



BANYULE
UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE

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In the spirit of reconciliation, U3A Banyule acknowledges the traditional custodians of the land and pays respect to their Elders, past, present and emerging. The U3A movement is a welcoming place for all.



Quarterly Newsletter March 2024

In this edition ...

Well, here we are in 2024. Classes are well away and social activities have already started. So this newsletter bridges the turn of the year with a last gaze on 2023 – the Thank You to Tutors and Volunteers and Awards afternoon (p3) and the Audacity and Recorder concert (p6).

This year's news starts with the introduction of new CoM members, Janet Ringrose, Vice-President and Steven Dennis, Treasurer (p2).

An exciting adventure with *Moby Dick* awaited Ann Ritchie, tutor for the Reading Aloud Group (p5) while a Welcome to New Members was well-attended and enjoyed by all.

Andrew Lees presented an engrossing lecture on Howard Florey that attracted a rapt audience (p4) and the Spanish night was a smash hit with the large crowd (p7).

Look out for the interesting stories in the Vale to four of our members (p8).

We hope you enjoy this edition and find old friends and new in its pages.

The newsletter team



President's report

It is hard to believe we have already been back for nearly two months, although the year well and truly began for many of our people long before the commencement of classes. All this volunteer endeavour was about making our organisation as professional as possible so that the start-up was smooth and purposeful.

Just prior to commencement, three big induction sessions were held. Firstly, training for new tutors and a refresher for continuing tutors was very successful with over 30 in attendance. This was followed by the Office Volunteer Training afternoon with the best roll up ever. The presentation and the publications have given our office volunteers absolute clarity. We have increased numbers offering to volunteer and a roster has been devised to match newcomers with experienced people to induct people effectively.

On 24 January, we welcomed new members with 23 in attendance. All were appreciative and went away with a thorough understanding of the organisation; how to navigate their way to get information and I hope they felt truly welcomed.

Each of these events was supported by a rotating group of people who volunteered to help with catering. Their efforts were very appreciated. If people are made to feel welcome, are well informed and feel supported, then it gives them confidence to get involved.

We have 767 members at present, a little down compared to last year but this will grow over the year. To keep what we do viable, we need to spread the load and draw on everyone's capacity to be involved. U3A is more than the sum total of its volunteers. No matter how big or small your contribution is, it is important.

So at the end of this first term, I want to celebrate the work of all of our volunteers. The quality of the classes, talks and events have never been better. Bravo!

Judith Craze



Introducing Janet Ringrose – Our new Vice President

Although a relative newcomer, I have really enjoyed being a member of U3A Banyule. I have lived and worked in the area for over 35 years but found that when I retired, I wanted to be more connected to the local community and now had the time and opportunity to explore new possibilities.

I have had a long and enjoyable career in education, with the last 14 years as the Principal of Heidelberg Primary School. It is with this background that my belief in lifelong learning has deepened. UNESCO defines education throughout life as based on four pillars: learning to know, learning to do, learning to live together and learning to be.

There is plenty of evidence to support the idea that remaining open to learning new things, exploring ideas and interacting with different people is what allows us to be happier and healthier in general. As I get older this is resonating even more and I was drawn to the U3A organisation as it provides us with a place to come together and continue to grow.

One of the first things you realise is what an amazing structure of dedicated volunteers underpin our organisation. Without their support for so many varying aspects of U3A we would not be the vibrant and dynamic association that we are. I am delighted to be a part of the Committee of Management and look forward to working with and contributing to the continued success of U3A Banyule.



Introducing Steve Dennis – Our new Treasurer

I retired at the end of 2020 and joined U3A Banyule in 2021, primarily to participate in French language classes as a way of keeping the brain active but also to (hopefully) engage in simple conversations during travels to France and the Pacific Territories. I am making slow but steady progress!

I have a degree in chemical engineering and in my professional career I worked in the oil and gas industry for nearly 40 years, mainly in Melbourne. In the last 15 years I worked on projects in Indonesia and Papua New Guinea, including 3 years living in Port Moresby. I ended up working on financial analysis, project economic analysis and commercial negotiations. I also took up volunteer positions on the trustee boards of my employer's in-house Credit Union and Superannuation plan.

I've been a lifelong volunteer, starting as Treasurer of our local kindergarten in 1995 when our children were young, and then progressing to their primary school committee and onto Scouts as a leader of the Venturers (14–18-year-old section). When the U3A Banyule Treasurer role came up I was looking to move on from Scouts and decided I would be happy to take on that role.

Aside from learning French and fulfilling the Treasurer role for U3A Banyule, I enjoy reading, cooking, gardening, travelling, puzzles, crosswords and making wooden model sailing ships.



Tutors & Volunteers Thank You and Awards Afternoon

A very enjoyable time was had by a large gathering of about 80 people on Monday 27 November at the Ivanhoe East Bowling Club. The annual end-of-year gathering to thank members who volunteer became a bigger event in 2023. The event was changed to a late afternoon gathering incorporating a presentation for U3A Banyule Life Membership and Significant Service Awards.

Life membership awards were presented to Kevin Whiting and Milena Maranville recognising the excellence of service, leadership and developmental roles these members have contributed to our organisation over an extended period of time.

There were 16 Significant Service Awards, 14 individual awards and a team award. This round focussed on presenting many of our long-term tutors or course organisers, recognising the commitment and critical contribution they make to the success of our program.

The catering team provided delicious finger food and there was champagne provided to celebrate. *Sue Beshara*

Life Membership Awards

Milena Maranville
Kevin Whiting



Kevin Whiting & Judith Craze Milena Maranville



The catering team



Enjoying the bubbles

Significant Service Awards Individual

Teresa Alfonso	Pat Amor
Maria Axarlis-Coulter	Elaine Bateman
Paule Cartwright	Nancy Cornwallis
Audrey Davies	Julie Marshall
Elsa McCarthy	Helen McKinnon
Joyce Parsons	Catherine Prowse
Lucille Sadler	Heather Stephens

Significant Service Awards Team

Elizabeth Drummond and Helen Cochrane
[weekly Thursday Talks team]



Heather Stephens



Maria Axarlis-Coulter



Helen McKinnon



Nancy Cornwallis



Pat Amor



Elaine Bateman

Photos: John Jones-Parry

Howard Florey and Penicillin

Wednesday afternoon talk 7 February 2024
Presented by Andrew Lees

Howard Florey, a great Australian, was born in Adelaide in 1898 – he topped his class at school in physics and chemistry but not biology – the field he would excel in. He attended The University of Adelaide, completing an M.B., B.S. in 1921. He twice tried to enlist in WWI, but the government decided that medical students should finish their degrees, thankfully!

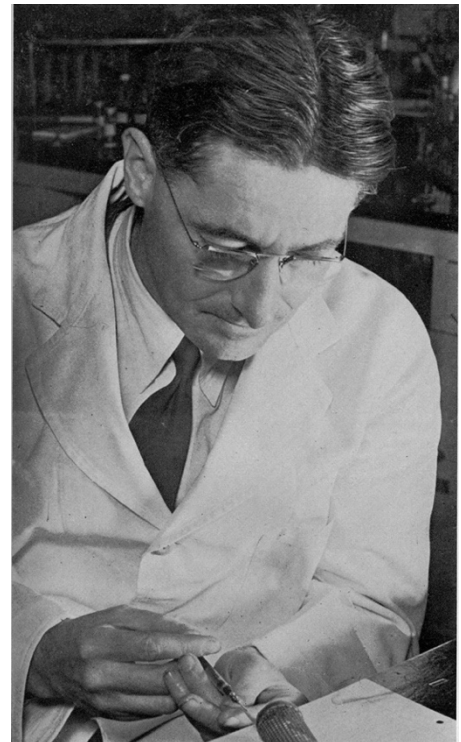
In 1921 he was awarded a Rhodes Scholarship to Oxford and began his career in medical research. Identified early as a brilliant researcher he went on to Cambridge and completed a PhD. Most of his work was studying diseased tissues at a cellular level and the body's responses to bacterial infections along with the quest for ways to kill bacteria.

In 1928 Dr Andrew Fleming left a discarded agar plate seeded with staphylococcal bacteria on the lab bench. Some weeks later he noticed that it had been contaminated by a fungal growth, and that the staph bacteria had died around the fungal growth. Fleming identified the mould as penicillin and found that an animal could be injected with no adverse effects but took the research no further.

The Rockefeller Foundation supported Florey in his research to concentrate on penicillin moulds. A difficult task as the fungus only produced very small quantities and was hard to isolate. Finally, they had a brown powder that would hardly cover a fingernail. In May 1940 eight Albino mice were injected with 100 million streptococci. The mice treated with penicillin survived. Florey then calculated the amount of penicillin required to treat a human infection. They would need massive quantities! Soon the lab had every conceivable container filled with nutrient liquid on which the blue-green penicillin mould would grow.

By January 1941 Florey decided that they were close to having enough penicillin to inject human subjects. The research team used all their penicillin on two adults, and they were so desperate for penicillin they were recovering it from the patients' urine. The great success came when they tested on five children, who were all cured. The age of effective antibiotics was started. Now they needed to seek industrial and research support for penicillin production, and this came from the Americans. On 17 December 1941, 10 days after Pearl Harbour was bombed, it was decided that penicillin should be used for the war effort. Dozens of academic and industrial centres were growing the mould and by 1943, 95% of the wounded men treated with penicillin recovered.

In 1945 Florey along with Fleming and Chain (an important member of Florey's team) were awarded the Nobel Prize. Florey's discoveries were estimated to have saved over 80 million lives. Sir Robert Menzies said "In terms of world well-being, Florey was the most important man ever born in Australia" This probably still holds true today.



Dates for your diary

Monday 11 March	Labour Day Office Closed
Thursday 28 March	Semester 1 Term 1 classes conclude
Friday 29 March	Good Friday – Office closed
Monday 1 April	Easter Monday – Office closed
Monday 15 April	Semester 1 Term 2 classes commence
Thursday 25 April	Anzac Day – Office closed
Monday 10 June	King's Birthday Holiday – Office closed
Tuesday 18 June	Enrolments open for Semester 2 program
Friday 28 June	Classes conclude Semester 1

Reading aloud group

What U3A can do to your life!

After reading *The Iliad* and *The Aeneid* in 2023, I thought the U3A Reading Aloud Group needed something with fewer bloody battles and deaths, so decided on Herman Melville's classic *Moby Dick; Or, The Whale*. This is one of the most never-read books (along with James Joyce's *Ulysses* among others).

While I was researching *Moby Dick* in October to see how it would fit with the group, I came upon the New Bedford Whaling Museum site. It was full of great stuff including an application to read at their Moby Dick Marathon in January. It was very early in the morning and I filled in the form. I thought that was that, but no, in late November I received an email telling me I had got a GIG. The Reading Aloud Group was very encouraging, as was my husband, so off we went.

It was a really great experience. Weird, who ever heard of such a thing? We spent four nights (we arrived on NYE) in Boston to acclimatise before taking the bus to New Bedford. Over 2000 people attended the marathon with just over 200 readers. (We won the prize for coming the longest distance.)

The readers read in relay for 25 hours starting on Saturday at midday and finishing just after 1pm on Sunday. They read continuously through the night. Some people had brought sleeping bags and cushions for the overnighner. We went back to our hotel to sleep.

Lots happened at the marathon besides the reading and, if it was closer, we would certainly go back in 2025. We met Melville Scholars (who knew there were such people), artists who specialise in Moby Dick art, Sea Shanty singers, people from all over USA and on the last day we had heaps of snow. The snow meant we did not get to Nantucket, which is where Ishmael sailed from on his Moby Dick voyage, but we did see lots of New Bedford and Fairhaven.

I, of course, blame U3A Banyule for this grand experience. Amazing things can happen.

This photo shows a minister reading Chapter 8 of *Moby Dick* at the Seaman's Bethel just across the road. This chapter contains a sermon given by Father Maple from the pulpit of the chapel, which is shaped like the bow of a ship. The wall plaques are dedicated to people who have lost their lives at sea. New Bedford is a working port still. *Ann Ritchie*

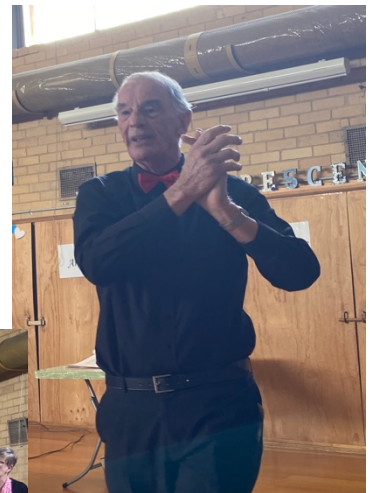


Out and about with U3A Banyule

Audacity choir and recorder group concert Tuesday 5 December

The concert, held at the Rosanna Uniting Church, filled the hall with enchanting melodies and harmonies as our group took to the stage. There was also a special performance of the U3A Banyule Recorder Group, led by Elizabeth Ward.

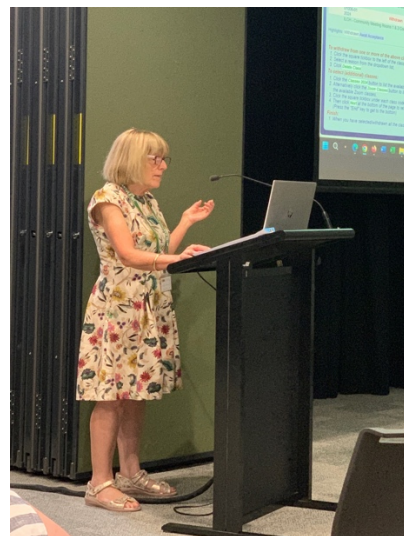
Thank you to all participants and organisers.



New member welcome morning tea

On 24 January, 23 new members for 2024 were welcomed at a morning tea at ILCH. The able leaders gave presentations on accessing our wonderful program on MyU3A. Thank you to all those involved, especially those who provided the delicious morning tea.

As of 26 January, we have 767 members with 711 Full Members, 44 Associates and 12 Life Members. There are 158 men and 609 women.



Photos: Milena Maranville

Spanish night 9 February

Ole! Ole! What a splendid Spanish evening!

Welcomed with complimentary sangria, attending U3A Banyule members and friends ensured the evening was full of colour and vibrancy, matched only by the festive table settings and bunting. After *bienvenido* from Judith Craze, in Spanish no less, and with quiet Hispanic music classics to set the ambiance, tapas was served; fabulous entertainment provided by Geoff Vaughan (a matador in fine voice), a 'little white bull' in Sam Terranova and an amazing Spanish señorita from somewhere? Turned out to be Barb Sekules, who also sang *La Cucaracha*, then led us with *La Bamba*.



Bruce Rigby and Mabelle Gardiol, together with host Teresa Alfonso, delivered a heart-wrenching version of *Guantánamera*. We were then transported somewhere high in the Andes by a beautiful Uruguayan song by Mabelle and Bruce. A highly enjoyable but challenging trivia quiz composed and delivered by Pam Macintyre followed a generous paella main course.



But wait, at the end of the evening, our attendees were encouraged to join organisers in dancing the Macarena, clearly showing their enjoyment and perhaps giving an insight into a minute part of our mis-spent (sorry well-spent) youth.



So many people to thank. The saying “it takes a village to raise a child” could easily be adapted to ‘it takes many persons to organise an event like this’.

Forgive omissions. Major thanks must go to Teresa Alfonso, our Spanish Tutor, who did so much to ensure that we could enjoy the evening; our in-house performers – Geoff Vaughan, Barb Sekules, Sam Terranova; to Stephen Sharpe, son-in-law of Nancy Cornwallis, for his accompaniment on the keyboard, and to Bruce Rigby and Mabelle Gardiol for their Hispanic music, which moved us; Pam Macintyre for her trivia quiz; Danny Learmont for the program; the amazing unnamed team of U3A Banyule members, to Val Wake and Cheryl Heskett in the kitchen (still there after 10:30 pm), and certainly not at all least, the indefatigable Joan Learmont who coordinated it once again.

Jan Ramp

Photos: Milena Maranville and John Jones-Parry



Afternoon tea 3 February

Four long-time U3A members attended an afternoon tea to celebrate the life of Joyce Goffin, arranged by her daughter Jennifer Vince. Joyce was an enthusiastic U3A member and office bearer in the early years of U3A Banyule. She taught bridge to members, including Kay Forde who now runs the U3A Bridge class. She encouraged Noel Griffith to begin a music appreciation class for the U3A. Noel's class began in 1995 and is still running in 2024.

Pictured from left to right: Kay Forde, Noel Griffith, Pat Griffith, Bev Holland, Jennifer Vince



Vale to four of our members

It was sad to receive the news of these members who passed away recently.

Joyce Goffin was well into her 90s and we believe a founding member, serving as Secretary when the office was the bluestone building in Burgundy Street opposite the Austin. Joyce recruited Noel Griffith who was running Music Appreciation classes for Probus. Joyce was a very keen member of Noel's classes, as was Edna Bird whom we featured in Omail a while back.

Diana MacNeish had a long association with U3A Banyule since 2005. Prior to retirement Diana was a midwife and nurse. When joining us, she was one of the early members of Caroline Wood's Tai Chi class. Following Caroline's retirement, Diana continued in Jan Ramp's Tai Chi Class as well as Gabriella Zito's Italian Class.

Jeanette Mullins, who died recently at the age of 93, served on the Committee of Management for 3 years and took on the role of introducing the Lingering Lunches.

Margaret Murphy, 90, was a long-time supporter of U3A Banyule. Margaret served on the CoM of Yarra Valley U3A, as our U3A was then called and was editor of the Newsletters and the course brochures. She was a tutor for the Cryptic Crossword group, poetry group and organised a foreign film group. As a great lover of Literature, Margaret ran two book groups, one for us and one for Manningham U3A. Margaret received a Jagajaga Award for her services to the community.