



# NEWSLETTER - TERM 1, 2025

## A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Welcome to all our U3A Deepdene members and friends to our first Newsletter for 2025. Welcome too, to the wonderful Term One program in which hundreds of you have already participated. I know that many of you joined the fabulous program which Anne Kemp organised for the summer vacation, making the most of the many social opportunities provided. Thank you, Anne for your work on the 'holiday programs'.



**Susie White**

The joys and benefits provided by all our programs are the opportunities to meet and connect with so many others from our own geographical community. When we finish our paid working lives, and children are less reliant on parents on a day-to-day basis, we often lose the opportunities for easy connection with others, usually in a similar age range, which are provided by the workplace or local committees and sporting teams. Many, many studies have demonstrated the value of social connectedness for our mental health. Our U3A programs, whether in the Short or Full Year programs, enable us to meet and connect with others, to test our ideas in a safe environment, and to learn the new skills or develop the knowledge areas which we have never had a chance to tackle in earlier times. Of course, U3A Deepdene also provides many programs which address other aspects of our health. These range from walking groups to strength training which support our physical health; while most other programs challenge our thinking, and provide safe opportunities to test our thinking on a wide range of issues. In all, U3A Deepdene enables members to build and maintain our social, physical and mental health.

The proportion of our membership is currently one-third male to two-thirds female. A number of our members are concerned that men in our community do not hear of or know about an organisation such as ours, as they really value their own participation and believe that many other men will too if they actually check out the organisation. Hence, we are holding a one-off event to which members, both male and female, are invited to participate so long as they bring a male guest. The guests may choose to come simply for the drinks and food, but they will have the opportunity to meet male members and hear about some of the pleasures that U3A provides for them. No doubt I will write about the occasion in our next Newsletter!

Now, speaking of our next Newsletter, Pam O'Brien, who has been a fantastic editor of U3A Deepdene Newsletter, is handing over the reins to others – a couple of people whose roles are yet to be finalised. You will all have been to occasions where Pam has taken fabulous photos of participants – with their permission, of course – for the Newsletter. Many of you will have also had the gentle tap on the shoulder about the possibility of writing an article and also (for some of us at least!) a gentle reminder about articles and due dates. Pam has set an exceptionally high standard and will assist those who take up the challenge of the editorial role, but I want her to know how extremely grateful our membership is for all the work she has done to keep us all informed. No doubt others will have heard comments about the high quality Newsletter produced for U3A Deepdene and will be keen to pass on their thanks!

In closing, I wish all an excellent year of learning, connection, stimulation and pleasure in participation in U3A Deepdene.

**Susie White**

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## CERTIFICATES OF APPRECIATION

At the end of year lunch for Tutors and Leaders, the following members were awarded Certificates of Appreciation with the citation 'In grateful recognition of your wonderful contribution as a Volunteer Leader over the last 5+ years'

Yvonne Clarke	Julie Holder	Val Little
Merrill Corney	Ian Hundley	John Manton
Patrick Culshaw	Jade Huynh	Angela Padula
Sandy Curnow	Steven Huynh	Ken Parker
Frank Devlin	Pam Jagger	Beth Perrigo
Jan Dods	Mahles Karrupiah-Quillen	Graham Pratt
Anna Harley	David Laycock	Alain Romary
Jacqui Harrison	Sally Laycock	Jan Tuckwell

'In grateful recognition of your contribution to the smooth running of a U3A Deepdene Program over the last 5+ years'

Neil Brown

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

We respectfully acknowledge the Wurundjeri Woiwurrung people of the Kulin Nation, and their elders past and present and future, who are the traditional owners of the land on which U3A Deepdene is located.

We are honoured to recognise our connection to Wurundjeri Country, history, culture and spirituality through this location.

We also acknowledge the traditional owners of lands across Australia, their elders, ancestors, cultures and heritage.

## HEALTH AND SAFETY

We would like to reinforce the importance of the protocols we request for our safety.

Please remember to:

- Wear/bring your membership card with the reverse filled in to all face-to-face sessions
- Carry your medical waiver form (with details included) to all physical exercise sessions
- Take into account the weather and decide whether you will attend or not
- Consider your own fitness regarding the activities in which you choose to participate
- Carry water with you and wear a hat outdoors
- It has been suggested that we install the 'EmergencyPlus' App on our mobile phones:
  - It is very easy to do
  - Go to the App Store, tap the search engine, type in 'EmergencyPlusAustralia' and download it
  - You can see your exact location (most important)
  - It is just a tap of a button to alert 000 Emergency, SES, or Police immediately.

## AED - AUTOMATED ELECTRONIC DEFIBRILLATOR

Each of U3A Deepdene's locations have defibrillators on the walls in case of emergency. Open the package and a recorded voice immediately gives instructions for use.

Please note their positions:

- At Balwyn Park Centre – beside the lift on the upper level;
- At Alston Halls – to the right of the doorway into Room 1B from the Breezeway;
- At Stradbroke Park – inside Room 1, to the left as you enter from the Cricket/Football oval (not the Athletics field);
- At Horrie Watson Pavilion – inside, on the west wall, on the right of the doors into the kitchen



- Sign at left is outside the buildings, indicating that an AED is nearby;
- Right is the AED beside the lift at Balwyn Park Centre and at our other venues as listed above



Members are reminded that U3A Deepdene has policies about Health and Safety, as well as Physical Programs. These can be found on our website.

# THE WONDER OF BIRDS' NESTS

Dr Iliana Guzman, a lecturer and researcher in ecology at The University of Melbourne, gave us a fascinating presentation late last year about birds and their nests. Her interest is particularly focused on non-human animal behaviour and she was a knowledgeable and delightful presenter.

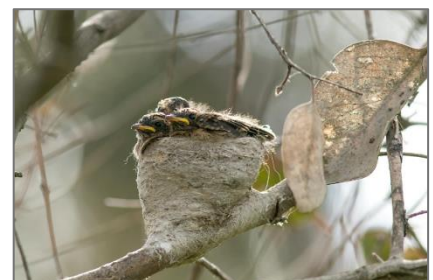
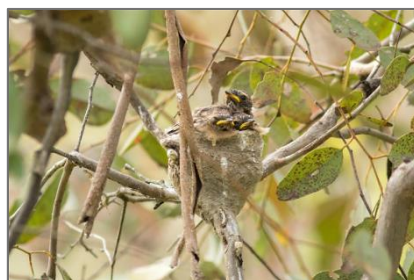
It turns out that birds are masters in architecture. They look at orientation, thermal qualities, building materials and labour when considering the design and building of their nests. Among the spectacular photographs Iliana showed us was one of a 10-gram bird which spent a week building its tiny nest; then the first flight of a fledgling.

Bird species and birds within species vary enormously in how they build their nests, from absolute works of art to the hopeless structures built by pigeons (I always knew they were a bit thick!).

Nests are built to house the eggs and nestlings, but also to protect them from predators. The microclimate inside the nest must be within certain parameters, with stable temperatures and not too hot. The capacity to build nests allows their owners to spread their habitat from tree hollows and other traditional nesting spots.

The ability to build nests among different species of birds ranges from those for very dependent nestlings of parrots up to those for fully independent chicks of emus and brush turkeys. The latter bury their eggs in a huge mound, then leave. The chicks never see their parents.

The building structure architecture is somewhat genetic. But we don't yet know how inheritable the building techniques are.



## ***Variation across species***

The two types of nests are open and domed. It is not known why some species build domed (covered) nests, but there are various theories. Features are linked to climate – thinner walls dry quickly in rainy areas; deeper cups are needed in windy areas. Open nests expose eggs to the sun, while domed nests protect them from sun and radiation.

Species that build domed nests have smaller ranges than those with open nests. Domed-nest builders are less likely to live in cities: this may be because of the lack of materials for nest building. Birds with open nests are more ecologically successful. So why build domed nests? They take longer to build and need more material. We don't have the answer yet.

Male and female birds take different lengths of time to build nests, and a couple takes longer than a female on her own. Some male birds sing next to the female while she builds! Larger birds take longer to build.

Birds with large clutches of eggs have a wide range and are in cities. Birds with domed nests have fewer broods per year. Open nests lead to selection of the species and more resilient babies.

## ***Variation within species***

If we take passerines as an example, 52% build domed nests and 15% build both domed and open nests. Yellow-rumped thornbills build very varied structures. Some include a decoy entrance to trick predators! Weebills build beautiful, tiny woven nests, varying from round to oval. Superb fairy wrens build nests of

different shapes and materials, some using wool to weave them. They build smaller nests in summer and larger ones in winter, as chunkier nests are warmer. They build 3 to 8 nests per season – a lot of building.

The availability of materials, like mud or cobwebs, affects the time needed to build. Some birds orientate their nest entrances differently in cooler and warmer seasons. They can face east, or right round to north, south and west, depending on the weather.

Temperatures inside nests can get up to 45°C, but nestlings will die in temperatures over 40°C, so their health depends on the ability of their parents as builders. A bird on her eggs may pant to cool them, or fan her feathers to cool the temperature inside the nest.

Cuckoos raid other birds' nests, so some birds build tunnels to their nest to keep the cuckoos out. The better the nest, the less time the parents need to sit on the eggs, so they can spend more time feeding and drinking away from the nest.

There is a theory that arid environs have more radiation, so there are more domed nests in these regions.

One member of our audience asked if Iliana had pictures of birds building nests, but she said that building behaviour has not been greatly studied, as cameras and other paraphernalia, and people, disrupt the birds and may cause them to desert the project. This is a big gap in our current knowledge and AI may be useful in this scenario.

From Iliana we learnt so much about the tiny architects and engineers in our midst; not to mention the wonderful photos.

**Heather Kelly**

**Photographer: Helberth Peixoto**

## MOVING INTO 2025

A successful, inaugural event, 'Moving into 2025', designed to facilitate a smooth start to the year for U3A Deepdene tutors and course coordinators, was held at Balwyn Park Centre on Thursday 30 January. The morning's program was informed by tutors' responses to the prompt, 'Ideas to help me with what I do', completed at the Tutors' Lunch in mid-2024.

After a brief welcome and a timely reminder about how adults learn from our President, Susie White, Denise Bray provided a very accessible description of how she conducts the essential Health and Safety briefing with her classes. Ilza Dulmanis followed with a succinct overview of the Tutor Portal with a focus on troubleshooting some of the common problems that tutors might encounter. Judy Still concluded with some insights into Short Course Program planning, before the group broke up for a lively catchup and networking over sandwiches and pastries.

**Trish Lele**

***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.***

# LA TROBE THE PLANTSMAN

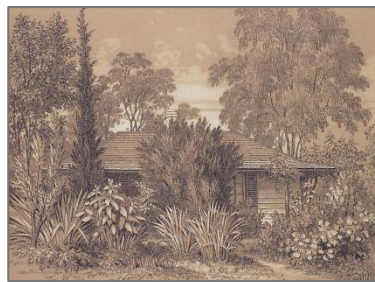
Presenter: Helen Botham

1839 Port Phillip District Superintendent

1851-1854 First Lieutenant Governor of the newly formed Colony of Victoria

Even before his arrival in Australia, Charles Joseph La Trobe had established himself as an 'excellent botanist'. (1)

As a boy, La Trobe attended Moravian schools in Yorkshire and it was there that he developed his interest in 'rambling' (2). He was an amateur geologist, a mountaineer and became a keen observer and collector of plants and seeds. He visited Switzerland and Mexico sketching, collecting botanical specimens and describing, in published books and his journals, what he saw on those continents. In 1835 he married his first wife, Sophie. Four years later Charles La Trobe, Sophie and their young daughter arrived in Sydney.



1. ***A view of Jolimont, Melbourne, Port Phillip, 1843-44. George Alexander Gilbert, Pictures Collection, State Library Victoria***
2. ***The detached cottage, Jolimont, Edward La Trobe Bateman, Pictures Collection, State Library Victoria***
3. ***Cottage roses, photo: Helen Botham***

For nearly fifteen years, the La Trobe family lived at Jolimont on twelve and a half acres, which was bought at auction in 1840 for 250 pounds. It was during that time that La Trobe detailed the development of the garden in his sketches, personal journals and letters; there are also descriptions by those who visited the garden, and the drawings of Edward La Trobe Bateman, who in 1853 was commissioned by his cousin, the Governor, to make 22 sketches of the house and garden.

A list of plants, sent to La Trobe in 1844 by the amateur botanist Robert Campbell Gunn, shows that at this stage La Trobe was planting mainly English plants, such as iris, pansies and petunias. The governor was well known for his love of roses and he often refers to them in his letters. Frances Perry, wife of the Anglican bishop of Melbourne, wrote in 1848, that 'you imagine yourself in a gentleman's park' (3). However, lack of rainwater meant that La Trobe had to rethink his plantings and, for example, a list sent from the Sydney Botanic Gardens includes some indigenous plants (4). He also established a succulent garden at Jolimont. The discovery of gold in the colony meant that gardeners deserted the garden at Jolimont for the diggings; drawings from that time show an overgrown garden.

It is well documented that La Trobe made the arduous journey through the Otway Forest to the site of the Cape Otway Lighthouse. Much of Melbourne's inner-ring parks and gardens can be attributed to La Trobe's foresight in reserving this land. La Trobe's expertise as a gardener, and the high esteem in which his ability to identify new species was held, are evident in the number of plants which bear his name.

In 1854, La Trobe returned to Europe and married his deceased wife's sister. His eyesight was deteriorating and eventually he went completely blind; however, this did not diminish his love of gardening. Governor La Trobe died in 1875.

All who heard Helen speak are extremely grateful to her and those who are successfully involved in sourcing and replanting the seeds and plants chosen by the La Trobes for their garden at Jolimont.

References:

*Australian Dictionary of Biology*

Botham, Helen *La Trobe's Jolimont - a walk around my garden*

Footnotes:

- (1) Sarah Susannah Bunbury to her father, 9th August 1842, Bunbury Family Correspondence, PA 98/14, Aust. Manuscripts Collection, State Library Victoria.
- (2) See John Barnes 'La Trobe: Traveller, Writer, Governor', Halstead Press, in association with State Library Victoria and La Trobe University, 2017.
- (3) A. de Q. Robin (Ed.) *Australian Sketches: The journal and letters of Frances Perry*, Carlton, Vic. Queensbury Hill Press, 1983, p. 70.
- (4) Royal Botanic Gardens, Sydney, Library Manuscript Book B2 'Plants Sent Out'.

**Elizabeth O'Loughlen**

## 'SUNNY JANUARY'

Our Sunny January program ran from 13 to 24 January 2025, and we enjoyed many events. First was a wonderful travel session, hosted by Pam O'Brien and presented by Frank Devlin, on the fascinating **Oman** region. More than 50 people enjoyed this presentation via Zoom. Frank shared with us stunning photos of mountains climbing vertically from the water's edge; mosques, museums, and forts; canyons, desert, beaches, and much more; and the wonderful people of Oman, so welcoming, smart and helpful.

Our next event, '**A Mystery Meander**', led by Beth Perrigo, began when 15 members met at the Camberwell train station. Admiring gardens as they meandered along the railway and bike tracks, they reached Riversdale station; and then continued to chat and walk along more tracks and trails to return to Camberwell, arriving at Sofia's for lunch. We would like to thank Ken Parker for his very efficient sheep dog duties!



**Riversdale Station signal box with its unique boom gates to allow for the trams**

Mid-week saw us enjoying a really interesting presentation at the **Shrine of Remembrance** - our group was split into two to ensure everyone could hear. The guides were clearly very passionate about the Shrine, its design, history and newly opened areas. Partly underground,



**Shrine of Remembrance**

it is an amazing feat: beautifully and thoughtfully laid out. Each aspect of this amazing building has its own story of Justice, Perseverance, Patriotism and Peace and Goodwill. The inscription on the wall as we left: '*Anzac is not merely about loss, it's about courage and endurance and duty and love of country and mateship and good humour and the survival of a sense of self-worth and decency in the face of dreadful odds*' serves as a reminder of why it is so important, particularly now, with conflicts throughout the world, of why we must honour those who have fought for our safety and freedom. We all agreed that it is valuable to have a guided

tour and be able to ask questions and gain a good understanding; alternatively, self-guided tours are free, and you can linger at your own pace.

The following day, our first **Coffee and Chat** was attended by a healthy number of 20 participants at East and Co, and was well received with people enthusiastically exchanging their Christmas news with their U3A friends.

Our **trip to Kyneton** was a wonderful day, with 33 participants. We met at Southern Cross station, and enjoyed our train trip. Meeting up with Larina, our guide from the Kyneton Historical Society, we appreciated her abundance of knowledge, starting right on the platform of the station with the story of the August 1861 Kyneton Railway Riots uprising - an equivalent to Ballarat's Eureka Stockade - where miners were disgruntled with their pay reduction from 7 shillings to 5. Some 400 men marched from Malmsbury along the newly completed works. They cleared the line of the plant in use and the 150 men already working en route were ordered to leave their posts. Police from Woodend attended and when they arrived in Kyneton they demanded free beer! There is an interesting article in *Trove* that discusses this event. Kyneton was the gateway to the goldfields and is famous for many things, including the birthplace of the Kyneton Mounted Rifles in December 1859, which was the forerunner to the Prince of Wales Light Horse.



**Kyneton train station**



**Memorial to the Light Horse Infantry**

Kyneton train station, like most on the Bendigo line, is constructed from bluestone, mined at Malmsbury. Many Germans worked there, and this is evident by their unique style of bluestone laying. Following our tour we headed to the Kyneton hotel with some free time to enjoy this lovely spot.

Caroline Chisholm, the 19th century humanitarian, known as 'the emigrant's friend', opened many accommodation places in the area, along the road that is now the Calder highway, in the 1850s.

The second week of the program began with another wonderful Zoom travel presentation, once again hosted by Pam and presented by Jan Dods, on her travels in **Nova Scotia**. Jan shared her beautiful photos of rugged coastlines, brightly coloured fishing villages, beaches, seabirds and whales. We learned about Nova Scotia's rich cultural history which began with French, Scottish and German immigration, as well as with the tribes of the Mi'kmaq nation, all of whom influenced the wonderful art, crafts, design, and music to be found there.

The following day was our **Coffee and Chat** at Bacinos, where there was enthusiastic conversation and a few new faces too!



**'Sunset over New York', designed by Gaetano Pesce**

On Wednesday Lois Heycox hosted a wonderful tour of the **Molto Bello Italian design exhibition** at Heide. This was visited by 14 members who were very impressed with not only the Italian designs but also the way they were displayed and the use of the Italian colours in the rooms. The items are placed on plinths with wooden edges and on the base was a colour that complimented the item, especially the lounge chairs. The use of the plinths meant that people would be prevented from sitting on the chairs or touching items.

After World War 2 the Americans, through the Marshall Plan, assisted Italians to make items for daily use. A lot of materials were left over from the war and some were reused in the building of the Vespa motor scooter. The small Fiat Cinquecento and the Olivetti typewriters were designed at that time too. It was a golden age for Italian design. After the exhibition a smaller group enjoyed lunch at the Veneto Club - a short drive from Heide Museum.

We were very fortunate weatherwise for our **Historic Walk of East Melbourne**, guided by Lisette, a local identity, an architect by profession and very passionate about the area. Starting in Fitzroy Gardens we saw an area reimaged as the watering/meeting area for indigenous people at the time of Melbourne's settlement by white man. It is so beautiful and calm. This area is prone to flooding, and we walked past the Scar tree which also indicates the site of the original positioning of the Yarra.



**Enjoying Fitzroy Gardens**

We heard of the founders of East Melbourne: Sir James Palmer, Charles La Trobe, and Robert Hoddle and his famed 'Melbourne grid'. Unfortunately the topography of the area meant that the Yarra had to be diverted, and this has caused major issues over the years. The difficult days post the 1929 stock market crash and ensuing depression affected the mansions in the area: many were subdivided and rooming houses evolved. The area is now 75% apartments and 25% homes.

Our final event for the program was lunch at '**Strangers**' café near Balwyn Park – 14 friends met for lunch, and conversation and laughter flowed over a very pleasant hour or two.

All in all, just over 200 people participated in the January Vacation program. Thank you for your interest and support.

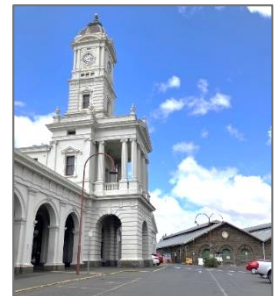
**Anne Kemp**

*U3A Deepdene Vacation programs give us an opportunity to go on half day outings or day trips. Do you as a reader of this article have a suggestion for an outing to be enjoyed during the next vacation? If so, please contact Anne Kemp: [anne.kemp462@gmail.com](mailto:anne.kemp462@gmail.com) or M: 0413 940 705.*

## EXCURSION TO BALLARAT

Led by Ballarat resident, John Manton, this excursion on 3 December demonstrated how the kernel of Ballarat's 19th century civic buildings have been renovated and repurposed to maintain a vibrant city centre.

Starting from the Railway Station (1862) - with its impressive portico and tower - we turned north at Lydiard Street. The environs of the railway station include the former large bluestone goods sheds, the recent Quest apartments and the old Victorian Railways Institute (VRI) hall. The hall would have once been the hub of recreational activities for railway workers. Our guide said that now, other than passenger services, there are only a few wheat trains passing through Ballarat. The historic railway gates have been replaced with boom gates but the elevated signal box remains.



**Right: Entrance to Ballarat Railway Station with one of the goods sheds in the distance**

Crossing the railway tracks we headed south along Lydiard Street admiring the wide footpaths and extant cast iron verandas of the streetscape dating from 1870s, up to and including Craig's Hotel. A feature of this street is the Ballarat Art Gallery and its accompanying buildings. Restored in 1967, it is the oldest regional gallery in Australia. It has an elaborate central entrance and elegant cast iron pavilion-like porticos on either side.



**Ballarat Art Gallery**

Further along the street is the Mining exchange (1887-89) where shares in mining companies were traded during the gold rush. The large, covered interior is now used for events and entertainment. Opposite is the art deco Regent cinema, now part of the Palace chain.



**Old Post Office, now part of Federation University**

The former Post Office together with the old library, Law Courts and Sheriff's Office now houses Federation University. We detoured into Camp Street where the old Sheriff's Office was located. Camp Street is so named because it was the location of the Government camp which administered the gold fields. It is now an open Gallery Park and art space and library plaza, opposite the historic three-storey 1887-88 Trades Hall building still serving its original purpose. It is worth noting that there was

no organised labour movement in the gold fields until the Eureka Rebellion in December 1854. It was in the Trades Hall building that the Ballarat Eight Hour committee was formed.



Nearby, the classical Masonic Temple (left) is now an art studio. On the Sturt Street corner, the former State Savings bank has been discreetly converted to a clothing store, Country Road.

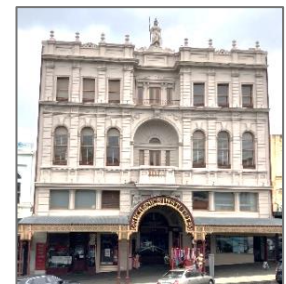
Sturt Street is a prominent thoroughfare with the three-chain wide median, originally for the moving of stock. It is now a leafy asset to the street and once had a tram line with the terminus at the bottom of the street where Bridge Mall is now. A feature of the median is the elaborate Edwardian bandstand erected in 1915 with funds raised by local bandsmen, in memory of the musicians who died on the Titanic in April 1912. No doubt the image of the band playing as the ship sank resonated in a community where music has been an important part of its history. Of interest was the weathervane on the bandstand which has a silhouette of the Titanic.



**Titanic Bandstand**

On the south side of Sturt Street is a monument to the discovery of gold at Poverty Point on 21 August 1851, with a replica of the 2,217 ounce Welcome Nugget. The list of alluvial nuggets and the fabulous yields of the early diggings explain the grandeur of Ballarat's fine early buildings.

Further along Sturt Street is the four-storey Mechanics Institute (1880), right, crowned with a statue of Minerva, and the former Unicorn Hotel with a cast iron balcony - one of the three early hotels in Ballarat - now an art gallery.



The next block in Sturt Street – between Lydiard Street and Armstrong Street - illustrates the lack of appreciation of Ballarat's built heritage before the 1960s. There is an impressive three-storey Victorian Gothic building on the corner of Lydiard Street and the grand Town Hall is on the Armstrong Street corner. As can be seen in the photograph (left), the infill buildings are totally out of character and scale and show no sympathy for this historic streetscape.

Venturing back to the south end of Lydiard Street, we entered Her Majesty's Theatre, originally built in 1874-75 but recently renovated and re-opened a few days before our visit. It is one of the most intact 19th century theatres in Australia and is reputedly Australia's oldest continually used performance space. Unique double horseshoe balconies were installed in 1898.

Opposite Her Majesty's is a Ballarat landmark, Craig's Hotel. There has been a hotel on the site since 1853 and it became Craig's in 1857. It expanded over time with a corner tower added in 1890.



Back along the south side of Sturt Street we made our way past the grand, bluestone Town Hall, built in 1870, which replaced an earlier 1856 building. The building still serves as municipal offices as well as being an information centre.

**Left to right: Her Majesty's Theatre; Craig's Hotel; Trades Hall Building**

The last stop was our lunch venue at the Golden City Hotel. From here, we said farewell to our guide, John, and made our way to the station for the 3.23 pm train and home in time for tea.

**Pamela Jellie**

## HUSH FOUNDATION AND GATHERING OF KINDNESS

On 19 November, Professor Catherine Crock AM shared with us her remarkable story of how her care for children receiving chemotherapy grew to a worldwide movement – the Gathering of Kindness – a culture of kindness throughout the healthcare system. Catherine reflected how, as a child accompanying her father, an eminent Orthopaedic surgeon, on weekend ward rounds, she had seen his caring attitude not only to patients but also to relatives and staff, and this remained with her during all her own medical training.



**Professor Crock with two young patients**

On commencing work at the Royal Children’s Hospital in 1998 as a Physician treating children who had cancer, she was distressed to find that repeated invasive and painful procedures were being performed in a soundproof room, so that other children and families were not disturbed by crying children.

Catherine began talking with children and parents as to how reduce this distress: with better pain medication, a way for families to report problems, and possibly with music. Music had always been an important part of Catherine’s life, and she realised that the type of music in this stressful environment would be very important. Musicians were invited to come to the treatment room to help them understand the problem and then compose appropriate music. Thus began the Hush Foundation, music composed especially for healthcare environments. The Hush music label now boasts 20+ album releases featuring over 170 compositions, recorded by more than 230 Australian artists and ensembles. But it wasn’t only music that was needed; families not only suggested solutions for some practical problems but also identified an atmosphere of disrespect between some staff, especially senior to junior, and this reflected not only on how care was given to patients but also to patient safety. The challenge was how to get colleagues to accept that this was a problem. The playwright, Alan Hopgood, was invited to the hospital and the play that he wrote, based on true stories, has now been performed worldwide and has helped staff to recognise the problems and improve staff culture.

Further changes have been seen at the Royal Children’s Hospital over the years, with children now being anaesthetised before painful procedures and the routine use of music and play therapy for children to reduce stress and anxiety. Families regularly say they feel safe and secure when their children are having procedures.

In 2015, Catherine cofounded the Gathering of Kindness (GOK) to build, nurture and instil a culture of kindness throughout the healthcare system to improve staff wellbeing and effectiveness. In 2016 GOK invited 100 participants - actors, healthcare clinicians, artists, musicians and innovators - to imagine that kindness, trust and respect were the fundamental components of the healthcare system, and that poor behaviour and incivility were unacceptable.



Since 2017 this has expanded into a five-day gathering over multiple venues during ‘World Kindness Week’ in November. In 2020 and 2021 with COVID19 changing plans for face-to-face events, GOK went online with thousands across Australia and internationally joining in a week of online offerings and conversations with renowned experts and international guest speakers.

The Hush Foundation and Gathering of Kindness continue to grow in many healthcare settings where the conversations are around how to build a kind health system for those working in it and for those receiving care. Kindness in healthcare is a topic that should interest everyone because it affects us all at some stage. To find out more and to get involved go to [www.hush.org.au](http://www.hush.org.au) and [www.gatheringofkindness.org](http://www.gatheringofkindness.org)

**Barbara Martin**

## MERRIC BOYD



**Merric Boyd at work in his studio**

The subject of Merric Boyd's life continues to fascinate, as was evidenced by over 50 attendees at Colin Smith's presentation at U3A on 5 February. Colin concentrated on the Boyds' various residences at Open Country in Murrumbena. Since Colin had lived in the area, as had several of our members, he was in a strong position to conjure up the original atmosphere of the suburb with many old photographs of the original streetscapes with their historically fascinating buildings. We were given a clear idea of the subdivision of the collective lots and the different coming and going of various Boyd family members and their partners. Doris, Merric's wife, played a pivotal role in the whole extended interconnected residences and studio spaces. Arthur was later to declare that Doris was without doubt the backbone of the family.

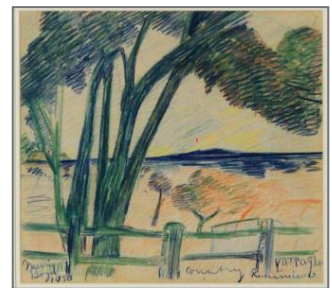
The ensuing community had not been made as clear until Colin's research in the plethora of literature on the Boyds. Many day-to-day situations between members and visitors to the property were recounted by the speaker who had been collecting data and interviewing endlessly over the past forty years. Drawing on anecdotes such as the dreaded Tuesday kiln firings highlighted the alternative lifestyle evolving on the property, much to the curiosity and often dismay of the various neighbours. Mown lawns or organized garden beds were certainly not *de rigeur* in this wild adventure playground setting. We were treated to many art images which showed the changing times and styles of three generations of Boyds. Art infiltrated life at every level. Merric's parents, Emma Minnie and Arthur Merric were both dedicated and talented, albeit conservative, painters. Their children, Merric, Penleigh and Martin expressed artistic talent across disciplines including pottery, painting, drawing, print-making and writing.

We were provided with images of Merric's distinctive pottery style which, while having been influenced by the Arts and Craft movement prevalent in England, was powerfully hand sculpted and possessed many distinctly Australian motifs. Colin described in detail Merric's character, which was a mix of extreme gentility combined with a frustrating struggle in dealing with increasingly severe epilepsy. In later life, soon



**Australian motifs**

after the catastrophic 1926 kiln fire, and particularly into the 1940s and 1950s, Merric increasingly turned to sketching, using colour pencils as his expressive outlet. His work still bears a strong originality which revealed a passionate soul striving for artistic expression. Merric and Doris's children were imbued with artistic talent and went on to express it in various ways. Merric had broken down the barrier between so called high art and the craft of pottery and even drawing.



**Pencil sketch**

Thank you so much Colin; your talk took us on a nostalgic journey into the lives of one of Australia's most eccentric and talented families. With your own passion for your subject combined with an understanding of the importance of personal histories, you entertained and informed us. You also demonstrated the importance of keeping old photographs, often the lesser ones, so that lives can in part be deciphered and celebrated.

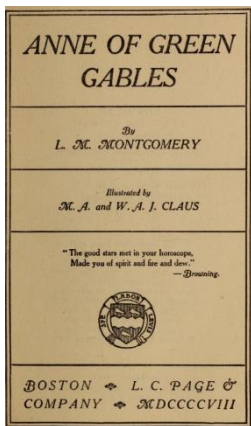
**Marg Pont**

# ANNE OF GREEN GABLES

In late November, many regular devotees of the Literature Program gathered at the Balwyn Park Centre to join in a panel presentation and discussion to explore the work of Canadian author Lucy Maud Montgomery [1874-1942], and the novel she is best known for *Anne of Green Gables*, published in the USA in 1908. Despite submitting her book to Canadian publishers, the much-rejected Montgomery was finally driven to try a firm across the border. The rest is history. The book was a runaway success, with over 50 million copies eventually sold in 36 languages. Thus, Montgomery, with an international following, became famous in her lifetime. Our gathering was in celebration of the 150th anniversary of her birth, on 30 November, and to reminisce with fellow readers, as we compared our experience of *Anne of Green Gables* and later books in the series.



**L M Montgomery,  
1935**



**Title page of the  
1908 first edition**

Anne Shirley is an orphaned 11-year-old, sent by mistake to middle aged siblings Matthew and Marilla, who have requested a boy to help Matthew on their farm. Following the death of both of her parents, Anne's life has been spent in orphanages or foster care, where her purpose had been to mind younger children. The story is set on Prince Edward Island where Scottish Presbyterianism has been widely adopted. The strait-laced, austere Marilla wants to return Anne to the orphanage, but the gentler Matthew is captivated, and persuades Marilla that they should keep her. The development of the eventual love between the elderly, no-nonsense Marilla, and the joyous, exuberant Anne, is in my view, the finest element

of the novel. It is a story of Anne's integration into the community, her education and teaching career, and the lessons she learns along the way. I didn't read about Anne until I was 13 when I had access to a decent public children's library, but some precocious readers started much earlier. I read them end to end, as the series moved from a story for younger readers to a coming-of-age novel which introduced me to Romance when Gilbert Blyth, Anne's ignored, long-time admirer, convinced her to consider him differently.

The speakers, Jan Beards, Kamoya Peterson and Suzanne Collings, wove an integrated story of the novel and its sequels. They explored how the life experiences of L M Montgomery informed her writing, and how the geographical setting and the history of European settlement on Prince Edward Island shaped society and its values. Consequently, we were given a rich context in which to recall what is regarded as a children's book, and reevaluate its relevance today. It was agreed that the feisty heroine Anne Shirley was still a relevant and engaging character - spunky, argumentative and intelligent enough to engage our granddaughters.

Credit is given to Jacques Cartier for the island's discovery in 1534. While the land mass appeared on a number of charts it took time to pin down its position accurately. The French named it Ile St Jean and claimed it in 1603, settled it about 1720 only to be ousted by the English who captured it in 1745. It was finally ceded by the French in 1763 as they progressively lost control of the Maritimes region, which included Nova Scotia and New Brunswick. The British deported the Arcadian French settlers. The war between the English and French, and the decision of Prince Edward Island to join the Canadian Confederation as distinct from the US, along with the requirement for functional literacy and numeracy, informed the values education needed to instil, and shaped the way it was funded, the training of teachers and the curriculum, all relevant to the novels as both Anne and her creator L M Montgomery were trained teachers.

At the time of the novel in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, mixed farming was practised at Green Gables as was the norm in the district. While work was hard and ongoing there was a place for comfort, a little leisure, good food and community fellowship. Prince Edward Island soils are generally fertile, well drained sandy loams and a Maritime climate makes the Island much milder than the rest of Canada, with a temperate 23C average in summer and only -3C in winter. Things had improved from the gruelling, barely subsistence conditions, endured by the first French and early British settlers. Today while PEI grows 25% of Canada's potato crop, it has diversified beyond farming, fishing and tourism to include aerospace and defence industries, biosecurity research and ICT software development. It is joined to Nova Scotia by a bridge.

***This house, owned by members of L M Montgomery's family, has been restored, and is now a National Historic site in Cavendish, Prince Edward Island, reflecting island life at the time of the Anne books***



While not an orphan in the same sense as Anne, L M Montgomery lost her mother to TB at two. She was then raised by her paternal grandparents who were pious Presbyterians, particularly her grandfather who did not favour education for women. Fortunately, her grandmother was able to prevail against him. When her father remarried, she returned to him and went on to college to complete teacher training. Obviously bright, she accomplished this in one year compared to the more usual two years. In 1898, following the death of her grandfather, she returned to care for her grandmother for the next 13 years.

L M Montgomery married a local country parson, and they had three children, two of whom survived. Their relationship was marred by the mental health problems of her husband. Sadly, Canada does not recognise her as one of their notable writers. In her inexperience she had signed over future novels to her publisher so probably didn't benefit financially as well as she may have. Her fictional heroine Anne enjoyed a much sunnier life.

Our final discussion, led by the presenters, ended all too early. Many thanks Jan, Kamoya and Suzanne.  
**Christine Georgiou**

## TRIP TO GENOVESE COFFEE HOUSE

How do you like your coffee? Latte? Cappuccino? Mocha? Americano? Macchiato? The main thing is:  
**drink what you enjoy!**

This was the message from Raymond Genovese who owns and runs the Genovese Coffee House in Coburg. The company was started by his parents in the 1970s and today it is obviously booming.

Twelve lucky U3A members visited the factory in November and were given a guided tour by Raymond. It started with our choice of coffee brewed by the resident barista. Delicious! The coffee offered was their favourite, Super Brazil.

Then we had a tour of the factory and all our questions were answered. It was fascinating to see the separating and roasting machines, then finally the blending machine where beans from many countries – including Brazil, Ethiopia, New Guinea, Indonesia and Peru - are mixed, then tasted for flavour.



I wondered how Melbourne's coffee enthusiasm started, and Raymond told us that the Italian migrants in the 1940s were keen to drink coffee such as they had enjoyed 'at home'. So they brewed their own! Then in the 1990s general enthusiasm for coffee in Australia boomed - and today Melbourne is known as the coffee capital of Australia.

It was such an interesting outing. Thanks to Angela Padula for organising it for us.  
**Jean Mapp**

## JAPAN, 1912-1940

In her presentation 'Japan 1912-1940', U3A Deepdene member Kamoya Peterson took members through the turbulent times in Japan between the death of the Meiji Emperor Mutsuhito to the consolidation of power by the army and navy over Japan's government.

This was Kamoya's third presentation covering the history of Japan. In 2024 she took members through the Tokugawa Shogunate, which had strictly controlled Japan as a 'closed' and feudal society for hundreds of years; and then through the Meiji period from 1867 to 1912, during which Japan had turned sharply to and fully embraced western modernisation. In this third presentation Kamoya explored the events and themes in Japanese history from 1912 that had led to the rise of fascist military control of government in Japan.

Over the preceding Meiji period Japan's strong inherent conservatism and nationalism had helped drive the country through the upheaval of reform and modernisation. This had also led to a constitution which required the army and navy to provide key cabinet ministers so to give it the power to destabilise any civilian government. The military also promoted *Bushido* - the ancient Samurai ethic of complete service to the ruling lord - as the basis of a new 'national ethic'.

Japan in the 1920s boasted an advanced education system, multiple political parties (with two that dominated) and an active trade union movement. The civilian government had also defeated the 1912 attempt by the military to destabilise the government, when both the army and navy ministers had resigned. However, disasters and financial collapses in the Great Depression fuelled conservative nationalist feeling. The Kanto earthquake in 1923 killed over 120,000 people and destroyed over 70% of Tokyo, and was followed by mob violence against Koreans and the rounding up of communists. Bank failures and the collapse of exports worsened rural poverty, and the country-city divide. Most Japanese soldiers and sailors were from the rural peasantry and were loyal to the army or navy rather than to any civilian government.

Kamoya also noted the emergence of anti-western grievances, particularly in relation to the rejection in 1919 by western powers of a 'racial equality' principle to apply in the new League of Nations. Despite Japan's assistance against Germany during World War I, the treaties that followed the war expressly limited Japan's navy relative to western powers. Samurai-based views and the idea that Japan's role and destiny was to free Asia from western colonialism and then be led by Japan, began to dominate, as Japan expanded to first take over Taiwan and Korea, and then later invade Manchuria in northern China.



***Left to right: Imperial Cabinet 1916-1918, included ministers from the army and navy; Emperor Hirohito, reigned 1926-1989; Land forces, Nanking, 1937***

The 1930s saw multiple coup attempts led by military officers which were praised by the patriotic press, with the trials often becoming a stage on which the plotters could loudly condemn civilian government. The military had begun to take its own action to expand the war in China without the approval of the government or the emperor. It was also active in the support of ultra-nationalist secret societies and the

assassination of prime ministers and other politicians. In the climate of fear the emperor's practical power to control the military became severely constrained and fears for the throne arose (indeed, there was a long history in Japan of warlords controlling and deposing emperors, with the average reign of an emperor being only about 10 years during the feudal period). For its part, the military aggressively promoted the idea of imperial divinity and loyalty to the emperor to death.

Kamoya noted that unlike the European fascism in Germany or Italy, Japanese military fascism did not involve a single 'great leader'. The military offered simplistic and nationalist solutions to very complex economic and political problems. As Japan became isolated internationally and subjected to severe American trade sanctions in relation to its continuing brutal invasion of China, this ultimately led the military to see the solution in war against Great Britain and United States.

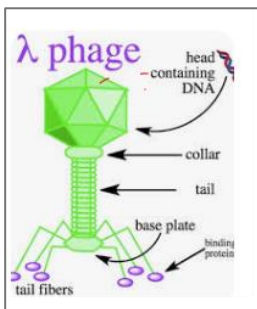
*Dr Kamoya Peterson enjoyed a long and successful career teaching and researching history in secondary schools and universities.*

**Philip Russell**

## HUMAN GENES, VIRUSES AND EVOLUTION

On 11 February, Ilse Hempenstall spoke to us of her training in science and her working life, which included medical laboratory science, air hostessing, fitness training and high school teaching. She became fascinated with viruses as they are all pervasive and over time have inserted sections of their DNA into the human genome and therefore have contributed to the evolution of our species.

Viruses come in all sizes and shapes, helical, icosahedral, complex and spherical (Covid-19). Her favourite was the bacteriophage, (pictured left) which infects bacteria and resembles a moon landing craft.



Are viruses alive? No. They cannot replicate independently and are considered an obligatory parasite. They can replicate only within a cell where they use the cell's mechanism for reproduction. After making more copies of itself, it either buds out of the cell or breaks open the cell, releasing the viruses, to infect new cells. Scientists have been able to create drugs that interfere with these processes allowing us to treat viral infections by disrupting them. In contrast, antibiotics work in a different way, by disrupting the cell walls of bacteria.

There is evidence now that viruses may have influenced our evolution. DNA contains the information, the genetic code, to create RNA which, in turn, makes proteins. The proteins become the components of the cells in our bodies and also the enzymes that catalyse all the cell's reactions. Our DNA contains sections called exons, which code for proteins, and in between the exons are large sections of DNA that were considered 'junk' DNA, called introns. Scientists now believe that within these introns are stretches of DNA that are involved in controlling how much of the exon DNA is made into proteins.

It seems that, after being infected by a virus, sometimes viral DNA can be inserted into our DNA. Virus derived DNA is now considered to have been involved in affecting the expression of our DNA, and therefore the evolution of our species. It is thought that one consequence of viral insertion into our DNA led to the human species becoming a placental mammal, which was a great advantage. Another great use of our knowledge of viruses is that we now can use certain viruses as carriers of specific DNA to create very effective vaccines. What is actually a very complex field of science was presented with humour and a sense of awe of our interconnectedness with viruses, both beneficial and pathological!

Ilse finished with a profound quote: 'Our genome is a history of victories of the experiments that did not kill our ancestors'.

**Rhonda McCaw**

# WE CELEBRATE 2024



## UNLOCK THE POWER OF TECHNOLOGY WITH U3A IN 2025

Computer technology is becoming more and more integrated into our daily lives and most of us use it in some way. But it is constantly changing; it can be hard to keep up, and difficult to work out how best to use it for the many different things we do. At U3A Deepdene, we are trying to provide courses that are engaging, practical, and empowering. In 2025, our technology courses for Terms 1 and 2 are designed specifically to help you build essential digital skills in a supportive and friendly environment.



**Errol Muir**

In Term 1, Technology sessions are aimed at exploring fundamental digital tools, gaining confidence and applying them to everyday activities. Whether you're interested in mastering spreadsheets, editing photos, or digitising old memories, there's a course to support your learning. For those new to artificial intelligence, a hands-on introduction to ChatGPT will help you understand how AI can assist with learning, entertainment, and organisation. Additionally, sessions on electric vehicle advancements have provided insight into the latest developments in battery technology; and coming soon, the evolving automotive landscape.

Term 2 introduces a range of topics, including creating professional documents with Microsoft Word and managing your digital legacy to ensure your online presence is well-organized for the future. Participants can also dive deeper into Artificial Intelligence with workshops on using AI for generating art, videos and managing photos, as well as using AI as a personal, free tutor to support language learning. These AI sessions are part of a new year-long program to develop AI skills and sessions and will continue in Terms 3 and 4. A face-to-face computing helpdesk session will offer personalised support, allowing attendees to seek guidance on technical challenges. Those eager to strengthen their skills with Apple devices will benefit from an in-depth introduction to iPads and iPhones, and from the class on photo editing. And a session introducing Facebook will help participants engage with social media safely and effectively.

We are fortunate at Deepdene in having members who generously provide their expertise over a huge range of courses, including technology. In the Technology area, we are always looking for additional tutors, so if you have some skill you can offer, we would love to hear from you. We can provide help in session preparation.

Technology is constantly evolving, and it's never too late to learn! Whether you're looking to find where technology can help you, master your devices, improve your digital security, or explore AI, these courses will give you the skills and confidence to navigate the digital world. To find out more, check the Technology section in the Short Course Program Guide. If you'd like us to provide sessions on a topic not covered, or if you can help by offering sessions on a particular topic, please contact me at [deepdeneu3atechnology@gmail.com](mailto:deepdeneu3atechnology@gmail.com).

**Errol Muir**

**Coordinator, Technology Courses**

***As many of you will know, we often take photos of our members at various classes, outings, and social functions. If you do not wish to be photographed would you please let the photographer know, and step aside. U3A Deepdene makes every effort to obtain the consent of members to their photographs which appear in this online Newsletter.***

# MOLTO BELLO - ICONS OF MODERN ITALIAN DESIGN

(A talk by Kendrah Morgan, Curator at Heide Museum of Modern Art, Wednesday 12 February)

Nothing beats actually visiting the exhibition, but for those of us lucky enough to attend Kendrah Morgan's presentation at a recent 'Wednesday Special' event, we were treated to a whirlwind tour of Italian design that left us dreaming of Vespa rides through the Tuscan countryside, stylish espresso machines, and typewriters so gorgeous you'd actually want to write a novel.



Kendrah's deep dive into the Molto Bello exhibition at the Heide Museum of Modern Art was nothing short of ... well ... molto bello! This showcase of 20th-century Italian design spans a glorious sixty years - from the first Milan Design Triennale in the 1930s to the riotously colourful Memphis Group of the 1980s. Think of it as a greatest-hits album, but instead of music, you get exquisitely crafted chairs, lamps that could be mistaken for modern art, and the iconic Olivetti Valentine typewriter - so stylish, it made office work look glamorous.

With a curator's passion and a PowerPoint presentation that had us all captivated, Kendrah explained how Italy, a land famous for its Renaissance masterpieces, pasta, and impossibly well-dressed people, also happens to be a global powerhouse in design. Marrying centuries-old craftsmanship with cutting-edge technology and a flair for the dramatic (it is Italy, after all), the country has produced objects that are as functional as they are fabulous.



Kendrah has been a curator at Heide for many years, putting together exhibitions on legends like Arthur Boyd and Mirka Mora. For Molto Bello, she scoured public and private collections across Australia for two years, gathering around 200 pieces of Italian design brilliance. Imagine being on a treasure hunt where the prizes are chic chairs, iconic homewares, and the beloved Vespa - a scooter so stylish it made zipping through post-war Italy feel like starring in a Fellini film. (Bonus fact: it was designed by a helicopter engineer. Because, of course, it was.)

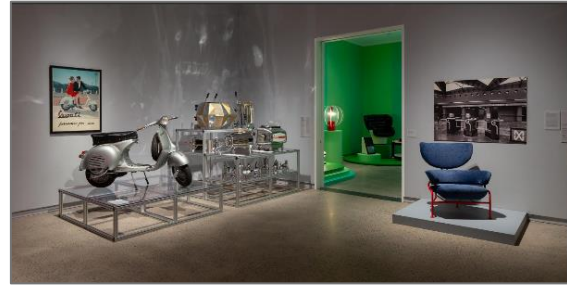
As Kendrah led us through the evolution of Italian design, we learned that the early 20<sup>th</sup> century was a hotbed of creative collaboration between not just industrialists and artisans but also a cluster of ingenious architects. Art Nouveau had its moment, Futurism brought a love of machines, and even Mussolini got in on the action, because what's a dictatorship without a bold aesthetic? Fortunately, Italian design survived its political entanglements, and after World War II, it emerged as a symbol of democracy - because nothing says freedom like a sleek, unisex Vespa!

By the 1950s, Italy had officially entered its *bella figura* era - design wasn't just practical, it was impossibly chic. The 1954 Milan Triennale gave birth to design competitions, and suddenly, the world was introduced to the cult of the designer. Fiat made small, stylish cars perfect for navigating Italy's charming-but-treacherous narrow streets, while the Castiglioni brothers decided that bicycle seats could double as stools. (Innovation or just plain stubbornness? You decide.)



The 1960s arrived in a blaze of psychedelic colours, plastic furniture, and experimental shapes - because who needs four legs on a chair when you can balance precariously on a futuristic blob

of fibreglass? Pop Art and counterculture influenced everything, and then, of course, there was the Sacco (bean bag). Ah yes, the ‘revolutionary’ chair that was fun and funky - until you tried to stand up.



By the 1980s, Italian designers had thrown all conventional rules out the window. The Memphis Group stormed onto the scene with a look best described as ‘eccentric geometry meets a candy store explosion.’ Kitsch was in, clashing patterns were celebrated, and serious design suddenly had a sense of humour.

Today, Italian design remains an enduring force worldwide, popping up in exhibitions from Milan to New York. And while many of these iconic pieces continue to return to the limelight, let’s hope the Sacco stays safely in the past - because let’s be honest, no one wants to see a group of retirees attempting to gracefully exit one of those things.

This is just a taste of Kendrah’s fascinating talk, and if you’re feeling inspired to see these masterworks in person (or just want an excuse to dream about sipping espresso in Florence), get yourself to Heide. It’s a journey through design history, with a little nostalgia and a lot of style.

**Nola Bartak (with help from her new best friend ChatGPT!)**

## A QUIZ FOR YOU

Now that you have read this wonderful newsletter, with coffee cup in one hand, here is a little quiz. The page numbers for the answers are printed in bold.

Unfortunately, there is not a prize of a return trip for two to the Seychelles for 10 correct answers!

1. Where is the automatic electronic defibrillator at Balwyn Park Centre? **Page 3**
2. Why do some birds build domed nests? **Page 4**
3. Where did Charles Joseph La Trobe go to school? **Page 6**
4. What happened at Kyneton Railway Station in August 1861? **Page 8**
5. The Hush Music Foundation now has how many albums? **Page 11**
6. What is the average summer temperature on Prince Edward Island? **Page 14**
7. Are viruses alive? **Page 16**
8. Where can I learn about ChatGPT? **Page 18**
9. When did Italy officially enter its *bella figura* era? **Page 19**
10. When does Term 2 at U3A Deepdene begin? **Page 21**

**With thanks to Alan Ray**



**OFFICE HOURS (during term time):**

Mondays to Fridays: 9.00 to 12.00  
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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, 2025 will be distributed in mid-March.

**TERM DATES, 2025**

- Term 1 Monday 3 February to Friday 28 March
- Term 2 Monday 28 April to Friday 20 June
- Term 3 Monday 21 July to Friday 12 September
- Term 4 Monday 13 October to Friday 5 December

**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING Wednesday 28 May**

**FUNCTIONS**

- Wednesday 11 June Mid-Year Celebration
- Friday 27 June Mid-Year Tutors/Leaders' Lunch

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

**PHOTOGRAPHERS:**

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