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## CALENDAR DATES

### Tuesday Talk

*Pathology Testing - Fact and Fable*

1.30pm Tuesday 28 February

Grandview Hotel, Fairfield

### Members Morning Tea

10am Monday 3 April

Northcote Senior Citizens Centre,

18A Bent St, Northcote

### Semester Dates & Holidays

**Term 1:** Ends Saturday 1 April

*Labour Day* - Monday 14 March

**Term 2:** Tuesday 18 April – 30 June

*(Easter Monday* - 17 April)

*Queen's Birthday* - Monday 12 June

**Term 3:** Monday 17 July -

Friday 22 September

**Term 4:** Begins Monday 9 October

## News

### Members Morning Tea - 10am Monday 3 April

Everyone is invited to this U3A Question & Answer session for new members. An opportunity to socialise, share your first term experiences and have a delicious morning tea.

This event will be held in the **Northcote Senior Citizens Centre**  
**18A Bent St, Northcote.**

*Please bring a plate to share, and don't forget to collect your door prize ticket when you arrive.*

### Welcome to our 2017 Tutors

On 25 January the Committee hosted a lunch at the Grandview Hotel in Fairfield to welcome new and returning tutors. Some formalities and much informal discussion ensued. Many thanks to all who volunteer their time and expertise to provide classes.

### End of Year Celebration

Our Annual General Meeting and celebration was held at Darebin RSL on Tuesday 6 December 2016. After the formal meeting agenda, our guest speaker from Darebin Council outlined the World Health Organisation's *Global Aged Friendly Cities* and local initiatives. This was followed by performances by our *Line Dancers* and *Singing for Pleasure* group. The later's rendition of 'Aussie Jingle Bells' was particularly well received...



*Jingle Bells, Jingle Bells, Jingle all the way, Christmas in Australia on a scorching summer's day.*

(If you missed this, the original is online <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OnJ8jsw4BS0&feature=youtu.be>)

After the entertainment, we rounded out the afternoon with a lavish Devonshire tea.

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Office hours: 10.15am – 12.15pm Monday to Friday during term times

## From the Committee

### 2017 Committee of Management

President	John Pinniger
Vice-President	(vacant)
Secretary	Ann Richie
Treasurer	Brian Hoban
Course Coordinator	Annette Davis
Volunteer Coordinator	Alison Daams
Property Officer	Jean Garita
Newsletter Editor	Janet Marlow
U3A Network Delegate	Julie Ryan
Web & UMAS Manager	Col Purchase
Members	Jan Gross Estera McKenzie

### Non-committee positions

Publicity	Margaret Monument
IT Consultant	Russell Lennox

### Enrolment Days

Last December, we experimented with opening the Fairfield office for 3 days to allow members either to renew and pay their 2017 membership, or to bring in their forms and get our wonderful team of volunteers to enter it online for them. They were highly successful and this meant that our Office staff and volunteers were very well advanced with the process by the time we closed on 9 December, allowing us to have a break over Christmas and New Year.

**Enrolment Days** have demonstrated several advantages. They speed up the process of renewals and avoid leaving a backlog of data entry to be done in January, when many of us are away. It allows us to process a large number of memberships on the spot, and to quickly confirm *some* class enrolments - as always, heavily subscribed classes can't be confirmed until January. Members can also ask questions of volunteers and committee members, or discuss ideas for new classes, venues etc.

While it is handy for many people to join and renew online, there is a loss of personal contact especially for new members. We really want everyone to feel that, as members, they are a vital part of a self-run volunteer organisation. Explaining how the classes, tutor system and Office/IT systems work helps make the organisation more understandable for people – and as volunteers ourselves, we are always interested in making use of people's skills and experiences.

### THINGS TO BE DONE!

The Committee is looking for people with expertise in a number of areas, as volunteers are essential for U3A to continue to offer classes and activities for over 50s in Darebin. We are always looking for willing helpers - below are some of the tasks we currently seek assistance with, and which do not require an added commitment of joining our committee.

**Applying for Grants:** people who have previous experience in this would be most welcome, working with Class Coordinator Annette Davies at various times during the year when a number of grant applications come due – the first round is due in March.

**Webmaster/UMAS system:** Web & UMAS Manager Col Purchase is seeking someone with IT communication skills who is interested in keeping our web site up to date and/or assisting with UMAS. You may know someone who is not a U3A member but might like a volunteer role - ask them, then if they are willing we will contact them to discuss what's needed.

**Seasonal Admin:** We have some jobs that only need to be done seasonally, however they do require learning a bit about our UMAS system.

**General Volunteers:** Join our band of willing Office Volunteers and Social Events set up people – we provide training, occasional lunches and much gratitude.

*If you have a desire to help in any way, please contact the office by email [info@u3adarebin.com.au](mailto:info@u3adarebin.com.au) or phone 9489 2103 and we will be in touch.*

### Committee Position Vacant

We are seeking a VICE PRESIDENT, a role for someone willing and able to help keep U3A Darebin alive!

## Coming Soon

### Tuesday Talk: Pathology Testing - Fact and Fable

1.30pm Tuesday 28 February

Grandview Hotel, 429 Heidelberg Road, Fairfield

Pathology is a field which has developed since the 1850s and recently advanced rapidly, with Australia having one of the best systems in the world. There have been many myths and misunderstandings in Medicine in the past, and Pathology laboratories have been at the forefront of dispelling some of these.

Presenter Julie Ryan has worked in the Pathology field for many years and enjoys spreading knowledge about this field of Medicine. In this talk, Julie will speak about some popular fables and their origins, such as Vampires, Werewolves, Dwarves and Goblins. Do or did they actually exist!

Come along for an interesting, entertaining presentation on these popular fables. Join in the Question & Answer session to find out more.

*Gold coin donation.*

U3A Darebin members and friends are invited to arrive around 12.30pm for lunch prior to the talk.



The Grandview Hotel has a good menu at reasonable prices; Seniors meal discounts are also available.



*World's tallest man?*

## Day Trippers 2017

### VISIT TO THE NEW CHADSTONE CENTRE

Would you like to check out the new developments at Chadstone? Here is your chance to do so - join us in taking the free bus from Federation Square.

WHEN: Tuesday 28 February

MEET: 10.15am outside the ACMI Theatre, Flinders Street side of Federation Square (opposite St Paul's)

BOOK: By Friday 17 February, phone Mary 9481 0992

**Limited numbers**

### FURTHER VISITS

During the year we will revisit the COSTUME COLLECTION at Bulleen and the POLICE MUSEUM to check out their new displays. Visits to the CHINESE MUSEUM in Bendigo and the AVIATION MUSEUM at Moorabbin Airport are also in the pipeline.

**WANTED** - ideas for excursions! If you know of some hidden gems in our beautiful city, please contact the office with details of your suggested trip.



*Melbourne From The East (detail) by Peter Schinkel*

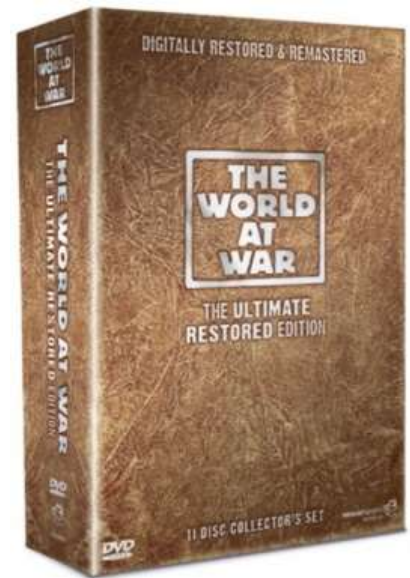
## From the Classroom

### New class proposed for Term 2

**The World at War** Tuesdays 12 noon -1.30pm from 18 April 2017

This course charts the history of war from 'The Great War' to 'Vietnam – the Chopper War'. The title of the unit is taken from a compilation of fascinating DVDs of the same name, beautifully narrated by Sir Laurence Olivier. This magnificent series will be used as reference material to punctuate the main thrust of the course – 8/11 DVDs – each one self-contained and running for 60 minutes each, thus allowing for discussion and personal reflection. The main bulk of the course is based on 'The War File' series with an obvious focus on World War Two.

The DVDs are superb, including action and information based on rare Nazi archives and related material. It is envisaged that the course will run for 10 weeks (one term) and continue term by term if there is sufficient interest.



*Noel Butterfield (Tutor)*

### Dance Tutor Wanted

We have members interested in a new Line Dancing class. If you or someone you know would be interested in volunteering to lead this activity, please contact our Course Coordinator, Annette Davis, at the U3A Darebin office: email [info@u3adarebin.com.au](mailto:info@u3adarebin.com.au) or phone 9489 2103.

### Needlecraft production



Last year the Needlecraft groups made 212 items for donation to KOGO (Knit One Give One). These included babies' clothes, beanies, gloves, scarves, 13 double hat-and-scarf sets and a variety of soft toys. Additional items were donated to the Brotherhood of St Lawrence.

Thanks to all our knitters and to class convenor Jean Garita who carefully packs and delivers all the knit-ware and hand-crafted toys for distribution by KOGO and the Brotherhood.



If you have unwanted balls of yarn, particularly machine-washable acrylic or wool mixes, we welcome donations at our Fairfield office. The Needlecraft knitters are already making clothes for KOGO to distribute before next winter. Even a single ball can be useful.

## Our Stories

### Mary de Bortoli

If you are a U3A Darebin member, chances are that you know, or know of, Mary de Bortoli. Mary is the organiser of our Day Trippers program, an office volunteer. She is also a long term member of the Tai Chi and the Line Dancing groups, performing at U3A functions and celebrations such as Seniors Week at Federation Square. Mary also contributed to the book *Learning and Sharing: 25 years of U3A Darebin*, our 25 year history, where she explains that she joined U3A Darebin 'because my family decided to drag me kicking and screaming into the 21st Century by giving me a computer'. This led her to join Russell Lennox's computer class, which was 'stomach churning' at first, because she was fearful she would make a fool of herself. But instead, she found acceptance, support and friendship. Her computer has become a part of her life and she now regularly consults 'Mr Google'. She also says joining U3A was a major turning point in her retirement years and opened up new worlds for her.



Mary was born in a bark hut built by her father in Licola, a small and isolated settlement in Gippsland where her father was working on a farm after migrating from the north of Italy between the two world wars. The hut had no running water. Mary describes her mother and father as very strong mentally. She has a wonderful memento of this time – an old Italian language newspaper article with photos, which tells part of her father's story and how, with several other men, he was able to earn enough money to move his family to Melbourne - by getting rid of a plague of rabbits on the property and selling their skins.

Mary moved to Melbourne with her parents and older brother when she was about two and a half years old. She has many memories of going to a Catholic Girls' primary school in Carlton, the teachers she liked and didn't like, and playing in the 'trenches' dug in the Carlton Gardens during the war years. She also remembers scary trips carrying a candle to a backyard dunny at night, as well as being with her parents meeting friends arriving from Italy by ship.

Mary is very grateful she grew up at a time when it was relatively easy for young people to get a job. Her parents wanted her to have an education and, with help from a diocesan scholarship, she was able to complete matriculation and then primary school teacher training. At the same time, Mary is very aware of the obstacles women faced at the time, such as lack of equal pay and restrictions on married women's employment in the teaching service. She's very grateful to the women who led the way in changing this situation. Interestingly, Mary's first teaching appointment was at the Northcote Primary School in Helen Street. Her teaching skills, concern for children's education, and her 'people skills' were clearly recognised by the Department and over the years, she taught in the primary and post-primary sectors and was principal of a number of schools in Melbourne and suburbs before retiring.

Family and friends and being involved in the community are very important to Mary. So too is going to the footy to watch Carlton, her 'beloved Blues', play. Mary believes there is a really good feeling at U3A Darebin and it provides much of the friendship she needs. She certainly adds to that 'good feeling' – Mary has a great sense of humour. Her Day Tripper outings have a band of followers and are a much appreciated part of the U3A program, and her willingness to help out in many ways has contributed to our organisation enormously over the years. Thanks Mary.

*Robyn Hartley*

## A little bit of her story

Like most U3A Members I have had a 'Number of Lives'. I have lived in many houses and in many parts of Victoria, including Newlyn, Creswick, Bendoc, Benalla, Toolamba and Bendigo. Seven years ago my husband, Kevin and I did a 'concrete change' to Melbourne and settled in the suburb of Bellfield.

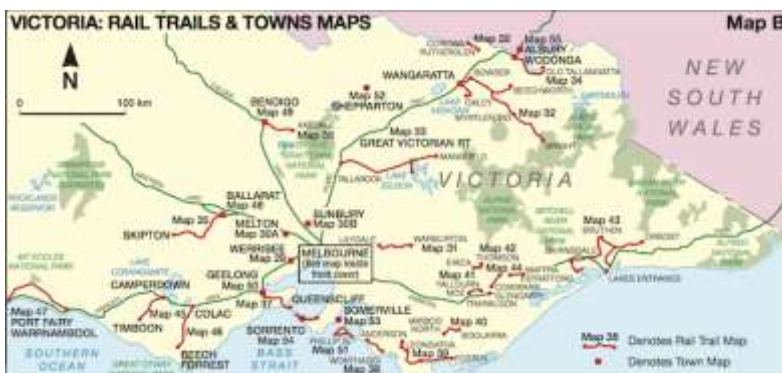
It has been another interesting time for us as we have been able to pursue many interests that were not readily available in Country Victoria. I have been able to get to know Melbourne by bike and have explored most of the bike routes, so cycling has introduced me to some of the most scenic parts of Melbourne. As well I have explored much of Melbourne by foot over the past five years and have a never ending list of places still to go. This year I am working through a list of 'The Top Ten Pubs in Melbourne'. Once again I am finding new and interesting places to visit.

My interest in U3A Darebin came through the Scrabble Group, now 'in recess', and on my volunteer form I must have ticked the Minute Secretary box. Before I'd thought about it I had a phone call from Robyn Hartley, the then Committee Secretary - I found this quite an easy job to do as merely had to attend the committee meetings, take minutes and send them out - a couple of hours work a month. However in 2016 the Committee was short of a Secretary and, as the organisation cannot function without one, I took on that role. This is a bit more time consuming and I have been on a fairly sharp learning curve (as has the whole committee ) due to the introduction of new technology and the need to find different ways of doing things, especially given the steep rise in postage.



I have stayed on in this role into 2017 because I discovered how important U3A Darebin is to its members, offering new learning opportunities as well as social contact. I have great admiration for the Committee members and the Tutors who manage to keep everything bubbling along. I hope to continue my commitment to U3A Darebin for a few more years. This year I have increased my commitment and am tutoring a class called 'Little Bits of History'. I have a great interest in history and am quite excited with the opportunities this will give me to meet new people and develop my knowledge of those 'things I always wanted to know'.

My husband Kevin worked for many years as a Forester, hence the moves around Victoria. Now in retirement he grows Bonsai. A very fitting life activity it seems to me. We have three adult children - one living in Monbulk, one in Gordon and one in Beechworth. We have nine grandchildren ranging in age from 7 to nearly 20 years old so our commitment to grandchild minding has diminished remarkably - almost to the point where we are merely fun to tease, and *might* give them money...



I expect one day to return to country Victoria, but not just yet!!!

*Ann Richie*

For maps of bike paths in Victoria, visit <http://www.bikepaths.com.au/map>

## Out & About

### From U3A Network Victoria

From March this year, the Network Victoria office will relocate to the ground floor of its current building (341 Queen Street, Melbourne). For more updates about U3A Victoria, visit <https://www.u3avictoria.com.au/network-news/>

The Network's Development Support Officer (DSO) Harry Dobson is retiring in August and a person to fill this role is currently being sought. This is a paid position and initially will be for 10 hours a week working alongside Harry to learn on the job. The DSO need not be a member of U3A but it would be an advantage to have a good knowledge of the organisation.

More details are available by emailing [president@u3avictoria.com.au](mailto:president@u3avictoria.com.au)

### An Unexpected Encounter

During a recent holiday in Portland, my friend and I saw this koala at close range sitting in quite a small tree on the edge of a lookout parking area.

Locals said he/she was often there and didn't seem to be worried by visitors. I had the feeling that this was a wise animal who knew a thing or two about life and survival!

*Robyn Hartley*



### Beware, 'predictable' energy bills can cost you more

A cautionary tale from a U3A member who also subscribes to the Consumer Advocacy group CHOICE.

*Origin* emailed a reminder that our contract needed to be renewed in January and offering us a 'predictable' billing option. This involves paying the same amount per month throughout the year, billed quarterly, regardless of how much gas you actually use. The amount they offer is supposedly based on **averaging out your past and your predicted annual usage**. Problem was they were offering us a deal that meant we would be paying \$150 a quarter rather than the \$110-\$120 we usually pay. When I called to question how they arrived at this figure, the very polite call centre operator pointed out that this deal meant 'you can use as much gas as you like without being charged extra'. As a two-person household with only a gas cook top and 'instant' hot water system, we'd be struggling to make it to the \$50 per month, even with a constant flow of house guests.

Moral of the story: when you're offered these deals (gas or electricity), go over your last 12-24 months of bills and average them out yourself, don't rely on what your provider tells you is a good deal!

## Our Privacy Policy

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

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

We also ask you for personal details to provide statistical data to government funding agencies. This is a requirement for receiving government grants and 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 please telephone our office 9489 2103 or email [info@u3adarebin.com.au](mailto:info@u3adarebin.com.au) so that we can explain our procedures in greater detail.



This newsletter is printed with assistance from the office of David Feeney, MP for Batman

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