

President's Report



Welcome back to Term 3. It's a commonplace to say that, as you get older, time seems to speed up, but I find it really hard to believe that we are now halfway through the year and already planning ahead for next year.

2016 Enrolment Procedures

Judging by the number of queries and comments I have received recently, the most important topic concerning members at the moment is the new MyU3A computerised enrolment system. MyU3A will be in place in time for enrolment for the 2016 programme. Let me assure you that we are well on schedule for the implementation of this exciting initiative. As I said in the June *News Update*, we expect the new system to be available to members in August, 2015. All members will be advised of their personal membership ID and a password, as well as the procedure for accessing the system. For those members who do not have access to a computer, or who may not be comfortable enrolling or managing their membership online, volunteers will be available in the office to assist you to update your membership details and to enrol in classes.

The MyU3A project team has met with a number of members from various sub-committees who have been introduced to the system to test its accessibility and functionality. Their feedback has been very positive. Implementation of MyU3A will include a training package to assist volunteer supervisors to learn the system procedures. These people will be available to train other volunteers, such as office staff, and will be able to assist members who require support.

January 2016 Summer School

As in previous years, a four-week Summer School will be available to members. This enrolment will give us a first opportunity to put the MyU3A computerised system into use, although on a smaller scale than for the general membership enrolment. Precise enrolment procedures are currently being drawn up by the Enrolment Team and details will be circulated to members shortly. It is envisaged that enrolment will commence in mid to late September.

Special General Meeting

A Special General Meeting of the membership took place on 23 July to approve two changes to our Constitution. First was the removal of Associate Member status from our U3A enrolments. Second was the transfer of the Grievance Policy to a comprehensive amalgamation of all Committee of Management Policies in a 'Membership - Policies' group. These changes will be published on the U3A [website](#) and made available at the U3A office on request as printed copies for members. We believe that this arrangement will make it easier for members to research relevant details regarding U3A Manningham's policies, procedures and responsibilities. Well over 100 members were present at the meeting and both changes received overwhelming approval.

President's Report (Cont'd)

Tutors' Lunch

Immediately following the Special General Meeting, a 'Thank You Lunch' was held for our universally valued and highly respected Tutors. This lunch was a small gesture, but offered with real sincerity, on behalf of our U3A to express our acknowledgement and gratitude for the wonderful work that our Tutors perform. On this occasion, Certificates of Appreciation for long and enthusiastic service were awarded to **Bruce Ford** for 15 Years of Service, and to **Valerie Bell, Barbara Byrne, Joan Creber, Donald Gay, Jo Grant, Tom Heyhoe** and **Christine Lederman** for 10 Years of Service.

A very special mention was made of the outstanding record of 24 Years of Service given by **Dawn Heffernan** and **Neville Heffernan**, and of the equally impressive record of 22 years by **Linda Chin**. On behalf of all our members, I congratulate each and every one of these Tutors for their commitment and stamina.



Some of the recipients of Certificates of Appreciation

Victorian Senior of the Year Awards 2015

We have nominated **Dr Michael (Taffy) Jones, OAM**, for the Victorian Department of Health Senior of the Year Award. He has an outstanding career record and, having now retired, has continued to draw upon his wealth of experience and expertise in health matters generally to help fellow members of the community maintain a good level of health in their later years. You may know Taffy as a volunteer U3A Manningham Tutor, running a programme dedicated to healthy ageing.

Doncare

I would like to take this opportunity to thank our members most sincerely for their many generous donations to Doncare. For some time now, we have supported this worthwhile and very necessary charity that offers a vital lifeline to local families in need. I am happy to report that your contributions last term exceeded those of previous terms. Doncare sent us a Certificate of Recognition which you will find displayed on the small notice board. Your concern and kindness is acknowledged and much appreciated.

My very best wishes to each of you for a stimulating, invigorating and enjoyable Term 3.

Geoff Sheldon, President

Monthly Talks

Monthly Talks are held on the 3rd Wednesday of each month from 3.00-4.30pm in Room 13. All are welcome - bring a friend. Entry by \$2 donation; refreshments are provided.

19 August: Mercy Ships Australia Margot and Tom Hartley are among the amazing volunteers who staff 'surgery ships'. This work brings both healing and hope to the world's forgotten poor.

16 September: To be confirmed. Keep an eye on Notice Boards and the [website](#). Details will be available in all classes.

21 October: Raw Vegan Endurance Runners Janette Murray-Wakelin and Alan Murray completed an endurance run around Australia. A film was made of this accomplishment and is being currently shown in Europe. They will share their experiences of this run (and hopefully their film), as well as provide more information about their lifestyle choices.

18 November: Urological Health Dr Joseph Ischia is an urologist with a special interest in prostate health. His talk will include something for us all.

Coral Vercoe

Curriculum Coordinator's Report

Planning for 2016 commenced in July and Tutors have submitted their forms to offer a variety of courses to our members. These courses include academic, artistic and physical components to ensure members can choose the areas that suit their needs. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the Tutors for their dedication and hard work in contributing to our successful offering of courses.

Term 4 Classes

There are a number of courses offered only in Term 4. If you are enrolled in the following courses, make sure you check your confirmation letter for the time, day and venue. The courses are:

- Computers - Buying & Selling on eBay
- iPad - Workshop for Beginners
- What We Eat
- Look Good, Feel Good

Course Title Changes in 2016

A number of course titles will be changed in 2016. Please check these titles when you enrol for next year.

- What We Eat *changed to* All About Food
- Making Quality Investment Decisions *changed to* Investing
- Understanding Financial Markets *changed to* Mastering Financial Markets
- The New Consciousness *changed to* A Philosophy for Living and Beyond
- Stock Market Self-Help Discussion *changed to* Financial Health in Retirement

Milly Ching, Curriculum Coordinator

A New Success To Be Launched By Hazel Edwards

The Written Word and Creative Writing groups have collaborated again to produce another *Golden Quill* volume. Without the support of Warrandyte Community Bank, it wouldn't have happened. It amazes us that, over eight years, we have produced four editions with the Bank's gracious grants.



It is very exciting for us to have **Hazel Edwards** launch this new book. It is also fortuitous timing because Hazel is launching a memoir, *Not Just a Piece of Cake: Being an Author*. We who participate in U3A writing groups give testimony to that statement.

Hazel writes fiction and non-fiction for children, young adults and adults. Her children's books include the series, *There's a Hippopotamus on Our Roof Eating Cake*. These books may be the ones with which most grandparents will be familiar. Some members of our U3A enjoyed Hazel's entertaining presentation at a *Monthly Talk* last year.

There is much to learn about Hazel. She is a director of the Australian Society of Authors and a National Reading Ambassador. In 2013, Hazel was awarded an OAM for services to Literature. Do visit her website, www.hazeledwards.com, and be as inspired as we are.

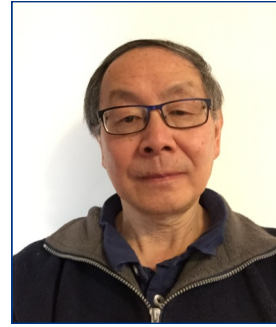
Meanwhile, write **Friday, 23 October** in your diaries. The launch will be in Rooms 16 and 17 and will begin at 3.00pm. Of course, we will provide refreshments to celebrate. This occasion promises to be a rewarding experience for everyone. We hope to see you there!

Trish Taylor and Lula Black

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Five Questions for...

Kevin Chan



You have been our website manager for several years. How has this 'job' changed over the years?

I took over from Leong Kwok in June, 2011. There has been a steady increase in the number of articles and items being added to the site.

Do you think it is important for everyone to learn how to use the Internet?

The Internet can change most people's lives. Not only is information on almost anything you want to know available online, but it can save us money and time. Like driving a car or using a mobile phone, using the Internet can enhance our daily lives.

Which websites are some of your favourites for useful information?

I use *The Age* website (www.theage.com.au) to read the news every day and Google (www.google.com) for searching for information most of the time.

How do you relax?

I am a bit of a couch potato. I enjoy watching most sports, particularly AFL and horse-racing. I also usually read at least one E-book a week. I just finished *The Girl on the Train* and *Dead Wake: The Last Crossing of the Lusitania*.

What is on your Wish List for our U3A?

To make it easier for all members to learn how to use the latest technology.

Vale Peti

Peti Leung, her husband, Tim, and their two boys, Michael and Hoi, came from Hong Kong to make a new life in Australia. She studied traditional Chinese watercolour painting while her boys were young. The family joined the Templestowe Baptist Church and were very strong in their faith.

In 2009, Peti joined U3A Manningham and we were both in Line Dancing and Chinese Painting classes together. In 2013, she took over as Tutor for the painting class. While on visits to Hong Kong, she would collect books, brushes and rice paper for the class. Members of the class would go to Yum Cha and visit the Chinese museum, art exhibitions, and have lunch together after class (we still do).

Peti was the most generous and giving person, always there to help, give advice and just be there for you. She often said to me when I was struggling with some frustrating piece, "Just do the best you can." And what more can you do but the best you can? Thank you Peti for the tutoring and, most of all, for the friendship.

Patricia Bevan

Views and Reviews

Views and Reviews is a forum for our U3A members. Contributions on a range of topics of interest to our members are invited, with a limit of 500 words. Selection for publication will be made by the Editorial Committee. Send contributions to dianeбайд@yahoo.com.

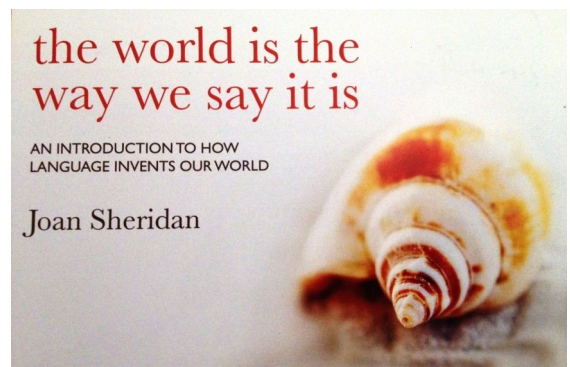
In this *Views and Reviews* section, there are two articles taking different perspectives on thinking. The first is about a new book published by one of our members that explores how language can influence the way you see the world. The second draws on information from taxi drivers and anatomy to examine how we may improve our memory.

The World Is The Way We Say It Is

by Joan Sheridan

A wonderful group of enthusiastic and wise people come to our U3A each Tuesday afternoon to discuss a broad range of classical and contemporary ideas. Over the years, ideas have been argued about and workshopped. Whether there is a consensus of opinion among the group, or divergent opinions, the discussion is always lively and thought-provoking and usually stimulates more questions than answers. My book, *The World Is The Way We Say It Is*, is the result of many such discussions.

The sessions at U3A, like those discussed in my book, are based on three basic philosophic questions: What can we know for certain? How do we act on this knowledge? What can we hope for? Beginning with the premise that we use language to express how we understand the world, my book proposes that by critically examining our language, we can find the often unconscious 'knots' or flaws in our understanding. These things prevent us from thinking differently. Once the problem has been identified, we have the chance to unravel the knot and imaginatively initiate changes in attitude and, ultimately, in behaviour.



The next and more challenging philosophic task is to discover new insights that will change our thinking and provide fresh solutions to the challenges of life. This process involves finding out what we do not know. It is a process that relies heavily on the role of conversation, metaphor and the imagination.

The humanist approach presented in this book offers an alternative to the traditional Platonic/Cartesian way of understanding our world, which seeks to find the unconditional 'truth' of any proposition. For the humanist thinker, life is full of changing possibilities: 'truth' is always conditional, dependent on context, time and human experience. Any new idea must be argued for and, if accepted, it remains 'true' for as long as it is convincing. With the passing of time, change continually occurs and new understandings are continually displacing the old. These ideas are part of our U3A discussions and have been used in my book.

I originally wrote this book for myself as a way of organizing thoughts and experiences that were meaningful to me. As such, it is often personal and subjective: some readers will agree, some will disagree, but hopefully it will stimulate thought and contribute in a positive way to the question of 'How best can we live in today's world?'

The World Is The Way We Say It Is

by Joan Sheridan (Cont'd)

By drawing on the wisdom of humanist philosophers, writers and thinkers, the book proposes a way of finding new paths to guide us into the future. It is intended as a contribution to the broader discussion concerning our planet's welfare.

Copies of the book are available by contacting Joan on 9878 5829 or at drjoansheridan@westnet.co.au

Taxi Drivers, Nutcrackers, Seahorses — and Us

by Geoff Sheldon



The region of the brain that plays a major role in memory, and particularly spatial memory, is the hippocampus. In Greek, this word means 'seahorse' because of its shape. The hippocampus can shrink in late adulthood and, for patients suffering from Alzheimer's disease, problems with memory and spatial orientation are some of the earliest symptoms. Consequently, the hippocampus usually is one of the first structural and functional parts of the brain to show damage or decay.

It is well known that in certain food-storing birds, the hippocampus is larger than in non-food-storing species. Clark's nutcrackers - a North American member of the crow family - rely more extensively on stored food in the wild than all other members of this family and, interestingly, have a larger hippocampal region relative to both body and total brain size.

This information has recently prompted research into humans to see if analogous examples can be found. In 2000, a study was made of London taxi drivers who must spend years learning to navigate by memory around London before they can obtain a licence to drive the famous black cabs. This training is known as 'doing the knowledge'. Researchers examined the correlation between the size and volume of the hippocampus and the length of time that had been spent as a taxi driver, and found a positive correlation.

So, what has all this to do with us? Well, the implications of this research are relevant to us in three ways. They suggest that responding to environmental demands could trigger localized change in the structure of the healthy adult human brain. They also suggest that prolonged activation of the neurons in this region of the brain possibly could lead to their strengthening and, perhaps, provide something of a defence against the cerebral deterioration that results in Alzheimer's. Finally, this study demonstrated that there is a reliable relationship between the size of the hippocampus and memory performance. Not all elderly people show hippocampal shrinkage of course, but those who do tend to perform less well on some memory tasks.

We know from a study published in 2011 that aerobic exercise can increase the size of the hippocampus in adults aged 55 to 80, resulting in improved spatial memory. What the study of nutcracker birds and the London cabbies tells us is that it may also be possible to reinforce that improvement with mental activities that require the exercise of visual-spatial skills.

Spatial memory is a central element of our daily lives. It helps us understand, appreciate and interact with the places we live in. With the arrival of smart-phones and satellite navigation technologies, however, we are in danger of allowing vital parts of our physiology to lapse into disuse. So, take time to look around you. It is all too easy to concentrate on getting to your destination without registering mentally what you are passing. Alternatively, try wandering around your neighbourhood to a place you've never been while paying more attention to your surroundings. Look for 'return home' solutions and routes that connect you with what is familiar. In other words, if someone tells you to "Get lost!" regard it as advice worth taking: it could just prolong the life of your memory cells.

Farewell to a Gentle Teacher

A respected teacher and member of our U3A, **Alan Smith**, died recently after an extended illness. Alan was known both as a Yoga Tutor and as an active member of classes in Bridge, Ballroom Dancing, German and Yoga.

From 2007, Alan taught a weekly class in Gita Yoga. He was always encouraging and clear in his instructions, but always with a gentle push to try, and try again. When working through an especially challenging posture, he would remind us to “breathe, don’t forget to breathe”. When we had worked our way through a few difficult repetitions, he would often say, “Just one more.” And we found that we *could* do it just once more.

At the end of each term, Alan enthusiastically joined the Yoga class for coffee and just a little cake. Here, we learned that he had been a travel agent and enjoyed travel whenever he could. He was a dog lover and often met other U3A members with his dogs at a local park. Alan quietly acknowledged the lessons that dogs can teach us.

Another of Alan’s enthusiasms was ballroom dancing. He was a member of the Ballroom Dancing class and was an excellent dancer. He loved going dancing two or three times a week with some members of the class. He also was a student in another Yoga class at our U3A.

Alan attended the U3A Social Bridge group for a couple of years until he became unwell. He was very understanding and kind. He never complained about his health despite going through an obviously very difficult time. Alan was a good bridge player but was always happy to play with newer players and offer them support and advice in a noncritical manner. He was such a very gentle and considerate person.



We will remember all the lessons Alan taught us, both in class and out.

Contributors to this article included: **Diane Baird, Charmaine de Silva, Tess Gibbs, Helen Lowell, Maureen Mitchell, Mary Serraro and Lyn Torrens**

Network News



Network Conference, August 17-18

The conference program and registration form are on the Network website (www.u3avictoria.com.au) and members should register now if they have not done so. The new Governor, Linda Dessau AM, will open the conference and Gerard Mansour, Commissioner for Senior Victorians, will give the keynote address. Other featured speakers are Dr Patricia Edgar and Rachael De Sain. A full list of speakers is on the website.

U3A Matters

This publication is sent to all U3As and is on the Network website. *U3A Matters* features information from Victorian U3As so members can learn about what other U3As are doing and achieving, as well as publicising individual U3A activities.

Festival of Learning

As part of Seniors Week, U3As will participate in the Festival of Learning on Sunday, 4 October. This event, at Federation Square, is an opportunity to enjoy the achievements of our U3As. Also during Seniors Week will be a U3A Art Exhibition held in Queen’s Hall at Parliament House. All Victorian U3As are invited to exhibit works by their members. For details about submitting art work, go to the Network website. The art will be hung on Monday, 5 October, and will be on display from Tuesday to Thursday, 6-8 October, during the sitting of the State Parliament.

Newsletter Deadline

The copy deadline for the November newsletter is Friday, 16 October, with publication at the beginning of November. Please forward copy to Diane Baird at dianeбайд@yahoo.com.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS Terms 3 and 4, 2015

Monday, 13 July	TERM 3 commenced (10 weeks)	
Monday, 17 August	Committee of Management Meeting (Rm 8)	1.30pm
Wednesday, 19 August	Monthly Talk (Rm 13)	3.00pm
Thursday, 10 September	Summer School Enrolment (PFR)	2.30 - 3.30pm
Monday, 14 September	Committee of Management Meeting (Rm 8)	1.30pm
Wednesday, 16 September	Monthly Talk (Rm 13)	3.00pm
Thursday, 17 September	Class Reps. Afternoon Tea (PFR)	2.30 - 3.30pm
Friday, 18 September	TERM 3 finishes	
[break – 2 weeks]		
<i>Monday, 5 October</i>	TERM 4 commences (8 weeks)	
Thursday, 8 October	Office Workers Afternoon Tea (PFR)	2.30 - 3.30pm
Friday, 16 October	Newsletter Deadline	
Monday, 19 October	Committee of Management Meeting (Rm 8)	1.30pm
Wednesday, 21 October	Monthly Talk (Rm 13)	3.00pm
Tuesday, 3 November	MELBOURNE CUP DAY HOLIDAY	
Monday, 16 November	Committee of Management Meeting (Rm 8)	1.30pm
Wednesday, 18 November	Monthly Talk (Rm 13)	3.00pm
Wednesday, 25 November	Enrolments commence	
Thursday, 26 November	Artistic Showcase	10.00am – 3.00pm
Friday, 27 November	TERM 4 finishes	
Thursday, 3 December	uniFEST	12 noon – 3.30pm
Friday, 4 December	Enrolments finish	

PFR - Pines Function Room

The Newsletter

Editorial team: **Diane Baird, Frances Langdon, Liew Staras**; CoM Advisor: **Jillian Gange**;
Website Manager: **Kevin Chan**; Distribution: **Jeanette and Lewis Badge, John Driver, Warren Trompf**.

And finally...

“What lies behind us and what lies before us are small matters compared with what lies within us.”
Oliver Wendell Holmes

Information contained in this newsletter was correct at the time of publication. U3A Manningham makes no guarantee that the information contained in the newsletter is always accurate.



MISSION STATEMENT

Our mission is to provide accessible and affordable educational, cultural, physical and social opportunities appropriate to the needs of retired and semi-retired people.

