

NEWSLETTER MARCH 2022

President's column



With the success of our formal Launch function (see the report below), and a number of new members, the outlook for our U3A is very positive for the years ahead. Compounded by the gradual easing of Covid-related restrictions, I think that we can look forward to being together again in all our favourite activities.

I take this opportunity to warmly welcome our new members, and hope that all existing members will also welcome them into our community. I look forward to everyone getting actively involved in our programme, no matter whether the activities are more formal ones like classes and tutorials, more intimate like the small group activities, or mind and body stretching like the live music recitals and excursions. Hopefully, there's something there for everyone, and as I've said many times, new and increased membership means more things we can offer, and the more we offer, the more people will want to join us and become involved.

The Committee has already started looking ahead to our programme for semester 2, which I hope will be even more varied and interesting than the one we have now. If anyone has ideas and suggestions for new activities, or would like to offer to convene something themselves, please contact any Committee member. We'd love to hear from you.

Programme Launch

I don't think that it's an exaggeration to claim that our formal 2022 Programme Launch, in Hammond Hall on Monday afternoon, 7 February, was a resounding success. Thanks in large measure to the excellent publicity material prepared by Robyn Harlock and Merran Koren and distributed via our new Facebook page and in poster form throughout the district, some 56 people were attracted to attend the event. From the reactions of those I spoke to, they enjoyed what was presented and the activities being offered by our U3A in 2022. We signed up several new members just before, during and immediately after the Launch, and I take this opportunity to welcome them

all to our U3A community. I hope that you are all stimulated and entertained by what you experience with us, and equally importantly, make many new friends along the way.

The Launch programme began with a very short "welcome to country" by Tracy Roach, representing the Eastern Marr Aboriginal Corporation. This was followed by an entertaining address by Cr Richard Ziegeler, mayor of Warrnambool, in which he formally launched our programme. We then had



two thoughtful and stimulating short talks by guest speakers David Fallaw and Janet Macdonald, intermixed with two brilliant short video clips prepared by our resident IT wiz, Robyn Harlock, highlighting some of the presentations from 2021 and giving a sample of what to expect in 2022. These were a big hit with everyone.

The event was rounded off appropriately with a delicious afternoon tea prepared by Barb Phipps and her team of willing scullery hands. This provide an ideal opportunity for existing, new and prospective members to mingle and interact, discussing weighty matters of life and the universe – exactly what our U3A is all about.

My thanks as president to everyone who contributed mightily to this outstanding start to our academic year 2022.

Peter Dexter

What's on the next two months

First and most important, a reminder again that if you haven't already done so, all members should register and enrol for Semester 1 activities online whenever you have that capability. For those who do not, you will need to contact any member of the Committee, who will be able to help you. Contact details are at the end of this Newsletter.

March will see a continuation of all the small group activities according to their own rhythms. The second and third of the social interactions sessions will be on 7 and 28 March, and the philosophy classes will continue on 10 and 24 March. The IT classes with Robyn Harlock will continue on 11 and 18 March. In addition, the tutorial programme will really get underway. We'll have all three of Peter Lazarus's hybrid astronomy presentations on 8, 15 and 29 March; the hybrid international affairs tutorials from Gerry Engwerda, on Tibet and Eastern Europe on 14 and 21 respectively; and our local face to face tutorials will begin with one by Bill Gardner on 22 March on "Impressions of Egypt". Altogether a very full month.



In April the small group activities will continue as before.

The third and fourth social interactions discussion sessions will be on 11 and 25 April, while the third and fourth philosophy classes will be on 7 and 21 April. The third and fourth of Gerry's international affairs tutorials will again be hybrid sessions on 4 and 18 April, while we'll be treated to a talk by John Sheely on 5 April on his time volunteering at Kew Gardens, and Bill Gardner will give his second presentation on 19 April on Homer, the Odyssey and the Iliad. Again, a very full month to look forward to.

Live concert. Finally, a highlight of the month will be our first live music concert, in Christ Church at 18.00 on Friday 1 April. The musicians will be Anita Hoekstra (piano), Anita Senior (soprano) and Erin Toolman (clarinet). The outline programme is at the end of this Newsletter.

Full details of times and locations for all these activities are in the March and April Activity Calendars attached to this Newsletter and also on the website.

Annual General Meeting

Our Annual General Meeting will take place on Tuesday 5 April at 15.00 in Hammond Hall. It will follow immediately after the hybrid tutorial to be given by John Sheely at the same venue at 14.00. It is planned that immediately after the tutorial, we'll break for afternoon tea, then reconvene for the AGM. The draft agenda for the meeting and call for nominations for office bearers and the Committee are being sent to all registered members separately.

Reminder: Membership fees are due for payment by the end of March. This can be done via the website (preferred) or by bank transfer. The annual fee remains \$40 per person.

Tutorial summaries

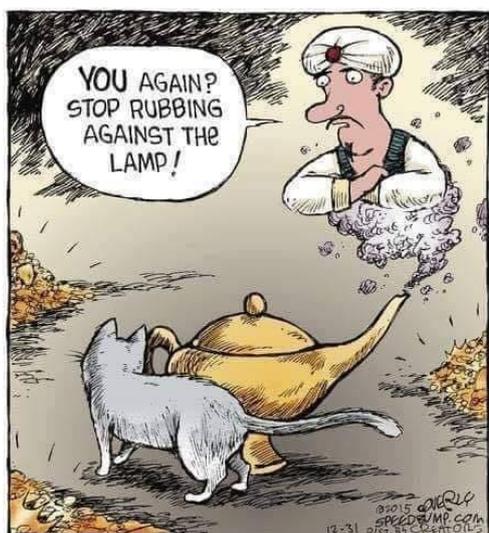
The Sun. Lazarus. The Sun has been around for about 4.6 billion years. How did the Sun form, and what keeps it going? Our Sun is very dangerous, but the Earth has protected us and set up conditions for life to form. But in the future, the Sun will destroy the Earth.

The Moon and Effect on Earth. Lazarus. Not long after the Earth formed, it was struck by a Mars sized object. The ejected material formed our Moon. The Moon has had enormous influence over the Earth, and we will explain some of these influences. This session will also explain lunar and solar eclipses. There will also be a fun quiz to test your knowledge of the moon, e.g., is there a man on the moon?

The Planets. Lazarus. A quick journey among the planets. The journey starts with how our solar system formed. Then we discuss the categories and characteristics of the planets, and end with some of the amazing discoveries that have been made.

Impressions of Egypt. Gardner. Egypt is old...they were undertaking precision engineering projects when the Britons were trying to arrange big rocks in a circle. Their system of agriculture gave them some unique advantages, which coupled with the surrounding deserts let them largely ignore the outside world. Other peoples often sought refuge there in times of drought or hardship...in respect to our culture, Abraham went there before returning to the promised land...it is a contentious issue as to

whether he also founded Mecca and left his Egyptian wife Hagar and son Ishmael there (still with consequences today). The Israelites went there in drought, and eventually left again under Moses. Mary and Joseph plus child sought refuge in Egypt and lived there probably until Jesus was 13 or so...did this influence him at all? Is it co-incidence that Tutankhamen is the only Pharaoh whose tomb was not emptied, given he was the son of the "heretic" pharaoh Akhenaton, and that regime change occurred on his death. The explosion of art under Akhenaton. Then onwards through Alexander the Great, the Romans, the Islamic conquest, the French, the British, and finally the western desert campaign and the battle of El Alamein.



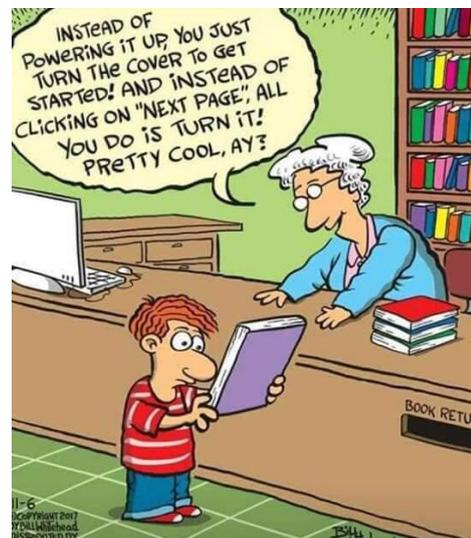
Homer, the Odyssey, Iliad, Jason and the Argonauts. Grdner. When Lorenzo (the Magnificent) of Florence became fascinated by ancient things, it kick-started the Renaissance and western civilisation. A cornerstone was the Heroic Age of ancient Greece, and the three stories above were largely all they knew. In a rather novel re-evaluation, the interpretation of these classics with respect to the oppression of women in our society will be the lens, in particular the story of Jason and Argonauts, backed up by references to the Iliad and Odyssey. Jason was taught..."Women are foolish, powerless, enslaved for their good, for they are flighty and weak and there is no integrity in them. One sniff of a man and they are gone etc etc." On the other hand Medea was taught by the priestesses "For we do not need men, little daughter, except for one purpose and for a short time." The plot revolves around how these opposing views came into juxtaposition when Aphrodite brought Jason and Medea together. The idea that western civilisation may have misinterpreted the whole thing is put forward, given the matrilineal nature of Greeks in the Heroic Age.

Tibet. Engwerda. Tibet was shut off from the West for a very long time and entry to the kingdom was strictly forbidden. What was it really like and what attracted those many freelance explorers who attempted to smuggle themselves in to Lhasa? How did Tibet come to be a short-lived British territory and what happened after the Chinese took over in 1950 and why are they so interested in it? A little bit of history, a fair bit of derring-do and quite a bit of geography in this one.

Eastern Europe after the USSR. Engwerda. In 1989 the Berlin wall came down and in 1991 the USSR broke up into Russia and 15 newly independent states. How did that happen, how did the new states cope with that sudden change of fortune and what have been the consequences for both Russia and the EU.

The Great Population Decline. Engwerda. For a long time, demographers thought that the world was either becoming or was already overpopulated and that very soon there would not be enough for everyone in terms of food and resources. As it turns out over population is not going to be a problem, but the reverse is as many countries fall below replacement level. In this session we will look at the impact of falling birth-rates on the GDP, work force, family structures and aged care sectors in the EU, China, Russia and Japan.

The evolution of the English Language. Engwerda. English is a Germanic language that has its origins in arrival of the Angles, Jutes, Saxons, and Frisians in the 5th century. From there it borrowed extensively from Latin, Greek, French and a host of other languages not all of them European. What did we borrow from other languages and how did we adapt them into modern English? In this session we will look in some detail at the Viking, French and the Norman influences on English and what it might look like in the future.



Volunteering in Kew Gardens. Sheely. In 2019 I was fortunate enough to be accepted as a volunteer within the prestigious Kew Gardens in England. I worked for 4 weeks within the gardens and tree teams which I specifically requested to assist in my professional development. This opportunity has further enriched my horticultural/arbicultural journey which I look forward to sharing with you all.

Tutor Profiles

John Sheely. John is currently Curator at Warrnambool Botanic Gardens, just commencing his 16th year. He has over 30 years' experience in Horticulture, Arboriculture and Turf Management in both private and public sectors.

Gerry Engwerda. I am a retired High School teacher. In my 43 years in the classroom, I taught English, History and International Relations and as well worked part time for Latrobe University. I am now happily retired in Yackandandah where we, (my wife, Ellen and I), have lived for the past 40 years. We have four children and ten grandchildren who take up all the time not taken by U3A. I am an aviation enthusiast and a terribly average cook who likes nothing better than to be left alone with a nice glass of red and a good book.

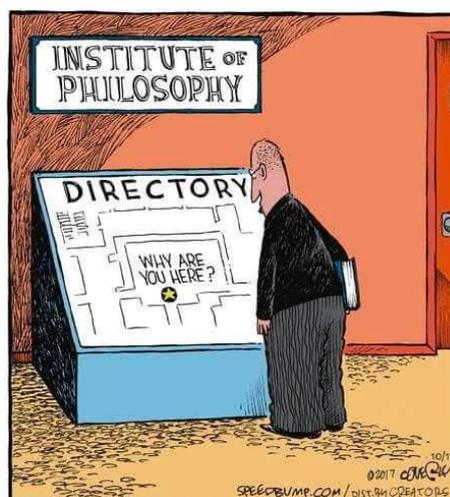
Peter Lazarus. Peter belongs to Hume U3A in Melbourne where he is their webmaster and has a strong amateur interest in astronomy. He has kindly offered to talk to us about aspects of the space environment nearest to home.

Bill Gardner. Bill Gardner is a recent arrival in Warrnambool, moving from Horsham last April. He has had a varied career studying Agriculture at Melbourne University, farming at Hay, NSW, moving onto a Ph D at Melbourne University, then a stint as a researcher with the Agriculture Department, followed by private consulting to farmers, back to farming and now retirement. Take note that he is quite comfortable with making stuff up where his knowledge runs out. **Impressions of Egypt.** An interest in history of the ancient world, reinforced by a trip to Egypt somehow convinced Bill that he could give a talk on this topic

Keith Purdie. Dr Keith Purdie is a retired Anglican priest and registered psychologist. He has worked as a parish priest, and in a variety of industrial settings as counsellor, trainer, and applied researcher.

Keith has a B.A (phil major), B.D. (Bachelor of Divinity); Grad Dip Psych; and PhD (in psychology, exploring the free will/determinism issue as it applies to psychology. Jointly supervised by a psychologist and a philosopher). Keith taught a philosophy class at U3A Emerald Victoria for 6 years

Member Profiles



Every month, we hope to have short profiles of different of our members, in particular new ones, to help us get to know one another better. We don't have any to offer this month, but with several new members now in our community, I'll be chasing up with some of you for future profiles.

Contributions

This month we have another delightful account by David Fallaw of a further one of his musical adventures in Europe.

David Fallaw

Prades Musical Festival

A few years ago, during our European wanderings, we decided to rent a long-term apartment in Carcassonne a small walled city on the Aude River in southern France. Founded in the second century by the Romans, it is dominated by the formidable fortress, La Cite', built in the 12th century, and for hundreds of years afterwards was a notorious centre for military conflict, and the Inquisition's elimination of the Cathars. After falling into ruin, it was restored in the 19th century to now be a UNESCO World Heritage Site and a major French tourist attraction.



During our stay we booked in for several concerts at the Prades Festival, which takes place every year in a beautiful town nestled in the east end of the Pyrenees, overlooked by the spiritual mountain, Pic de Carnigou. We drove south from Carcassonne, following the Aude River, stopping briefly at St Hilaire village, that is reputedly where sparkling white wine was made by the monks 100 years before Champagne was discovered. We continued on to the market town of Limoux, through a menacing gorge, before leaving the Aude and starting to climb. Up a winding road, through beech and oak forest, we reached the pass at about 2000m, encircled by pine forest and alpine meadows seen eerily through a light mist. Once over the northern ridge of the Pyrenean ranges, we descended more gradually and finally found Prades a few kms along the valley of the Tet river.



Prades is a small pink-marble town on the banks of the Tet, distinguished by the beautiful pre-Romanesque abbey of St. Michel-de-Cuxa, which lies 2-3 kms further up the valley and built by Benedictine monks in 878. Recently the city's reputation has spread due to the legacy of the famous cellist, Pablo Cassals, who spent many years in exile here from Franco's Spain, and it is here that every August this abbey provides the setting for the Prades Music Festival, held in his memory.

Our first concert was in St Martin de Carnegou, a spectacular remote site built in early 1000 on the west flank of Pic de Carnigou, a jagged spur of rock approached only by a 40 minute climb from the car park. As it was a hot day, we were very glad to be finally ushered to our seats in the cool basilica and be enraptured by the ethereal sound of the Boccherini Cantata with choir, soloists and instruments. If there is a heaven, this felt very close.

The following day we were totally mesmerised by a performance of Beethoven's Gross Fugue String

Quartet Op 133, in the beautiful abbey grounds of St. Michel-de-Cuxa surrounded by cloisters built 1100 years ago. On a warm summer night, the atmosphere of musical, historical and religious significance was indeed very profound.



We returned to Carcassonne via the coast road passing Argeles beach near the Spanish border where thousands of Franco's civil war fugitives sought refuge, only to die from exposure or starvation. Horrors like this had such a devastating effect on Pablo Casals that he left his home country and settled in Prades, refusing for many years to play in public. Fortunately, a Polish pianist convinced him that as one of the greatest cellists of his time, he was needed by the rest of the world to spread his musical genius. Casals therefore decided to return to the concert platform and to found the Prades Musical Festival, which remains to this day a wonderful legacy to a great musician and philanthropist.

Smile Corner



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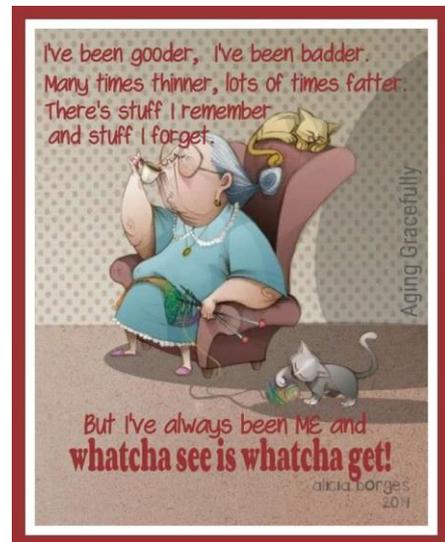
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For matters relating to our zoom/hybrid tutorials:

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March 2022

Calendarpedia
Your source for calendars

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
27	28	1 Mahjong, Hammond 10.00	2	3	4	5
6 Film, Hankinson, Hammond, 14.00	7 OzChild Nicholas Hammond Hall 10.30	8 Mahjong, Hammond 10.00 The Sun, Lazarus Hybrid, 10.30	9	10 Philosophy 2 Purdie Hammond Centre 14.00	11 IT class, Harlock, Hammond Hall, 14.00	12
13 Renaiss/baroque Hankinson, 240 Lava, 1400	14 Engwerda, Hybrid Tibet 10.30 Cryptics, Hammond back, 14.00	15 Mahjong, Hammond 10.00 The Moon, Lazarus, Hybrid, 10.30	16 History Walk, Village Green, 10.30 Macdonald	17 Book club, Hammond back, 14.00	18 IT class, Harlock, Hammond Hall, 14.00	19
20 Beethoven 2, Phipps, 240 Lava, 14.00	21 Engwerda, Hybrid Eastern Europe 10.30	22 Mahjong, Hammond 10.00 Impressions of Egypt Gardner Hammond Hall 14.00	23	24 Philosophy 3 Purdie Hammond Centre 14.00	25	26
27	28 Cryptics, Hammond back, 14.00 WRAD 2, Powell ACT/SMART Hammond Hall 10.30	29 Mahjong, Hammond 10.00 The Planets, Lazarus Hybrid 10.30	30	31	1	2

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April 2022

Calendarpedia
Your source for calendars

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
27	28	29 Mahjong, Hammond 10.00	30	31	1 Live concert, Christ Church, 18.00 Hoekstra, Senior, Toulman	2
3 Film, Hankinson, Hammond, 14.00	4 Cryptics, Hammond back, 14.00 Population decline Engwerda Hybrid 10.30	5 Mahjong, Hammond 10.00 Kew Gardens Sheeley Hammond Hall 14.00	6	7 Philosophy 4 Purdie Hammond Centre 14.00	8	9
10 Vivaldi Hankinson, 240 Lava, 1400	11 OzChild 2 Nicholas Hammond Hall 10.30	12 Mahjong, Hammond 10.00	13	14 Book club, Hammond back, 14.00	15	16
17	18 Cryptics, Hammond back, 14.00 English Language Engwerda Hybrid 10.30	19 Mahjong, Hammond 10.00 Homer etc Gardner Hammond Hall 14.00	20	21 Philosophy 5 Purdie Hammond Centre 14.00	22	23
24 Beethoven 3 Phipps 240 Lava St 14.00	25 Brophy 1 Kayla Hammond Hall 10.30	26 Mahjong, Hammond 10.00	27	28	29	30

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Programme for Concert 1/04/2022

Anita Senior, Anita Hoekstra, Erin Toulman

Eliza's Aria from Wild Swans Ballet Suite Voice, Piano, Clarinet	Elena Kats-Chernin 1957 - Present
Ave Maria Voice, Piano, Clarinet	Luigi Cherubini 1760 - 1842
The Rose and the Nightingale Voice, Piano	Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov 1844 - 1908
Suite for Clarinet and Piano	Jean-Philippe Rameau 1683 - 1764
Les Chemins de l'Amour Voice, Piano	Francis Poulenc 1899 - 1963
Au Bord de L'Eau Voice, Piano	Gabriel Fauré 1845 - 1924
Studies on English Folk Song for Clarinet and Piano	Ralph Vaughan Williams 1872 - 1958
Der Hirt auf dem Felsen Voice, Piano, Clarinet	Franz Schubert 1797 - 1828