



NEWSLETTER - TERM 3, 2024

A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Welcome all to our Term 3 Newsletter. As I write/type these notes, the sun is shining brightly outside. Blue skies are so welcome in winter, even if it's really cold in terms of temperature. I know that even though the very cold weather keeps some members at home on occasion, and others must stay at home because they are unwell or unable to travel, we are so fortunate that we can still join a range of U3A Deepdene sessions via Zoom. This option was not available when many members joined and was really prompted by the dreadful COVID epidemic. I guess I could be charged with 'looking for silver linings' but I really do find the changes in our technology availability and use in a couple of years is quite amazing.



Susie White

Many of our members who were in Melbourne during the last term vacation enjoyed a wide range of fascinating activities. I never cease to be amazed at the variety of visits, trips and special places we have in and around Melbourne, which we can enjoy if someone takes the time and effort to plan and arrange for us. In this case, Anne Kemp was the person who did that for us all, and we thank her for arranging such an enjoyable program. I was able to participate in two events which were highlights of my 2024 calendar.

Whenever I need to provide U3A Deepdene statistics in applications for a grant, for example, I become even more aware of our ratio of female to male members. Currently, of over 1400 members we have two-thirds female (1099) to one third male (329). Some of our Committee members are very keen to explore this issue further and will welcome ideas and suggestions about increasing male participation. An email sent to our secretary, Helen Christie, at deepdeneu3asecretary@gmail.com will be very welcome.

Recently, someone commented to me that they did not realise that there were other U3As around. In fact, I understand that there are 104 separate U3A organisations in Victoria alone, let alone across Australia. Many of these are smaller in terms of member numbers, especially in various country areas. Individual U3A organisations join U3A Network Victoria. The Network represents Victorian U3As on relevant committees and convenes regional meetings of member U3As. On October 3 – 5 the Network is convening a Statewide Conference in Melbourne. Information about the Conference is available on their website: <https://u3avictoria.org.au/>

Additionally, some of our more artistic members may like to enter a competition entitled *Art Against Ageism* which the Network is promoting. The competition aims to show us the beauty, diverse capabilities and mindsets of senior people through their artwork. Entries for this competition are required by 8 September, 2024. It would be fabulous if some of our talented members were represented in the exhibition.

It has been wonderful to see and chat to so many of our members at our recent Wednesday Specials. We are very fortunate to have such a great space to hold these events – our thanks as always, to the City of Boroondara Council for enabling such occasions.

My best wishes to all members for the remainder of Term 3 and the following vacation.

Susie White

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COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT, 2024



Left to right, back row: Simon Harris, Trevor Rosen, Philip Russell, Judy Still, Jenny Cash
Front row: Paula Grundy, Helen Christie, Leonie Kuhrt, Susie White
Inset, top to bottom: Lois Heycox, Trish Lele, Fiona Malcolm

MEET LEONIE KUHRT, WHO HAS RECENTLY RETURNED FROM OUTBACK AUSTRALIA

I graduated as a Manufacturing Engineer and had a fabulously diverse career with Kodak over 26 years, at what was a huge facility of 21 buildings in Coburg.

Most of my work has really been process improvement – finding better, simpler ways to do things. I've worked as a Project and Industrial Engineer, front line supervisor for many manufacturing sub-businesses within Kodak: Asset Manager, Supply Chain Manager and in Human Resources. As Kodak shrank, it became a difficult and challenging time. Much of my work became shutting down parts of the business around the country, selling off equipment and training people overseas who were taking on my team's jobs (and mine).



After Kodak, I then spent ten years working for a large Australian company, and it was a wonderful change to have all my efforts helping Australians.

I love camping, bushwalking, travelling (especially off-road); and generally being away in the bush somewhere peaceful with lovely scenery.

I joined U3A Deepdene in 2022, after I had limited movement due to an injury. The Zoom Travel meetings on Fridays helped keep me sane during this time. I'm amazed at the range of topics on the schedule and I'm hoping to help where I can, to enable the smooth running of U3A Deepdene.

DAVID ASTLE VISITS U3A DEEPDENE

A very different News and Views session was held at the Balwyn Park Centre to mark the end of Term 2.

Over 100 members of U3A Deepdene attended an in-person event to enjoy David Astle's presentation, 'Fun with words and thinking outside the square: how lateral thinking can help solve cryptic crosswords'.



David is a master wordsmith, well known as the legendary DA, creator of cryptic crosswords in *The Age* and *The Sydney Morning Herald*. He is also well known as the 'dictionary man' on television quiz programs, and the weeknight presenter on ABC 774 Melbourne.

Our goal was to learn how to solve cryptic crossword puzzles. With well over half of the participants never having tried a cryptic crossword, David had a challenge. With pencils poised we began an interactive session that was filled with much laughter as David entertained us with anecdotes, jokes and puns. We worked through a mini DA cryptic crossword (below) consisting of seven clues. Some lucky people received copies of David's books for their spot-on cryptic crossword mindset answers!

A cryptic crossword is not for a literal person, David reminded us. Clues are coded stories. Uhm! Some of us, as literal people, felt a sense of trepidation.

Clue 4 down caught my eye: *note cheese ingredient on the rise (6 letters)*. This clue felt like a piece of barbed wire waiting to snag fellow literal thinkers. What could the words 'on the rise' mean? I was perplexed until David advised it was wordplay to indicate that the letters for the answer were to be written so that it reads from bottom to top. By the way the cheese ingredient was rennet, when reversed it reads as tenner.



David's top tips for solving cryptic crosswords were:

- The key thing is to think laterally not literally.
- Recognising that every word in a clue is important and accounts for something.
- Start with the clue that has the shortest number of words as that is likely to be the easiest one.
- Know that a cryptic clue has two parts – an indicator or type of clue and a definition.
- Identify the cryptic clue type whether it be anagram; charades; containers; double meanings; hidden; homophones; reversals; puns; manipulations and deletions; codes and rebuses and spoonerisms; and literal clues. For an added note of confusion variations of all twelve of the clue types result in the hybrid clue!
- The perfect cryptic clue, according to David, 'melds a cryptic clue's two parts, making wordplay serve literally as the definition'.
- Start with easier cryptic crossword puzzles. If you are sharpening your pencils for *The Age* puzzles don't start with Friday's DA puzzles as they are not for the faint-hearted. Instead, try the RK puzzles which are friendly to beginners, or crosswords by RM on Mondays. Perhaps you could be like NS (Nancy) who at 97 is still setting crosswords once a month for *The Age*.
- Best of all – ask a friend for help, look at the answers to the crossword when they are available and untangle them, read the Cryptic Crossword Newsletter in the online edition of *The Age* or join the U3A Deepdene Cryptic Crossword Group!

David's love of and passion for the English language were clearly evident. We learnt that as a young boy he loved riddles. He loved the word play and subversion. He sees crosswords as riddles for grown ups. Things gelled for David when as a thirteen-year-old student, a relief teacher asked everyone to make a crossword complete with clues from scratch during a lesson. David was the only one to complete the task and the teacher, impressed with his efforts, roneoed copies to give to other students. His career as a creator of crosswords had begun.

For many of us David unlocked the mysteries of cryptic crosswords – not all of the mysteries have been revealed of course, but the journey has begun. There will be some very satisfying time spent solving some or all of the clues of various cryptic crossword puzzles.

After the presentation we all enjoyed some delicious savouries and refreshments, and the opportunity to socialise. A special thank you to all those involved in organising this event. It was a great success.

Aliya Porter

U3A CRYPTIC CROSSWORDS GROUP

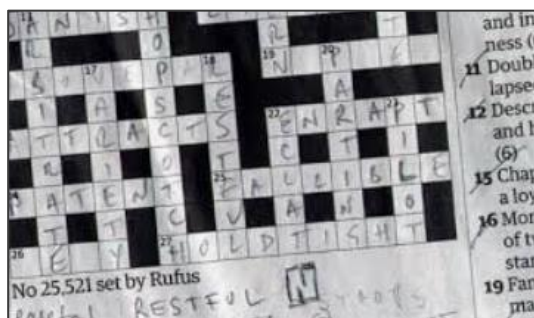
The recent presentation by David Astle certainly drew many followers and may perhaps have triggered an interest in exploring cryptic crosswords further. At the same time, you may also have thought ‘I can’t make head nor tail of cryptic crosswords’ or perhaps ‘I’ve been meaning to explore how to do cryptic crosswords for ages’. Well, one of the U3A activities on Friday mornings is Cryptic Crosswords. So, let me unravel what does happen in this mysterious Zoom meeting of 90 minutes each Friday!

The group itself numbers 11 registered members who bring a range of experience and insight to the activity. Some have been participating for 10 or more years, others are more recent converts. Some have days full of insight followed by days of furrowed brows and dead ends. The undoubted champions of the group are Isabelle and John Mentha who, despite their self-deprecating manner, bring an uncanny ability in code breaking which leaves us in awe.



Each week the group sets out to do two crosswords, one more forgiving than the other! Crosswords are drawn from a range of sources – *The Guardian* online with setters such as Rufus, Vulcan and the more prosaic Pasquale; the mighty(!) *Herald Sun* offers some interesting challenges also, along with the late Mungo McCallum who speaks to us from the after-life in a book that he compiled ten or more years ago. The Lovatts crossword enterprise and various online resources, such as the *Toronto Globe and Mail*, supplement our needs. Until now, however, the wily DA’s Friday Age crossword has had only an occasional appearance; it’s a work in progress for most of the members!

The Zoom experience, necessitated by lockdown, has proven to be an excellent way of conducting this



activity. No doubt meeting in the flesh, as it were, has its appeal, but there is a flexibility in ‘Zoomland’ that sits comfortably with the group. And finally, I think it can be said that, despite the puzzlement and occasional frustration, there has rarely been a ‘cross word’ expressed. So, if you’d like to join this group, the invitation is certainly extended. In reality, some familiarity and experience in doing Cryptic Crosswords would be advisable.

Graham O’Rourke

The views expressed by presenters in all our classes are their own views and not the official views of U3A Deepdene. Our aim is to encourage the exploration of ideas in a relatively free environment.

HEALTH AND SAFETY PROCEDURES

In late 2023, we reviewed U3A Deepdene's Health and Safety (H&S) policies and procedures. Various related documents were examined and made consistent with the updated policy to ensure consistency.

First aid kits at each of our four locations were all replaced with new kits with common expiry dates, thus making it easy to replace out-of-date products in the future.

We also changed the incident reporting procedure to help ensure that incidents (including near misses) are reported to the office and the H&S officer. Rather than recording an incident in a booklet held at each venue, recording is now done on the relevant incident reporting form (held at each venue and at the main office) and submitted to the office at Balwyn Park Centre. Follow-up procedures are in place to review the incident and to establish whether any changes need to occur in future to prevent or minimise similar potential incidents.

New Incident Reporting Procedures

Incidents and accidents (including near incidents or accidents) should be notified by phone to the U3A Deepdene Office (or a contact listed at the end of the Incident Report) as soon as practicable after its occurrence.

Copies of the Incident Report are located at each venue and at the Balwyn Park Centre office. Its contents include:

- Personal details of the person involved in and the person reporting the incident.
- Description of incident (including details of what happened and whether '000' was notified).
- Investigation (for office use only). This is to be completed by the H&S Officer (including incident causes, follow-up and any recommendation[s])
- List of emergency contacts

This Incident Report should be completed soon thereafter while details are still fresh in the minds of witnesses and those involved. The information contained in the report can be useful for decision-making on future incidents to help identify behavioural patterns and more significant systemic issues.

Many of you will be aware that we ran two H&S workshops for tutors, monitors and course coordinators. This was to highlight the changes outlined in this article and to explain their roles if an H&S incident were to occur during class time. In addition, we have also conducted a very well attended and presented defibrillator training session more recently. First aid training will be scheduled in the latter half of 2024.

I hope you all keep safe and remember the importance of completing the back of your name tags and wearing these at all times when at U3A venues or when attending related events. **This information will help others help you!**

Vince Giuca

Vince Giuca is the past Vice-President and Health and Safety Officer for U3A Deepdene. Due to on-going commitments, he has not renominated for either of these roles. He continues to coordinate the 'World Around Us' and 'Philosophy, Ethics and Religion' programs.

FIONA MALCOLM SHARES SOME FAVOURITE LIBRARIES

Strahov Monastery Library, Prague

The library of the Premonstratensian monastery at Strahov is one of the most valuable and best-preserved historical libraries – its collection consists of approximately 200,000 volumes. The oldest part of the library, the Baroque Theological Hall, was established between 1671 and 1674; the main Classicist vaults of the Philosophical Hall date from 1794 and are two storeys tall. Both halls are dominated by ceiling frescoes by Siard Nosecký and Anton Maulbertsch.



The National Baroque Library of the Czech Republic



The National Library of the Czech Republic, seated in the Baroque complex of Klementinum, is the central library of the country. Its book-stock preserves all books, manuscripts, and other publications issued in the Bohemian land since 1807. There are also much older documents, the oldest of which are Greek papyri from the 1st century. The Baroque library hall was built in 1722 and is decorated with amazing science and art themed frescoes. These include a picture of the Holy Roman Emperor Joseph II ('Josef II' in Czech), who provided

the library with collections confiscated from the cancelled monastic libraries, and a depiction of Peter Canisius, the founder of the Czech Jesuit province.

Admont Library, Vienna

The Admont Monastery Library is one of the great masterpieces of European Late Baroque. It combines various forms of art (architecture, frescoes, sculptures, writings, and printed works). The late Baroque Library Hall, completed in 1776 with a dome fresco, was commissioned by Abbot Matthäus Offner (reigned 1751-1779).



Planned since around 1764 and constructed in the subsequent years, it was designed by the Austrian Baroque architect Josef Hueber (1715-1787). Hueber was committed to the ideals of the Enlightenment: 'Like the mind, rooms should also be filled with light.' This colossal, tripartite space stands as the world's largest monastic library hall. The spirit of the Enlightenment is also evident in the seven ceiling frescoes created by the over 80-year-old artist Bartolomeo Altomonte (1694-1783) during the summer months of 1775 and 1776. These frescoes depict the stages of human knowledge, from thought and speech to the sciences, culminating in divine revelation in the central dome. The most valuable treasures are the more than 1,400 manuscripts (from the 8th century) and the 530 incunabula (early prints up to the year 1500).

Copenhagen - The black diamond



The Royal Danish Library on Søren Kierkegaards Plads, Copenhagen extends across three very different buildings. Facing the water is The Black Diamond (1999), designed by the Danish architect group Schmidt Hammer Lassen Architects, in the centre of which Preben Hansen's narrow extension (1968) stands, and at the back is H.J. Holm's historical library building from 1906, which is connected to the library garden. The building is shaped like a sculptural monolith. The front of The Black Diamond consists of 2,500 m² *Absolute Black* granite, mined in

Zimbabwe and cut and polished in northern Italy. Each stone weighs 75 kg.

Central Library Oodi, Helsinki

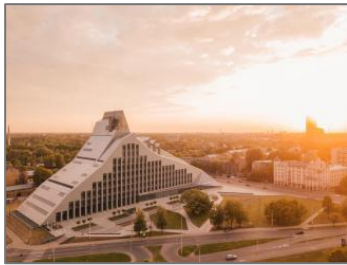


The public plaza in front of the building continues inside, merging with a catalogue of meeting and experience features. The ground floor is a robust, busy and frequently updated space suitable for quick visits and walk-throughs. The traditional, serene library atmosphere can be found on the top floor. This is a calm and contemplative area



floating above busy central Helsinki. It offers unobstructed, majestic views to the surrounding park and cityscape.

National Library of Latvia



Just a bridge span from Old Town, on the left bank of the Daugava, looms an extraordinary, culturally significant edifice, the Castle of Light - the new National Library. Opened in August of 2014, the striking edifice is the masterwork of the world-renowned Latvian-American architect Gunārs Birkerts.



National Library of France, Paris

Opened to the public in 1996, the François-Mitterrand site grew out of the need to enlarge and modernise the Bibliothèque Nationale, the national library. Architect Dominique Perrault's design embraces a minimalist aesthetic. Its tall, angular towers symbolise four open books. The reading rooms, which are accessible to the public, enclose a forest garden of more than a hectare.

Fiona Malcolm

Learn more about these beautiful libraries, and much more, on 7 February 2025, when Fiona will open Travel for Term 1 by presenting 'Bibliotourism - great bookshops and libraries of the world'. (Ed.)

MILITARY HISTORY

In April, U3A member Philip Russell presented to our Military History group some experiences of Australian Broadcasting Commission war correspondents during the first year of the Korean War in 1950-51.

The ABC team was put together in October 1950 to cover the progress of the 3rd Royal Australian Regiment and RAAF 77 Squadron. These forces had been deployed in September 1950 from their occupation duties in Japan to fight as part of the United Nations response to North Korea's invasion of South Korea. The correspondents – Des Telfer and Ted Russell (Philip's father) – were tasked with making frontline radio coverage of the Australian military in action in Korea. They had a tape recorder (high tech in 1950!) and sent recorded despatches for the ABC program News Review (broadcast on ABC Radio Mondays to Fridays at 7.45 pm) as well as cables for the ABC's Independent News Service. As war correspondents they travelled with the Australian forces in uniform but as 'non-combatants'. In theory, as accredited correspondents they were covered by the Geneva Convention. However, North Korea was not a signatory at the time.

The ABC team followed the United Nations forces, including the Australians, over late 1950 as the North Korean army was pushed out of the South and back north over the 38th parallel and the capital of North Korea, Pyong Yang, was captured. They also followed the UN retreat south down the Korean peninsula back to the 38th parallel in early 1951 when the (then) Red Chinese intervened in support of North Korea. The presentation provided background and context with an overview of the early cold war political situation leading up to the North's invasion of South Korea in June 1950, and the decision by the Menzies government to commit Australian forces to the United Nations response. It also provided an overview of the first year of the war and the main actions in which Australian forces participated. This included the Battle of Kapyong near Seoul in April 1951, after which the 3rd Royal Australian Regiment was awarded a Presidential Citation by US President Harry Truman.

The progress of the ABC Team in Korea was featured several times in the ABC Weekly magazine. In May 1951 the first correspondent team's 'tour of duty' ended and they returned to Australia and were replaced with new ABC personnel. Philip's presentation also included many photographs taken by Ted Russell with his own camera while in Korea over 1950-51. These recorded the correspondents' flight in a DC3 from Japan to Pusan in Korea escorted by a Mustang fighter, and their many road trips across Korea in a jeep to interview Australian soldiers and airmen, seeing American jet fighters and wrecked Soviet T-34 tanks along the way. The photographs also showed the ABC correspondents' billets in Seoul and Pyong Yang where they were billeted with other Australian newspaper correspondents from the *Sydney Morning Herald* and Melbourne *Sun News-Pictorial*.

The presentation included memorabilia such as Ted Russell's passport with the special Government permission needed to travel to Korea, Australian Military Forces Correspondent's Licence and Identification Card (which gave correspondents the same status as officers in the Australian Military Forces!), and US Press accreditation card and propaganda leaflets dropped by the UN over North Korean lines. One of the anecdotes Ted Russell passed on to Philip about his time in Korea was seeing American newsreel reporters using occupation money to encourage American soldiers to be filmed marching up and down a hill or firing their weapons, for this to be spliced into a newsreel as 'combat footage'.

Military History is a full year course that meets each Monday of term from 10 am to 12 noon at the Balwyn Park Centre. In term 3 the program will cover a wide range of topics including the plans for the invasion of Japan in 1945 (that did not proceed after the atomic bomb and Japan's surrender), the Confederacy's strategy and battles in 1862 in the American civil war, the international aspects of the American civil war, the Roman push into Gothia (modern day Germany) in 9 AD and aspects of ancient Roman battles.

Philip Russell



Left to right: John Buttle, Des Telfer and Ted Russell in a pre-departure publicity photo from ABC Archive; cutting from the ABC Weekly magazine; Ted Russell with the tape recorder and Des Telfer with the microphone interview a soldier, from the State Library of Victoria Collection

EXPLORING ARTWORKS

The delightful group who met in 2023 elected to continue this year with our stimulating and thoughtful sharing of ideas in sessions. We have new members this year and their contributions have been very valued.

Often in each session we viewed 2 artworks on a similar theme or big idea: the beach featured in summer with a painting from the 40s by Meeres and a more recent photograph, a part of a series on Bondi Beach, by Anne Zahalka.

We then moved to two street artists: Rone, the well-known Melbourne street artist, and Jean René's 'Giant' featuring a little boy in his wall mural in Havana, representing the wall Trump has planned to complete. The dark side of art was represented by Peter Booth works, which may have been influenced from his childhood memories of Sheffield.

We discussed the works of two indigenous artists, Vincent Namatjira and the painting 'Sexy and Dangerous' by Brook Andrew. In their own ways they both connected with their indigenous background.



Emotions and feelings were the subject of three works by Edvard Munch – the most famous being 'The Scream' (left); and the painting 'Anguish' by August Schenck (right). The Schenck painting is held at the NGV and was nominated the most popular painting in 1906 and 2011.



Abstract artworks were the focus in one session; a challenging conversation as abstract works have no beginning or end. The artworks included 'Untitled' by Robert MacPherson (1997), 'Thinking Head' by Samantha Malone, 'Blue Poles' painted by Jackson Pollock, and Emily Kame Kngwarreye's 'Big yam dreaming'. Jackson and Emily have been described as Abstract Expressionists and action painters.

I congratulate and thank each member of this gathering each month. We have all heard new and exciting ideas, some that challenge us, while others are the stimulus to inspire us to extend our knowledge further. A great appreciation of others' ideas and thoughts is all part of the community of enquiry process.

Thanks as always to Lois Heycox for her ongoing dedication to presenting the artworks on the big screen for our discussions.

Bev Steer

SCRABBLE

The first Scrabble group at U3A Deepdene was formed in 2011 by Jenny Cash and was held in Alston Halls.

The following year the co-ordinator was Barbara Johnson, who resided at the Concierge in North Balwyn. In exchange for the use of the facilities there, the residents were able to participate. One of the residents was the late Joan Montgomery, formerly principal of PLC. Covid, unfortunately, ended that arrangement.



Scrabble was re-introduced to the program in 2023 and is now held at Balwyn Park Centre. There are no competitions and no chocolate for the winners (as in Trivia)! As the program guide states, it is a friendly, light-hearted game for both experienced and inexperienced players.

You would be welcome to join us!

Anne Smith

STAINED GLASS IN THREE TOORAK CHURCHES

We braved one of Melbourne's coldest mornings on 22 May to meet up with our guide, Dr Bronwyn Hughes, at St John's Anglican Church (1860). Outside the sun shone through the autumn leaves; inside, we found ourselves in a jewel of a church. An extraordinary array of glowing stained glass adorned every window. From the High Victorian style of vivid red, gold and blue in the east window (Crucifixion), ranging through to modern windows with softer colours and more areas of clear glass. As Dr Hughes said, this small church has almost a who's who of stained glass artists and makers, initially from Britain, but then homegrown. The descendants of one artist and maker, John Ferguson, are still making stained glass in Melbourne today. In this church, each wooden pew also has a carved Australian motif of flowers, birds or animals.



Dr Hughes is the author of several books on stained glass. She explained the many techniques used over the last 170 years to create different effects. Some stained glass was painted and fired up to five times to achieve the artist's desired hues. Others began to apply a technique to the back of the glass, which gives a wonderful silvery or golden gleam to intricate patterns on clothing. Unusually, most of the windows are at eye level, so we were able to admire this detailed work up close. Over time there were no more spaces left for stained glass windows, so a new technique used opaque glass panels (opus sectile) on all the walls between windows.

A short stroll away is St Peter's Catholic Church, first established in 1912. It was rebuilt and has been recently refurbished with a beautiful modern stained glass entrance to the church. There are older biblical scenes in vivid colour within, but also more modern scenes of women in period costume and personal touches such as a small stagecoach and horses, perhaps requested by a wealthy family descended from pioneers. The west window is a quite spectacular modern creation of the Resurrection, with interesting Middle Eastern influence in dress style and darker faces on the subjects.

Our tour continued with a short walk to the Toorak Uniting Church (1876), where Dr Hughes has co-authored a small booklet on its stained glass, which we all received. This church has also been modernised with some fine standing panels of stained glass within the main body of the church. A post WW2 window has poignant resonance as it includes a depiction of a RAAF Sunderland aircraft flying over Norway in memory of a flying officer who died in 1944. A smaller window by the artist Christian Waller is of two ascending figures, referencing a tragic plane accident in 1935. It is in glorious shades of blue, with the heartfelt biblical inscription 'If I take the wings of the morning'.

Famous architects William Wardell, Ole Jorgensen and Joseph Reed designed each of these fine churches. The windows reflect the history of Victoria, as its foremost citizens became wealthy and families were able to donate stained glass honouring the departed and their beliefs, in the church of their choice. We are fortunate that these beautiful churches and windows have survived, to enrich our history. It seemed there wasn't an abstruse question which couldn't be cheerfully answered by Dr Hughes, including on church architecture and wood carving.

By this time we were looking forward to lunch in the old Manse at the charming Cafe 603 and art gallery. We enjoyed our tasty meals, co-ordinated the day before by our excellent leader, Lois Heycox. During lunch we learned that Dr Hughes (with friends) had managed to save some stained glass from demolition, and it is now safely installed in the Shrine. We celebrated this, and in all it was a great day out with fellow enthusiasts.

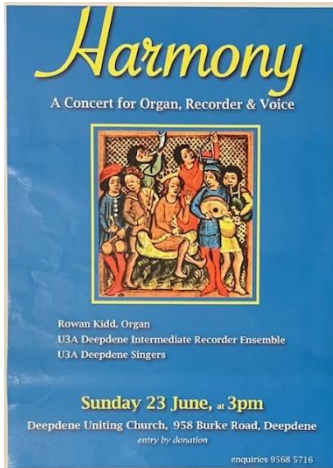
Denise Deerson



HARMONY CONCERT

A well-chosen name to display the talents of some of our musical members, both singers and recorder players. The concert, including items on the excellent organ, was held at Deepdene Uniting Church on Sunday 23 June, to an appreciative audience.

We were fortunate to have the guest organist, Rowan Kidd, bookending the afternoon with awesome renderings of works from Stanford and Howells. The U3A Deepdene Singers sang pleasingly, two brackets of four pieces each. Led by our dedicated leader, Stuart Shearman and accompanied by pianist, Helen Thomas, the songs ranged across traditional, musicals, folk and sacred. An extra joy was hearing a guest violinist, Mary Helen Woods, accompany them for one of the songs. The audience was invited to join in, with words provided, for 'I Vow To Thee My Country', to wind up the Choir's delightful performance.



As compere, Stuart Shearman introduced the Deepdene Intermediate Recorder Ensemble, paying tribute to their talented Leader and Tutor, Jacqui Harrison. Four pieces from the Baroque period were presented on instruments ranging from descant to alto, tenor and bass, both spritely and harmoniously.

Afternoon tea was welcomed by all, following the fine performances of the many hard-working musicians.

Our gratitude goes to all participants for providing a most pleasurable, mid-winter afternoon's entertainment.

Beth Light

UKRAINE

The World Around Us – how much support is there in Russia for the war against Ukraine? Petr Kuzmin, official representative of Alexey Navalny's team in Australia

Over 50 people attended a fascinating presentation by Petr Kuzmin on 14 June, who gave us an insight into the way polling is used in Russia to provide endorsement for Putin's invasion of Ukraine.



While Putin had published an essay arguing the Imperial Russian position that Ukraine had always been part of Russia and had no right to exist as a separate state, after his illegal invasion of Ukraine, his régime needed the population and the world to believe that the war was just. He claimed that it had been started by the West and that Russia was in existential danger.

Petr treated us to an enlightening and incisive description of political polling in an autocratic state. This was a complex topic that he was able to cover through some 30 data-rich slides, providing a close analysis of official and unofficial polling to illustrate the unreliability of official polling, but also how we can learn from them. To be credible, polling must be seen to be independent and have statistical validity with an appropriate sample and good response rate. However, in March 2022 laws were passed in Russia criminalising independent reporting on the war or protesting against it, with heavy prison sentences. Independent news outlets and polling organisations were shut down within 10 days of the

invasion. The remaining news outlets and polling groups are all sympathetic to the government because they are state approved.

As a result respondents tend to be wary of expressing their views to a pollster because there is little trust in the confidentiality of the poll and a fear that it might be used against them. There is therefore a low response rate as people refuse to participate. In some cases, participants begin by answering but hang up when the war is mentioned. While the main polling agencies do not report participation rates, one estimate by Russian Field is that only 5-9% of those called agree to participate. These are more likely to be supporters of the war or people who simply provide the answer they believe to be the government line. People understand that polling results are likely to have been manipulated. But despite an evident mistrust of government and polling, there is still a tendency to believe polls that report a very large majority supporting a particular position. Not having access to accurate participation rates, the view seems to be that while the polls may have been rigged, the size of the supporting vote is so overwhelming that even if it's been exaggerated it must still represent a majority view.

The official polls suggest that only 3% blame Russia for the invasion while over 60% blame NATO and the West. Interestingly, only 14% blame Ukraine. Support for the actions of Russian forces in Ukraine has remained at around 76% since the start of the war. Casualties, which are great, are not given coverage in the state media or the polling. Petr's careful analysis and cross-referencing of the different types of polls enabled him to demonstrate inconsistencies in the official polls, showing that support for the war is far less than indicated.

For example, war heroes standing in the recent federal elections were given 25% bonus points and there was also relentless glorification of the war. Yet in the primaries for Putin's own party war heroes lost badly in all 14 Moscow districts and the majority of the regional ones, including Crimea and Sebastopol. When people were asked what their neighbours thought about the war, support was much lower than in the polls asking for a personal opinion. When they were asked in September 2022 for the most significant event that had happened that month, 27% mentioned the partial mobilisation, 11% mentioned the attack on the Crimean bridge, and only 6% the annexation of the invaded provinces. When asked about the continuation of the war almost 50% want peace negotiations and fewer than 20% want it to continue. Most believe the war will not end soon.

So, through this analysis, Petr showed us that any news about the level of support for the war among ordinary Russians should be taken with a grain of salt.

Vin Massaro

THE USA PRESIDENCY

We speak the same language and eagerly lap up American culture but, in important ways, the USA still seems a very foreign country. This is particularly apparent at the moment when the world is watching the political turmoil around the presidential elections. In his recent talk Graham Pratt, a former Associate Professor of Business at RMIT and an experienced business consultant, explored and clarified for us the long, often bitter history, that helped produce a contest between an old narcissist facing many legal charges and an experienced politician who has trouble remembering his lines.



Australians are fortunate that our democratic constitution is a product of the end of the nineteenth century and has a clear mechanism for reform. The USA is governed by a constitution written in the eighteenth

century that is very hard to change. As Graham pointed out, it has been shaped by a colonial past of passionate ethnic and religious diversity, slavery, civil war, wars with strong indigenous populations, and a gun culture that has resulted in 120 guns of all kinds for every 100 people in the USA.

The Civil War lasted from 1861 to 1865. It is still by far the deadliest war in American history, costing between 620,000 and 750,000 military lives, about 2% of the population. The effects continue to resonate in the divisions between north and south, the long, bitter civil rights movements, political gerrymandering and intense states' rights feelings. These forces of course operate within the framework of an old constitution. The Founding Fathers, believing in separation of powers, focused on the court system and the legislature. The Presidency was an executive after-thought based on state based electoral colleges, not the majority vote. There are fifty states. About forty three are usually predictable.

Although post-Civil War reconstruction promised non-compulsory manhood suffrage, the organisation was left to the states. Despite the gains of the 1960 and 1970s civil rights movements gerrymandering of district boundaries, the location of polling stations, times of voting, registration requirements and postal voting difficulties still remain. Between 1980-2020 only about 52% to 62% of those eligible actually voted.

One big change in the Twentieth Century has been in the ideological position of the two big parties. In the 1860s the Republicans were anti-slavery and progressive in terms of industrial and social policy whereas the Democrats were the party of White Supremacy and agrarianism. Since the New Deal in the 1930s and the 1960s Civil Rights Movement, the Democratic Party had become 'left of centre' or 'progressive' and the Republicans 'conservative' and 'small government'. About fifty percent of electors in both parties still rate religion as very important when voting.

So how has this all led to Donald Trump? Graham pointed to a number of factors including distrust of the complexity and technocracy of Federal legislation and, during Obama's presidency, the rise of the Tea Party and divisions over health care. Even mass shootings like Sandy Hook did not sway voters from opposition to gun control. Despite his behaviour, Trump has appealed to conservative Evangelical Christians. Billboards in some states proclaim evolution is a fairytale for grown-ups, abortion is murder and call on God to bless Trump. Book banning has greatly increased. However, more important has been economic and demographic change. Non college educated white males, not just from the rust bucket states, see elites earning more while their own earnings decline and respond to Trump's claims to be an economic reformer, anti-elite, a supporter of traditional values and an opponent of migration. For them the Republican Party is a refuge for cultural nostalgia, individualism and 'America first', as it is for the 'alternate right', which pushes white nationalism, racism, anti-immigration, and homophobia. The depth of emotional division was highlighted by statistics on the growing hostility to marriage across party lines. Graham did not present a happy picture and he raised questions about whether Trump is a cause or a manifestation of crises in the American system. Is he a true 'conservative' (lower taxes, small government, rule of law, traditional attitudes) or a 'pragmatic populist'? His promised future program includes mass deportations, using the military for domestic crime control, tariffs, isolationism, sacking most of the public service and use of pardons for legal decisions against him and his supporters. Of course what Trump says is always subject to revision.

To save us slipping into pessimism Graham ended his wide-ranging, informative talk by pointing out that Allan Lichtman, who uses thirteen key indicators, and has correctly predicted the results of nine of the past ten presidential votes does not think Trump will win, but recent events add to the uncertainty. What will be the effect of the attempted assassination of Trump and the replacing of Biden, probably by Kamala Harris? Much depends on the few swing states and voter turn-out.

Kamoya Peterson

RUSSIA AND CHINA

On Friday, 21 June, well before 9:30am, approximately 50 keen Deepdene members were on Zoom awaiting another well-researched and clearly illustrated presentation by Gerry Engwerda. This topic was 'Russia/China - Partners or Rivals'.



Gerry Engwerda

Gerry outlined that although the war in Ukraine has brought Russia and China closer together against the West, many tensions and rivalries remain. Stalin had supported Chiang Kai-shek and China's more recent tensions with Taiwan have not been supported by Russia. In the 1670/80s, clashes over territory on the Chinese/Russian border favoured Russia, and, as recently as the 1960s, there have been border conflicts. Those eastern territories which Russia annexed contain valuable mineral deposits. To the south in Vietnam, China fears it will remain pro-Russia. China has border disputes with India while Russia supports India and each took separate sides in the Indo-Pakistan war of 1971.

There are differences in the two countries' economies. China's GDP is 10 times that of Russia and is the world leader in green technology. Its electric vehicle exports are burgeoning world-wide including to Russia. Russia does not have solar panel and electric vehicle industries. However, only 2.7% of China's trade is with Russia while China is Russia's primary foreign trade partner. Because the European Union attracts over 14% of China's exports, China does not want to damage its trade relations with the Union so it remains neutral and refrains from voting at UN level on the Ukraine conflict. 'By saying very little and blaming the West, Beijing expects a positive outcome for itself', Gerry suggested. However, China sends military aid to Russia but not direct weapons.

Russia has historical security with Central Asian states while China increasingly is undertaking economic development across the Stans. Since the war in Ukraine, more gas and oil from Central Asia is exported to China rather than to Europe. Because pipelines from Central Asia are sited through Ukraine, trade with Europe has declined from 60% to 8%. Russia is selling gas at bargain prices to China, which must import 72% of its energy needs. China is proving a tough negotiator, using the sanctions imposed on Russia to its advantage.

Although both modern states have communist foundations, the two countries now have very different political systems. China is ruled by the Communist Party of China while Russia is a 'personalised kleptocratic dictatorship that masquerades as a democracy'. In 1949, Russia was the big brother of China. Stalin's Marxist position had no time for Mao's peasant-led revolution and in 1956, when Premier Khrushchev commenced peaceful negotiations with the West, China saw it as a betrayal as did Russia when Kissinger and Nixon visited China in the late 1970s to form an anti-Russian coalition. After the Soviet Union collapsed in 1991, Russia sold surplus weaponry to China which China copied, demanding more advanced units. Suspicion increased when a Russian Arctic scientist was accused of passing state secrets to China who subsequently encroached into the Arctic. Russia is increasingly becoming a vassal state of China.

China and Russia are not formal allies. They are not committed to defend each other or consult over foreign policy. They coordinate policies in some areas and manage differences in others. China has not been expected to support Russia's annexation of Crimea. However, Russia is China's most significant partner in a hostile political environment. In Putin's recent visit to China, the joint statement contained the word 'cooperation' 130 times, but Xi was silent on 'support'.

Gerry sees a parallel prior to WW1: Germany was a rising world power while the Austrian empire was in decline. Germany desired to manage Austria to its own advantage. China grows more powerful as Russia has burnt its bridges with the West. Xi is now positioned centre-stage in media releases and Putin comes to him. It is interesting that Putin's two daughters are studying Mandarin.

Gerry follows world events very closely. His sessions always commence with a round-up of important current events which are riveting. There surely is an abundance of information at each of Gerry's presentations and he generously answers any questions. We appreciate his contributions to our U3A enormously.

Del Groves

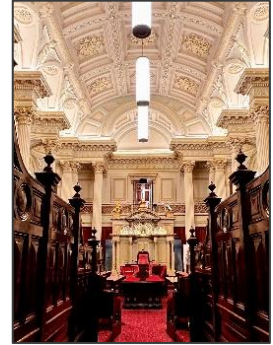
HEARTY JULY

This winter's vacation program was very well supported with close to 300 people participating in our different events.

Our program included two wonderful travel presentations - the first was by Terry O'Callaghan, about a self-guided tour of New Zealand's beautiful South Island which concluded with a walk along the Abel Tasman Track; and the second, the following week, of Christine Georgiou's 14-day walk along the Thames from its source to the sea. Thank you to both presenters for your enthusiasm, research and amazing photos.



For me, one of the highlights of the program was the visit to Parliament House where we learnt of the symbolism of 'Guarding the Mace' - yes it still happens, and appears on Parliamentary staff's rosters; the significance of green carpet in the Legislative Assembly (reflective of the Westminster House of Commons where many meetings took place on the green grass - the common of the city) and all the stunning features of the architecture, particularly in the ceiling area of the different chambers. Our tour guide, Joachim was so knowledgeable and clearly passionate as he explained so many aspects of our tour, and he'd only been in the job for a month or so!



This of course was followed by a delicious lunch served in the timber-panelled dining room where we enjoyed spectacular views of the surrounding gardens.

Beth Perrigo took our walkers on a fascinating walk around the 'Greens of Burwood' to hear the history and local adventures of the area. Celia Dynon led a wonderful tour of Heide in Bulleen where our members learnt of the history of John and Sunday Reed and their greatly renowned visitors and fellow artists of the day.

Another highlight was the Rennie Ellis exhibition held at The State Library - this was an excellent portrayal of life in the 1960s and '70s. The music was provided by our friends at the Wantirna Jazz Museum which our Vacation Program visited in mid 2023 and was just sensational, putting everyone in high reflective spirits. A few in our group meandered up the 6th floor to see the Dome which was so worthwhile - an amazing view of the library and its architectural design.



The trip to Bendigo was again well supported, and the Paris Exhibition was delightful. I was interested to learn how the government of the day wanted to ensure outdoor park areas for the benefit of both children and adults. Many lived in apartments which had little space and fresh air and these parks are still in use today. Despite the wet weather, some of us attended the historic Shamrock Hotel prior to a quick bus ride back to the station and home. Conversation flowed on the train and all in all it was a great day.



Our 'Coffee and a Chat' mornings were to capacity with more than 30 people attending, over the two mornings. The movie choice 'A Silence' was a thought-provoking, somewhat confrontational French film, which ensured animated conversation over a coffee at East and Co.



Our last event was a trip to Schramms Cottage in East Doncaster, which was really worthwhile, highlighting the challenges of early Lutheran settlers from Germany, utilising their farming and agricultural skills. They were determined, resourceful people. The woodwork, and the lace work they achieved was truly outstanding in a particularly cold and harsh environment.

The passion of our Tour Guide, Glenys McIntyre from the Doncaster-Templestowe Historical Society, was inspiring. This visit was suggested by Geoff Deason.

The next vacation program is underway, and I will need just two or three people to host a couple of pre-planned events - please send me an email/call me to discuss further (anne.kemp462@gmail.com, 0413 940 705). It's a great way to meet new friends and make discoveries together. If you have any ideas for outings or visits, please let me know.

Anne Kemp

Photos from top, left to right:
Parliament House - Queen's Hall, Upper House
State Library – stained glass window, view from the dome
Paris Exhibition – French fashion, beautiful menus
Schramm's Cottage

SCHRAMM'S COTTAGE MUSEUM COMPLEX

I had heard the name of Schramm's Cottage many times but knew nothing more than it was out somewhere near Doncaster. Our Vacation Program provided an opportunity to learn much more about the cottage itself and the whole museum complex.

At 10.00 am on a Friday in July, about twenty people gathered at the Cottage in Muriel Green Drive, Doncaster East, for a welcome from Geoff Broome, President, and Glenys McIntyre, Committee Member of the Doncaster-Templestowe Historical Society which is responsible for Schramm's Cottage. It is useful to note here that the Cottage is central to a whole Museum Complex comprising the Cottage with its displays and items from a schoolroom from the 1800s as well as a kitchen, dining room, study, parlour and bedroom of the era. In 1860, Schramm built a schoolhouse and taught Lutheran curriculum in German to the children. Some 16 years later, the school became State School No 197 and he was required to teach the government curriculum. Schramm then opened a school in his own cottage so that he could continue to offer his curriculum. In 1884, this was closed.

Apart from Schramm's Cottage Museum, the Complex comprises the Garden and Waldau Cemetery in which are plants and shrubs planted in 1862 from the Melbourne Royal Botanic Gardens, an historic Horse Trough, an Orchard Museum, Fingers Barn and Atkins Cottage, a (replica) of Australia's first electric tram which ran between Box Hill and Doncaster along Tram Road from 1889 – 1896 and a Sloyd Room which houses an educational innovation of the 1920s which was originally located at East Doncaster Primary School. The flyer notes that *the Swedish Sloyd program was used to develop skills, confidence and success in boys.*



**Dan Rabonovici reads
The Age in the Museum
Complex**



The Cemetery

Of particular note, and some sadness for me, was the Children's section of the cemetery where many gravestones were side by side for graves of babies and young children, often from one family, who had died just one or two years apart. The daffodils were all just beginning to flower on these graves which was a little heartening. I understand that members of Kevin Heinze Gardening assist with the gardening in the cemetery area and other parts of the Complex. It is certainly a splendid display on arrival.

Susie White

JONE GAILLARD PRESENTS

Jone Gaillard's History Classes (or should that be Herstory)

Tuesdays 10.30 - 12.00, on Zoom and at Balwyn Park

I have been doing the wonderful Jone's classes for nineteen terms and each term she has presented us with a new theme or era, all of which have been stimulating and exciting. We have 'fought' in long boats with the Vikings, investigated the empires of Ancient Greece, the Byzantine, the Moors, the Hapsburgs and the Ottomans. In addition we have explored Heroes, Women in History, Revolutions and the Renaissance. At present we are gaining insight into Books by Immortals.

What a gift Jone is to our U3A. A learned and true Florentine, she has been in Australia for over forty years, working as a social historian and in many other areas of history and culture. She is witty, entertaining, passionate about her subject and in a word, brilliant. Her vast research and experience are evident in her presentations which are informed, broad-based and captivating. Her delivery is charming, informal, clever and she displays an astounding memory. She skilfully links different eras, taking us on a remarkable journey each new term. Matched with her excellent power-point presentations, this course is a true diamond. If you ever thought history classes were dull, you will never think that way again after a term with Jone.



Jone Gaillard

She brings to her sessions many interesting, amusing anecdotes, segues, and a superior breadth of knowledge, indicative of a deep and enduring passion for history. She shares with us not just facts and figures, but the feelings and personalities of historical characters and events. She provides us with gems of information you could never glean from the pages of a history book. If you have been lucky enough to have travelled to Europe, you can see, in these classes, connections to times and places you may have visited that were not so obvious at the time. Jone has certainly whetted my appetite to go to Europe again, to see with new eyes.

I cannot find enough superlatives to describe these classes and I feel very fortunate to be able to participate. Jone entertains us with describing her favourite and not so favourite characters, her heroes; and she includes hilarious titbits.

I include a quote I read recently in the memoriam section of *The Age*. It seems a perfect description of the importance of knowing and understanding history:

SIMPSON, Lynette (Latham)

6/5/1938 – 5/6/24

'To be ignorant of what happened before you were born is to remain forever a child. Greatness requires deep historical knowledge, according to Cicero. You cannot be insightful or persuasive if you don't have the ability to make comparisons to past events and eras. Lack of a broad historical perspective produces a moral shallowness, a narrowness of purpose and a crippling inability to inspire. Worst of all it leaves you poorly equipped to respond to change, thus Cicero tells us, is the power of history.'

(Written by Lyn in March 2024)

Come join us for Jone's illuminating recounting of our past.

Nola Bartak

ESTELLE KELLY, RETIREMENT LIFE COACH

Estelle Kelly conducted a 'Lifestyle coaching and beyond' presentation/workshop last term at Balwyn Park Centre. She asks if you are curious as to what a Retirement Life coach does:

We all know what we are retiring from. Less certain is what we are retiring to.

Life coaching is a means to support people achieve a change in their life. It's like walking beside them as they make a change. A Life Coach is there to support the client. If we look at our whole life, we have areas of our life that are not working as well as we would like them to.

A life coach might use a tool like a Wheel of Life and the client can look at what they rate, how they rate their relationships, their finances, their work-life balance, their health. Often there's one of those areas that they're just not happy about at that time of their lives.

The life coach walks beside that person while they go about making desired changes.

The things that life coaching is not - it is not mentoring, it is not counseling or psychotherapy. And it's not giving advice. The ideal is to have the client come to their own solution to their problem. They have ownership of the solution.

The life coach's job is to look at the big picture of a person's life, ask the questions to change the thinking, or the way that they understand the client sees their life. When a life coach meets with a client, a meaningful conversation is created; after establishing some rapport, there's an invitation from the life coach to the client to tell their story.

Clients are prompted to share their dilemma with questions such as:

What's on your mind?

What do you want to talk about today?

The job of a life coach is to listen and listen deeply to the client's story and give them a lot of space to tell that story. Life coaching applies to retirement as it does to any other stage of life.

Retirement is something that people really look forward to in life, that's the time to kick back, take it easy and choose what you do want to do. But for some people, it can be a time of great challenge.

Did you know on the Ray and Holmes stress scale for life events, retirement rates as number 10? That is because there is a huge change from being in the full-time workplace where the focus is work and your energy goes into work. The fear is that when we retire, we'll just fade away into nothing, into old age, and we won't be contributing anymore, and we disappear.

You have a home life and you've got relationships and that, but all of a sudden, that's not there. So who are you when you are no longer a nurse, an accountant, a manager?

Through deep listening and relevant questions, a retirement life coach assists people to progress to a fulfilling, meaningful retirement.

Estelle Kelly



CLIMATE DRIVERS

El Niño and other Climate Drivers that influence Australia's weather

Dr Kim Reid from Monash University challenged our understanding of how rainfall is so critical in the decision making of every Australian farmer. Variability between wet and dry periods determines whether the correct amount of rainfall is received at the ideal time, for production. Rainfall affects planting times, the choice of crops, the stocking rate and the choice of animals bred for the best economic outcome.



Kim Reid

The Drivers of Climate Change (CD's) are natural forces which cause variation in weather from year to year. These 'Drivers' are totally distinct from 'Climate Change', which is caused by the burning of fossil fuels by humans.

Climate Drivers cause a variation in global ocean temperatures and trade winds. This affects the likelihood of different weather systems hitting Australia. El Niño and La Niña are climate patterns in the Pacific Ocean that can affect weather worldwide.



During normal conditions in the Pacific Ocean, trade winds blow west along the equator, taking warm water from South America towards Asia. To replace that warm water, cold water rises from the depths - a process known as upwelling.

El Niño and La Niña are two opposing climate patterns that break these normal conditions, El Niño and La Niña can have both global impacts on weather, wildfires, ecosystems and economies.

We can all recall:

- 1983 - Ash Wednesday fires in SE Victoria and Canberra
- Early 2000s - Millennial drought
- 2010/2011 - floods which caused huge destruction in Eastern Australia
- 2019/20 - Black Summer Fires

Climate Drivers cannot predict the future with perfect accuracy, but they can influence the odds and possibilities of predicting extreme weather. The BOM cannot predict the future or every single outcome into the future. The long range forecast provides the best guidelines for likely conditions in the coming months, with the Bureau's climate model taking into account all influences from the oceans and the atmosphere when generating the long range forecast. The Climate Driver update provides insight into the state of the main drivers influencing current conditions.

Lyn Anderson

As many of you will know, we often take photos of our members at various classes, outings, and social functions. If you do not wish to be photographed would you please let the photographer know, and step aside.

U3A Deepdene makes every effort to obtain the consent of members to their photographs which appear in this online Newsletter.

ROOF GARDENS

With her wealth of knowledge and great enthusiasm for all things gardening, Helen Page led us on a virtual tour of rooftop gardens in Melbourne and beyond.

The amazing green roof at Burnley Horticultural College boasts over 200+ species of plants including many succulents. Layers of earth, scoria, ash and crushed tile along with irrigation have been built up to support the garden and the micro climate which has been developed to promote long flowering.



Burnley Horticultural College

Tucked away in different parts of the city are rooftop gardens that you may not have heard about or seen. I certainly hadn't!

If you are a guest at Crown Casino you can enjoy the large rooftop garden which boasts tennis courts and an avenue of topiary trees. Around the Arts Centre you can see the Triptych Green Wall in Cavanagh Street where the water drips down through the plants on this vertical wall. You might also like to visit the garden on the top of

the Arts Centre carpark which is planted out with lawns, gum trees and shrubs enhanced with sculptures. On the seventh floor at the Peter McCallum Centre in Parkville there is a rooftop garden and cafe which provides a beautiful space for patients and the public to enjoy, as well as great views over that part of Melbourne.



Peter McCallum Centre

Have you ever noticed that our politicians are sometimes interviewed with a garden background? These beautiful gardens are situated on the roof of the offices at Parliament House. They are planted out with all-Australian plants including a lovely range of Eremophilas and Banksias.

Thank you, Helen for a wonderful tour with so many suggestions of beautiful rooftop gardens to visit in our own city and around the world.

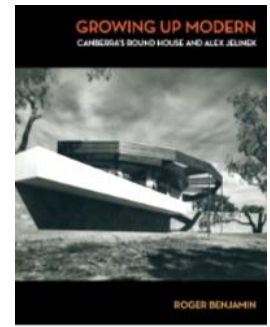
Chris Hepworth

**Our members enjoyed
conversation and friendship
at our Mid-Year Get-together
on 12 June**



GROWING UP MODERN BY ROGER BENJAMIN

Towards the end of Term 2 a delightful talk on Zoom was given by Roger Benjamin, the Professor of Art History at Sydney University. Instead of art history, his talk was an illustrated personal reflection about the 'Modernist' house in Canberra in which he grew up, and the influence it had on him. His reflections led him to research the history of the house and to eventually publish a book, *Growing Up Modern: Canberra's Round House and Alex Jelinek*, published by Halstead Press, 2023.



As background, 'modernist' architecture had its origins in the early 20th century when the use of new materials, steel and concrete etc, functional designs, clean geometric shapes and linkages to landscape were championed. In Australia, a significant modernist movement was evident in post-World War 2 domestic building, in response to shortages of building materials, population expansion and overseas architectural design influences.

Roger was fortunate in that he was born the same year, 1957, as his family moved into their iconic modernist 'Round House' at 10 Gawler Crescent, Deakin. Roger's father Bruce was Senior Lecturer in Philosophy at ANU and he and his wife Audrey had recently moved from Melbourne, after earlier having travelled overseas. Both parents came from well-to-do backgrounds and his father had attended soirees held in Melbourne by his cousin, modernist Australian painter Lina Bryans. It was from this contact that his parents employed Alex Jelinek, an architect who was also the partner of Lina Bryans, to design and oversee the construction of their new house.

Alex Jelinek had his own history which Roger documents. He was a Czech émigré and much younger than Lina. He was born in 1925 and had been a student of architecture, but escaped the 1948 Soviet Union takeover of Czechoslovakia by hijacking a plane to Germany, where he married his first wife. They then emigrated to Australia, and he worked for some years as a builder on the Snowy Mountains Scheme. (Roger showed a portrait of him by Lina Bryans in Canberra's National Portrait Gallery.)

When travelling overseas, Roger's parents bought two treasured art works - a Buddhist Khmer stone head and a very long Chinese scroll - and wanted their new house to showcase these two works. So Jelinek designed a house with a long, curved wall to house the scroll, and a prominent location for the head. The house itself was on several levels and built of concrete, timber and glass around a central pool of water. Not strictly round, its design was based on a Pythagorean spiral, making some rooms wedge-shaped. The house reflected Jelinek's love of geometry and materials and influences of overseas modernist architects such as Frank Lloyd Wright and Alvar Aalto. The book contains many photographs of the house under construction. It was completed in 1957 and attracted many awards and accolades in magazines.

Roger's father died young in 1963, aged 38, but his mother continued to live in the house with Roger and his three siblings, as she wanted to maintain her independence. Roger has fond memories of growing up in the house, with many very enjoyable family dinners and celebrations, evident in the photographs. It was also full of beautiful things such as an Ian Fairweather painting, which no doubt influenced Roger's future career as an art historian.



The long curved wall and Chinese scroll, photo by Wolfgang Sievers, 1957

The house evolved with the times and by 1968 the kitchen had been enlarged and a verandah enclosed.

As the children became teenagers, the décor changed too, becoming more colourful and reflecting the fashion of the 1960s. By 1980, all the children had left home; Audrey was living alone and as happens in many families, the garden became too much, and the house was sold in 1982.

After that the house had two owners, who inevitably made changes. Original trees were cut down, a swimming pool, tennis court and pergolas were added, and even the signature curved cement block wall was tiled in alabaster, the then owner being a stonemason.

Finally, in 2000 Roger and his first wife were drawn back to the house, buying it and until 2010 restoring it, demolishing the pergolas, etc, ensuring the house was good for the next century. Later owners have also been sympathetic to Roger's restoration and colour choices. A heritage order was placed over it in 2003, so hopefully it won't follow the same demise as the house next door, which was demolished, even though it is on a large block.

Roger's talk was a lovely homage to the house where he grew up, full of fond memories as well as being an architectural masterpiece. It is interesting to note that Melbourne has a modernist Round House in Frankston South, designed by the well-known Melbourne modernist architect Roy Grounds, which predates the Canberra Round House by four years; so it is possible that this house could have provided some inspiration for Alex Jelinek and his Canberra house.

Ros Savio

Roger has advised us that the associated exhibition opened on 27 July in central Canberra, and will continue until 10 November 2024, and he forwarded the link for further information:

<http://www.cmag.com.au/exhibitions/growing-up-modern-alex-jelinek-and-canberra-s-round-house>

MRS ANNE FRASER BON AND WILLIAM BARAK



What have these two people in common: a Scottish-born pastoralist described as imperious, religious and autocratic, and the last elder of the Yarra Yarra tribe pictured as erect, bearded and with a boomerang in one hand? What is their legacy? Sandy Curnow took us back to colonial Melbourne in her fascinating talk on 29 July, to discover the extraordinary relationship between them. Their backgrounds could hardly be more different.



Introducing our two subjects

Mrs Anne Fraser Bon [9.4.1838 – 5.6.1936] was born in Dunning, Perthshire, Scotland and married John Bon, 33 years her senior, in 1858. After sailing to Australia with her piano, a box of bulbs, five servants and a large quantity of linen, she settled with her husband at Wappan on the Delatite River. When her husband died in 1868, she, aged 30 with four young children, managed the station until her sons were old enough to take over. When it was clear that the property would be flooded by the Sugarloaf Weir and Lake Eildon, she moved to 58 Charles Street Kew and later spent her final years in the Windsor Hotel.

William Barak [c1824 – 1903] was born near the Merri Creek and belonged to the Wurundjeri Willun tribe whose country lay along the Yarra and Plenty Rivers. He was 11 years of age when his father was one of the 'signatories' to the so-called Batman 'treaty'. His traditional Aboriginal childhood was dislocated, and he

received an elementary Western education in mission schools. He was a member of the Native Mounted Police, renowned for his tracking skills, and a respected member of his community. He was buried at Coranderrk Mission Station near Healesville. William was a very fine artist who recorded some of the first images of his community. He was able to pass on to Alfred William Hewitt, the explorer and natural scientist, detailed descriptions of his culture and history.

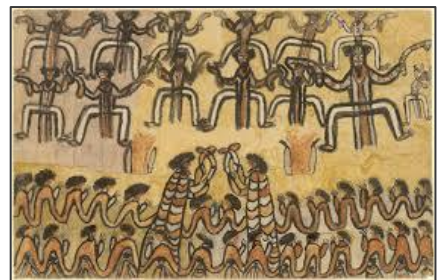


How did their lives intersect?

Anne was a great philanthropist. She supported the Salvation Army; she established a school for Chinese children in Melbourne and was a member of the first Ladies’ Committee of the Austin Hospital. She took a special interest in the Aboriginal community. Aborigines were settled by government policy in Coranderrk in the 1880s under the Aborigines Protection Board. She began to support Aborigines, like William Barak, who opposed Protection Board policy. Her persistence and connection with leading citizens persuaded



the Government to investigate conditions at Coranderrk in 1881, and she was a member of that enquiry which reversed government policy. From 1904 until her death, Anne was a board member and extremely active in advocating on behalf of First Peoples. Her concern



for Aborigines and their welfare made her unpopular with the other board members who saw her as ‘interfering’.

What is their legacy? Have their efforts made any difference to First Nations’ peoples?

Looking back at Anne’s efforts on behalf of Aborigines, did that change the attitude of members of the public or people in authority, in the nineteenth century? Sandy in her talk described Anne as a pioneer of reconciliation. Her actions challenged the accepted views of Australians to both the Chinese and



Aboriginal communities. She demonstrated practical compassion as well as advocacy for their rights. William Barak, with quiet dignity, was able to document his heritage which was in danger of being lost, in both painting and verbal history. His image appears on the outside of a building at the northern end of Swanston Street, ironically perhaps, overlooking the city built on his tribal land.

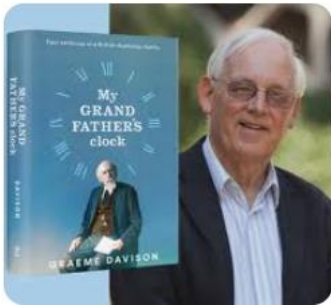
Sandy was able to bring to life these two diverse pioneers who confronted issues which are still relevant today.

Alan Ray

***Photos from top, left to right: Mrs Anne Fraser Bon, William Barak (previous page)
Members of the Coranderrk community in Healesville
William Barak’s art
The Barak building at the northern end of Swanston Street***

GRAEME DAVISON: *MY GRANDFATHER'S CLOCK*

Professor Graeme Davison is always very generous with his time at U3A Deepdene, and on Wednesday 5 June over 100 of us gathered for an absorbing Wednesday Special to hear him talk about his most recent book *My Grandfather's Clock: Four centuries of a British-Australian family*. The afternoon was a huge success. The talk was fascinating for all of us interested in social history or family history - or both - and while we finally called 'time on' for questions, and then got to the serious business of drinks, finger food and the discussion with friends of our attempts at writing our own family histories, Graeme was still surrounded by enquirers as we closed up for the night.



The book's genesis was the inheritance from a great aunt of a long case clock, brought from England some decades earlier. Its mechanism was far older than its casing: it was re-housed after an unexpectedly rough trip to Australia and, much to Graeme's surprise, it took the family story back through four centuries from being Scottish Reivers - marginal farmers, cattle thieves and occasionally murderers - from Sir Walter Scott's Border country through a Davi(d)son clockmaker and the confines of the Industrial Revolution and Methodism, and finally emigration to Australia. His family became quiet, respectful folk.

Graeme argued that for many people, history through the lens of our own family gives wider history a human face, that little history is more appealing than big history, and that many are more interested in objects than pages - that something to touch is historically more engaging than something to read. The clock which turned out to go back seven generations in his family becomes both the means and the metaphor for the family's story. The idea of time's divisions and the regulation of days is thousands of years old. It was central to the religious practice of Hours - of praying at specific times through the day and night - of the great abbeys of Christian Europe. But the Industrial Revolution meant that time, when to clock on or clock off in the factory, constructed a completely different framework to the human day. They became slaves rather than servants of time.

As many of us strive to write our own family history we strike similar problems, family folklore is appealing but notoriously unreliable, and as we hunt for forebears in the digital age, we often confront a melange of fact and fiction; I was delighted to hear that Ancestry.com is both a gateway to original sources and a rubbish dump of flawed research. Linked to this, Graeme's point about names constructing identity rang a bell; an illegitimate forebear who struggled to form an identity derived from association with others of similar name sprang to mind. We often construct our forebears to explain ourselves.

One more issue raised must be familiar to us all; we occasionally read C20 histories and respond with irritation 'but I was there, and it wasn't like that'. He illustrated his point with the popular argument that Australia suffered an identity crisis/loss when the UK drifted towards what would become the Common Market in the Sixties, and abandoned some Commonwealth trade. He was overseas at the time but on re-reading letters he felt a sense of liberation rather than a 'loss of Mother England'.

My own response at the time was anger. The Australia I knew rejoiced in a thoroughly un-Pommie sense of self, and apart from the newly arrived 'whingeing Poms', we old hands felt a wave of contempt. Britain had exploited our relationship over two world wars; we lost more soldiers per capita in WW1 than any other of the victors; the Rats of Tobruk were needed for the defence of Australia and Churchill had come up with the Brisbane Line. The UK was ready to exploit the Colonies once again; they were only ever moved by their own economic interests. Thus, three quite different responses to 'fact'.

The book is a delight to read, we enjoyed hearing about its genesis, and thank you once again, Graeme.

Sandy Curnow



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Weekly email/s are sent to all members with email addresses; watch for these updates. See our website for details of courses.

The Program Guide for Term 4, 2024 will be distributed in early September.

CALENDAR DATES:

Spring Celebration Wednesday 4 September
End of year Get-together Wednesday 4 December
Lunch for Tutors Friday 13 December

2024

Term 3 Monday 22 July to Friday 13 September
Term 4 Monday 14 October to Friday 6 December

2025

Term 1 Monday 3 February to Friday 28 March
Term 2 Monday 28 April to Friday 20 June
Term 3 Monday 21 July to Friday 12 September
Term 4 Monday 13 October to Friday 5 December

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