



The *U3A* Crier

NEWSLETTER OF NATURALISTE
UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE INC

Autumn Edition 2014

EDITORIAL

Welcome to 2014 – Christmas and New Year festivities are over, babysitting duties easing off and U3A activities are swinging into action. As always we have an interesting range of courses lined up for the year and will feature guest speakers at our general meetings. We hope that you will take time to send us some feedback on things you have enjoyed so that others can get to see what happens in the various groups. As well, it's the people you meet and the friendships you make that are the valuable spin-offs of being a member of U3A. Many, especially those members who have recently moved to the area and are seeking new contacts and activities, have commented on the warm welcome they have been given and the valuable social interactions they have found.

Joan and Christine: Co-editors

FROM THE CHAIR

The Crier is now in new editorial hands: John Wilkins, who successfully launched our newsletter just over a year ago, resigned as editor in December. We thank John for bringing his extensive experience to the challenging task of establishing *The Crier*: It drew widespread compliments both from within Naturaliste U3A and beyond. We now welcome Joan Parke and Christine McDonald as joint editors. New editors always bring some changes, and I feel sure that Joan and Christine will also be well received by our readers.

Amongst the sixteen courses offered for First Semester this year, again we had some interesting new ones such as Let's Talk (leader: Joan Parke), Ukulele for Beginners (Richard O'Donoghue) and World Religions (Ted Witham). Sometimes we invite a non-member to join us and conduct a course, but these three are all established members, and one has not conducted a U3A class before. We probably have many members with an untapped potential to lead a class. Remember, class leadership in U3A is based primarily on having a desire to lead a group of like-minded people in exploring a subject that is interesting and attractive to them and the leader. Depending on the subject, expertise or extensive experience may not necessarily be essential. Think about it: maybe you could lead a class?

A further opportunity for U3A leaders or learners is to take advantage of the resources of U3A Online: they offer a range of online courses that can be made available, either to members studying individually, or for the leader and members of a class who then meet regularly as a group and discuss the course material.

U3A Online currently offers over 40 courses in world affairs, history, nature, writing and creativity, lifestyle and science. For details see <http://www.u3aonline.org.au/u3a/courses/>

Finally, to all the members who made Naturaliste U3A “tick” during the last twelve months: class leaders, committee members and the many volunteers who assisted with arrangements for classes, meetings, catering and administration: thank you for helping to create another successful U3A year. We encourage all members to help occasionally in these tasks if possible.

Naturaliste U3A Website

Our website was “on the way” for a long time, and it’s now up and running. Details of our First Semester courses for 2014 were on the website before the enrolment circular was sent to members in December, and some members have enrolled and/or paid their annual subscription using the website. *And* some new members have made their initial approach and joined U3A via our website. The first two new members to join us this way were Maidie Brockman and Inge Greig. We welcome Maidie and Inge as members of Naturaliste U3A, and we compliment them for their initiative in finding our new doorway.

Have *you* found our website? The full address is <http://www.u3anaturaliste.com.au/> Simply searching for “Naturaliste U3A” or a similar abbreviation will find it too, but for a while you may find some other U3A websites at the top of the list, and parts of a previous website that we started in 2010 – until the search engines “learn” that our new website is your likely target.

And for our members who don’t use internet be assured, you will still receive the usual information by post – *The Crier*, courses and enrolment, general meetings and other U3A happenings.

Don McDonald: Chairman

MATTERS FINANCIAL with our TREASURER

What seems like a lifetime ago I told you that I would give you an idea of the “one-off” expenditure we have incurred. Mostly such expense is for the purchase of equipment. Over the four years we have been operating we have been fairly prudent in this regard.

We first ‘lashed out’ \$68 on three dozen wine glasses (got our priorities right!) to avoid having to hire them for special meetings. A projector screen (\$156) was next. A considerable amount of time and thinking was spent on the consideration of getting our own (leased) premises. It could not be justified.

Next we purchased a laptop computer – still serving us well – for \$1436 (offset by a grant of \$1184). A digital projector and dedicated laptop for \$3111 were a good investment. They are used regularly in classes and general meetings. That cost was offset with a grant of \$2660. Likewise a compact PA system (\$99) helped those of us with degraded hearing at meetings.

There have been a couple of other 'one-offs'. Attendance at the first WA U3A state conference by five Naturaliste members was subsidised to the extent of \$640, but again, this was offset with a grant.

Finally, the establishment of our website cost us a total of \$1800. This has proven to be one of our best investments with over 50% of Membership Renewals and Course Enrolments coming in through that medium for 1st semester 2014. Your Committee will spend your money where the consensus is that it would enhance the effectiveness of Nat U3A, but trust me, all expenditure gets rigorous consideration.

Richard Liston: Treasurer.

PS As many of you know, our website is now up and running, however (as can often be the case with new technology) there have been a couple of minor glitches with such things as a few direct debits for subs arriving with no name and similar with course enrolments! So, a request for you to check carefully that your name is included on online dealings. If by chance you haven't had a response re your online course enrolments, or subs, please contact me preferably via email using admin@u3anaturaliste.com.au, or on 9755 4417.

WELCOME TRISH

Our new Secretary is Trish Robinson. Trish is a West Australian who relocated to Busselton from Perth in 2012. Her working life has been diverse and she has always been community-minded. Since her arrival here Trish has joined a number of local groups, apart from U3A, including the Busselton Hospice Volunteer Team.

NEWS FROM OUR GROUPS

Creative Writing Group

Obviously these writers had lots of 'creative fun' at their Christmas gathering, no doubt producing some very interesting pieces of writing. Hopefully we will get the chance to read some of their efforts in a future newsletter. The power of the pen is mighty and it would be exciting to find published works, maybe even a novel, in our local bookshops!



Betty Caven and David McDonald



Left to Right: David McDonald, Val Hill, Stella Vote, Noeline Carlson, Walter Graham, Moira Dahlberg, Betty Caven

(Photos: John Wilkins)

'1st Tuesday of the Month Book Club'

A difficult thing for book lovers to do is to part with their accumulation of books! Along with this we face the dilemma of buying even more books for Book Club. The first year of our Book Club we were able to take bulk loans from the Busselton Library and this was ideal but is no longer available. In 2013 we hired our books at low cost from 'Book Talk' in Mandurah and this worked out well and we will continue with this system. The hardest thing is choosing a small number of books from a very large catalogue!

Last year we had somewhat of a focus on Australian women writers and had some quite robust discussion about the books. This year we will read a mix of autobiographies - e.g. 'And Furthermore', by Judi Dench, and fiction - e.g. 'The Book Thief' by Marcus Zusak. These books are, in fact, the first two of the year. It seems that a number of you have enjoyed seeing Judi Dench in the film 'Philomena' and also the film version of 'The Book Thief' that have been showing locally.

I am sure that Book Club members are keenly waiting for the first Tuesday in March to get into our list of books – I know I am. Joan Parke (Leader)

Music Appreciation Group

We enjoyed eight sessions in Second Semester, 2013. The last was held on 11/12/13 and featured the Nigel Westlake/Lior composition, *Compassion*.

Nigel Westlake was born in Perth and has written lots of music for film and television. Lior is a young Israeli/Australian singer songwriter. *Compassion* is currently touring the country under the auspices of the ABC. Westlake conducts the Sydney Symphony Orchestra and Lior sings the songs. The inspiration for the piece came from ancient Hebrew and Arabic texts that were non-religious. The writings inspired Lior to compose melodies, which Westlake then orchestrated. The result is a very moving and meditative work that proved very popular with those of us who attended Session 8.

We decided to rerun Session 8 on 9/1/14 and give the others who missed it the first time the opportunity of listening to it. Ten participated and a shared lunch was enjoyed afterwards.



Above: Participants at the shared lunch. Left to right: Tom Moore, Edna Moore, Colin Murray, Heather Murray, Christine McDonald, John Slee, Madeleine Symonds, Lesley Watt & John Watt.

References:

1. Nigel Westlake and Lior discuss *Compassion*: <http://www.sydneysymphony.com/production-pages/2013/concert-season/lior-westlake-songs-with-orchestra.aspx#youtubeOverlay/1/>
2. Margaret Throsby interview with Lior on *ABC Classic FM* 30/9/13: <http://www.abc.net.au/classic/content/2013/09/03/3839230.htm>

Christine & David McDonald

COURSES: Some courses not offered in Semester One (old favourites and new) will be advertised before Semester Two, so keep an eye out for them! If you would like to offer a course, please contact Richard Liston or David McDonald at admin@u3anaturaliste.com.au, as new leaders and courses are always welcome. Is anyone up for leading an Italian language group??

LEADERS' FUNCTION



Lesley Watt and Joan McDonald



Don McDonald, John Slee, Moira Dahlberg, John Watt, Joan Parke

Richard Liston and David McDonald

The Course Leaders' Function was held following Enrolment Day when leaders, and their partners, were thanked for the work they did with courses last year and new Leaders were welcomed. This was an ideal opportunity for Leaders to network and enjoy themselves in an informal gathering.

CALENDAR REMINDER: Our first general meeting for the year is coming up on Friday 14th March at the Busselton Family Centre in Kent Street at 2.00pm. Our guest speaker will be Christina Marruffo (U3A member and course leader) whose topic is "Mexico - Land of Enchantment".

Her presentation will be followed by afternoon tea.

CONTACT US: If you have any queries, feedback – which will be welcome, or letters you would like to send, at present the best way to contact us is either by post: The Editors, *The Crier*, PO Box 1792, Busselton WA 6280, or by emailing us at admin@u3anaturaliste.com.au

We trust that you have enjoyed reading our first 'Crier' for the year,

Joan and Christine