



DEEPDENE
UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE

NEWSLETTER – TERM 1, 2024



IN THIS ISSUE: A note from our President p 1; Joan Taylor OAM – life member p 2; Certificates of Appreciation p 2; Celebrating 2023 pp 3 - 5; Historic walks p 5; Bruce Wolpe p 6; Frank Bongiorno p 7; Joseph Hajdu p 8; U3A – a personal perspective p 9; Understanding the ageing brain p 10; Remembering Koonung Creek Reserve p 11; Amazing art of the NGV p 12; Table tennis p 13; Sustainability p 14; Our travellers go north p 15; Joy-Filled January (Westgarthtown, Eastern Hill Fire station, ASRC lunch, Roman Garrison) pp 16 - 19.

A NOTE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Welcome everyone to the first U3A Deepdene Newsletter for 2024 and to the wide range of courses, programs, discussion sessions and activities which are now well underway. In actual fact, some of you will have participated in the varied and interesting U3A Deepdene Joy-Filled January (holiday program) which was planned, developed and organised by Anne Kemp. There were many fascinating activities ... I believe you may read about some in this Newsletter.



Membership of our organisation provides so many opportunities to develop skills, learn about new ideas and visit places of interest which we may never explore on our own initiative. I must also add to the aspects of our formal program, the value of U3A Deepdene as an organisation to meet and get to know other people with whom we may share similar interests. Socialisation and social connection are so important to maintaining our ongoing health and wellbeing. As Jenny Cash notes in her weekly 'omails', we encourage people to connect and maybe share a coffee/tea and biscuit together as often as possible. We are fortunate in our venues – Balwyn Park Centre, Horrie Watson Pavilion and Stradbroke Park – all three of which are generously made available to us by the City of Boroondara. Our other venue is the Uniting Church Deepdene where many of our more physical programs are conducted. My participation in regional U3A meetings and other voluntary association groups makes me very aware of our good fortune! All venues enable us to gather in twos and threes fairly easily as part of our overall participation in U3A Deepdene.

First term is a very short one this year. It will be holidays before we know where we are!! Likewise, our 2023 – 2024 Annual General Meeting will be upon us on 15 May. I encourage you all to think about any roles for which you would like to offer yourself: if not as a formal member of the Committee of Management, then maybe becoming involved in administration support, producing articles for this Newsletter, or being a personal welcomer to our U3A.

I hope you will enjoy this Newsletter as much as I do. Pam O'Brien is an excellent editor and I extend enormous thanks to Pam for her kind but persistent demeanour in chasing up articles!

Susie White

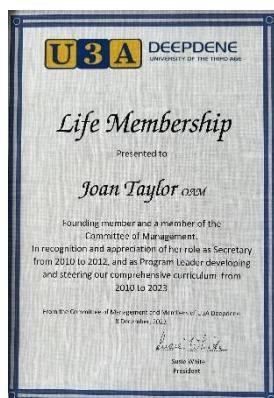
JOAN TAYLOR OAM - A SPECIAL PIECE OF NEWS

Course leaders will recall a very important moment at the Tutors' Lunch on 8 December, 2023. The special moment was my opportunity to present Joan Taylor OAM with a Certificate of Life Membership of U3A Deepdene. With the amazing development of Zoom, Joan was able to receive her certificate across the airwaves as she could not attend in person on that occasion.



Joan was a Founding Member and a member of the Committee of Management from 2010 to 2023. The certificate notes: *In recognition and appreciation of her role as Secretary from 2010 to 2012, and as Program Leader developing and steering our comprehensive curriculum from 2010 to 2023.*

In an earlier Newsletter, I told the story of Joan Taylor and her colleague and friend, the late Sadie Stevens (who had also been awarded an OAM), taking up the challenge on behalf of the Uniting Church, Deepdene, to undertake a Community Development course. The outcome of the practical component of that course was the formation of a new volunteer organisation – U3A Deepdene.



We thank Joan for all her work over the years, knowing that the organisation she was key to founding and developing has gone from strength to strength. We also appreciate the work Joan undertook, especially in 2022 and early 2023, to prepare other members to take up the baton of curriculum management and development – especially in the short course program area, which is broader in scope than most other U3As because of Joan's vision. Joan would contact people who were featured in the daily press, asking them to present to us.

In accepting the award, Joan explained that we were able to establish a new U3A because of the concentration of talented people who were keen and interested to share their skills in lots of different ways. She suggested that her task was much easier than the program co-ordinators of most other U3As in Victoria. Joan also acknowledged the support of the various Committees of Management which rarely said 'no' to anything she proposed, and were very generous in their affirmation of what we were doing. Further, Joan expressed her gratitude to Jenny Cash, who efficiently took care of the often challenging administrative details.

Susie White

CERTIFICATES OF APPRECIATION

How fortunate we are to have members who have provided such valuable support to us over the past years. In addition to the 51 members who were awarded Certificates of Appreciation at the 2022 Lunch for Tutors and Class Leaders, we celebrated the contributions of a further 23 members in December, 2023. So, we sincerely thank the following -

Full Year Tutors:

Suzanne Collings, Bronwyn Culshaw, Helena Dunn, Paul Flanagan, Janie Gibson, Alison Head, Keith Head, Fiona Malcolm, Linda Marshman, Rhonda McCaw, Terry O'Callaghan, Helen Page, Karin Watts, Carole Williams and Gillian Yung.

Full Year Leaders:

Kay Axsentieff, Christine Georgiou, Wendy Stewart and Michelle Trevorrow.

Smooth running of a program over the last 5+ years:

Nola Bartak, Tral Cash, Mitzi Mann and Ian Withell.

CELEBRATING 2023

1. End of Year Barbecue, 15 November



2. End of Year Drinks, 29 November



3. Lunch for Tutors and Class leaders, 8 December



(Bottom left: Susie White reads the citation on Joan Taylor's Life Membership certificate)

HISTORIC WALKS

In Term 4 2023, Graham Ray ably assisted by his wife Wendy, led their first historic walk along Swanston Street. We met at Federation Square and walked north up Swanston Street to the State Library. Graham gave us lots of information and stories as well as the good advice to **look up**.

We usually have four historic walks each term and the areas covered are diverse and varied. Typically, the walks take two hours.

Each year 70+ members enrol for the historic walks.

On the Friday prior to the walk, we send out an email inviting members to secure a place in the walk on the following Tuesday. The first 20 to reply are accepted!



Historic Walk group on stage at Federation Square

I have now completed my first year as Historic Walks Co-ordinator. I would like to thank firstly the wonderful leaders of the walks, as well as Richard and Beryl Hume for their assistance with the microphone and roll marking, Fran Willmott for co-ordinating while I was leading, and Jenny Cash for assistance with the Friday 8 pm invitation email and various office tasks. I also thank the many members who gave us extra information and great stories as we covered our wide-ranging routes.

Beth Perrigo

BRUCE WOLPE - THE STATE OF PLAY IN THE US

News and Views for 2024 got off to a great start on 8 February, with an excellent talk by Bruce Wolpe to a large number of participants. There were at least 140 enrolled, which might be a N&V record and reflects the level of interest, if not concern, that this topic generates.



Bruce is currently based at the US Study Centre in Sydney, and has vast political experience, including work with the Democrats under President Obama, and this informed his thoughtful and sometimes disconcerting analysis.

He began by addressing the question ‘How has Trump survived?’ This is something that many of us have been wondering, given our own rather different politico-legal environment. He described the way Trump has converted his many legal challenges into political strengths that can only grow stronger as the court cases multiply, and quoted some surprising statistics: for example that 70% of Republicans believe that the 2020 election was stolen. He also voiced some interesting insights, like his view that Nicky Haley has no chance of defeating Trump, but that she would actually be a more potent challenger to Biden.

Turning to the Democrats, Bruce explained why the (ageing) President Biden wasn’t being replaced by a younger candidate. In essence, Biden has been a very good President, drawing on 50 years of political experience and with a progressive agenda. Moreover, history has shown the Democrats that an attempt to take down the incumbent President would only damage the party. Bruce’s view is that Biden’s mind is clear, and he knows exactly what he is doing.

A week is a long time in politics. A day or two after this talk Biden was being described by a US Special Counsel as an ‘elderly man with poor memory’. It seems unlikely that Bruce would agree. Regarding Kamala Harris, he believes that she, too, is doing a better job than media representation would suggest. It is observations like these, based on his own close involvement with US politics, that made the talk so interesting.

Bruce then moved on to voting patterns. He told us that younger Democrats are not really sure about Biden, and that he is losing support among Black and Hispanic Democrat voters. Black people feel that they did reasonably well under Trump, and Hispanics are concerned about the influx of migrants in the South. Again, this is a level of detail that we don’t usually get in our local news sources. Bruce sees the coming election as an ‘enthusiasm election’. That is, that Trump voters will be swept along by their enthusiasm while Democrat supporters lack that strength of feeling, and this is something that they will need to address.

With his enthusiastic followers, and policies that are gaining some traction among voters, Trump may look as if he has a good chance of winning the next presidential election; however, looking at the recent Republican primaries, there were still Republicans who did not vote for him. Bruce said that these will not all necessarily come out to vote for him in the actual election. He also pointed out that Trump was becoming more and more erratic in his comments and outbursts and using language with Nazi connotations that was likely to have a negative impact. Then there are the court cases. Most of these are civil cases that will not stop Trump, but those relating to his involvement on January 6 could do him serious damage.

After this we had an overview of the electoral colleges, especially those that were particularly important, and then the possible impact a Trump victory would have on Australia. Pleasingly, Bruce’s view is that we should have no serious concerns. He also referred us to his recently published book, *Trump’s Australia*.

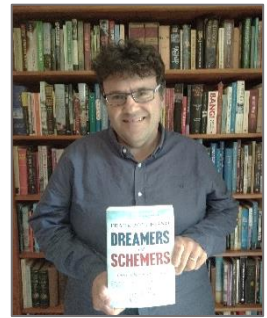
The presentation was deeply interesting, and comparatively short to allow plenty of time for questions and discussion. These continued until the last possible moment. Then Bruce concluded, was thanked, and left the zoom meeting. However, many members stayed online for another 15 minutes or so, continuing to discuss the issues raised – the sign of a very successful News & Views.

Many thanks to Bruce Wolpe and to the organisers.

Rosemary Massaro

FRANK BONGIORNO – DREAMERS AND SCHEMERS

How fortunate we were that Professor Frank Bongiorno was able to fly in from Canberra to deliver a talk about his new book *Dreamers and Schemers*, which is a political history of Australia. As Professor in the School of History at ANU, his interest is in Australian History, especially of labour traditions and the Australian Labor Party. This book explores social and cultural links to politics and was written largely under lockdown. Each chapter explores a significant period of Australian history to give a sense of the political, social and economic history of the time. The author emphasises political leadership by answering three questions - what was demanded of the political system, how it worked, and how it changed society.



Australia's political system from 1788 to 1855 was an autocracy. Britain feared revolution, such as happened in France in 1789, and had sorted its politics much earlier with a factional and military model. Jobkeeper during the pandemic echoes the tradition of the commissariat which ensured a minimum commitment by government: 'you look after us and we will obey' being a type of social contract. With the influx of newcomers due to the gold rush, democracy was instituted in the wake of Eureka. Two houses were established in all the colonies despite no aristocracy as represented in Britain by the House of Lords.

Modern political parties began in Victoria in the 1870s; bodies such as the National Reform and Protection League had a platform, and elections and politicians were kept to account. The maritime strike in 1890 was a turning point due to union involvement. Federation in 1901 was a radical experiment to graft some American ideas to the British tradition. Early twentieth century Australia was severely affected economically by WW1 (the Country Party emerged in 1914) and the Depression. The Communist Party was founded in 1920.

Although WW2 soldiers slotted back into civilian life, 1966-1982 were tumultuous years due to the Vietnam War, mass change and the end of the Menzies era. The 1950s and 60s were affluent - home ownership grew from about 50% to 70%. Baby boomers began voting from 1967, women's liberation began in 1969, then issues such as gay liberation and the environment affected politics as society changed.

In this era of post-materialism we idolise Ned Kelly and sporting heroes, rather than Alfred Deakin. We like peaceful transitions, fear electoral systems and are content with compulsory voting, green and gold Medicare cards, rational gun laws etc. Which direction will we follow in this era of social media? Misinformation and misleading statements are problematic, as Facebook and other platforms have the ability to disseminate information as well as campaign on issues very quickly, often spreading mistruths.

Frank answered several questions from participants, including a question on Whitlam's dismissal, which Frank saw as a mobilisation of vested interest, coalesced to remove government, and on the imminent Voice referendum. Final comments suggested that we may now be in a new era of greater political activism demonstrated by a major shift to the Teals as elected parliamentarians. After all this food for thought, the audience participated in refreshments and informal discussion. This was an excellent event when we all learned more about Australian political history, thanks to Frank Bongiorno.

Evelyn Perks

JOSEPH HAJDU - MUSEUM ISLAND

Joseph Hajdu is a distinguished retired academic. He is also an author and a traveller of great insight. Joseph gave us an evocative account of the UNESCO World Heritage site of Museum Island, a unique artistic treasure in the heart of Berlin.

A brief snapshot of some German history is important to put the construction of the five museums into context. In 1871, 39 small states were replaced by one united Germany. Germany became the dominant power in Europe, with Berlin the capital. A united Germany was made possible by a Prussian victory, and the Kaiser and his advisors were determined to make Berlin the cultural centre of Europe, with large scale imaginative town planning and the erection of magnificent monuments. The Kaiser wanted galleries of the calibre of London and Paris.

The genesis of Museum Island was the private collection of the Kaiser. He prided himself on the depth of his knowledge of classical culture, and he funded archaeological digs in Greece, Turkey and Italy. He networked well and wealthy people were appointed to the board, as fundraising was pivotal.

Museum Island successfully survived the First World War. Aerial bombing was in its infancy and any physical damage was minimal. In 1920-23, there was a huge financial collapse in Germany and money for museums became scarce. Completion of the Pergamon was significantly delayed.



Museum Island

During the Second World War, Berlin experienced carpet bombing, coupled with extensive street battles, and there was not a building left unscathed in the entire city. Treasures were spirited to the country for safe storage to minimise the loss of valuable objects. The Russians, who had conquered Berlin, looted what was left.

Museum Island and the whole historic centre fell into the Eastern part of the city. East Germany made Museum Island a tourist site and only basic renovations were executed. Today, an underground walkway connects the museums, extensive renovations have been made, and are ongoing to this very day.

The Museums in order of construction:

1. The **ALTES MUSEUM** (Old Museum)

With its opening in 1830, historical collections and artworks were made accessible to the general public for the first time. This museum was constructed as a Greek temple, based on the Pantheon in Rome, with a classical dome. Prussia's most important architect of the time, Karl Schindler, designed the building.

2. **NEUES MUSEUM** (New Museum)

This was the second impressive structure, built in 1855, and designed by a pupil of Schindler, namely Friedrich Stüler. It houses the Etruscan and Egyptian collections. The most famous exhibit is the bust of Nefertiti, which is over 3000 years old.

3. Built in 1876, the **ALTE NATIONALGALERIE** (Old National Gallery) has architecture reminiscent of a neo classical Corinthian temple. The building is



Nefertiti

situated on a high platform, reached by a double staircase. It houses 19th and early 20th century paintings, such as Manet, Cezanne, Caspar David Friedrich and Max Liebermann.

4. **BODE MUSEUM** (1904) was originally the Kaiser Friedrich Museum, but after the war there was a change of name. Today it houses one of the largest collections of sculptures in the world. It is neo Baroque in style and sits on the wedge-shaped end of the island.

5. The most famous museum is the **PERGAMON**, completed in 1930. It is home to a magnificent collection of large architectural treasures, excavated by German archaeologists in the late nineteenth century. The exhibits are awe-inspiring, not just for their fabulous design, but for their grand scale. These include:

- the Gateway to the market of Miletus
- the Ishtar gate and the Processional Way, built during the reign of Nebuchadnezzar II, in Babylon.
- The Pergamon Altar

6. **JAMES SIMON GALLERY** (2012-2019) is the central point of entry to the entire complex. James Simon was a Jewish citizen and a patron who provided Berlin's museums with extensive collections.

It was our good fortune that Joseph found the time to speak to us. He has a messianic enthusiasm for his topic. Museum Island is definitely on our bucket list!

Lyn Anderson

U3A - A PERSONAL NOTE TO 'BROTHER BILL'

U3A Deepdene started in 2010 and my wife, Bronwyn, and I joined shortly afterwards. It is now a large and thriving group with over 1300 members, 90+ full year courses, and 57 short courses each term. In fact we pride ourselves on the variety and range of short courses offered, which is not the norm in Melbourne for other groups.



Our first involvement was the wine appreciation group - I suspected my brother Bill was slightly jealous of that!

However it was not long before someone let on that I played bridge, and so I became U3A Deepdene's bridge instructor and group leader. I followed up with classes in cryptic crosswords. My other main interests over the last ten years have been military history, and politics/current affairs.

Bronwyn has run mosaic classes and followed various art courses, travel, bridge and a few one-off specials. We both belong to (different) book groups.

U3A has become a central part of our lives over the last 8 to 10 years. We count ourselves lucky to have found it and a little sad that we were put off initially by the name 'University'! We could picture stern lecturers and exams, but of course nothing could be further from the truth. It is a shame, because we could have been 14-year members by now!

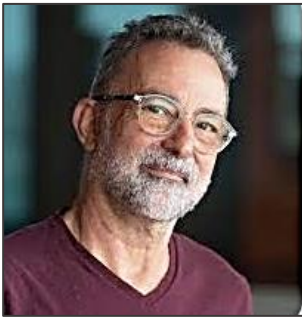


It is of course an entirely voluntary organisation with remarkable people giving freely of the time to 'educate, entertain and stimulate, and promote discussion, enquiry, and fellowship; to find new friends, and to have FUN'. My military history group leader once said it took him 100 hours to prepare one talk. I can confirm that, as my two presentations - 'Trafalgar' and 'The Dardanelles' - took at least that long ... and he has done over 80 of them!

I send our greetings and good wishes to U3A Malvern UK from Deepdene in Melbourne Australia where it cooled down today and dropped below 30 degrees.

Patrick Culshaw (Melbourne 2024)

ADVANCES IN UNDERSTANDING THE AGEING BRAIN



On 28 November 2023, Professor David Finkelstein gave a large group of U3A zoom participants a stimulating presentation on this topic. David is the head of the Parkinson's Disease Laboratory at The Florey Institute of Neurosciences and Mental Health and The University of Melbourne. While David's main interest is in Parkinson's Disease, he gave us insights into the broader topic of the ageing brain.

We learnt that our bodies, and in particular our brains, change as we age. Reassuringly, although as we age, our brains do lose neurons, our remaining neurons can compensate. David said that animal experiments have shown that even if we only have 30% of our neurons left, we can still have almost 100% of our brain functions intact.

Some of the factors that David thinks cause cell loss in ageing are the environment in which we live and our lifestyle. Environmental factors that may have an adverse effect on our brains include pollution, the use of plastics and viruses.

David emphasised lifestyle factors that he believes can slow cell loss in ageing. He was very strong on people having regular vaccinations for covid and for influenza. Good blood pressure control, sugar control and low salt diet are also important.

David sees exercise as being a key in achieving and maintaining good health and brain function. He had an excellent quote from Lord Stanley: 'Those who do not find time for exercise will have to find time for illness.'

David stressed the importance of being socially connected and involved in our community. He encouraged a good relationship with our GPs and, if needed, having someone advocating on our behalf in medical situations.

He recommended a book *Being Mortal* by Atul Gawande. The thesis of the book is that medical care should focus on well-being rather than survival.

He also recommended using official websites such as [health.gov.au](https://www.health.gov.au) and looking at healthy ageing within these websites, and not being coerced by scams or trends that have not been scientifically proven.

Importantly, David provided reassurance for those of us who experience 'senior's moments' when we forget names or words, or where our keys are. He said that these moments are normal and that we should not put stress/pressure on ourselves when these moments happen. He reminded us that we live in a busy world and we often have a lot going on in our minds. He urged us to use tools at our disposal like diaries or notes on the fridge or on our phones to aid us in remembering things.

David gave us all a big pat on the back for being members of U3A. He saw the benefits of participation in U3A as it provides education, social stimulation and connections, and mental stimulation. All these things help to maintain a healthy brain and a healthy body. Well done U3A Deepdene.

It was a thought provoking, stimulating and informative session.

Wendy Ray

The views expressed by presenters in all our classes 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.

REMEMBERING KOONUNG CREEK RESERVE

A photographic exhibition



Photography, left to right: Karin Watts, Peter Ogier, and Jenny Peacock

Koonung Creek has been an important waterway and open space over millennia: for the original Wurundjeri people, through to the first colonial settlers and present day users of the park. Long term residents remember the creek, prior to the freeway being built, as a place where they could play all day as children, building cubbies and splashing around in the deep creek.

The current parkland is about to change and be significantly reduced in size to allow for the widening of the Eastern Freeway as part of the North-East Link project.

A photographic exhibition by the U3A Deepdene photography group '*Remembering Koonung Creek Reserve*' documents the Koonung Creek Reserve from Bulleen Road to Doncaster Road as it exists in 2024. In its current form the park has picnic areas, a wetland, a playground, an original orchard, a paved bike and walking path (connecting the eastern suburbs to the city) plus many hidden, rough paths enjoyed by mountain bike riders and dog walkers.

U3A Deepdene member Kimbra White initiated this project, as she considered future North Balwyn residents may wish to have a record of the beautiful landscapes, the tall trees and informal pathways of the park as it currently exists. She put the project together with Karin Watts, U3A photography group leader. The photography group has taken some fabulous photos of the park for everyone to enjoy.

The exhibition is being held at the Greythorn Community Hub for two months from 7 March to the end of April 2024. Please visit the Hub and see the exhibition.

The Eastern Freeway was built in stages, the first stage from Hoddle Street to Bulleen Road opened in 1977, the second section from Bulleen Road to Doncaster Road opened in 1982 and the third section to Springvale Road opened in 1997. Koonung Creek is an open stream upstream of Doncaster Road and also downstream from the Carey Sports Fields to where it meets the Yarra. The 2.4 km section of the creek from Bulleen Road to Doncaster Road was converted into an underground drain as part of the 1982 freeway construction.

Many trees that are now 30-40 years old will be lost as part of the current widening of the Eastern Freeway, including many planted by North Balwyn Rotary Club members when the section to Doncaster Road was completed. Seven hundred trees were planted over two weekends in September 1983, and in 1989 the club managed the planting of a further 3,000 trees during Arbor Week as part of an Australia wide 'Trees for Survival' program launched by the Governor General Sir Ninian Stephen.

Parkland will be restored as part of the project, but it will be smaller and different. It is expected that the hidden and informal paths will be lost as well as the many mature trees and wide-open spaces. In many parts of the park there are three pathways: the main paved path, a walking path and a hidden rough bushland path.

The exhibition is documenting the current park and its users as an historical record of North Balwyn.

The photographs have been taken by the U3A Deepdene Photography Group as part of their regular program and the exhibition has been sponsored by the Community Bank Inner East and hosted by the Trentwood Community House at the Greythorn Hub.

Kimbra White



AMAZING ART OF THE NGV

What an interesting, informative and amusing talk Graham Ray gave us on 1 November when he introduced us to 21 of his favourite pieces at the NGV – a very difficult choice for him. Graham has been a volunteer guide at the Gallery so is familiar with most of its works of art. His choices covered Australian and Indigenous art, early European art, sculptures, silver, a Chinese figurine, and the famous glass ceiling, all accompanied by excellent slides. Not only did we see these beautiful works but for each one we learnt something new, something to explore on our next visit to both the International and Australian galleries of the NGV.

Graham began his talk with the iconic *Shearing the Rams* by Tom Roberts, a painting we all know well. But did you know that after cleaning, it was discovered that the Tar boy (who painted tar on the nicks of the shorn sheep) was actually a girl! Graham also noted that the shearers were using hand shears even though mechanical shears had been introduced two years previously.



Anguish by Augustus Schenk chose to wrap him in a large cloak, a rather shapeless garment resembling a dressing gown. The people who commissioned the sculpture were insulted and rejected it. Our bronze cast was acquired in 1968.

A Chinese figurine *Guardian Lion Spirit* of the Tang Dynasty (c.700CE) was described to us as a tomb guard and is a hybrid of various animals, elephant ears, bird wings, cloven hooves and a lion's chest. Instead of passing it by as rather an ugly item, the description brought it to life!

Picasso could not be ignored and we heard about the history of the *Weeping Woman*, which was stolen from the Gallery in 1986 only eight months after it had been purchased, for \$1.2 million, from Picasso's daughter. It was believed to be a stunt from an unknown group of artists who were demanding more money for the arts. It was missing for 15 days and finally recovered from a locker at Spencer Street station. Nobody has ever been arrested for the theft – but the arts are now much better funded! Postscript: Patrick McCaughey, the Gallery Director, felt the security guards should have been more vigilant so banned the chairs they usually sat on. They went on strike and the Gallery was closed for three days!



Balzac by Rodin

Leonard French's amazing glass ceiling in the Great Hall is the largest artwork in the Southern Hemisphere and the largest glass ceiling in the world. He had never worked with glass before and it took him five years to complete, having to cut 224 thick pieces of glass in 50 colours, by hand.

Among Graham's amusing anecdotes was the story of a school class looking at Bertram Mackennal's sculpture of *Circe* with her arms straight out and fingers dangling. When asked what they thought she was doing, one young girl timidly suggested she was drying her nails. Salvador Dali's painting entitled *Desert Flower* was actually painted as an advertisement for a perfume, and did you know he designed the wrapper for Chupa Chups? Samples were provided.

Graham finished with the story of *The Banquet of Cleopatra* by Tiepolo, arguably the best painting in the collection of the NGV, purchased from Russian authorities in 1932. Cleopatra and Mark Antony had a wager as to who could stage the more expensive feast. He put on a very lavish feast. Hers, as shown, was very meagre but she took off one of her priceless pearl earrings, put it into her wine and drank it – the winner. But did it reappear two days later???

Graham had something interesting to tell us about each and every piece. But finally, nobody in attendance at Balwyn Park will forget the charade we had to decipher to name another iconic Australian colonial masterpiece. Graham placed a Four and Twenty meat pie against his ear – think about it!!! *

Diane Tiffin

*For the answer to Graham's challenge, check this Newsletter's last page.



***The Banquet of Cleopatra
by Tiepolo***

'FRIENDSHIP' TABLE TENNIS MATCH

U3A Deepdene Table Tennis players enjoyed taking part in a 'Friendship' tournament at the Evergreen Centre, Balwyn, recently. The day was arranged and co-ordinated by HinKay Man, of the Kew Home of Chinese (KHC). There were 30 participants from KHC, U3A Deepdene, Boroondara Chinese Senior Citizens and the Australian Vietnamese Association.

U3A Deepdene was represented by Marg Pont (one of our two Deepdene Table Tennis co-ordinators), Ling Tong, Helen Christie, Paul Whelan and Ken Parker. The competition gave our players the opportunity to play singles, experience a variety of playing styles and to compete against other enthusiastic players. The competition was fierce with opponents focussed on winning the best of three games. Congratulations to all our participants who played well, with Helen and Ken being placegetters.

Jess Wilson, MLA Kew, Maree Guthrie (Boroondara Council Active Ageing Policy and Projects Officer) and Susie White, U3A Deepdene, attended. Jess Wilson made the most of the opportunity to play a brief game before presenting certificates to all placegetters.

Kew Home of Chinese provided afternoon tea to end a lovely afternoon of play and new connections.

Helen Christie and Susie White



***Above: Deepdene players left to right:
Helen, Marg, Paul, Ling, Ken and KHC
member HinKay***

***Left: Maree Guthrie and Jess Wilson with
placegetters***

KEN PARKER – SUSTAINABILITY IN THE HOME

On 29 November Ken Parker's presentation was illuminating. He spoke with passion about the need to improve sustainability to improve the world in which we live when climate change is affecting our environment. This is a serious issue which needs addressing as 162m tons of man-made global warming pollutants are released into the atmosphere every day. This comes from thawing permafrost, coal mining, coal plants, industrial processing, oil production, air travel, forest burning and land travel – all of which are something beyond our reach to affect directly, but we can make changes at home which will make a difference.

We can reduce consumption and particularly make our homes more sustainable. Ken clearly presented many options for us to achieve this, which will result in a healthier place for us and the planet, energy costs will be lowered as will water and medical bills, and we will feel we have helped preserve the planet for younger generations.

There were simple things which can be done such as turning off the lights, avoiding long showers, turning off appliances when not in use, set the thermostat to a lower temperature – probably many things we are already doing. On a larger scale Ken explained the benefits of going all electric and pointed us to many websites to Electrify Boroondara – we can save considerable amounts of money, we can save our health by removing gas from the home, and we play our part in helping the climate.

Electrify Boroondara is a broad alliance of community groups and individuals dedicated to accelerating our transition to a clean energy future.



The biggest use of energy comes from heating, cooking and water heating – 63% of domestic use. By installing solar panels we can access free, efficient energy from the sun and this helps reduce financial costs for the householder. We can convert cooking from gas to induction cook tops, our health will be improved without the use of fossil fuels – gas cooking is responsible for 12% of childhood asthma. We can instal reverse cycle air conditioners for heating and cooling, have a heat pump for hot water, and when purchasing a new car go electric. For those who are bike riders consider an ebike to help with the hills!!

We can also improve the thermal performance of our homes by sealing gaps, double glaze windows, have effective insulation, have external shading to stop the sun's rays heating windows and all this can be retro-fitted to any home for relatively little cost. Thermal imaging cameras can be borrowed from the library to show home owners' deficiencies with insulation.

Electrifying our homes is a journey which we need to begin now and Ken showed us how to take the steps along this journey in an inspiring and thoughtful manner.

Margaret Phillips

As many of you will know, we often take photos of our members at various classes and social functions. If you do not wish to be photographed would you please let the photographer know, and step aside.

OUR TRAVELLERS GO NORTH!

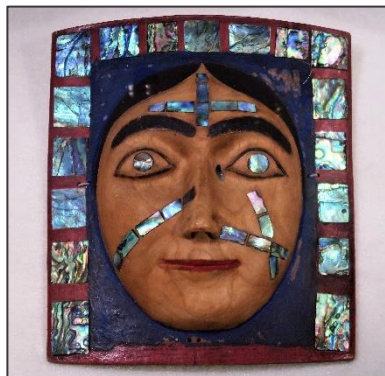
Many of our members have resumed travelling after the lifting of the restrictions which Covid imposed upon us all. We would like to share just a few of the beautiful photos that three of our keen travellers presented to our Travel group recently:

1. Margaret Dixon enjoyed a lovely trip to Lake Como, France and the UK -



Left to right: Japanese Garden at Villa Melzi d'Erie; Lake Como at sunset; Chateau de Vaux le Vicomte

2. Hugh Bucknall had an amazing holiday in Alaska and the Canadian Rockies -



Left to right: Reflections at Pyramid Lake, Jasper; Ancient face mask by Tlingit people, Alaskan coast; Shining lights on the Provincial Legislature, Vancouver BC

3. Victor Caune delighted us with his Arctic adventures -



Left to right: The midnight sun, Svalbard; Icebergs, South Greenland; Harbour, Lofoten Islands

JOY-FILLED JANUARY

Our Joy-Filled January program was very well received with over 150 zoom participants and 170 excursion/craft participants joining the program.

We planned a mix of social opportunities, with historical options such as Westgarthtown, the Holden Museum in Trafalgar and a tour of the Eastern Hill Fire station. In addition, we participated in healthy historic and artistic flavoured walks and excursions.

Crafting was also featured with several members learning how to weave bags, trivets, and bowls from recycled plastic bags. We also included a fascinating Indigenous excursion beginning at the Koorie Heritage Trust Centre, Federation Square.

Our Coffee and Chat mornings were a big success, and we will include these in future planning.

Apart from venturing out, our proficient team of zoomers looked after us at home with fascinating travels from Egypt to Turkey and Alaska, plus a wonderful presentation about a Roman Garrison in Chester!

It's important to include a social justice aspect which was also very well supported to assist the Asylum Seekers Resource Centre.

Feedback has been very positive, and I wish to extend a warm thankyou to everyone who helped this program succeed, as without your support either as a leader, presenter or participant, it simply won't come together, so a very sincere thank you!!

I have some ideas for the Easter Holiday Program, but I am always keen to hear yours! Please don't hesitate to email or phone me with your thoughts. Please enjoy the reviews on particular activities that follow.

Kindest regards and thanks

Anne

Anne Kemp

Vacation program Co-ordinator

0413 940 705

E: anne.kemp462@gmail.com

VISIT TO HISTORIC WESTGARTH TOWN

Travel back in time to 19th century rural Germany when you visit the historic Westgarthtown in present day



Thomastown. Tuesday 23 January saw twenty U3A members exploring Ziebell's farmhouse with outbuildings built 1851-56, and the Lutheran Cemetery and Church, built 1855. Our expert local guide explained that the original settlers came in 1850 from Germany, to establish dairy farms on land owned by Thomas Westgarth, a Melbourne merchant.

This house museum evoked daily life both on the ship transporting the colonists to Melbourne, as well as the hard grind of being self-sufficient in a strange land. The photos show the 61 cm thick stone-walled dwellings with steep-pitched roofs, built very close to the roads. We marvelled that this devout community travelled so far to establish new lives for themselves, yet sought to preserve what they had left behind in the buildings and lifestyle of their homeland.

Alan Ray



TOUR OF EASTERN HILL FIRE STATION

Seeing a fire engine in action is many a child's dream, and watching a demonstration at the Fire Rescue Victoria Museum satisfied some a bit older as well.

This important service to the community began in Melbourne in the 1870s and has a proud history displayed in the original heritage-listed building on Victoria Parade, East Melbourne.

Initially, insurance companies guaranteed certain homes and businesses for fire and failed to attend if a burning building was not insured by that company.



Fifteen members of U3A Deepdene were impressed by the wealth of knowledge of honorary volunteers, retired firemen who were long serving in both spheres.

They showed displays from horse and cart days, when water was drawn from the Yarra River, to modern, powerful, shiny red trucks; old uncomfortable uniforms intended to protect the wearer now upgraded to those with modern burn-proof fabrics. Gleaming brass helmets and brass buttons that required constant polishing on clothing have been redesigned for better protection, comfort and convenience, using velcro fastenings.

Speed of dressing in preparation for any emergency was one of the practical demonstrations, along with rescues of people from top storeys and fast car-cutting methods used after a vehicle crash.

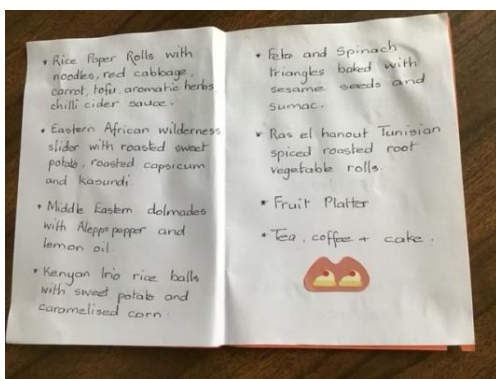
The old Hub of Communication was a beautifully crafted office of polished woodwork studded with telephone switchboards.

Everything about the Museum was shipshape and well ordered. It was an inspiration to be reminded of a wonderful service that protects our community.



Beth Light

ASYLUM SEEKER RESOURCE CENTRE (ASRC) LUNCH



What would you enjoy from this exotic menu?

On 17 January, Matthew and Elizabeth Etty-Leal hosted a lunch for twenty U3A members at their home. The selection of six different finger foods was catered for by the ASRC Catering Group and showcased flavours of Africa, the Middle East and Southern Asia.

Sister Brigid Arthur of the Brigidine Sisters was present, and spoke to us of her work advocating for asylum seekers: trying to find them accommodation, employment, everyday necessities, and English lessons where needed. She has worked for the organisation for thirteen years, helped by a team of volunteers.



Those who attended had a most enjoyable meal while supporting a worthy cause.

Jenny Kelso

THE ROMAN GARRISON IN CHESTER

What a surprise it was to see our tour guide, Gerald Hughes, donning a toga and laurel leaf headdress to show us Roman Chester as a part of the January vacation program.

Gerald was the perfect guide as he and his wife Kathy lived for thirty years in Pulford, a village very close to Chester, before migrating to Australia.

Located on the high point of the River Dee near where it meets the Irish Sea, Chester was the centre of an agricultural area and also a trading port. The Romans visited Chester to trade in circa 50 BC.



***Artist's impression of the Cheshire landscape
in Roman times with the river reaching the sea on the
horizon.***

The Roman invasion of Britain commenced in 54 BC but it was not until the 70s AD that a fortress was built at Chester. By 197 AD the wattle and daub buildings of the early Roman fort had given way to stone and tiled structures within a walled town. Chester, or Deva Victrix in Latin, was at this time the largest military fortification in Britain and a significant Roman settlement.

Its central location, close to the Welsh border and with access to a harbour, held strategic implications. Gerald noted it is

thought that Chester was 'so important strategically to the governance of England, Scotland and Wales that the Roman Commander was based there'. It has also been suggested that with its proximity to a harbour, Chester would be an ideal port for the Romans to begin an invasion of Ireland in their quest for the further expansion of their Empire.

We glimpsed everyday Roman life, visiting the baths with their cold, tepid and hot bathing facilities. We saw that Romans dined reclining rather than sitting at a table. I was equally fascinated to discover that underneath his toga a Roman man would be wearing a tunic!

We observed how archaeology has been instrumental in discovering aspects of Roman life in Chester. Excavations have shown the layout of the fortress with its barracks, stables, workshops and granaries. The size of the rampart and ditch defending the fort, the sophisticated lead piped water supply system that served the town, and the water disposal system with culverts under the main streets have also been revealed. It was fascinating to see some of the hypocaust that provided underfloor heating and hot water to the elaborate Roman baths for military personnel. An impressive amphitheatre was located beyond the walls of the fort.

Research has shown that the area beyond the fort was a civilian settlement. Gerald noted that as many people lived outside of the town walls as inside. The civilian population provided additional goods and services required by the Roman garrison.



***Reconstruction of takeaway food based on
finding the very large cooking pots***

Interestingly, archaeological studies have also included the analysis of Roman rubbish! For example, studies of seeds, bones and fibres found in rubbish have indicated what the residents of Chester were eating during this period. It has been discovered that while the lower classes ate meat, fish, vegetables, grains, eggs and cheese, the upper classes also enjoyed delicacies such as dormice, hare and snails.

As a member of his local historical society, Gerald was able to visit the excavations on a farm near his village.

The archaeological digs revealed that the farm had functioned as a market garden for Roman Chester. Fruit and vegetables including beans, peas, salad, brassicas, apples, pears, grapes and quinces were grown and then transported by boat along the River Dee to feed the garrison.

The farmer, Gerry Fair, became interested in archaeology after finding a Roman tile in his fields. He, together with some philanthropists, went on to found the Poulton Trust. Today the Poulton Trust, based at the farm, offers archaeological training to students, and encourages community interest in archaeology.

We finished our tour looking at modern Chester. Deva Victrix is not far away. The current main road follows the course of the old Roman road. A walk into a fast-food shop brings you into contact with the past. You can see parts of Roman buildings that have been preserved behind glass screens as you line up to order a burger! The town walls still exist and have been restored. A walk along them is fascinating and provides wonderful views of Chester.

A warm thank you to Gerald for providing such an informative and personal tour, complete with so many illustrative photos.

Aliya Porter



ABN: 12 241 330 302

OFFICE HOURS (during term time):

Mondays to Fridays: 9.00 to 12.00

T: 9817 7736; (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 2, 2024 will be distributed in mid-March.

CALENDAR DATES, 2024:

Term 1	Monday 5 February to Friday 22 March	Wednesday 15 May, 4 - 5.30 AGM
Term 2	Monday 22 April to Friday 21 June	Wednesday 12 June, 5 - 6.30 Mid-year drinks
Term 3	Monday 22 July to Friday 13 September	Friday 28 June, noon - 2.00 Mid-year lunch
Term 4	Monday 14 October to Friday 6 December	for Tutors and Leaders

Many thanks to all contributors to our Newsletter: writers, photographers, and proofreaders. Your support is greatly appreciated.

PHOTOGRAPHERS: Hugh Bucknall, Victor Caune, Margaret Dixon, Jenny Kelso, Beth Light, Pam O'Brien, Peter Ogier, Jenny Peacock, Beth Perrigo, Karin Watts, supplied by the contributor, or in public domain.

NEWSLETTER EDITOR: Pam O'Brien.

*** Answer to Graham Ray's audience challenge: 'Pioneer'!**



WE THANK OUR SPONSORS:



248 Burwood Road, Hawthorn 3122

We thank Jellis Craig for kindly printing our Newsletter.

