



# The U3A Crier

NEWSLETTER OF NATURALISTE  
UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE INC  
Autumn Edition 2016

## EDITORIAL

This year sees the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of U3A in Western Australia and is the 7<sup>th</sup> year of Naturaliste U3A (Nat U3A) running in our region. Courses started in 2010 and some are still being offered, and filled. Last year we established a 'Getting to Know...' article and we gave profiles of Committee members. In this edition of *The Crier*, we have a profile on the oldest member of our group, Fred Stone, and in coming editions we will look back at the members of the original steering committee (2009), especially those who are still actively involved as long-standing members, leaders and on the committee. We hope that you will find these to be interesting.

(Joan Parke and Christine McDonald)

## FROM the CHAIR

A warm welcome to new and continuing members. I am sure many of you, like me, are very keen to get started on the courses this Semester.

The year started with a very busy Enrolment Day! Given that many enrolments were made on-line (oops about the computer glitch that was quite beyond our control) a large number of members turned up in person. From a 'getting to meet people and put names to faces' view this is a very good thing; logistically with a group that has grown in size as we have, it would be very difficult to get through all the enrolments without having the capacity to have on-line and postal enrolments. Thank you for persevering whichever way you enrolled.

Many courses will have just started and a few actually have been in action for a few weeks. Some will happen a little later in the term. As you will see in the Calendar, and will already have received notice of, we will be starting our Topical Talks with a presentation by Steve Andrews, founder of the Black Dog Ride, on Friday 1<sup>st</sup> April. So, we are off to a very interesting and stimulating year.

Enrolment Day was followed by our '**Thank you and Welcome to Leaders' Sundowner**. This has become an annual event to show our appreciation for the work put into the courses by our leaders who volunteer so much time and effort to make Nat U3A the interesting group that it is.

(Joan Parke, President)



Christine Benporath, Rod Wheeler and Wendy Beames



Colleen and Richard Liston

## ENROLMENT UPDATE

Apart from the website hiccup, membership applications and renewals, as well as course enrolments, were predominantly via the website. I would also venture to say that at least half of the membership subscriptions were paid online. One thing that has been a problem is with renewing members paying their subs online, doing their course enrolments online, but NOT doing a membership renewal, making the process a bit harder. We will endeavour to take steps to clarify the need for that before next enrolment.

Some statistics of interest that have emerged as we start this year with our largest number of financial members so far, are as follows - I don't have at hand the numbers for Semester 1, 2010 so I'll start with **Semester 2, 2010:**

**140 financial members. 80 members enrolled in 107 classes across 10 courses. Three of those courses are still being offered this year - Music Appreciation (it was called "Listening to Music" then); Mah Jongg and The Enneagram. Music was the 'big' group with 17 in the class, and 11 of those 17 are still attending!!**

Fast forward to today in **Sem 1 2016:**

**192 financial members. 165 enrolled in 304 classes (PLUS another 12 doing Neuroscience already booked in Sem 2) across 20 courses. Mah Jongg is the 'big' group with 35 and three more about to join. Four of the "twitterers" hark back to 2010. Of the 192 members 48 are new to NATU3A this year.**

**Founding committee:** Tom and Sue Walmsley; Ian and Chris Benporath; Ken Jack, John Watt; Christina Marruffo; Patti McSwain and Richard Liston. Peter Nash played a significant part in getting the ball rolling.

**(Richard Liston Treasurer)**

## **COURSES INFORMATION**

Several Courses were heavily oversubscribed and thanks are extended to the Course Leaders who have added extra sessions to accommodate the numbers.

An early reminder that if you have some interest in running a Course in Semester 2, please don't hesitate to get in touch to discuss your idea. There are many untapped areas of interest just waiting for a leader!

**David McDonald (Course Co-ordinator)**

## **AROUND the GROUPS**

### **BASIC COMPUTER USE**

The second course of the Basic Computing group started on February the 25<sup>th</sup> with nine participants enrolled. The five sessions aim to boost participants' confidence in using computers, demystify some terminology, explain the basics of computers and overall to increase their ability to undertake their own research using the existing programs "Help" facility or 'the web' to solve particular problems and learn more about the programs they use on a day to day basis. A common issue seems to be knowing how to set up a filing system on the computer so that documents, Emails, photos are stored in a way that is logical to each participant; this is essential to being able to retrieve them for future use. Good housekeeping practices form the basis of the course.

As Course Facilitator, I have learned from the last course not to be too prescriptive in what information is imparted at each session but rather respond to the questions and problems raised by participants. I stress that I do not consider myself to be a computer expert. However I am quite confident using my computer and a range of programs for my everyday use and participants will use their computers in different ways for different purposes. There is a lot of common ground though. There is a range of previous computer experience in the group and this knowledge and expertise will be tapped. Hopefully all will gain some new skills and ideas from the course. My main aim is to facilitate a non-threatening environment where the whole area of computers can be discussed, knowledge gained and skills developed. The sessions are at the Busselton Volunteer Marine Rescue building and the lessons are conducted using one computer and the digital projector in order to demonstrate the various actions and manoeuvres being done. Most participants find this the best way to learn, by actually seeing what is happening on the projector screen. I make every effort to go slowly and describe what I am doing whilst using the mouse. The whiteboard also comes in handy to illustrate what is happening internally or in the ether!! **(Leader Jenny Sheehan)**

## DRU YOGA

Dru Yoga is based on soft flowing movements, directed breathing and visualisations. Its foundations are set firmly in ancient yogic tradition; although it is particularly appropriate for the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Dru Yoga works on improving strength and flexibility; creating core stability; building a heightened feeling of positivity, and rejuvenating your whole being; and most importantly bringing body, mind and spirit into balance.

A feature of Dru Yoga is its emphasis on a soft, gentle approach to the physical movements. One of the things I love about Dru is that it is accepting of where we are in the moment, leaving us free to be present to our yoga practice.

U3A invited the Dru Yoga classes into the 'curriculum' in 2015, and they have been enthusiastically accepted by U3A members. We have an 'Ongoing' class – those who stayed the distance in 2015 and into 2016. Two 'Introduction to Dru Yoga' classes (full) are offered in Semester 1 in 2016. It's a wonderful experience to be teaching Dru Yoga to U3A Members. (**Leader Valerie Frearson-Lane**)



Members of the On-going Dru Yoga group at the end of a relaxing session!

## MAH JONGG

Well, here we are again, more than two months into another year, with lots of U3A members anticipating new (or continuing) courses.

Meanwhile, at Mah Jongg, the 'twittering of the birds' were chorusing more than five weeks ago, with a record enrolment of 35 players. We have five totally new members already progressing really well, and the return of three former members who had been taking a break.

So we are already off to a great start in the Salvation Army Hall where we very much appreciate the comfortable surroundings. We love our new tables, provided with a Grant from the City of Busselton, and have since had to acquire a couple more to accommodate our growing numbers.

Mah Jongg is presently entering its 7<sup>th</sup> year of continuous playing, with four foundation members still playing very regularly. (**Leader Wendy Beames**)

*(Well done on your continuing leadership of the Mah Jongg group Wendy)*



You can **feel** the concentration!!

### **GETTING to KNOW: Mr Fred Stone**

Fred Stone is the sort of person who makes U3A worthwhile.

Fred had his 95<sup>th</sup> birthday in February this year and has found that, through the Naturaliste U3A, he has been able to reconnect with his lifetime passion – music. He has been blind for more than 10 years, with macular degeneration.

By the time he was aged 20, he was playing classical piano pieces, including concertos by Mozart and other composers, with a symphony orchestra at the ABC studio in Perth.

Music was his life. Driven by an ambitious father, and practising two hours in the morning and two in the afternoon, he was headed for a career as a soloist on the music stages of Australia.

Fred passed the London Trinity College ATCL degree in music while still in Perth after being examined by an examiner sent out from London. Then came World War 11, and Fred was called up. He served in the islands north of Australia, and returned after the war, still in one piece, to be told by his father that he must resume his musical career.

“Dad, I haven’t seen a piano for five and a half years,” said Fred. “I can’t go back to that.”

And he didn’t. He qualified as a chartered accountant, and spent his working life with the firm Smith Goyder.

When he retired in 1984 he served on company boards with Kerry Stokes and others, but in the 90’s he started to get eye trouble, resulting in almost total loss of vision. He now lives in Ellenvale Aged Care home in Broadwater with his wife of 40 years, and last year he discovered the U3A music appreciation classes run by John Slee and David McDonald.

He loves these classes with a passion. The class runs a roster of members to pick him up and his walking frame, and John or David make sure he is comfortably seated in such a way that others won’t accidentally knock his cup of coffee over at half time.

He doesn't get much chance to listen to music in his room, but he "reads" a lot by listening to audio books. He is currently reading Gettysburg.

While John was interviewing him at Ellenvale, two librarians came in with a bag of new books for him.

He is not a man who seeks sympathy. He is as sharp as a tack, and can discuss a wide range of subjects with ease.

Naturaliste U3A can be proud of attracting a man like this to one of its classes.

By John Slee

*(As well as Musical Appreciation, Fred has also enrolled in Geological Perspectives and Neuroscience this year so he really is a role model to us all. Editors)*



Fred with his daughter, Genevieve

## CALENDAR

**TOPICAL TALK FRIDAY APRIL 1<sup>st</sup>, 2-4 pm at the Busselton family Centre, Kent St, Busselton.** Steve Andrews, Founder and Managing Director of the Black Dog Ride, will talk to us about raising awareness of depression and mental health issues. This is a very pertinent topic and will be a Talk not to miss. Refreshments will be provided at the end of the presentation. Members free. Visitors are very welcome, a gold coin donation, thanks. **RSVP** Secretary: Barb Taylor 0433441655 or email admin@ u3anaturaliste.com.au

*For those who may like to read up on the **history of the expression 'Black Dog'** there is an interesting essay by Linda Michael, at the following link.*

*(<http://www.blackdoginstitute.org.au/media/eventscal/index.cfm>)*

*Please be aware that this is the Black Dog Institute and NOT the Black Dog Ride as represented by our speaker, Steve Andrews, but the information is a general history of the term, not necessarily specific to either group.*

## SNIPPETS

# It seems that so many Nat U3Aers are attending the superb range of films being offered by Harvest Films (Orana Cinema, 6.15 every Wednesday) that it could be one of our Courses! Food for thought that a Film Club would make a great new Course for next semester... just needs a leader???

# U3A WA is celebrating its 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary with a Garden Party at the UWA Sunken Garden, Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> March, 2-4pm. Special Guest: Dr Maureen Smith who brought U3A to WA. Cost \$10, bring nibbles to share, dress for the races! This may be of interest especially to those who have been members of this first U3A group in WA. Sorry this is short notice.

# A reminder from Barbara (our Secretary) for those who use Facebook, that U3A Network WA has a Facebook site and if you would like to access information you can just search for U3A WA and it should come up on your Facebook page.

## GENERAL INFORMATION

# Anyone who is interested in volunteering to help out with a Heritage Tour walk, planned by Ian Bateman, to key points of interest between the Interpretive Centre and the Museum and planned to coincide with the next cruise ship visit on March 23<sup>rd</sup>, can contact [viptours@busseltonjetty.com.au](mailto:viptours@busseltonjetty.com.au) for further information. Resources and training will be provided.

# The team at the Great Australian Story has invited members to consider contributing to it. The Great Australian Story is a resource for those interested in Australia, its history and way of life, as it builds a picture of who we are in our own words - by way of short stories. For information contact [info@greataustralianstory.com.au](mailto:info@greataustralianstory.com.au) and/or visit <http://www.greataustralianstory.co.au>.

# The Busselton Men's Shed is sponsoring a morning tea at their premises in Roe St for the Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia's *Defence Long Ride 2016*, at 9.00am on the 18<sup>th</sup> April. Participants in the ride throughout Australia to Margaret River help raise awareness and funds to help combat prostate cancer. For further information please contact Phil Atherton, 9751 4423 or 0429 314423

## FEEDBACK

As always, your feedback regarding the newsletter, courses or events is welcome, as are contributions.

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