



*Lifelong Learning*



**NEWSLETTER December 2011**

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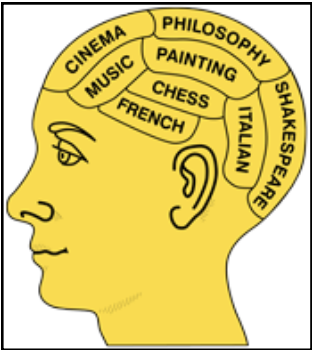
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**MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS and ENROLMENTS FOR 2012**

Renew your membership and enroll in courses for 2012 on **Open Day Wednesday 14th December**

**MIND MATTERS**

We now know that brain cells develop and grow during every stage of development; from birth until the day we die. Stimulating the brain to continually learn new skills, tasks and activities is one of the best ways to keep the mind active, healthy and strong, regardless of physical condition and capabilities.



Games involving perception, concentration and focus are one way to enhance the brain's capacity to utilize and stimulate brain cells and to keep our neural pathways open and functioning. Finding a relaxed and friendly setting to share adventures of the mind is a great bonus and we have such an opportunity in our U3A!

*Helen Gillies reports.....*

Mind Games started almost 3 years ago when Hurstbridge U3A was formed, with around 10 members each term, all keen to keep their brains active. We meet each week on Tuesday morning to share and solve a variety of puzzles, logic problems, mathematical challenges, word games and general knowledge.

This year, without having a 'tutor', we have been pooling our resources to find new and exciting activities to stretch our minds. We have learnt to play speed scrabble, tackle tangrams and undertake paper folding challenges as well as to more effectively solve puzzles and problems frequently found in magazines and newspapers.



Most weeks bring new challenges to stimulate our brains ~ some of these may appear simple and inevitably there is an 'Einstein' in the group who will solve the problem quickly. However, there is often much discussion and laughter as the rest of us fumble our way to the correct solution!

One puzzle that had us all perplexed for quite some time is this:-  
*At the local hardware store, Jim learned that 1 would cost him \$2.00, 12 would cost \$4.00 and the price of 144 was \$6.00. What was Jim buying?*  
 IF you can work it out,---- IF you CAN'T work it out, or -----IF you would like to know the answer then maybe Mind Games has something to offer you!!.....

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

I recently attended a Victorian U3A Network meeting at which some interesting activities being undertaken by other U3A groups were reported. Perhaps they will inspire us to expand our imagination as to what we could do around our community.

One group runs a Community Mentoring program in conjunction with the local schools. Volunteer members spend an hour or two each week with a student – sometimes two or three students – who are 'falling through the cracks'. These kids are chosen by the school and typically are judged to be anti-social, inattentive, and have poor communication skills. Their attendance is optional so the school presents the program as a privilege and opportunity. Parental approval and police checks are required. The mentor's task is to listen; let the kids say what their problems are, why school is difficult and so on; and to show them someone is interested in them. The mentor and student obviously must agree about what is done with information disclosed, if anything. The program is reported to be very successful and is supported financially by NAB who make money available to the schools.

Another group also works with their local schools by running a creative writing competition, in this case for year 7 students. The U3A provides the judges and is sponsored by local business. The most recent subject was to write a radio play with the winning entry to be performed on local radio.

For those familiar with the online world there are also interesting developments. U3A Online provides material which can be accessed online or downloaded but is not interactive. There are now some local trials which will allow easy interaction with the tutor and other participants. Subjects in the trials are Democracy and Leadership and Economic Philosophy.

I should also report that one of our sources of funding, a grant from ACFI to the Victorian network to whom we in turn can apply, has been cut from \$250,000 to \$150,000. We will advise as soon as possible if this is likely to affect us significantly.

In the meantime enjoy your activities and I look forward to seeing you at the Open Day on 14 December.

*Doug Rutherford*

## MEMBERSHIP 2012

In December membership is due for renewal. This can be done on Open Day, 14th December from 1.00-3.30 pm or posted to PO Box 322 Hurstbridge 3099.

Renewals will also be accepted at the office in January, in the week before classes start.

Office Opening Times:

Tuesday 31/1/2012 10am-1.00pm

Thursday 2/2/2012 12.00-3.00pm

At the last committee meeting it was unanimously decided to increase our membership fee to \$40 per annum.

It is important for the office to have accurate records, particularly up to date phone numbers and email addresses. Each member is required to fill out a membership form before paying fees and receiving a receipt. A membership form is included with this newsletter and can be completed to bring for membership renewal on Open Day. Membership cards will be issued in the first week of term next year.

## COMMITTEE MEMBERS AND ROLES

**President:** Doug Rutherford  
**Vice President:** John O'Connor  
**Secretary/Almoner:** Laraine Hussey  
**Treasurer:** Robert Scopes  
**Assistant Secretary:** Betty Clark/Anne Kane

**Public Officer:** Robert Scopes  
**Course Coordinator:** Eve Scopes  
**Catering:** Colleen Gardner  
**Publicity:** Valerie Osborne, Chris Durie,  
Margaret Naughton

**Enrolment Coordinator:** Robert Scopes  
**Enrolment Assistant:** Shirley Tunaley  
**Newsletter:** Anne Kane (Coordinator)  
Bonita Dowell  
**Network Representative:** Doug Rutherford  
**Website:** Brian McLean

**Grants/Fund Raising:** Shared among  
Committee Members  
**Council Representative:** Shared among  
Committee Members

## ENROLMENTS FOR TERM 1 2012

*Enrolments for courses to be offered in 2012 will be taken on Open Day.*

**COURSES FOR NEXT YEAR:** *We are hoping to offer some new courses next year depending on availability of tutors and interest from members. We have decided that unless there are at least 6 people enrolled classes are not viable, so we do encourage you to enrol on 14th December at the Community Centre, so that we and the prospective tutors know how they stand.*

**COURSES THAT WILL NOT CONTINUE IN 2012 ARE:**

Issues in Science and Technology, Craft, Bowls and Be A Tourist In Our Town

**POSSIBLE NEW CLASSES ARE :**

Living Sustainably, Your Health, Economics, Computers and  
Literary Essays, instead of Short Story

**CONTINUING CLASSES ARE:**

Recorder, Mind Games, Music Appreciation, Spanish for Fun, Knowledge and Traditions of Arnhem Land, Cosmic Timeline, Discovering the District, Contract Bridge, Art, Current Affairs, French.

There will be a full program available on Open Day. If you cannot attend and wish to enrol/ re-enrol, or if you have any enquiries about courses, please ring Eve on 9718 2459.

## OPEN DAY

Wednesday, 14th December 1.00pm—3.30 pm

All U3A Nillumbik members and interested people from the community are invited to our last Open Day for 2011. Membership renewals will be accepted and enrolments for courses in 2012 can be made. Don't forget to bring a completed membership form (included with this newsletter) and your \$40 fee. There will be :

- a slide show to recall memorable people and moments since our U3A began
- a performance from the recorder group
- an art display
- some examples of mind games for your grey matter
- an opportunity to meet with Geoff Gill who is interested in finding out what computer courses he could offer next year

Following this we will be able to enjoy a delicious afternoon tea and socialise, enjoying the company and ideas of our fellow members.

## LOOKING AHEAD TO 2012

Do you have any **suggestions** for ways we can improve our organisation? The committee would love to hear about your suggestions and comments. Please record them and place them in the suggestion box near the entrance to the hexagonal room on Open Day.

One of our goals is to **increase our membership** to 150 members. This will help to balance our budget, but also increase the variety of courses on offer.

With this in mind we need some members with good ideas for letting the community know we exist and what we offer. Even more importantly we need tutors who are willing to share their talents, enthusiasms and knowledge. It is not

necessary to be available for a whole year. Perhaps there are members who could volunteer to tutor for a term or even less. We all have something to share from our years in the university of life! Give Eve Scopes, our Course Co-ordinator, a ring on 9718 2459 if you have a course you would like to offer.



## GETTING TO KNOW OUR VOLUNTEERS *with our Roving Reporter, Bonita Dowell*

### BRIAN MCLEAN TALKS TO US ABOUT HIS MOST INTERESTING LIFE

Brian McLean joined U3A during its first year. He has participated in various courses, and this year developed a new course "History through Music", which he hopes to continue in 2012. He is also a valued and active member of the U3A committee.

Brian lived in Thornbury until he married. He met his wife Wilma, when he was a young lad of 15. They have three children and five grandchildren.

He holds a Melbourne University Diploma of Physical Education, and Trained Secondary Teacher Certificate. As a part time, mature aged student and whilst teaching at Trinity Grammar, Brian gained a BA in History and Politics from La Trobe University – a subject that continues to fascinate and frustrate him. He commenced his teaching career at Moreland High School and over time moved into teaching humanities subjects. He was a year level coordinator for pastoral care in senior school. He finished his teaching career as head of senior school at Eltham College.

Teaching Phys. Ed appears to have been a result of Brian being "sport-mad" whilst growing up. Sport, however, was curtailed at 18 because of a serious shoulder injury, although he continued to play golf and sail. Brian has recently taken up cycling with the Banyule BUG, and in 2010 enjoyed a trip to Vietnam to cycle the Ho Chi Minh trail.



Since retiring Brian has become interested in genealogy, which started as an investigation surrounding the death of his grandfather in WW1. Disappointment was felt as there was no First Fleet Ancestry but jubilation followed, as a convict was discovered a little later! His bloodline is English, Irish, Scottish, Norwegian, and German.

Travel is a passion, and commenced in 1988 with a trip to China with the Eltham College Concert Band. Brian was responsible for the logistics and videotaping of the trip. China affected him so profoundly that he took his whole family back the following year, so they too could experience the culture. Wilma and Brian have travelled extensively, but Norway and Germany are still waiting. They have also completed a grey nomads trip around Australia in a campervan, exploring among other things, the places first settled by their ancestors.

*Thank you Brian for sharing your time and talents so generously.*

## THANK YOU—WE WOULD BE NOTHING WITHOUT YOU!



Many members speak about how much they value what our U3A offers them—interesting courses, new skills and knowledge and most importantly social interaction. While the committee, the tutors and all our volunteers

offer their time and expertise very willingly, it is important to acknowledge their contribution. Thanks to all those who have offered their time and talents so generously this year. We can only continue to grow and thrive when our members are prepared to volunteer in any way they can. Please indicate on the membership form if you have a contribution to make so that 2012 can be another great year for us all.



**A THOUSAND THANKS TO ALL WHO HAVE VOLUNTEERED IN 2011**



## A MEMORABLE, SHATTERING CHRISTMAS DAY

The table was set. The extended family, including our two very elderly Aunts from the nursing home had all arrived; presents were given and received with "oohs and ahhs". Drinks and nibbles were distributed and the usual family discussions started.

The kitchen was abuzz with the preparation and smells of the Christmas fare. The traditional Turkey was looking great in the oven, as were all the vegies that would accompany it.

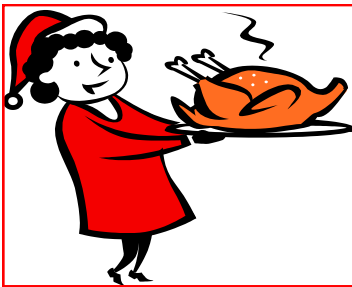
Soon entrée had been produced, devoured and enjoyed. It was time to return to the kitchen to remove the "big bird" from the oven.

Great: looked fantastic; out of the oven; shut the door.

Loud CRACKING sound; FRACTURING of oven glass;  
myriads of fragments falling like crystals onto the slate floor.  
Laugh or cry?

Turkey still looking magnificent on the bench,  
vegies unharmed in the oven.

Leave the carpet of sparkling crystals on the floor;  
serve and enjoy Christmas dinner together while hot.



**Yes we did!**

Wilma McLean.

## SOME COSMIC CHRISTMAS CONSIDERATIONS

During 2011, our Astronomy and Cosmology group have met on Tuesday afternoons to view selected awesome cosmic DVD's (far out, what a hoot, to quote the grandkids), and to discuss our unfolding comprehension of the vastness of space, the immensity of time, our cosmic origins, the Galaxy and stars, our Solar System, our good planet Earth and our sustainable stewardship of its resources.

We handfuls of animated stardust tend to agree with Monty Python: we hope that there's intelligent life somewhere out in space, 'cause there's [\\*#@%!!-all](#) down here on Earth. We've considered life's origins, its 4 billion years of evolution to produce the exceedingly complex 3-pound 3-pint lump of matter between our ears, and our use of it; as Bill Bryson asks, are we simultaneously the living Universe's supreme achievement and its worst nightmare?

Coolness over climate warming, when the course convenor held forth on this hot-button issue, served him right. We also considered local cosmic wonders: Scorpius and its supergiant star Antares in winter skies, springtime's Andromeda Galaxy and Square of Pegasus, summertime's SOAP (Sirius-Orion-Aldebaran-Pleiades), our superb national constellation Crux Australis and its Emu Dreaming, and our silvery moon's gentle beaming as it stabilises our orbit and climate.

Meanwhile, we wish all our U3A friends a happy Christmas and New Year. May we cherish our cosmic instant and each other, trusting that our descendants will find another Goldilocks world (not too hot, not too cold, just right), when all the seas gang dry, my love, and the rocks melt wi' the sun (Robbie Burns' prescient quote), as our star becomes a swollen red giant in 5 billion years or so - provided we haven't first ruined this one?

With best wishes for 2012 and our far future, John O'Connor.



## CLASS CHIT CHAT

Our USA Recorder Group has been running for 2 years now, and we are playing in four parts amid much hilarity, not to mention a fair sprinkling of mistakes. Everyone feels that she plays much better at home, so it was facetiously suggested that we all stay home and play individually next year. As that would rather defeat the purpose we'll press on with our scales, arpeggios and pieces together and enjoy ourselves in the process. We'd welcome new players with some experience and sight reading expertise, and if we had enough interest there is the possibility of a beginners' group as well. Happy Christmas to all from the Recorder Group.



### CONTRACT BRIDGE

Not only will Contract Bridge be offered again next year, but an additional group may be formed to teach members who have

no experience.

If you would like to learn how to play Bridge this is your chance. Register your interest on Open Day and if there are enough starters a group will be created.

### COMPUTER CLASSES

As we have a talented person ready to take a computer class in 2012 we will be asking any interested members to indicate what courses would interest them on Open Day. This is a great chance to improve your computer skills, so go to the Enrolment area and register your needs and interests .



## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

### TERM DATES FOR 2012

- |        |  |
|--------|--|
| Term 1 | 6th February—30th March<br>Good Friday — 6th April |
| Term 2 | 16th April—29th June                               |
| Term 3 | 16th July—21st September                           |
| Term 4 | 8th October—14th December                          |

OPEN DAYS are held on the last Wednesday of each term

COMMITTEE MEETINGS are held on third Thursday of each month at 4.00pm.

First Committee meeting for 2012 is 2nd February

Classes are not held on Public Holidays or on Total Fire Ban days.

VERY BEST WISHES FOR A JOYOUS AND PEACEFUL CHRISTMAS TO OUR READERS. THANKS TO ALL THE MEMBERS WHO HAVE CONTRIBUTED TO AND SUPPORTED THE PRODUCTION AND DISTRIBUTION OF OUR NEWSLETTER.