



Newcastle U3A
NEWSLETTER

LEARN, LAUGH, LIVE

Winter 2020

Dear Members,

We hope you have all come through the past months untouched by Covid-19.

Our U3A year commenced 2020 with a Program packed with classes, activities and excursions, but we were only partway through when Covid-19 put a stop to it. Your Committee, being conscious of the potential risks to our members pondered long and hard over the weekend of 14 and 15 March, before deciding to shut down the following day, Monday 16 March. With the increase in Covid-19 cases the Prime Minister came out and shut down the country the same day.

The subsequent weeks have been a difficult time for a lot of you, especially for our members who live alone. For some it has been a lovely quiet time, while others did their spring cleaning in autumn.

Some of our tutors have been presenting their classes to homebound members via the online medium of Zoom, creating virtual classrooms, or via email. Several of your Committee members have been very busy introducing Tutors, course clerks and members to the workings and requirements of Zoom. U3A Online self-directed courses have also been made available to members.

Our Program Coordinator, Beth Elliott, has put together another great Program for Terms 3 and 4, with the assistance of Michelle Deeg, Excursions Coordinator, and Keith Finnie, Venues Coordinator, with Secretary Jenny Williams and Enrolments Officer Marg Finnie getting the Program into our online system and ready for distribution. In light of the rapidly changing conditions, NU3A's COVID19 Safety Plan for those returning to face to face classes will be published on the NU3A website, and key elements are in the Program as at the status when it is released on Friday 3 July.

Beth stepped into the Program Coordinator role in 2019, as a temporary measure, for which we were very grateful. She has since produced the two 2020 Programs as well and started on 2021, but has decided it is now time for her to step back. She will continue to coordinate the 30th Anniversary projects which have been interrupted by the shut down, and will bring them to fruition in 2021. Thank you Beth, it has been wonderful working with you.

We had a good response to the Survey that went out recently with more than 50% of members responding, and this has guided us in our decision to plan for a Term 3 opening. Report below.

This year's Annual General Meeting was planned for April, but had to be deferred. The Department of Fair Trading, that manages these things, has advised that we can skip the 2020 AGM altogether this year and combine it with the 2021 AGM, for which a date has not yet been arranged.

The Audited Accounts for 2019 are annexed to this newsletter.

Eric Aitchison, who has been organising the well-attended Monthly Lunches for some years, has finally stepped back. A great contribution, thank you Eric! Leonie Sullivan has offered to take over the running of the lunches! Thank you Leonie!

Upon advice, the very popular Singing Group at this stage is not expected to recommence until next year due the high risk, caused by the force of air and droplets into the atmosphere when singing, of spreading Covid19.

Best wishes to you all

Julie Newing - President

From the Program Co-ordinator

These last three months have been quite testing for all Australians and for our demographic in particular, being classified as among the most vulnerable to a virus that has changed our entire worldand I think we can all take pride in the way we have met the challenge.

To say it's been easy pulling together the Program for terms 3 and 4, would be a downright lie. It has been frustrating for the entire Program Coordination team, mainly because we have been unable to get the information needed to finalise the program and is the reason the Program is being released later than normal, still flying blind.

There have been many transitions for committee during this last year but one that has worked well has been the setting up a Program Coordination Team where the work is shared between a number of people and where their own special skills contribute greatly to the whole. As my nan used to say, many hands make light work and no longer is the Program Coordinator's role a solitary one.

What has been inspiring is the esprit de corps of our tutors who have offered courses in these testing times. Their loyalty, their generosity of spirit and most of all, their patience is to be applauded, so our sincere thanks and appreciation goes out to all of them.

For myself, it has been a great privilege over this last year to work with tutors who have made this organisation such an icon of learning and who, each in their own way, have continued the legacy and the history of 30 amazing years. I think we have done great things together and I know I am richer for the experience.

I am moving on from the PC leadership role but will still be involved as Coordinator of special projects such as the Adult Learners Week Program and the NU3A documentary "Older and Bolder" begun last year to celebrate our 30th Anniversary. Our celebrations might have been delayed somewhat, but we will celebrate. When, is still to be determined, but I can assure you, it will be in style!

Beth Elliott

Footnote: An important legacy of Beth's time in the PC leadership role has been the sharing of the engine-room of NU3A administration across a team of people (which had previously fallen on too few shoulders) and the development of shared systems for documenting the Program as it is developed (thanks to Michelle). The PC Team is led by the Program Coordinator focused on tutor liaison and scheduling in collaboration with the Excursions Coordinator and Venues Coordinator; the Enrolments Officer and IT Coordinator are also key contributors to the Team; and all under the oversight of the NU3A Committee.

Thanks Beth!

From PC Team and NU3A Committee

SUMMARY OF SURVEY RESULTS

Some 388 members (out of 640 email addresses) responded to the NU3A survey on returning to face to face classes – a very pleasing 60% response and over half of all 700 members.

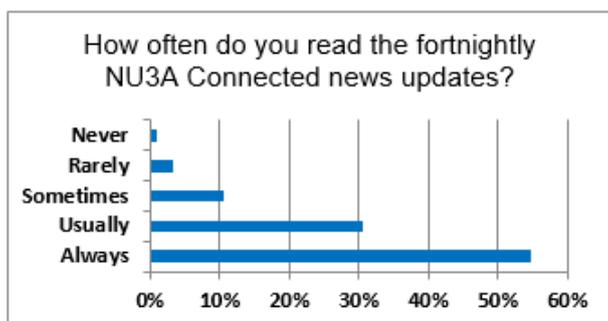
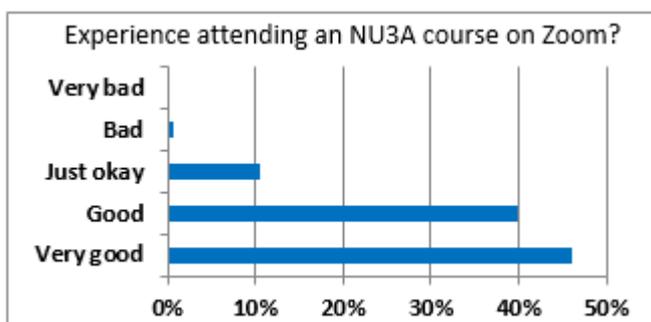
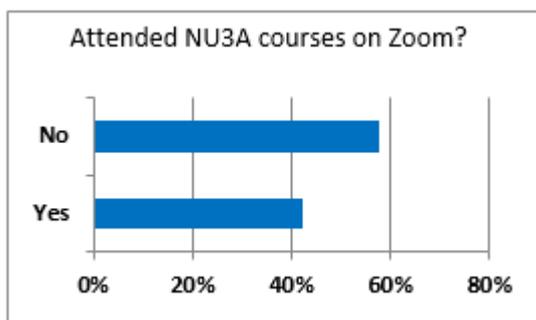
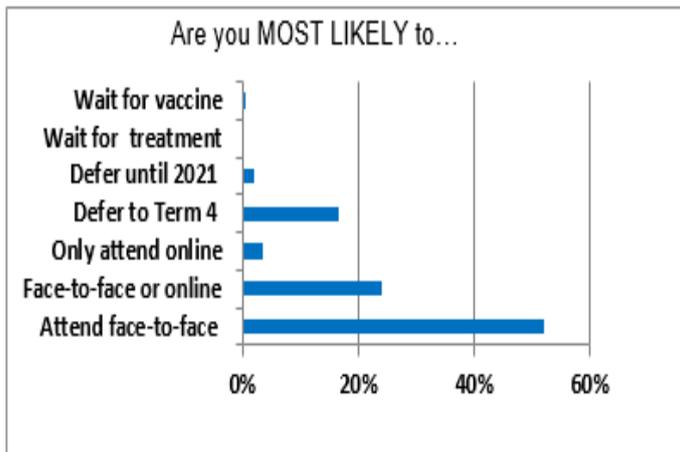
This level of feedback is very much appreciated and has been key to the Committee's decision to try to recommence face to face courses, with a COVID19 Safety Plan in place, in Term 3.

Comments from over 150 respondents reflected both the appreciation of members for efforts to continue to provide learning opportunities and how much members miss the social interaction of normal operations.

The key results are presented in the following graphs and show that:

- Just over half who responded (almost one third of all members) were keen to return to face to face classes IF safe to do so.
- Members who had attended NU3A courses on Zoom were more likely to respond to the survey (42% of respondents, but only about one quarter of all members).
- The 'Zooming' members had overwhelmingly found it a positive experience with almost 90% of them rating it as good or very good, and only one person having a 'bad' experience. There were many who used the comments to thank the tutors who were able to give NU3A courses on Zoom.

- 85% of those who responded read the fortnightly NU3A Connected during the Coronavirus shutdown usually or always – very pleasing to the editor and your Committee!



NU3A’s ‘Clayton’s Closure’ OR ‘Learn, Laugh, Live in Lockdown’

As members who have been reading the NU3A Connected bulletins know, we have not been ‘enjoying the tranquillity’ or doing our spring cleaning during the closure forced on us by the Coronavirus pandemic. The Committee is deeply appreciative of the generosity and efforts of tutors who have continued to provide courses for our members via email or online, and of the enthusiasm, good humour and perseverance of all (tutors, Course Clerks old and new, and members) who have taken on – and conquered – the challenges of learning to Zoom (often with the help of children or grandchildren)...

As a result, we understand that NU3A is one of very few branches that have continued to offer some level of interactive courses during closure. So we are now in a very good position to continue to do that as needed – for, even if we are able to recommence face to face as planned, there will be some courses that are only offered online for the time being. This is due to the restrictions in place and the particular vulnerabilities of some of our members.

Highlights of our Clayton’s Closure have included:

- Music Appreciation continued via weekly links to online music performances.
- Macca’s photography courses continued with assignments sent and submitted and feedback provided via email (see article below).
- A number of other tutors have continued to provide support to members via email, including those in their classes who were not able to join their course on Zoom.
- Michael Foley’s Italian courses continued on Google Hangouts.
- Over a period of a month, we were able to build up to offer 21 courses on Zoom, including most of the language courses, ukulele (thanks to Susan Coggan for her pioneering spirit), the Writers Forum and a combined yoga class (with over 40 participating).
- Existing Course Clerks or other class members have stepped up to learn how to host a Zoom meeting to free the tutor to teach. Courses on Zoom from the Term 1 and 2 Program were

offered only to those already enrolled (and not all of those enrolled were able to Zoom).

- We added three brand new courses via Zoom – Elevating Art, the Philosophy Discussion course associated with the U3A Online self-directed material, and the very popular Newcastle in 1800s series with 50 enrolled! (all advertised in NU3A Connected).
- Dr John Carr’s Astronomy course recently transitioned to NU3A’s Zoom account, providing additional security for participants, and welcoming members from neighbour Eastlakes and Lake Macquarie branches along with our own members who were previously enrolled.
- From the start, the NU3A Zoom sessions had high levels of security (password protection to prevent outsiders from ‘Zoom bombing’, waiting rooms, etc.) thanks to the support of IT Coordinator, Joy Carlin... and these measures have all now been made mandatory by Zoom!
- We have developed a suite of instructions, tips and tricks for new Zoom participants and hosts... and have been asked by the NSW U3A Network to mentor other branches that have yet to take up the challenges.

Last, but by no means least, we could write a short book on how Murphy’s Law runs riot in Zoom – and how we learn from it (and laugh a lot!). More importantly, members who are now accomplished Zoomers have learned a new set of skills that apply in life more generally, and all have benefited from a level of social interaction – not as good as face to face, but a lot better than nothing!

The item below from the Zoom Spanish class will give some flavour of the Zoom experience to those yet to participate.

**With thanks to all involved
The NU3A Zoom Team (Jenny, Marg and Joy)**

DO YOU HAVE HAIRDRESSING SKILLS ?

A member has suggested that because of COVID19, many female members have been avoiding going to the hairdresser and thought that a class to teach blow-dry styling techniques could be helpful. Possibly as a Zoom class.

Would you be interested in taking up the challenge of teaching? If so please let us know ...

newcastleu3a.au@gmail.com

I finally remember what Zoom meetings remind me of.



NU3A - ANNUAL ACCOUNTS 2019

Profit

The profit in 2019 was \$5,860, representing a substantial increase on previous years. In 2018 profit was just \$412. The main factor was a 39% increase in membership fees to \$41,700 caused by:

- An increase in the number of paid-up members from 607 people to 714 people, and;
- A \$10 increase in member fees for the full year and for Semester 2 from \$50 and \$30 in 2018, to \$60 and \$40 in 2019. This factor by itself added \$7,140 over and above what it would have been without the fee increase.

Excursion and course fees received from members were down 4% to \$6,582 but of course these are largely offset by excursion and course costs paid by NU3A. A surplus of \$127 was made on these activities in 2019, down from \$350 in 2018. The main cost continued to be that of venue hire. This increased 26% to \$28,936 and accounted for 79% of total costs excluding excursion and course costs. The next largest cost (again excluding excursion and course costs) was communications \$3,843 which accounted for 10% of costs. This item comprises telecommunication costs, postage and stationery.

Balance sheet

The 2019 year finished with net assets of \$36,056, significantly up on previous years due to the increase in profit.

- Assets of \$58,095 were largely represented by cash and term deposits of \$56,387, plus venue bonds and prepayment of 2020 rent.
- Liabilities jumped sharply to \$22,039 due to a big increase in 2020 membership fees and course fees received in December. These are not included in 2019 profit but carried forward to 2020.

The cash and term deposits position of \$56,387 was boosted by \$21,196 in monies received and paid in December that related to 2020 items (primarily membership fees). Net of that, the cash and short term deposits position was \$35,191, and this is a good measure of the excess funds now held by Newcastle U3A.

Cash flow

Net cash flow (as represented by the increase in liquid resources) turned from a \$2,158 deficit in 2018 to a \$18,750 surplus in 2019. Main factors were the increase in net profit and that huge influx of membership fees during December relating to 2020.

Reconciliation of profit with cash flow

Profit is a very different concept to cash flow for an organisation such as Newcastle U3A which typically receives a good proportion of its income relating to the year in question during the previous year in the form of prepaid member fees. For this reason profit is a truer representation of performance for the year than cash flow. To assist in understanding, the table in the annexed report provides a reconciliation between the two concepts.

Graeme Newing – Treasurer

(Audited Accounts annexed)

A big thank you to those members who, despite the late call-out for stories, put pen to paper (or fingers to keyboard/pad) and responded with the following fabulous contributions...

Be Careful What You Wish For...

There I was, wishing that lockdown life were not so 'groundhog day', when things began to kick up a notch...

The day can only get better when you find a possum trapped in the toilet window. We had just stumbled out of bed, ready for our early morning walk, and there was the possum- large, sleepy, and wedged between the louvres and the (fortunately, inside) mesh. Not overly fazed, we turned on the light, shoved in a radio playing loudly, closed the door, and headed off for our walk, fairly certain the possum would have moved on. But, no - the possum liked the music. We stepped it up a notch, with the addition of a very strong light and toddled off to drink our coffee, pretty sure the possum would be gone. But, no - all we got was an evil stare; obviously the possum was planning a return raid

that night with a few friends. Our next move involved the water spray bottle reserved for my indoor plants and the broom handle. I sprayed whilst Rob tapped the stick around the window. The possum was not impressed; he gave us the possum finger and leapt into next-door's overhanging photineas. A bad move on poss' part, as we pursued it whilst rattling the photineas with the garden rake. The possum was last seen heading east. Rob then possum-proofed the window and I cut back the overhanging photineas which stretched along the eastern side of the house- a whole 2 green bins worth and all before breakfast. The above incident took place early in 'isolation' and the possum has not made a return appearance. It turned out he'd been chased from our neighbours the day before. The word is out in the possum world to avoid our neighbourhood. Either that or a full scale war is being planned.

Penny Raven



This lockdown is stimulating my memories

back some seventy years to the mid-century poliomyelitis epidemic known then as "infantile paralysis". I began my general nursing training in 1951 at the old Royal Newcastle Hospital prior to University education for nurses. The devastating infectious disease was not then labelled as 'polio' prior to identification of the virus and long before the invention of the oral vaccine. Cinemas were closed and many anxious parents kept children home from school in the 40's, general panic prevailed due to the tragic repercussions of permanent paralysis. The Infectious Disease Hospital at Waratah was combined with an infants/primary school and trained teachers so recovering children could continue their education once the infectious stage was over. Those who had been discharged to home were transported in a public bus manned by volunteer driver and assistant from local transport department. For those children

still in admission and post infectious stage there was a beautiful large therapy pool at Waratah. The local orthopaedic specialist Dr. Alan Roberts was one of the few doctors in Australia who were convinced the Sister Kenny method of rehabilitation was the treatment of choice. They had regular pool therapy and exercises on tricycles. I well remember these children racing the long wide corridors on their tricycles never realising they were having therapy at the same time. Nurses were taught to supervise the exercises because the RNH with 830 patients had only one trained physiotherapist. We had such successes even young adult patients from interstate were sent for the rehabilitation and eventually succeeding from being bedridden to walking with the aid of callipers. The exercise was frequent and mandatory but most patients regardless of age, desperate to regain use of limbs, were always co-operative. How fortunate medical progress has all but eliminated that destructive disease. BRING ON THE COVID 19 Vaccine research establishments.

Daphne Roper



Spanish by Zoom

Renate has been leading our class with structured lessons on Zoom assisted by Jack with grammar and pronunciation.

Renate said she has enjoyed being able to continue our Spanish using Zoom thereby maintaining our visual connection which means we have been able to speak, read, ask questions and help each other as if we were together at a venue. Fortunately, it is simple to use

although some language learning activities cannot be used but thanks to the U3A tech savvy Committee, we have not fallen behind.

Jack said he enjoys the small group contact as there are plenty of options and opportunities for interaction and everyone gets a turn fairly quickly and he would be happy to continue the Zoom experience if the face to face classes don't resume.

Rosemary said that our Zoom class has been great fun and well worthwhile as we have worked well together as a group with the industrious work ethic of Renate and the clarifying help from Jack where needed.

Glen said her preference is to do the Zoom meetings because of her nomadic lifestyle – regardless of where she is, she can always attend class.

We look forward to meeting in person, but Zoom has been a great substitute and I think it is a good alternative when face to face classes are not possible. It keeps us all 'connected' and we enjoy having our chats too.

Annette Latter



Top row from left: Glen Charlton, Annette Latter, Rosemary Witcomb,
Bottom row: Renate Daly, Jack Caldwell Absent: John Olive

U3A PHOTO ONLINE

Thanks to some quick thinking by Tutor Mark, photography devotees were able to avail themselves of one of the first NU3A courses to be offered non face-to-face:

ONLINE PHOTO FEEDBACK.

Offered initially to all enrollees in Semester 1 photo courses as well as those who participated in courses last year, 20+ took up the challenge.

That challenge was to email 2 snaps every 2 weeks based on a set subject. These are appraised by the Tutor and, with anonymous evaluations shared bcc with the group as a short MP4 file.



There's opportunity for questions, advice and guidance from our Tutor.



Participants are asked to think about the subject set for each assignment - how they interpret the subject is entirely up to them, so it's a great opportunity to be creative, test skills and Point of View and it comes with the bonus of a professional photographer's feedback.



We are LEARNING and also having a lot of FUN...



John Thacker

I had a rather amazing few weeks whilst in the middle of lockdown due to COVID-19. One rainy day I had a tidy up and unearthed a novel I wrote a couple of years ago. It was delegated to the proverbial bottom drawer. I had finished 'Live Once - Love Twice' and sent it off to a publisher. They showed interest but wanted changes that didn't appeal to me.

With nothing else in demand I read my book and decided to publish on Amazon. What a learning curve. It was harder than writing but that was my lack of experience with electronic publishing. After a frustrating few days I finally achieved all the necessary layouts, pictures, titles and pressed send! Now I have a book on Kindle. Not to be outdone, my husband David, also with U3A checked his old work. Did a huge edit and sent his novel to Harper Collins electronically.

It is a great feeling of achievement to create during a rather big yawn in our lives.

Joy Barrow



This TEST has only one question, but it's a very important one. By giving an honest answer you will discover where you stand.

THE SITUATION:

You are in Miami with chaos all around caused by a hurricane and a flood of biblical proportions. You're a photojournalist working for a major newspaper and trying to shoot career-making photos. There are houses and people swirling around you, some disappearing under the water. Suddenly you see a man in the water fighting for his life trying not to be taken down with the debris. You move closer. The man looks like...Good Heavens! it's President Trump! You realise that the raging waters are about to take him under forever.

YOU HAVE TWO OPTIONS:

You can save President Trump OR you can shoot a dramatic Pulitzer Prize winning photo, documenting the last minutes of one of the world's most powerful men.

THE QUESTION - Would you:

A) select high contrast colour,

or

B) go with the classic simplicity of black and white.

thanks to Stefan for this potential quandary

Milly's Pattern...

My Mum and my Aunts were crafty – not ‘shifty’ crafty (OK, maybe one or two of ‘em...’) but creative crafty. They all worked with their head ‘n hands. Crochet, tapestry, cross stitch, knit, sew. Although, no individual, and there were many siblings, would dominate a discipline that another was the expert of – that reason is lost in history - but all Sisters could cover each. My Mum was the knitter of the family. Jumpers, cardies, all in quality wool. Gifts, always, with love. But one knit-up stood out: socks. They were knitted in quantity. For family, hospitals, ‘Old Folk Homes’, charities, thrift shops, Red Cross. You name it. The stash left after her passing went to a number of places: hundreds of bootees. Here’s the recipe. Any knitters out there?

John Thacker

Use No. 8 or 9 needles. *FOR FOOT SLIPPERS. (RED) Milly's pattern*
 Cast on 64 stitches. *FOR LARGER SIZES NEEDLES 6 OR 7*
 Knit 12 rows. *(SOLE)*
 13th. Row -- Knit 2, purl across, knit last 2 stitches.
 14th. Row -- Knit 28 stitches, knit 2 together 4 times, knit 28 stitches.
 15th. Row -- repeat 13th. row.
 16th. Row -- Knit 26 stitches, knit 2 tog. 4 times, knit 26 sts.
 17th. Row -- repeat 13th. row.
 18th. Row -- Knit 24 stitches, knit 2 tog. 4 times, knit 24 sts.
 19th. Row -- repeat 13th. row.
 20th. Row -- Knit 22 stitches, knit 2 tog. 4 times, knit 22 sts.
 21st. Row -- repeat 13th. row.
 22nd. Row -- Knit 20 stitches, knit 2 tog. 4 times, knit 20 sts.
 23rd. Row -- repeat 13th. row.
 24th. Row -- Knit 18 stitches, knit 2 tog. 4 times, knit 18 sts.
 25th. Row -- repeat 13th. row.
 26th. Row -- Knit 16 stitches, knit 2 tog. 4 times, knit 16 sts.
 27th. Row -- repeat 13th. row.
 28th. Row -- Knit 14 stitches, knit 2 tog. 4 times, knit 14 sts.
 29th. Row -- repeat 13th. row.
 30th. Row -- Knit 12 stitches, knit 2 tog. 4 times, knit 12 sts.
 31st. Row -- Knit plain.
 32nd. Row -- Knit the next 12 rows, bind off. Sew up sole and back: Leave cuff open in back. For longer wear, use double yarn for sole which is the 12 knitted rows. The last 12 rows is the cuff and can be made in different colours.

Lunch of the Month

Please join us in the venue at 12.00 noon.

RSVP, please: Leonie 4965 5121 or 0423 257 602

Aug 21 [Blackbutt Hotel](#), corner Carnley Avenue and Orchardtown Road, Kotara

Oct 16 [Mayfield Hotel](#), ([Benny's](#)) 284 Maitland Rd, Mayfield

Old age is golden I've often heard it said,
 but sometimes I wonder as I crawl in my bed.
 With my ears in my drawer, my teeth in a cup
 and my eyes on a shelf until I wake up.
 When sleep dims my eyes I think to myself,
 is there anything else I should put on that shelf?
 The reason I know my youth has been spent,
 is my-get-up-and-go has got-up-and-went!
 But, I really don't mind as I think with a grin,
 of all the fun places my get-up has been !



Friday Coffee mornings

Join us in the venue at 10.30 am **RSVP please** (at least **2 days beforehand** and remember to leave your name with the message): **Elizabeth 0451 272729**

Jul 31 [The Wickham Boatshed](#), Hannell Street (near Newcastle Yacht Club)

Aug 28 [Birdies Café](#), 169 Maitland Road, Tighes Hill (near Tighes Hill TAFE)

Sep 25 [Crema Coffee House](#), 162 Broadmeadow Road (near Broadmeadow shops)

