

Open Door

to healthy minds and healthy bodies

Newsletter 185

18 Oct 2017

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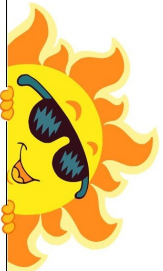
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**Next Newsletter
Deadline****1st December**

Please email
contributions to Alanna
aingear22@bigpond.com

Bargain basement membership

It is that time of the year again to encourage your non-U3AA member friends to join. From October 1, NEW members receive 15 months membership i.e. the final three months of 2017 + all of 2018.

So get them on board NOW!

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Presidents' Corner

Perhaps it is a sign of age but the years seem to slip by at an ever increasing rate. Already the Committee and Course Coordinators are well into planning for next year. We will have our Enrolment Day on Tuesday, 16 January and our Annual General Meeting on Tuesday, 20 February. Both dates will be advertised in our December Newsletter.

As in previous years, anyone joining U3AA after 1 October will be fully paid up for 2018. At our last AGM we also agreed to keep our fee for 2018 at \$40. This will be the fifth year we have been able to keep it at this amount. However, although we were successful in obtaining the grant for work on ASCA House, as you will be aware we have had to spend a fair bit of our own money, both towards this work but also because of the unexpected cost of correcting the storm-water drainage problem. The latter problem has now been rectified and we hope that members were not inconvenienced too much, especially when the south sliding door entrance could not be used. Your Committee will be looking carefully at our financial position and as a result we will be putting forward a recommendation to the AGM in February for a proposed fee in 2019.

Although we hold many of our courses and activities at ASCA House you will be aware that we also use other venues, which often entail paying rent. U3AA normally subsidises this rent but members involved in such activities are asked to make a modest contribution. The amount varies from activity to activity and in some cases is paid at the start of the course but in some cases is paid on a week by week basis. One problem with the latter situation is that if someone does not attend then they do not pay. However, the rent still has to be paid in full. In addition, the amount varies depending on the venue and the course leader is responsible for collecting the money from members. We felt that we needed to make the system more equitable so that costs paid by members do not vary greatly between activities and also to simplify it. Therefore, the U3AA Committee identified the need to establish a reasonable "standard payment rate" for members of groups who use venues that attract rental fees. From First Semester 2018, a flat rate of \$20.00 per Semester per course for each course member will be charged. Please note that this only applies to activities held in other venues where there is a rental payment. As with other course charges, payment will be due when you enrol. We hope you agree that this is still a very reasonable cost for a full semester.

Further to my comment in previous Newsletters, we will have at least one vacancy on your Committee next year so please consider joining us and feel free to talk to someone on the Committee about what is involved.

Ian Jackson

Please support our sponsors:

Since we have a growing list of sponsors, space means that it has become very difficult to fit all their logos in our Newsletter. Therefore we decided that instead, they will be placed on the address labels for the Newsletter. You can also view their websites from our website. Just click on *Sponsors* on the left hand of our webpage. However, since we do value the support of our sponsors very much, we intend to still list them in the Newsletter. Our current list of sponsors is as follows:

Armidale City Bowling Club, Regional Australia Bank, 2AD, 2ARM-FM, Ducats, Shane Hutchison (LGHM), Moin and Associates (Lawyers), New England Travel, Newling Gardens, Eyecare Plus.



Roving reporter Barb Trehy, asks the hard questions

Is Armidale's U3A special? A personal view.

I have been a member of many U3A branches, including ones in Sydney, the Blue Mountains and the Mid-North Coast, and have found that each has its own unique character in addition to, and differing from, that of belonging to a world-wide organisation.

Part of the reason is to do with geography. Those in the city of the Blue Mountains face a unique difficulty - that of being part of a local government area that is a long, narrow ribbon development of about 60kms, from Blackheath to Glenbrook, with just one road (the Great Western Highway, always undergoing major roadwork) to get from one end of it to the other. Courses are held in many towns from top to bottom.

And the two ends are quite different in their demographics. The high end, from Blackheath to about Wentworth Falls, attracts a high percentage of writers, poets, artists, craftspeople, folk musicians, and so on. There is a tendency towards interests in the arts and crafts, literature and spirituality, different from those of the lower end down to Lapstone, where retired workers look to the social sciences, philosophy, politics and economics, as well as games and hobbies.

The Mid-North Coast area is different again - the balmy climate beckons one outdoors, and life is very laid-back. The U3A activities feature card and board games, sports, book clubs and popular quiz games.

Armidale's U3A has its own uniqueness, evolving from isolation, the town/gown divide and the rural factor. It is an amalgam of all the above, with a huge range of courses and activities. I think it is significant that the most popular and well-attended one is "Tuesday Talks", where anyone has the chance to give a talk for an hour on the subject of their choice. These are never less than interesting, and some are quite simply wonderful, showcasing the rich and varied experiences of our city's retired population.

I for one think that is special.

Barbara Trehy.

There are two studies being conducted by the University of Southern Queensland

1. Mental Health Services Accessibility Study questionnaire. Takes about 15-20 to complete
2. Assessing Wisdom Study 2017 questionnaire. Takes about 50 to 60 minutes

Questionnaires may be found on the website: www.bit.ly/usq/study

Federal Government Stronger Communities Programme Grant

I have just heard from our Federal Member, Barnaby Joyce, that we have been successful in obtaining a grant for 50% of the cost of installing a solar system at ASCA House.

Ian Jackson



August Puzzle Answer

Room for one more

October Puzzle

ALL
AGAIN

The School of Rural Medicine is preparing again for the interviews (Multiple Skills Assessments – MSAs) for candidates applying to study medicine at the University of New England in the Joint Medical Program (JMP). The JMP relies heavily on the expertise and generous support of community representatives to ensure the continued success of this critically important student selection process.

The assessment of applicants seeking admission to the Joint Medical Program in 2018 will be held between Tuesday 28 November and Friday 8 December, 2017. At the University of New England, there will be two Multiple Skills Assessment (MSA) sessions each day, one 8.30am – 1.30pm and the other 12.30pm - 5.30pm.

We are always keen to welcome new interviewers to assist with this important selection process. I have attached a form and am hoping you would be able to forward this to anyone that may be willing to volunteer their time to interview. Assistance with one interview session (either a morning or afternoon session) helps enormously. If people are interested, there is a training session available on Tuesday 14 November from 4.30-6.00 at UNE. If people would rather hard copies of the form, I am able to provide a hard copy as well.

If anyone has any questions or would like to discuss further, please let me know and I can contact them directly.

Get Well and Best Wishes

There may be times when we do not hear about those members who are ill and perhaps in hospital. To all who may find themselves in such a position we send our best wishes and hope that you will soon be well enough to join in our activities again.



Just in case you were wondering

- The human heart pumps 182 million litres of blood during the average lifetime.
- The human embryo acquires fingerprints within three months of conception.
- Women's hearts beat faster than men's.
- The average person forgets 90% of their dreams.
- The total length of all the blood vessels in the human body is about 100,000 km.
- On average, a person's respiration rate is one third higher in spring than in autumn.
- By the end of a person's life, they can recall, on average, around 150 trillion pieces of information.
- The hairs on our heads grow about half an inch per month and have an average life of **2-6 years**. An average person's hair should grow no longer than 3 feet or so.

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U3AA members get out and about in our beautiful New England bushland

A group of members enjoyed getting close and personal to many wattle species under the tuition of John Nevin. We learnt how to classify and name a few of the roughly 1400 known species. The course culminated with a day out seeing many wattles along the roadsides on a glorious sunny day, and John showed us the many different species in his lovely home garden. I am sure that we all look at wattles in a different way now.

Thank you John



A group of members enjoyed 'Exploring the Bush' on Saturday, 2nd September. It was a glorious early spring day. We drove to Walcha where we checked the local parks and had morning tea at the Lions Park which is being much improved with a huge new shelter shed. Then on to parts of the Oxley Wild Rivers National Park. We walked to a view of Tia Falls, where the photo was taken. Then a walk and picnic lunch at Apsley Falls before heading home after a very enjoyable day out.



Review of REFUSAL by Felix Francis

In August we read Refusal, a book produced from the stable of Dick Francis. Dick died in 2010. In the preceding few years he and his Physics teacher son, Felix co-authored four books, maintaining the same approach and character of Dick's books. Felix now writes solo and Refusal is the third of these.

I have always loved Dick Francis' books, easy to read and a rollicking story on some aspect of the racing industry which formed the basis of all his books. Having been a first rate jockey in the UK his knowledge of, feel for and love of horses and racing shone through all he wrote. The question is: can his son, without such an in-depth personal knowledge of racing pull off this private detective story?

The yarn revolves around the premise that, despite the efforts of the British Horseracing Authority, someone was "beating the system – manipulating the results of races" (p2). Sid Hayley, a retired private detective eventually finds himself undertaking the necessary investigation with all the challenges to himself, his family and members of the racing fraternity.

While the tale moved quickly, I am not sure that page turning was quite as rapid as in the past; nevertheless it makes a pleasant read when spare reading time is limited. Apparently the book was not enjoyed by other members of the group but I shall continue to read the Francis' books.

Marian C. Stone

Thursday book group

The Childhood of Jesus by J.M. Coetzee

Today people are on the move, fleeing wars, earthquakes, drought, floods or life-destroying poverty. Coetzee's novel depicts the experiences of a man and a five year old boy in a similar situation who, like everyone they meet, are on the move to find a new and better life. In the opening scene they arrive at a Reception Centre in a Spanish-speaking country. The man becomes the boy's protector during a dangerous sea journey. He wants to help him find his mother but does not know her name, as all documents were lost at sea.

They were given the names of Simon and David at a previous Centre. These are run efficiently by a benign bureaucracy. While basic needs are met, there is no allowance for intimacy or even friendship. All are urged to forget their past. The psychological cost is increasingly apparent for both Ines and David when Ines accepts the role of David's mother.

Coetzee is a keen observer of human behaviour. Aspects of human experience including sexuality, responsibility and love are explored in the novel.

This book has been the most controversial of those we have read this year. The relevance of the title was also questioned. Read it and form your own view.

Ann Pryosusilo

U3A NEVER TOO LATE TO LEARN
(or: EVERY TOM, DICK & HARRY CAN ...)

Young Tommy Bell could study well, with wisdom and discretion.
He longed to be a lawyer, see - and entered that profession.
His brother Dick was often sick, and missed a lot of schooling;
while Harry Drew missed lessons, too - through playing round and fooling.

Three different men; they grew, and then they worked in three careers;
and when retired, they all desired to learn in later years.
So Tom could start to study Art, while Harry took up Writing;
and Dick could speak in Ancient Greek; for all, it was exciting.

And Tom's wife Sue learned new things, too - like Spanish conversation;
while Harry's Jean taught Thai cuisine; and Dick taught Meditation.
Their school today is U3A, with no exams or swotting.
They're having fun - no homework done! (No copybooks for blotting).

Now Harry's wise: to his surprise, this learning's an adventure!
He's learned a bit; he's keeping fit, and staving off dementia.
There's no Degrees - each class a breeze; this stuff's no load to carry.
This learning's fun for everyone - Tom, Dick and even Harry.

Bessie Jennings, 15/10/10

Permission to use Photographs

When providing photos to the Newsletter please ask those in the photo for permission prior to submitting for publication. Sorry, but this is the way things are in these *litigious* days.

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