



AUSTRALIA

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Even the audience came armed with ukuleles at Wallsend, NSW.

This issue:

■ Member reports:

- 🔊 *WA Conference first in five years*
 - 🔊 *SA toeing the line*
 - 🔊 *Queensland shaking their bootee*
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 - 🔊 *U3A Online attracts Latin lovers*
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From the Editor

Where have all the volunteers gone? Pete Seegar could have written a song about it. Difficulties finding volunteers is a problem acknowledged everywhere, not just U3A and not just Australia. Charities Minister Andrew Leigh said his national tour of 'town hall meetings' revealed the huge challenge of finding volunteers while the National Strategy for Volunteering released reports on the 'great resignation' of volunteers.

Volunteering Australia says formal volunteering has slumped from 36% in 2010 to just 24%, and 83% of organisations need more volunteers. There is a long-term decline exacerbated by the impact of Covid-19.

International research revealed that 44% of the global volunteer workforce stopped volunteering over the 4 years 2018-2021, a loss equivalent of 48 million full-time volunteers.

Studies have come up with tips to retain voluntary workers: make efforts towards offering more flexible arrangements; improve support from volunteer coordinators and fellow volunteers; provide volunteers more autonomy and voice; and minimize burnout by checking in to make sure they have whatever is required to cope rather than just leave people to sink or swim. Promoting a well-supported volunteering ecosystem is in the interests of both volunteers and society as a whole.

Relevant to U3A is that among people aged 55 and over, a change in marital status such as the start or the end of marriage is associated with a greater likelihood of starting volunteering. Factors associated with stopping volunteering are moving house and undertaking long caring hours. Of course when U3A started, many women over 55 were not in paid employment and must have found U3A a Godsend. Now it is a societal expectation and an economic necessity to be in full employment to 65 and even beyond.

Click on this [help sheet](#) from Our Community that lists practical steps for boosting your volunteer base and make sure you read the link it contains on ways to thank your volunteers. A piece of management advice which has always stayed with me is that you reprimand someone in private but you praise them in front of the biggest audience possible.

Above all, make it fun. The dress-up photos in this issue prove members are certainly not averse to having fun and making it fun for their fellow members.

Hope you enjoy this issue. My apologies for it being so late but I was awaiting an answer from OneMusic to some copyright questions I had put to them (see SA article).

Deadline for next issue of this Bulletin is Wednesday 22 March.

Very best wishes for the coming holiday season.



*Claire Eglinton
U3A Lower North &
U3A South Australia*

From the Chairman

A recent discussion with committee members from a number of local U3As centred on the uniqueness of the U3A membership engagement model which is based on volunteer group leaders meeting weekly with group participants to share their knowledge.

The general view of those involved in the discussion was that around 8% to 10% of the members of each local U3A is a volunteer tutor / activity leader. Of the 100,000 plus U3A members in Australia, we have approaching 10,000 members maintaining close to weekly contact with around 90,000 older Australians. As an organisation, we are proud of the excellent work of these volunteers who are not only sharing their knowledge and experience but are trusted community connectors for the members attending their classes and activities.

It is pleasing to note the U3A organisation has established over many years a strong community connection network that provides older Australians with classes and activities which are not only engaging but contribute to counter loneliness and provide a point of contact for members to source information to support their Health and Wellbeing.

As our State networks continue to share knowledge and experiences with each other it is not surprising that governments (Federal, State and Local), other peak bodies and research organisations are approaching U3A to collaborate with U3A to gain a better understanding of the needs of older Australians. Yes! We are being recognised and listened to.

U3AAA delegates at their meeting on 2 November approved the proposed Constitution for the incorporation of U3A Australian Alliance as U3A Australia a company limited by guarantee in which each State network, ACT and U3A Online will be a shareholder. The documentation is being prepared for sharing with our member networks as part of the incorporation process.

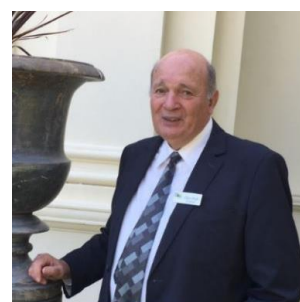
The significant benefit that will initially accrue to our member networks and in turn benefit our local U3As and their members is the elevation of a number of the collaborative relationships developed by our member State networks to a National level and provide a two-way communication of the needs of our U3A members to all levels of Government.

I would also like to recognise the good work of the Queensland and Victoria U3A Networks in collaborating with nbn, government and other support organisations to support the development of the digital literacy skills of older Australians in their States and their preparedness to share those relationships with the other State networks.

Another demonstration of collaboration is the support the U3A New South Wales Network is providing the U3As in Tasmania and some in Western Australian and Northern Territory with Insurance coverage included in an Associate Member arrangement.

I acknowledge the good work of all member U3As and the commitment of their volunteers to ensuring U3A in Australian can look forward to a bright future. Let us all look forward to the future with optimism and enthusiasm.

Glen Wall
Chair,
U3A Alliance Australia



WESTERN AUSTRALIA

ARMADALE COMES UP TRUMPS: CONFERENCE A GREAT SUCCESS!

The 2022 State Conference held on Thursday 20 and Friday 21 October at Armadale attracted over 100 participants and few would have gone away disappointed. Armadale U3A, who hosted the conference, in conjunction with the WA Network, are to be congratulated on the excellence of their organisation.



From left: Sheila Shenton (Conference Director), Ruth Butterfield (City of Armadale Mayor) and Peter Alcock (U3A Network WA Past President) Photo courtesy Film Crew

Due to the Covid-forced cancellation of the 2020 conference, this was the first state conference in WA for four years. It is sincerely to be hoped that the next one will not take so long. Conferences such as this one are a great opportunity for U3A members to emerge from their local groups and mix with people from U3A groups around the state.

There was a great variety of speakers – all very accomplished. Professor Peter Newman from Curtin University opened the conference with a lively talk about urban development, the environment, and managing population growth in a sustainable way. He emphasized that Western Australia, with its advanced solar energy development, and the largest deposits of lithium in the world, was uniquely placed to lead Australia, even the world, in the vital changes that have to be made to reduce emissions in the coming decades.

Bill Bunbury spoke about how we communicate with others throughout the world. He particularly emphasized the idea of ‘many maps’, citing the ways First Nations people have communicated over thousands of years. Geoff Kaye, gave a very interesting and amusing talk

on miscommunication and illusions. Julie Fearn-Pheasant presented communicating through art. What's in a picture: a lot! One of the stand-out sessions on the afternoon of the first day was a jazz concert featuring The Melody Makers. This worked very well, utilizing the immediate after lunch session – no post-prandial napping here.



Communicating through music – The Melody Makers

Among the many excellent aspects of the conference was the catering done by Year 12 home economics students from Armadale Senior High School.

On the second day, the highlight was Dr Brett Biddington, who travelled from Canberra to address us on identity, community and society, with particular reference to the online world. In the shadow of recent major criminal hacking of databases in Australia, he urged us to take back control and maintain the integrity of who we are. Do not give away your personal data except to very trusted organisations.

Peter Flanigan
WA Network



TRIVIA ABOUT COSSACKS AND IRISH LABOURERS

While writing the editorial I uncovered this trivia about 'Where Have All The Flowers Gone'. In 1955 Pete Seeger, largely unemployable during the McCarthy era, found inspiration when he read the lyrics of 'Koloda-Duda' a Cossack folk song: 'Where are the flowers, the girls have plucked them. Where are the girls, they've all taken husbands. Where are the men, they're all in the army', referenced in the Mikhail Sholokhov novel *And Quiet Flows the Don* (1934). Seegar said he borrowed the melody from an Irish song with the words 'Johnson says he'll load more hay'. He simply slowed the tune and incorporated the new lyrics. Since then, every performer imaginable has done a cover version (in all languages and on all instruments including bagpipes) and it was declared one of the Top 20 political songs. The Pete Seegar recording was inducted into the Grammy Hall of Fame in 2002. These days he would have every man and his dog chasing him for infringement of copyright.

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Line dancing has been on the U3A Tea Tree Gully program for about three decades and over those years it has developed from beginner level short dances to advanced level with lots of dances in between. It's no longer just country music but all genres of music. Aficionados say, line dancing may not be for everybody, but you will never know if you don't give it a go. Benefits of line dancing are, apart from the obvious physical exercise, are mental and social. The mental concentration needed to learn and memorize steps keeps your brain active and can minimize memory loss. Then there is the social aspect of meeting new friends with a common interest: having fun and enjoying yourself.



There is a waiting list at U3A Tea Tree Gully to join Robert Mcfayden's line dancing class

Funnily enough, it was a dancing group of another type at a different U3A which has been causing my current headache and delayed this issue while I confirmed the facts.

One member, having experienced her choir needing a music licence, approached OneMusic to get a licence for her U3A because their Circle Dancing group used a music tape. When we approach these licensing organisations we might think we are talking to a copyright expert who will ask the right questions and give advice appropriate for our situation. This is not necessarily so. In this case there were no questions just advice to purchase their product.

First I should explain that OneMusic is a joint initiative by existing music copyright companies to simplify the music licensing process. It is now the One Stop Shop for music copyright licences to get all the necessary permissions required to play music in public. It is a good idea but I sometimes wonder if the employees of these licensing agencies are on commission.

I have always known it is legal for us to use music and videos in teaching situations without holding any music licence. I had assumed this was because we hold an educational copyright licence through Copyright Agency Ltd (CAL) which is primarily for licensing written works (books, magazines, etc.). In reality it is the Copyright Act, itself which allows this freedom.

The Music Copyright Guide for Schools, updated 28 July 2022, says teachers and students at schools can perform musical works live or play sound recordings in the classroom under a special copyright exception (section 28 of the Copyright Act) provided it is both in the course of education and is not for profit, and everyone in the room is giving or receiving instruction or directly connected with the place where instruction is given, i.e. no general public.

It doesn't matter where we teach, on our own premises or a rented hall, it is our 'classroom'. So long as we don't exceed that narrow scope of section 28, we don't need a licence.

So what happens if you want to leave the classroom and give a performance in front of the general public at a shopping centre or in a retirement home? This is where it is important to choose your venue very carefully. Make sure you select a licensed (that's music not alcohol) venue. Many businesses and venues hold a music licence already so that will cover you and anyone else who performs at their venue.

OneMusic's manager assures me that next year they will be expanding their licence for education & training providers and this will be available to U3As who wish to do public performances. He said the Education & Training Providers Licence Scheme may better suit our needs being based on the number of enrolments. I am advised that activities covered by this new licence, as well as the relevant fees, will be revealed in the coming months.

In the meantime, follow the rules and don't be conned into buying something you don't need.



U3A Mt Gambier members know that the best part of joining a French group is finding opportunities to wave the Tricolore and eat croissants. You might call it a Licence to Indulge.

Claire Eglinton
Secretary
U3A South Australia

QUEENSLAND

October is Senior's Month in Queensland and right around our state U3As are participating in seniors expos, come and try days, concerts, art exhibitions and celebrations of all things U3A.



Toowoomba Seniors Expo: From left: Janelle Connelly and Anna Carson handing out U3A publicity material to Mary Godlee and Mark Baranov.



U3A Sunshine Coast Belly Dance Group performing at the Sunshine Coast Seniors Expo

COTAQ organized a morning tea which was hosted by Her Excellency the Honourable Dr Jeanette Young AC PSM and held at Government House. I was delighted to represent U3A Network Qld at this event. Governor Young extolled the work of volunteers in all organisations and conveyed her personal appreciation of the countless hours contributed to communities each and every day by volunteers.

Qld Network has partnered with COTAQ (Council on the Ageing Queensland) and NBN to produce webinars that are eminently suitable and in fact essential for seniors. The first webinar offered was introducing the program that NBN has designed: OSCAR (Online Skills Check and Resources). As its name suggests OSCAR can assess each person's digital weaknesses and tailor their learning to fill that space. NBN have ambassadors in each region who conduct workshops and tutorials that assist in developing ability to use all relevant digital devices applicable to everyday situations. Further details can be found at <https://onlineskillscheck.com.au/>

Our second webinar, which was attended by 350, dealt with 'Your Digital Legacy'. Every day, without realizing it, we are leaving digital footprints as our digital legacy. These can be valuable treasure for those we leave behind, but they can also leave you open to identity theft and fraud if you don't plan for your digital legacy. By popular demand this webinar was offered a second time. As an added bonus we were joined by special guest solicitor Peter Smith from GDS Law who was able to give general information on legal questions.

Our partnership with COTAQ and NBN is a win-win situation for our organisation and our members and we will be sharing webinars on a regular basis.

I cannot pass up an opportunity to once again to mention 'U3A Yesterday, Today & Tomorrow'. The international conference organized and hosted by U3A Rockhampton 8-12 May 2023, and celebrating 50 years of U3A worldwide. Information can be found on the Qld Network website u3aqlld.au

The Network team have been gratified by the response to the new initiative of appointing a liaison person from Network to each of our autonomous U3A groups. Feedback from presidents and management committees has reinforced the importance of our taking this step and strengthening the links between management committees and Network.

U3A Beaudesert TAG (Travel and Adventure Group) who regularly gather and travel to faraway places, planned a week-long visit to Toowoomba. Toowoomba U3A members welcomed the enthusiastic group of Beaudesert travelers and gave a brief tour of the local U3A complex and then the visitors joined Singing for Fun for some old-time nostalgia followed by afternoon tea and lots of chatting. This interaction between groups gives an added dimension to the value and benefits of belonging to U3A.

*Rhonda Weston AM
President
U3A Network Qld Inc*

And for those who were dying to know:

SA's euthanasia laws will be effective from January. The Malinauskas government brought forward the implementation of this landmark law by two months, allowing South Australians to access voluntary assisted dying from the end of January 2023.

NEW SOUTH WALES

HUNTER UKULELE PLAYERS CELEBRATE BEATLEMANIA

On Tuesday 18 October more than 100 ukulele players from six Hunter Valley U3As came together at Wallsend to celebrate the 60th anniversary of The Beatles debut single *Love Me Do*. It was the largest gathering of its kind in NSW and a first for the region.

Decked out in Beatles-era costumes, the gathering played and sang songs like *Ticket to Ride*, *Let it Be*, *Ob-La-Di, Ob-La-Da* and *Eight Days a Week*. 'The talent and enthusiasm of the participants was amazing,' said Susan Coggan, the event organiser. 'Everyone was right into it, singing songs they first learned as teenagers. There was a real sense of joy in the room.'

'The ukulele is a great instrument for beginners,' said Susan. 'It's light, inexpensive and easy to get started on. It's a very forgiving instrument. It's also wonderful for playing Beatles songs. George Harrison was a keen ukulele player and a member of the Ukulele Society of Great Britain. Most of the Beatles' catalogue is available with ukulele arrangements.'



The event was supported by Wallsend Diggers (formerly Wallsend RSL & Community Club), which provided the venue, sound system and seating. With players coming from Port Stephens, Maitland, Morisset and Belmont, a central location was needed for the event. Wallsend proved ideal, and the support from the club was described as wonderful.

This is the first time the Hunter/Central Coast Region of U3A has staged the event. Its success has ensured that it will become an annual activity and Wallsend Diggers has already offered the venue again.

Submitted by Jean Lewis

U3A Network NSW newsletter co-editor



VICTORIA

VICTORIAN STATE CONFERENCE INVITES IDEAS

The 2022 Network Victoria State Conference, hosted by U3A Bendigo on 2-4 October, offered 150 participants an opportunity to share their ideas and hopes for the future of our movement. The conference was opened on Sunday by Bendigo Mayor Cr Andrea Metcalf, and Victorian Seniors Commissioner Gerard Mansour gave the keynote address.

Commissioner Mansour noted the significant contribution of Victorian U3As to social community: fighting loneliness, promoting social connection, and encouraging digital literacy.

Conference chair Cynthia Hardie, president of U3A Bendigo, thanked her team for persevering during the handicaps of COVID and lockdowns; and Network Victoria president Annie Grigg thanked all participants for celebrating a return to face-to-face interactivity with the *Build Back Better* program.

The conference went through three strategic planning sessions based on the unique Systemics methodology pioneered by Australian senior Bruce McKenzie. Bruce noted to the conference 'Systemics is a different mode of thinking, essential to the complex issues we are facing in the 21st century. Adopting a systemics approach allows organisations to navigate uncertainty, build resilience collaboratively, and foster innovation.'

The conference examined such themes as:

- the role of U3As in the 2020s
- the ideal U3A
- why is a network of U3As better than stand-alone U3As
- how can a volunteer group like a U3A resource its activities
- what will make U3As relevant in the next decade

The four most prominent interventions devised by the conference were:

- Greater engagement and appreciation of the membership by treating all attendees at courses as part of an important community family. Hence anything and everything that enhances the bonding between participants in U3A activities is a *Build Back Better* outcome.
- Giving greater status and appreciation to tutors and leaders, while also offering them training and encouragement. Tutors and leaders should be seen as the engine of all U3A services to seniors.
- Increasing the footprint of U3A in its community through promotions of all types will be a basis for attracting the funding and people to motivate *Build Back Better* outcomes.
- Thinking about 'adult learning' outside the traditional box by partnering with other agencies and welcoming pro bono tutors from other institutions of learning.

Final results of the Systemics sessions are still being compiled and will be made available to the Network Victoria team currently working on the 2023-2026 Strategic Plan.

Another popular idea was the 'The Nomadic Tutor' where U3A tutors travelling the continent on holiday might arrange before the trip to offer their classes to U3As in the areas they visit.

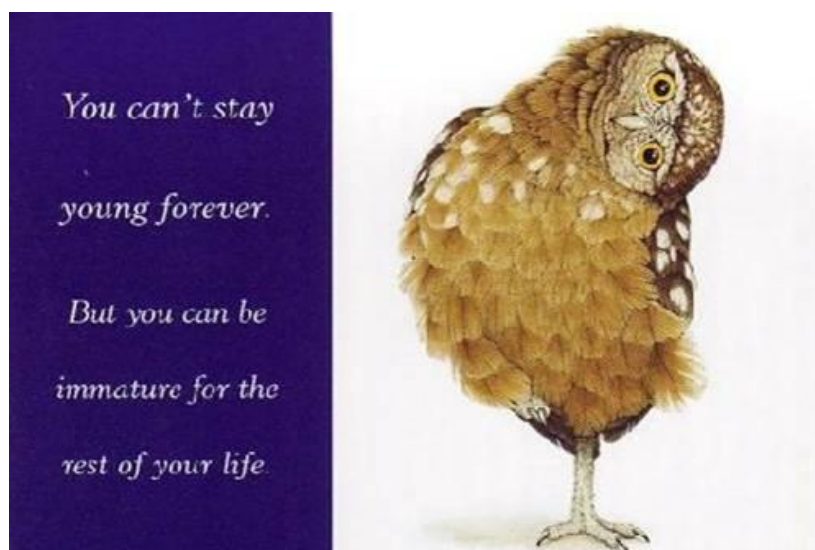
The other popular conference session was *Bucket Lists for Seniors* for a light-hearted look at achieving goals in later life.

Of course the City of Bendigo offered many extra-curricular activities to fill in the spaces before, after and during the conference. A special tram ride could be booked, and early-rising attendees joined a U3A Bendigo-led morning walk around Lake Weeroona. Perennial favourites Bendigo Pottery and the Chinese dragon museum drew conference participants and partners in between the working sessions. The conference used multiple venues in Bendigo, with very favourable comment about Sunday's opening session at the Ulumbarra Theatre Complex at the old Sandhurst Goal. An informal conference dinner at the local RSL included performances by a combined ukulele group and a singalong with the choral group.

In parallel with the state conference, the national peak body for the U3A movement, U3A Australia, held two hybrid meetings to work on incorporation of that body and goals in advocacy and infrastructure development.

The conference concluded with enthusiastic support for future get-togethers. Flowers and applause farewelled the organising team, and thoughts turned to selecting the next host U3A for 2024.

Susan Webster
Vice President
U3A Network Victoria



U3A ONLINE

As some of you also did, U3A Online took part in Get Online week in October. We used our grant from Be Connected to host a free taste of U3A Online courses via our Facebook page and Zoom.

The talks by some of our tutors included:

- The History of Ireland
- Australian Poetry
- Family History.

These topics attracted a lot of interest with over 400 registering via email and double that figure on Facebook.

The talks will be available for another six months so if you want to hear them, go to our Facebook page and you will find the link there.

We also used some of the money to send brochures and flyers about U3A Online and the talks to MPs in Canberra. Many know about local U3As but very few are familiar with U3A Online.

We will be holding our AGM online on our website during the week of 14-18 November and I am pleased to note that we have three new nominations for the Committee of Management. As I'm sure you're aware finding volunteers is becoming increasingly difficult so it is good to see new people stepping up for positions.

We presented two new courses this year, both of which have proved to be popular:

- Online Latin
- Afghanistan

There are currently 40 members enrolled in Online Latin so it is obviously not a 'dead language' after all! Afghanistan was developed following the talk given on last year's Get Online Week which generated a lot of interest. We also have a new course in development. The Modern Science course writer, Derek Robertson, has offered his life's work to us, so Heather, our Course Developer, has a big task ahead of her, organising it into a format for presentation.

Jean Walker
President
U3A Online

UPDATE YOUR CONTACT DETAILS

After each AGM please make sure any change in contact details is passed on to not just your State Network but also U3A Online. They keep a valuable database of U3As around Australia which anyone can access through the U3A Online website: <https://www.u3aonline.org.au/>

Check your U3A's entry now to see it has the correct information. This valuable service is maintained by volunteers so be generous in allowing time for updates to occur.