



U3A
Brisbane

eNews
March 2023



Connecting Seniors to Lifelong Learning

Editor's Notes

Jane Elliott



I am fortunate to be editing this eNews while on the road, currently in Tasmania. While travelling, my husband and I have met several individuals and families who are combining working lives with touring, some on a global scale. Grant and Naomi, for example, are one year into a four year trip around Australia with their two pre-school age children. Janek, from Germany, works for a Dutch engineering firm but finds it easy to indulge his love of hiking in remote parts of the world. Retirees, however, tend to be the dominant species on the move. We have met people from Cairns, Coffs Harbour, Sydney, Geelong, and Bunbury. What a lucky group we are.

U3A members are another fortunate group, finding interest, enjoyment and challenge in a supportive environment. One notable subgroup is the Creative Portraiture class run by Carol Owens, and Brisbane members have a chance to view their achievements, as Carol explains.

The Creative Portraiture class is holding an exhibition at New Farm Library 2-29 March. Holding exhibitions is a challenging part of our group's artistic development. For emerging artists, it also develops skills in curating, event management and working within a creative team. These activities fit well with the Wheel of Wellbeing's (WoW) six principles:

- *Body - be active*
- *Mind - keep learning something new and/or boosting skills because this is fun, and it helps build or maintain confidence*
- *Spirit - maintain a spirit of giving, e.g., doing something nice for a friend or a stranger - even doing small things can make a big difference*
- *People - connect with others*
- *Take notice - remain curious; encourage ourselves and others to pause to look at a drawing or other beautiful things*
- *Care – strive to enhance our community and environment*

WoW research has found that living by these principles can improve mood, strengthen relationships, and add up to seven years to our lives. Our class reckons that U3A provides opportunities to practise these principles, and thus encourages and supports us all to enhance our wellbeing.

President's Report

Des Taylor

Hard to believe but we are now in March and Term 1 finishes at the end of the month. Class enrolments for Term 2 will open 19 March. **Make sure you have renewed your membership for 2023 so you can enrol in classes and other U3A Brisbane activities.** Tell your friends about U3A also as it is a wonderful opportunity to take part in interesting activities which expand your mind and it provides an opportunity to make new friends. The importance of U3A in many people's lives was [explained on the ABC website](#). This is



particularly important for people who are isolated or lonely. It is a chance for a new beginning. Now is the time to join as we start to take enrolments for next term.

I hope you are enjoying your classes in Term 1 and are looking forward to coming back to classes in Term 2 which commences 17 April. Pay special attention to the Class Schedule when it is released on 19th March as it will give details about our AGM which will be held on Zoom at 10am 12 April.

I have finally achieved 'model' status as, together with our previous president, Greg Doolan, I had an opportunity to model for one of our U3A Art classes in New Farm Park. I hadn't realised it was so creative for the model. 'New pose' was requested frequently. No longer could I attempt only to show my best side to the camera. I look forward to viewing the final results. This class is run by Carol Owens and is a wonderful group of creative happy people.



Stay well. Enjoy your classes.

Regards,
Des

Special Online Presentations in March

Mary Denver

Wednesday 15 March 11am-12:30pm. Lorraine Walker: *Stroke Safe*.



Can you recognise the signs of stroke? Join us for this presentation and help save lives. The presentation will focus on a range of issues including:

- What stroke is.
- What happens when someone is having a stroke and the different types of stroke.
- How to recognise the signs of stroke – learn the vital FAST (Face, Arms, Speech, Time) signs of stroke which will help you recognise when someone is having a stroke.
- What to do if someone is having a stroke – if you or someone else experiences the signs of stroke, no matter how long they last, call 000 immediately.
- How to prevent stroke – steps that can be taken to better understand and reduce the risk of having a stroke.

Stroke Foundation is a national charity that partners with the community to prevent, treat and beat stroke. The Foundation stands alongside stroke survivors and their families, healthcare professionals and researchers to build community awareness and foster new thinking and innovative treatments. We support survivors on their journey to live the best possible life after stroke. We are the voice of stroke in Australia. Our *StrokeSafe* speaker presentations aim to raise awareness of the risk factors, signs of stroke and promote healthy lifestyles.

StrokeSafe speaker, Lorraine Walker, is a retired nurse who specialised in head and neurosurgery. Her family has a history of stroke and her lived experience will emphasise the impact that stroke has not only on the stroke survivor but also on loved ones. Lorraine dedicates her time and energy to connecting with community and *Stroke Foundation* is grateful for the ten years that Lorraine has been *presenting StrokeSafe* talks.

Wednesday 29 March 11:00am -12:30pm. Patty Beecham: *Writing Your Life*.



This presentation is intended to help older writers tell their life story and write their memoir. As well as a PowerPoint presentation, there will be writing exercises to complete, so participants should keep notepad and pen handy.

Patty Beecham is the author of *Growing Up, Rocky*, as well as two volumes of poetry, *The Poetry of Patty Beecham: The Light between Breath* and *These Days I live in Brisby*. Her poetry has been published in the international magazine *Prism*, winning several awards including “The Professor Bruce

Dawe, AO, Patronal Prize”. She has had articles published in *The Courier-Mail* and *Crikey.com.au*. She also enjoys writing children’s books, travel and wine. She was Australia’s first Roving Reporter for ABC Breakfast Radio 612 (4QR), and the first funeral photographer in Australia.

[Book Here](#)

eBooks

Des Taylor

eBooks are easy to acquire, great if you need large print and much cheaper to purchase - or even free through the Council Libraries.



I’m enrolled in a Literature class and sometimes members purchase a book but find it difficult to read because either the print is too small or it is not of sufficient quality. Also, some books are difficult to source in print form.

eBooks can be an attractive solution to these problems. You can read eBooks as well as normal books. They do not replace them unless you wish to do so.

How to get ‘into’ eBooks without breaking the bank.

Library Books

[Brisbane City Council makes eBooks available](#) through their Apps or on PCs. The Apps that I mostly use are *Libby* and

Borrowbox. These are available on all portable device platforms. I access them on my iPad and also on my phone which is running an Android OS. They can also be downloaded and read in a browser on any PC.

The books available are often the latest releases from well-known authors. You can also get e-Audiobooks and Magazines e.g. the latest Feb 2023 *National Geographic*.

If you have a Tablet or Smartphone, and want to experiment, download either *Libby* or *Borrowbox* or both (they offer different selections). Install them and set them up to access the Brisbane City Council Library. You will need to have an appropriate library card and will have to enter your library number and pin. Once that is done you can look at the books etc available and select and download. The loan will usually last 3 weeks but you will get an option to renew unless the book is in demand. If that is the case you can put a hold on it and you will be notified when it is available. You will never have overdue fees again.

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You need to purchase your eBook online at an appropriate eBook provider. *Kindle* eBooks are purchased through Amazon.com.au and *Kobo* books can be purchased through the *Kobo* website but also through e.g. *Booktopia*. In either case, you will need to set up an account with a user name and password.

When you install the Apps you will need to set them up to access the appropriate provider, e.g. *Amazon* with the same username and password as you used on the website where you purchased the eBook. You can only read *Kobo* formatted eBooks in the *Kobo* app and *Kindle* ebooks in the *Kindle* App.

I usually see if the library has the book I'm looking for and if not then I will purchase it online and read it in the App.

If you put the App on more than one device then you can actually move between devices, e.g. you can start on your iPad and then move to your phone and pick up where you left off.

Benefits true for either App

Choose day- or night-mode, your favourite font type/size and more. The App even comes with a built in dictionary, plus note-taking and highlighting tools to mark those special passages you don't want to forget.

Meet our Volunteers

Carmel Lafferty (Westside Coordinator)



My friend Jean Blake, who sadly passed away in October 2022, introduced me to U3A and to Rob Hill's Modern History class in 2014, so this is my tenth year in the class. I love this class as every week I learn something new. During Covid, the class was conducted by Zoom, but this year it has returned to face-to-face and it is great to bring that social aspect back again. I have done other classes, such as Tai Chi (it was fun but I was rubbish despite the efforts of the tutor), but now I am happy doing just the one class and my volunteering.

*Over the years I have volunteered with groups and organisations such as Neighbourhood Watch and the 2014 G20, which was held here in Brisbane. My favourite time was working as a volunteer for over ten years at what was then the Moggill Koala Hospital, now the **Moggill Koala Rehabilitation Centre**, which is run by the Queensland Government Department of Environment and Science for the rehabilitation of sick, injured, and orphaned koalas.*

Prior to retirement I worked for over twenty years in many roles in banking, and then fifteen years with Brisbane City Council.

I have been working as a volunteer in the U3A office for about five or six years. I am the Co-ordinator for the Westside District Classes. It is a role that I really enjoy. I work with great people and working in the office allows me to maintain (and improve) my technical and customer care skills. Customer service phone skills developed during my time with the Brisbane City Council Contact Centre certainly are useful in the office. Being a chatterbox, I love meeting the members. It is great to be able to help tutors and members with enrolments, enquiries etc.

There have been some changes since I first joined U3A that have affected the processes in the office. For example, the introduction of upfront Term fees means that office staff are handling much less cash. Since Covid, with most payments made by EFTPOS or online, very little cash is involved. For security reasons I think these changes are really positive. One of the most obvious changes since returning to face-to-face classes has been the introduction and use of the QR codes. Like many of the other volunteers, we miss sitting and ticking off the members as they go into class. It was a great way to get to know our members.

I was on the Winter School Committee for two years prior to the Covid outbreak in March 2020. Unfortunately, the Winter School was not held that year and has not been held since 2019. Being on that Committee was a fantastic experience. My role was to contact possible speakers from many walks of life, and different businesses, and organisations. The positive feedback regarding U3A from those speakers was amazing. It would be wonderful if we could re-establish Winter School.

I have also been working with our previous U3A President Greg Doolan and Chris Davidson on ways to promote U3A to the Brisbane community. I love my involvement with U3A so I find it easy to spread the word. U3A is an organisation that is member focused. It is a place where people learn in a relaxed but, I think, professionally run environment. Members learn together with like-minded peers who share a common goal of learning for pleasure. The variety of classes is just amazing.

The friendships that I have made form a large part of what I love about U3A.

U3A Social Events

Thank you to the members who have volunteered to form a new Social Committee going forward in 2023. The new chair is Heather Dowling and new members include Liz Crunkhorn and Colin Watford. We need still more members to join us so please consider joining this new committee. Contact me if you are interested: president@u3abrisbane.org.au

We thank the retiring members, Marianne Jones (Chair) and Angela Butler for their efforts particularly over the last 3 years when the events they organised gave a glimmer of hope in a difficult period.