Learning for Life

U3A RIVERLAND
Staying active: mentally physically and socially

Newsletter # 16 **May 2019**

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EDITOR
Diana March

It was pleasing to see so many new members attend the AGM where we farewelled President Brent Morrell and Course Co-ordinator Anna Harper. Both have served for significant periods and made huge contributions to our U3A.

We welcome Helen Slade back to the Committee. Helen was part of the inaugural committee and has accepted the role of President

Anne-Marie Riley was elected Course Co-ordinator. This is probably the most significant role on the Committee as without schedules of activities and liaison with tutors there could be no U3A.

Helen Simpson's presentation titled "I'm not a teacher" gave us an insight into her "past life" as a physiotherapist and her steep learning curve in offering one of the very first activities—Conversational French. Now in its 4th year, we owe much to Helen's commitment. See … you don't have to be at "teacher" to facilitate a group.

We also heard a fascinating tale of travel along the Amazon River by John and Meredith Dunn. I think we were all blown away by some of the statistics about the width and capacity of this river—our Murray definitely pales into insignificance!

Membership now stands at 186, signifying that we must be doing something right. I'm delighted to inform you that …. at long last …. we have a Beginners' French group running. Also new to the offerings are Snooker and Pool, Beginners' German, Card Making and Flower Arranging.

Remember to check the activity schedules, available at local libraries and on our own website.

OUTGOING PRESIDENT'S REPORT
Brent Morrell

I am pleased to be able to report to you on the operations of U3A Riverland in 2018.

It has been suggested to me, by someone who has a lot of experience in these things, (our Tai Chi tutor Helen Cenko), that I just say "Been another good year, thanks for coming." Perhaps I best not be quite that brief.

Congratulations to Helen on her crowning as Renmark Paringa Citizen of the Year—a well deserved honour. This follows on from another of our Tutor members, Ellen Traeger, in 2017. I don't suggest that service to U3A is a major criteria for this award, but I believe it is indicative of the quality of people we have amongst us.

It has been another good year. Figures show that we have had around 2000 attendances at 19 activities, 11 of which ran throughout the year. This is a slight increase on the previous year.

Membership numbers have been maintained and most pleasing is the increase in participation, with 116 members enjoying at least one activity. A popular addition has been Carmen's Beginners' German group and thanks to Marian and Daina's efforts, Doreen Aspen is conducting a Yoga group at Moorook, giving us—at last—a presence south of the river. Another to provide variety was the Friday Forum, whilst the Art and French groups maintained their popularity and are producing fantastic results. Sadly our Drawing and Meditation groups ceased when Murray Goodes left the district. Murray was an important contributor to U3A Riverland and will be hard to replace.

Another wonderful contributor is Course Coordinator, Anna Harper, who is retiring from that position, effective today. Anna brought a level of professionalism to a position that requires special skills. U3A Riverland will benefit well into the future from her efforts. Happy travels Anna.

This time last year we welcomed Meredith Dunn and John Penna to our Committee. Both have become valuable members of the team and as contributors to activities. It is very comforting to have a doctor and a nurse at our meetings!

Members of the Committee, greatly assisted by resident handyman Alan Key, have transformed the office into a very smart and functional space and discussions are continuing into ways it may become our "shop front".

As foreshadowed at our last AGM, State Government funding for U3A SA has ceased. What does that mean for U3A Riverland? Well, we will no longer

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2019 Committee Members
Back: *Tony Guster, Shirley Sims, Bev Hartigan, Meredith Dunn, Marian Woodberry, John Penna.*
Front*: Daina Braddock, Diana March, Helen Slade, Anne-Marie Riley.*
Absent*: Terry Marter, Anne Chase*

HELEN SLADE
President

THREE STAGES OF LIFE-LONG LEARNING

The **first stage** took place at Solomontown Primary School followed by Port Pirie High where I had the privilege of being Head Prefect. I then went on to train as a teacher at Wattle Park Teachers College in Adelaide.

The **second stage** was my working life. I taught at Uraidla, Risdon Park and Nailsworth before marrying Stewart and moving to the Riverland, living on a fruit salad block. How I loathed those apricots spoiling my school holidays! I taught at Renmark Primary, raised two children and spent many years following them around the country as they played sport. I also enjoyed tennis, netball and volleyball.

I continued teaching at Barmera and Berri Primary Schools before becoming Principal at Loveday and Lyrup. After retirement I had a short term as principal at Kingston on Murray and undertook relief teaching.

The **third stage** has begun and it is so much busier than stage two. I have had the chance to travel to many different countries in Europe, Africa and Asia. We are lucky enough to have our son living in the UK, the perfect spot for a home base when travelling in Europe.

I served on the Renmark Paringa Council for 8 years and was lucky enough to visit China as the acting Mayor. I am a keen Rose Festival supporter and was president for 5 years. I continue now as coordinator of the Institute floral display. We have 5 grandchildren, 2 in Canberra and 3 in the UK, so more visits are on the agenda as are our biannual family holidays.

I was lucky enough to hear about a small group of women keen to start up a branch of U3A in the Riverland and joined them in the Initial planning. The rest is now history. I look forward to my role as President and continuing my own learning and involvement through the many courses on offer.

ANNE-MARIE RILEY
Course Co-ordinator

It is a pleasure to be part of this vibrant group of people in the Riverland through the U3A. I am still in the throes of adapting to retirement life and have enjoyed the opportunity to dabble in a range of activities including knitting socks, bridge, card making and flower arranging!

I started life in Adelaide (co-incidentally born in the same hospital as my husband!), but due to family circumstances attended ½ dozen primary schools and 4 high schools, mainly in country areas from Bordertown to Port Pirie!

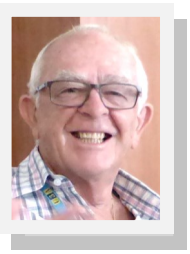
I studied to become a teacher and was appointed to Glossop High School in 1976. This is where I met my husband to be Jim (an experienced teacher of 2 years!) We married at the beginning of 1978 and settled in Barmera. While we have changed houses (and had a year's teaching exchange in Canada, where our daughter was born), we still live in Barmera. Apart from some time out having children, I continued to work at Glossop High in a variety of roles and have a strong affection for the school, staff and students I have had the pleasure of teaching. We love bumping into ex-students and catching up on what they are doing.

(Continued from page 1)

receive an annual grant of a little over $2000. Also we will have to fund our Public Liability and Volunteers Personal Accident cover ourselves – an amount of about $500 per annum. Delegate's travel to U3A SA meetings will no longer be subsidized and per capita fees (the amount we contribute to the running of U3A SA) will increase from 50 cents to $1.00 per member. Despite this, Treasurer Shirley has reported that we are in a satisfactory financial position and your Committee feels we can maintain membership fees at the same level for now.

A major factor in keeping our fees so low is the generosity and co-operation of the Berri RSL Members. Our original arrangement was to have use of the top room (the Sisters' Room) where so many of our activities take place. We have since taken over the office, have free rein of the room we are currently in and have recently commenced snooker and pool in the Vietnam Vets room and on the pool table behind me. We certainly owe them a debt of gratitude and pledge that we look after this building to the best of our ability.

I would like to think that U3A Riverland is achieving the goals it adopted four years ago: to involve those of the third age mentally, physically and socially through drawing on the knowledge, experience and skills of its members to learn from each other and share experiences in a relaxed, social environment. A comment made by a member recently, sums it up pretty well – "U3A is the best thing that has happened in the Riverland. It has got people involved in activities that would not otherwise have been available to them."



Finally, I would like to thank you for the privilege of being your President for the past 4 years. I have had an armchair ride thanks to an extremely talented and hardworking committee. Every one of them has fulfilled their role to a "T" and what you see today is testament to their efforts.

As of today I am relinquishing the Presidency, for a couple of reasons. Firstly, I firmly believe that it is a position that should be shared by the membership, to bring fresh ideas and energy to it. Secondly, experience has taught me that it is easier to find good committee members than tutors and I am getting great pleasure facilitating Writing for Pleasure, Social Bridge and now, with Terry Marter, revisiting our mis-spent youth at the snooker table.

Thank you all for your support of U3A Riverland—long may it continue.

Art excursion to Broken Hill

At 7.45am on April 4th, a small group of U3A Riverland artists set off for **THE** trip to Broken Hill—eager, somewhat excited and looking forward to the journey.

The journey revealed a very barren and drought stricken landscape, but the hours sped by as we chatted our way past the parched, sun-soaked paddocks. We were fortunate to have Tracey Taylor (a former Broken Hill resident) travelling in our vehicle, as she was able to point out features of the landscape that were well known to her.

Thanks to Ute Young's excellent organisational skills we found our comfortable cabins arranged in a village–like setting, providing us with separate bedrooms and lots of room to move about with lounge rooms and kitchen spaces included.

Sadly Jack Absalom's gallery was closed. Jack was one of the famous Brush Men of the Bush who passed away only several weeks earlier. Undaunted, we soldiered on to two different galleries, one of which had the most amazing panorama of Broken Hill. I have seen panoramas in a few venues, but this one, must surely be amongst the best. The detail was masterful and we felt as if we had been transported into the desert hinterland of Broken Hill.

It was in the second gallery, where the work of pastel artist Wendy Martin caught our attention and where we learnt more about the art of pastel drawing and were given some finer tips on oil painting by her partner. Both these experiences were unplanned but really appreciated. Leaving the gallery it was time to catch the Sunset on Sculptures, about 10kms out of Broken Hill. We arrived just at the right moment to see the sculptures at their best, with the changing colours of the setting sun providing the best contrast of light, shade and evening hues to the giant monoliths. A serendipitous moment.

We spent most of the next morning at Pro Hart's Gallery. Our "off the cuff" guide, provided us with an insight not only to the artist Pro Hart, but to the man; the miner turned artist and fellow of the Brush Men of the Bush. (The artists who took their work to London and put their Australian outback landscapes into the international arena. An amazing feat for the 1960's!) We could have spent even more time in this eclectic place but our rumbling stomachs were obliged in one of the many cafes on Argent Street.

The Regional Gallery of Broken Hill was the next stop. Apart from the most comprehensive collection of notable art works, our guide treated us as honoured guests, taking us into the bowels of the building where some very precious art works are stored in a humidity controlled environment. We were then offered biscuits and a range of teas and coffees in the staff room! A Margret Preston painting was amongst the treasures. Nothing seemed too much trouble for James who prove to be a very knowledgeable and interesting person.

We ate at The Palace Hotel that night. All the meals we had in Broken Hill were commendable, however, I think for me breakfast at The Silly Goat was really something different and memorably yummy.

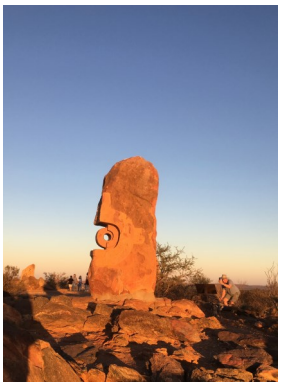
On our way home on 6th April we

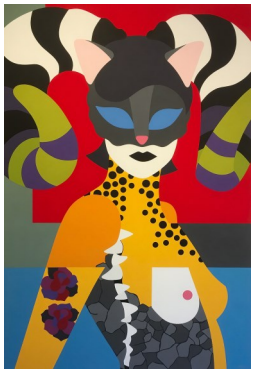
detoured to Silverton, the original mining town of the district before the mines shifted to the Broken Hill site. This was an oasis of the most interesting kind: Mad Max memorabilia, unfettered donkeys roaming the “main street”, the Belgian backpacker serving in the bar of the hotel, helped by Caryl, and the discovery of a very unique outback artist Howard Steer.

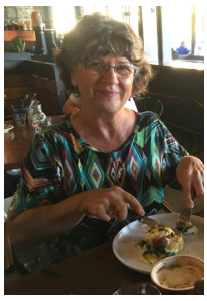
Howard Steer’s art works captured our collective imaginations so much that instead of heading home, we went back to Broken Hill and straight to his studio/gallery where we were able to see even more of his quirky paintings.

The above fond memories of our time in Broken Hill are merely a sketch of the enjoyable time spent there but as with a lot of good travels, ”what happens on the trip, stays on the trip…….. “

Our sincere thanks go to Ute Young for her “can do attitude” and Tracey Taylor for adding her local knowledge, which together made for a very successful and informative excursion. *Daina Braddock (Art tutor)*







Our sincere thanks to Ute Young and Tracey Taylor for organising such an informative and fun art excursion to Broken Hill

We are extremely grateful to Ruth Tucker who volunteered to introduce French to an eager group of people who have waited 4 years for the opportunity. 10 people attended the first session and like others, I'm sure, I left with my head spinning. They say that learning a new language helps to stave off dementia—what's not to like about that!

Merci beaucoup Ruth

We are equally grateful to Carmen Borowski who has broadened her offerings by taking a new beginners' German class, followed by the continuing group. All participants look forward to the Kaffee und Kuchen at "interval".

Danke Carmen

SNOOKER AND POOL ANYONE?

An addition to U3A's offerings this year is the noble game of Snooker, together with its lesser known cousins of Kelly Pool and 8 Ball. These are made possible by the generosity of the Berri RSL and Vietnam Veterans who have two excellent tables in their clubrooms.

Led by Terry Marter and Brent Morrell, this group meets on Wednesday mornings at 10.00 a.m. The men are attempting, unsuccessfully so far, to recapture the skills of their youth and the ladies are having a lot of fun learning a new one.

Much mirth and good fellowship ensues. There are still a few vacancies for any members who would like to join in. Contact Brent Morrell by email: bkmorrell@bigpond.com or telephone: 8586 5235.

An ever increasing number of U3A members are not only enjoying, but reaping the benefits of Yoga classes, with Doreen Aspden. This activity is held at 10.30 Tuesday mornings in the Moorook Hall.

Thank You

to all our tutors who generously give up their time to help our U3A grow

Card Making *with Sue Drabsch*

Those who attended the first workshop with Sue were delighted with their results. The second workshop saw the creation of amazingly professional quality cards.

I have received one of Sue's beautiful Christmas cards each year for a number of years and I treasure the works of art.

This activity is held from 1-4pm on the last Wednesday of the month. People still wishing to register should contact tutor Sue Drabsch on 0472 792 339 or email: denisdrabsch@hotmail.com

Save the Date

Rendezvous Adelaide Hills

A tantalising taste of the Adelaide Hills

Adelaide Hills U3A is hosting a 3 day mid-week event at **Hahndorf from 22-24 October 2019**

The Rendezvous Committee has planned a dynamic programme of events with the aim of entertaining and informing U3A members and guests from around South Australia as well as the Adelaide Hills.

Inspiring Centurians

Trudy Smith had always dreamed of being a painter, but she did not pick up a paint-brush until she was 85.

ABC South West WA , 6 Sep 2018,

Now 102, Ms Smith said it was a mixture of loneliness and newfound freedom that gave her the courage to start pursuing her passion following her husband's death.

"The one thing I wanted to do was to paint," she said. "I never did very much before that because he [husband] was very critical. "It has taken quite a while but suddenly I have realised that it is lovely to be free of everything—you can say what you like, you can do what you like and you can think what you like."

Some of Ms Smith's latest work, ranging from colourful abstract art to landscape pieces, were featured in an exhibition at her local seniors community centre in Eaton, in Western Australia's south-west

However, she was not comfortable with the attention. "I'm not very happy about talking about my own things at all," Ms Smith said.

All her paintings are organic with very little planning involved. "I know some artists are very frightened of a blank canvas," she said. "When I see a blank canvas I just love it. I can sit and look at it and the picture comes to me from the canvas."

Trudy Smith had always wanted to be a painter, but it was not the life her father, a doctor, encouraged.

"I was sort of a misfit," she said. She saw herself as the weed growing in the middle of her family, a position she encouraged other black sheep to embrace. "Be a weed — then you belong to everywhere or anywhere," she said.

Say 'yes' to life

She is often asked how she keeps fit and healthy at her age but she said there is really no secret to it. Instead, her advice is to just give anything a go, particularly in your senior years.

"Sometimes in life you think shall I do something, shall I move, shall I get married, should I have another child," she said.

"Always when I have had that feeling of 'shall I?' the answer is 'yes.'"

To see some of Trudy's inspirational art visit

https://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-05-01/trudy-smith-102-year-old-painter/9710314

World's oldest barber is 107 and still cutting hair full-time

www.nytimes.com Oct. 7, 2018

Anthony Mancinelli shook out a barber towel and welcomed the next customer to his chair in Fantastic Cuts, a cheery hair salon in a nondescript strip mall, about an hour's drive north of New York City.

Mr. Mancinelli is 107 and still working full time, cutting hair five days a week from noon to 8 p.m. He has been working in barbershops since he was 11.

Mr. Mancinelli has a trim build, a steady hand and a full head of hair, albeit snow white. He spends much of his day on his feet, in a pair of worn, cracked leather black shoes.

"People come in and they flip out when they find out how old he is," said the shop's owner, Jane Dinezza.

"He never calls in sick," she said. "I have young people with knee and back problems, but he just keeps going. He can do more haircuts than a 20-year-old kid. They're sitting there looking at their phones, texting or whatever, and he's working."

Asked — for the umpteenth time — about his longevity, Mr. Mancinelli offered only that he has always put in a satisfying day's work and he has never smoked or drunk heavily.

But no, longevity does not run in his family and he was never big on exercise. Diet-wise, he said, "I eat thin spaghetti, so I don't get fat."

He has all his teeth and is on no daily medication. He has never needed glasses, and his hairstyling hands are still steady.

"I only go to the doctor because people tell me to, but even he can't understand it," he said. "I tell him I have no aches, no pains, no nothing. Nothing hurts me."

One reason he continues to work, he said, is that it helps him stay busy and upbeat after the death of his wife of 70 years, Carmella, 14 years ago. He visits her grave daily before work.

Mr. Mancinelli lives alone, not far from the salon in New Windsor. He drives to work, cooks his own meals, watches television — he is a big pro-wrestling fan — and is adamantly self-sufficient. He still trims the bushes in his front yard with no help.

"He won't even let anyone sweep up his hair clippings," said his son Bob 81.

I'll have what he's having! What about you?