



U3A
Brisbane

eNews
November 2023



Connecting Seniors to Lifelong Learning

Editor's Notes

Jane Elliott



In this edition of eNews we have a couple of special items. Firstly, U3A tutor, Carol Owens, winner of this year's ABC Bradley art competition in portraiture, gives us some insight into her U3A engagement. Secondly, Phil Browne, the presenter of one of our newest classes, provides some detail about electric vehicles. These very welcome additions to the newsletter prompt me to ask for more. As a new member of U3A (I joined in 2022), I know very little about 99% of the classes U3A offers. I would like to hear from members about their experiences – what do you like about your favourite class? If your class would be happy to do so, a photograph of the group could be included. Perhaps members of one of the creative classes could share a photograph, a poem, an anecdote or a snippet of biography. Please send to editor@u3abrisbane.org.au.

President's Report

Gabrielle Power West

Congratulations to our talented art tutor, Carol Owens, who recently won first prize for her portrait of Jenny Woodward in the ABC Bradley Art Competition. Carol's portrait of Jenny is an excellent likeness and I am sure that Jenny Woodward was thrilled with the outcome. The exhibition has been held at the Powerhouse in Lamington Street at New Farm.

Carol is the tutor for the U3A class A83, *Art – Creative Portraiture*, which is held in New Farm Park on a Friday twice per month with email catch-ups throughout the term. Recently, Janet McKeon, Chair of the U3A Marketing Subcommittee, and I joined the class as models for a fun and informative experience. I would certainly recommend this class to any members who have artistic interests as they are a welcoming and warm group led by an impressive, talented and warm tutor in Carol Owens.



Recently the Management Committee met with Greg Taylor, who is the very committed and experienced Information Technology Manager/Coordinator for U3A. As you would be aware, the computer system at U3A is of a high standard and provides an excellent service and experience for our members. The discussions centred around computer laboratory planning, hardware replacement, and future directions for IT at U3A. This was a most useful and informative experience for Management Committee members. Thank you to Greg for the commitment and expertise he brings to this important role. Members who are interested in the IT classes that U3A offers can expect to see new laptops installed in the computer room together with a new computer room layout (depending on availability of tradespeople) for the 2024 computer classes U3A offers.

It was reassuring to see that U3A members responded to our call in the October eNews for additional tutors and volunteers for our organisation. There were two members who volunteered as tutors and two as volunteers generally. Thank you to these members as your interest is appreciated. As you would all be aware, U3A runs on volunteers for all aspects of the operation of the organisation.

I noted during the week that the Queensland Department of Health is advising people over the age of 60 to have a Covid booster as there is a new strain of Covid circulating and this new strain appears to be most prevalent among people in the age group of U3A members. So visit your doctor and get that latest booster!

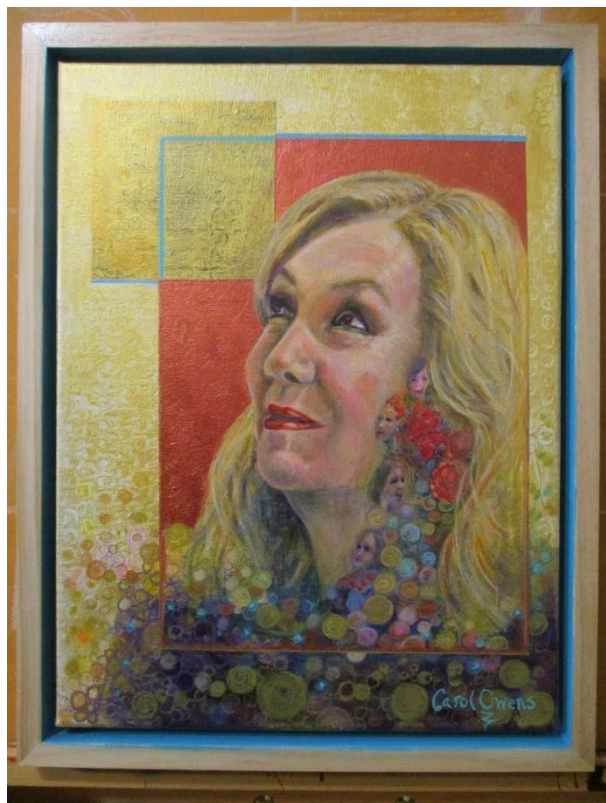
Enjoy the remainder of your Term 4 classes and, indeed, the remainder of classes for 2023. Take care and seek out that Covid booster.

Best regards

Gabrielle

Carol Owens and The Bradley

Here's my painting that's titled: Hip, Hip Hooray for Golden Girl Jenny.



What a lovely surprise it was to be announced as the winner of ABC's Bradley art competition. Our muse was Jenny Woodward, ABC TV weather reporter. The prize for winning the Bradley was to have the my painting displayed in the iconic Brisbane Portrait Prize exhibition at the Powerhouse until the end of October.

Several of our U3A Creative Portraiture class entered The Bradley and we already thought that we were winners simply by being part of our group, meeting Jenny and having our portraits displayed. It was fun to challenge ourselves with a common goal and to exhibit our work in a public place amongst other artists.

I became a member of U3A in 2017 and enrolled in Shelia Mackay's Art Appreciation class, Lindsay Shepard's Philosophy class and Geraint Morgan's Charcoal and Pencil Portraiture class.

Geraint took a semester off and I volunteered to step up to maintain the tuition in his absence, because I was experienced in facilitating groups (oops, but not in portraiture). So we became a community of practice and learnt together. By the time Geraint was able to return, there were enough people on the class waiting list that he started a new class.

During the Covid lockdowns Geraint held Zoom classes and I held outdoor classes in New Farm Park with an email group discussion platform provided by U3A. We are an adaptable lot in Queensland! We enjoyed being in the park so much that we've continued. We focus on learning using YouTube tutorials, inviting models to pose for us, and regularly having participants become host tutors on a topic of their interest.

Our class is a joyful community of practice with beginners and those more experienced sharing their challenges and new-found skills in a supportive environment. We all appreciate the opportunities that U3A provides us. I certainly wouldn't have entered The Bradley if I wasn't part of such an energised group.



Special Online Presentations

Mary Denver

Wednesday 15 November 11am-12:30pm. Volunteering Queensland: *Volunteer to change your world – myths, trends and opportunities for the older volunteer*



Members enjoy the learning opportunities at U3A Brisbane knowing that volunteers, including all our tutors, are involved in every aspect of the organisation. Volunteering offers numerous rewards for all, benefitting both volunteers and the communities they serve. Volunteers experience improved mental and physical health, a profound sense of purpose, and greater connection with others, whilst contributing the skills developed over past careers with the opportunity to learn something new.

Join Andy Parkinson, Sector Engagement Manager at Volunteering Queensland, in this interesting presentation in which he will:

- dispel volunteering myths,
- investigate current trends,
- explore the many ways we, older volunteers, can contribute to our community, and
- explain how to bring skills and life experience to a volunteer role that suits us.



[Register for this Event](#)

Wednesday 22 November 11am-12:30pm. Communify: *What it is today, and how you can help*

Discover *Communify*!

Presenters Karen Dare and Mish Burkett take you on a journey from *Communify*'s early days in the 1970s as a Paddington-based community centre, to what it is today – an amazing hub of inner city neighbourhood centres, delivering mental health support, community-based aged care, child care, family support programs, addiction recovery programs, assistance for asylum seekers, and housing and homelessness services.

More than 200 volunteers provide a helping hand in many of the programs and are key to *Communify*'s mission to support a thriving community that cares. Don't miss this chance to connect with them, hear their story and hear about Karen's vision for a new and exciting program for *Communify*. Gain insights into their place-based philosophy, learn how their diverse range of programs have evolved, and explore opportunities with them for your involvement in giving back to the community.

Communify CEO Karen has a social sciences background and over 30 years of experience working in the community sector. Karen is recipient of the 2001 Centenary Medal and the Brisbane Australia Day Award for her contribution to the community sector.

Volunteer Engagement Coordinator Mish coordinates *Communify*'s volunteer program and works with small volunteer-led community groups such as community gardens and the Free Range Library.



Karen Dare



Mish Burkett

[Register for this Event](#)

City Precinct News

Rod McLary

The [Historical Walking Tour](#) (Class code H04) around the Brisbane CBD will again be conducted on Wednesday 15 November from 10.00am. This is a repeat of the previous tour – if you would like to attend, look for H04. The meeting place is between the lions at the front of the City Hall. Six key historical locations will be visited and a commentary will be provided on each of them by the tour leader, Brett Lee. The tour will also be conducted as H06 on 7 December.

[Electric Vehicles 101](#) (Class code S02) will also be repeated at the same location near the Northshore City Cat terminal. The class will be held on Wednesday 8 November from 10.30am. Class members will be provided with considerable information about EVs, and the class will be held near EV chargers so that you can see up close how chargers work. The tutor, Phil Browne, has now bought his second EV. See Phil's article below.

Full details of both classes are [on our website](#) and both have vacancies.

Electric Vehicles: Yes or No?

Phil Browne (Tutor)



I was cautious about buying an EV in early 2021, but I adapted so well that I bought a second EV this year. I find the experience superior and I wouldn't ever buy another petrol car. The acceleration is astounding and I love the regenerative braking which slows the car and sends charge back to the battery every time I ease off the accelerator. Some EVs can also power your fridge in a blackout. It's very convenient charging at home where the car is normally parked. I used solar to obtain free "fuel" from the sun. Then I moved to an apartment where I now charge from a power point. I can drive up to 450 kms without charging and I've done many country trips.

I'm planning a longer road trip through western Queensland using the fast charger network (usually co-located with services) to top up along the way.

Australian sales of EVs lag behind many other countries (in Norway about 85% of all new car sales are EVs), but we are catching up. In 2021, only 2% of all new car sales were EVs. This doubled to 4% in 2022 and, so far in 2023, 8% of cars sold were EVs. Some of these cars are now entering the used car market offering a cheaper way to own an EV, though three new EVs now cost under \$40,000 (and the \$6,000 government EV rebate makes it even cheaper).

Government and business vehicle fleets are increasingly transitioning to EVs not only to reduce vehicle emissions, but also to reduce their fuel and servicing costs. I can vouch for how cheap it is to run an EV, and with so few moving parts there is less servicing. Many vehicle manufacturers have said they will only make EVs in the near future. Plus a number of countries have banned the sale of all petrol and diesel cars in the coming years, so EVs will become more prominent. Many children of today will likely never own a petrol or diesel car.

If you would like to know more about EVs, join Phil's class:

[S02 on Wednesday 8 November](#)

Details on our website.

Meet our Volunteers

Sue Marshall (Tutor)

I first joined U3A in 2016 when I was living in Bundaberg. I learned about U3A through a noticeboard in the main street of Bundaberg and thought I would give it a go. I was attracted to the group setting of the classes with people of mutual interests. Some of the classes I took were Italian Beginners, the U3A Bundaberg choir, Aquarobics and Painting for Beginners. I was asked to train to be an assistant instructor for Aquarobics as the instructor was going on an extended holiday. I absolutely loved it.



My current role as an aquarobics instructor includes teaching four classes per week, some paperwork and computer work. I also liaise with the manager and staff at Dunlop Park Memorial Pool and assist U3A members with enrolments, membership status and some health advice. All the exercises we do have been designed specifically for the more mature person, to assist with balance and keeping the body supple as we age. We have several younger members (in their 50s) with physical disabilities who attend with their carers, and our oldest member is 86.

I really enjoy the camaraderie of the U3A classes, and members of my aqua group also have lunches three or four times a year. We have a Christmas party every year with secret Santa gifts for all, and we organise a sweepstakes at the pool for the Melbourne Cup every year, getting the pool staff involved in the festivities as well. I have met some really good friends through U3A.

Before I retired due to illness I worked in disability for 23 years, fulfilling differing areas including workplace health and safety, workplace training and assessment, and support coordination. I think the skills I brought from my former working life are in negotiation, training and problem solving. It is also very helpful that I have such a wide experience with people with disabilities.

I have been teaching for five years now and I must say, I get just as much out of the class as my students do. There are lots of laughs but we share our sadnesses as well. Our motto at aquarobics is to enjoy what we do and make friends.

U3A Social Events

Heather Dowling

For bookings, please contact the U3A office on 3236 3055, or visit the 97 Creek St office. You can keep up to date with the latest Social Events on the U3A Website: <https://www.u3abrisbane.org.au/groups/social-group>

Past Event: Bribie Island Cruise 3 October 2023



The cruise to Bribie was uneventful with a sea breeze that helped keep everybody cool. We shared the cruise with members of the public, with a total of 44 people on board. Safety instruction was mandatory, and we had to pay close attention to how to put on the harnesses and where the life rafts were stored in case of emergency. Morning tea, lunch and afternoon tea were provided by the Lady Brisbane team who showed their expertise in setting up and clearing away efficiently. Once on Bribie the group split up to enjoy their stay in their own way – visiting the museum, bird spotting and just relaxing on the promenade. It was a great way to spend a day.



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