



# Newcastle U3A NEWSLETTER Summer 2018/2019

## Welcome!

### From the President...

Dear Fellow Newcastle U3A Members,

What a wonderful year of classes, courses, and talks, we have had, as well as art gallery tours, photographic tours, street history walks, scientific day excursions, a day on the river and a day on the buses, while our Write Your Story group wrote, published and launched their own book.

September was a busy month. At our General Meeting Phil Ashley-Brown, ABC's Manager of Content Quality for 48 regional stations throughout Australia, gave us an informative and entertaining talk on the ABC in regional areas.

We also hosted our annual Tutors and Volunteers Morning Tea, which was well attended and much appreciated, and followed that up a week later by hosting the U3A Hunter Regional Forum which was attended by delegates from throughout the Hunter and Central Coast region.

The Semester 1 2019 Program will be out shortly. Our Joint Course Coordinators, Gloria Jones and John Thatcher, have put in many hours compiling courses, creating the new Program and dealing with the multiple challenges of sourcing and managing venues for the next semester.

In addition to this, they and our project team of Diane Body, Phil Warren, Jenny Williams, Noelene Lowes, Joy Carlin, and Southlakes member Ken Doolan, each of whom have selflessly given their time and extensive knowledge, have created our first ever online registration and enrolment system. It will be an exciting time in the office as we see the first registrations and enrolments come online.

If you have a computer but need some help with our new online system, we will be holding 'helping days' in the Meeting Room at 21 Gordon Avenue, in early January which you will be welcome to attend.

On behalf of your Committee and The Office Team we wish you all a Merry Christmas and a healthy and happy 2019.

**Julie Newing  
President, Newcastle U3A**

### U3A OFFICE HOLIDAY HOURS

During the summer break, the U3A office will operate at reduced hours. Although the summer break is our busiest time of year administratively, volunteers need a break too! We're doing our best for Members – don't forget to thank a vollee!

The office will be open at the following times during the break, including extra hours to assist members with the new online membership and enrolment application system:

Monday 7 January – 10.00 am to 1.00 pm - Open for Enrolment Enquiries and **Online Enrolment Assistance**

Wednesday 9 January – 10.00 am to 1.00 pm - Open for Enrolment Enquiries and **Online Enrolment Assistance**

Friday 11 January - 10.00 am to 1.00 pm - Open for Enrolment Enquiries and **Online Enrolment Assistance**

### **ENROLMENTS CLOSE AT NOON Monday 14 January**

Friday 18 January - 10.00 to 11.00 am – Badge collection & Open Office

Friday 25 January - 10.00 to 11.00 am – Badge collection & Open Office

Friday 1 February - 10.00 to 11.00 am – Badge Collection & Open Office

Friday 8 February - 10.00 to 11.00 am – Badge Collection & Open Office

**Semester 1, 2019 commences on 11 February 2019** – the normal term office hours will then operate, that is: Mondays 10.00 to 11.00 am Fridays 10.00 to 11.00 am.

### **SAVE THE DATE!**

### **U3A ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

**Tuesday April 9<sup>th</sup> 2019 commencing 10.30am  
Carrington Room, Hunter Unions (Trades Hall)  
408 King Street Newcastle West  
(to be confirmed)**

**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:  
to be advised**

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

## NEWCASTLE U3A WRITING GROUP BOOK LAUNCH *THE TALE MAKERS*

Newcastle U3A Writers' anthology 'The Tale Makers' was launched by Sharon Claydon, M.P. Federal Member for Newcastle on Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> November with Scott Bevan, author, journalist and playwright as special guest speaker.



Over a hundred guests were welcomed by Newcastle U3A's President Julie Newing and Secretary Jenny Williams, Mark Lynch, M.C. and Elizabeth Elliott, leader of the Writing Group, to what was the culmination of an amazing year for the Newcastle U3A Writers.



Special guests attending were Sonia Hornery, NSW Member for Wallsend; Rosemarie Milsom, Director Newcastle Writers Festival; Laurene Mulcahy, Regional Representative for the Central Coast and Hunter U3As; and Christine Gregory, Port Stephens Writer.



The event was a celebration of the warmth, trust and friendship that had, throughout the year, allowed the authors to find their own voice and share their stories without fear or favour in an environment that was safe, supportive and non-critical.

In his review of the anthology, Scott Bevan wrote:



*"Through their words, the Newcastle U3A Writers are more than the Tale Makers. They are life embracers. The stories of these 16 writers show that life is not just stranger than*

*fiction; it is funnier and more tragic, it is unpredictable yet reassuring, it is harrowing and far more rewarding.*

*From the measure of their years, from the breadth of their experiences and knowledge, and from the depths of their*

*souls, the creators of The Tale Makers have woven stories that allow us to feel how beautiful life is."*

In her foreword to the anthology Elizabeth Elliott,



speaking of the authors said: *"Their wealth of life experiences in their very diverse fields was the source of stories that have made us apoplectic with laughter, angry at the cruelty and injustices of our world, cry at the tragedies life sometimes brings and marvel at the blessings of life – both mundane and magical."*

And isn't that the essence of any writer or writing group – creating a special kind of magic that can touch the heart in so many different ways.

Elizabeth Elliott, Course Leader  
Newcastle U3A Writers



## FIT FOR FUN (DRAISING)...

"I thought that you might like to know that I completed the ride yesterday. It was a perfect day for it and I was pleased with my effort. While 82 kilometres is not such a long way, the course is very hilly, especially through the National Park and closer to Wollongong where there are way too many headlands! I completed the ride in just under 4 hours which I was pleased with"

These are the words of U3A member Chris Cull who, once more, entered and completed the Sydney to the 'Gong (Wollongong) bicycle ride.

This annual event, to raise funds for MS, is a cycling challenge. Chris was up for it and up to it. Many members and friends made donations... Chris explains:

"Thanks to your generosity, together we raised just over \$1,500 ... all due to your kind support! This got us on to the Honour Board"

where, as you can see, there are not so many that raise over \$1,000 given that there are 10,000 riders. Well done to you all!"



And well done Chris!

**COURSE REPORTS**

**The Music of Louisiana:**

Tutor Mark Tinson is both knowledgeable and enthusiastic about his interest: music. And Mark's presentation on Cajun, zydeco, blues, jazz, funk and swamp pop (to mention just a few of the genres demonstrated) was, to put it simply, a blast!

Introductions to the many exponents of a multitude of musical styles, with accompanying anecdotes, many personal, was both entertaining and enlightening. From a thorough demonstration of the squeezebox to many, many high-quality recordings (played at, ahem, sensible volumes) Mark took us through the history and evolution of the regions many approaches to music making. The audience wasn't quite on their feet and dancing

but there was many a toe tapping in the room. Overall the rating for this course was "way cool y'all!"



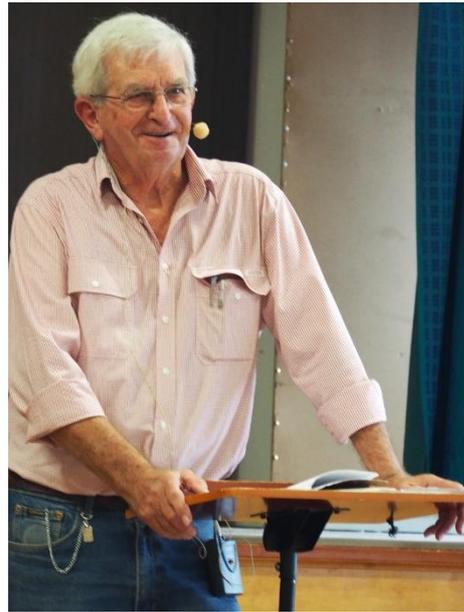
**ORCHESTRA NOVA**

U3A Members were fortunate to see and hear this amazing 'show and tell' of musical making in the acoustically delightful surrounds of Adamstown Uniting

Church. Tools of the trade - instruments -were explained and demonstrated, techniques of conducting described and clarified, and the role of the orchestra in the community made clear. Oh, and some wonderful music was played. The audience was appreciative and no doubt looking to attend a few of the many concerts scheduled by Orchestra Nova over the next year.



**Bob Bush: The Bush Poet**



Bob travelled all the way from Tea Gardens to entertain, amuse and charm an appreciative group of listeners for his polished and well-rehearsed performance. Bob's an Australian of the Old School with not only a sense of values but a sense of

humour. Both were on display in his readings of his poetry and in his yarn telling. The audience couldn't help but smile, laugh, cry as Bob spun rhyme after rhyme. This was great stuff; we could all use a laugh and a good time and Bob delivered in spades.

**EXCURSIONS REPORT The Riverboat Postman**



In Semester 2, Newcastle U3A members enjoyed an interesting history walk around East Newcastle, a mystery tour on the buses, several Art Gallery experiences.

And for a special treat, some 45 members spent a delightful sunny half day on the Riverboat Postman, learning about the history of the lower Hawkesbury River, enjoying the first-hand experiences and funny stories from the Captain - accompanied by home-made Anzac biscuits and later a pleasant salad lunch in good company - and even helping to collect and deliver the post at the many small island communities along the way.

## TWO MATHEMATICAL EMAILS:

### *A Whimsical Exchange*

1. Teacher Arrested At Sydney International Airport

A high school teacher was arrested today at Sydney's Kingsford-Smith International airport as he attempted to board a flight while in possession of a ruler, a protractor, a compass, a slide-rule and a calculator.

At the press conference, the Attorney General said he believes the man is a member of the notorious extremist Al-Gebra movement. He did not identify the man, who has been charged by the AFP with carrying weapons of maths instruction.

'Al-Gebra is a problem for us', the Attorney General said. 'They derive solutions by means and extremes, and sometimes go off on tangents in search of absolute values.' They use secret code names like "X" and "Y" and refer to themselves as "unknowns;" but we have determined that they belong to a common denominator of the axis of medieval with coordinates in every country. As the Greek philosopher Isosceles used to say, "There are three sides to every triangle."

When asked to comment on the arrest, Prime Minister Tony Abbott said, "If God had wanted us to have better weapons of maths instruction, He would have given us more fingers and toes."

Fellow Liberal colleagues told reporters they could not recall a more intelligent or profound statement by the Prime Minister.

2. Good one, Darren; I enjoyed it so much I made one of my own:

A rival group calling themselves the Arith-metics have formed a new fraction with the common denominator of destroying the higher powers. They decimate points and employ long division to split up their opposition. They immediately square any roots of democracy and employ Pythagoras at every opportunity to establish right angles as they see it. They are multiplying at an exponential rate and have built whole villages out of log-orythms to house their whole numbers. If they are not erased soon they will branch out into Trigonometric groups, perhaps a Cosine of things to come, and Geometric polygons, presenting all sides of their argument, and where will we be then? I urge all right-thinking people to form integers and fight this cancerous metamorphosis before the sum is finally totalled.

*John Page*

## NOTICE FOR CURRENT AND ASPIRING TUTORS

Dear Tutors

Please be aware that we are exploring the possibility of creating just one annual 2020 Newcastle U3A Program, rather than two single semester programs.

An annual program will save funds and time and enable members to plan their year knowing when the courses they particularly want to attend are scheduled. It will also significantly increase the range of venues available to us in the second half of the year.

We appreciate this will be a big change for tutors, which is why the possibility is being flagged so early. When planning potential courses for 2020, please include the full 12 months in your submissions.

Now that the 2019 Program has been finalised and released, planning is already underway for the 2019 Semester 2 program. Feel free to **send us your course proposals** with as much detail as possible - course title, description, minimum and maximum numbers, resources and AV required and a list of your preferred venues. Don't forget to let us know your preferred days of week, time of day and any periods when you will be unavailable.

When thinking about courses you might like to present, be aware that it is quite acceptable to reduce the length of courses to one hour rather than the standard 90 minutes. Not only will this reduce the burden on venues, but also has the potential to increase participant engagement. Members can find it hard to sustain focus and attention for 90 minutes. It depends on the type of course, and the specific content. Sometimes tutors also propose longer activities – be aware that these must have the potential to attract sufficient applicants and be financially viable.

We urge all tutors to read their **Semester 1 2019 "Tutor Letters"** with care. These communications have been significantly updated and contain important information that you need to be aware of.

**We thank our tutors** for their significant contributions to the quality of our members' lives. The learning experiences and enjoyment you so generously give is very much appreciated.

Gloria Jones and John Thacker  
Joint Program Coordinators

**NEWCASTLE U3A TERM DATES**  
**2019 Term 1: 11 February - 5 April**  
**2019 Term 2: 29 April - 21 June**  
**2019 Term 3: 22 July - 13 September**  
**2019 Term 4: 14 October - 6 December**

## COURSE COORDINATORS REPORT

### AN EXCITING SMORGASBORD FOR S1

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 13 September

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

Labour Day Holiday – 7 October

Melbourne Cup Day - 5 November



### **TAKING NEWCASTLE U3A ENROLMENTS ONLINE – UPDATE**

As foreshadowed in the Spring 2018 Newsletter, plans to implement a fully web-based system for Newcastle U3A membership and enrolment functions (MyU3A) are on hold. But thanks to the commitment and generosity of our own programming wizard, Diane Body, webmaster Phil Warren, and Lake Mac U3A's Ken Doolan, our little team of volunteers has been able to put together an easy-to-use online system for membership and enrolment applications that can be fed into our existing database (all courtesy of Ken Doolan's design initiatives). You will see the instructions for the new system on our website soon, with links to the online forms. They are very user-friendly and, if you do not have access to internet or would otherwise like some assistance to complete their forms, our friendly and knowledgeable volunteers have laptops and help in the office at 21 Gordon Avenue, Hamilton, during extended hours in the week of 7-11 January (see p.1 of this newsletter).

We hope Newcastle U3A members will use and enjoy the new system as much as our volunteers will enjoy the relief from keying in all the data on those paper forms – and saving the trees too!

**FROM A COUPLE OF OUR INTREPID TRAVELLERS:**

Everyone should take a cruise at least once in their life. You might hate it but then again you might love it, get hooked on sailing the seven seas and then, at some nexus in the future, sign up for a World Cruise. Sign up for three-and-a-half-months in a small room aboard a big white ship with occasional land-relief in intriguing ports of call.

G&J did such an adventure in 2018 and didn't regret it. Life at sea is controlled relaxation, with some sightseeing along the way. That small cabin is tolerable when the whole ship is at your disposal and the endless seascape distracts and many a mysterious destination beckons.

J: "I took over 12,000 photographs but there's none of us schmoozing in front of an icon. Instead I look to the quirky and the unusual, and have an interest in what can be seen on the street.

The Smart cars New York cops use these days are completely incongruous; big people with big guns in tiny vehicles.



No location disappointed but some were just exhilarating." In 108 days of travel the scenery will obviously vary immensely. From icebergs to tropical jungle with the occasional sophisticated urban locale thrown in, it might not be immersive travel but it's interesting travel. A sampler to lure you back for more if you will. Repeat this long voyage of discovery? Maybe, but not too soon. Although there are still vacancies on that two and a half month Pacific cruise in 2020...



**FRIDAY COFFEE MORNINGS**

For new, current and potential members (or simply the curious) to chat, socialise and get to know others. If you have a friend interested in learning more about U3A they are more than welcome to come along.

Join us in the venue at 10.30 am

RSVP please: Elizabeth Howard 0451 272729

Feb 8 Wickham Boatshed, 91 Hannell St., Wickham

Mar 8 Jacks Hide Out, 103 Tudor Street, Hamilton

Apr 12 Hood Milk Bar, 188 Union Street, Junction

May 10 Suspension Espresso, 3 Beaumont Street

Jun 14 Source Cafe, 1/74 The Lane, Maryville

Jul 12 CJ'S on Glebe, 62 Glebe Road, The Junction

Aug 9 Tailors Workshop, 10 Beaumont St.

Sep 13 Cafe Inu, 43 Denison St, Carrington

Oct 11 Fernleigh Cafe, 89 Fletcher St, Adamstown

Nov 8 Peaberrys, 81 Maitland Road, Islington

Dec 13 Birdy's Cafe, 173 Maitland Road, Tighes Hill

**LUNCH OF THE MONTH**

Venues have been chosen because of parking availability, access to public transport and a reputation for being an enjoyable place to dine and socialise. Join us in the venue at 12.00 noon.

RSVP, please: Eric 4957 2211 [ericatch1@gmail.com](mailto:ericatch1@gmail.com)

Leonie [leoniesullivan@hotmail.com](mailto:leoniesullivan@hotmail.com)

Feb 15 Town Hall Hotel, Turton Road, Waratah

Mar 15 Mary Ellen, 57 Railway Street, Merewether

Apr 9 (Tuesday) NEX, 309 King Street Newcastle

May 17 Royal Inn, 61 Station Street, Waratah

Jun 21 Wickham Park, corner Maitland Rd & Albert St

Islington

Jul 19 Lambton Park, cnr Howe and Morehead Streets

Lambton

Aug 16 Blackbutt, cnr Carnley Ave & Orchardtown Rd

Kotara

Sep 19 (Thursday) NEX, 309 King Street Newcastle

Oct 18 Gates Hotel, 660 Glebe Road, Adamstown

Nov 15 Prince of Wales, 1 Morgan St., Merewether

Dec 13 Duke of Wellington, 69 Regent Street,

New Lambton

**NEWCASTLE U3A THEATRE GROUP**

**Sundays: January 20, March 10, April 28,**

**June 2, July 14, August 25, October 6,**

**November 17, 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 the box office.

**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 Hamilton