

We warmly welcome all our new members and wish everyone a happy and fulfilling New Year.

FROM THE EDITOR

Happy New Year to everyone and a very warm welcome to all our new members and tutors!

In this newsletter you will find details of three more new classes starting this term. This brings the total number of classes to a staggering 33, compared with a dozen or so 10 years ago. It has also meant having to change the format of the Timetable which we trust is now more user-friendly.

We have received a wealth of contributions from members for this newsletter, from accounts of the exhibition *Australia's Muslim Cameleers* at the Immigration Museum to the wonders of modern technology for keeping in touch with loved ones overseas.

Most fascinating and moving for me personally is the life story of Grammatiki Michael, one of our oldest members who passed away last November. 'Gramma' was one of the most modest and self-effacing people and yet, not only did she write beautifully, but it turns out that, as a dressmaker, she created that most famous Cup Day dress worn by Jean Shrimpton in 1965!

One of the many joys of Darebin U3A is meeting so many wonderful people who have led such rich and interesting lives. Many members have told me how much they enjoy reading of people's life experiences, so please keep sending your stories to us.

Jill Craig

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MEMBERS' MORNING TEA

10.00 – 12.30, Monday 11 April
 at Northcote Senior Citizens Centre
 18A Bent Street Northcote

The committee invites all U3A members to an informal morning tea. We especially look forward to meeting our new members and tutors over a friendly cuppa and home-made goodies.

There will be a presentation on 'Growing Herbs – particularly in pots'.

After refreshments seasoned travellers, Odette and Albert Stuckey, will present a selection of slides from their extensive collection.

Please bring a plate to share.

CONTACT INFORMATION

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Or go to the website at ...

<http://home.vicnet.net.au/~darebinu3a/home.html>

Office hours during school terms:

Whenever possible a volunteer will be in attendance on week days as follows:

Mon – Friday: 10.30 am to 12.00 noon
and 1.00 pm to 3.00 pm

*Before visiting the office, please phone to check that somebody is in attendance.

2011 Committee Members

PresidentAudrey Grace
Vice-PresidentDon Stewart
SecretaryFrances Hennessy
TreasurerVacant
Assistant Secretary.....Elva Armstrong
Office Co-ordinatorPat Oswald
Property OfficerJean Garita
Newsletter Editor.....Jill Craig
Tutor Co-ordinatorCarmel Lee
Membership/Class Records...Tony Wild
Committee MemberDianne Beaumont
Committee MemberLorraine Carr
Committee MemberJim Logan
Committee MemberJudith Prosser
Committee MemberJan Stewart

Other Positions

Honorary AccountantBasil Conquo
Class EnrolmentsClaudia Sanzin
ArchivesLuciano Sanzin
U3A Network DelegateOdette Stuckey
Computer Consultant.....Russell Lennox
Assistant Editor.....Teresa Pitt

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Welcome to 2011. This is an important and exciting year for Darebin U3A - we have now entered our 20th year and we intend to celebrate! The actual date of our twentieth anniversary is Sunday 16 October. Put this date in your diary now – before you read on! We have booked the Preston Shire Hall for the occasion and the Darebin Council has covered the hiring cost, for which we are very grateful. (See page 4 for more details.)

Thank you all - our Annual General Meeting was once again well attended. At registration members received their choice of a U3A badge or a copy of the *First Ten Years* booklet. There were also five exciting door prizes: The first prize, of a \$50 voucher, was donated by Coles at Northcote Plaza. This was won by Elva Armstrong. Lucky Elva! This was followed by four bags of donated Christmas goodies. A big 'thank you' to Coles, the Community Pharmacy in Fairfield and members for their donations.

We were entertained by the Singers for Pleasure, who opened the proceedings with three songs, and members of the Yoga group gave a lovely demonstration of their 'standing poses' as a closing item.

Cr Trent McCarthy impressed us all with his entertaining and informative talk detailing the Council's freshly minted ten-year plan targeting activities and services for older persons living in Darebin - all with humour and without notes!

We ended the AGM 30 minutes ahead of schedule, and then moved smoothly through the dreaded Special General Meeting, tackling legal changes to our constitution, in half its allotted time. That left plenty of time to have a good chat and enjoy the sandwiches and cake provided by the RSL. We thank Maria, the chef at Royal Rose Bistro, for the afternoon tea, and Geraldine, manager of the RSL, for setting up the room and the tables so attractively.

Audrey Grace

2011 Committee of Management

All previous Committee members who nominated as candidates were re-elected at the AGM - see list in Contact Information on page 2. However, no nominations were received for the position of Treasurer and this position is currently vacant.

Urgent - Treasurer Needed!

Please help us find a volunteer for this essential role, preferably someone with book-keeping experience. This is not a very onerous role as we have the assistance of an honorary accountant who is thoroughly conversant with the computer accounting system. If you think you could help please contact the office or speak to one of our Committee Members.

RSL parking tickets

Those members who paid the \$10 fee for a ticket entitling them to park in the RSL car-park should have received it with their member's package. Please remember to park along the back wall. Please note that this ticket is for parking only.

The RSL now has only one membership level: full membership, with its entitlements to discounts and reciprocal rights. The annual fee of \$40 has now been reduced to \$25. If you have already paid for a parking ticket, you only need to pay an extra \$15 to upgrade to full RSL membership, on presentation of your parking ticket.

Have you visited the RSL since it was refurbished? It is pleasant and welcoming, with a comfortable lounge area. There is a large TV, and two computers are available for visitors' use. The pokies are tucked away. The bar also serves tea and coffee from an espresso machine. The Royal Rose Bistro provides well-cooked meals for lunch (closed Monday and Tuesday) and dinner (closed Tuesday). Light lunches for \$10 and senior's meals are also available.

Class Enrolments

Thank you to all those members who sent their membership renewals and class requests to the office by 30 November. Tony Wild was able to transfer your details on to the computer spreadsheets before Christmas and he and his helpers managed to process class enrolments in the first week of January. You will already have received your letter and class enrolment details. Your 2011 membership card was included. This does not replace the permanent member card in your lanyard, which has your emergency contact details inside. The 2011 card is simply proof that your membership is current. Please keep it in your purse or wallet as there may be times when you need to show it.

Some very popular classes had a large number of applications and unfortunately not everyone could be enrolled in the class of their choice. Your preference order helped us to place you as fairly as possible.

We now have three computer classes and happily there is no longer a waiting list. In fact there are a few vacancies to offer new members, which is wonderful!

To those members who have not yet re-enrolled, we suggest that you do so as soon as possible. We will do our best to place you in your favourite classes. If you have mislaid your Membership Supplement, which was included in the November *Flyer*, please contact the office for another copy.

Finally, it would be very helpful if you could memorise your membership number. If you include it in correspondence or when you leave a message at the office, your request can then be speedily processed. It also helps us if you include your telephone number with your message.

Attracting new members

In 2010, 85 new members joined Darebin U3A, but 70 members did not re-enrol, so the total increase of members for the year was only 15. Now, in 2011, another 75 members have not yet

re-enrolled. Unless we continually promote Darebin U3A and recruit new members, we would soon cease to exist. A while ago our net enrolment was actually decreasing, but thankfully we have been able to reverse this trend.

However, we do need to work continually at promoting Darebin U3A in our community. As one way of making ourselves known, we included some brochures in your membership mail-out, with some distribution suggestions. Please help 'spread the word', and please don't waste them – each brochure cost ten cents.

We have also started a '**walkers group**' who are posting our brochures in letterboxes in East Preston, around the new venue, and also in Thornbury, as we have very few members from that suburb. If you would like to join this fitness group, please contact the office.

Twentieth Anniversary Celebrations

We are keen to hear members' ideas about how to celebrate our twentieth anniversary on Sunday 16 October. Please contact the office with your suggestions and ideas, or to let us know if you would like to be on the planning committee. Members of long standing would be particularly welcome.

We are hoping to publish another commemorative booklet like that published for our 10th anniversary. Teresa Pitt has offered to help produce the booklet and would appreciate some help and input. Please contact the office if you would like to be involved.

Teresa is asking everyone to send in written recollections about your classes or your time on the committee, photos, and any other memorabilia. Please send these to Teresa, via the office, as soon as possible, and no later than the end of May.

Generous Donation from Officeworks

We purchase a lot of our equipment and paper products from Officeworks in Bell Street, Preston, and they have surprised us with the gift of a wonderful Canon inkjet colour printer

which is now installed to use with our office computer.

We are very, very grateful and delighted with this wonderful gift. A huge 'thank you' to the manager and staff of Officeworks, Preston.

Workshop for Tutors and Class Representatives

A reminder: Russell Lennox's second workshop to train Tutors and Class Representatives in the use of our two projectors for class presentations will take place on Thursday 27 January, 10.00 am – 12.00 noon. Please contact the office to book in; only five places are available.

DIARY DATES

Darebin Community and Kite Festival

Sunday 27 February, 11am – 5pm

This great community event will be held this year at Edwardes Lake Park, Reservoir. Note that it is very early this year. It is a large outdoor family fun day featuring entertainment and music to suit all tastes, a Kite Flying Field, kite-making workshops and lots of other fun activities for kids.

Darebin U3A will once more have our Booth there. You won't be able to miss it with its bright signage and photos of classes and events. Do call in to say 'hello' to the team.

Members' Morning Tea

Monday 11 April, 10 am – 12.30 pm

We are inviting all members, especially new members, to join us for morning tea in the main hall at the Northcote Senior Citizens Centre. This is a great chance to catch up with friends and meet new members. There will be a presentation on 'Growing Herbs – particularly in pots'. During the refreshment break you may wish to make some purchases. After morning tea, our intrepid travellers, Albert and Odette Stuckey, will present a selection of slides from their extensive travel experiences and study tours. Please bring a plate to share.

COURSE INFORMATION

Course Starting Dates

Term 1 commences on Tuesday 1 February and finishes on Friday 8 April. Please check the new-look **Timetable** on page 13 very carefully for course starting dates as some classes have later starting dates.

- **Computers for All** - this new class commences on Saturday 12 March from 10 am – 12 noon at Merrilands
- **Draw Then Paint** commences Tuesday 3 March, 1.30 – 3.30 at Fairfield Station
- **French Language and Culture** will resume on Friday 4 March, 2:30 – 4pm at Northcote Senior Citizens Centre.
- **Let's Talk Together** recommences on Wednesday 2 March at Span.
- **Line Dancing** recommences Friday 11 February at Northcote Senior Citizens
- **Scrabble** (2nd and 4th Monday of month) commences on Monday 14 February, 10am – 12noon at East Preston.

NEW CLASSES

Toning Meditation and Healing Circle

Facilitator: Audrey Grace

Last November Darebin U3A was fortunate to be offered a workshop in Toning Meditation by Dr Jaroslav Kovaricek – see report on page 7. This form of meditation is very simple, pleasant and undemanding physically. The focus is on creating harmony and positive energy. Audrey Grace is now offering to facilitate weekly sessions, with Jaroslav's full support and guidance by email.

We will meditate using the CD supplied by Jaroslav. We will then create a healing circle for the world, yourself and those close to you who are in need. This group is open to those who attended Jaroslav's workshop and also those who could not be included at that time.

Sessions will be held weekly on Tuesday mornings from 8.30 – 9.30 am, at the Northcote

Senior Citizens Centre, in the main hall, commencing 8 February.

If you wish to order your own CD, please bring \$20. If you would like to enrol in this class, please phone the office giving your membership number and phone number.

Italian Film Club

Co-ordinator: Claudia Sanzin

This monthly screening of selected Italian movies will appeal to our Italian members and to anyone else who is interested in the Italian language and Italian cinema. A gold coin donation would be appreciated to cover the cost of hiring the DVD or video. Please contact the office if you would like to join this group. We will meet at Fairfield Station on the fourth Friday of the month, 10.30 – 12.30 am, commencing 25 February.

Introduction to Philosophy

Tutor: Dr Peter Goldsmith

This eight-week short course will provide students with an understanding of philosophical thought through relaxed and informative discussions. Concepts and questions will be introduced in a way that builds our understanding and enables a sharing of ideas. For example, a question that emerges from the philosophy of the 'mind' is – if people have souls, what are they? Then there are 'ethical' questions such as - should we keep our promises? Should we not interfere with the liberty of others?

Dr Peter Goldsmith will facilitate discussions in a relaxed and exciting way. You will be both stimulated and challenged and be self-driven in your desire to build your knowledge in the areas you choose.

These weekly classes will be held on Mondays, 1.30 – 3.00 pm, at Fairfield Station, commencing 7 February. Please contact the office if you would like to join this class.

Disclaimer: The material presented in classes is at the discretion of the class tutor or leader and does not necessarily reflect the views of U3A Darebin Inc.

FIRST SEMESTER COURSES FOR 2011

<u>COURSE</u>	<u>TUTOR/CO-ORDINATOR</u>
Art Appreciation.....	Alison Laird
Book Discussion 1.....	Anne Clarke
Book Discussion 2.....	Elva Armstrong
Canasta.....	Claudia Sanzin
Charades, Trivia and Music.....	Noel Butterfield
Cinema Studies.....	Paul Michell
Computer 1.....	Russell Lennox
Computer 2.....	Russell Lennox
Computers for All.....	Nalin Sharda
Current Affairs.....	Dr Marko Beljac
Dinner Dancing.....	Ethel Fredericks
Draw Then Paint.....	Jane Savage
Female Archetypes in History and Legend.....Dr Jone Gaillard
French Language and Culture.....	Clement Nanbu
History of European Culture.....	Yana Ostapenko
Introduction to Philosophy.....	Dr Peter Goldsmith
Italian Film Club.....	Claudia Sanzin
Italian Language.....	Adriana Ficarazzi
Line Dancing.....	Lorraine Hegarty and David Lamb
Let's Talk Together.....	Christine Fittipaldi
Mah Jong.....	Nancy Keele
Needlecraft.....	Jean Garita
Painting and Drawing.....	June Pitman
Poetry Through the Ages.....	Noel Butterfield
Reading and Writing for Retirees.....	Rita Keller
Scrabble Club.....	Dorothy Hunt
Shakespeare.....	Albert Stuckey
Singing for Pleasure.....	Jo Laurance
Tai-Chi.....	Barry Watson
Toning Meditation and Healing.....	Audrey Grace
Yoga.....	Shyamala Benakovic

SOCIAL GROUPS

Morning Melodies

These events are held on the third Thursday of the month, 10.30 – 12.30, at Fairfield/Alphington RSL, commencing on 20 January. Morning tea and lunch are supplied. The total cost is \$15. We are arranging a group booking for U3A members and their friends.

If you would like to attend, please phone the office. We will book each month separately. The full timetable with guest entertainers is on our notice board.

Movie Club at Northlands

The **Ambassador Club** holds monthly movie sessions for people over 55 at Northlands Cinema complex. There is a very low annual fee of \$6 plus \$5 for each session. Full details will not be available until February. For further information and to join, go to the customer information desk at Northlands. Claudia Sanzin was a member last year when sessions were held on the 3rd Monday at 10.30 am and she thought other U3A members might be interested in joining this year as a social group.

FROM THE CLASSROOM

Charades, Trivia and Music

If you like to take part in Trivia quizzes and Charades, why don't you join us on Monday afternoons from 1.30 pm to 3.00 pm at the Fairfield Community Room, in the Fairfield Library complex? Come along and test your knowledge and you will be surprised just how much you know. We need new members, and we would love you to join our friendly, fun-loving group for a great afternoon's entertainment. So far we have learned the prompts for Charades, presented Charades, and tried quiz questions from *Who Wants to be a Millionaire?* Noel Butterfield is our quiz master with many years of experience in this field of entertainment. We hope to see you in the New Year!

Anne Partridge

Reading and Writing for Retirees

Rita Keller, the tutor of this class at Merrilands, has written to thank Darebin U3A for passing on information and free passes to the exhibition *Australia's Muslim Cameleers* at the Immigration Museum. The group went there for their last lesson before the holidays and thoroughly

enjoyed the exhibition. Two students wrote the following accounts for the Newsletter.

Australia's Muslim Cameleers

I would like to say thank you to Darebin U3A for having introduced a class for reading and writing at the Merrilands Community Centre. Because of this class we could visit the Immigration Museum, together with our teacher Rita Keller. This gave us the opportunity to 'unpack' stories of immigration from Victoria's past and present. We learned about the Muslim Cameleers, known in Australia as 'Afghans'. They came from Pakistan about 150 years ago.

Despite cultural and linguistic differences, they shared ancient skills and the Muslim religion. Gradually the cameleers added elements from their homelands. They extended their network of tracks and settlements through the Australian bush. The first settlements provided shelter for the cameleers as they came and went.

The Burke and Wills expedition demonstrated that camels provided the mobility and endurance needed for inland exploration. They are strong and could travel for days without water. They are more efficient than bullock or horse teams.

Brothers Faiz and Tagh Mohomet began importing camels and cameleers, and in 1893 they pioneered transport in the Western Australian goldfields. As many as two thousand cameleers and fifteen thousand camels arrived in Australia during the period from the 1870s to the 1900s. A small Muslim community was a feature of the Australian outback for more than fifty years, but when motor transport reached the outback during the 1920s, the era of the cameleers ended.

Australia's Muslim cameleers are well remembered by their descendants, but have been largely forgotten or misrepresented in the historical records.

Nicoletta Di Vincenzo

Pioneers of the Inland, 1860s -1930s

In those days when the cameleers came to Australia from Pakistan, they brought with them the camels to work. They worked hard from sunrise to dusk. The cameleers lived under shelters in camps. The cameleers were a small Muslim community and they never forgot their daily prayers. Some cameleers were literate, while others relied upon oral tradition, reciting poems and folk tales at evening campfires and celebrations. The cameleers rapidly proved their worth. During the early 1870s they joined exploring expeditions and extended their inland network to include mining towns, ports, remote pastoral stations and overland telegraph stations. They led as many as seventy camels in a team, securing loads of up to 600 kg with a single rope.

They built small mosques, halal butchers, vegetable gardens and date groves. When motor transport reached the outback during the 1920s, the era of the cameleers ended. Some cameleers married European or Aboriginal women. Their children were brought up in the Islamic faith, but with the passing of the elderly cameleers, this younger generation merged with Australian mainstream society.

Giovanna Romano

Toning Meditation Workshop

Last November I was one of the lucky U3A members to attend the Toning Meditation Workshop given by Dr Jaroslav Kovaricek. This experience was very timely and helpful for me as I was going through the stress of giving up smoking after 50 years!

The toning exercises are very simple and create a wonderful experience of harmony and peace. Yet they are also amazingly powerful and energising. The next day I was positively bursting with new life and energy! Since then I love greeting the morning by chanting these basic tones. It might sound a bit strange to the neighbours, but monks have been doing this for

centuries and it really works for me! As Jaroslav writes in his leaflet:

Using harmonious sounds can enhance our health, help us to control stress, improve our learning potential and create feelings of peace and happiness.

Heartfelt thanks to Jaroslav for so generously sharing his techniques and wisdom with us. Many thanks to Rita Keller and Audrey Grace for organising this workshop.

Jill Craig

Vietnamese Elderly Citizens Group

The following is an address by one of the volunteers who help with organising and translating in the U3A English for Vietnamese class. Vui came to Australia from Vietnam in 1984.

Hi, everybody. My name is Vui. I'm a student at the Neighbourhood House and I'm also a volunteer for the Indo-Chinese Elderly Refugee Association in Preston. Our group has been in Preston for more than twenty years. We used the room at the Neighbourhood House a few years ago for meetings, then we moved to the Migrant Resource Centre, and now we use the room at the Old Court House.

Why I became a volunteer: because of the old Vietnamese people needing some help and I have spare time.

What help can volunteers give the group?

You know, most of them can't speak English, their children go to work, and they stay at home alone all day. They get sick and feel lonely and depressed. Sometimes they want to go somewhere or do shopping, but don't know how to use the public transport system. The volunteers help them with everything, if we can, including filling in forms, contacting doctors, booking hospital appointments, reading important news from the government, etc. So, if the elderly people join our group, by this time, they feel happy and enjoy their lives. They are now part of the community and not isolated.

I think that volunteering is rewarding, fulfilling and fun. It benefits you and your community.

Through volunteering you can:

- Learn new skills
- Gain confidence
- Meet new people and make friends
- Try something you've always wanted to do
- Help others and your community
- Be active and improve your well-being
- Have fun.

In my opinion, helping people is happiness.

Vui-Huynh

Thank you, Nell

On Sunday 16 December, I picked up Nell Bell to take her to a barbecue at Edwardes Lake Park. She had just come home from a check-up, as the day before she had had a cataract operation. When we got to the park, a stream of people came to meet her. They were members of the Vietnamese class that Nell has taught English to for the last two years. They care for Nell very much and call her 'Mum'. We all had a great time that day.

Nell will not be able to teach English this year as she is to have some more operations through 2011, so she will step aside again.

Nell has been a tutor at Darebin U3A for many years. I first met Nell as a tutor for Needlecraft, then Story-telling, and the list goes on as we worked together with the Vietnamese group. Thank you, Nell, for all you have done and do for Darebin U3A, not just from myself but from all your friends at Darebin U3A.

Jean Garita

MEMBERS' CONTRIBUTIONS

A Personal Response to the AGM

It is rare to hear someone say that they enjoyed an AGM, but I can truly say that I really did enjoy the Annual General Meeting of Darebin U3A. This was a first for me as I only came to

live in Northcote from the Eyre Peninsula of South Australia in January 2010, and had never previously had the chance to join in U3A classes. Being a great advocate of lifelong learning, I was delighted to find that my local area afforded its senior citizens a wide range of diverse opportunities to engage mind, imagination and even body.

On first entering the venue for the AGM I was impressed by the arrangement of the tables that allowed people to interact – no formal rows of chairs. I deliberately chose to sit with some whom I had never met and appreciated the friendly atmosphere. Then, after a warm welcome from the President, the keynote speaker, Councillor Trent McCarthy, was introduced and I must say I found him both informative and entertaining –not surprisingly so, as when not involved in Council business he confessed to performing as a comic. He acknowledged the importance of the University of the Third Age – I think he said his grandmother was a member – and the contribution this organisation makes in an ageing demographic. I feel that he genuinely invited us older community members to be involved in the planning and development of the Darebin area.

As a newcomer I found the President's Report really interesting as it made me more conscious of the great variety of courses and the generous contribution that so many gifted men and women make as tutors. It also made me aware of the difficulties the Committee has in finding suitable venues and the support given by the Darebin Council to our organisation. New members need to be encouraged, particularly from the Thornbury end.

A rainstorm interrupted proceedings but did not prevent the yoga class from demonstrating their standing exercises in the outside area – most impressive.

The two visiting speakers, both younger women working with older people, were lively and interesting. It was good to hear from Nicola

Johnson of her work with the Darebin Aged Care unit, and from Fiona Van Arkadie as the Supported Access Worker with the Migrant Resource Centre, known as Spectrum, with which our U3A continues to engage.

The meeting came to an early and happy conclusion with the drawing of prizes and a welcome afternoon tea.

Philippa Wetherell

Keeping in Touch Electronically

Hi, Claudia here! Happy New Year to all our members

Someone suggested that I write an article for the U3A *Flyer* on the way I keep in touch with my relatives overseas, every day, at a very minimal cost. (You must have an Internet connection.)

Gone are the times when I used to telephone my mother and my sister every fortnight and then be afraid to look at the phone bill. Now I have no more fear. We are in the 21st Century and everything is electronic. This is a word that scares many mature people, but usually, with the help of our children or - more precisely- our grandchildren, we can overcome the fear of using the computer.

Most of the time, with a 'hand-me-down' computer, we can gradually learn to use the 'mouse'. Step by step we graduate to more sophisticated tasks than just playing games. And here we have the first step to communication: e-mail. This method has become so popular that every business or organisation you deal with will ask for your e-mail address.

At U3A Darebin we are lucky. We have Russell and Nalin to teach us, step by step, how to use e-mail and all the important rules to observe.

A second method of communicating is through SKYPE. This is a completely free service for people with the Internet. Last Christmas, my family and my sister's family decided to give us poor old mothers an easy way to keep in touch, and we both received a web camera. This is a

sort of 'magic eye' with an inbuilt microphone that you attach to your computer screen (you need the speakers) and pronto, you are able to talk and, best of all, *see* the person on the other side of the line. (So you have to be decently groomed!) For me this is something that came out of the imagination of Jules Verne - the telephone with visual.

For a set-up cost of less than \$100, you have the daily pleasure – yes, daily, because I call my sister every day - of exchanging news and gossip for as long as we like, and it costs nothing.

This method of communication is much, much better than e-mail. Using SKYPE you just talk and talk, no need to type and, for us New Australians, no need to worry about the accuracy of your spelling. If you have a loved one far away, I personally recommend this method of communication.

NB: Most Laptops or Notebooks now have the webcam mechanism incorporated.

Now for the Grand Finale - Facebook. This is an invention that I was not very keen on till a few weeks ago. At present my granddaughter is holidaying in Europe and she uses this method of communication to inform us in Australia of her movements. Day by day she posts a diary of her doings and photos of interesting attractions. One of the must-sees is a photo of the room and bathroom of every hotel she stays in. She writes very well, and expresses so well the novelty of the snow falling in London, the cold she felt at the top of the Eiffel Tower in Paris, and the grandeur of the Cathedral in Milan.

With this method of communication we are sharing her adventure rather than having to wait to hear her stories when she returns. As I said, I am still a novice with this method of communication, but I'm sure our computer tutors, Russell and Nalin, would be more than happy to help you enter the 21st Century.

Claudia Sanzin

IN HONOUR OF GRAMMA

Grammatiki Michael

17.2.1929 – 11.11.2010

We were very saddened by the news of the death of Grammatiki Michael on 11 November last year. 'Gramma', as she was known to her U3A classmates, was a longstanding and proud member of the legendary **Improving Your English** class. She contributed many beautiful poems, thoughtful articles and lovely stories for a number of U3A Darebin publications, commencing with *A Year in Our Life: Improving Your English (Language)* 1999. Along with other class members she also contributed a number of stories to the *Migration Memories* Exhibition at the Immigration Museum. U3A Network has published a book of these writings which includes an account by Gramma of her life story, told with a lovely clarity and simplicity. Here are some excerpts:

I was born in the year 1929 on the island of Samos, where Pythagoras was born. Some people call it Paradise. I am the third child in a family of five, three boys and two girls.

My parents owned a small farm. We kept chickens, a donkey and two goats for milk. The main income was the vineyard ... During winter the crop planted was potatoes which were sold in a greengrocery in spring ...

The worldwide depression had left a mark on our village. Money was scarce. My father became ill and worried. For two years, my mother carried on the best she could, struggling to maintain the farm and rear the family.

Gramma's father died in 1939 when she was 10 years old. The family's troubles became worse with the occupation of Samos during World War 2, which they all fortunately survived. We will take up her life story from the beautifully written eulogy presented at her funeral:

Peace brought opportunities and Grammatiki began training as a seamstress, a fine traditional vocation of Samian women. At first she practised locally in

Samos. Later her older brothers, who had moved to Athens, noticing her promise, helped her make the move as well and paid for her further training at an academy.

After graduation, Grammatiki ... accepted an offer of marriage mediated by her Aunt Eudoxia in Australia, and arrived at Melbourne's Essendon Airport on 6 December 1956. Within three weeks she was married to George Michael, a tailor of Cyprian origin. Together they built a boutique clothing business variously located around the Swanston and Collins Streets area.

George was a capable tailor who spoke English well, but it was Grammatiki's skills that often received attention. Her work stood out to those with an eye for quality. Dresses she made always sat well on the models who wore them. Close inspection of the seams and stitching also revealed a talent that stood apart from more industrialised work. Melbourne's clothing elite were drawn to her handiwork and by the mid-1960, Cup season after Cup season would typically feature at least one of her dresses, with photographs appearing in local magazines and newspapers.

*Grammatiki was, however, modest and held back also by her limited English. She was dutifully content in her role, loyal to her husband and family. With hindsight, and without overstatement, Grammatiki made a significant contribution to **Melbourne Cup fashions** in the 1960s and early 1970s, the legacy of which remains with us today. Testament to this is that her dresses continue to appear in retrospective reports of Melbourne Cup fashions. **Grammatiki's most famous dress is the 1965 mini-skirted shift worn by Jean Shrimpton at Flemington.** Without Grammatiki's skill, the simple shift is likely to have looked more like a potato sack that would have otherwise been forgotten by now.*

Sadly her husband George died suddenly in 1978 after twenty-two years of happy marriage, thus ending her career as a boutique dress maker. Having no children of her own, Gramma was very fond of her two nephews in Australia, sons of her younger sister. They had

a special bond with their Auntie who was often seen as a substitute mother. The eulogy continues with this lovely observation about Gramma's writing:

To improve her situation in Australia, Grammatiki took up learning English as an adult. She spent hours practising writing short stories and poems that illustrated her life and experiences. Her stories, like her garments, typically appeared simple at first. A closer look, however, revealed more and something special.

In spite of various ailments, Gramma rarely complained or asked for help. She valued her independence and kept her spirits strong. The eulogy ends with this moving tribute:

To those close to Grammatiki she represented love, warmth and happiness. She was an optimist with consistency and purity. Grammatiki always carried herself with poise and dignity while being pleasant. She avoided excessive materialism, preferring practicality, and was unselfish to an extreme. She will be sadly missed by all those who knew her. Grammatiki's spirit will, however, continue to live on in the hearts she touched, and will remain a guiding light within them into eternity.

Amen

We thought you might enjoy the following lovely samples of Grammatiki's writing.

... I remember my father taking us to Grandmother's place for lunch – I will never forget her Sunday's roast beef which was cooked in a hot-pot on the top of a tripod in the home's hearth. It was delicious. She always gave us macarons for dessert.

In those days we had special clothes to wear for Sunday. Every Saturday we were very busy preparing all the family clothes to be ready for next morning. We used to boil water with rosemary leaves, and with rosemary liquid we had to clean my father's black suit, and we had to polish his shoes. My aunty Mary used to come and teach us how to do it. She was a dressmaker.

Grammatiki Michael, from 'The New Sunday', in A Year in Our Life (U3A Darebin, 1999)

Two Seasons

Winter is the coldest part of the year. Snow covers the top of the mountains. The sea is very rough and the waves move on the surface and splash the rivers.

Grey clouds float in the sky. Sudden falls of very heavy rain. The atmosphere is misty and the sun disappears. Birds and animals hide somewhere to avoid the cloudburst.

Nature is asleep for a long time, but now it is time for her to wake up and prepare the earth for the next season.

This morning I had to get up early, to go to the hospital to have a C T scan. When I stepped out I saw the almond trees in my garden full of blossoms and sparkling drops of water covered them. Ice and snow over the fields. The temperature had dropped down to 2.3 degrees.

When the sun rose, the early morning scene was magnificent, with those sparkling drops of water it resembled the stars sparkling in the sky at night. Birds were flying around the trees singing and feeding from the buds.

All that impressed me, and is a reminder to me that Spring is around the corner.

Grammatiki Michael (in U3A Darebin *Flyer*, August 2008)

The Almond Tree

Tell us about the almond tree

Where did you find the idea?

To bring the spring down to earth

So early every year?

Still it is very cold and snow

Is falling on the fields.

The days are still so short

The sun has disappeared!

The buds and the birds

All nature is sleeping.

Only you hurry to wake up

So early every year.

Grammatiki Michael, in *A Year in Our Life* (U3A Darebin, 1999)

OUT AND ABOUT

On Jackson's Track

The members of Book Group 2 have been out and about again. Last year we visited Jindivic, where Daryl Tonkin, the author of *Jackson's Track*, lived in an Aboriginal settlement and raised eight children. Daryl and his brother started a timber mill and employed many people from the settlement. The mother of his children was Lionel Rose's aunt.

We were able to visit the Jindivic General Store where Daryl and other Aboriginal people traded so many years ago. The present owner of the store is a direct descendant of the original owners, and was very interesting to talk to. We also drove to the site where the settlement had been, but the government had moved all the residents out and flattened all the buildings many years ago, leaving no sign that Aboriginal people had ever lived there.

After a pleasant lunch at 'The Barn' we were able to wander through the flower and vegetable garden of the restaurant, where all the vegetables used by the restaurant are grown. It was very interesting visiting the places that we had read about, but sad that no trace remained to show that a thriving settlement had once existed.

The weather was great, the company was great, and once again our capable bus driver added to the enjoyment of the day.

Elva Armstrong

Autumn Newsletter

Calling for Contributions

We hope to publish our *Autumn Flyer* in early April with more members' writings, including Noel Butterfield's story from the Nullarbor.

Autumn Newsletter deadline: Friday 4 March.

Articles of 250 words or less preferred.

Please send all contributions to the Editor,
Jill Craig, at U3A Darebin

CLASS TIMETABLE: TERM 1, FIRST SEMESTER 2011

Course Title	Day	Time	Starts	Venue
SCRABBLE, 2nd & 4th Monday	Monday	10 – 12:00	14/2/11	East Preston Senior Citizens
HISTORY OF EUROPEAN CULTURE	Monday	10 - 12:00	7/2/11	Fairfield Station
ITALIAN LANGUAGE	Monday	10:30 - 12:00	7/2/11	Span
DINNER DANCING	Monday	12:30 – 1:30	7/2/11	East Preston Senior Citizens
CHARADES TRIVIA AND MUSIC	Monday	1:30 – 3:00	7/2/11	Fairfield Community Room
INTRODUCTION TO PHILOSOPHY	Monday	1:30 – 3:00	7/2/11	Fairfield Station
TAI CHI - BASIC	Monday	1:00 – 2:00	7/2/11	Northcote Senior Citizens
TAI CHI - INTERMEDIATE	Monday	2:00 – 3:00	7/2/11	Northcote Senior Citizens
TAI CHI - ADVANCED	Monday	3:00 - 4:00	7/2/11	Northcote Senior Citizens
TONING MEDITATION & HEALING	Tuesday	8:30 – 9:30	8/2/11	Northcote Senior Citizens
COMPUTER 1	Tuesday	10 - 12:00	1/2/11	Span
POETRY THROUGH THE AGES	Tuesday	10:30 - 12:00	1/2/11	Fairfield Station
DRAW THEN PAINT	Tuesday	1:30 - 3:30	1/3/11	Fairfield Station
BOOK DISCUSSION 1, 1st Wed	Wednesday	10:30 - 12:00	2/2/11	Fairfield Station
BOOK DISCUSSION 2, 2nd Wed	Wednesday	10:30 - 12:00	9/2/11	Fairfield Station
CINEMA STUDIES, 4th Wed	Wednesday	9:45 – 12:45	23/2/11	Fairfield Station
LET'S TALK TOGETHER	Wednesday	12:30 - 2:00	2/3/11	Span
NEEDLECRAFT	Wednesday	12:45 - 2:45	2/2/11	Fairfield Station
READING & WRITING FOR RETIREES	Wednesday	1:00 - 4:00	2/2/11	Merrilands
SHAKESPEARE	Wednesday	3:00 - 4:30	2/2/11	Fairfield Station
COMPUTER 2	Thursday	10:00 - 12:00	3/2/11	Span
CURRENT AFFAIRS, Fortnightly	Thursday	10:30 - 12:00	3/2/11	Fairfield Station
YOGA	Thursday	1:00 - 2:00	3/2/11	Northcote Town Hall
PAINTING AND DRAWING	Thursday	1:30 - 3:30	3/2/11	Span
ART APPRECIATION, 1st-3rd-5th Friday	Friday	10:00 - 11:30	4/2/11	Fairfield Station & Gallery visits
ITALIAN FILMS, 4th Friday	Friday	10:30 - 12:30	25/2/11	Fairfield Station
SINGING FOR PLEASURE	Friday	1:00 - 3:00	4/2/11	Span
FEMALE ARCHETYPES IN HISTORY	Friday	1:30 – 3:00	4/2/11	Fairfield Station
LINE DANCING	Friday	2:00 – 3:30	11/2/11	Northcote Senior Citizens
FRENCH LANGUAGE AND CULTURE	Friday	2:30 – 4:00	4/3/11	Northcote Senior Citizens
COMPUTERS FOR ALL	Saturday	10:00 – 12:00	12/3/11	Merrilands
MAH-JONG	Saturday	1:30 - 4:00	5/2/11	Fairfield Station
CANASTA	Saturday	1:30 - 4:00	12/2/11	Fairfield Station

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

96 102 102 so that we can explain our procedures in greater detail.

If undeliverable return to:



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Reg No. A0028861A

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Newsletter

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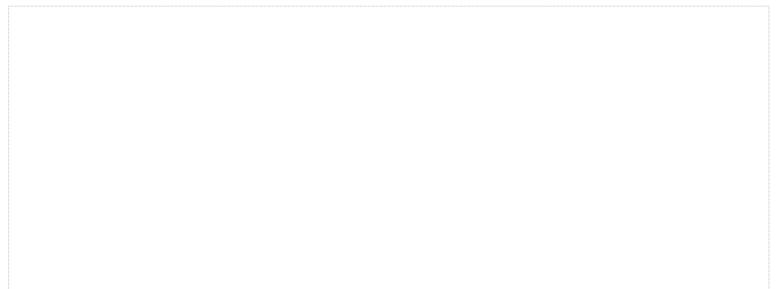
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