

U3A FLINDERS NEWSLETTER – NOVEMBER 2019



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Message from our President



Greetings Everyone,

It is hard to believe that we are almost at the end of another year and are now looking forward to signing up for the first Programme of 2020. The last few weeks have been a particularly sad time for me as President, as I have written five letters of condolence to families who have said goodbye to dear ones. U3A has lost five much respected, long serving members in Leon Milford, Neville Hatwell, Betty Moore, Jeanie Bilkens and Ben Brinkman. Our thoughts are with all of their families.

As I reported in my last message to you, the Committee and I have been working hard to cover all the conditions we signed up to in our Agreements with Flinders University. The replacement computer and associated software have been purchased and we received excellent assistance from the Uni's technical staff in setting up the equipment and transferring data. The Office Volunteers have got to grips with the new electronic car parking arrangements at the Uni. Revised Health & Safety instructions for our Office Volunteers have been completed and will be instituted in the New Year. As a condition of our new contractual agreements with Flinders Uni, we have also had to produce a new logo for U3A Flinders (see above), to exclude any elements of the Uni's official logo from the artwork. This has now been done and the design accepted by the Flinders Uni Design Team, who provided us with the version of their own logo to be used in conjunction with ours. This process has also entailed us redesigning our forms, brochures and other documents, although they have permitted us to use up our old stocks until they run out.

Once again, we have enjoyed our usual stimulating and enjoyable lectures over the last few months. Thank you from all of us to Max, the Programme Planners, and the MC's and Assistants. We will be looking for some new faces to come forward at the AGM in 2020, to help ensure that this wonderful organisation continues to deliver "learning with friendship" to all members. In the meantime, if you would like to find out a bit more about joining the Committee, do feel free to have a chat with me or any committee member before the AGM.

Finally, Max and I would like to say a big thank you to all of our friends at U3A who have shown such love and support on hearing of Max's diagnosis of cancer recently. We are now in the world of treatments, procedures and heavy-duty drugs we can't pronounce the names of. Interestingly, we now know that the Mitcham Prostate Cancer Support Group is run by a couple of our very own U3A members - Jeff and Theban Roberts. Small world. We will travel ever more hopefully knowing we have such a strong band of support behind us.

Season's Greetings to you all, and may we have a healthy, peaceful 2020 (I am an optimist!). ♦

Liz Gordon
President

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Pets

by *Sue Sedivey* (Wednesday Scribblers)

(The Group was given the task of writing a complete, self-contained story of exactly 100 words).

I was never allowed a pet when I was growing up. Our large family moved around a lot before finally settling into a semi-detached grey brick Housing Trust house in Mitchell Park. My friends had dogs and cats, birds, fish and some even had horses, but I didn't and so I never understood about pets. I didn't know about dogs and how to relate to them and I was ignorant of many things. I thought all cats were female and all dogs were male. It sounds silly now but it was how I made sense of things I didn't understand. ♦

What U3A means to me

by *John Bartlett*



In The Grampians, Vic
2016

U3A has a motto which is printed on our letterhead and Newsletter, and it reads: "LEARNING WITH FRIENDSHIP", and that is exactly how I feel about U3A.

Following the death of my wife in May 2010, it was quickly apparent that I needed something new in my life, and as has been said so many times by so many people "Life must move on".

A friend who is a member urged me to go with her to U3A some time in 2011 and I took to it immediately. U3A is now part of my life along with walking, reading, art, music and the theatre.

So, what does U3A mean to me?

- It means meeting lots of guest speakers who talk to us on a very wide range of subjects resulting in my mind being broadened and my knowledge extended.
- It means making a lot of new friends, usually with common interests and similar levels of education.
- It means visiting many interesting and diverse places around Adelaide which again have led to the broadening of my knowledge and learning about the workings of such places.
- It means that I have followed my instincts by getting involved in the running of U3A. My recent five years as President were enjoyable, constructive and generally very satisfying.
- It means that I probably will continue to prepare presentations for our group on subjects that I hope will be of interest to our members.

So far, I have prepared six presentations, and another one is due for presentation in November.

After all, the very preparation of them is often a learning experience in itself.

Members should remember that anyone wanting to put a presentation together can find the necessary help from within our group, as I did originally.

Having said all of the above, I would like to make a plea to members to come forward and take a role in the running of our excellent organisation we know as UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE FLINDERS - INC.

After all, new blood is needed in running U3A, and if members don't come forward and help with its running, it will collapse, and that would be tragic. ♦

Don't think, just do it!

We recommend that all members should write the name and telephone number of a suitable emergency contact on the reverse of their membership badges. You know it makes sense. ♦

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U3A Book Group 2019

by Judy Milford

This small group of avid readers meets monthly, each member who wishes taking a turn at selecting a book. The books chosen have been historical novels, *Wolf Hall*, *The Leopard*, *Poum and Alexandre*, Australian Classic, *Jasper Jones*, Comedy, *The Hundred Year Old Man Who Climbed Out of the Window and Disappeared*, Fiction, *The Slap*, *My Brilliant Career* and non-fiction, *Silent Invasion*. True Story, *Lion* by Saroo Brierly, later made into a movie, warranted two sessions. As in the past, books that members didn't like generated much discussion, leading to thoughts that perhaps readers in our age group are not always the target audience! All agree on the value and enjoyment in trying new authors as well as sharing old ones. New members are always welcome to join us.

Several members have approached me to say that they would be interested in joining the Book Group, but that Fridays tend to clash with other activities. If this is the case, it might well be possible for the Book Group to meet on another day (to be agreed by mutual consent). If you wish to explore this idea, please let me, Judy, know on 04088 42479. ♦

U3A Flinders - Walking Group 2019

by Judy Milford and Nola Byass



Janet Newman leading this group

Again, this year members have suggested and volunteered to lead walks, resulting in visits to a variety of interesting locations.

We were grateful that Nola completed the majority of the organisation while Judy was unavailable.

A couple of the walks were cancelled due to hot weather (32c or above) but we managed “walking in the rain” at Warriparinga Wetlands and Waite Arboretum. We strolled along our beautiful beaches as far as Kingston and admired the historic mansions at Glenelg. Further

inland we enjoyed the history of Unley, Mitcham and Centennial Park Cemetery and followed the Mike Turtur Bikeway at Forestville, Morphettville and Glengowrie. We walked beside the Sturt Creek, Torrens River, Brownhill Creek and the Oaklands Wetlands and enjoyed a stroll in the South Parklands and around West Lakes. Hills walking took us to Coromandel Valley, Flagstaff Hill and Blackwood. Being involved in this group is a wonderful opportunity to get to know fellow members, both during the walk and during the “all important” coffee break. New walkers are always welcome.

Coordinators: Judy and Nola. ♦

In Memoriam

We are sad to announce the following deaths since our previous Newsletter:

Neville Hatwell OAM (a long-time member, and U3A's Returning Officer)

Harry Cresswell (a long time member, and husband of the late Phyllis)

Jeanie Bilkens (a long time member)

Elizabeth (Betty) Moore (a long time member)

Ben Brinkman (a Committee Member for a short period, and husband of Jacqui)

Our thoughts are with their families.

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Visiting pristine Grytviken, South Georgia

by Mary Schumacher

This was the most memorable experiences of my travelling life! I circumnavigated South America on the Holland America ship, *ms Prinsendam*, between January and March 2019, including the Antarctic Peninsula and Sub Antarctic islands of South Georgia and the Falklands.

South Georgia is visited extremely rarely by cruise ships, and there is a general limit of 500 people permitted at any time. We had over 600 passengers, and only obtained permission to call at this very special place after negotiations taking many months. The only people living at Grytviken are a small number of scientists at a research station nearby.

There were some strict conditions on our visit. The cruise line also had to make a considerable payment to the authorities on behalf of every person on board the ship – £90 for each person.



King penguins standing in a stream, with some fur seals

A number of people working on the ship were given training to become ‘human traffic cones,’ controlling the flow of passengers along pathways around the port of Grytviken, that is a disused whaling station from the early 20th century. They were directed to give priority to the animals at all times, and to ensure that no one disrupted the natural behavior of the animals - King penguins, fur seals and elephant seals. All passengers who wished to go ashore on South Georgia had to attend a compulsory briefing session. We viewed a video that highlighted the importance of not endangering or stressing the wildlife, on biosecurity, and our health and safety. We were warned not to touch any of the animals, and to back off if any of them came too

close to us, as a bite, even from a penguin can be ‘very nasty.’

Our call on Grytviken was on a clear and cool day in early February with a temperature of 8°C, one of only three such good days during the summer of 2018/9.

Everyone was to keep comparatively quiet, not to place any item, such as a bag or jacket, on the ground at any time, not to drop litter of any kind, and obey all directions of the ‘human traffic cones.’

The day before going ashore everyone had all items of clothing inspected to make sure that every item of outer clothing was free of dirt or other contaminants, seeds, or pests of any kind. Hemlines, pockets and all velcro fastenings were of particular interest to these inspectors. The soles of our shoes were scrubbed also. On leaving the ship we had to walk through a special disinfecting foot bath and shoes were inspected once more before we returned to the ship.

We were organized into small groups, with each boatload being allowed a limit of 2 hours ashore, so that the animals were not overwhelmed by a mass invasion of humans.

Once ashore we were instructed to keep to the pathways, except where we were told to deviate, for instance when an enormous elephant seal flopped down right across one grassed pathway! We were given a ‘Stop’ signal to allow young sea lions to cross in front of us too.

Many of us were approached by individual fur seals. When this happened, we were told to stand still and quiet, or back away if necessary, until the animal went away. It was a bit disconcerting when a young animal came up to me – but he moved away after a couple of minutes.

As we walked around the area, we saw many moulting King penguins, mostly standing motionless in a small shallow stream that came down from the mountaintop (see Photograph). The process of moulting takes 2-3 weeks and is very energy-depleting. We were given severe warnings about the danger to the wellbeing – even the life – of penguins if they are frightened into moving while losing their feathers and growing new ones.

As indicated, this was a precious experience, and one that I’ll never forget! ♦