

# U3A Education Matters

U3A Education Matters is published by the Network Education Committee, a committee of U3A Network Victoria.

Contact [u3anec@u3avictoria.com.au](mailto:u3anec@u3avictoria.com.au)

## Introducing U3A Education Matters

Welcome to the first U3A Education Matters newsletter!

Attending Region meetings and workshops and experiencing the very positive vibe of the annual Course Coordinators meeting, the Network Education Committee (NEC) recognised the demand for more communication with and between those U3A members who have the often challenging but rewarding responsibilities for delivering their U3A's education programs.

So, while the U3A Network provides a quarterly newsletter on all matters of interest to member U3As, the NEC has decided to explore the value of a newsletter specifically aimed at supporting course coordinators, tutors and program organisers in the development and delivery of their education programs. There are clearly common interests in U3As throughout Victoria on ideas for new courses, finding tutors, latest concepts of adult learning, dealing with the difficult .....(fill in the blank), accessing and using educational technology, and so on. There is a wealth of valuable knowledge and experience on these educational matters out there in U3A Land, and many creative and innovative ideas that might be shared to mutual benefit.

This electronic newsletter aims to assist U3As by capturing and sharing these needs and experiences and assisting in the further development of our stimulating courses and programs.

The NEC team that is now bringing this enterprise to you is: Leona Haintz (U3A Deepdene), Dennis Atkin (U3A Waverley), John Pinniger (U3A Darebin), Peter Fleming (U3A Casey), Neville Johnson (U3A Manningham) and Anne Thompson (U3A Seymour and District). The committee has quite wide experience in U3A matters and all have an education background. The committee certainly understands many of the issues faced by course organisers and presenters.

Our aim is that Education Matters will initially be a quarterly publication. We invite you, our U3A members, to be our partners in this enterprise, helping to shape the newsletter by sharing your best educational experiences, ideas, needs and course conundrums with each other through this newsletter. **Please send us your stories, photos, ideas, concerns – and about the rewards you're having in your vital role.** Our email address is [u3anec@u3avictoria.com.au](mailto:u3anec@u3avictoria.com.au)

Anne Thompson (Convener, Network Education Committee)

### Diary Dates

#### Region Meetings

Outer Eastern Metro

Friday 17 June

Region Rep: Moira

Hughes

Goulburn North East

Victoria

Thursday 23 June

Region Rep: Gail

Peters

Eastern Metro

Monday 27 June

Region Rep: Geoff

Steventon

#### Seniors Festival

Celebration Day

Sunday 2 October

Federation Square

#### Course Co-

ordinators' Annual

#### Forum

Friday 9 December

Celtic Club, City



**Network Victoria**  
UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE

JUNE 2016

## Book Club ideas

Many U3As have book clubs and if our book club is any example, there is a lot of very vigorous discussion around the monthly book. There is great pleasure to be had in talking about a good book with others who have enjoyed reading it. A recent Guardian article reported on some novel ways of running book clubs that might be worth considering

Emily's Walking Book Club works on the premise that it is easiest to talk to someone as you walk along with him/her. Every month, somewhere between 10 and 40 members walk across local parklands while they talk about a book. The members can all talk at once, but often the group fragments into twos, threes and fours to allow myriad conversations. They periodically regroup to recap, read aloud and launch into a new topic. This means that no single reader can dominate and, if there's a clash of personalities, it's easy to avoid one another!

Then there's the knitting book club where the click-clack of knitting needles accompanies impassioned literary discussion as members work on their woollens while unravelling complicated strands of plot. Eligibility is being able to knit and talk at the same time! (Editor: Just a thought, maybe the knitting could be linked to the book e.g. colour themes; motifs from the book knitted into the design.) Any more ideas?

Another book club is held alongside exhibitions in an art gallery. A guest speaker or U3A facilitator leads the discussion about how a particular book is relevant to the artist's work. The idea is that the book throws new light on the art, and the art gives an unusual way in to the book. Readers gather inside the gallery, amongst the art, to talk about the book's relationship with the work around them. Given that not all U3As have access to a Rembrandt or two, there are some good art books around to help.

A cinema conducts this book club event when it screens an adaptation of a book. An academic introduces the film and hosts a discussion afterwards. Most unusually, at this book club you don't have to have read the book first – it is as much an opportunity for members to discuss with the academic their area of expertise and share their own views. The most common response is to hear people saying afterwards, "I'm going to read that now." U3A adaption: Screen film at the U3A eg The Dressmaker then read the book.

These are just a few ideas for jazzing up your book club. **If you have any creative ways of running your book club or you try any of these ideas, and if you would like to share them, please email us at: - [u3anec@u3avictoria.com.au](mailto:u3anec@u3avictoria.com.au)**

## Use your university

Victoria is fortunate to have a large number of universities in Melbourne city and regional centres. While a number of U3As have established formal relationships with their local university, there are many opportunities for all U3As to capitalise on the rich and varied public programs that the universities offer. These (usually free) programs provide excellent possibilities for basing courses on, or providing individual learning experiences. Most university staff working in public programs warmly welcome groups of older learners.

**La Trobe University** offers an interesting public lecture program at its campuses at Bundoora, City, Bendigo, Albury–Wodonga, Mildura, Shepparton  
<http://www.latrobe.edu.au/events/search-events>

**University of Melbourne** also has a free public lecture program. Check it out at <https://events.unimelb.edu.au/all/free-public-lecture> or the University's monthly newspaper "Voice" at <http://voice.unimelb.edu.au/> (Voice also contains research news, informed opinion and analysis, alumni news and profiles, stories on student life and activities, arts reviews and previews, sport, previews of multimedia programs and listings of public lectures and other events.)

**Monash University** has a free public lecture program at its campuses at Clayton, Caulfield, Parkville and Frankston. <http://monash.edu/news/events/category/public-lectures> The university also conducts free one-day events such as the Monash Future Thinkers: Australia in 2050.

**Federation University** has campuses at Churchill, Ballarat and Wimmera (Stawell, Ararat, Horsham) and offers public programs. <http://federation.edu.au/international/life-at-feduni/campuses>

**Deakin University** has community events at its campuses at Burwood, Geelong and Warrnambool and, at the Deakin Gallery in Burwood, gallery staff provide floor talks on request to visiting groups.  
<http://www.deakin.edu.au/about-deakin/administrative-divisions/advancement/art-gallery>

**Australian Catholic University** has public events at its Ballarat and Melbourne campuses.  
[https://www.acu.edu.au/connect\\_with\\_acu/events](https://www.acu.edu.au/connect_with_acu/events)

**RMIT University** offers quite a substantial range of talks, lectures and events for the public in its city campus. <https://www.rmit.edu.au/events/all-events/public-lectures/> The RMIT Gallery offers seminars, floor talks and special seminars. <http://www.rmit.edu.au/about/our-locations-and-facilities/facilities/exhibition-spaces/rmit-gallery/upcoming-events/>