



AUSTRALIA

U3A AUSTRALIA BULLETIN No. 40

MAY 2024



*Sunset at beautiful Bunbury, venue for the WA 2024 Conference
(photo courtesy Lyn Frings)*

This issue:

■ *Member reports:*

- 🔔 *Victoria prepping for October*
 - 🔔 *WA issues an invitation*
 - 🔔 *SA gets mention in Hansard*
 - 🔔 *Queensland member makes an offer*
 - 🔔 *NSW each way bet on technology at Dubbo*
 - 🔔 *U3A Online into fractals and chaos*
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From the Editor

Thanks to everyone who changed the style of their submissions this issue. Unfortunately the promised new digital format is still to eventuate so I am sticking with the old reliable KISS method. It was originally chosen so that anyone with a basic knowledge of Word could take over the position. Anyone with an interest in eventually retiring, knows the value of keeping things simple: 'position available: no particular skills required' is the best sort of job advert.

Stories of coming conferences, marking special milestones, dominate this issue. Victoria has pulled off quite a coup by having Dr Norman Swan as their keynote speaker. He is a man who not only knows what he is talking about, but knows how to talk about it. Excellent communicator. Yes, I am a fan of both Swan Senior and Swan Junior.

A notice arrived from Queensland saying that they would have no article for this issue but an unexpected member email serendipitously filled the gap. It is wonderful when group leaders offer to share their teaching resources with other U3As so do take time to read it.

Sharing resources is very much what is happening at national level with the first of two Think Tanks. Once the first on Online Activities is working well, then a second, the Technology Think Tank will start. State networks cooperating and pooling resources will be one of the great benefits of creating U3A Australia.



Deadline for next issue of this Bulletin is Wednesday 25 July.

Claire Eglinton
U3A Lower North &
U3A South Australia

STOP PRESS: Our communication with our members is very important and it has been decided to have two communications issued. An updated format for the U3A Australia Bulletin will be issued periodically with a *Breaking News* issued monthly to communicate the positive outcomes being achieved through the development of our collaborative partnerships with other peak bodies and advocating on behalf our members.

Glen Wall, Chair U3A Australia

2024 Diary Dates

October 3-5: U3A Victoria Biennial State Conference, Storey Hall, RMIT University. Joint hosts: U3A Melbourne and U3A Network Victoria. Keynote speaker: Dr Norman Swan.

October 24-25: Western Australia's Biennial State Conference, Bunbury. Hosted by U3A Bunbury and U3A Network WA.

VICTORIA

Forty and fabulous – Now what's next!

U3A Victoria Biennial State Conference - mark your diaries for 3-5 October, at the start of the Victorian Seniors Celebration month.

This year's conference will celebrate the 40th anniversary of the founding of U3A in Australia, which took place in Melbourne. The conference will be co-hosted by U3A Melbourne City and U3A Network Victoria and will be held at one of Melbourne most recognizable venues, the pea-green Storey Hall at RMIT University - more familiar as Royal Melbourne Institution of Technology – and with easy access from a tram stop just in front.

The conference program will be out at end April, with challenging topics and engaging speakers. As a preview, keynote speaker will be Dr Norman Swan, known nationally for his *Coronacast* and *What's That Rash?* podcast series. Dr Swan will be speaking about 'The Ageing Myth' and how to respond to the government's approach to older folk.

Other speakers from Victoria and around the nation will present on:

- Recruiting volunteers
- Using technology smartly
- Leverage through partnerships
- Social media impact on the third age
- Advances in handling dementia

If you think the outside of RMIT's Storey Hall (right) looks funky and fabulous, wait until you see the inside



A series of workshops and discussion groups will be included in the conference, focussing on such topics as:

- Managing the money at your U3A
- Education aids such as course guides and mentoring
- Finding foreign language tutors
- Governance at your U3A
- Partnerships and Local Government Authorities
- Engaging seniors with AI
- Leveraging social media to attract new members

For more information on the conference and how to register, visit the conference pages on U3A Network Victoria's website – you can use the link [here](#).

A U3A Laneways Tour highlights ancillary activities around the 2024 U3A Victoria State Conference



*Susan Webster
Vice President
U3A Network Victoria*

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

If I were to say to you, '*Kaya moort wandju Goomburrup*', you might wonder what the heck I was saying. This is our Noongar language of the South West and I would be saying, 'Hello family welcome to Bunbury'. The original inhabitants of the Bunbury area are the Wardandi Noongar people, who have lived in the South West for over 45,000 years. It was a seasonal gathering place, with good sources of food, and sites for ceremonial gatherings.

Our seasonal gathering, the WA State Network Biennial Conference, will be held in Bunbury, this October, and the Bunbury U3A members are very excited, to be presenting this event entitled *Learn to Listen, Listen to Learn, Get Curious not Judgemental* to Western Australians and Australia as a whole.

If anyone from the eastern states is going to be travelling throughout WA this year, please think about putting Bunbury on your list to visit on 24 and 25 October, and join us for this event. It will be held in our world-class Bunbury Regional Entertainment Centre, which lies near the heart of our wonderful city, and looks out over our inlet. Bunbury is the place of three waters: the ocean, the Collie and Preston rivers, and the Leschenault Inlet. Accommodation is mostly within walking distance to our venue, with the whole gamut of choices available: hotel, motels, apartments, backpackers and caravan park. As a delegate you will get to experience the ambience of our special place.

We have an art gallery, museums, lookouts, a dolphin discovery centre and sculptures you have to see to believe. We also have mangroves, the most southerly in Western Australia with a 5 km walk around including 200 metres of boardwalk. The list of birds known to frequent the estuary is a whopping 60 species. If you're lucky you might also see one of our wild dolphins fishing there, or our resident ospreys seeking their next meal of the day.

We have restaurants and cafes galore, too many to name, and will have a selection of these for delegates to choose where they will dine on Thursday evening, accompanied by one of our Bunbury members to make your stay enjoyable.

So 'come on down', watch our beautiful sunsets, wonder at our wonderful wildflowers, and enjoy the hospitality of our U3A Bunbury members at this beautiful place in Australia. (Right: *Grevillea trifida* and Grass Tree)

For more details contact me, conference coordinator, Lyn Frings at u3abunbury@gmail.com.

Lyn Frings
WA Network Newsletter Editor
U3A Bunbury, Inc.



SOUTH AUSTRALIA

A couple of U3As are celebrating their 20th anniversaries this year and have taken quite different ways to mark the occasion. U3A Campbelltown, one of our mid-size urban groups, issued formal invitations inviting guests to an afternoon of music and presentations with afternoon tea at the local function centre. Special guests included State politicians John Gardner and Vincent Tarzia, and local mayor Jill Whittaker, a keen supporter and member.

John Gardner sent the best thank you message when, just four days later, he stood in the House of Assembly to mention all the good work that U3A Campbelltown does, even managing to weave our State motto of 'Staying active: mentally, physically and socially' into his speech twice. John knows the value of U3A only too well as his father is a member. Thanks John for the publicity and memorialising the event in Hansard. His speech can be found at https://youtu.be/kikm_8X4qGc?si=hlpWwh-WpHLqLcd3.



Vale Pederson (left) and Glenda Sherwin-Lane (right) bestow life membership on Kerrie Smith at U3A Campbelltown's birthday celebrations.

Performance by harpist and soprano Emma Harwood opened proceedings.



U3A Campbelltown punches well above its weight at State level. Vale Pederson, Kerry Smith and Glenda Sherwin-Lane have not only served as presidents of U3A Campbelltown but, except for four years, have chaired the State network from 2010 until the present.

U3A Yorke Peninsula, a smaller country group, used their 20th anniversary to grow membership. They gathered in Victoria Square, Kadina for their customary start-of-year picnic but to mark this special milestone the event was open to the public as an Open Day, Come and Try opportunity. People from Kadina, Moonta and Bute attended to find out more about U3A and what it had to offer them. There were displays of courses such as Sew and Yarn, Photography, Mahjong, Balance and Bones, Colouring with Music and Circle Dancing. After a couple of hours of chatting to new and prospective members, everyone settled down and enjoyed a very social picnic lunch together.

*Claire Eglinton
Secretary,
U3A South Australia*



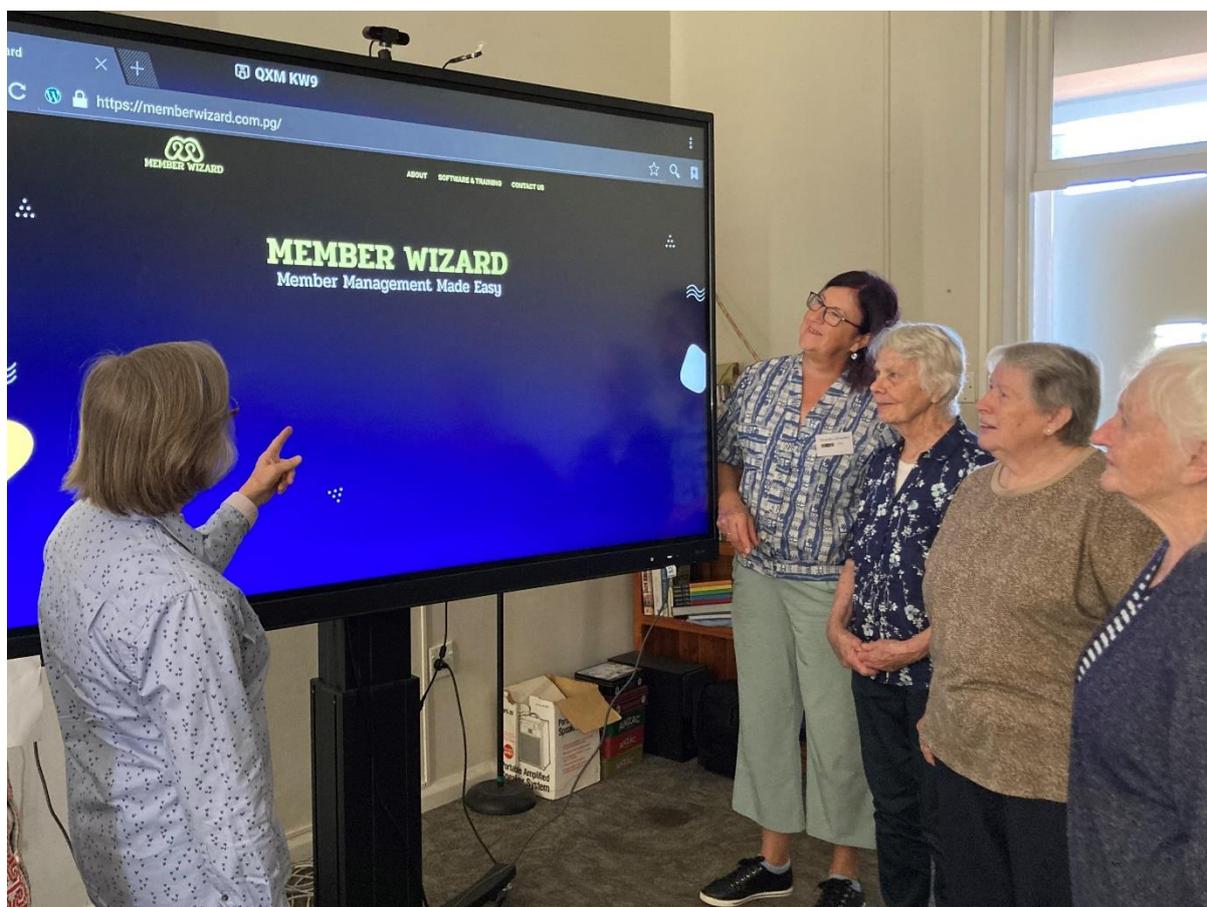
NEW SOUTH WALES

DUBBO HAS GREAT START TO 2024 USING OLD AND NEW TECHNOLOGY

U3A Dubbo's Open Day in January saw many new faces come and join up. We advertised in the local free newspaper and recorded interviews on the ABC and 2DU radio stations. As a result, we have acquired around 100 new members, bringing our total to around 400.

Our new registrar has been fine tuning the program Member Wizard, which was recommended to us at our regional seminar in Orange last year. This has meant a much smoother way of recording current members details and ensuring payment and receipting is efficient. We are using online membership and payment, direct deposit, the 'square' for card payments at Open Day, as well as in-person cash payment. We are very pleased with this Member Wizard system and all the communication shortcuts it gives us for members who are using computers or mobile phones.

However, we still post printed newsletters to those members who are not comfortable with the digital world; but our registrar conducts brilliant classes on how to use your iPhone and iPad for those who are underconfident.



Our two main classrooms are equipped with 86" Clevertouch interactive screens, so most of our class leaders are learning to use these IT devices. Anything prepared and put on a thumb drive can be quickly inserted and appears in large format so that all class members can see clearly what is being discussed. Colourful PowerPoint presentations, or similar, are enjoyed by all.

The photography class is particularly keen on the large versions of their photos which can be appreciated and critiqued. The jazz improvisation class uses the music notation screen to develop their tunes while the ukulele group appreciate being able to follow their music on the big screen.

Julie Wilson
President
Dubbo Chapter U3A Inc

LIVING SMART FESTIVAL - SPEERS POINT NSW

We had another very successful weekend of spreading the word about U3A to the people who were drawn to our stand at the Living Smart Festival at Speers Point last September. Despite the incredible heat that day, we had many enquiries as to what U3A was all about and we collected a large number of names of people who want to be sent our 2024 program so they can sign up.

This was again a combined stand with Eastlakes and Southlakes U3As, so people were able to connect with the U3A closest to them.

The stand featured that essential ingredient: smiling faces.



Rosalie Menzies
President U3A Lake Macquarie

QUEENSLAND

Many U3As especially small regional ones, know the frustration of wanting to start a new course but they lack a group leader who can teach the material. There are a lot of adults who want to master cryptic crosswords but first you need someone with the confidence to teach. And what about a new course that is novel and might appeal to men? Well it was always the boys at school playing with their Rubik's Cubes when it was first released. (Hungarian Erno Rubik invented it in 1974).

A thank you to Barry Lynch of U3A Redcliffe who has shared with U3As around Australia the teaching resources he has created for cryptic crosswords and the infuriating Rubik's Cube. He says his crossword course on You Tube has now been well accepted, and many U3A members are enjoying it. In the process of teaching a course on the Rubik's Cube Beginner's Method at Redcliffe he created video tutorials and they are now also on his cryptic's site.

Barry says the Beginner's Method requires students to commit six short algorithms to memory, and this is wonderful exercise for the brain. Using these algorithms, students will train their minds and fingers to work together, just as they would if learning to play the piano.

The course was very successful at Redcliffe, and Barry was thrilled when some of his U3A students told him they enjoyed showing their skills to their grandchildren. Now they are able to watch the You Tube videos with their grandchildren on their home TV, so that they can all enjoy learning together. Any such bonding is one of the ultimate enjoyments a grandparent can experience, and U3A members, with all their knowledge, are uniquely set up to enjoy this.

It would be a wonderful course to include in any U3A programme.

Besides learning the algorithms, students will also learn all the usual terms and techniques, and will be well prepared to take on the harder, (expert) method, if they wish.

To keep these videos separate from his Cryptics ABC videos, Barry says he will put them in the category for subscribers only. Subscribers are notified whenever new videos are added.

As with Cryptics ABC for ALL, these tutorials will be free to watch on You Tube, and no U3A or any of its members will have to pay anything. Barry's only wish is to add more enjoyment for U3A members.

The tutorials are designed so that the tutor does not need to know how to solve the Rubik's cube, in order to run the course. (That's good news!)

The only prerequisite is that all students will need to front up with a Rubik's cube (original colours please – white, yellow, green, blue, red, brown) for the first lesson. Kmart usually supplies them for about \$20;

A reminder that the site name is Cryptics ABC for ALL, and the link is https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC2whB5I_IHbNSLeW6BfDvng

Most of the above information was originally circulated by Barry Lynch via direct email to U3As.

U3A ONLINE

U3A Online has an extremely impressive-sounding new course: Introducing Fractals and Chaos. Wow, that is not only impressive sounding, it sounds confusing. What are fractals? At their most basic, fractals are a visual expression of a repeating pattern or formula that starts out simple and gets progressively more complex.

Chaos is defined scientifically as a form of order that lacks predictability; it's the study of how simple patterns can be generated from complicated underlying behaviour. Think quilting patterns and ice crystals.

The man to make it all clear is course author Andrew Holt. After graduating in the 1960s with a mathematics degree and Ph.D., Andrew didn't follow an academic career. Instead Andrew joined the UK civil service working in operational research, statistics and information technology in various departments and ending up as Director of Information Services at the Department of Health prior to retirement in 2005.

During that time Andrew did maintain some contact with mathematics and has been an Open University part time tutor since 1970.

Since retiring, Andrew has been involved in UK U3A mathematics running two local mathematics groups in his area of London and was the UK U3A National Mathematics and Stats Subject Adviser for a few years.

Andrew wrote the math course on number theory for U3A Online. This geometry course is on a completely separate math subject and not an extension to the number theory course, nor is that a prerequisite to undertaking this geometry course.

In this project Andrew is being assisted by Chris Tiernan, who is a member of one of his U3A London math groups.

To find out more go to the U3A Online website: <https://www.u3aonline.org.au/>

Jean Walker
President
U3A Online



*"To get back my youth I would do anything in the world,
except take exercise, get up early, or be respectable."*

Oscar Wilde, from The Picture of Dorian Gray



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