



NEWSLETTER – TERM 1, 2026

A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT



Philip Russell

Welcome everyone to your U3A Deepdene Newsletter for Term 1, and a belated Happy New Year for 2026!

When you read this it will be early March, and I do hope that by then the weather will have settled somewhat. I hope you and your families were able to stay comfortable when the temperature hit 40 C and above. The heat and fires that affected Melbourne and Victoria over the break also impacted our own *Jaunty January* vacation program. The extreme heat and risk of fire regrettably led to the short notice cancellation of two fully organised visits - to Trentham and to Blue Lotus Gardens.

Despite that, I must once again thank Anne Kemp and her team for putting together the vacation program (see page 7). The vacation activities are a great way to stay in touch over the break and see some of Melbourne's attractions. This January, the program included visits to the Melbourne Town Hall where, amongst so much, we saw the fabulously ornate Council Chambers, stood in the footsteps of royalty and the Beatles on the Swanston Street balcony and gawked at the unique robes and crown worn by Australian Hollywood actor Frank Thring as the King of Moomba in 1982 (and for my money Frank Thring is the only *true* King of Moomba).

This term we return to our regular courses and our Wednesday Specials. By the time you read this we will have held one Wednesday Special - hearing from Professor Arnold Dix, the Australian tunnelling engineer who was instrumental in the rescue of 41 workers trapped underground in India in 2023 (see page 5.) Our second Wednesday Special for the term 'Ending nuclear weapons, before they end us', on 11 March, will be given by Associate Professor Tilman Ruff AO, Associate Professor of Population and Global Health at the University of Melbourne. Do enrol promptly for this eye-opening talk.

Our Newsletters aim to bring you highlights from both Term 1 2026 so far and Term 4 last year, across the breadth of the substantial U3A Deepdene program. Check out what others are doing at U3A, it might well interest you, no matter what your chosen U3A courses may be. Made a New Year's resolution and don't know where to begin? Check out our Program Guides on the U3A Deepdene website for all the Term 1 and Full Year courses. Some courses may already be full by the time you read this Newsletter but there is still a wide variety; and you can place your name on the wait list/s.

In each Newsletter I make sure to thank everyone who volunteers their time and energy in leading, researching and presenting our very wide range of courses, and who volunteer in administration and catering. Let me leave you with this idea – as U3A Deepdene moves towards GST registration in 2026, the Committee of Management would welcome involvement by members experienced in accounts or bookkeeping. Contact the office and we will get back to you.

We aim to make membership at U3A Deepdene a stimulating and social experience. Have a great Term 1 and enjoy what we are able to offer.

See you around U3A.

Philip Russell

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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.

IMPORTANT TECHNOLOGY NEWS!

DID YOU KNOW THAT THE TABLE OF CONTENTS IS NOW HYPERLINKED?

If you are reading this newsletter as a 'soft copy'
(on your computer/phone/tablet)
you are now able to click/press on an article's title
or its page number in the Table of Contents
and be taken straight to the article.

AND NOT ONLY THAT ...

The blue arrow at the bottom right hand corner of each article is also hyperlinked!
If you click/press on it, you will be taken back to the top of the Table of Contents.

HOWEVER ...

If you are reading a paper version (hard copy) these features will not work.



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 free 'EmergencyPlus' App on our mobile phones:

It is easy to do and it's **free!**

- **Download the App:** Available on both Android and iOS platforms, users can download the app from Google Play Store or Apple App Store.
- **Install and Open:** Once downloaded, install and open the app.
- **Allow Location Access:** The app requires location access to function correctly. Ensure you grant the necessary permissions.
- **Familiarise Yourself:** Explore the app's features and understand how to use it in an emergency situation.

You can see your exact location (most important).

It is just a tap of a button to alert 000 Emergency, SES, or Police immediately.

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

AED - AUTOMATED ELECTRONIC DEFIBRILLATORS

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

Please note their positions:

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



Left is the sign 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



THE TUNNELLER WHO BROUGHT 41 MEN HOME FOR CHRISTMAS

On 12 November 2023, the serene beauty of the Himalayas turned suddenly and violently against 41 men.

Deep inside the Silkyara–Barkot tunnel in Uttarakhand, India, a collapse buried fathers, sons and brothers beneath 200 feet of rock and debris. As the world watched, high-tech drilling rigs thundered into the mountain – and failed. One by one, sophisticated machines stalled against the immovable reality of ‘squeezing ground’ in one of the most seismically volatile regions on Earth.

And then, into this unfolding geological drama stepped an unlikely figure: Arnold Dix – Australian barrister, scientist, engineer, former President of the International Tunnelling and Underground Space Association – and, as it would turn out, the ‘face of hope’ for more than a billion people.



Arnold Dix

Participants at this year’s first Wednesday Special were privileged to hear Arnold recount the extraordinary 17-day rescue that captured the world’s attention. He did not arrive in India offering corporate platitudes. He made a personal promise: he would bring those 41 men home by Christmas. And he meant it.

Arnold explained that tunnelling in the Himalayas is often described as a battle. But, he said, the mountain is not an enemy to be conquered. It is a force to be understood. Decades earlier, during his first visit to the Tehri Hydro project, he had witnessed rock bolts ripped from tunnel ceilings and fired like missiles under immense geological pressure. The Earth, he learned, does not appreciate being told what to do. At Silkyara, that lesson proved decisive.

The early rescue strategy relied on massive drilling machinery. But in seismic zones 4 and 5 vibration is danger. The drills destabilised the already fragile ground – and ultimately struck twisted steel embedded in the rubble. Machinery ground to a halt. So Arnold advocated something radical: harmony over force.

Drawing on techniques used in tectonically active countries like Japan and Taiwan, he argued for a method that worked *with* the mountain’s movement rather than against it. When the million-dollar machines failed, the solution was human skill – and Indian ingenuity.

Arnold spoke warmly of *jugaad*, India’s celebrated culture of improvisation under pressure. Far from being a shortcut, he described it as a sophisticated technical asset. The pivot to hand excavation – painstaking, dangerous, precise – was not desperation. It was intelligent adaptation.

When Arnold arrived on Day 5, the trapped men were surviving on lentils, rice and water pushed through a narrow ventilation pipe. Survival odds diminish rapidly in such circumstances. By Day 14, hope was fragile – among rescuers and across India’s intense media landscape. But Arnold understood something essential: engineering alone would not save these men.

He recognised the spiritual significance of the site and respectfully embraced local custom, kneeling in Padmasana (lotus position) at a makeshift shrine to Baba Bokh Naag ji. The image went viral. For some, it was symbolic. For many, it was profoundly reassuring. For Arnold, it was simple respect – for the mountain, the culture and the people waiting at its edge.

His humility, he told us, was shaped by an earlier turning point: walking the streets of New York after 9/11 and witnessing families holding photos of missing loved ones. That experience transformed him from a commercial lawyer into an investigator of disasters – a protector of ‘the many’.

Back in the tunnel, when machines could go no further, specialist hand miners – often called ‘rat-hole miners’, a term Arnold firmly rejected – crawled into a space less than a metre in diameter to dig the final metres. In solidarity, he swapped his helmet for theirs. To him, these were not marginal labourers. They were elite professionals performing at the very limits of courage and craft.

The rescue, Arnold told us, was like a vast jigsaw puzzle. Engineers, welders, miners, drillers, priests, medics – every piece mattered. You cannot demand elite performance while diminishing human dignity.

On Day 17, breakthrough. The first miner emerged. Then another. Then another. Forty-one ambulances stood ready. Forty-one lives reclaimed. No casualties among the rescuers. Promise kept.



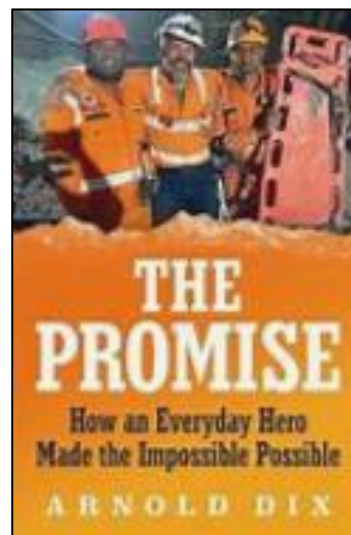
Jason Vorherr

As if the story itself were not moving enough, the afternoon concluded with a powerful tribute song written and performed by Jason Vorherr – a celebration of Arnold Dix, a self-effacing, truck-driving, flower-growing farmer from Monbulk, who just happens to be one of the world’s leading tunnelling rescue experts.

It was a reminder that greatness does not always arrive in grand packaging. Sometimes it arrives quietly, kneels before a mountain – and brings 41 men home for Christmas.

Kenneth Wilson

You can read Arnold’s remarkable story in his book, *The Promise*, published in January 2025.



JAUNTY JANUARY PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

Our U3A Deepdene January vacation program attracted close to 170 people.

Perhaps the most spectacular events were the tour of the Melbourne Town Hall Art Collection on 23 January, and the Melbourne Town Hall Heritage Tour on 29 January. These tours are free, and well worth a visit. We'll be repeating them again in the April vacation program, but as only 10 people can participate at a time, you may like to arrange a tour yourself, or with friends and family, by booking online at <https://whatson.melbourne.vic.gov.au/things-to-do/melbourne-town-hall-tours>

The first tour focused on the Art Collection, which, apart from art, highlighted memorabilia from days gone by. According to our fabulous tour guide, Jo: 'This is like the second bedroom – you know, where you put things you want to keep but just aren't sure where to place them'. We were shown the old 'grey ghost' uniforms, parking meters and street signs from yesteryear.

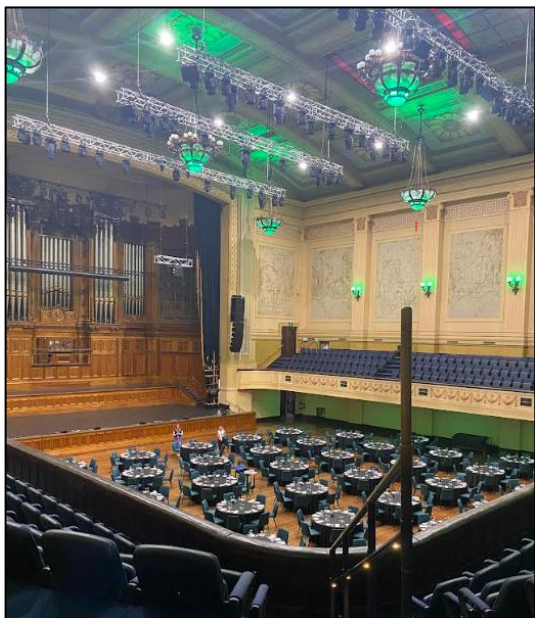
There was also plenty of focus on Moomba: interesting photos of the Moomba floats, and of course many photos of past kings and queens of Moomba. One of the standouts was Frank Thring, who apparently found the king's robe a little passé and had his own designed in an elegant and, of course understated (not), gold fabric!

Osaka is the sister city of Melbourne, and clearly the sisters get along well, as there was a plethora of beautiful Japanese dolls and artefacts.



Left: Frank Thring, King of Moomba in 1982; and right: Dame Edna Everage as Queen Mother in 1983, with King and Queen: Daryl Somers and Linda Knight

The second tour – the Heritage Tour – was sensational, focusing on the history of the beautiful building, completed in 1870; and the intricacies of the carving in the Grand Council Chambers. We also went onto the balcony, facing Swanston Street, where the Beatles and later Abba appeared – such amazing views of the Manchester Unity Building and the Century Building across the road. Our tour leader, Jim, with 20+ years' tour experience, was a fount of information. There were portraits of past Lord Mayors, and he made the important distinction of how, since 2016, Lord Mayors have had to be voted in by their constituents. We also saw the Grand Organ – which is huge and was installed in 1872 – and we heard about the free concerts that are regularly performed there.



Left: Grand Organ; above: Desmond Hynes;

Below: our tour group in the Town Hall Chambers – Anne Kemp, Trevor Storer, Lin Lee Clark, Philip Russell, Connie Rees, Fraser Clark (gavel in hand, seated) Brent Campbell, Helen Bruckner, Carolyn Fraser, Angela Padula and George Nicholls



There was a room devoted to the moral righteousness of days gone by: in particular, signage completed by Melbourne identity Desmond Hynes - you may not know his name, but I'm sure you'll remember his Jesus trolleys! He apparently lived opposite Ripponlea, and his front garden was a mass of colourful signage proclaiming Jesus and the slogans about 'doing the right thing'. The locals either smiled with amusement or

detested his 'bringing down' of the area. Journalists often visited.

Many other events were planned for our enjoyment, such as our Coffee and Chat mornings, which are always well attended. My thanks to our guest hosts, Sandie Beswarick and Annette Neville, for ensuring that these were a success.

Travel is always well patronised, and attracted many members who enjoyed presentations via Zoom, from the comfort of home. First was a wonderful session on Lyon by well-travelled Brent Campbell; and in the following week Ebrahim Shayan gave a thought-provoking history and current day look at Iran. Pam O'Brien did her usual exemplary job of being the host for these speakers.

Elizabeth Ety-Leal hosted a delightful picnic at Alexandra Gardens in Kew, with a good turn-out and many positive comments were received. Matthew Ety-Leal's planned trip to Trentham had to be postponed due to weather and fire risk, as was the planned excursion to Blue Lotus Gardens in Emerald. In future our January program will be more locally focused, in a bid to avoid disappointment and wasted effort.

Our final event was lunch at Box Hill RSL, located in the hospital district of Nelson Road. A healthy turn-out, with the lingerers finally leaving around 2.45pm! This is a really stylish venue, and it was a great choice to complete the vacation program.

My thanks to everyone who made this program so enjoyable and successful.

Anne Kemp



SWEET LEGACY - THE CHOCOLATE BOX STORY



This was a fascinating story, presented by Gary Adler, the son of the founders of The Chocolate Box, Rose (Guttman) and Richard Adler. I found Rose and Richard's story quite uplifting - their strength, courage, perseverance, imagination and determination, all overlain with their generosity and kindness.

Rose was born in 1924 in Peiskretscham, a small town in eastern Germany (now Pyskowice and part of southern Poland), where her parents owned a pub. Life was good until the rise of Nazism, which made her mother start looking for another place to live, even though her father was confident that the Hitler issue would pass.

Fortunately, Rose's mother decided that they had to leave. They moved to Berlin for over a year before eventually leaving Germany. During their time in Berlin, her father was arrested for entering an ice-cream parlour. Rose, then aged 14, was sent to the police station to try to get him released. She explained to the police that her father had won an Iron Cross in World War I and this helped her to convince them to free him.

Her parents were able to purchase entry visas for Cuba as a temporary transit on their planned way to America. In May 1939, she and her family boarded the *St Louis* bound for Cuba - this was the last ship of Jewish refugees to leave Germany, often called 'Voyage of the Damned'. When it arrived at Cuba it was refused entry and the ship's captain was ordered to return to Europe. The ship sailed towards Miami but was stopped by the US Coast Guard (even though most passengers had US immigration quota numbers, which would have allowed them to enter the US), then to Canada, where they were also refused entry. The ship eventually travelled back to Europe, where the 937 passengers were divided between The Netherlands, Belgium, France and England.

Rose's family was among the lucky 287 allowed into England. She was 15 by then and was sent to work, missing forever her promised Swiss finishing school education. Her family was incredibly lucky, as many of those who disembarked in Europe were eventually caught and murdered by the Nazis.

Richard was born in 1917 in Uherske Hradiste in the Austro-Hungarian Empire (which two years later became part of Czechoslovakia), where his parents ran three hardware stores. He enjoyed a happy childhood, with good schooling, a comfortable home, and a large extended family.

As war approached, he finished his schooling and started officer training in the Czech army. When the army was disbanded under the Nazis, Richard, then 21, and a friend decided to go to Palestine to join his sister, who had made her way there to help establish a Jewish state.

They travelled under cover of night all the way to French-controlled Lebanon, where they thought they would be safe. Instead, they were arrested and forced to choose between being sent back to Europe or joining the French Foreign Legion - they joined the legion. When the French found that Richard spoke both Czech and French, he was appointed assistant to the French-speaking general in charge of the Czech battalion of the French army in France.



Rose and Richard Adler

As the German war machine drove through France, Richard found himself with British troops at Dunkirk. Evacuated to England, he joined the British army - his third - and became an engineer, specialising in optics for binoculars and tank sights.

During leave he attended a dance at Covent Garden. There he approached a couple of attractive girls, and asked for a dance. One answered, 'OK', but he said 'not you, the little one behind you' - and that was the start of a love story with Rose Guttman that lasted more than 68 years. They married in 1943.

Meanwhile, Richard's parents had been deported to Theresienstadt, Czechoslovakia, before being murdered in Auschwitz. He never became bitter as a result of those terrible events. On the contrary, he was always positive and focused on the future.

Rose and Richard were planning to leave Europe after the war ended, initially having New Zealand in mind as it was the farthest English-speaking country from Europe, but their Australian neighbours told them that Melbourne, Australia, was a much better proposition! So, in 1948 they left England as non-assisted migrants, as it happens on the same vessel as Bradman's Invincibles team returning to Australia after its Ashes tour of England. Upon its arrival, the ship was greeted by a crowd of cheering cricket fans – the Adlers were very impressed, thinking that was how Australians always welcomed visitors to our country!

Richard found work immediately at General Motors Holden, and after a short time Rose opened a kindergarten in North Balwyn where they had purchased a home. In 1958, they decided to open a camera shop, and looked for premises in busy Burke Road, Camberwell. They came across a small chocolate shop called Smile Away Chocolates, which was for sale. They changed their focus from cameras to chocolates and bought Smile Away Chocolates, changing the name to The Chocolate Box. Rose worked there during the day and Richard would go to Camberwell every afternoon after work and run the shop until closing at 8pm.

The chocolates were made in the back of the shop and sold in the front. Soon, Rose and Richard also started selling quality local brands such as Newman's, Hillier's and Red Tulip. Later they imported quality chocolates from Europe to enlarge their range. This proved an enormous success, and the chocolate making was moved off site. The Chocolate Box Café was opened a few shops away.

Then came expansion into other suburbs and interstate, including Melbourne and Sydney airports.

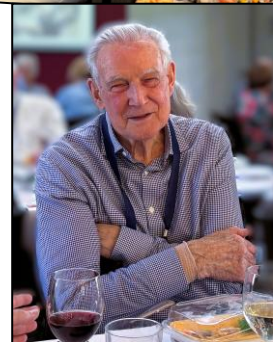
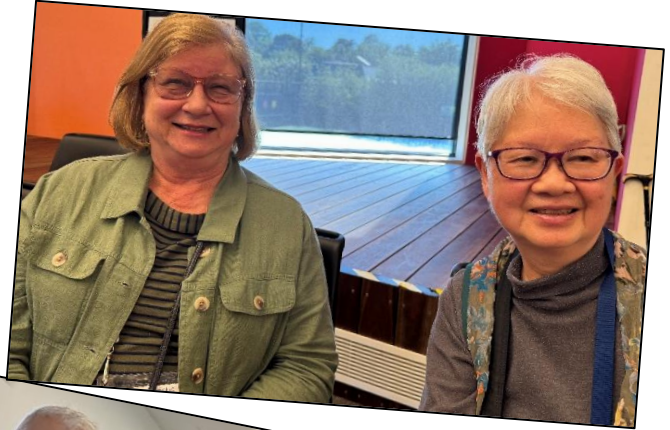
Son Gary and daughter Marion helped run the business and eventually took it over when Rose and Richard retired in the late 1990s. In 2021 the business was sold to Paul Ryan, who is committed to ensuring that it continues to grow and prosper.

The Adler/Chocolate Box story demonstrates how Rose and Richard refused to let grief define them. From the ashes of a stolen world, they built something enduring – a family and a highly successful business. This is a very inspiring story of the quiet strength of those who choose to believe in tomorrow.

Alan Haintz



WE CELEBRATE ANOTHER YEAR OF LEARNING AND COMPANIONSHIP



EMBRACING THE FUTURE OF AI: A GUIDE FOR U3A MEMBERS

AI is transforming everyday life, often in subtle ways that U3A members might not notice, or overlook. For those who are retired and outside the workforce, understanding AI helps navigate this shift confidently.

AI in Daily Life

Many U3A members encounter AI knowingly, like using ChatGPT for recipe ideas or Gemini for travel tips. Others experience it unknowingly, such as suggested Netflix recommendations, advertisements on Instagram or spam filters in email - these systems learn from your patterns without fanfare.

Beyond Chatbots

AI now extends far beyond conversational models. It includes machine learning for predictions, computer vision in self-driving cars, and robotics in vacuum cleaners like Roomba, all automating tasks and making decisions seamlessly.

Growing Ubiquity

AI now infiltrates healthcare diagnostics, smart home devices, and financial applications, with deeper integration ahead. Expect smarter virtual assistants managing schedules or health monitors in the prediction of issues.

AI's Evolution

Advancements like larger models and better data make AI more powerful and sharper. Industries from farming (crop-yield predictions) to entertainment (personalised content) adopt it widely, benefiting individuals and companies alike.

AI Advantages

AI brings clear benefits to many, like boosting efficiency through faster medical scans and enhancing accessibility with voice aids for those with mobility challenges. It also drives innovation, such as accelerating drug discovery to improve health outcomes for all.

AI Disadvantages

Challenges of AI include job displacement in routine tasks, privacy risks from vast data collection, and biases in AI decisions stemming from flawed training data. Moreover, the high costs of developing and maintaining AI systems, along with potential security vulnerabilities, hallucinations or inaccuracies, and the significant power consumption of large-scale models, add further complexity to AI adoption. These issues highlight the need for careful oversight.

Managing Risks

Disadvantages include potential biases amplifying inequalities and slow regulations, which are lagging behind the pace of change in technology. Individually, verify AI outputs and protect data; collectively, advocate for ethical policies and transparency.

U3A Deepdene embraces AI's potential while staying vigilant - learn basics, question sources, and engage in discussions to shape its responsible growth.

What you should do about it

Don't forget that U3A Deepdene offers a wide range of Technology Courses, including a stream focusing on Artificial Intelligence and its many facets.

Tim Hodgetts

PS: Incidentally, this article itself was constructed with the help of AI.



PRACTICAL AND CREATIVE ARTS EXHIBITION

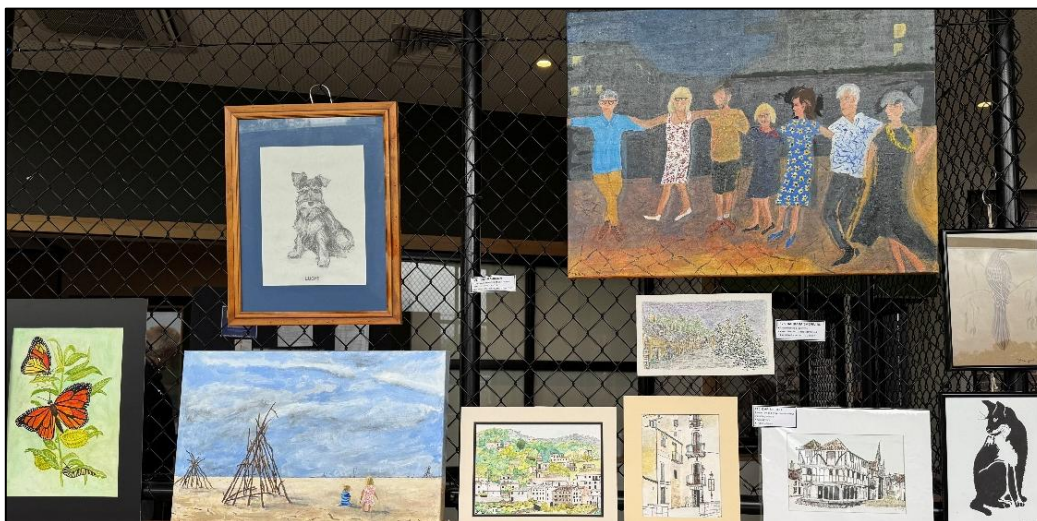
A wonderful exhibition of work by members of the various Practical and Creative Arts classes was held on 26 and 27 November, 2025. This exhibition was curated by Anne Semple, leader of our Slow Stitching and Beyond classes, with assistance from others. Displays represented the work of some absolute beginners and also those who are more experienced. Demonstrations were given by class members, and we were very impressed with their lovely creations.

U3A Deepdene offers a number of Practical and Creative Arts classes; for details please check the Full Year courses ... you could well be inspired to join a class this year!

Many thanks to Anne for her initiative in organising this exhibition of beautiful work by our keen, creative members.



Slow Stitching and Beyond with Anne Semple



Painting and Drawing with Gary Faul

Making Cards with Joan Cooper



Quilting with Jean Dunn

Felting with Julie Holder



Student, Susan Ware, with some of her work



THE SUPERB LYREBIRD AS AN ECOSYSTEM ENGINEER

Our presenter, Dr Alex Maisey, is a Research Fellow with the Research Centre for Future Landscapes. In 2021 he completed a PhD focused on the role of the Superb Lyrebird as an ecosystem engineer in south-east Australia's temperate forests.

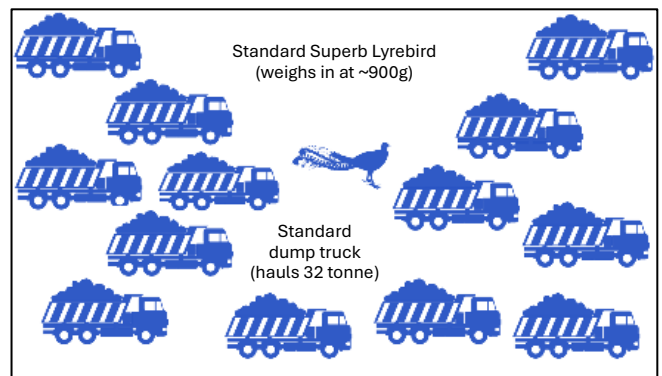
Building on this work, he undertook a research project to investigate the impacts of the 2019–20 megafires on Superb Lyrebird populations and their habitat.



His presentation covered the lyrebird ecology, its role as an ecosystem engineer and finally the impact of fire on this iconic species. The Superb Lyrebird is a ground-dwelling bird of the moist rainforest of south-eastern Australia. Our nearby Sherbrooke Forest in the Dandenong Ranges is a home to this legendary bird.

The lyrebird is recognised as an 'ecosystem engineer', that is, by its extensive digging, it modifies the litter and soil layers while foraging for invertebrates. It is estimated that one bird can move sufficient soil to fill thirteen 32-tonne dump trucks per year. Using experimental plots, Alex was able to show that these foraging actions created a positive feedback loop that not only replenishes the biomass and diversity of the invertebrate prey, but has other positive implications for a forest ecosystem. This process of farming by the Superb Lyrebird is unprecedented in non-human vertebrates and extends across extensive areas of moist forests.

The huge impact of the 2019–20 megafires on much of our country's wildlife is well known and the lyrebird was no exception. The impact of these fires on this species was the subject of a collaboration between Latrobe University, Birdlife Australia and World Wildlife Fund. This study found that the fires affected about 41 per cent of its distribution and burnt about 51 per cent of the existing rainforest. Lyrebirds prefer to breed and build nests in moist rainforest, as well as utilise the moist leaf litter to find food. There were many accounts of lyrebirds surviving the fires by gathering in dams or moist gullies, although many were lost. They are, in fact, a resilient species and are relatively long lived in more normal conditions.



This research showed the need to protect rainforests from future fires – either prescribed or wildfire – as, once the fire has passed, the landscape presents new threats to lyrebirds, such as fox predation and damage to habitat by Sambar deer.

Alex closed by demonstrating how lyrebirds can mimic human sounds such as camera clicks, chainsaws and he even had an example of a human conversation!

The presentation reinforced how lucky we are in Melbourne to have these amazing birds so close in the Dandenong Ranges. It is up to us to protect their habitat from wildfires and predators so that future generations can enjoy these unique birds in our bush.

Ken Gosbell



BIRDS WITH BACKPACKS



This delightful presentation given by Paula Wasiak from the Australian National University was a synopsis of her PhD research on the trial of the release of bush stone curlews into rural and urban areas of Phillip Island.

The aim was to reintroduce the bird to the island, curlews having become extinct there in 1970. Paula sought to work with the Indigenous people, the Bunurong, and with the support of many of the local community they hoped to re-establish a healthy colony.

Having brown and black plumage, about 60 cm tall and weighing 600 to 800 grams, these birds are ground dwelling and nocturnal. They form long-term partnerships but as their nests are sparse and they lay few eggs at a time, establishing a local population was not going to be an easy task.

To date there have been three releases: August 2024 - 12 captive bred birds from partner organisation, the Odonata Foundation

April 2025 - 24 captive bred birds and November 2025 - 8 captive bred birds

Initially placed in a protected area, free from predators, the birds' wings were clipped, ensuring that they did not fly away. With the regrowth of the wing feathers they would soon be up and away again!

All birds were fitted with identity bands and GPS units attached as small compact backpacks, ensuring monitoring of movement, as they are free to go anywhere on the island. These units will eventually fall off, but do last for a considerable time.

The curlews are regularly weighed and checked to ensure that they remain healthy, that local habitat is suitable, that they have no injuries and that the backpacks are securely in place.

The birds are now moving about the island freely. Eighteen months into the program there has been a 55 per cent survival rate. All deceased birds are recovered, to learn and understand the reasons for their demise - vehicle accidents being the major factor. None of the eggs hatched have grown into adults yet, as birds are learning how to care for their eggs and nurture their chicks.

The hope is to establish a healthy colony and eventually have enough offspring to use for translocation to other areas.

Margy Moller



STUDLEY PARK'S MID-CENTURY ARCHITECTURE

Trish Lele's presentation took us on a virtual tour of the amazing mid-century homes that have been built on the steep blocks that overlook Yarra Bend Reserve and the Yarra River, to take advantage of the bush-like setting, the panoramic views and proximity to the city. The Studley Park precinct of Kew between Studley Park Road and Molesworth Street is literally a 'feast' of post-war Modernist classics, designed by architects such as Anatol Kagan, Robin Boyd, Guilford Bell, Roy Grounds, David McGlashan and Graeme Gunn, who designed homes in the area between the late 1940s and the 1960s.

The late '40s was a time of opportunity and optimism, but development was delayed by post-war shortages of both material and labour. One of the first architects to build in the recently opened housing blocks above the Yarra Boulevard was Anatol Kagan, whose aesthetic was grounded in European mid-century design. An early example of his work is Leon Broon's residence, with its box-like design.



Leon Broon's residence (Anatol Kagan, 1955) reflects a European interpretation of mid-century Modernist design

But, as we know, Australia is not Europe, and this difference evolved into what came to be known as the Melbourne Regional Style, which acknowledged our climate, distinct flora and topography, as well as our abundant light and space. Significant and influential proponents of this new approach were Roy Grounds and Robin Boyd, whose homes were featured in our virtual tour. Robin Boyd's Pettigrew House, built in 1946 at 21 Redmond Street, is one of his earliest residential designs in the area and, with its expansive glazing, lack of ornamentation and integration of indoor and outdoor spaces is an excellent example of these new design principles.



Pettigrew House (Robin Boyd, 1946) reflects the new Melbourne Regional Modernist style

Roy Grounds designed the extraordinary Leyser House in 1951 at 11 Hume Street. It is one of the earliest examples of Australian Modernism: large, north-facing windows and an open-plan internal design; expansive north and west facing windows.



Leyser House (Roy Grounds, 1951): this photo was taken during construction and well before the current vegetation engulfed the site.

These and many more mid-century architects believed in clean design and allowing the sun to shine through the windows. They took advantage of new developments like the thin-line metal Stegbar windows and flat roofing techniques. They continued to respond to social change, as Modernism was always intended to do, designing homes accessible to the ordinary householder, such as Graeme Gunn's 1969 award-winning six apartments in Molesworth Street. Protected by a strict heritage overlay and appreciated for design concepts that are so suitable for the topography and lifestyle, these post-war Modernist homes - and the work of the architects who created them - endure and continue to give pleasure to both their owners and those who love to walk around the area and enjoy the architecture.

Kamoya Peterson and Trish Lele



ST ANTHONY'S CAPUCHIN FRIARY CHURCH

On Wednesday 18 February we enjoyed a tour of St Anthony's Church in Hawthorn. Father Thomas of the Capuchin order was our wonderful, knowledgeable guide.



The church was built between 1961 and 1969 as a significant post-war shrine for Melbourne's Italian community. It is operated by the Capuchin Friars, who arrived in 1949.

The church is in Romanesque Revival style, with a prominent spire. Inside there is extensive use of multi-coloured marble, and a large Calvary scene mosaic.

The group loved the richly decorated interior with its tranquil, reflective atmosphere. The image of St Anthony of Padua (born in Portugal), patron of the shrine/church, was sculpted in northern Italy and occupies a central position behind the main altar.

Many thanks to Angela Padula, who organised the event and shared her personal knowledge of the church and the people associated with it.

Wendy and Graham Ray



Father Thomas in the middle at the back. Angela Padula in the front, third from the left



ARCHBISHOP MANNIX AND RAHEEN



Archbishop Mannix

Daniel Mannix is an enigma: an archbishop who never owned a car, never drank alcohol, never used a telephone and even cut his own hair. He was a brilliant speaker who could fire up a crowd and was enthusiastically followed by many of his flock, yet he lived alone in a cold, 20-room Italianate mansion in Kew. An Irishman who was so influential that the British Government prevented him from landing in Ireland during the fight for Irish independence, yet so simple that he walked from Kew to St Patrick's Cathedral precinct every day through the slums of Melbourne. Who was this book-loving cleric, always photographed in his biretta or silk top hat, who so divided this country with his political views, yet who ordered his papers to be burned on his death, just before his 100th birthday?

In her presentation, Sandy Curnow took us on a fascinating journey from Mannix's birth in 1864 – son of a tenant farmer in Charleville, County Cork, Ireland – through his brilliant scholastic career at Maynooth Theological College – as student, professor and later President – to his appointment to oversee a large Catholic archdiocese in our State. Sandy illustrated the way this archbishop divided Victorian society with his views on conscription, Irish Home Rule, State aid for Catholic schools, the Democratic Labor Party (DLP) and glorification of the St Patrick's Day march.

'Who do you think you are?' could have been the subtitle for Sandy's insightful biographical presentation. We learned about the Easter Uprising against British Rule in Dublin in 1916, and its ripple effect throughout the Irish diaspora in the British Empire. Mannix's life and clerical career is almost a history of Ireland during the 20th century.

Sandy ably illustrated her talk with anecdotes of her encounter with the archbishop at school functions. Photos of the magnificent entrance and ballroom at Raheen, which the Catholic Church bought in 1917 as a suitable residence for their archbishop, conveyed the scene of clerical opulence that contrasted with the abject poverty of some of his flock in West Melbourne.

Although Mannix never wrote his biography, many books have sought to dissect this important person in Victorian history and his legacy both to his church and to wider society.

The audience thanked Sandy for her research and insights into this divisive man who was Melbourne's Catholic archbishop for 50 years, and who presided over his church's substantial growth under his episcopacy.



Entrance Hall and staircase, Raheen

Alan Ray



TRUMP'S TUMULTUOUS YEAR: AN ASSESSMENT



At a Wednesday Special on 12 November, 2025, a diverse group of U3A Deepdene members gathered at the Balwyn Park Centre to hear from Deakin University Associate Professors Zim Nwokora and Clare Corbould. Dr Nwokora spoke about the pressing issue of 'Is democracy in the United States in crisis?' and Dr Corbould talked about the *Voting Rights Act* (VRA). The discussion highlighted various aspects of American democracy, its current strains and the vital role of the *Voting Rights Act*.

To understand the situation better, Dr Nwokora suggested that democracy can be distilled into three main elements: participation, contestation and rights protection. Participation is about every citizen being able to vote; contestation refers to the existence of multiple parties competing in fair elections; and rights protection ensures that these processes safeguard individual freedoms, especially for minorities.

Current state of democracy and participation in the US

Dr Nwokora further pointed out that while recent presidential elections have seen a relatively high voter turnout of approximately 60 per cent, there are clear signs of stress within the political system. For instance, the recent government shutdown, which was the longest in US history, stems from extreme political polarisation. Nevertheless, Dr Nwokora suggested that this phenomenon isn't new. The US has weathered several turbulent periods, yet its democratic constitution has endured for over 200 years.

However, underneath the surface, several troubling trends threaten participation. Certain states have enacted laws requiring stricter voter ID, tightened early voting access and implemented exclusions for people with criminal records. All these changes effectively result in excluding large numbers from the democratic process. This raises concerns about who is truly included in this process. Dr Nwokora noted that while participation is being challenged, so far it hasn't been significantly dismantled like in earlier historical periods, such as occurred for African Americans whose voter registration was systematically stripped away in southern states following the Reconstruction and ensuing Jim Crow era.

Contestation and rights at risk

When discussing contestation, which involves the ability of multiple parties to freely compete, recent elections have shown a noticeable back-and-forth in power. However, a significant incident that looms large is Donald Trump's attempt to invalidate the 2020 election results, which, thankfully, failed. However, this still raises questions about the robustness of the democratic process.

As Dr Nwokora highlighted, the erosion of rights is perhaps the most concerning indicator of democracy in distress. Key civil rights – such as the right to dissent, reproductive rights, and due process – have faced increased scrutiny and restrictions in recent years, particularly during Trump's administration. This points to a worrying trend where essential rights are systematically undermined.

The importance of the *Voting Rights Act*

In this context, Dr Corbould emphasised the crucial importance of the *Voting Rights Act*, passed in 1965. This landmark legislation aimed to eliminate discriminatory voting practices that suppressed African

American voters, particularly in the south. The VRA was a response to the civil rights movement, motivated by the need for federal oversight to ensure fair access to the ballot.

Historically, the VRA has significantly impacted voter registration and representation. For example, in Mississippi, Black voter registration jumped from a mere 6.7 per cent in 1965 to 59.8 per cent in just two years. This shift not only transformed local politics but also became a model for protecting the rights of other marginalised groups.

Yet, recent threats to the VRA raise alarms. The 2013 Supreme Court decision in *Shelby County v Holder* struck down essential provisions of the Act, leading to a resurgence in voter suppression efforts and the closing of polling places in minority communities. The statistics are staggering, with around 1,600 polling places closed between 2013 and 2018, disproportionately affecting neighbourhoods with higher populations of Black and low-income residents.

Currently, the Supreme Court is considering the constitutionality of Section 2 of the VRA, in a case titled *Louisiana v Callais*. If the judges decree that section is unconstitutional, that will effectively see the end of sixty years of federal intervention to secure the fundamental democratic principle of one-person-one-vote.

Conclusion: A call to vigilance

While the evidence as presented by the speakers suggests that American democracy is not on the verge of collapse, the indicators paint a complicated picture with many potential dangers. The risks associated with diminished institutional support for democracy – like the partisanship of the Supreme Court, the intimidation of Congress, and the silencing of civil society activists – are indeed concerning.

As Dr Nwokora said, in the current moment US democracy may not be as dire as in the past, but the erosion of crucial guardrails raises valid concerns. Looking ahead, the mid-term elections in 2026 and the presidential elections in 2028 will be crucial in determining the trajectory of American democratic health. The 2025 off-year elections held in November showed renewed vitality and vigor in the electorate, in the process providing the Democrats with some notable victories in a sharpened focus on the importance of the democratic processes.

In conclusion, while Americans must remain cautious about the signs of crisis in US democracy, it will be vital for them to advocate for the protections set out by the VRA. Without robust participation, meaningful contestation and unwavering rights protection, American democracy risks slipping into deeper crises. As the United States has loomed large on the international stage for so long, US citizens, the health of their democracy and its survival are of utmost importance, not just to Americans but to the world at large.

As for the question ‘Is democracy in the United States in crisis?’, maybe at best the answer is ‘There’s no fire yet ... but there clearly is smoke!’

Sam Biondo



Contributions to the Newsletter are very welcome. There is no need to be asked, just email a review, an article, or photos to u3adeepdeneeditor@gmail.com
The editorial team members are Bea Hardman, Heather Kelly, Susie White and Megan Williamson (with occasional help from Pam O’Brien).

LES FEMMES IMPRESSIONNISTES - SISTERS OF THE BRUSH

U3A Deepdene's Arts and Architecture Short Course program got off to a flying start on 4 February with a wonderful presentation by Dr Michael Adcock, retired history teacher, travel guide and art historian, entitled 'Les Femmes Impressionnistes - Sisters of the Brush'.

The dual title refers to the female artists of the Impressionist art movement originating in France in the late 1800s and largely overlooked in favour of their male counterparts, and to the influence of the feminist movement of the mid-1900s, which later led to female art historians questioning why women artists had been left out of the historical art narrative. Dr Adcock blended these two trains of thought together by outlining some of the research into feminist art history that brought to light many of the names of overlooked female Impressionist artists, such as in Linda Nochlin's book, *Representing Women* (1999) and Tamar Garb's book, *Sisters of the Brush: Women's artistic culture in late 19th-century Paris* (1994).

Dr Adcock then gave brief outlines of the lives and careers of five female Impressionist artists who practised in Paris in the late 1800s: Berthe Morisot, Mary Cassatt, Eva Gonzales, Marie Bracquemond and Louise Abbéma. While these women were not allowed to attend the Paris School of Fine Arts (with the exception of Bracquemond) all were from wealthy upper-class families and so were able to obtain private art tuition, and a few even had well-known male mentors such as Manet and Degas.

Female artists could, however, enter the annual Paris Salons, important at the time for artists. If their work was not accepted, it was because they were 'too modern', not because they were female. Instead, the social mores of the day ensured that their subject matter often differed from that of male artists. Female Impressionist studies of modern life were restricted to domestic interiors, gardens, terraces and balconies and portraits of people they knew, whereas male artists had a lot more opportunity to paint landscapes or street scenes anywhere. 'Respectable' women were not allowed to go out unaccompanied, only with male relatives, except to socially acceptable places such as The Louvre, the opera or the theatre. This may have influenced their painting of portraits, mainly of women, showing greater sensitivity than those of male artists.

The most notable of the five female Impressionist artists was Berthe Morisot. The NGV was lucky enough to purchase her painting *La Broderie [Embroidery]* (1889) in 2021. Her undisputed masterpiece was *The Cradle* (1872), demonstrating considerable empathy with the subject matter and great skill in interpreting diaphanous fabrics.

Mary Cassatt, while at first painting in the style of the 'Old Masters', usual at the time as part of art training, later began painting portraits in the Impressionist manner, which demonstrated similar sensitivity to the subject, as seen in the *The Young Bride* (c 1875).

Gonzales, Bracquemond and Abbéma's legacy was also mostly portraits, not necessarily female, with Bracquemond significantly producing an etching of herself as a painter, not as a wife or hostess (*Woman at Easel*, c 1890).

At the end of his talk, Dr Adcock gave a tantalising introduction to some Australian women Impressionist artists, two being Clara Southern and Jane Sutherland. Like their French sisters, their art practice was restricted by the social mores of the time and they were unable to go outdoors to paint unaccompanied. Southern's picture *An Old Bee Farm* (c 1900), of a woman tending bee hives, is in the NGV collection, while Sutherland's picture *The Field Naturalists* (c 1896) is of boys poking about in water, and also is in the NGV collection. Both subjects are more of a gentle 'feminine' nature, in contrast to the masculine *Shearing the Rams* (1890) by Tom Roberts.

It would be hoped that Dr Adcock might give a more expanded talk of Australian Women Impressionists in the future.

Ros Savio

French Impressionnistes -

Berthe Moriset 'La Broderie' (Embroidery) 1889

Mary Cassatt 'The Young Bride' 1875

Eva Gonzales 'Pink Morning' 1874

Marie Bracquemond 'The Artist's sister, Louise, and her son in the Garden at Sèvres' 1890

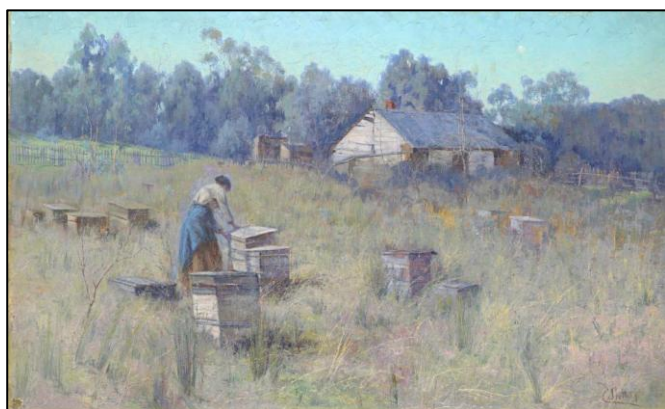
Louise Abbéma 'La Dame Avec Fleurs' 1883



Australian Impressionists -

Clara Southern 'Old Bee Farm' c 1900

Jane Sutherland 'The Field Naturalists' c 1896



LUCY BOYD BECK

On 11 February Colin Smith gave us a well-illustrated presentation on Lucy Boyd Beck (1916-2009), the first-born child of Merric and Doris Boyd.

The Boyd family is considered to be the most important art family in Australia, with members known for such diverse talents as music, poetry, sculpture, printing, painting and ceramics.

Lucy grew up on a property called 'Open Country' in Wahroonga Crescent, Murrumbena with her parents, Merric and Doris Boyd. Lucy had four siblings: Arthur, Guy, David and Mary. They all attended Murrumbena Primary School. Lucy loved school, something not shared with her siblings who struggled with its strictness and discipline. Some of the Boyd children enjoyed the freedom and space of their rambling family home, whilst others were self-conscious about it being so different from homes around them. But the children were very close to their parents and appreciated their achievements and creativity.



Lucy at Open Country, c 1922

Lucy's parents had been married for just a year when Lucy was born in 1916. Merric had established 'Open Country' in 1913. By the time of Lucy's birth he had built a kiln, and his pottery was in full production.

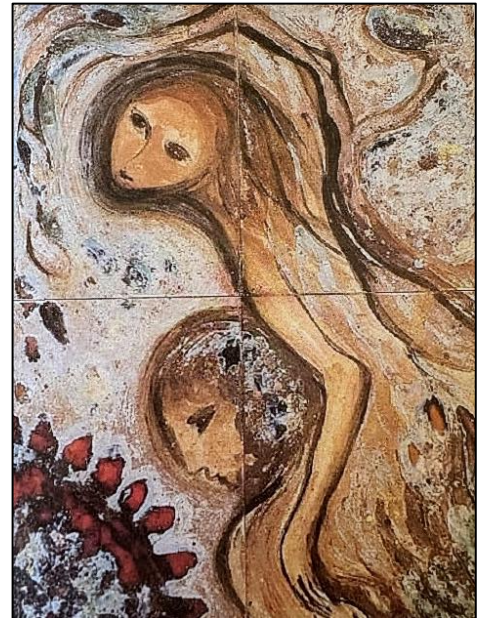
Lucy was born in the home of her maternal grandmother, Evelyn Gough, who lived near 'Open Country' in Sydney Street, Murrumbena. Later in 1916, Evelyn sold her home and bought land in Wahroonga Crescent, next to Doris and Merric. She had a house built, which she called 'Green Pastures'. Merric's parents also came to Wahroonga Crescent in 1916 and had a house built called 'Tralee'. For about six years, between 1916 and 1922, one entire side of Wahroonga Crescent was occupied by Boyd family members (Evelyn, and Merric's parents, had moved there to support Doris and Lucy whilst Merric was overseas serving in the First World War).

Merric arrived back from the War in 1919 when Lucy was three. He went straight back into his pottery and produced some of his finest work. In 1926, when Lucy was ten, Merric's studio burnt to the ground. He had been experimenting working with a gas kiln, trying to get higher temperatures to achieve the strong red 'blood of the ox' glaze. He never fully recovered from the stress of the disaster. He suffered a breakdown and began having tonic-clonic epileptic seizures which plagued him for the rest of his life. His health and the financial stress of the fire played a big part in what was sometimes a financial struggle at 'Open Country'. Doris worked tirelessly to support Merric and care for their five children. Arthur Boyd said that without Doris, their lives would have fallen apart.

Lucy left MacRobertson Girls' High School after two years there to support her mother at home and help care for her siblings. She became something of a second mother to them. In the early 1930s she took a nannying position in Avenel and sent her earnings home to her parents.

In 1939 Lucy married Oakleigh potter Hatton Beck, 15 years her senior. They lived in a bungalow at 'Open Country'. Hatton established a commercial pottery in Neerim Road. He worked there until 1943 when he passed it on to his brother-in-law, Arthur Boyd, and two of his friends, John Perceval and Peter Herbst. They established the Arthur Merric Boyd Pottery.

In the 1940s, all Lucy's siblings lived at 'Open Country' at different times with their spouses. They brought many of their creative friends there, including Albert Tucker, Fred Williams, John Blackman, John and Sunday Reed, and many others. Doris enjoyed the stimulation of these visitors but it put a great strain on her as the noise and activity affected Merric, who struggled with the busy social life at his home.



Above: Six-tile ceramic painting by Lucy Boyd Beck, undated; and right: *The Little Wanderer*, a four-tile ceramic painting by Lucy Boyd Beck, undated

In 1947 Hatton and Lucy bought land in Brisbane and went there to live. Hatton had found work at Brisbane Technical School as a teacher. At this time, Lucy found time to draw. Her family made regular visits to Murrumbidgee during the 1950s. Over this time, Merric's health declined through his seizures. He died in 1959 at 'Open Country'. Doris died the following year.

In 1961 Hatton and Lucy returned to 'Open Country' and taught pottery. Teaching was financially rewarding but it didn't leave them time to do their own ceramics. Also, they had acquired debt to establish their school and in order to pay out family members for what they would have received had 'Open Country' been sold. Because of this financial pressure, in 1964 they sold the house and in 1965, went to London. There, they established a pottery at Wandsworth Common. They made, taught and sold pottery there.

In 1969 Lucy and Hatton returned to Melbourne and settled in Surf Avenue, Beaumaris. There they worked on their practice of painting with glazes onto Hatton's handmade tiles. While Hatton painted mainly landscapes, Lucy became known for her expressive and individualistic ceramic paintings of people and nature.



Lucy at home in Mordialloc, September 2004

In 1978 they left Surf Avenue and lived around Port Phillip Bay and Melbourne's outer east. The couple lived in Parkdale during their final years. Hatton ended his time in a nursing home in Carrum. Lucy lived on at Parkdale and later Cheltenham and Mordialloc. She died in Sandringham in 2009.

Lucy lived a full, creative life. She was full of life, wisdom, freshness, vigour and was, from all accounts, a beautiful human being.

Lyn Anderson

For more information on Colin, his books and art, including Boyd family art, visit colinsmithbooks.com



FULL YEAR COURSES

Many U3A Deepdene members take up one or several of the many full year courses that are offered by our wonderful tutors and facilitators. Here are some comments from participants in a few of the popular courses.

Bridge

To play bridge well is a lifetime project! As any player will tell you, there is always more to learn. Card combinations are extremely numerous and few players know all the different strategies. Having a regular partner helps, but is not necessary. Our U3A Bridge Group is friendly yet serious. We all assist in setting up the tables and cards as well as packing up. Members enjoy the morning tea break, preferring to get some fresh air as we chat to our classmates. Our tutor, Meredith Corbet, has the task of tabulating the scoresheets; we take bridge seriously and we look forward to her publication of results by email. It is thrilling when we feel we are improving, as we can by regular commitment to learn and practise play, aiming to reach a good understanding of Duplicate Bridge.



Evelyne Perks

Table Tennis

If you love tennis but can't run anymore ...

If your family is too busy to play on your own table tennis table, or you've moved to a smaller abode ...

If you want a sport that is fun and open to improving your performance ...

If you like a laugh and to not be blamed for your mis-hits ...

If you want to be picking up new moves and spins ...

If you are already a champion player and want to be challenged ...

Then U3A Table Tennis is for you!



Julie Holder

Thoughts from a watercolour class

Magic! A splash of crimson, a dash of blue on a piece of damp white paper and voila – rich purple, mauve, pink. Add a splodge of yellow, and a dazzle of greens, aquas, browns and greys are added to the feast of colours, all fighting for attention. Magic! Only watercolour gives the excitement of colours mingling on the page, the white paper shining through for vibrant transparency.

The new members of the U3A watercolour class have come with a knot of fear and apprehension in their hearts. 'Will I be good enough?' 'I know I'm not creative.' 'Will I be the worst in the class?' Brave souls. Many students over the years have told me of childhood memories of a teacher holding up their art work to say, 'Don't do it like this!' or declaring, 'Well, you will never be an artist, will you?' They carry the hurt and anxiety with them – *but*, there are no comparisons here. We are all learners. This U3A teacher has been teaching for 40 years and she is still a learner. The joy of seeing those colours appearing before our eyes is contagious.

The painters are set a task and before long there is total silence. The teacher knows they will not hear her now. They have moved from the left to the right side of the brain. They are absorbed. The teacher is surprised and delighted afresh at the diversity in style, in colour selection and in interpretation of the subject. They are surprised to find the two hours have passed so quickly. Those apprehensive starters are at home now in this class. They chat and praise each other's efforts and share painting tips.



The teacher has been drawn aside by one student who confides that all her life she has longed to learn to paint but concerned parents pointed her to science and maths. 'I have had to wait until I am 70 years old to find that my love of art is still alive and this is the highlight of my week. I love it!' At the beginning of a session a late arrival hurries in 'I have had a wonderful experience' she exclaims. 'I visited an art exhibition. I was afraid I wouldn't understand it and I would not know how to react; but no, I loved it and I realised that this U3A class has taught me how to see!'

The tight rules of colouring between the lines have gone. The wilful water and colour have broken the borders and painted the picture their way. Not tightly corseted - free, exciting. Magic.

Merrill Corney



COLONEL SIR EDWARD 'WEARY' DUNLOP

The great Australian Sir Edward 'Weary' Dunlop was the subject of a talk given by Matthew Ety-Leal on 2 February, our first day of Term 1.

Sir Edward was born at Majors Plain, north-west of Benalla, on 12 July 1907. He was a natural athlete and preferred sport to study. He had a strong work ethic and took pride in his Scottish heritage, the British empire and British governance and institutions. He played rugby for the Wallabies, the Australian national rugby union team.



Sir Edward studied pharmacy first and then medicine at the University of Melbourne, and graduated in 1934. He joined the Royal Melbourne Hospital in 1935 and the Royal Children's Hospital in 1937. He married Helen Ferguson in 1945, and they had two sons. In 1938 he left for London, where he attended St Bartholomew's Medical School, and became a Fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons.

Sir Edward enlisted in the Australian Army Medical Corps with the rank of Captain. He was sent to Sumatra in 1942, which the Japanese attacked. Prisoners, including Sir Edward, were taken to Burma, where they were put to work to build a 421-kilometre railway. They had neither physical strength nor good tools. Each morning Sir Edward had the challenging task of deciding who was fit enough to work. As a surgeon, he did what he could to care for the soldiers, with little equipment or medicine. He was a compassionate man, and his insistence that any money they had was pooled to buy fresh food and medicine for all the men (not just the officers), was legendary and contributed to the survival of many of the men. 'The men would do anything for him, and are proud to be with him', wrote POW Ray Parkin in his diary. On 27 September 1945, Sir Edward was appointed Lieutenant Colonel.

After the war, Sir Edward practised as a cancer specialist in Melbourne and was involved in humanitarian programs. In 1969 he was knighted in recognition of his contribution to medicine. He was named Australian of the Year in 1987.

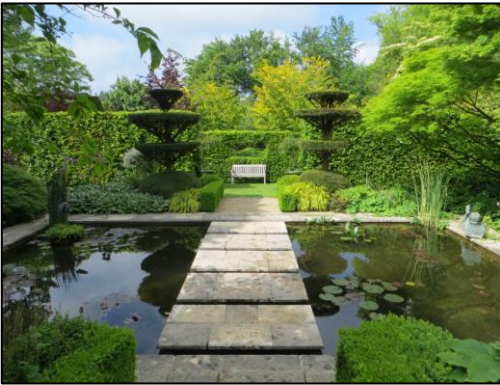
Sir Edward died in 1993 and was accorded a state funeral at St Paul's Cathedral in Melbourne. Attesting to his great popularity, 20,000 people lined the streets.

Judy Coghil



'MY FAVOURITE GARDEN'

On 19 February, some of our garden lovers shared their favourite gardens with us.
Join us at the second session on 19 March to enjoy more beautiful gardens.



Les jardins de Castillon

A garden of two acres in two different styles – French and English – with an amazing range of plants crammed into it.
Suzanne Collings



Ayrlies, New Zealand

This garden is characterised by sweeping lawns and informal but detailed plantings by ponds and waterways, and has been described as the quintessential New Zealand garden.

Barbara Burton



Rushall Park Retirement Village, Fitzroy North

This is where I live and it is a constant visual delight, plus a place of peace and restfulness.

Judy Still



Ozponds

The garden I have only seen online, but from which I learnt how to make wine-barrel and pot ponds for adding water plants to my garden.

Janet Russell



Hofgarten Veitshochheim, Wurzburg, Germany

I discovered the garden of Veitshochheim while staying in the nearby town of Wurzburg in Germany; I heard that it is one of the finest Rococo gardens in Germany, so I had to see it.

Sue Woolley



ISLAM IN AUSTRALIA

This illuminating talk was presented by Sherene Hassan, Director of Education and Community Engagement at the Islamic Museum of Australia and a trail blazer for women in the Muslim community. She has mentored many young women to take up leadership roles. Sherene is committed to social cohesion and promoting cross-cultural understanding, conducting over 1000 information sessions on Islam in the past two decades. She was on the board of the Islamic Council of Victoria and served as Vice-President and executive committee member for eight years. In 2007 *The Age* included her in the 100 most influential people, and in January 2018 she was awarded the Order of Australia.

Sherene prefaced her presentation with her own experience. She started school in Perth, where she was born, and felt that being the only Muslim at school and with a mother from Iraq and father from Egypt she was ashamed to be different from her peers. For many years she carefully fobbed off questions about Ramadan and Christmas festivities, fearing rejection by her classmates. It was not until she was a teenager in Year 9 that she 'came out' and felt great relief at doing so.

There are approximately 1.6 billion Muslims in the world, of varying races, languages and customs, of which 18 per cent are Arabic speaking. Indonesia is the most populous Islamic country, while 3.2 per cent of the population in Australia are of the Muslim faith, which represents the second-largest religion in the country. Historically, the first Muslims were Macassan fishermen, who traded with the Indigenous people in the north of Australia from the 1700s (some reports say 1600s, possibly earlier). Then from 1860 to 1920 Afghan cameleer traders opened up remote areas of the country. From 1900 even some of the pearl divers along the north-west coast were Muslims. The first mosque in Australia was built in Marree in South Australia in 1861.

There are six core beliefs of Muslims. These beliefs define a person as Muslim:

- Belief in God
- Angels
- Revelations: Torah, Psalms, Gospel, Quran
- Prophets (eg Moses, Abraham and Jesus)
- Day of Judgement and the hereafter
- God's divine will

Key practices of Muslims are the Five Pillars of Islam which are:

- The declaration of faith; that there is one God and Muhammad is the last Prophet
- Prayer five times a day
- Charity by giving 2.5 per cent of one's savings to those in need
- Fasting in Ramadan between sunrise and sunset for 30 days
- Pilgrimage to Mecca in one's lifetime.

Much of the adverse publicity about Muslims is the result of patriarchal misinterpretations and cultural practices. Regarding cultural practices, often the judgement is made on the worst examples that predate Islam and violate Islamic teachings, including forced marriages and honour killings. The dress code for women should be an act of choice, but some Muslim men prevent their wives from wearing the hijab and others enforce it. Sherene states it is the women who should make the choice of whether or not to wear it and sees it as a statement of faith, comparing it with nuns wearing the habit in the Catholic Church.

The destruction of the World Trade Centre in New York was a shattering event for Sherene, and the heightened prejudice that followed made the experience even more difficult. She was motivated to write to The Age, The Australian and The Advertiser newspapers, expressing her outrage at this attack, and she received supportive letters from people from all walks of life, which aided her recovery. Sherene emphasised that Muslims condemn terrorism. Although parts of the media blamed the attacks on ‘jihad’, the term in Islam actually refers to a meritorious inner struggle – striving against one’s own desires, anger, hatred, and impulses for revenge. The exact meaning of jihad depends on the context, but its interpretation as ‘holy war’ originated in the West during the time of the Crusades. In Islam, jihad primarily refers to the human struggle to choose right over wrong.

Sherene concluded her presentation by clarifying the many forms of jihad.

Pam Jellie



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 Paris for 10 correct answers!

| | | |
|-----|---|----------------|
| 1. | What is the ‘Emergency Plus’ app? | Page 4 |
| 2. | What is ‘jugaad’? | Page 5 |
| 3. | When was the Melbourne Town Hall organ installed? | Page 7 |
| 4. | When did the Adlers buy ‘The Chocolate Box’? | Page 10 |
| 5. | What is Chat GPT? | Page 12 |
| 6. | How much soil can a lyrebird move each year? | Page 15 |
| 7. | Why is the Pettigrew House important? | Page 17 |
| 8. | Who was Clara Southern? | Page 22 |
| 9. | Where was Weary Dunlop born? | Page 27 |
| 10. | What are the five pillars of Islam? | Page 29 |

With thanks to Alan 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 respectful and
relatively free environment.**



2026 DATES

U3A Deepdene Term Dates 2026

| | U3A Deepdene | Schools |
|---------------|--|--|
| Term 1 | Monday 2 February to Friday 27 March | Wednesday 28 January to Thursday 2 April |
| Term 2 | Monday 27 April to Friday 19 June | Monday 20 April to Friday 26 June |
| Term 3 | Monday 20 July to Friday 11 September | Monday 13 July to Friday 18 September |
| Term 4 | Monday 12 October to Friday 4 December | Monday 5 October to Friday 18 December |

Public Holidays 2026

| | |
|----------------------|------------------------------------|
| Monday 26 January | Australia Day |
| Monday 9 March | Labour Day |
| Friday 3 April | Good Friday |
| Sunday 5 April | Easter Sunday |
| Monday 6 April | Easter Monday |
| Saturday 25 April | Anzac Day |
| Monday 8 June | King's Birthday |
| Friday 25 September* | Friday before the AFL Grand Final* |
| Tuesday 3 November | Cup Day |

** to be confirmed*

Source: business.vic.gov.au

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U3A DEEPDENE INFORMATION AND SPONSOR DETAILS

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 emails are sent to all members with email addresses; watch for these updates.

See our website for details of courses: www.u3adeepdene.org.au

The Program Guide for Term 2, 2026 will be distributed during the week commencing 16 March.

Enrolments for Term 2, 2026 start on Monday, 23 March.

FUNCTIONS:

20 May Annual General Meeting

10 June Mid-year celebration

26 June Tutors' lunch

VACATION PROGRAM 'ADVENTUROUS APRIL':

This will be held between 13 and 24 April and is currently being arranged.

Please watch for emails giving details.

THANK YOU:

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

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Anne Kemp, Trish Lele, Pam O'Brien, Graham Ray, Anne Semple, supplied by the contributor or presenter, or in the public domain.

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Deepdene



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