



NEWSLETTER – TERM 2, 2022

IN THIS ISSUE: Message from our President pp 1,2; 2022 Committee of Management p 2; Quilting p 3; A message from our Foundation President, Sadie Stevens p 3; Welcome to the Rock p 4; The shortest history of the Soviet Union p 5; Author talks pp 5, 6; Preserving your memories p 6; Garden visit to Heide p 7; Poem – ‘At the Tandicals’ p 7; The Lincoln Highway p 8; Shopping in Brunswick p 9; Australia and the Pacific p 10; Dates for your Diary p 10; Emmanuel Macron – 5 years on p 11; Duplicate Bridge p 12.

A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Our second term of 2022 is now well underway and already I have participated in some fascinating short course sessions. I know I am not alone as each of these sessions, both face to face and on zoom, have included plenty of participants and each time I have had the opportunity to make a new acquaintance. I personally think the programs which Joan Taylor and her team have developed each term have been vibrant, varied and often challenging. It is also astonishing to note the many full year courses which are managed by Lois Heycox and Jenny Cash. These include twelve French, three Spanish and two Italian language classes; Practical and Creative Arts ranging from photography, drawing and painting, and quilting; multiple walking groups including historic Melbourne walks; and a range of physical exercise courses including yoga, Tai Chi, Chi Ball and Chinese 8 Brocades, table tennis and social tennis, classical ballet, Zumba and Strength Training. There are also numerous Literature and Film groups, a range of music experiences, practical programs which Extend Your Thinking including Bridge and Current Affairs discussions, wine appreciation, Military History, Science, Technology, the very popular Travel program, and of course, News and Views plus plus. In fact, some members have commented that there is such a choice, they find it a challenge to read the whole program and to join all the sessions they would like to undertake.



Susie White

I wish to thank those of you who participated in our AGM. Holding it on Zoom meant we were able to cater for those who wanted to participate but it did mean that the chat and refreshments both before and after the meeting did not happen and we were unable to catch up with each other – yet again. Let us hope 2023 will enable us all to participate and enjoy the aspects of these formal occasions which are most enjoyable. It was special to have our key Council of Boroondara links join us for the meeting. They included our Mayor, Cr Jane Addis, Lina Tallarida, Deanna Boulos and Lana Holien, all of whom have been very supportive of our organisation. We plan to work with Council in a range of their programs promoting healthy and active ageing, especially through participation of all older residents in their Boroondara community. Martina Ryan also joined the AGM as a representative of the U3A Network. She spoke briefly about the Network and the activities they undertake on behalf of all individual U3As.

At the AGM, we farewelled Christina Jenkins from the role of Treasurer. She has learned our financial program Xero and managed our books exceptionally well for the past two years. We look forward to her now having time to join some of our courses! Christina’s Treasurer role has been taken by Paula Grundy who is a fairly new U3A Deepdene member and our Committee is thrilled to welcome her. We also farewelled Alan Ray from our Committee. Alan has undertaken a brilliant role in Health and Safety and has been invaluable in checking all our

Committee responsibilities across the organisation. Carole Williams was re-elected as Vice President and our absolutely fabulous Secretary Ilza Dulmanis was reappointed. Dan Rabinovici has joined the Committee of Management as an Ordinary Member. Ordinary Member is the Constitution's term, not mine, as no Committee member is ever 'ordinary'. The other 'ordinary members' of the Committee of Management are Jenny Cash, Doug Crocket, Christine Georgiou, Lois Heycox, Lesley Macleod, Barbara Mathews and Joan Taylor. Each Committee member takes on a particular role and these will be publicised after the new Committee's first meeting.

In welcoming our Life Members, Sadie Stevens and Suzanne Collings, to the AGM, I spoke a little of the story of the origins of U3A Deepdene. As most of you will know, our U3A's home was originally at Alston Halls, Deepdene Uniting Church. Twelve or so years ago, when the Church was initiating some changes, Sadie Stevens and Joan Taylor agreed to undertake a Community Development course on behalf of the Church, to build inclusion of older people. The outcomes of the work they undertook were the formal structure and membership of a new organisation – U3A Deepdene. I know how proud I would be in completing a module whereby some 12 years later, the organisation I had proposed was prospering with more than 1200 members, a fabulous program and literally scores of volunteers taking on a wide range of roles.

My very best wishes to all our members for Term Two and our future times as members of U3A Deepdene.
Susie White

2022 COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT

MEET OUR TWO NEW MEMBERS

Paula Grundy:

I was born and raised in Rockhampton, Central Queensland. I completed a BCom at the University of Queensland and worked in public accounting in Brisbane and Melbourne while completing my qualifications to become a Chartered Accountant. My husband and I then moved to the USA where he obtained a PhD in Finance.



I worked in corporate accounting in Berkeley, California and Chicago, Illinois. At the University of Chicago I loved non-degree classes in history and art appreciation, so different from studying accounting.

The US visa requirements were such that a spouse could only work while their partner was a full time student. Thus once my husband took up full time employment at Stanford University in California and later at the Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania, I became the full time caregiver of my family.

After living in the US for 20 years, we returned home to Melbourne in 2000. After an initial period of adjustment, I became very involved with fund raising at both my sons' school and with Juvenile Diabetes. For 10 years I was part of a team at the school that made Christmas puddings and ran the annual second hand book sale. I came to know Christina Jenkins, U3A's retiring Treasurer when she was also involved in the school fundraisers and I look forward to continuing her work at U3A.

I joined U3A during lockdown in 2020 and, like many others, it really helped to focus on the life of the mind. Life pre-Covid involved a lot of travel with my family to conferences and sabbaticals in Europe, Asia and America. I enjoyed visiting galleries, museums, and gardens around the world and have very much appreciated seeing many of them again and learning more about them via U3A classes over the last two years. Later this year, I am looking forward to visiting my sons and their families in Ireland and New York.

I am very impressed with the breadth, depth, and quality of the U3A program. I hope I can help the very dedicated and hard working Committee to continue this excellent program over the coming years.

Dan Rabinovici:

I grew up in Bucharest, Romania, where I completed high school and took my bacalaureate. I left Romania in my 20s during the days when the Iron Curtain was standing, the Cold War was a reality and daily life was difficult under Communist leader Nicolae Ceausescu.

Melbourne University is my alma mater having studied Social Theory at undergraduate and postgraduate levels as well as completing a Bachelor of Social Work. My wife Alison and I met at Melbourne University.

During my studies I worked as a professional interpreter. I then practised in Social Work for over 30 years and retired in July 2021. Between 2003-2019 I was associated with Monash University in a course coordination and teaching capacity, mainly in history units.

Alison and I have two sons; one lives in Melbourne and the other in Tours, France. Both became parents last year.

Since my retirement I have enjoyed more family time, especially being a grandfather, and allocating more energy to physical activity and wellness.

I am looking forward to providing a valuable contribution to U3A Deepdene.



QUILTING



The U3A Quilting group was initiated by Sadie Stevens. Sadie was one of the prime movers in setting up U3A Deepdene, and proudly carries the membership number of 01. I think it fair to assume, therefore, that it was one of the first groups to be established.

When I joined the group a few years later it was running like clockwork with Sadie covering machine work and her good friend, Cecily Patterson, in charge of hand-work. It was a joy to join the group of like-minded women and revel in the quilts.

In those days we met at Alston Halls. We had to set up the room with tables and chairs and, sometimes the chairs had to be retrieved from the News and Views room if they had an extra-large enrolment that day. Immediately following our session, the room was used by a toddler ballet class so the floor had to be swept carefully – it's hard for older eyes to find a dropped needle, but easy for toddler toes.

When Sadie and Cec decided it was time to retire, I nervously put up my hand. They had both been quilting all their lives. These were very big shoes to fill. I made a calculation that they had in excess of 100 years' experience between them. My eight years were looking a bit pathetic, not to say ambitious.

Today in Balwyn Park, no tables go up or down and no floors are swept, but the essentials have not changed. We are a group of women who love to quilt together. Why not come and see what we do? You may even want to make a quilt yourself.

Jean Dunn



... AND A MESSAGE FROM SADIE STEVENS, OUR FOUNDATION PRESIDENT



'You may know that I moved into residential aged care almost a year ago after a serious illness. I have been able to enjoy the zoomed classes and proudly speak of the adaptability of members and the lecturers in using the new technology. For me and the majority of our members it has been a blessing during this pandemic.'

WELCOME TO THE ROCK

On Tuesday 8 March a dozen U3A members met to discuss the extremely popular musical *Come from Away*. Led by a self-confessed musical theatre tragic (me) we looked at how (or why) someone could read about the events of September 11, 2001 and think ‘that would make a great musical’. Yet that is pretty much what happened.

In the wake of the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, United States airspace was shut down. Operation Yellow Ribbon redirected 38 planes to Gander, Newfoundland, adding 6,656 people to the town’s population of approximately 10,000.

Toronto lawyer Michael Rubinoff thought this story would make a great musical and pitched the idea to many writers, but with no luck.

In 2010 he met up with writers Irene Sankoff and David Hein and pitched the idea to them. They were intrigued and in 2011, supported by a Canada Council grant, Sankoff and Hein headed to Gander for the 10th anniversary reunion of the ‘plane people’ and spent a month interviewing passengers and locals. These interviews became *Come from Away* the musical.

When they first travelled to Gander, Sankoff and Hein hoped to write a musical that Canadian high schools might be *forced* to perform.

David Hein ‘We weren’t trying to write a 9/11 story’ ... ‘We often call it a “9/12” story. We wanted to tell the story of what happened in Newfoundland. It’s not about the tragedy; it’s about how this small community responded to the tragedy.’



Twelve actors tell the story of both the Islanders and the Plane People, revealing the fear and uncertainty that came with the terrorist attacks – as well as the profound generosity and compassion of strangers. Along with acting out the events of the four days, characters step out from the story to narrate the events. Staging is minimal, making use of only a few tables and twelve chairs to be the airplanes, the buses, and the various locations within Gander.

While some characters and stories are an amalgamation of several people and experiences, others are based on true people, such as Captain Beverly Bass, the first female captain for American Airlines.

In 2017 *Come from Away* became only the fifth Canadian musical to make it to Broadway. It received seven Tony Award nominations and recouped its \$12-million investment within eight months.

We listened to several of the songs, but one of the highlights for me was hearing and seeing some of the songs and characters that were cut from the story prior to its Broadway opening: <https://youtu.be/d2BBwIXXRsq> or search *cut from away* on YouTube.



As mentioned earlier, the creators of *Come from Away* have stated that this is not a September 11 story, it is rather a September 12 story - a story of the best people have to offer each other, and a reminder that we are all capable of doing good for each other, especially in the darkest of times.

Fiona Malcolm

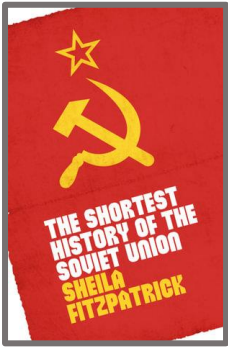
~ ~ ~ ~ ~

Views expressed by presenters in all classes, and in contributions to this Newsletter, are their own views and not the official views of U3A Deepdene. Our aim is to encourage the exploration of ideas, in a relatively free environment.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

THE SHORTEST HISTORY OF THE SOVIET UNION

I wish that those who believe that the study of history is not important in schools and universities had been part of the audience for internationally acclaimed historian, Sheila Fitzpatrick's thought-provoking presentation on the birth and death of the Soviet Union. Her recent book, *The Shortest History of the Soviet Union* met the challenge of explaining 75 years of monumental events culminating in the unexpected, cataclysmic collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, in 50,000 words. Like her book, Sheila's talk led us through the complexities with clarity and engaging personal touches.



Defying all predictions, the USSR had survived its unlikely birth in 1917, the Stalinist reconstruction and purges of the 1930s, the horrors of World War II, and the death of its dominating leader in 1953, to reach apparent stability by 1980. As Sheila told us, with typical humour, the US Library of Congress finally decided to give the USSR its own catalogue entry card, rather than consigning it to a subsection under 'Russia'. What went wrong?

She clarified the post war situation with vivid little images of the men who took up the challenges of rebuilding, reforming and withstanding the machinations of their Party colleagues. They were not 'new men' but rather Stalin's former colleagues. Khrushchev, in many ways an idealist, was the underestimated, younger man who emerged as the dominant figure, but Detente with the West failed. Despite rises in the standard of living, Khrushchev's colleagues became sick of some of his harebrained schemes and in 1964 he was forced to retire. In a way unimaginable under Stalin, he took his small pension and a country dacha, and lived quietly in the country, recording his memoirs which were smuggled to the USA for publication. In an ironic little touch, Sheila's office at Columbia University in New York was next to the room in which she could hear Khrushchev's tapes being translated.

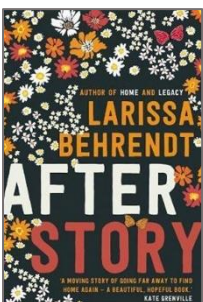
Brezhnev took over but there was more awareness of life in the West and he proved too optimistic about catching up to the USA. In 1995 a more idealist member of the younger generation, Gorbachev became the last Soviet President. Sheila made an interesting comparison between the way the USSR and China tackled the need to continue modernizing their countries. Gorbachev decided to focus first on the issue of democratic reform ahead of systemic economic change. China, on the other hand, changed its economic system.

Glasnost, 'openness' and Perestroika, 'restructuring', produced challenges to the people's sense of post war national rightness and intensified anxiety and confusion about what was happening. Sheila pointed out that the Soviet Union, which had prided itself on its respect for the rights of all its nationalities, did not finally collapse because of unrest in the regional republics but because Yeltsin, the leader of the Russian Republic, backed by the other two Slavic republics, Ukraine and Belarus, called for a tax strike and then independence.

The eager questioning from the audience was indicative of the stimulating effect of this engaging talk and its relevance to Putin's actions in the Ukraine as well as broader issues of change and reform.

Kamoya Peterson

AUTHOR TALKS

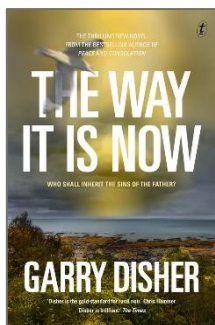
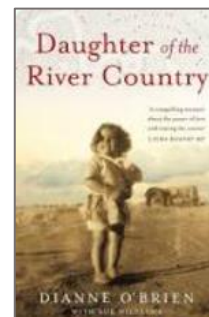


Author Talks 'zoomed' back into the homes of U3A Deepdene members in February and March this year and provided plenty of enjoyment and interest for a large group of enthusiastic readers.

Larissa Behrendt is an award-winning author, lawyer, film maker and host of *Speaking Out* on ABC Radio. Her most recent novel, *After Story* (QUP 2021) is a moving and powerful reflection on family relationships, grief, borrowed culture and First Nations storytelling. As a First Nations woman, Larissa understands the power of storytelling to forge and maintain family connection. She tells Dreamtime stories through her writing, film projects, dance, and youth literacy programs

- as an antidote to identity loss and intergenerational grief within indigenous communities and to improve understanding and acceptance by non-indigenous Australians. 'Amongst loss, you have to hang onto what you have.'

Sue Williams returned to *Author Talks* in March with her co-writer and First Nations woman, Auntie Di (Dianne O'Brien) to talk about Dianne's memoir, *Daughter of the River Country* (Echo, 2021). *Daughter of the River Country* is a compelling piece of storytelling, which paints a vivid picture of suburban Australia in the latter half of the 20th century: the casual racism, bullying and violence, the White Australia Policy, and the forcible removal of First Nations children. This absorbing and uplifting memoir offers us an opportunity to learn, reflect and hopefully understand something of those challenges but also of the power of love and staying the course.



Garry Disher is an internationally acknowledged, award-winning crime writer. So, it is hardly surprising that he attracted a very large audience for a *Wednesday Special* in February. Garry's topic was Australian Rural Noir as evident in his two most recent books, *The way it is now* (Text 2021) and *Consolation* (Text 2020). Garry discussed the centrality of setting and the role of the outsider, as well as the evolution of character over the three titles in the 'Hirsch' series (*Bitter Wash Road*, *Peace*, and *Consolation*.) It was a pleasure to have Garry share his experiences of the trials and rewards of being a professional writer, and his informed and accessible insights into the creative writing process.

We are looking forward to hearing from two local authors programmed for upcoming *Author Talks*: Alice Pung, who will discuss her latest novel, *One Hundred Days* (Blackinc Books 2021) as well as an earlier novel, *Laurinda*, now adapted for the stage. Lucy Treloar (*Wolfe Island* 2019 and *Salt Creek* 2015) will now join us in Term 3.

Trish Lele

PRESERVING YOUR MEMORIES - A PRACTICAL SESSION

On 29th March, ten lucky students gathered at the feet of Susie White to discover what this promising title could mean. Expectations were varied: one nonagenarian hoping that it would help him remember what happened last week, but this proved not to be the purpose. Instead, we were led into the prospect of writing (and illustrating with photos) a personal memoir.

What is a memoir? Most importantly, it is not an autobiography. It is a story focusing on one or more life events or theme. It is a retelling of experiences, hopefully compelling, and it will be unique. It should give the reader the opportunity to get to know you (or perhaps to know a relative or friend you are permitted to write about).



Being a workshop session, rather than lecture, we then took turns to briefly say when and why we had joined U3A and why we had chosen this class. Also, whether we had attempted similar prior efforts. Old photos and family histories were produced and talked about, and we were each given a ruled school exercise book to start our work. (Not to worry; succeeding work can be done on laptops).

At this session we were not expected to get far past the initial jottings and headings, which, working in pairs and prompting each other, we set about doing.

Time passed quickly and it became obvious that the project is very much a work in progress, requiring further workshop(s) at which we will continue to encourage each other. In the meantime we are to work on our own drafts, and are urged to prompt our paired partners to work on theirs. We meet again for a further workshop in term two.

Alison and Keith Head

GARDEN VISIT TO HEIDE

Originally timetabled b.c., it was a long postponement for a popular outing. But it was worth the wait: a morning of indigenous culture, history, art and horticulture.

As our knowledgeable volunteer guide, Jill, led us on a stroll around Heide's 16 acres of parkland, we were immersed in the history of John and Sunday Reed's vision for creating a gathering space for young modernist painters.



Long before the Reeds created Heide, the lush Yarra River flats were used by the Wurundgeri people. In addition to two kitchen gardens and a healing garden, there is an indigenous garden. I gaped in awe at Yingabeal, a distinguished scarred or bark tree reputedly over 500 years old!



After learning so much about Heide we were invited to view its current exhibition: the Sidney Nolan Search for Paradise. Nolan lived at Heide in the 1940s, so it is apt that his paintings have been chosen to help Heide celebrate its fortieth anniversary. To view the 81 paintings was a richly reflective way to round off a wonderful outing.

Our thanks as always to Suzanne Collings for organising a very enjoyable visit.

Elizabeth ETTY-Leal

≈ ≈ ≈ ≈ ≈ ≈ ≈ ≈ ≈ ≈ ≈

Chris Wallace-Crabbe was born in Richmond in 1934. He held academic posts at the University of Melbourne in English and has published many volumes of poetry. This is part of a longer poem evoking Melbourne's Botanic Gardens.

At the Tandicals, by Chris Wallace-Crabbe

From the high lawns
laid out like a curious map
of the Green Man's consciousness
lobe after leafy lobe,

and punctuated by
sweet colonies of cousinly flora,
kindred by clan and
branch close after brother branch

to a darker fern gully where
more or less everything feels vertical,
but where on earth
are the flying foxes nowadays?

Diminished into fruit bats
and packed off to North Balwyn.
This is the dream republic
of fruits and flora.

If, as I did, you grew up
in this neck of the woods,
suburbanly close to
its paradise of botany, with

everything you can imagine
labelled by the emerald goddess
whose name is Discipline
you would somehow glimpse her.

You would then believe
that real swans are not white
or even pause to admire
lazy horizontals that

make up the Daimyo oak,
just over there, right now.
But yes, of course, my friends
this is the grand Oak lawn

and not all as British
As you might have believed at first.
The trees and their shrubs below
Flaunt multiculturalism here.

The Grand Oak lawn

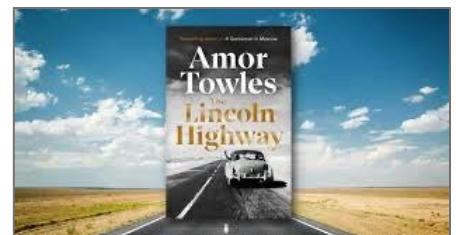


THE LINCOLN HIGHWAY

Coral Classon, one of our members, took us on a journey along 'The Lincoln Highway'. No, it wasn't one of our Friday Travel talks. It was Thursday, 30 March at Balwyn Park, and we were on a literature journey. The subject was, of course, the new book *The Lincoln Highway* by the modern American writer, Amor Towles. Previously, many members had enjoyed his wonderful journey through 20th century Russian history in the company of Count Alexander Rostov, *A Gentleman in Moscow*.

This new journey, *The Lincoln Highway*, is set in America in the 1950s, a period which resonated in our own memories. A different society from Towles' previous book, on this road trip along 'The Lincoln Highway' in 1954, Coral described how we were in the company of four boys and one girl with their adventures and misadventures. In the old Studebaker were Emmett Watson, an 18-year-old Nebraskan kid, just released from a Kansan juvenile detention centre after serving 15 months for involuntary manslaughter, and his lovable 8-year-old brother Billy, enamoured of *Professor Abacus Abernathes' Compendium of Heroes, Adventurers and other Intrepid Travellers*. With them were two of Emmett's fellow inmates: Duchess, a fast-talking swindler and Woolly, a 'neuro-diverse' son of a rich New York family.

The book takes them, and us, on a journey from Nebraska to New York, from a small mid-West Nebraskan town with its four streets, to New York with both its wealthy and its seedy sides. The object for Emmett and Billy is really, of course, California. As Coral wrote in the hand-out notes, *The Lincoln Highway* is a symbol of a rush to the future. But is there in this book also that nostalgia for the 1950s? As Coral's hand-out notes reminded us:



Many American TV productions of the 1960s and even later (eg Happy Days) were set in the 1950s; In the 1950s Frank Sinatra's crooning is joined by Elvis with Jailhouse Rock; television use is becoming widespread; Hollywood is capturing the attention of the world; and America's cultural capital is increasingly becoming dominant.

Later in the session, there were many interesting comments and questions from members:

The puzzle (discussed by the group) of why Towles commenced with Chapter 10 and ended the book with Chapter 1;
Is it a book which resonates with readers younger than ourselves?
The significance of the author's choice of epigraph – poem at the frontispiece of the book (significant both when starting and finishing the book).

For readers of *The Lincoln Highway* the afternoon provided refreshed enjoyment and new insights into a book rich in thought, hope and understanding of life. After all,

'There is nothing bigger than a man's opinion of himself ...'
'No one needs a pool and a butler ...' – and
'How easily we forget - we in the business of story telling - that life was the point all along.'

And for those U3A members who haven't yet travelled 'The Lincoln Highway' in an old Studebaker with Emmett, Billy and others in the era of Frank Sinatra and Elvis Presley, the session raised an awareness of what they have been missing.

Thank you, Coral, for the 'joy-ride', on a Deepdene afternoon, along 'The Lincoln Highway' with Amor Towles and some memorable characters. And if we, as readers of Amor Towles' books, are left with feelings of nostalgia, as Coral noted the 'nostalgia of before', then how timely for us that we can indulge that nostalgia with a journey along 'The Calder Highway' to Bendigo to rekindle memories of Elvis. Make sure you drive carefully and don't be distracted by the old car radio blaring out Jailhouse Rock.

Joan Anson

SHOPPING IN BRUNSWICK



It must have been at least 40 years since I last visited Sydney Road Brunswick and its surrounds; so when I joined Margaret Peucker's fascinating food excursion on 29 March it was a very different scene from the one which I remember.

We met on the corner of Sydney Road and Victoria Street outside the last of Franco Cozzo's memorable furniture stores. It still houses the same style of furniture seen in his self-promoting ads on television years ago.

Some chose to start the excursion with a coffee at a shop in Victoria Street recommended by Margaret; the majority headed along Sydney Road to the Mediterranean Wholesalers, an enormous continental food store which has grown from a small deli established by Giuseppe and Carmela Madafferi in 1961. It is now a multi shop icon and serves customers from all over Victoria and interstate. There is a massive array of pasta in every shape, size and colour, a huge variety of wine and spirits, every type of sauce imaginable, a magnificent collection of cheese and cold cuts and quite an array of cakes. In one corner there is a coffee shop where some of our group had coffee. A place in which to easily get lost!

After Margaret rounded us up again, we proceeded to NSM Foods in Victoria Street, premium food supplier since 1962, which supplies products to restaurants. They have a magnificent selection of nuts roasted in-house, a good selection of dried fruits, and also an interesting selection of sauces.

We headed back towards Sydney Road and looked in on 'Nino's and Joe's', a butcher with a large array of beautiful looking meat, reasonably priced. We then left Victoria Street and returned to Sydney Road via Sparta Place, which contains relics of its past history and some small shops. Then we continued along Sydney Road past some more interesting shops, one where there were men smoking Hookahs - a pipe passing through water containing tobacco and molasses. There was also a Halal butcher's shop where the meat was reasonably priced.

Our expedition finished at Balha's Pastry established in 1991 - a huge shop with an amazing array of traditional Lebanese pastries and biscuits which are sold by weight. There is also delicious ice-cream and good coffee available.



This is an area which has adapted itself well to a changing population and shares the best of its new heritage happily with others.

Many thanks to Margaret for the very interesting, and happy, hours that we enjoyed in Brunswick and the knowledge she shared with us.

Megan Martin



AUSTRALIA AND THE PACIFIC

Dr Ian Hoskins, historian and author, delivered a thought-provoking talk on the background to the Pacific – its discovery, the interests of competing colonial powers over time, and the current situation.

There is a huge diversity of both language and culture across the Pacific islands and all the Pacific rim countries. People of the Pacific are very aware of the imbalance of both power and affluence, when discussing Australia.

The attitude of Australia to the Pacific is both ambiguous and ambivalent. We do cause problems to the peoples because of our coal reserves and associated exports. The climate change ramifications are particularly urgent to these island nations. We can guarantee that the Solomons Island Prime Minister factored this into his recent decision making.

The southwest Pacific was initially colonized by the French, the British and the Dutch. Chinese headed south during our gold rush. The Japanese were employed in the pearling industry to the north of Australia. Many South Sea Islanders worked in horticulture here. But South Sea Islanders and people of Asian descent were not always welcomed by White Australians. In 1901 the White Australia Policy (WAP) was legislated when the government felt strongly about foreigners having the potential to undermine the cost of labour. The WAP also served to limit non-British migration. Prime Minister Gough Whitlam renounced the WAP in 1973 and established a policy of multiculturalism.

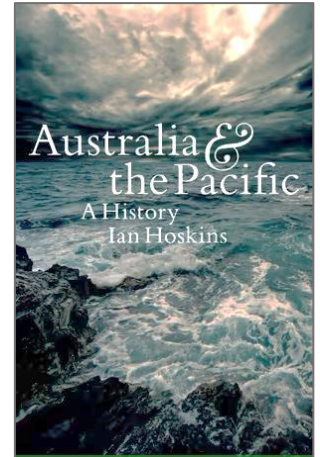
Climate change is the existential and growing threat to all islands in the Pacific. The Pacific Island nations have experienced our arrogant indifference to their existential concerns and economic challenges over a number of years. Foreign aid has been cut, budget after budget.

If we as a country behave in a way that suggests our engagement with the region is only about containing China, and if we project as if we are treating the Pacific as a geostrategic plank, that is not the right signal to send, and it's not in our long-term interest to do that. The Federal Government's complacency is now aiding China's proposed naval port ambitions in the Solomons. This matter is not of marginal importance. Beijing convinced Honiara that they could provide what Australia could not: big infrastructure projects – stadiums, roads and mining. In exchange, they needed the Solomons to switch its allegiance from Taiwan to the mainland. This agreement will allow Chinese police to guard Chinese infrastructure assets, and at the most, Chinese warships to be based in the Solomons. There was no intelligence briefing from the Solomons or any other information that this deal was about to be agreed.

Fundamentally, we have to be engaged constructively with our neighbours and put in the time to be considered credible 'friends'. Our attitude must be respectful and authentic and based on trust.

The Solomons saga has been a salutary lesson.

Lyn Anderson



DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Term 2	Monday 2 May to Friday 24 June
Term 3	Monday 18 July to Friday 9 September
Term 4	Monday 3 October to Friday 2 December
Mid-year drinks	8 June and 22 June, 4.00 - 5.30pm (the intention is that members attend only one mid-year drinks event)
Tutors lunch	8 July 12 noon - 2pm



EMMANUEL MACRON - FIVE YEARS ON

Neo-Liberalism vs Far Right?

Macron and the French political situation

It was some relief not to have to think about Australian politics for a while, and to be taken on the journey of Macron's presidency by Emeritus Professor Charles Sowerwine on Thursday 12 May. He looked at the freshness of a young, dynamic president elected in 2017, and explained the changes and challenges of Macron and his closest opponents over the last five years.

Macron's skills in negotiating internally and on the world stage are seen as positives and during the pandemic years he has handled the situation well with good support. During the last five years he has been under continued pressure from the far right and also from the protests and increasing anti-Muslim feelings.

Professor Sowerwine described some of the history of Marine Le Pen (Macron's strongest opponent) who followed in her father's footsteps initially - her father having been an extreme Roman Catholic, known for his anti-semitic, anti-Muslim and anti-migrant views. In 2011 Marine took over control of the party from her father and made some changes to his extreme views, distancing herself somewhat and changing the emphasis towards the cost of living, solidarity issues and 'bringing the French together'.

In the before and after photographs, Macron appears more harried and pressured, while Le Pen has undergone a make-over of sorts, making herself perhaps more feminine and 'softer' in appearance.

Professor Sowerwine went on to discuss Macron's other political opponents, including Eric Zemmour, the ultra-traditionalist with a strong anti-North African stance, and Jean-Luc Melenchon, previously a socialist party member who now promotes a platform of socialist policies including increasing pensions, price controls, retirement at 60 and progressive taxation. Melenchon also has a fairer attitude towards refugee/migrant policies, which has in turn resulted in 7/10 Muslims voting for him.



Professor Sowerwine continued the discussion with some interesting statistics of the percentage of votes gained by the main parties after the second round of the recent French elections. Despite there having been enormous dissatisfaction with Macron and his socialist party ideals, he nevertheless won another 5-year term. Our attention was drawn to the new alliance of four political groups, known as 'The Nupes', including Melenchon, and recent polling has attributed them around 23% of the vote.

The next Legislative (Senate) elections are coming up in September 2023, and Macron could find himself in trouble with the Right. Perhaps this could result in a very fractious parliament. Despite his on-going challenges, Macron is fortified by his 'brilliant' performances in the international arena.

Professor Sowerwine's informative talk gave us greater understanding of the French political scene, which will no doubt encourage us to take a greater interest in European politics in the future.

(PS I stand by my comment at the end of the session suggesting that Macron's on-going success is in no small part due to his having a mature, older woman by his side!)

Nola Bartak

DUPLICATE BRIDGE



Back in pre-COVID days, U3A Duplicate Bridge was a Monday morning activity where we all met at Horrie Watson prior to 10am, exchanged news of the past week, set up our tables for the game and enjoyed the challenge. Some of us had regular partners, whilst others happily played with a new member or someone who did not have a partner that particular week. It was friendly competition and a great test of our memory ... what card to lead? what cards have already been played? the number of cards remaining in a suit? who might be out of that suit? etc etc. Of course, morning tea was a highlight, especially when someone brought us a treat! Great camaraderie, new friends and a Christmas party to end the year.

Then along came COVID! February 2020 saw the end of this happy in-person play. Lockdown forced innovation in most areas of our lives, including at the Bridge table. Bridge Base Online (BBO), an international online Bridge game became popular, and we decided to trial it so that we could play each other during lockdowns. We all needed a little instruction to get started, but soon we had increasing numbers and before long we were regularly programming nine or ten tables for play each week. Amazing, as this was double the number playing earlier face-to-face! Again, as with the change to Zoom meetings, it demonstrated that our U3A members are wonderfully adaptable and accepting of change.

Moving forward to 2022, we needed to consider going back to in-person play. Would it be safe? Handling the cards, pens, score sheets, bidding sheets ... all posed questions of hygiene and COVID-safety. So we conducted a survey of our members to see what their playing preference would be. And what a surprise! Whilst we thought social interaction would be the deciding factor ... No! People wanted to continue with BBO for 2022, same time, same place ... at home. Comfort, organised competition, safe!

So here we are, Duplicate Bridge online with 41 members playing regularly and enjoying the Monday morning challenge. Of course, our Christmas get-together each year ensures that we all still recognise one another and meet the new members. Perhaps 2023 will see a return to sitting around a card table holding real cards and chatting over morning tea! As with so much today, the future is interesting to ponder.

Kay and Peter Bailey



WE THANK OUR SPONSORS:

ABN: 12 241 330 302

OFFICE HOURS (during term time):

Mondays to Fridays: 9.00 to 12.00
T: 9817 7736; Jenny Cash (AH) 0408 019 815
E: u3adeepdeneinc@gmail.com
W: www.u3adeepdene.org.au

Weekly email/s are sent to all members with email addresses; watch for these updates.

See our website for details of courses.

The Program Guide for Term 3 2022 will be distributed in mid-June.

PHOTOGRAPHERS: Jean Dunn, Elizabeth Etty-Leal, Barbara Finch, Alison and Keith Head, Fiona Malcolm, Pam O'Brien, supplied by the contributor, or in public domain.

NEWSLETTER EDITOR: Pam O'Brien



Jellis Craig
248 Burwood Road, Hawthorn, 3122
generously printed this Newsletter