



The U3A Crier

NEWSLETTER OF NATURALISTE
UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE INC

SUMMER - 2017

EDITORIAL

The warmth of Spring has finally arrived, although with "Peppermint blossoms" still around a few more equinoctial storms may be experienced before the arrival of the Thirsty Thirties and the Fiery Forties. In preparing for the heat of Summer you may be interested in Climate Change. If so you should have attended Dennis Gee's "Geological Perspectives". The geological records show that we are in one of Earth's 100,000 year warming cycles to which humans may have added to through CO2 emissions since the Industrial Revolution. According to Dennis, there is no real evidence to show that increased CO2 levels raise temperatures or whether increased temperatures raise CO2 levels.

Note: U3A members typically have a diversity of views on a range of topics – climate change being one of them!

FROM the CHAIR

Many thanks to all those who attended or sent proxy votes to our Extraordinary General Meeting and the Annual General Meeting, ensuring that we achieved desired outcomes and got through the meetings in very good time! Thanks also to those who came early enough to enjoy the Showcase and chat to Course Leaders. I hope you find the following President's Report interesting and informative as you read about happenings of the past year.

President's Report October 27th 2017

There is no other way to describe this past year than to use three key words – GROWTH, CHANGE and CHALLENGES. The goal for this coming year will certainly have to be CONSOLIDATION!

On reviewing this last year I would like to start with a quote from the Winter 17 ONECOTA Magazine for older Australians that says, 'There is nothing average about the modern older life'. This holds true for the members of Naturaliste U3A who, ranging in age from the early 50s to our oldest member who is 96, engage in a variety of activities that provide social interaction, mental stimulation and physical good health. These are the cornerstones of positive ageing. The days of looking forward to doing 'nothing' in retirement are moving aside to make room for looking forward to those of becoming involved in life-long learning in one form or another.

MEMBERSHIP: As of 2 days ago, we reached 268 financial members – 51 more than this time last year. We maintained, then increased last year's growth. This can be attributed, in good part, to a very effective 'grapevine' where members are passing on information about their positive experiences to others – thanks very much.

COMMITTEE: of course, this progress isn't just in membership growth alone. I must thank on my behalf and yours, a very determined and hard-working Committee, without which no organisation can flourish. Members have put in extra hours of research and work to bring to fruition two major changes in particular.

*The first is being able to bring forward a motion for the membership to vote on that we 'accept the New Model Rules for Incorporated bodies, in full'. It is a Government requirement that all Incorporated bodies must address this and either submit changes to be ratified or accept in full, also to be submitted for ratification.

*The second is the implementation of the U-MAS Database system. This has been thoroughly researched, purchased and Committee members have had training sessions with a trainer from Victoria where some 20 U3A groups now use the system. Committee member, Lorraine Watts will take on the role of System Administrator, bringing her expertise in Information Technology to that task. The use of U-MAS will greatly assist in the running of an organisation the size of ours.

* The Committee unanimously agreed that the membership fee of \$25 not be raised for 2018.

*The Committee met last December for a planning session to devise a Strategic Plan for 2017-2020. Considerable inroads have already been made into implementing those plans.

*Meetings are held monthly to ensure that we keep on top of courses, Government requirements, finances and the everyday running, much of it unseen, of Naturaliste U3A.

*In May the Committee held a 30th birthday celebration for the original U3A formed in Busselton. This was a most enjoyable morning tea and was appreciated by some of those very early members and others from the 2009 group who 're-formed' what is now the current Naturaliste U3A.

**** This brings me to **the most important news** about the structure of the Committee, your Committee. Four members of the Committee have stepped down earlier than the AGM so we could co-opt new members to take their places. With an extremely busy few months looming, it meant that retiring members could have more time to pass on essential information needed then, rather than wait until after the AGM. Each of the co-opted members, apart from Malcolm Jennings, have nominated for their positions to be voted on.

Retiring members are Richard Liston who has been Treasurer for eight years and also held roles dealing with membership, enrolments and the website. David McDonald has been Vice President and Course Co-ordinator for some six years, Barbara Taylor has been Secretary for three years and Cathy Oldman for one year. Between them they have a massive amount of experience and knowledge. Barbara and Cathy were instrumental in investigating new technology and working on the new Constitution/Model Rules. The combined drive and service of these members has been greatly appreciated.

Thus, the full nominating Committee is: Joan Parke (President), Gwyn Cracknell (Vice President and Course Co-ordinator, replacing David), Chris Masterman (Treasurer, replacing Richard), Rose Vella (Secretary, replacing Barbara), Lorraine Watts, Margaret Maloney and Deirdre Chell (general Committee, one of these positions replacing Cathy). Various responsibilities of members will be finalised after election.

COURSES: As many of you are aware, our courses, both short and on-going are based on two semesters a year. This year 51 courses have been offered – a great effort as it is essential to increase our courses as our numbers grow.

On Enrolment Day in February we held our annual ‘Thank you and Welcome Sundowner’ for Course Leaders. As always it was an enjoyable time and gave us an opportunity to show our appreciation for the contribution leaders make. This event will take place again next year. There is no doubt that Course Leaders are the backbone of Naturaliste U3A!

It is not too late to express interest in running a course for next year so if you have an interest or experience in a particular area that you would like to share, please contact Gwyn Cracknell on 9754 1703 for further information.

We are planning to hold a mentoring and information session for new leaders later in November.

TOPICAL TALKS: This year we have presented Topical Talks by Grant Henley- Mayor of Busselton, Matt Norton, from the Margaret River/Busselton Tourist Association, Kerry Bayley- Busselton’s 2017 Citizen of the Year, awarded for her volunteer work, and Bernie Masters who spoke about Citizen Science. All were very interesting. On average each was attended by about 35 members.

NEWSLETTERS: Our newsletter, *The Crier*, is sent out in the first week of each season, either by email or post and is also on our website. These are an important communication tool, vital in a group such as ours with its variety of courses and other activities and ensure that members are kept up to date on what is happening. As from this Spring’s edition, Gwyn Cracknell and I have reversed roles and he is Editor and I am Co-editor. Contributions and feedback are very welcome.

TECHNOLOGY: You will be given updates by email, post or via our website on the steps being taken with our move onto the data base system, U-MAS. Members who require help entering their data, enrolling etc for the first time on this system will be given assistance. Those who are postal members will still get communications from us through the post and help will be given to you to ensure you are not disadvantaged by not using computers.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT and NETWORKING:

*Early this year I spoke to the Friendship Group at St Mary’s and the audience showed interest in hearing about the various things we do. I also met with some Committee members from Margaret River U3A and we shared information about our two groups. A planned lunch with that group, ours and Mandurah U3A’s didn’t finish happening but hopefully might next year. The networking between groups is both interesting and valuable.

*Unfortunately, no-one from our Committee was able to attend the WA U3A Network this year.

*I continue to be your representative on the board of the People Place, Busselton - formerly the Busselton Family Centre. Over the years we have developed a very good relationship there and the welcoming staff give us much support. Like us, the People Place has had to work hard on making necessary changes and we will see some interesting happenings taking place in the coming year.

*Nat U3A is also a member of COTA - the Council on Ageing. Hopefully next year, having heard previous Topical Talks from them, we will be able to tap into their wealth of information and support.

CHANGES and CHALLENGES: Finally, in the next month or so the Committee will be reviewing the ways we can best serve our members as we move into the ninth year of Naturaliste U3A. Are the processes that were determined to suit a small group now appropriate for the large group we are now?

Some of the changes will come about just through our basic technology needs. Others, more importantly, will be to ensure that our ethos of accessing life-long learning can be best applied to our members. Mostly, it is anticipated that the changes will be a series of small steps rather than giant leaps. Many will affect the administration more than the actual membership.

CONCLUSION: In conclusion I would like to thank all of you for being members of Nat U3A and bringing your own contribution to the Courses you participate in and Talks you attend. This makes us, as a whole, a valuable asset to the community. I often bump into Libby Mettam, our local MLA, and I enjoy reminding her that Nat U3A is doing an invaluable job in helping maintain the well-being of 260+ senior members of the wider community – she totally agrees!

ADDENDUM to REPORT- as a result of the General Extraordinary Meeting and Annual General Meeting:

- 1. The motion to accept the New Model Rules was accepted by the required number of members at an Extraordinary General meeting prior to the AGM on 27/10/17.*
- 2. The 7 nominating members were voted on to the Committee into the roles nominated for at the AGM 27/10/17*
- 3. The motion to retain the membership fee of \$25 per annum was unanimously accepted.*

TREASURER'S REPORT

The detailed financial report to 30 June 2017 tabled and accepted at the AGM can be found on the Naturaliste U3A Website along with a short additional note covering finances between that date and the actual AGM. In summary, Naturaliste U3A remains in a comfortable financial position thanks to increasing membership. Its cash balance is sufficient to cover the purchase of the new 'Membership and Administration' software (UMAS) and its associated annual maintenance; there is also an adequate buffer for future anticipated, and reasonable unforeseen, expenditures. Chris Masterman

YOUR NEW COMMITTEE:

Hard at work already. Just look at all that paperwork!

Getting to know your Committee, with information about each member, will start in the first *Crier* in Autumn, 2018.



Rose Vella, Margaret Maloney, Lorraine Watts, Gwyn Cracknell, Joan Parke, Deirdre Chell, Chris Masterman

AROUND THE GROUPS

SUPER TROUPERS REPORTING –TAP DANCING Leader: Penny Swingler

This year has been one with many ups and downs. I have been running two classes, one for beginners and one for those who are familiar with tap dancing terms. As with all U3A classes, the numbers wax and wane depending on who is travelling, babysitting, has a sore knee, back etc.

We still dance in the Jazz Attack dance studio where there is a specially sprung floor and very large mirrors at the front. These mirrors provide me with the ability to see how the ladies are going. Sometimes you would think I'd asked them to dance to the moon and other times when I think they are going to have trouble, they pick it up easily. Such is the teaching life.

But I cannot stress enough how I may be teaching them how to tap dance but they are teaching me all sorts of wonderful life lessons. They pull faces at some of my new steps then laugh and carry on. What a great attitude they all have. Of course we go for a cuppa afterwards and we laugh some more and solve the problems of the world. Maybe I should write a new philosophy paper on how they "Tap into Life".

Today's mini lesson was if you have grey or white hair you never stand in front of a grey wall to have your photo taken, you might fade into the background and we certainly don't want that! Thank you, ladies and "Go Super Troupers"! Penny Swingler.



Featured is the advanced class.

Back Row: Judy Stainton, Maureen Wright, Anne Sargent, Evelyn Jennings, Cynthia Noonan

Front Row: Jan Clarke, Diana Loudon, Christine McDonald

POETRY WRITING FOR FUN Leader: Joan Parke

Lots of fun, a few challenges too, as we looked at using various poetry writing techniques and challenged the belief that poetry must rhyme. Of course, we did have a go at playing around with various rhyming patterns! We hope you enjoy a sample of our writing efforts – great job Ladies. Joan

THE MIRROR *Barbara Saunders*

She held the mirror up to me.
the ravages of my surgery.
“Go on,” she urged, “be strong.
what you see, will not be wrong.”
Reluctantly, I looked in to the mirror,
Appalled at what I saw, my bloated face with
tubes that snaked across the pillow.
“It will not always be like this,” she soothed.
How right she was to say the words she did.
The swollen face, the scars, are now well hid.

BY THE SEA *Amanda Bell*

With the rise and fall
of every wave.
With the sharp stench
of rotting weed.
With the salty, wet
Breath of ocean breeze.
with the hot footed burn
of the mid-day sun.
With the fear
and anxiety of the unknown sea.
I feel,
Always.
When by the sea.

AUTUMN *Mandy Byrne*

Autumnal spectacular catches us by surprise,
Trees in their glory, such splendour for our eyes.
Green leaves fade slowly to fiery bronze-reds aglow,
Gold haloes ablaze in this glorious patina on show.
Gently disrobing, leaves crackling, leaves jostling,
Become a carpet less vibrant, wind-whipped and rustling.
Defiant limbs, outstretched in Winter's stark haze,
Await the splash of new growth and Spring's joyful days.

THE MIRROR *Lorraine Watts*

When I look in the mirror today
I wonder who that woman is.
Is she a mother, daughter or wife?
Or is it a little girl who lost her way?
She looks like she knows what she's about
Always strong and confident
A worker, a colleague or friend
Does she ever have moments of doubt?
Maybe she is all those things tied up in one
She does her best each day
And tries to not offend
What more can she do, when all is said and done?

LONELY *Jacqui Rawling*

I'm not lonely
If I only want to stare
Shield my eyes from glare
Of diamonds' sparkle far at sea
We are lost humanity
You're withheld, withdrawn from me
In the ocean of our bed
Silent waves so much to say
Crash on shores of apathy
Your heart removed from me
Our boat of silence
Cannot traverse this ocean
That is lonely
So I'm not lonely
If I want to be alone.

HATS *Dawn Atherton*

Hats and fascinators and ribbons and bows
And feathers and frills and furbelows,
Of all the frivolous things
a female dreams of,
These are few of my favourite things.

Hats large and small, pretty or plain,
Work hats or look at me hats,
Who really cares?
A hat is a hat just to polish your style.
Weddings and race meetings
and any old 'do',
Hats are my favourite to all I aspire.
(Sorry, this is a shortened version)



Joan Parke, Amanda Bell, Mandy Byrne, Lorraine Watts, Jacqui Rawling Dawn Atherton

TOPICAL TALK - OCTOBER

Our October guest was Bernie Masters speaking about Citizen Science. He urged people with an interest in the world around them to simply observe the world and be naturalists in the same way Charles Darwin and John Gould recorded their natural world in the 1800's.

An example of valuable observation occurred when Bernie quite by accident recorded the call of one of the world's rarest parrots (the Night Parrot) while on a camping trip.

NEW COURSES – 2018 SEMESTER 1

There are some very interesting brand-new courses, along with our regular favourites, included in next year's offerings:

BIODIVERSITY IN AUSTRALIA:

From fossil floras to sandplain hotspots, from marsupial diversity to the role of invertebrates, this course is an introduction to the biology of the exciting biota (flora and fauna) which is Australia. Patrick Prevett.

JAPANESE MESH WEAVING:

This is the art of weaving using bias strips. The result looks like a miniature patchwork quilt. It can be a simple project or a very complicated one, however the results are always quite spectacular. Clare Parry.

STILL LUCKY – BOOK DISCUSSION:

A discussion of Rebecca Huntley's timely book on topics that every Australian can relate to: why do we worry even though we are lucky? Why do we hate politicians but love government? Why do we still want houses? How do we feel about the future? Participants take turns leading the weekly chapter discussions. Jan Coe.

SINGING FOR PLEASURE:

A great opportunity for members to come together and celebrate their love of singing. Our repertoire will focus on evergreen and all-time favourites. Pat Holyoake.

WRITING YOUR AUTOBIOGRAPHY - FOR MEN:

Every week we will write our life story by subject with a set topic, as many of our experiences flow through our lives. Everyone enjoys a good story, so why not write yours? Jacqui Rawling.

EXPRESSIONS of INTEREST

Do we have a member, or someone they know, who would be interested in forming a **Beginner's group for Mah Jongg**. The current group is unable to take beginners at present. The Committee will be able to draw on the experiences of the current Mah Jongg group to help a leader get the new group started. Please contact Joan Parke on 9752 4769 or 0410667696 for further information. If after 15/12/17, contact Gwyn Cracknell on 97541703.

SNIPPETS

*The gold coin donations (plus some paper money) towards the Cliff's Kitchen and St Mary's Christmas lunch, given at the last Topical Talk and the AGM, raised \$170. This was passed on to Kerry Bayley and she was delighted to receive it. Thanks very much – a simple way to help what is such a worthwhile cause.

*The City of Busselton libraries are offering '**Tech-Savvy Seniors**' sessions next year. Each will focus on a different type of technology. Ideal for those new to computers, iPads, iPhones etc. For further information please phone or call in - Busselton 9781 1777, Dunsborough 9756 7111, or visit website: www.slwa.wa.gov.au

*Anyone interested in Permaculture might like to find out about the exciting Community project and courses being offered at The People Place (formerly the Family Centre), Kent St, Busselton, next year. For more information please call 9752 3550.

NOTICE

As from the start of 2018, postals will continue to get *The Crier*, Courses and other notices via hard copy. Other members will be informed when these are available and can read online from our website at www.u3anaturaliste.com.au . This will benefit those who have difficulty opening attachments and ease the workload for the Committee.

FEEDBACK

Feedback, suggestions and contributions are welcome and can be emailed to the Editors at admin@u3anaturaliste.com.au or posted to PO Box 1792, Busselton, WA. 6280

Gwyn Cracknell (Editor) Joan Parke (Co-editor)

HARD COPIES

Thank you to Tony Robinson at 'Jack in the Box' for sponsoring coloured copies of The Crier for postal members.

Other hard copies have been printed courtesy of the office of Libby Mettam, MLA.