

OFFICE HOURS

Until further notice there will be someone in attendance at the Office on the following days and times, during school terms:

- Monday 12:30 pm to 2:00 pm
- Wednesday 1:00 pm to 2:30 pm
- Friday 10:00 am to 11:30am

CONTACT INFORMATION

Email: dbin@alphalink.com.au
 Post: PO Box 44, FAIRFIELD VIC 3078
 Phone: 96 102 102 Fax: 96 102 101

Visit the office at the Railway Station:
 26 Railway Place, Fairfield 3078

Supported by:

The U3A Network Victoria Inc.

City of Darebin.

Adult, Community and Further Education Board.



Adult Education in the Community

Contents	Page
OFFICE HOURS.....	1
CONTACT INFORMATION	1
PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE	1
OUT AND ABOUT	4
ITALIAN CONVERSATION CLASS	4
REFLECTIONS.....	5
ART EXHIBITION	8
FROM THE OFFICE.....	8
DEPRESSION AND OLDER PEOPLE.....	9
CLASS VENUES	12
TIMETABLE FOR SECOND SEMESTER 2007	12

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

In the previous edition of the Newsletter, it was stated that "new members entitle Darebin U3A to an amount in addition to the membership dues to be received from that member." As described at that time, new members were "those who did not belong in the previous year".

On 23 January 2007, a four-year funding agreement, forming part of the "Program Support Fund" was signed between U3A Network and the Department of Victorian Communities (DVC), according to which, membership growth is to be calculated on the net increase in numbers, not on the number of new members.

The altered definition was perceived to have the potential severely to inhibit the ability of Darebin U3A to access the funding. At the end of February 2007, some weeks after the main enrolment activity, and after tutors and/or class representatives reminded some of last year's members to re-enrol, membership was nine short of the corresponding date last year, and 22 lower than at the end of 2006. The comparison with the end of 2006 is valid, in so far that many of those who joined after February 2006 continue to be members in 2007, and are, therefore, included in the current figures.

Between 1 March and 31 May 2007, another 14 paid-up members registered. Furthermore, following negotiations between U3A Network and the DVC, the base period is now 31/5/2006 rather than 31/12/2006, therefore we shall be applying for some funding.

Altogether, 27 new members joined Darebin U3A in the current year, as follows:

Through Friends/Relatives/Other Members	13
Had prior knowledge of U3A	5
Had been members years ago	3
Internet	2
Local Press	1
Reservoir Civic Centre	1
Darebin Council	1
Not Stated	1

It is gratifying to find out that the majority of the new members were introduced by existing ones. It would also seem that our effort to have our name exposed to the public has not been in vain.

On the other hand, a greater number of 2006 members did not renew their membership. The reasons are understood to be:

Had nominated for only one subject	18
Health and mobility reasons	5
Engaged in other activities	4
Had secured full time employment	4
Absent overseas	1
Unable to contact (available contact details no longer valid)	<u>3</u>
	<u>35</u>

Those who enrolled in 2006 for one subject only may not have continued their memberships for a variety of reasons: because they had completed that subject; or the subject was no longer available in the first semester; or the class for that subject was already full, therefore, there would be no merit in contacting them; or they were not satisfied with our offering, but were too polite to say so.

Whilst the figure for the members who had undertaken only one subject may appear to be significant, it is not, apparently, extraordinary, as up to 20% of members enrol for a single subject, even among U3As with approximately 1000 members. As a general rule, most, if not all associates would belong to that category, as they would follow the majority of their subjects at their principal U3A.

To sum up:

2006 members who have not (or not yet) renewed their membership	35
Less: new members in 2007	<u>27</u>
Decrease at 31/5/2007	<u>8</u>
Decrease from 2006, at 28/2/2007	22
Less: recruited 1/3 to 31/5/2007	<u>14</u>
Decrease at 31/5/2007	<u>8</u>

You may wonder why I am preoccupied with what is a modest reduction, especially when we have not yet entered the second semester. It is because the continuing decline (the 2006 membership was already lower than 2005) may be the start of a downward spiral. It suggests that we are losing our momentum, our dynamism.

The first impact would be on finances. With membership fees covering about one third of our expenditure, any contraction in membership would have an adverse effect, particularly as several costs, such as rent, insurance, etc., are usually unaffected by the number of members.

State government subsidies are also likely to be influenced by the level of membership, both on the basis of needs and on our value to the community, although the reduction by 34% in our 2007 funding allocation from ACFE (Adult, Community and Further Education Board) would not be totally attributed to the drop in membership. (Incidentally, the ACFE is now under the control of DVC, which seems to be setting conditions for its funding, rather than as a contribution towards our operating costs, which used to be the ACFE practice).

Important though the question of finances is, it is not my immediate concern. Our bank balance is robust enough to withstand deficits for some time. It is rather the erosion in confidence that a dwindling membership would produce.

With lower size in membership, the number of students in a class may ultimately fall to the extent that the course ceases to be interesting to either or both the tutor and the participants; but discontinuing that class would make us less attractive to a prospective member.

An organisation such as Darebin U3A cannot function without the work of volunteers, whether tutors, committee, or those who perform the multitude of other necessary tasks. If they become demotivated because their energies are less fruitful than would be expected of their labours, they are likely to be less productive, even to withdraw their services, with the burden falling disproportionately on a lesser number of people, with a predictable deterioration in their willingness to continue contributing.

What disturbs me is not knowing the reason for our predicament, when the number of retirees in the City of Darebin is increasing, and other U3As are experiencing growth.

To help us find the answer, the City of Darebin (Aged and Disability Services), with the mentoring of SPAN Neighbourhood House, made an application to the Municipal Association of Victoria for funding to cover the cost of a project worker for three days a fortnight over a year, to be dedicated to Darebin U3A, with the aim of better understanding and meeting the changing needs of aged residents in the municipality. With some valuable input from Jay Chubb of SPAN, the newly appointed Darebin Positive Ageing Project Worker, Steve Ward, devoted an impressive amount of personal exertion to prepare a professional and comprehensive application. Regrettably, it was not successful.

More recently, we applied through U3A Network for funding for a more focused project, targeted at the under-represented groups in Darebin: those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, males, and residents of the northerner northern suburbs. The plan is to utilise 4 – 6 students from Latrobe university to undertake a needs analysis, and on the basis of the findings, pilot at least two new courses directed at the under-represented groups and develop a social marketing strategy, to attract new members, volunteer tutors and other volunteers.

Once again, the talents and enthusiasm of Steve Ward proved highly beneficial. Apparently, the DVC is not totally satisfied with our submission (or for that matter, with those of other U3As), but the U3A Network is defending our cause.

In the meantime, our other attempts to create opportunities for new members: brochures, occasional press announcements, advertisements with community radio station 96.5 Inner FM, inclusion in the Council's website and publications and our participation in the committees mentioned in the OUT AND ABOUT column of this Newsletter, are still taking place. You will undoubtedly agree that if we do not achieve our stated aim for 2007 of increasing the membership level, it would not be because we have failed to try.

This issue of the Newsletter contains several articles from members. Though a small group, the "Improving Your English" class has again demonstrated that neither age nor language is an impediment to being productive. (There are still several copies of their 1999 booklet A YEAR IN OUR LIFE available). To them, and other contributors, I extend my personal thanks. At the risk of being repetitious, I implore members to submit articles for publication. Those expressing member's opinions of their courses would be of interest to others contemplating to join those classes, but I am certain that all of us have a life experience (and at our stage of life we would have plenty of those) or a product of our creativity, to share with others.

We do not normally endorse any products or services, but we are reproducing in this Newsletter brochures from two organisations, in the belief that their offerings would be of interest to our members.

Finally, I wish to wish you all full enjoyment of your classes in the second semester, and look forward to meeting as many of you as possible on 11th September 2007.

Michael Arapakis

OUT AND ABOUT

Members of your committee continue to represent Darebin U3A at the following external projects:

- Steering Committee of the Thornbury Womens' Neighbourhood House Online Learning Project;
- Both the Reference Group and the Management Group of the Darebin Positive Ageing Project;
- The organising committee of the Darebin Seniors Festival – Healthy Ageing.

They have also attended on your behalf:

- Municipal Association of Victoria – Planning for Positive Ageing, 30 March 2007.

This was an exposure of current activities by various bodies dealing with aged Victorians, designed to encourage them actively to participate in the community.

Of special interest was how more than one approach was employed to address the needs of various cultures in setting up the Yarra City U3A. Some of our full members are associates at Yarra City U3A, and some of their members are associates with us

- The unveiling of the Town Hall Arts, Community and Cultural Venue and Civic Square, on 26th May.

The refurbishment was impressive.

We also ensured the poster and brochures placed for display earlier were not obscured by the promotional material of other exhibitors.

- The Darebin Volunteering Forum, on 7th June 2007.

Contact has been made with the Co-ordinator, Social Policy and Research, and the Darebin Volunteering Project Officer as well as others not forming a part of the Darebin Council, whose co-operation would be crucial when we are ready to recruit new tutors and other volunteers.

Two other active U3A members not on the committee have already participated at the Resident Voice Workshop for the Darebin Positive Ageing Project. They will form part of the Council initiative to collect the stories of older people as a way of showing their wisdom, but also learning about the problems encountered by older people. Apart from reinforcing our connection with the community, they may acquire worthwhile insights of significance to Darebin U3A.

ITALIAN CONVERSATION CLASS

Cari amici

Solo due righe per informarvi che con il 16/07/2007

U3A Darebin lancia una nova classe "Conversazione in lingua italiana"

Se avete piacere di partecipare fateci sapere.

If you would like to communicate in the most melodic sounding language in the world, but in simple everyday Italian, without the formality of strict grammar, or if you have a grounding in the language but want to build your confidence, our Italian Conversation classes will be held at the Northcote Library on Mondays, from 3.00pm to 4.30pm, starting on 16/07/2007.

The tutor will be Nerina Novak, who conducted similar classes in the past. She will be assisted, as and when required, by Claudia Sanzin.

Ci vediamo

REFLECTIONS

BUON VIAGGIO, JONE

Graceful in her flowing robes
Poised and self-assured
She is equally at ease
Discussing the machinations of Machiavelli,
Leading our exercise group,
Or narrating her entertaining anecdotes.

She has flown away
To the warm Italian skies
A colourful,
Vibrant
Bird of Paradise.

But we know she will return.
After all, she has been with us for 10 years.

CANASTA

Bridge enthusiasts usually take their game too seriously for the relaxed group of members who gather at Fairfield Station on the first and third Saturday of a month. Whist and its variants - 500 in particular, has been suggested – like bridge, require four players, and that precise number is not always achievable.

So, we play Canasta (we have attempted Samba only once so far), in partnership when the number attending is even, otherwise for our own account. When seven or more are assembled, they are accommodated at separate tables.

We take a break some time between 2.30 and 3.00pm, for a cup of tea or coffee and a biscuit. Chatting is not restricted to the break, and we cannot recall a game that did not produce lots of laughter. Our sessions are, therefore, much more than just card games. One member has commented she is looking forward to her Canasta "fix", and a former member used to treat counting of her points after each hand, as a mental exercise.

As with every game, there will be winners and others. It would be ridiculous to pretend that we play to lose, but we have never experienced a player to lose his or her temper as well as a game. We may feel like kicking ourselves after making a mistake, but are always understanding when our partners is the one who played the wrong card. Every so often, a game is finished early enough to give the losing side a chance to equalise the score at a second game.

Thanks

Hi,
I would like to thank all the people for their kind words of support, phone calls and cards that I received during my illness. The operation went well and the doctor is very pleased with the result. I will need some treatment but the outcome is very satisfactory. I feel very good and have resumed my normal life. I'm not the only one sick at the moment. I would also like to wish a speedy recovery to Verne Richards, Edna Young and Nancy Keele and all the other members who feel a bit under the weather.

Claudia Sanzin

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY
DEAR DAREBIN U3A**

It seems no time at all since we were putting together our "10 Years On" booklet. What's happened to the past 5 years? Well, it's been up and down like a see-saw during this period.

At one stage the threat of collapsing altogether looked possible.

THEN after struggling to put together a committee, along came the brilliant team we have now.

Hearty congratulations to Michael and all the committee members and helpers who have resurrected Darebin U3A.

Membership is dwindling though, so how about each and every one of us spreading the word about the interesting and enjoyable courses we offer.

Where are all the early retirees – perhaps your children are in this age group now.

Please have a word with them and their friends.

May the U3A flag fly high well into the future.

Odette Stuckey

From the "Improving your English" class

As Time Goes By

After the death of my husband I was in a bad state, I don't remember exactly who told me about U3A, it may have been Mr Borghese the history teacher at U3A. Anyhow I decided to go, not only to attend classes but to meet new people. It was there that I met Maria and Lorenza. It was the beginning of a beautiful and lasting friendship that is still so dear and important to me.

It was Maria that told me about the Improve Your English, I went and liked it. The atmosphere in the class was great. The teacher Mr Allen Clement was the most understanding person that I have ever met. Slowly but surely he took us from point zero to the best of our ability. All of us became good friends and we are still very close, in spite of the loss of some good companions.

I thank U3A for giving me the opportunity to improve my English and also thank all the teachers that were so brave in enduring and persevering with this very noisy group. Noisy yes, but willing to learn, and keep our mind active. As an Italian saying goes "mente sana, corpo sane".

Nerina Novak

My Mother

I had Mother's Day lunch with my family and friends. It was a fantastic lunch, primarily because the lunch was cooked by the men in our group. I must admit they did an exceptional job.

During the day my thoughts often turned to my own mother, reflecting on her life. How different it was then.

My mother was twenty eight years old when my father, hoping for a better future for his family migrated to Australia leaving his young wife and three children aged between six months and four and a half years old behind. It must have been a very painful separation for them both because another twenty eight years would pass before they could be reunited again.

My mother was left with a huge task and great responsibilities, she had to be both mother and father to us, and it must have been very difficult for her. In those days she did not have the commodities that that we enjoy today. She also had to cope with unforeseen events, such as sickness and the war.

She was an outstanding and intellectual woman, a great reader and a good writer. As a young girl I clearly remember my mother writing letters for her friends (who were illiterate) to their relatives overseas.

After my family reunited, my mother and father fortunately enjoyed a very happy and long life together.

When I reflect on that time of separation, my heart goes to my mother with immense love and gratitude for all the work and sacrifices she made for us.

Maria Vido

To Have

To have a lot of money means nothing to me.

To have a beautiful home means something to me.

To have my mind, that means much to me.

To have an active mind means that I can always find something new. It also means I have the ability and independence to make my own decisions and manage my own life without being a burden to others.

Grammatiki Michael

Different Customs

The cafeteria in my first Australian factory was a big room, dark and uninviting. I recall our first lunch there, well! The room full of people was a pandemonium. Their voices were fuzzier than the noise in the sewing-room upstairs. Both sounds were incomprehensible to us.

There was a big tank sitting on the table with everyone queuing for a cup of tea, not a cappuccino or latte in sight. Our family loved tea and we always enjoyed a nice cup of tea but the odour in the cafeteria was nauseating. How we wished for the aroma of freshly brewed coffee.

My sister and I found two chairs at one of the long tables, everyone was drinking tea. I noticed that the inside of the cups were dirty brown. It occurred to me then, that in this country people never washed their cups. I later discussed this with my father; he explained that some people think that tea tastes better in a tanned cup.

In the cafeteria in front of us, sat a kind old lady, with a dainty hat on. I was thinking how strange to be at work and wearing that kind of hat, then from a brown paper bag she took out the tiniest and titbit sandwich that I had ever seen. Others at our table were eating what looked like little cakes full a brown mince sauce, topped with red sauce. Reluctantly my sister and I opened our brown paper bags, pulling out two thick and plump pieces of bread and two big chunks of chocolates and with one in each hand we ate with much gusto.

However we sensed by the expression on the faces of our table companions that they were thinking "from where these girls come from with such table manners".

My sister and I were observing everything, and even if we didn't realise then. We did perceive the difference between our cultures.

Franca Pieroni

Sustainable Gardening

Once a month, on the first Tuesday, the Gardening Group meets under the tutelage of Jude Larkham to discuss everything you have ever wanted to know about how to get the best out of your garden plot, be it large or small. No longer do the PH levels of your soil have to remain a mystery.

Are you using the right mulch that will retain the moisture to nourish your plants? – so important when we don't know when the next shower will arrive. Once you know the PH level of the soil you will have a better idea of what plants will do well. Camellias will not do as well if the PH is 6.5. BUT YOU CAN ALTER IT!

Find out about the value of worms in composting. Jude has the answers to most of the problems that beset us in our gardens. On the agenda for July is pot culture and what we can do now to ensure the best results in spring and summer. Bring along any query you may have. All are welcome!

Cinema Class

Paul Michell had planned to run a Cinema class in the second semester, unfortunately he has some health issues and is unable to do so this year. We all hope things are better for next year.

ART EXHIBITION

An exhibition with the theme "Nature on our Doorstep" will be held between Thursday 26/07/07 and Sunday 19/8/07

at Bundoora Homestead Arts Centre (closed Mondays and Tuesdays)
Snake Gully Drive,
Bundoora (Melways 19G2) (Tram Route 86)

of paintings featuring the unique bushland, wildlife habitat and different aspects of the forest, by Kerry Maher, our tutor for Art Appreciation.

The Art Appreciation session on 3 August 2007 will be held at the site of the exhibition, at 11:00am.

Interested members may join the class, or contact Kerry direct on 9435 6470, for a visit to the exhibition at other times.

FROM THE OFFICE

Volunteers to staff the office on Monday afternoons and Friday mornings are needed. If you can help even occasionally please leave a message for Pam Fergie-Jackson on the answering machine.

There are some books, magazines, DVDs and CDs available for loan. They are kept in the office on the north wall. Drop in and see if there is anything of interest to you or your group.

DEPRESSION AND OLDER PEOPLE

We have received a brochure which, under the heading

Beyond maturity blues

States:

- **Depression is not a normal part of ageing.**
- **Depression is a health problem, not a weakness.**
- **Depression is a treatable illness.**
- **Information and support is available.**

The national depression initiative "beyond blue", in partnership with COTA (Council on the Aged) have worked together to train peer educators to present this important topic to members of organisations such as Darebin U3A.

If there is sufficient interest from members we will arrange an information session.

Interested members are requested to leave a message on 96102102, and will be contacted as soon as more information is at hand.

For those who wish to contact "beyond blue" direct, the details are:

Info Line	1300 224 636
Internet	www.beyondblue.org.au

DAREBIN SENIORS FESTIVAL – HEALTHY AGEING

The 2007 Seniors Festival in Victoria will take place from Sunday 7th October to Sunday 14th October. In order to enable senior citizens to participate in the activities of the wider community, the Darebin City Council will hold its own Seniors Festival with a "Healthy Ageing" theme

On WEDNESDAY, 17th OCTOBER 2007

Between 10.00am and 3.00pm

At the DAREBIN ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT CENTRE

which is located at the corner of Bell St. and St. Georges Rd., Preston (Melways 30F1)

The aims of the Festival are:

- to encourage participation of older people in community activities;
 - to increase community awareness about older adults and healthy ageing;
 - to promote local groups and services;
- and
- to create an opportunity for networking between services, groups and residents

A member of your committee represents Darebin U3A at the Planning Group at the Festival. Further information will be communicated to members in a flyer as the date of the event draws nearer.

It is proposed to showcase as many of our activities as possible, but also to make our presence felt by a stall with a crew of, say two of our members, who would have brochures available for distribution and answer queries from potential members, and for which

VOLUNTEERS ARE NEEDED

for shifts of 1 to 2 hours. Please express your willingness to assist by leaving a message on 9610 2102. This will be an excellent opportunity for Darebin U3A to make itself known to the public at large.

INVITATION

In October 2007 we shall be entering our 16th Year.

To help us celebrate the landmark 15 years of activity, you are invited to join the committee and long term members on -

11th SEPTEMBER 2007

from 10.30am

**For A CUPPA
A SLICE OF BIRTHDAY CAKE
and CONVERSATION**

at

**FAIRFIELD STATION
CLASSROOM**

CLASS VENUES

Fairfield Railway Station

- Situated at 26 Railway Place Fairfield
- Melways 30K10.
- Apart from the train, the 567 bus stops on the other side of the railway line. Parking at RSL Club. Details given at your first class.

SPAN

- Situated at 298 Victoria Road Thornbury on the corner of Clarendon Street and Victoria Road opposite Clyde Jones Reserve.
- Melways 30J5.
- Buses Nos 552, 246, 251 pass along Victoria Road.

Northcote Library

- Situated in Separation Street Northcote opposite Northcote Plaza
- Melways 30F8.
- Bus No 552 terminates at Northcote Plaza.
- Tram No 86 in High Street - Alight at Toto's Pizza Restaurant.
- The Library opens at 10.00 a.m.

Northcote Town Hall

- Tram No 86 in High St.
- Melways 30 F9.

TIMETABLE FOR SECOND SEMESTER 2007

Day/Time	Starts	Subject	Venue	Comments
Monday				
12:15 - 2:15	2/07/2007	Italian language	Fairfield Station	In Progress
3:00 - 4:30	16/07/2007	Italian Conversation	Northcote Library	New Class
Tuesday				
10:30 - 11:30	3/07/2007	Sustainable Gardening	Fairfield Station	1st Tuesday of the month
10:00 - 12:00	17/07/2007	Computer 1	SPAN	In Progress(fully booked)
2.00 - 3.00	17/07/2007	Gentle Exercise	Northcote Town Hall	
Wednesday				
10:30 - 12:00	4/07/2007	Book Discussion	Fairfield Station	1st Wednesday of month
11:30 - 12:30	18/07/2007	Classical Studies	Fairfield Station	3rd Wednesday of month
12:45 - 2:45	18/07/2007	Needlecraft	Fairfield Station	
12:30 - 2:00	18/07/2007	Improving Your English	SPAN	
3:00 - 4:30	18/07/2007	Shakespeare Plays	Fairfield Station	
Thursday				
10:30 - 12:00	19/07/2007	Current Affairs	Fairfield Station	Every Second Week
10:00 - 12:00	5/07/2007	Computer 2	SPAN	
1:30 - 3:30	19/07/2007	Painting	SPAN	
2:00 - 3:00	5/07/2007	Tai Chi - Basic	Northcote Town Hall	Yang Style modified for seniors
3:00 - 4:00	5/07/2007	Tai Chi - Intermediate	Northcote Town Hall	Yang Style modified for seniors
Friday				
10:00 - 11:30	20/07/2007	Art Appreciation	Fairfield Station	Fully Booked
1:00 - 3:30	20/07/2007	Singing for Pleasure	SPAN	
Saturday				
1:30 - 4:00	7/07/2007	Canasta	Fairfield Station	1st & 3rd Saturday of Month

Our Privacy Policy

U3A Darebin is a community based provider of classes for older people and is run by volunteers.

We collect names and addresses to enable us to mail out newsletters and other information about classes, and we list phone numbers to contact you directly if required. This mailing and phone list is not made available to anyone outside the organization.

We also ask you for personal details to provide statistical data to government funding agencies. This is a requirement for receiving government grants. The information is used for future planning.

This information is compiled into statistical reports that do not identify individuals.

If you choose to withhold these personal details there will be gaps in the data that will reduce the accuracy of the statistics, and this will not help our cause.

We do not disclose any of this information to any other parties, and would never do so without your consent.

If you have any concerns or queries or would like to know more about how we handle your private details feel free to phone our office on 96102102 so that we can explain our procedures in greater detail.



DAREBIN INC.

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If undeliverable return to
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26 Railway Place
Fairfield 3078

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Fax: 96 102 101
Email: dbin@alphalink.com.au

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