



## NETWORK WA

Newsletter

July 2020

### WE'RE BACK IN BUSINESS!



*Happy Mandurah U3A members (Photo taken BC – before Covid)*

We at the Mandurah U3A eventually held our AGM at the Dudley Park Bowling Club on 30 July 2020. The meeting was well attended by over 30 members and a new Committee was elected for the 2020 to 2021 year. It was the first time we had been able to meet as our usual meeting place at the Mandurah Seniors' Centre had been closed since 20 March 2020 and was still not open to U3A owing to the room size. Other matters decided at the AGM were to reduce the number of Committee Meetings and General Meetings to reduce administrative tasks and to reduce the number of weekly meetings from three to two days. We are intending to recommence at the beginning of August 2020 as long as we do not experience any major changes in Western Australia. I have attached a photograph of members from before the Covid-19 shutdown when we were visited by a U3A member from Cyprus.

Rory O'Brien President  
Mandurah U3A

## FROM THE CHAIR

U3A groups around the State are now emerging like butterflies from their chrysalis and meeting face to face for the first time in months for many of us. The joy of being with each other was very evident at the first (albeit socially distanced) meetings beginning in July. This highlights the social value of our U3A groups as being possibly more value than the learning as we get older. The film group in Perth has taken up this theme for a research project on how seniors learn to be put together as a short film.

The Network was able to provide Zoom hosting for a number of groups during the lockdown period which allowed unlimited virtual meetings for group presentations, committee meetings, choir group and film group meetings, as well as social “get togethers” for members.



The U3A choir has resumed practice at a larger venue in Yokine which allows social distancing without unduly compromising the choir sound and feel.

The cancellation of the State Conference which had been planned for Busselton in October is regrettable and unlikely to be resumed until 2022 and at another venue, so we are looking for other ideas for a State-wide meeting and venue for that time.

The National U3A Alliance (U3AAA) has been meeting online. Chair of the group passed from WA to Victoria in April and new chairman is Glen Wall from Whittlesea U3A. The group is currently revising the Memorandum of Understanding with a view to becoming incorporated, providing a higher profile for lobbying and publicity at a national level.

Internationally the governing body of U3A (IUTA) has called upon the European Union and others to:

- 1) Affirm the essential place of seniors in our society
- 2) Demand maximum protection of seniors in terms of public health
- 3) Recognize the essential role of seniors in inter-generational social networks

- 4) Suggest that everything should be done to guarantee the role of seniors as the repository of the memory of our societies
- 5) Call on European and international authorities to mobilize resources to ensure lifelong learning for seniors which are linked directly to their mental and physical health.

Peter Alcock, Chairman U3A Network WA

## NEWS from NATURALISTE

\*As a strongly 'Course - Oriented' group, we have been considerably impacted by the COVID 19 pandemic in the way we function. We offer a range of courses that include year-long ones, short term ones that are usually 6-8 weeks duration, and some half day workshops. During the year we usually have 4 Topical Talks, so not only have our class members been affected but the Leaders who have planned, and in many cases had just started their courses for the year, have faced trying different options. On offer for Semester Two we have 31 courses and hopefully all will run.



*Winter clouds over the beach at Busselton (the beach is actually covered in seaweed which is normal for this time of the year)*

We hold our courses in various places including our Community Centre (The People Place), Church Hall, Dance Studio, Retirement Village and at local Restaurants. In order to cope with restrictions and assist Leaders, we implemented a COVID Safety plan to not only comply with Government regulations but also with any specific conditions required by the venue. The most affected have been those courses taking place in private homes where social distancing is quite difficult.

For some time no groups could meet face to face and some Leaders attempted to offer Zoom meetings – these with limited success, others kept in contact via email and Skype. However, in the main, like most other groups, Semester One courses came to a standstill. However, as restrictions have eased, a number of courses are picking up from where they left off and Semester 2 ones are starting

\*Some examples include: The ‘Mah Jonggers’ and ‘Scrabblers’ are getting desperate to restart and have fingers crossed for that to happen in August. The two Book Clubs resumed this month, as have the French and French Conversation groups. The Tap Dancers are about to resume and the Dramatists are now back to their play readings. The two Dru Yoga groups are very happy to be meeting again.

\*We are a ‘chatty’ lot in the Naturaliste group with the following courses all starting with the words ‘Let’s Talk’ – Let’s Talk TED Talks, Let’s Talk Philosophy, Let’s Walk and Talk and Let’s Talk History – The English Crown!

It makes us very aware that the social aspect of our groups is so important and no doubt one of the major impacts, albeit necessary, of the COVID restrictions, has been the social isolation of our members. In particular, as a place with many retirees who are living away from families and just establishing friendships here, the time has been especially difficult.

\*Our ‘nomads’ have been hitching up their caravans and heading north – apparently there are quite a few Busselton number plates to be seen in Kalbarri. We have had quite a few holiday makers arriving down south but more come as a summer destination. Readers will be used to seeing summer pictures of our beautiful beaches. On its weekly walk, the Walking Group proceeds along the foreshore path and always enjoys the changing ocean, cloud formations and, quite frequently, rabbits in the sand dunes. The photo above is a view of the beach after our first winter storms. The beds of seaweed immediately appear and although not lovely to look at, do their job of protecting the beach until they almost as quickly disappear during spring.

Joan Parke (President Naturaliste U3A)

## **CANNING RIVER REGION U3A**

Canning River Region held a Welcome Back Party on Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> July which was a successful and happy occasion. We were able to attract some new faces and celebrated our return to regular meetings with music, videos and an impressive feast.

During the Lock Down period, a quiz was conducted by email by several CRR members, with questions and answers sought from the whole membership. Based on the subject of WA this was a successful event and lightened the mood of all.

A new focus on our own region of Canning for inspiration for our programme has been adopted for the rest of this year. We begin on July 17<sup>th</sup> with a lecture on the Camps at Canning Bridge, a graphic tale of dispossessed families living on the foreshore of the Canning River during the Great Depression. We have enjoyed a good response to our wider invitation to all U3A Members to attend this event, but advise that seating is limited to 40.



*Members relax over afternoon tea and enjoy the social side of the meetings*

We have approached both Canning and South Perth Councils and the South Perth Historical Society in our quest for research into our region. We have been gratified by the response we have been given, with libraries and staff being offered to support our efforts.

Our Philosophy Group will now meet on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Fridays at 2pm at St Augustine's Anglican Church Hall in Como. This move will permit use of technical equipment available there, underpinning the creativity of the Group. Come along and contribute with your views! All welcome!

Our Film Group is supportive of our initiatives (see attached photos), and their role in enlivening lectures with appropriate footage is seen as critical to the success of our future research. We see the future as promising indeed.

Dianne Airey Chairperson, Canning River Region U3A

# WILL I EVER USE THIS AGAIN?

## *THE GENTLE ART OF CULLING*

Our rural and remote friends have been forced to cull their livestock. Coronavirus has brought those of us in urban situations with (hopefully) no livestock, to engage in our own version of “culling” in our home, our sheds and our gardens. We had time to do it.

Why would we do it? Could be lack of space, downsizing accommodation, can't find things, can't reach things, or perhaps a gesture of goodwill to descendants who may otherwise need to order a very large skip bin.

Culling requires a strategy, advanced decision-making skills and discipline. Undertaking it place by place at least allows for grouping of similar types of culled items together - potentially in the spare bedroom. Will you still be able to move around the spare bedroom?

For each item examined. Do I like this, will I ever use this, how many previous years' culls have this item survived and why? Is it of use to someone else or should it be binned? The “will I ever use” is the big question. What size is that item of clothing and do I realistically ever expect to be that size within the next two years? What about these shoes? Am I still capable of wearing them with some degree of safety? Are they worthy of donation?



*Does your shed look like this?*

Then there is the bookcase. Will I ever wish to read that book again or is it one I have not had time to read and would like to? Is it a valuable book? All the others are “cull potential” and many can be donated.

The kitchen potentially has items you will never use again and some rarely ever used. You can go wild here. It may be that you are no longer cooking fancy meals and you can't safely

lift heavy weights etc. You may also need to be able to reach items. Donate items if you can and when they are safe for others to use.

You've finished making your way through your house and your spare bedroom is becoming unnavigable. So, you attack the shed. You're still in discipline mode. At least you may have space to pile up the shed cull somewhere in the shed - all sorts of things you have not thought about for years. It could be a journey even more nostalgic than the house culling. It requires even more discipline. Best to keep them all you decide?

Impediments to culling do exist. It can depend on your physical ability, your objective, your discipline, the assistance available to you and how long it takes for you to move items on. There's grave danger of "unculling" items if you have not moved them on. Best advice is don't ever revisit culled items.

Discipline also needs to be observed regarding the items which land in the red, yellow and green bins.

You've done your culling! Those spaces you have created do not need to be filled. You can spread things out. You can find things, there's space to spare. You can move some things to more accessible areas. Life will be even more wonderful. The cull you do next year will be so much easier to do.

Others will benefit from your endeavours. Your descendants will admire you. I refuse to declare how successful my cull was.

*Lyndal Lance U3A North Coast (Hamersley)*



*Some members of the U3A Choir in good voice at Yokine*

## MY FAVOURITE FLOWERS

*(This acrostic was sent in by Pauline Begley, North Coast Hamersley)*

*Fragrance fills the garden air*

*Riotous colour unfolding everywhere*

*Each small flower exuding its essence*

*Enchanting colours enriching my presence*

*Springtime heralds these wondrous flowers*

*I love to see them after nourishing showers*

*Alas, when they are spent*

*Sadness descends, as only for a season were they lent.*



Freesias

## FILLING THE VOID AT WANNEROO

When the lockdown was proclaimed in March, many U3A groups, like other community groups, went into recess. This was not good enough for two enterprising members of



*Constance O'Brien and Cheryl Cundall with copies of KIT*

Wanneroo U3A, Constance O'Brien and Cheryl Cundall. Brains must be kept active! They produced a weekly publication, KIT (Keeping in Touch), for the members of the group. It was an online production featuring games, puzzles and items of wide general interest giving plenty of food for thought for those who were confined to their homes during this time.

## U3A NORTH COAST (HAMERSLEY)

In a recent talk David Hounsome presented "Aboriginal Art from Cave to Canvas" David's talk encompassed many aspects of Aboriginal Art including Albert Namatjira's work, the work of stolen generation children at Carrolup School near Katanning, how cultural practice became a commercial product and also how many aspects of colonial settlement impacted on Aboriginal life and art.

He talked about rock art of the Kimberley and Kakadu and the break-through international recognition of the Papunya "school" and a range of art from other language groups. (There were something between 250 and 400 language groups at the time of European settlement). It is a huge subject and David brought it all together in an extremely interesting way.

David is a graduate of UWA and a longtime art lover who, on retirement, trained as a guide at the Art Gallery of WA while completing an art history course at TAFE.



*Ric Foster (North Coast), left, presenting thanks to David Hounsome with the illustrated copy of The Uluru Statement From The Heart in the background.*

Many thanks to our hard working committee who have had added duties in recent times – the disinfecting of chairs, tables, door handles, microphones etc. Fortunately the community hall we use is large enough to accommodate our members and a few visitors while still observing social distancing.

*Peter Flanigan*

### **FROM THE EDITOR**

**Many thanks to all who submitted articles and photographs. We can always use more.**

**There will be one more edition in 2020 – deadline 20 October.**

***Peter Flanigan***