

February 2025



Batesford Community Hub
94 Batesford Road
Chadstone 3148 Tel: (03) 9077 2720

Email: Apologies & Membership enquiries:
membership@u3awaverley.org.au
Webpage: www.u3awaverley.org.au

PRESIDENT'S REPORT



Our search for a new Secretary has been successful!

I am very pleased to announce **Ros Prasad** has agreed to join the Committee as our new Secretary and will be formally elected at the AGM in March. Welcome Ros!

In Ros' own words.....

My career has for the most part been in IT, with much of that time being in the education sector. I have worked at Deakin

University, Monash University, Holmesglen Institute, and various other smaller educational institutions throughout the years. So, I guess it is no surprise that in retirement my interest still lies in education, whether it be in teaching or in continuing to learn.

Initially, upon retiring I became a volunteer teacher of English to refugees and asylum seekers, which was both enjoyable and rewarding. Wanting also to continue learning, I studied Auslan for a year at Melbourne Polytechnic. Then last year I enrolled in three courses at U3A Waverley: French Conversation Intermediate, Understanding Linguistics, and Music and the Brain. They were all so interesting, and I learned a lot. This year I am excited to be continuing with French, and starting Astronomy and Choir. There are so many fascinating courses to choose from!



Over the last year, I came to appreciate the value of U3A and what it has to offer to the community. Among retired and semi-retired folk, there is a wealth of knowledge and experience. It is wonderful that some of these people are choosing to share their expertise with others, and U3A provides a platform for this to happen. Additionally, in this environment, people not only have the opportunity to learn new skills but also to meet others and socialise together. And everyone involved in U3A is a volunteer – I love that!

I decided that I would like to contribute to this amazing organisation in some way, so last year I began volunteering in the Office a few times a month. Then, in my first class this year, our President, Jane Evans, made an announcement that the position of Secretary was vacant and that U3A Waverley was legally required to fill this position in order to continue to operate. I wondered to myself if that was something I could do. After some thought, and discussion with Jane, the position was offered to me and I have accepted. I am looking forward to a very productive year ahead with Jane and the other Committee members.

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“Ask not what U3A Waverley can do for me, what can I do for U3A Waverley?”

At the end-of-year function in December, the Committee recognised several Tutors for their outstanding or longstanding contributions to U3A Waverley. One of those acknowledged was **Brian Graham**, now Tutor of the Armchair Travel class.

Brian composed a gracious and interesting letter of thanks to me in response – extracts of which appear below. There was one paragraph in particular that resonated for me in which Brian, paraphrasing President Kennedy wrote, “Ask not what U3A Waverley can do for me, what can I do for U3A Waverley?”

As the Committee searches for new members to help manage the organisation, or volunteers to join teams organising events, or people for the Office, as well as Tutors for classes this is such a strong call to action. As a totally volunteer-based organisation, U3A Waverley cannot function if members don’t ‘give back’ as volunteers.



Extracts from Brian’s letter...

I have been a member of U3A Waverley for over 30 years, since my retirement from Senior Engineering and Corporate activities in both Commonwealth and State Governments.

My retirement was unfortunately an unhappy and abrupt event, and for some

time I was devoid of motivation and activity. Then I discovered U3A and U3A Waverley, which amply filled an intellectual, educational, creative and entertainment void.

I absorbed the essential nature of worldwide U3A, which encourages life-long learning, social interaction, and volunteering. I volunteered my skills in several areas, including technical support for equipment maintenance and construction. I did make a difference;

examples of my practical work are still being used in U3A Waverley activities.

I found that my desire to learn, and my technical curiosity led to developing (on average) typically two technical presentations each year for my Science and Technology class, learning audio-visual skills such as PowerPoint along the way.

I found this to be a thoroughly rewarding process, from which many U3A members could benefit.

This was in the era when the late Jack McDonell, who helped to bring U3A to Australia, was still Tutor for the Science and Technology class, producing fascinating presentations weekly.

When Jack relinquished this role. I was one of several who volunteered to carry on the tutoring task.

I enjoyed attending several U3A classes, including Science and Technology, Music Appreciation, Armchair Travel, and occasional short courses.

I decided to volunteer as a joint Tutor (for Armchair Travel) with Ray (Wall), this time using U3A Waverley's newly introduced Internet facilities, and a Chromecast plus video device already used in my home. This concept enables a plethora of more modern and recent travel videos to be sourced from YouTube.

U3A Waverley's purchase of a Chromecast plus video device has since enhanced the activities of several U3A Waverley classes.

I continue to gain great pleasure and intellectual enrichment from U3A Waverley classes.

Now aged 90, I enjoy the company of like-minded people, and I hope I can continue contributing.

- Brian Graham (Member No.42)

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News from the Committee

The Committee has a very full program over the next two months - you will see more information as arrangements are developed.

Strategic Planning Workshop

You will recall last year we arranged a survey of members and received great feedback on what you all wanted to see continue and most importantly what we could offer in the future.

We also ran a Tutors Workshop which generated more interesting ideas and feedback from the Tutors' perspective.

All of that will be essential input to a strategic planning process the Committee is conducting on 13 February. We will be imagining what U3A Waverley might look like by 2028 – membership diversity, classes offered, one-off programs, cultural and social activities and so on. We will then be agreeing on what needs to be done and the people from within the organisation who can help achieve the vision for 2028.

The results of the workshop will be prepared in a Strategic Plan for members to view and comment on.

New Members Welcome Event

For the first time in a long time we will be arranging an informal gathering of new members as an opportunity to meet each other as well as Committee members. Planned for 6 March at the Hub the event will allow new members to find out more about U3A Waverley, how the organisation works and the openings there are for members who might want to be more deeply involved.

New members will be contacted personally with the details.

Annual General Meeting

U3A Waverley (then known as U3A Monash) ran its first classes in April 1985. So, the organisation is 40 years old this year – which presents a wonderful opportunity to celebrate at the AGM on **26 March 2025**. A small planning team is working on making the AGM a little more lively and engaging this year to commemorate that 40-year history.

Make sure you put the date in your diary!

End of year function a great success!

The popularity of the end-of-year function in the Jordanville Hall grows year on year. Some 170 people attended the event in December and were treated to a range of performances or recitals showcasing the variety of classes available from U3A Waverley. We enjoyed Tai Chi to Line Dancing, recorder ensemble to piano keyboard, our choir to ballroom dancing. The Indonesian cultural dance and guitar group 'singalong' deserve a special mention.

I would also like to acknowledge all the people who worked behind the scenes or on the day to make the event a success. Kevin Delaney for keeping the performances on time, Bruce Brown for ensuring the audio equipment was working effectively, Lynette Crowe for setting up the urns, helping with the catering tables and managing the clean up afterwards, Chris Nallaratnam for designing the Recognition Certificates for Tutors – and the team of heroes who moved some 50 chairs from the Multi-Purpose Room in the Hub to the Jordanville Hall and back again. Of course, we shouldn't forget all the Tutors who rehearsed their classes to be performance-ready on the day.

I am sure we are looking forward to an even better event at the end of 2025.





Australia Day
behind us
the year for
U3A begins

Faces
keen and eager
seek out
friends
Share their
holiday times
joys
sorrows
Compare
their latest
health journeys

The happy buzz
of laughter
of chatter
draws back
as classes begin

Our U3A
keeps us
active

in mind
in body
in knowledge
in emotions
in expression

We listen
and learn
share
our wisdom
our understandings
our friendship
our caring support

All this
I saw
and felt
as I watched
as I shared
from the Office window

Our Community
again gladdened
together

So starts 2025!



Unlock a world of learning from the comfort of your home! These three courses are coming to you via Zoom in 2025. Expand your mind and stimulate your intellect – all from your favourite armchair! Dive into our exciting new offerings below.

Subject: Healing Ourselves and the Planet

Course Code: **25 HEA028**

Tutor: Dr John Beaney

Delivery: Via Zoom Tuesdays & Fridays

We should be enjoying unprecedented good health, but we are not. We demand more from the planet than it can provide. What can we do, personally at the grassroots level, to heal ourselves and our planet? Each week, (Tuesdays and Fridays) we will explore different aspects of personal and planetary health.

No need to commit to the complete 34 weeks. Delivered via Zoom twice a week and each week is packed full of interesting information with plenty of me for discussion. Give it a try. You may get hooked!

Subject: Jewish Scriptures and Writings

Course Code: **25 HUM024**

Tutor: Dina Burgess

Delivery: Via Zoom on Wednesday on Zoom 10.30 - 12.30

This year we will study selected verses from the Torah (Genesis to Deuteronomy) to try to understand concepts that underpin Jewish ethics and continue to be of great

importance to societal well-being today. Topics will include: free will and God's role in history; idolatry and the problem of evil; war and peace; affluence and human hubris; gratitude and the sin of joylessness; and stewardship of God's gifts. Discussions will reference the Hebrew Prophets, the Psalms, the books of Job and Ecclesiastes, plus the writings of sages and rabbis from the Talmud (e.g. Hillel and Shammai), through medieval times (e.g. Ibn Ezra and Moses Maimonides), to the modern era (e.g. Martin Buber, the late Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks) and current Israeli and Australian thinkers.

Most sessions will begin with a segment called "Israel matters", with updates about events in Israel and the Jewish world.

Jewish religious festivals will also be highlighted as they occur during the year.

The course is for non-Jewish people and will suit both new and returning participants. In keeping with Jewish tradition, questions and discussion are welcome, the only requirement being mutual respect. This is a year-long course, conducted on Zoom, weekly on Wednesdays, from 10.30 am to 12.30 pm.

The course is hosted by U3A Waverley, with members of other U3As also participating.

Members of the U3A Network Distance Education Program can enrol through U3A Waverley (contact:

u3awaverley@u3awaverley.org.au)

Subject: How to Read Music

Course Code: **25MUS**

Tutor: Knobby Clarke

Delivery: Via Zoom on Monday, 3:00 PM - 3:40 PM

The course assumes no prior music knowledge of musical notation. The course progressively introduces the student to the

elements of standard music notation used for Western music.

At the end of the course, each student will be able to follow an orchestral pocket score during a performance of a movement of an orchestral work. The reading skill acquired will be enough to enable the student to learn to sing or to play an instrument. Numbers of students are dictated by the ability to manage the enrolments.

New Face-to-Face classes:

Subject: Armchair Travel

Course Code: **25ENT002**

Tutor: Brian Graham & Ray Wall

Delivery: Class based

Commencing Thursday, February 6 - 1.35 to 3.30 pm Room 2

Passengers are needed for a virtual magic carpet adventure to exciting travel destinations around the world.

View towering mountains, stunning waterfalls, lush forests, gorgeous snowscapes and sea-scapes on a big screen, in living colour and high definition. One usually can't do this at home!

Grasp this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to enjoy exotic experiences without the cost and hassle of physical travel. 'Armchair' provided!

Join other friendly U3A Waverley travellers in this learning and entertaining voyage of exploration, launching soon! Enrol NOW! Don't miss it!

Subject: Sensation, Perception and Aging Process

Course Code: **25SCI005**

Tutor: Robert Taylor & David Kemp

Delivery: Class based

Wednesday, 2:00 PM - 4:00 PM

Next date: 12 Feb 2025

Though the physical world we occupy may be identical, the reality we experience is very different. This is true not only from one person to another but even within the same individual. Our various sensory systems can be altered over time, their acuity changing in response to aging or injury, life experiences, evolving personalities, and other factors.

Our experiences are vastly different today than they were when we were children and those experiences are becoming ever more different as we age when natural changes alert us to the need to compensate, often in ways that are quite positive.

Using a DVD series of lectures, over 12 weeks, you will explore how our sensory systems interpret our world and how this changes as we age.

Subject: Epic Engineering Failures

Course Code: **25SCI004**

Tutor: David Kemp

Delivery: Class based

Starting: 20 Aug 2025

Engineering failures pave the way for improvement in the ways that we design, build, and maintain our technological systems. But first, we must figure out what went wrong. Over 13 weeks, using a DVD-based lecture series, you will go behind the scenes of painstaking and captivating investigations that not only reveal what caused failure in more than 24 epic engineering disasters.

The course also examines the less technical and more human components of error—the individual personalities and sometimes dysfunctional organisations that led to catastrophe. In addition, the question is asked, Can we move forward as a civilisation without these engineering failures?

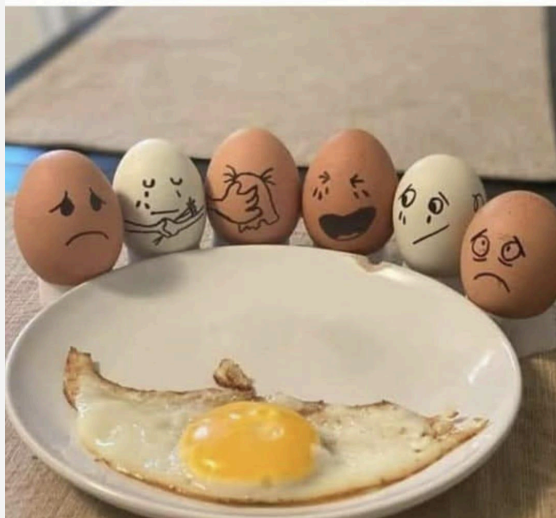
New Addition to DVD Library

A new title has been added to the DVD library in the office: **Music and the Brain**. 18 x ½ hour lectures examining how humans react to music and what role the brain has in that process.

The DVDs in the library are available for loan for a month at a time. Each DVD is accompanied by a book explaining the lectures.

Eggcellent!

He died last fry day. Thank God he wasn't beaten. Don't worry, he went over easy. He's now on the sunny side. He's definitely in a better plate.



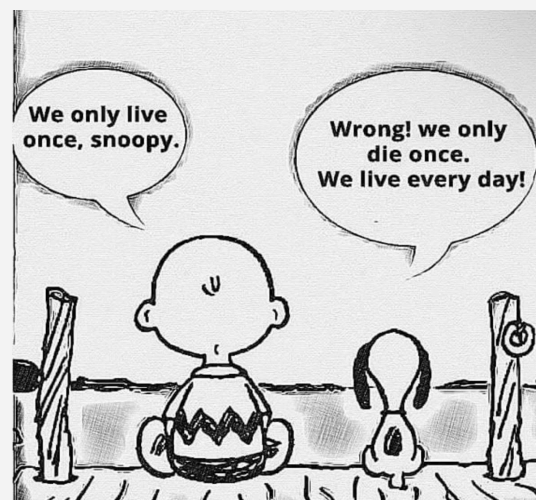
Let's Celebrate!

Many of our U3A class members celebrated the end of a fantastic year of learning and camaraderie with a delightful gathering in their class. They enjoyed a spread of delicious cakes and other treats, sharing stories and laughter as they marked the occasion. Here are some snapshots from the festive year-end class party!

Drawing & Sketching class:



Eastern Mahjong class:



END OF THE YEAR CELEBRATION 2024!

U3A Waverley's end-of-year bash on December 13th, 2024, was a resounding success! With around 170 members in attendance, the event was a vibrant showcase of talent, featuring captivating performances and recitals by our talented tutors and students. It's truly remarkable to witness the magic that unfolds when a volunteer-led organisation pours its heart into creating such a memorable celebration. See the joy for yourself! Check out the performances on our website and browse the photos below of our wonderful members celebrating together!







Welcome to the first Waverley U3A News Letter of 2025!

A warm and joyful New Year to all our members—we are thrilled to reunite and embark on another year of learning, connection, and shared enthusiasm. Exciting developments await: brand-new courses are set to ignite curiosity, and we extend a heartfelt welcome to Ros Prasad, our new secretary, as she joins the U3A family. This newsletter is your platform to shine! We invite you to share your creations, experiences, and stories, enriching our community through this vibrant medium. Your contributions—whether a memorable anecdote, a creative project, or a fresh idea—are what make these pages come alive. To ensure this newsletter remains engaging and inspiring, we warmly welcome your suggestions and feedback. Thank you for your unwavering support—here's to a year of growth, discovery, and togetherness!

Please submit all Newsletter contributions to our new dedicated email address at least one week before the end of the month to guarantee timely publication. Email: newslettereditor@u3awaverley.org.au

I hope this newsletter keeps you informed and engaged! Thank you, Editor: **Chris Nallaratnam**