bob Birrell dealt with immigration and housing, and Dr Katharine Betts' topic was immigration and public opinion. In light of the popularity of the Annual Forum, this year's event, to be held on Monday 25 November, will be held in a much larger venue, the Heidelberg Golf Club in Lower Plenty. U3A will subsidize the increased cost, so that members will only be asked to pay the usual \$10 per head. This year's topic is to be "Social Media – Real Solutions for Real People", and an enlightening afternoon is assured.

This year's **International Women's Day Fundraising Luncheon** in March was another popular and successful event. The speaker was Lynn Berry, who told the amazing story of her project that culminated in 62,000 knitted red poppies on stems being on display in the grounds of the Australian War Museum in Canberra for Remembrance Day 2018. Thanks go to **Diana McCormack** and her team, who once again organized this Luncheon so efficiently. As always, the Creative Knitting group provided beautiful items for sale. Funds generated on this occasion and others have resulted in the astonishing sum of \$3,000 being raised for two very good causes, and presentations will be made shortly. Congratulations, Diana, you are a legend!

May saw another successful fundraising event, an afternoon tea to support the Pancare Foundation, which raised \$780; this sum included the proceeds of sales of knitted items.

A speaker from Pancare, which is located in Banyule, did much to raise our awareness of pancreatic and upper gastrointestinal cancers. Thanks go to our energetic and efficient Social Organizer, **Diann Bennett**, who arranged the catering for this and several other occasions. She is stepping down from this role today, and we thank her very warmly for her great contribution.

The **Annual Lunch** in June, once more held at St George's Restaurant at Melbourne Polytechnic in Northcote, was attended by a capacity crowd of 100. Well-known linguist, Professor Kate Burrige, was the entertaining and engaging speaker. All enjoyed the delicious meal prepared and served by students and staff, as well as the opportunity to socialize with U3A friends both old and new.

Morning and afternoon teas to welcome new members and Tutors were held at the beginning of each Semester, as well as a thank you event for Office Volunteers and Tutors at the end of the year. These events are obviously appreciated by all who attend, and affirm the value placed on social engagement by members of our U3A.

Community Involvement

Over the past year, we have linked with the wider community in a variety of ways, including the following:

The Audit Program at **La Trobe University**, where U3A members are placed in a semester - long course or unit as a non-assessed, listening student, has continued, with enthusiasm from both members and LaTrobe University. Our thanks go to **Sue Beshara**, our Liaison Officer for the program, a task which she has carried out in a very professional manner.

Following is her report for this AGM:

"Since January, Learning and Teaching, led by Neridah Baker has become our liaison department with the University. Thanks go to Neridah, Tracey and her team for their excellent liaison with the academic staff and with myself and students. Thanks also go to the host lecturers. We are always grateful and reassured at how welcoming and encouraging staff are about the additional participants in their lectures. Though the Memorandum of Understanding between our two organizations, is yet to be renewed, the process and discussions to advance it have occurred and are progressing well. Helen McKinnon and Sue Beshara met with Neridah in early July on this matter.

As reported, last year, LaTrobe University program offerings now have increased online delivery of lectures. The Learning and Teaching unit has addressed some of the related issues by granting access for U3A participants to the online Learning Management System. U3A Banyule members may participate in lecture based courses, not those with full online delivery. All courses now have some online elements and now our members can participate fully.

A wide range of courses has, again, been subscribed. They include Indonesian 3, Spanish 3 and 5, Japanese 1, "Moving Text, Page Screen and stage", 'Myth, Legend and History', 'Romanticism in English Literature', 'Art and its Makers: Renaissance to Impressionism', 'Programming for Engineers and Scientists'. One member is studying the advanced Italian 7 and 8. In Semester 1, the 13 applicants were all offered a placement. All 13 accepted and participated.

In Semester 2 there have been 12 applicants all of whom we expect will be offered a placement. There are two new members to the program and to U3A Banyule this semester. Overall in 2019, there are now 22 active or prospective participants to the program and five people taking on full membership with U3A Banyule to access this program."

As in previous years, we strongly supported the **Seniors' Festival** in October. In the Banyule area, the wider public was invited to participate in some sessions.

In the CBD, the Audacity Choir performed at Deakin Edge, and some classes demonstrated their activities. Audacity has become the stand-out choir at this annual event at the opening of Seniors' Week.

It is pertinent to mention here the acknowledgement received by the choir leader, **Nancy Cornwallis**, at the Banyule Council's Celebration of Volunteers in May. Nancy was awarded a Lifetime Contribution Individual Volunteer Award for her work as Tutor of U3A Banyule's Singing for Pleasure class since 2011, as well as her contribution as founder of Serendipity Choir in 1990. Congratulations, Nancy!

We are fortunate to be situated in **Banyule**, which is a leading Age Friendly City, committed to creating age-friendly communities. We are the largest organization for seniors in Banyule, and appreciate the recognition and strong support we receive from Banyule City Council. We are aware that not all U3As enjoy such endorsement of their work. **Sheila Colls** is our representative on the Banyule Age Friendly Advisory Committee, and **Maxine Marks** has represented us on the Banyule Seniors Network for some years; we thank them for their important contributions.

Thank you to all our volunteers

I have already made mention of our **Tutors**, and obviously, without them, there would be no U3A. Tutors and facilitators contribute countless hours of time to share their skills and knowledge. Some come from within our membership, some from the wider community, some offer one off sessions, some short courses, some longer series, some run year-round classes. They make a significant difference to the lives of our members, and I hope they know how greatly they are appreciated.

Secondly, I want to thank our **office volunteers**, a group numbering 25 members, plus a number of Super Users who step in for emergency support when needed. These dedicated people keep the office staffed for two hours every weekday, cheerfully handling all manner of queries, as the public face of our organization. Thank you to **Pat Gropel** for her efficient work as Office Volunteers Coordinator. **Valerie MacPhee**, our Office Manager, can be found in the office almost every day of the week, handling a myriad of tasks to ensure that it functions efficiently, and helping to create a warm and welcoming environment. She is also a crucial member of the MyU3A team.

Thirdly, thanks are due to the many people who help out in various ways to keep our classes running smoothly, whether it is shifting furniture, helping with technology, looking after refreshments, or assisting Tutors in different ways. Special mention must again be made of **Gilda May**, whose commitment to these tasks is astonishing. To all who make a contribution in this way – thank you very much! You are truly appreciated.

Lastly, I wish to acknowledge and thank the **Committee of Management**, for their dedication and hard work over the past year. In addition to those whose contributions I have already mentioned, they are:

- **Russell Scoular**, who as Vice President has brought a fresh approach, drawing on his professional career in the world of business. He will be stepping down from this role, but happily, will remain on the Committee as a general member. Russell was responsible for recruiting our Treasurer, Brendan Quirke, who took over from Acting Treasurer, **Tom Porter**, in October. We thank Tom very sincerely for helping out as Acting Treasurer in an emergency situation.
- **Brendan Quirke** came to us after 38 years with Ford Motor Company as Chief Financial Officer. Remarkably, he has fitted into our much smaller, yet somewhat complicated, organization with grace and patience, and endeared himself to everyone with whom he has worked. Our financial operations are now running smoothly, thanks to Brendan, and we look forward to his ongoing involvement.
- **Milena Maranville**, our very efficient Secretary, whose contribution to the smooth operating of the Committee has been invaluable. She has also brought the benefit of her professional experience to the annual Strategic Planning Day. She has worked diligently to ensure that the four working parties set up to expedite planning for the future, namely Management, Membership, Courses and Facilities, have been accountable, and made change happen.
- **Eleanor Bozzo** joined the Committee during the year as Minute Secretary, and her work in this role is very useful, and appreciated.
- **Jan Ramp** has been our Volunteers Coordinator over the past year, contacting members who have volunteered their time, and others who while they may not have offered to volunteer, have skills that they might be willing to use for the benefit of U3A. She does a great job matching people to roles, and her work is much appreciated.
- **Dianne Williamson** has served for some years as our extremely capable MyU3A Administrator. She has patiently handled the complexities of the data base, which on the whole serves our needs well. It is very pleasing that some much-needed improvements are being made to MyU3A by the small team who manage it for the benefit of the many U3As who use it across the state and beyond.

MyU3A Administrator – Dianne Williamson
Volunteers Coordinator – Jan Ramp

Office Manager – Valerie MacPhee
Bimonthly News Editor – Cheryl Pritchard
U3A Network Victoria Representative – Jim Murphy

General (4 positions) – Jack Ings, Bryce Phillips, Michael Maguire, Russell Scoular

According to the Constitution, we vote for these “ordinary members” as a group.

All in favour? Carried.

Appointments to 15 Off Committee positions

These appointments will be made by the new Committee – no election is required.

7. Other business

7.1 Presentation of a donation to representatives of:

- \$2,000 was presented to Pam Rowley, Montmorency Asylum Seekers representative and
- \$1,000 to Isabel Armer from Helping Hand – Nepal

Diana McCormack as convenor of the Craft Course spoke about the outstanding contribution that the craft group have made by making mittens for prem babies, blankets for homeless and also other clothing for those in hospital facilities. Sale of their goods has also enabled them to donate funds to various charities each year. This has totalled almost \$10,000 over the past 5 years.

7.2 Other items – Vice-President to speak

Acknowledgment of exemplary leadership and thanks to retiring President – Russell presented Helen with flowers and a gift on behalf of members for her outstanding leadership and significant contribution to U3A Banyule in her presidency as well as numerous other roles she undertook.

In response Helen said how much she enjoyed her roles and also acknowledged the support she had received so freely from others such as her husband Graeme.

Helen thanked Adrian and Jan Ramp for their work as Coordinators of Public Lectures and Diann Bennett as Social Secretary.

Helen then acknowledged the long-term magnificent efforts of Mary Wilson and Joan Learmont who have acted as her very dependable and skilled right and left hand.

8. Conclusion - Helen thanked U3A members and Banyule City Councillors, Alison Champion, Peter Capaldi, Craig Langdon and Tom Melican for their support and attendance and invited everyone to stay for refreshments and time to appreciate the craft items on sale.

15 August 2019