

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

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Adult Education in
the Community

Supported by:

The U3A Network Victoria Inc.

City of Darebin.

Adult, Community and Further Education Board.

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Like many other members, those comprising the Committee of Management of Darebin U3A may be feeling the burden of years, with frequent medical appointments; or they may have ailing spouses or elderly parents who require attention; or they may need to look after their grandchildren, and no matter how gratifying the participation in the direction of this organisation may be, it does not match the delight brought about by a child's arms around one's neck; or they may wish to travel, while still able to do so; or they may have other absorbing interests, and whilst we advocate active retirement, we are not an exclusive provider of suitable activities.

Whether or not due to any of these reasons, three of the four current officers of this association will not be standing for office in 2008. Our Secretary for the past two years, Heather Slack, has carried a considerable workload; our Treasurer for 2006 and 2007, Carol Andrews, has not only looked after our finances, but has undertaken several other administrative tasks; and our Assistant Secretary for 2007, Peter Kinden, acted as Secretary when Heather was away, and initiated other activities, including organising the popular Discussions on Geological Times. I wish to express my gratitude to them. Without their willingness and drive, such success as we have had would not have been possible.

This does not diminish the contribution of other members of the Committee. Pam Fergie-Jackson as Office Co-ordinator, Jean Garita as Property Officer and Carmel Lee as Tutor Co-ordinator have worked hard in their respective responsibilities, whilst other committee members helped with their ideas and wisdom. Two committee members also lead classes. They have all deservedly earned my appreciation.

In an organisation like ours, it is very rare for the workload to be divided equally among all members. Even in the workplace, it is often practised that if one wishes to have a matter dealt with expeditiously, it should be handled by a busy person, who will find a way of coping with it. However, even a willing horse will occasionally bolt.

What may not be generally realised is that the work which needs to be performed by the Committee is not significantly different in an organisation with our level of membership, from one with over 1000 members; except that the latter has a larger pool from which to draw its committee members.

Therefore, I urge you to nominate for one of the positions on the Committee, described elsewhere in this newsletter, if we are to avoid the cost of hiring external help, or neglecting non-urgent duties such as publicity, because the committee's resources are spread too thinly.

As this edition of the Newsletter concentrates on the AGM and the proposed changes to the Constitution, we have not actively elicited contributions from members, although some are published, including from the always reliable "Improving your English" class. However, I request you to submit articles for publication in the January 2008 issue.

Humans must have been narrating stories since they discovered speech. Story telling was one of the segments at the Darebin Seniors Festival, it forms part of the Positive Ageing Project, and has been adopted in several other social programs. In this edition of the Newsletter, a "Life Experiences" column has been introduced. It would please me to see at least one story in this column – whether serious or amusing – in all future Newsletters. This should not be difficult to achieve, as we only issue three Newsletters a year.

Any progress we have made in raising the public profile of Darebin U3A in the community, and maintaining our financial position would have been possible without the support of the Darebin City Council and SPAN Community House, and I take this opportunity to convey my deep appreciation. Many Council employees contributed to varying degrees, but I extend my heartfelt thanks to Steve Ward of the Darebin Ageing Project, and Jay Chubb of SPAN.

Special thanks are reserved for our tutors, without whose knowledge, experience and willingness to give up their free time we would not exist as a University of the Third Age.

This organisation would not have been able to function without the contribution of Basil Conquo as Assistant Treasurer, the office volunteers and all the other helpers who prefer to remain anonymous. To all of them, I offer my genuine thanks.

It would be negligent on my part if I did not openly declare how proud I am of our members who took part at the Darebin Seniors Festival – Healthy Ageing Expo. Their attainments have compensated me more than adequately for my efforts.

Some members have expressed the wish to enrol earlier than the established late January/early February dates. Applications will, therefore, be accepted at the AGM, when a timetable for the first semester of 2008 will be available.

As this is the last Newsletter in 2007, I wish all members A MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR. Members for whom English is a second language, and who would like to hear these greetings in their native tongue, will have that opportunity at the AGM.

Michael Arapakis

OUT AND ABOUT

EXHIBITION OF PAINTINGS BY KERRY MAHER AT BUNDOORA HOMESTEAD

Many of our members may be unaware that not far from where they live and do their shopping, is a magnificent historic building, the Bundoora Homestead, currently an art centre.

In Queen Anne revival style as adapted to the Australian environment, the mansion was built in 1899/1900, the result of a public architectural competition organised by the owner of the property, a prominent identity in the horse breeding and racing industry. The original property, on some 245 hectares operated for 20 years primarily as a horse and cattle stud, with some outstanding successes.

Acquired by the Commonwealth Government in 1920, the site served as the Bundoora Convalescent Farm for WW1 veterans, and was renamed the Mental Repatriation Hospital in 1923. Between 1930 and 1952 part of the property was allocated for use by the Victoria Mounted Police. The Repatriation Hospital at Bundoora was de-commissioned in 1993, and ownership of the total site transferred to the State Government of Victoria in 1995. By the end of 1996, most of the buildings were demolished, with the exception of some now surviving in the custody of Preston Historical Society, and the homestead, which was left unoccupied and fell into disrepair.

With the assistance of the LaTrobe University and the Commonwealth Government, the Darebin City Council restored the Bundoora Homestead and opened it to the community in 2001 as a heritage and cultural space. Registered by Heritage Victoria and certified by the National Trust, it boasts impressive examples of plaster craftsmanship, unique pyrography, the formation of images by burning rather than carving the wood, and an impressive stained glass skylight, bathing the imposing stairwell in light.

This was an appropriate setting for the exhibition of paintings by Kerry Maher, the facilitator for our Art Appreciation class. Held between 26 July and 19 August 2007, it featured aspects of the LaTrobe University's Melbourne Wildlife Sanctuary in Bundoora, Greswell Forest, and a patch of land linking the two, the Habitat Link.

The Melbourne Wildlife Sanctuary is located at the LaTrobe University Bundoora campus and is open to the public at certain times. For those without a car and prepared to hike, it is accessible by tram 86 (Stop 61). Greswell Forest and the Habitat Link may be visited at any time. Except for the Habitat Link boundary, Greswell Forest is now bounded by suburban dwellings. The ability to enter these natural reserves so close to an urban environment explains the theme of the exhibition: "Nature on our Doorstep".

Inspired by the beauty of the wildlife reserves with centuries old trees, and impressed by the reforestation and other restoration work carried out by Friends of the Wildlife Reserves, of which he is a member, Kerry painted the pictures exhibited and some others between 2005 and 2007.

Preferring to paint in the early morning and late afternoon when long shadows provide interesting contrasts of dark and light, he captured the chaos and order of nature, and the vagaries of the seasons.

Kerry Maher is an impressionist painter. In his words: "I don't attempt to produce a literal copy of the scene before me; rather, I concentrate on attempting to capture light and some feeling for the subject. Although I'm interested in the flora and fauna found in the reserves, I resist painting an accurate representation of what I observe in favour of a more "painterly" result. I've attempted to make each painting a separate response to a limited aspect of nature".

The pictures at the exhibition were accompanied by comments, often witty, but always fascinating, identifying several of the flora and fauna, with which he is obviously familiar. In his meticulous manner, Kerry also provided a map of the area, indicating the location where each painting took place.

The exhibition was officially opened on 28 July 2007 by Allan Lee, President of the Friends of the Wildlife Reserves. Also present was Merv Lia, President of the Preston Historical Society, who was instrumental in saving the Homestead from the wreckers. A member of the Committee represented Darebin U3A. The Art Appreciation class on 3 August 2007 was held at the exhibition.

As a result of the exhibition, many people plan to visit the reserves, and the Friends of the Wildlife Reserves attracted new members, which are probably as pleasing to Kerry as the sale of more than two thirds of the paintings exhibited.

DAREBIN SENIORS FESTIVAL

Visitors to the Darebin Arts & Entertainment Centre started arriving earlier than the opening time of 10.00am on 17th October 2007, for the Healthy Ageing Expo, organised by the City of Darebin. Very soon, the place was abuzz with activity, with the carpark full by midday, and people arriving by bus approximately every hour.

Darebin U3A featured widely enough for the Mayor, Cr Marlene Kairouz to mention us in her address. Our stand, which we shared with the Darebin Positive Ageing Project, was close to the entrance, and attended by Carol Andrews and Steve Ward, while Tess Maplestone, one of the LaTrobe University students assigned to our needs analysis project, interviewed a number of those who approached to collect our brochures.

Our appropriately named "Singing for Pleasure" group performed this time for the pleasure of others four songs at the theatre, to which the audience responded with applause. A bass from another singing group may join ours next year.

Dr. Kerry Eccles, tutor of Classical Studies, spoke about the evolution of the mentality of ancient Greeks in the centuries between the Homeric times and the staging of "Antigone", one of the tragedies by Sophocles. She summarised the plot of the play, and recited a poignant scene, a dialogue between the heroine and her sister; better dead and heroic, than alive as a coward.

The Tai Chi group took part in the Qigong breathing exercise, the Meridian (loosening joints), the Lotus (breathing and stretching) and the level one "Yang style" basic routine. They were followed by a demonstration of the Beijing 24 or 32 sword by the tutor, Barry Watson. A highlight was that a member of the Chinese Tai Chi group congratulated Barry. At a reprise of the Lotus exercise, Barry invited the audience to participate and several more people joined them, including two Chinese; a proof that different cultures are capable of meeting as mentioned in the Mayor's letter.

The Needlecraft as well as the Painting and Drawing groups held their weekly class at the Festival, exhibiting some of their completed work as well as doing what they would have done in the classroom. It must have felt strange to have people looking over their shoulders and asking questions, but they generated a lot of interest.

The activities of Darebin U3A have had a greater exposure to the public than they would have had for a long time. Significantly, the participants had, apparently, a great deal of fun, while giving enjoyment to others.

On page 5 we are reproducing a letter from the Mayor of Darebin.

Although the letter is addressed to Michael as a member of the Planning Group, the credit belongs to those of our members who took part in the activities thus contributing to the success of the Festival.

The Committee recognises that they must have been subjected to a lot of hard work and a measure of stress, and thanks them for their efforts.

DISCUSSIONS ON GEOLOGICAL TIME

Full classes attended the 3 one-hour sessions led by Dr. Norman Gardiner on successive Mondays between 24 September and 8 October at Fairfield Station.

Palaeontology must be Norman's passion (we suspect he has many more interests and accomplishments) as his formal education was in English Literature, although as an undergraduate at Hamilton College, he studied two units of geology. He obtained his MA degree at the University of Arizona, and his doctorate at Bedford College, University of London. He taught English at LaTrobe University from 1969 to 1994.

Norman covered the various geological periods, punctuating his talks with illustrations, miniature representations of dinosaurs, fragments of fossils – and humour-

He cheerfully answered questions from his listeners, and was asked by some of them if he would share with us next year his experiences from the nine digs on which he has worked: seven in the United States, one in France, and at Inverloch in Victoria, which he has visited many times. We hope that his commitments will allow him some time for Darebin U3A.

WE HAVE NOW ENTERED OUR SIXTEENTH YEAR



Perhaps it was too long a time lag between the announcement in the June 2007 issue of the Newsletter and 11 September, when we celebrated our 15th Anniversary with a morning tea.

About 20 members attended at the Fairfield Station classroom, but we are pleased to report that they were joined by two of our tutors, and John Mitchell, President of U3A Network Victoria.

Odette Stuckey, a founding member and the first Secretary of Darebin U3A cut the birthday cake. She congratulated the committee and members on our continued success, and expressed regret that Eileen Capocchi, another founding member and former President and Vice President, who had been looking forward to taking part in the activities, was unable to be present because of illness.

Another celebration of our 15th Anniversary took place in the afternoon, with a cake being shared with representatives of other local organisations at a Strategic Planning Workshop on Volunteering, conducted by the Darebin Council.

We wish to thank the City of Darebin for providing the cakes, Luciano Sanzin for setting up the room and all those members who helped.

LIFE EXPERIENCES

ART WORK

In the middle of the dining room stood this beautiful dining table that had been delivered that morning. It was the pride and joy of my mother!

She was so happy, that we could hear her singing while she cooked.

My brother, my sister and myself were admiring the table.

It gave off a wholesome odour of wood and French-polish, throughout the house.

The table reached in height to my chin, its top was sparkling, like a mirror reflecting many things in the room.

However, my imagination saw a brilliant lake, with a myriad of fantastic and unreal beings, dancing and moving kaleidoscopically.

Being so fascinated, and rapt in these fantasies I didn't realise that my mouth was resting on the edge of the table.

The top of the table had a small border all around, a shade lighter in colour and seemed to be of softer wood, than the table top.

Not that I was hungry, but I had just grown two new front teeth and like a little mouse I enjoyed testing them on a variety of things. So I gently bit the edge of the table.

Even now when I close my eyes, I can remember the softness and the sweetness of that wood, with a strange but pleasant taste.

The imprints of my teeth lured my imagination, and I had another bite.

My brother was watching, and asked: "Is it fun? Is it good?" And grabbing with his hands the top of the table while standing on his toes, he had his first bite at the table. "O! Yes I like it" he declared.

It was fun, especially at comparing which of our teeth imprints were the best.

Our little sister was saying: "Me too, me too" so we found a stool so she could reach the top of the table as well.

When we finished the first side of the table edge, my brother and I decided that we had to do all four sides, because it looked unfinished.

It was hard work to reach the last corner; we were very tired, but also very happy to have achieved this work of art.

The excitement didn't last long, though!

We called our mother, and proudly showed her how nice the imprints of our little teeth looked. She was shocked, unable to move, speak or scold us, she stood there like a marble statue. We didn't know why!

It took me a few more years to understand it!

Of course my punishment was that I had to endure this piece of art for many years.

Franca Pieroni

MORE FROM THE "IMPROVING YOUR ENGLISH" CLASS

COMPUTER

Years ago my son left his computer at my place while doing some renovation work at his house. Since he couldn't use it, he thought that it was a chance for me to understand and get to know something about it. It was a huge task, but I was willing to learn.

Naturally, he thought that he had explained in simple words what and how a computer worked, and that is how I was introduced to technology.

Therefore every free minute that I had was spent on the computer while thinking, that it wasn't as hard as I thought. How wrong I was!!!!

I wasn't very familiar with many words that the screen was asking, so I had to use the Italian dictionary, but sometimes you can't have the right meaning in translating it to another language.

By nature I am a very curious person and sometimes I have to pay the price for the curiosity.

On a particular day, so confident of myself, while browsing, I misunderstood the meaning of a word. The result? I deleted everything that was on it.

My first big mistake was nothing compared with what happened months later.

Even today I don't know what I did. The fact is that the monitor went black and the computer was dead. I was in shock. But that did not deter me from persevering, so I bought a new one. Naturally, without the help of my grandson Paul I would not be able to work on it the way I do. The Internet is my major interest.

Sending and receiving mail and humorous jokes with my friends is fantastic. But most of all, browsing and searching on it, it gives me the opportunity to read news, listen to music and see something I had never dreamed it existed. It is a fascinating world!!!

Maria Vido

THE PLACE WHERE I GREW UP

The place where I grew up was a small village called Volpiano. I think the population was about a thousand, maybe less. The village was situated on a plain, surrounded by beautiful wooded hills. Just a long main street crossed the village, starting from the watermill and ending at the cemetery. At approximately half way, there was a square, which at that time looked big to me, but looking back now, it was the size of a McDonald's car park. However, that was the meeting place for young people, because there was a church, with cinema, card room, reading room and sports ground. On Sunday mornings the square was full of peasants, as this was an occasion for exchange of information, ideas and family news.

The houses were built of brick, and were mostly double storeyed with ground floors used during the day and upstairs floors at night. Our house was single storeyed, but very comfortable, with large rooms, a lot of space and a fireplace. My best memory is of the spacious kitchen, because every day there were delicious smells of bread, biscuits or just plain good food like soups, especially at winter time.

Beside the house there was a pergola, where my grandfather made a swing for me. At the left of the house there was a river where usually our animals went for water, but often chattering women came to wash their linen in clean, flowing water.

Outside the village, the hills were full of chestnut trees. In the undergrowth we found many species of mushrooms, and wild strawberries, raspberries and blueberries.

Now, the village, and of course, the house have totally changed, but I prefer to remember them as they were when I grew up there.

Teresa Gjerga

FIFTY YEARS LATER

I've heard people talking about a book they've been reading, Il Gattopardo. In the English version, it is "The Leopard" by Giuseppe Tomasi di Lampedusa. I believe it was on the book list of the discussion class. Someone had said, they made a film about this book, but I did not see it or hear about it so I checked the local Library and found out that they carry two versions of the book, Italian and English, so I got them both to compare the translation. I read first the Italian and then the English version and to my surprise I enjoyed the English edition more. The reading flowed quickly; I felt more at ease and followed the story with pleasure. Why? Have I blended so much in the Australian culture to forget my origins? You may laugh but it is really frightening to realise that you are no more this or that. I will always be a New Australian in this country and in Italy as soon as I open my mouth, I get asked where I come from. You will not believe that Italian Literature was my best subject.

Claudia Sanzin

SPRINGTIME

A change of seasons brings a change of heart! It seems to make us more sociable, more romantic.... That's how it works for me!

I'm in my garden watching the trees become alive; the branches are covered with delicate flowers, like a pink cloud ready to fly up, up and away.

The primroses, the daisies, the roses, like a colourful mosaic, are transforming yesterday's sleepy garden into a beautiful vibrant painting.

The long winter is gone!

The smell of springtime is in the air. I enjoy watching the birds jumping from one branch to another, and transforming my fig tree into a gymnasium of noisy sparrows.

Then a bird calls its notes so clearly they seem to split the air.

The lovely sound tricks my mind: another day like this, so very long ago, but still so vivid in my memory "My first spring in Australia". I was so nostalgic for my people, my country, my lovely house by the sea....

It hurts so much that it makes me write this little poem.

Loneliness

Along the golden beach
listening to the murmur of the sea
When the day is in descent
lost over the horizon
When darkness
covers everything
My lonely night
becomes serene.
When the night is bright
how sweet it is
listening to you
little melancholic stars.
This is the moment divine
when I'm enjoying you
solitude mine.

Nerina Novak

FROM THE CLASSROOM

Painting and Drawing Group

Our little art group has become larger and all participants enthusiastically contribute to the genial and co-operative atmosphere. June continues to be our guiding light and along with an on-going exchange of ideas and the sharing of helpful information we seem to find inspiration and motivation. We are all continuing to enjoy and benefit from our time spent in this creative endeavour.

Helen Marshall

Book Group visit to the Athenaeum Library

In June, our Book Group's monthly meeting was held at this historic library. An introduction and tour was provided by Jill, the Librarian, and morning tea was provided. Their Volunteer Archivist, Marjorie, also gave a short talk on how to preserve family documents and passed around some pieces of library and theatre memorabilia. Members enjoyed looking around the old building, inspecting the books, the artworks and the displays. A letter of appreciation was sent to the Library by the Group Leader, Christine Honig.

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.

OUR WEBSITE

Thanks to the efforts of our Computer Tutors, we now have our own website.

It can be accessed via the Darebin City Community Portal or at
<http://users.alphalink.com.au/~dbin/home.html>

Step by step instructions for access via the Darebin City Community Portal are available at the office.

THE MORE THINGS CHANGE. . . .

We repeat, without comment, a paragraph from an OPEN LETTER TO ALL MEMBERS signed by Claudia, which appeared in the July 2003 edition of the Newsletter:

Wives, if you are sick and tired of your husbands hanging around doing nothing concrete all day – send them to us, or you male species, sick and tired of having a nagging wife on your back all the time, send her along to help us.

INVITATION

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

You are invited to attend our annual general meeting.

AGENDA

1. Welcome from the President
2. Apologies
3. Confirmation of minutes for AGM, 1 December 2006
4. President's Report
5. Financial Report
6. Appoint Honorary Auditor for 2008
7. Nominations for Committee Members
8. Election Procedure
9. Special Business:
Proposed Changes to the Constitution and Rules for Special Resolution
10. Address by Guests
11. Any other Business

Date: Thursday 6th December 2007

**Place: FAIRFIELD RSL
9 Railway Place
FAIRFIELD**

**Time: AGM at 1:30 PM
Refreshments to follow**

SOME THOUGHTS BEFORE THE AGM

IS WORD PROCESSING ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY?

In theory, probably not, but handwriting or typing correspondence, applications for funding, minutes of meetings, the Newsletter and Flyers, maintenance of the members register etc. would be extremely time consuming, and therefore, impracticable. Also, communicating by email and bringing our website up-to-date would be denied to us. At any rate, the facilities for word processing and the advantages they offer are available, and it would be wasteful not to employ them.

We have been very fortunate in the past two years that the Treasurer and Secretary, and the Assistant Secretary in 2007, are computer literate. However, their skills and competence will not be accessible to us in 2008.

Members who would otherwise be willing to nominate for the positions of Secretary, Assistant Secretary and Treasurer, or the other positions which would ordinarily require word processing, need not be deterred if word processing is not their strong point. What is imperative is the continuing provision of services through the orderly operation of the organisation. If the only way of achieving this is by outsourcing word processing, then the course of action is clear.

It would not be the ideal solution, because:

- There would be some cost involved, for what are administrative tasks, rather than services to members;
- In our funding applications, we have been declaring "Management, administration and tutoring functions are performed by volunteers", which we shall no longer be able to claim;
- The principle entrenched in our Constitution – Statement of Purposes, Clause 2(2) – according to which "as much as possible of the activity is voluntary, freely given by members of the Association to their fellows" would be somewhat compromised;
- Preparing drafts or dictating is not as efficient as direct word processing of the material;
- It may cause resentment among volunteers who do not get corresponding support.

Such measures which would need to be taken if the 2008 Committee of Management does not attract volunteers with the requisite word processing knowledge, would only be temporary, specifically for the next year. This is in order to give the chance to the initiatives which have either already taken place (the Darebin Healthy Ageing Festival), are in progress (growth support program, including needs analysis; the Darebin Positive Ageing Project), or are in the planning stage (Volunteering Project) to yield results.

IS THE PRESIDENT (OR THE VICE PRESIDENT) REALLY NECESSARY?

As pointed out elsewhere in this Newsletter, if the President's only purpose is to chair meetings, one would not be necessary, as those present elect one of them to preside. However, there are several activities which are not covered by the responsibilities of the other officers of the Association.

Membership subscriptions account for approximately only one third of our expenditure. For our long term survival, we depend on grants from the Darebin Council, and, through U3A Network, from the state government. Applications for grants usually demand input from several committee members, including, in the absence of a grants officer, the President, if only to co-ordinate the application. Other involvements may be attending funding information sessions, and, if successful, reporting on how the funding has been applied, and the achievement or otherwise of its stated objectives.

Apart from being a significant contributor to our funds, the City of Darebin has provided in kind specialist support to the Committee. Contact with the Council, by participating in project group meetings, forums and workshops, enables the Darebin U3A representative to keep abreast of developments in the municipality, and

the opportunities these may offer our members, but also reinforce our connection with the community in which we operate.

Darebin Council's Aged Housing estates are a potential source of new members, with the added advantage that classes may be held at their premises. Two committee members have attended gatherings there, but it has not been possible to sustain the level of our presence which would be necessary for success.

The current policy of the state government on grants, is to give preference to those applicants who form partnerships with other not-for-profit organisations. Our strengthened relationship with SPAN Community House has resulted not only in an additional financial benefit, but also in-kind specialist support to the Committee, and an offer of administrative assistance. Two members of the committee have represented Darebin U3A in a project run by Thornbury Women's Neighbourhood House. Steps have been taken to foster collaboration with U3A's in neighbouring municipalities.

As the governing body of U3As in Victoria, the Network holds workshops on specific issues and conducts quarterly Council Meetings, to which Darebin U3A sends a delegate. The U3A Network encourages U3A's to appoint more than one delegate (several U3As have 2 or 3) to ensure continuity if one of them is unable to attend, but also to promote discussion from each individual U3A perspective on the topics raised from time to time.

All these commitments and opportunities entail frequent informal discussions, but, principally, participation in meetings. Committee members have deputised from time to time, but, recently, in three instances in as many months, Darebin U3A was not represented at certain meetings because they were held at the same time as others in which we took part. If for this reason alone, a person is required to share some of these activities. Whether this person is called a Vice President or any other name, is irrelevant.

NOMINATIONS FOR THE 2008 COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT

According to the Constitution and Rules of U3A Darebin Inc., the current committee will hold office until the AGM on 6 December 2007.

As U3A Darebin is an incorporated body, it is mandatory that certain office bearers be appointed, in order to satisfy legal requirements. Apart from the protection that incorporation provides its members, it is a condition of eligibility for certain funding, and the organisation cannot survive in the long run on membership dues only.

A nomination form for candidates offering themselves for election as committee members appears on page 17 in this Newsletter.

These notes will briefly describe the roles of committee members and some other positions essential for the effective management of the organisation.

THE OFFICERS OF THE ASSOCIATION

Rule 21 (1) calls for the following positions:

- a) President
- b) Vice President
- c) Treasurer
- d) Secretary
- e) Assistant Secretary

PRESIDENT

Both the Associations Incorporation Act 1981 and the Constitution and Rules of U3A Darebin Inc. are silent on the President's precise duties, except for convening – Rule 26(2) – and chairing – Rule 14(1) – meetings. On the other hand, Rule 14(2) dictates that in the absence of the President, those present are to elect one of their number to preside at the meeting.

In reality, the President has the responsibility of ensuring the smooth operation of the organisation and, as the need arises, marshalling the resources necessary for the performance of necessary tasks. Sometimes, the President may have to undertake such jobs personally, e.g. representing the organisation at various gatherings.

VICE PRESIDENT

As evident from the title, the Vice President acts as the deputy to the President. Although for some years, the committee has functioned without a Vice President, it may not be possible to take full advantage of the programs which have started, unless some of the tasks are shared.

TREASURER

The treasurer's duties are extensively defined in the Rules but, in summary, these are:

- Preparation of accounts for payment
- Banking of receipts
- Keeping Accounts (the computer system is QUICKEN)
- Reporting monthly accounts to the Management Committee
- Presenting an Audited set of Accounts to members at the AGM.

The Treasurer will also need to submit quarterly BAS reports to the ATO.

Whilst ideally the treasurer would be computer literate, this is not an obligatory requirement, as the Assistant Treasurer, though not a member of the committee is prepared to provide technical support.

SECRETARY

The Rules of Association of U3A Darebin Inc. specify several duties including:

- To keep and maintain the register of members
- To keep minutes of the resolutions and proceedings of each meeting (including the AGM)
- To be the custodian of all books and documents of the Association, and its Common Seal.
- To serve and receive Notices on behalf of the Association.

In practice, the Secretary also attends to the correspondence and plays a leading part in all secretarial, clerical and administrative processes that keep this organisation alive.

Because of the way in which Darebin U3A is currently structured, the Secretary would preferably be computer literate. What is more important, however, is that a Secretary be appointed; some letters may be hand written, and where the task requires skills which the Secretary does not possess, it would be outsourced.

ASSISTANT SECRETARY

This office was added to the Rules in December 1997, presumably in recognition of how onerous the Secretary's responsibilities can be. An Assistant Secretary would obviously strengthen the Committee, enabling it better to serve the members.

OTHER COMMITTEE MEMBERS

MINUTE SECRETARY

The Rules require the Secretary to keep, rather than prepare, the Minutes of meetings. As an officer of the Association, the Secretary needs to actively participate in proceedings at meetings, without being distracted by keeping notes.

Minutes of committee meetings may be handwritten, if necessary, and specialist professional assistance may be engaged for the AGM.

A volunteer who will take notes at meetings and then prepare the Minutes would be welcome by the new committee, otherwise alternatives would have to be considered, including outsourcing.

TUTOR CO-ORDINATOR

Consults with tutors as to their availability, draws up timetables, books venues (Northcote Town Hall, Northcote Library, SPAN Community House), searches for new courses and tutors to conduct them.

PROPERTY OFFICER

Issues keys, checks out equipment to venues other than Fairfield, reports on any maintenance or security problems at Fairfield, and ensures safety and cleanliness of the Fairfield premises. Is actively involved in procurement of equipment, maintains asset register.

OFFICE CO-ORDINATOR

Recruits office volunteers, familiarises volunteers with the office routines, provides training where necessary, and ensures volunteers' messages are followed up.

ORDINARY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Members are invited to nominate as ordinary committee members, to offer their opinions at committee meetings and otherwise assist in furthering the organisation's aims. The Rules call for a minimum of three ordinary members.

OTHER POSITIONS

The following positions may be held by any members who may not wish to participate at monthly committee meetings. They would need to liaise with an active committee member.

NEWSLETTER EDITOR (AND EDITORIAL SUB-COMMITTEE)

The Newsletter is the most effective medium of communication between the Committee and members, but also among members through the articles they contribute, as it reaches every member.

At least three Newsletters are issued every year, and flyers between Newsletters when circumstances warrant.

There are a number of steps involved which may be undertaken by different people:

- Eliciting and collecting material,
- Layout and Word processing of a master copy,
- Printing (using photocopier at the local MP's office, which provides double sided and stapled output),
- Folding and labelling (for which help is usually available) and delivery to Post Office for mailing.

Ensuring that the publication is of a standard worthy of its readership, containing information of interest and usefulness to the members has the potential of being a rewarding experience.

PUBLICITY OFFICER

Arranges and communicates press announcements, ensures up-to-date brochures are distributed, participates in interviews with the media.

A publicity sub-committee (rather than a single person) would enable sharing of the workload and wider coverage.

COMPUTER DATA MAINTENANCE OFFICER

Undertakes the maintenance of software and databases for timetables and class lists and runs regular virus checks and backups.

The systems currently installed and in use are:

QUICKEN Accounting
Microsoft Windows and Office (Word and Excel)
VET Anti-Virus

Also attends to the photocopier and printer, such as changing the toner.

MEMBERS' CO-ORDINATOR

Greets new members, familiarises them with the workings of the organisation and generally interacts with the individual members and with the committee, so as to facilitate the committee in becoming sensitive and responsive to members' needs.

U3A DAREBIN INC.

Reg. No A0028861A

**NOMINATION FORM
For COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT**

for 2008, for election to be held at the General Meeting at
Fairfield RSL, 9 Railway Place, Thursday 6th December 2007, at 1.30pm

You are invited to stand or nominate a fellow member to the Committee of Management for one of the following positions:

PRESIDENT
VICE PRESIDENT
TREASURER
SECRETARY
ASSISTANT SECRETARY

MINUTE SECRETARY
TUTOR CO-ORDINATOR
PROPERTY OFFICER
OFFICE CO-ORDINATOR
ORDINARY COMMITTEE MEMBER

I hereby nominate for

Proposed: (Name)..... (Signed)

Seconded: (Name)..... (Signed)

I accept the above nomination

(Nominee) (Signed)

The relative Rule of the Constitution appears on the reverse of this Form. In order to satisfy the requirement of Rule 23(1)(b), please ensure that this form reaches

The Secretary
U3A DAREBIN INC.,
P.O. Box 44
FAIRFIELD VIC. 3078

not later than Thursday, 29th November 2007

**NOMINATION FORM
FOR OTHER POSITIONS**

I nominate myself the following position (please tick)

NEWSLETTER EDITOR
MEMBER OF THE EDITORIAL SUB-COMMITTEE
PUBLICITY OFFICER
MEMBER OF THE PUBLICITY SUB-COMMITTEE
COMPUTER DATA MAINTENANCE OFFICER
MEMBERS' CO-ORDINATOR

(Name) (Signature)

Extract from CONSTITUTION & RULES, U3A DAREBIN INC.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS; VACANCIES

23.

- (1) Nominations of candidates for election as officers of the Association or as ordinary members of the Committee:
 - (a) shall be made in writing, signed by two members of the Association and accompanied by the written consent of the candidate (which may be endorsed on the form of nomination); and
 - (b) shall be delivered to the Secretary of the Association not less than seven (7) days before the date fixed for the holding the annual general meeting.
- (2) If insufficient nominations are received to fill all vacancies on the Committee, the candidates nominated shall be deemed to be elected and further nominations shall be received at the annual general meeting.
- (3) If the number of nominations received is equal to the number of vacancies to be filled, the persons nominated shall be deemed to be elected.
- (4) If the number of nominations exceeds the number of vacancies to be filled, a ballot shall be held. The ballot for the election of officers and ordinary members of the Committee shall be conducted at the annual general meeting in such usual and proper way as the Committee may direct.

PROPOSED ALTERATIONS TO THE CONSTITUTION & RULES OF U3A DAREBIN INC.

The pressing reason for the proposed alterations is the requirement of the Australian Taxation Office (ATO) for our Constitution and Rules to preclude the distribution of assets or income to the Members, if we are to continue enjoying our tax free status.

As any change to the statement of purposes or the rules of an incorporated association needs to be submitted for approval to the Registrar, and a fee is payable for each submission, the opportunity is taken to propose amendments to some other rules in order to eliminate ambiguities and inconsistencies, and also to enable the award of life membership to former members who, on the assessment of future committees of management, deserve that distinction.

The adoption of alterations to the statement of purposes, and the rules of an incorporated association calls for a special resolution.

The Associations Incorporation Act 1981, Section 29, sets the following conditions for the passing of a special resolution:

(2) (a) – at least three quarters of the “entitled members” present at the meeting vote in favour of the resolution;

(5) - “entitled member” is a member entitled to vote, according to the rules of the association;

(4) - the chairperson’s declaration that the resolution has been carried will be conclusive proof of that fact, unless a poll is demanded.

U3A Darebin Inc. Rule 18(1) provides for a minimum of 3 members to demand a poll on any question.

ALTERATION TO THE STATEMENT OF PURPOSES.

Clause 2. (3) of the Statement of Purposes, as inserted in December 1997, proclaims:

To operate this Association, as a voluntary, non-profit organisation.

Discussion

The ATO has recently (May 2007) published a booklet with the title:

TAX BASICS FOR NON-PROFIT ORGANISATIONS

according to which;

Non-profit organisations may be entitled to access tax concessions. (p1)

However, in order to qualify for those tax concessions, it is not sufficient merely to state the not-for-profit nature of the organisation.

The booklet explains:

A non-profit organisation is one which is not operating for the profit or gain of its individual members, whether these gains would have been direct or indirect. This applies while the organisation is operating and when it winds up. (p1)

A non-profit organisation can still make a profit, but this profit must not be distributed to members or other private people. (p2)

Any profit made by the organisation goes back into the operation of the organisation to carry out its purposes and is not distributed to any of its members. (p1)

The Tax Office accepts an organisation as non-profit where its constituent or governing documents prevent it from distributing profit or assets for the benefit of particular people – both while it is operating and when it winds up. These documents should contain acceptable clauses showing the organisation’s non-profit character. The organisation’s actions must be consistent with this requirement. (p1)

It is proposed to emphasise the non-profit character of U3A Darebin Inc. by expanding the present Clause 2. (3) in a manner believed to be acceptable to the ATO.

Also, as the proposed resolution refers to the purposes of the organisation, it logically belongs at the end of the statement of purposes. The current purposes (4) to (8) will, therefore, be re-numbered as (3) to (7), as they were up to November 1997.

PROPOSED AMENDED STATEMENT OF PURPOSE 2. (8) FOR SPECIAL RESOLUTION

To operate the Association as a voluntary, non-profit organisation and apply its assets and income solely in the furtherance of its above-mentioned objectives and no portion of its assets and income shall be distributed directly or indirectly to the members of the Association except as bona fide compensation for services rendered or expenses incurred on behalf of the Association.

RULE 3 – APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

According to the present wording:

- (1) *A person who applies for and is approved for membership as provided in these rules is eligible to be a member of the Association in payment of an annual subscription payable under these rules.*
- (2) *A person who is not a member of the Association at the time of the incorporation of the Association (or who was such a member at that time but has ceased to be a member) shall not be admitted to membership unless:
 - (a) *he /she applies as provided in sub-clause (3); and*
 - (b) *his/her admission as a member is approved by the Committee.**
- (3) *An application of a person for membership of the Association:
 - (a) *shall be made in writing in the form provided by the Committee; and*
 - (b) *shall be lodged with the Secretary of the Association.**
- (4) *As soon as is practicable after the receipt of the application the Secretary shall refer the application to the Committee for approval or otherwise.*
- (5) *Pending approval of membership by the Committee the applicant shall on payment of the stipulated first year's subscription be entitled to participate in the Association's activities but not vote at any meetings of the Association.*
- (6) *Upon an application being approved by the Committee, and provided that the first year's subscription has been paid, the Secretary shall, with as little delay as possible, notify the applicant in writing that he/she is approved for membership of the Association.*
- (7) *The Secretary shall, upon payment of the amounts referred to in sub-clause (5) and upon the Committee's acceptance of the applicant, enter the applicant's name in the register kept by him/her, and upon the name being so entered, the applicant becomes a member of the Association.*
- (8) *A right, privilege or obligation of a person by reason of his/her membership of the Association:
 - (a) *is not capable of being transferred or transmitted to another person;*
 - (b) *terminates upon the cessation of his/her membership whether by death or resignation or failure to pay the annual subscription or otherwise.**

Discussion

This rule does not reflect current custom, and, to the extent that this is ascertainable, has not been totally followed in the past. Members are usually accepted upon completing an Application Form and submitting it together with the annual subscription.

The rather elaborate procedure described in the current Rule seems to have been based on Model Rules, and would be suitable for organisations in which there are requirements to be met before admission.

If the membership level of this organisation ever reaches the point at which the order of admission to membership would depend on some factor such as the applicant's undertaking of volunteer activities, the Rule may again be revised to depict the circumstances.

It is proposed to alter Rule 3 so as to confirm current practice, to define members' rights and to incorporate honorary and life memberships, in recognition of services to the organisation.

PROPOSED AMENDED RULE 3 FOR SPECIAL RESOLUTION

- (1) Any person may apply for membership of the Association and shall be accepted as a member for the calendar year for which application is made, upon application in writing in the form provided by the committee and payment of the annual subscription.
- (2) The Secretary shall, upon such application and payment of the annual subscription enter the applicant's name as a member of the Association for the relevant calendar year, in the register kept by the Secretary.
- (3) Membership of the Association entitles each member to participate in all activities of the Association and vote at any meeting of the Association for that calendar year.
- (4) The Committee may confer life membership of the Association on any former member of the Association who has, in the opinion of the Committee, made a valuable contribution to the founding and progress of the Association. A life member may participate in activities of the Association with the exception of attendance at classes, and may vote at any meeting of the Association.
- (5) The Committee may confer honorary membership of the Association for the calendar year in which the honorary membership is so conferred on any person who, in the opinion of the Committee provides valuable services to the Association in that year. An honorary member may participate in activities, vote at meetings of the Association, and enjoy such other privileges which the Committee may grant.
- (6) The rights and obligations of a member cannot be transferred to any other person and terminate upon the death, resignation or expulsion of that member.

RULE 4(2) part of ENTRANCE FEE AND ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION

The wording of this Rule is now:

The Committee may require any member to pay the annual subscription of an amount to be decided by the Committee from time to time. Any annual subscription shall apply for that calendar year.

Discussion

The meaning of this Rule is not considered absolutely clear. Expressions such as "The Committee may require" and "any annual subscription" may be interpreted as though the annual subscription is optional; also, the impression may be gained that the Committee may change the amount of the annual subscription without prior notification to members.

PROPOSED AMENDED RULE 4(2) FOR SPECIAL RESOLUTION

The Committee shall set the amount of the annual subscription for each calendar year and that amount shall be set out on the application for membership form.

RULE 5 –REGISTER OF MEMBERS

At present, this states:

The Secretary shall keep and maintain a register of members in which shall be entered the full name, address and date of entry of the name of each member and the register shall be available for inspection by members at the address of the Public Officer.

Discussion

As membership is not continuous, but is renewable every year by a fresh application, the date of entry of each member is unnecessary and it is, therefore, proposed to remove that requirement.

The Public Officer is the association's main point of contact with Consumer Affairs Victoria, and in that capacity, has no relationship with the organisation's members.

Section 28 of the Associations Incorporations Act 1981 demands that the Public Officer's (rather than the association's) full address be reported to the Registrar. It would be impracticable for members to inspect the Register of Members at the Public Officer's residential address, which is, at any rate, subject to relatively frequent change, as opposed to the organisation's registered address, which is likely to remain constant in the long term.

PROPOSED AMENDED RULE 5 FOR SPECIAL RESOLUTION

The Secretary shall keep and maintain a register of members in which shall be entered the full name and address of each member and the register shall be available for inspection by members at the registered address of the Association.

RULE 19 – part of PROCEEDINGS AT MEETINGS

According to this Rule:

- (1) *A member is not entitled to vote at any general meeting unless all monies due and payable by him/her to the Association have been paid.*
- (2) *There shall be no votes cast by proxy at any general meeting of the Association.*

Discussion

As the organisation's transactions with its members are in cash, and membership does not take effect until the annual subscription has been paid, Rule 19(1) serves no useful purpose, and it is, therefore, proposed that it be deleted.

PROPOSED AMENDED RULE 19 FOR SPECIAL RESOLUTION

There shall be no votes cast by proxy at any general meeting of the Association.

RULES 22(5) and 22(6) part of COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT

Inserted in December 1997, these read:

- (5) *No member of the management committee may receive payment for the performance of any part of their role as a committee member. No person employed by the management committee, either directly or indirectly, may be a member of the management committee.*
- (6) *No member of the Management Committee may receive or acquire any of the organisation's revenue or property, except in accordance with the provisions of the Act in the event of the winding up or the cancellation of the incorporation of the Association.*

Discussion

The proposed amendments referred to earlier prevent any acquisition of the organisation's property or revenue by any member, including committee members.

Therefore, it is proposed to delete that part of the rule which allows for exceptions, and to combine the two clauses.

PROPOSED AMENDED RULE 22(5) FOR SPECIAL RESOLUTION

No member of the Committee may receive or acquire any of the Association's income or assets or receive payment for the performance of services rendered other than reimbursement for expenses incurred on behalf of the Association. No person employed by the Committee either directly or indirectly, may be a member of the Committee.

RULE 23(2) – part of ELECTION OF OFFICERS: VACANCIES

The first 2 clauses of Rule 23 read:

- (1) *Nominations of candidates for election as officers of the Association or as ordinary members of the Committee:*
 - (a) *shall be made in writing, signed by two members of the Association and accompanied by the written consent of the candidate (which may be endorsed on the form of nomination); and*
 - (b) *shall be delivered to the Secretary of the Association not less than seven (7) days before the date fixed for the holding the annual general meeting.*
- (2) *If insufficient nominations are received to fill all vacancies on the Committee, the candidates nominated shall be deemed to be elected and further nominations shall be received at the annual general meeting.*

Discussion

It is not certain that nominations for unfilled vacancies will be received at the AGM.

PROPOSED AMENDED RULE 23(2) FOR SPECIAL RESOLUTION

If insufficient nominations are received to fill all vacancies on the Committee, the candidates nominated shall be deemed to be elected and further nominations may be received at the annual general meeting to fill any vacancies on the committee.

RULE 25(2) – part of REMOVAL OF A MEMBER OF COMMITTEE

The first 2 clauses of Rule 25 state:

- (1) *The Association in general meeting may by resolution remove any member of the Committee before the expiration of his/her term of office and appoint another member in his/her stead to hold office until the expiration of the term of the first-mentioned member.*
- (2) *Where the number to whom a proposed resolution referred to in sub-clause (1) makes representations in writing to the Secretary or President of the Association (not exceeding a reasonable length) and requests that they be notified to the members of the Association, the Secretary or the President may send a copy of the representations to each member of the Association or, if they are not so sent, the member may require that they be read out at the meeting.*

Discussion

Obviously, the third word in Rule 25(2) should read “member” rather than “number”.

PROPOSED AMENDED RULE 25(2) FOR SPECIAL RESOLUTION

- (2) Where the member to whom a proposed resolution referred to in clause (1) makes representations in writing to the Secretary or President of the Association (not exceeding a reasonable length) and requests that they be notified to the members of the Association, the Secretary or the President may send a copy of the representations to each member of the Association or, if they are not so sent, the member may require that they be read out at the meeting.

RULE 29 – part of SECRETARY AND CUSTODY OF RECORDS

This rule at present asserts:

Except as otherwise provided in these Rules, the Secretary shall keep in his/her custody all books, documents and securities of the Association.

Discussion

Whilst the Secretary is responsible for safeguarding the organisation’s records and securities, these are physically located at the registered office.

PROPOSED AMENDED RULE 29 FOR SPECIAL RESOLUTION

Except as otherwise provided in these Rules, all books, documents and securities of the Association shall be held at the registered office of the Association.

RULE 31 – part of TREASURER AND FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION

This currently reads:

The funds of the Association shall be derived from entrance fees, annual subscriptions, donations and such other sources as the Committee determines.

Discussion

Whereas this rule mentions entrance fees as a source of funds, Rule 4. (1) states:

There will be no entrance fee.

In fact, no entrance fees are being charged, and there is no value in continuing this inconsistency in the Rules. It is therefore, proposed to remove the words “entrance fees,” from Rule 31.

PROPOSED AMENDED RULE 31 FOR SPECIAL RESOLUTION

The funds of the Association shall be derived from annual subscriptions, donations and such other sources as the Committee determines.

RULE 36 –AUDITOR

As this rule stands at present:

The Auditor(s) appointed shall be a member of some Institute of Accountants, or, if no such Auditor is available, shall be a person sufficiently versed in business practice to carry out capably the duties of Auditor.

Discussion

There is no reason why a member of either of the two recognised principal accounting bodies referred to in the Act would not be available to act as auditor; the Rule does not specify the basis on which a person would be judged to be sufficiently versed in business.

PROPOSED AMENDED RULE 36 FOR SPECIAL RESOLUTION

The Auditor(s) appointed to examine the books of the Association must be qualified in accordance with the provisions of the Act.

RULE 37(1) – part of SEAL

This declares:

The Common Seal of the Association shall be kept in the custody of the Secretary.

Discussion

As with the organisation's records, the Seal is physically located at its registered office.

PROPOSED AMENDED RULE 37(1) FOR SPECIAL RESOLUTION

The Common Seal of the Association shall be kept at the registered office of the Association.

RULE 39. WINDING UP AND CANCELLATION

This rule currently reads:

In the event of the winding up or the cancellation of the incorporation of the Association, the assets of the Association shall be disposed of in accordance with the provisions of the Act.

Discussion

Part VIII of the Associations Incorporations Act 1981 permits the distribution of assets to members in certain circumstances, and is, therefore, at variance with the stated requirements of the ATO in relation to non-profit organisations seeking tax exemption.

It is proposed to modify the wording of this rule so that it specifically forbids the distribution of the assets of the organisation to its members.

PROPOSED AMENDED RULE 39 FOR SPECIAL RESOLUTION

In the event of the winding up or cancellation of the incorporation of the Association, the assets remaining after such winding up or cancellation, and the satisfaction of all its debts and liabilities, shall be transferred to another organisation or organisations having similar objectives to the Association and which is not or are not carried out for the profit or gain of its or their individual members.

FORGET UNCLE SAM

DAREBIN U3A NEEDS YOU



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.

Reg No. A0028861A

U3A Darebin Inc. Newsletter
Number 47 . November 2007
PRINT POST No. PP30479/04

If undeliverable return to
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