



# Newcastle U3A NEWSLETTER

Spring 2018

## Welcome!

### From the President...

The AGM in April this year brought in a change of office bearers and some new Committee members for NU3A. What a steep learning curve it has been since taking on the President's role from John Thacker, who stepped down as required by our Constitution, after three hard-working years in the role. He and equally hard-working Past-Secretary Gloria have been enjoying a well-earned round-the-world cruise. They will return towards the end of September and continue in their joint role of Course Coordinator, to bring us another wonderful smorgasbord of courses for Semester 1, 2019.

Our new secretary, the ever helpful and cheerful Jenny Williams, is generally the person behind 'The Office Team' sign-off on your emails. Treasurer Laila Boctor, who stepped into the breach a few months before the AGM, had her position ratified at that meeting. They both bring a wealth of experience to their roles.

The Committee has been working on several issues. We now have Not-For-Profit status which will allow us to apply for grants, and we are going through the process to obtain DGR (Deductible Gift Recipient) status.

We have three functions scheduled for September. The first is the GM on 20 September, in the Carrington Room, Hunter Union Building in Devonshire Street, Newcastle. We hope to see a good roll up there. On 25 September we have our annual morning tea for our wonderful volunteer tutors and presenters as well as course clerks and our small band of valuable 'behind the scenes' helpers. In addition, this year NU3A is hosting the regional U3A conference on 27 September.

With a membership that is currently around 615, the biggest issue that the Committee is dealing with is the introduction of online membership application and enrolment, which will massively reduce the administrative workload for our team. We are looking at introducing a short-term measure that will 'lock into' our current office software, to get us through the membership and enrolment period for Semester 1, 2019. In the meantime, we are testing the U3A-specific MyU3A software system with a view to it being up and running for the Semester 2, 2019 enrolments.

We are always looking for more helping hands, whether it be in the office, sharing your computer software skills, helping with morning teas for our functions, or being a course clerk. Please give us a call if you would like to help.

We keep in mind those of our members who are in poor health or going through sad times, and they receive a beautiful home-made card especially for them, made by our Committee member Jean Griffiths. Please remember to let us know if you hear of any of our members who are going through hard times.

Best wishes and good health to you all,

**Julie Newing**  
President, Newcastle U3A

## NOTICE of U3A GENERAL MEETING

**Thursday September 20th commencing 10.30am**  
**Carrington Room, Hunter Workers (Trades Hall)**  
**408 King Street Newcastle West**  
**Note the venue!**

**Tea and coffee available from 10.00am**  
**and the meeting will be followed by**  
**lunch (your expense)**  
**in the Bistro at NEX (formerly Wests)**  
**309 King Street Newcastle West**

### Guest speaker:

**Phil Ashley-Brown**

**ABC Quality Manager for Regional  
Australia**

**Financial Reports and Agenda will be  
available prior to the meeting**

### WHY BE A PART OF U3A?

Research has shown that as we get older it is important to maintain our physical and mental health and that mental stimulation can contribute to our overall wellbeing and help reduce natural deterioration. It's factual: use it or lose it!

U3A provides opportunities to continue to learn about subjects of personal interest, to develop new skills and to share expertise and experience with others who are willing to learn from each other. U3A aim to provide a learning place in a friendly and supportive environment.

The U3A movement has been identified through academic investigation as being the fastest-growing adult education organisation in Australia. Will you join us?

### NEWCASTLE U3A TERM DATES

**2018 Term 4: 15 October - 7 December**  
**2019 Term 1: 11 February - 5 April**  
**2019 Term 2: 29 April - 21 June**  
**2019 Term 3: 22 July - 14 September**  
**2019 Term 4: 14 October - 6 December**

## TREASURER'S REPORT 15 AUGUST 2018

Following is a summary of the income and expenditure report for the financial year to date (1 January to 31 July 2018).

### INCOME

Membership fees	\$19,490
Excursions and Activities	\$6,114
Donations (incl \$600 for 3 boats)	\$700
Interest	\$602
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$26,906</b>

### EXPENDITURE

Venues Rent	\$10,820
Excursions Costs and Refunds	\$4,470
Equipment	\$2,220
Postage, Telephone, Printing & Stationery	\$1,246
Donations - purchase of 3 boats	\$600
U3A Network fees	\$585
Membership refunds	\$410
Insurance	\$200
Office Software	\$129
Sundries	\$106
Bank fees	\$79
	<b>\$20,865</b>

### SURPLUS \*

\$6,041

### RECONCILIATION

Available Funds 1 January 2018	\$39,795
ADD Surplus (as above)	\$6,041
Funds as at 31 July 2018	\$45,836

### BANK ACCOUNTS

Achiever Account	\$14,836
Term Deposit 933824300	\$11,000
Term Deposit 819528700	\$20,000
Bank Statement Reconciliation	\$45,836

\* The surplus is before taking into account \$1,665 excursion costs to be paid out later in the year and \$250 venues rent not yet invoiced to us, a total of \$1,915.

### Notes to the accounts

This year has seen a healthy increase in the number of memberships (approx 20%). The positive movement in the number of members can, to a great extent, be attributed to the efforts of Gloria Jones and John Thacker who never stop working to improve on, and add to, the course options. Of course we cannot ignore the tremendous contribution made by the Course leaders and Course clerks who make it all possible. This, however, meant an increase in the cost of venues rent which, for the year to date, is running at +30%.

Whilst no decision has yet been made about the 2019 membership fees, it is clear that we will have to give serious consideration to an increase in order to meet our financial commitments.

## NEWCASTLE U3A MULTI-BRANCH INITIATIVE – UKULELE 'BOOT CAMP'

Newcastle U3A has had the benefit of offering a Ukulele course for beginners this year through the generosity of gifted teacher Susan Coggan (photo). The course was greeted with such enthusiasm in Semester 1 that Susan suggested a 'Boot Camp' in the long mid-year break to allow others to be included, and this evolved into the first-ever multi-branch U3A course in the Central Coast & Hunter Region.

The Ukulele Boot Camp of two intensive half-days was offered to current members of all 12 independent branches within the Region with no additional course fee. With the assistance of Regional Coordinator, Laurene Mulcahy, invitations and course information were sent to the other 11 branches for distribution to their members, and expressions of interest were relayed to Newcastle U3A. Our volunteer office staff coordinated enrolments, venue and morning tea arrangements, and printed course notes and music, supplied by Susan, to give to participants.

The first multi-branch course and Boot Camp for ukulele was a great success as evidenced in the photos at the end of the second day. Two of our more experienced Uke group members (Helene and Danny) generously volunteered their services to help Susan with 19 complete beginners, and five of the graduates have gone on to join our regular ukulele class in Semester 2.

We are hopeful that the success of this venture will pave the way for more multi-branch offerings – and of course more ukulele aficionados!



## COURSE COORDINATORS REPORT

Planning for the 2019 program is now well underway. As has become the norm, there has been no need for your course coordinators to source most courses – tutor members and non-member volunteers have already offered a variety of diverse courses. Even one of our shipboard dining companions (who does not live in Newcastle) has offered a fascinating session.

For the 2019 program, more than ever, matching courses to appropriate venues is our biggest challenge. Membership numbers have significantly increased over the last few years and finding venues large enough for some courses is a real challenge. Places that cater for groups of over 50 participants all come at significantly higher cost, as do comfortable exercise-based venues (Tai Chi and Balance 'N' Bones).

Prior to 2018 our most expensive venue was \$15 an hour. Venue expenditure has soared during 2018 and we anticipate it will rise even further in 2019. Some examples include the new Balance 'N' Bones venue, which costs \$40 an hour. Why do we use such an expensive venue? Because it is a strenuous exercise program and we consider air-conditioning and a suitable floor essential for health and safety reasons. Prior to 2018 our Tuesday Afternoon Series venue cost \$10 a session. However, it only catered for 50 members and by late 2017 enrolments far exceeded the capacity. At the beginning of 2018 that program moved to a 90-seat capacity space at \$54 a session. That capacity was reached early in term 1 and the semester 2 venue now caters for over 120.

The nature of course offerings has changed too as tutors and courses have become more sophisticated. This has two impacts. Expenditure on technology has risen as data projectors and screens are required at multiple venues. We lost our long-term Music Appreciation venue as part of the University of Newcastle's refurbishment program. This meant the purchase of new, sophisticated equipment; equipment that had previously been available for no charge on-site. Venues need to have the capacity to be darkened and again, these venues often come at increased costs.

Over the many years we have been involved with Newcastle U3A various committees have always prioritised the matching of appropriate venues with courses and proactively sourced new venues. Appropriate criteria were set 5 years ago with accessibility and availability of public transport judged to be the primary factors. In 2018 revised bus timetables added another complication. In general, we aim to use a variety of locations to maximise opportunities for all members.

**So matching courses to venues is a real issue as we negotiate with tutors as part of the 2019 program planning process. To ensure that we make the best possible decisions, we would appreciate member feedback. What venues work**

**for you and why? What doesn't work for you and why? What features would you like to see in future venues? Please send your feedback to the U3A office as soon as possible.**

If you are interested in offering a 2019 course, there is still time to do so, although some timeslots are now tight. Please send your suggestions via email through the U3A office, marking them "Attention: Course Coordinators".

As Newcastle U3A's Course Coordinators we are delighted to be able to offer our members such a diverse and satisfying range of what we believe are quality courses and presentations and are grateful for the many, many contributions that make this possible. It is with such good spirit that we as a volunteer organisation continue to grow and succeed.

*Gloria Jones and John Thacker*

### **Important Dates for your 2019 Diary**

#### **Dates for Semester 1:**

**Term 1:** 11 February to 5 April

**Term 2:** 29 April to 21 June

Good Friday – 19 April; Easter Monday – 22 April

Queen's Birthday Holiday – 10 June

#### **Dates for Semester 2:**

**Term 3:** 22 July to 14 September

**Term 4:** 14 October to 6 December

Labour Day Holiday – 7 October

Melbourne Cup Day - 5 November

### **TAWU CONTINUES THE GREAT SMORGASBORD**

Tuesday Afternoons with U3A hit yet another high note when writers' group member Mark Lynch's Presentation on his time as a Patrol Officer in Papua New Guinea held his audience spellbound. It took us back to the time when Australia had responsibility for PNG, now unfortunately forgotten in the annals of our history and world of today. Thanks to Mark and to Ron and Carol Davis and the TAW team for providing us with such learning and enjoyable experiences.

### **EXCITING NEWS FROM NU3A WRITERS' GROUP**

The Write Your Story Group expects to have its first anthology of short stories titled: 'The Tale Makers' printed by September/October. It has been an exciting project for members of the group and as the foreword to the book says: *"the wealth of life experiences (of the authors) has been the source of stories that have made us apoplectic with laughter, angry at the cruelty and injustices of the world, cry at the tragedies of life and marvel at the mundane and the magical."* So watch this space.

.....Elizabeth Elliott.

## **NEWCASTLE U3A HOLIDAY AT SEA – CRUISING 25 OCTOBER TO 3 NOVEMBER 2019**

We had planned a 2018 Cruise; a social and educational opportunity for members to travel together and enjoy a holiday with like-minded people. It wasn't to be, with the appropriate cruises booking out too quickly. The 2019 U3A program contains a cruise holiday with plenty of lead-time. We do suggest, however, that if you are interested, you book now! The planned itinerary includes two-back-to-back cruises on the same ship, the *Golden Princess*. It includes some ports you might not have visited. As it involves sailing only in Australian waters, a passport won't be required:

**Sydney to Melbourne – Friday 25 to Sunday 27 October 2019 (voyage no. 5936)**

**Melbourne to Melbourne – Sunday 27 October to Sunday 3 November 2019 (voyage no. 5937)**

You will need to make your own way home from Melbourne with the options including flying Melbourne to Newcastle, XPT train or coach. The cruise company is Princess Cruises and the ports include Melbourne, Phillip Island (tender port), Port Lincoln, Kangaroo Island (tender port) and Adelaide.

An information handout is available through the U3A office.



## **TAKING NEWCASTLE U3A ENROLMENTS ONLINE**

The Committee and a group of dedicated tech-savvy volunteers, led by Phil Warren, Joy Carlin and Diane Body, have been working to take our member application and enrolments system 'online'. That is, moving from the present cumbersome pen and paper system to one where members can go online and key in their membership details, pay membership fees, and choose courses they would like to enrol in. This will greatly reduce the demands on office volunteers and give members, tutors and course clerks a more direct way to indicate their enrolment preferences, manage course information, and advise of absences and the like.

After considering several alternatives, the system chosen for our purposes is one designed by and for U3As – called MyU3A, of course! It is currently being used by an increasing number of branches in Victoria and NSW, including in our own Central Coast Hunter Region. Initial plans to have the new system available for Semester 1 2019 have been impacted by a number of factors, including a delay of some months in getting the process started. The team is now working on a 'Plan B' for Semester 1 – online membership and enrolment applications feeding into our existing database system, with the current options for payment.

We will keep members advised of progress – but whichever system it is, and whenever it goes 'live', there will be plenty of information to guide users and hands-on assistance in completing applications for members who do not have internet connection or feel less than comfortable filling in online forms!

A special event will be held on Monday December 10th at Lake Macquarie Performing Arts Centre, Warners Bay starting at 1.00 pm.

This is the annual **Combined U3A CELEBRATION OF ACHIEVEMENT CONCERT** and is followed by a "High Tea" of grand proportions. Organised by the wonderful Colleen Potts, the cost is only \$10.00 (to cover the cost of the high tea).

Booking enquiries direct to Colleen [queencleopatradiamonds@gmail.com](mailto:queencleopatradiamonds@gmail.com)  
Members who have attended the concert in previous years will attest to the very high standard of dance and production.  
A not to be missed performance!

## **FRIDAY COFFEE MORNINGS**

For new, current and potential members (or simply the curious) to chat and get to know others. If you have a friend interested in learning more about U3A, they are more than welcome to come along. Meet in the venue at 10.30am RSVP please: Elizabeth Howard 0451 272729

- Sep 14 The Boatshed [91 Hannell Street](#), Wickham
- Oct 12 Surfhouse [5 Henderson Parade](#), Merewether
- Nov 9 Cruising Yacht Club [95 Hannell Street](#), Wickham
- Dec 7 Lotus Corner [50 Glebe Road](#), The Junction

## **LUNCH OF THE MONTH**

Venues, all hotels, have been chosen because of parking availability, access to public transport and a reputation for being a good place to dine. Meet in the venue at 12.00noon.

- 20 Sep NEX (formerly Wests) [309 King Street](#), Newcastle West
- 19 Oct The Gates, [660 Glebe Road](#), Adamstown
- 16 Nov General Washington, [Fullerton & Mitchell Streets](#), Stockton
- 14 Dec Duke of Wellington, [69 Regent Street](#), New Lambton

## **NEWCASTLE U3A THEATRE GROUP**

**Sundays: October 7; November 11; 2018 and January 20, 2019**

**Time: 1.45pm – 4.45pm (approx.)**

**Venue: Newcastle Theatre Company,  
90 DeVitre Street Lambton**

Be part of the Newcastle U3A group: when purchasing tickets, please specify that you are part of the Newcastle U3A group & will attend Sunday matinees.

Contact the theatre to book 4952 4958

Monday to Friday 3.00pm to 6.00pm,

[www.newcastletheatrecompany.com.au](http://www.newcastletheatrecompany.com.au)

Meet in the theatre foyer no later than

1.45 pm to collect your ticket from your U3A leaders.

## **Newcastle U3A POSTAL ADDRESS PO Box 316, Hamilton 2303**

Members can also leave mail in the secure drop-box on the door of our office at 21 Gordon Avenue