

University of the Third Age

Venue: The Philip Smith Centre, 2 Edward Street, Glebe

Website www.u3ahobart.org.au

PO Box 71 Sandy Bay 7006



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August 2020

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Term Dates 2020

Term 1: In-person classes suspended
Term 2: In-person classes suspended
Term 3: In-person classes suspended

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From the President

It has been difficult to make decisions about the future when surrounded by so much uncertainty.

At the macro level and at the time of writing this message, Tasmania's borders are closed and we appear to be living in one of the safest places in the world. But we know things can change very quickly. For example, Victoria is now experiencing a large and deadly second wave of the coronavirus which is killing people who are mostly in the same demographic age group as our members.

Closer to home, the U3A Hobart Management Committee is actively trying to address a number of challenges that include deciding when we can resume face-to-face classes and where they will be held. If we are to stay at the Philip Smith Centre we have to engage with the new management of the Domain Tennis Centre which is reviewing the use of the land that many U3A members presently use for parking. In respect to these matters we have had and will continue to have meetings with the University of Tasmania and the Domain Tennis Centre because they must be resolved before the 31 December.

We will, of course, keep you informed about any progress we make.

A more immediate decision involved the possibility of some restricted use of the Philip Smith Centre in Term Three. The University had indicated that very small groups could meet in the centre subject to extensive and very labour-intensive protocols that included the execution of health tests, record keeping, modifying physical layouts to accommodate social distancing, extensive

cleaning, and the provision of toilet monitors.

Given our members are in the most vulnerable coronavirus demographic group we thought the restrictions and protocols eminently sensible. However, it was also clear we did not have the resources to implement them.

Even if we had the resources, the result would benefit only a small proportion of our members and give them a poorer experience than they have been used to. I am sure many of you will agree that an attraction to attending U3A classes includes the social interaction with other lifelong learners.



Reluctantly, after much discussion, the committee decided we could not offer face-to-face classes for Term 3. However, we will continue to offer some online courses during the term. 126 members enrolled for Term 2's online courses.

We have prepared an optional online survey so you can share your thoughts on some important matters in our present difficult circumstances and tell us from your experience of our online courses how they might be improved.

Just click on the link below.

Because we have not been able to run face-to-face courses in 2020 the committee has decided that all current financial members will not be charged any subscription fees for 2021.

I am sure, like me, many of you have missed the social interaction U3A provides, so we hope to organise some outside social activities over the Summer School period. Perhaps we will meet then.

2020 has been a strange and challenging year. I hope you have coped well with the challenges and I remain optimistic about our post-coronavirus future.

Warm regards,

John Green

PRESIDENT

Zoom classes

Top: Sue Mulcahy's

Bottom: Graeme Ingram's



HAVE YOUR SAY

by completing our confidential member survey at

<https://forms.gle/Wyi68QiUu1mekXEw7>

Plus four extra questions on page 8 for your consideration.

Program Co-ordinator's Notes

August 2020

I am certainly not the Program Co-ordinator at present. Alison Waters and Sue Mulcahy have done the excellent work in preparing a most interesting program of 15 online courses for third term. (See below.) Sue and Graeme Ingram will provide tutors with any assistance needed to present their courses online. The term begins on 14 September, but you will note that Michael Bennett's course will be given in the second half of term, beginning on 19 October. We are most grateful to all the tutors who have put a lot of time into keeping U3A running this year.

You will have read in the President's report that we will not be resuming face-to-face sessions in third term. We have discussed the situation at length, and with the uncertainty of the future we are obviously confined to online courses for the remainder of the year. I hope you are not missing our U3A interactions too much. Certainly those taking part in the online courses are enjoying contact with one another. It is just possible that at the end of term (mid-November) we might be able to have a picnic and a catch-up.

"Just a thought", as Blue Bottle would say. We'll keep in touch.

Leone Scrivener

Online Program Term 3, 2020

14 September - 19 November

1. Android Skills

Graeme Ingram

Tuesdays, 11.30am, begins 15 September, 8 weeks, max=10.

Participants will be using Zoom.

This is an eight-week Zoom course on using your Android tablets and phones. Topics include managing the settings on your devices, using popular email programs and contacts, security, and popular apps. Graeme will make contact with participants and provide individual sessions for those who need help getting started with Zoom prior to the first class.

2. Astronomy & the Related Science Discoveries

Peter Taylor

Monday, 10am, begins 14 September, 10 weeks, max =25.

Participants will be using Zoom.

Using Zoom we will continue with the examination of the latest news and science from space.

3. *Birds and Islands: a peripatetic virtual tour examining what birds are found where, and why* **Sue Jones**

Begins 14 September, 10 weeks.

Using YouTube videos (narrated PowerPoints) and possibly Zoom conference sessions.

There is something about islands. They lure travellers across oceans, feed our imaginations, and inspire dreams of idyllic solitude. They also provide living laboratories for life scientists. Studying the fauna and flora on islands helps us understand how life evolves and how species are distributed across the world. Focusing on birdlife, this course will provide an introduction to island biogeography, a theory that explains how species are distributed across isolated natural communities.

However, it is also a travelogue in disguise. We will visit (virtually) a series of islands that I have been fortunate enough to visit in person, starting with our own island of Tasmania. We will consider how the geography, geology, and human history of these selected islands have shaped the bird communities that live there. We will also see how some islands are being used for the conservation of rare species. The “lecture” material will be delivered as online modules that you can watch or download via YouTube at a time convenient to you. The modules will take the form of narrated slideshows, each 20-30 minutes long if you watch it straight through. New material will be made available weekly. I will also offer optional discussion via Zoom. Scheduling details will be sent to participants later.

4. *Dr Jenner’s War on Smallpox* **Michael Bennett**

Begins 19 October, 5 weeks.

This course begins with the horrors of smallpox and discusses the cowpox discovery, Edward Jenner, and the spread of vaccination around the world. Each module will be 20-30 minutes long if you watch it straight through.

5. *Dragons and Giants: reptiles of the Galápagos* **Sue Jones**

Begins 14 September, 5 alternate weeks.

Using YouTube videos (narrated PowerPoints) and possibly Zoom conference sessions.

The Galápagos Islands are home to a unique suite of reptiles. Charles Darwin was greatly intrigued, particularly by the marine iguanas and giant tortoises that appeared to have different-shaped shells depending on which island they lived on. Following in Darwin’s (metaphorical) footsteps, we will consider the biology of these fascinating animals, how they evolved, and how they are adapted to life on their islands. We will explore how modern scientific studies of Galápagos reptiles are providing new insights into the biology and behaviour of animals.

The course material will be delivered as online modules that you can watch or download via YouTube at a time convenient to you. The modules will take the form of narrated slideshows, each 20-30 minutes long if you watch it straight through. New material will be made available **every two weeks**. I will also offer optional discussion via Zoom. Scheduling details will be sent to participants later.

6. *Exploring the World of Art* **Wendy Pearson**

Begins 14 September, 10 weeks.

Using YouTube videos (narrated PowerPoints).

Topics include the human body in art, portraits, animals in art, art and politics, and the lives of artists, some famous, some infamous. Each module will be 20-30 minutes.

7. Six Countries down the Rhine

John Biggs

Begins 14 September, 3 weeks.

Using YouTube videos (narrated PowerPoints).

We go on a journey on a very long boat that takes us down the Rhine. We start from the Netherlands, detour to Belgium, then through Germany to France to Luxembourg, back to Germany, and finish in Switzerland. There is lots of breathtaking scenery but barely enough water to keep us afloat. But we make it. The presentation is broken up into three 20-30 minute modules.

8. Trades, Industry & Shipping on the Derwent

Rex Cox

Begins 14 September, 6 weeks.

Using YouTube videos (narrated PowerPoints).

This course looks at the port which has played a vital role in Hobart's history from the time of first settlement and continues to do so in the 21st century. Subjects discussed and illustrated include port development, whaling, shipbuilding, fruit exports, and the role of industries such as the zinc works. At the conclusion of the course I will conduct a tour of the port.

9. Victoriana

Basil Sansom

Begins 14 September, 10 weeks.

Using YouTube videos (narrated PowerPoints) and possibly Zoom conference sessions.

Victorian mythologies, Victorian mores, and Victorian manifestations.

10. Writing Workshop

John McRae

Begins 14 September, 10 weeks, max=12.

Using email and attachments.

Topics are sent by email each Monday, writers are asked to produce a contribution in the following week, and it is emailed to all members of the group. We comment constructively on one another's work and learn by reading everyone's work as well as practising our own. We are an online community of writers.

Ongoing fully booked courses include *Let's Talk Books, Memoir Writing, and Drawing.*

Enrolments open Monday 17 August and close Monday 31 August
and this term will be [online only.](#)

Log into UMAS (U3A Hobart Membership & Enrolment System) at <https://www.u3ahobart.org.au/members/massTemplate.php> using your membership number and password. Once you're logged in you can view the classes on offer this term and enrol.

Please ring Alison Waters (0418 548 352) if you need help with enrolling.

Tutors Talk About Their Online Courses

Graeme Ingram (Android Skills)

Coronavirus, COVID- 19, whatever name you give it, has disrupted our lives, and of course this applies to U3A Hobart. I have been running sessions over the last few years on using Android tablets and phones but with all the current restrictions this was not possible for Term 2. Instead we have moved online, using ZOOM to meet every week. Of course we had a few issues along the way but the class has been wonderful in adapting to new methods of delivering the material. There have been some unexpected advantages too. ZOOM meetings can be recorded and for those unable to attend this does offer a great way to keep track of what may have been missed.

Is it better than face-to-face? No, of course it isn't. Would I use it again? Yes, of course. The world is very different now and we are all learning to adapt to new ways of living. My class has been a delight and being able to see their smiling, happy faces over the internet every week is a real highlight. And of course, they have got to see my cat who always loves to ZOOM!

Peter Taylor (Astronomy)

Overall, I found that the response to my online *Astronomy* course has been very positive.

The bonus is that the astronomy images are shown in the finite detail that is sometimes diluted when shown up on the wall/screen, and the course participants are able to see these fine details on their own computer screens. Their eyes are able to take in much more than the larger projected image.

I can adjust the slides to suit the people and they can respond immediately. I can hear from their comments that things are going well! It is also becoming easier to accommodate the wishes of the classes on what subject they want to dwell upon. It is so much easier to show Hubble images of the far depths of the universe and not lose any of the definition of the particular image. As a presenter, Zoom is making it a pleasure to show the PowerPoints.

Jennie Clarke (Memoir Writing)

It has been a fascinating few weeks, and meeting everyone has been a delight, despite the difficulty of finding a suitable venue for our get-togethers. During our two-hour meetings we cover all aspects of creative and memoir writing. Each member sends his or her writing to me and all other members. I read and critique every one separately, and my comments can be shared with the class or not, as each member prefers.

With your unique life story and style there is no correct or incorrect way of getting the words on paper, but some things are paramount: write, share, and edit over and over until it is like a finely tuned violin. The only examiners of your memoir are the readers, and with this in mind the writer needs to be aware of who they are and talk TO them. Providing each chapter with some degree of conflict, climax, and resolution, the reader will become involved with you, the author, and absorb the tale being told. "I couldn't put it down" are magical words for any writer to hear.

John McRae (Writing Workshop)

In Term 2 the U3A writing class continued by email. Each week we wrote on a set topic, sent in our contribution, and then received thirteen remarkable stories or poems on Monday. We wrote poems, haikus, true and fictitious stories. It was very special to discover the amazing range of experiences people in our group have had: confronting polar bears, refugee camps, farming adventures, orienteering, childhood memories of early Tasmania, and graphic descriptions of normal human experiences. It has been a privilege to read each week's contributions. Although some of us have never met in person, we have offered each other some deep insights into who we are.

Penny Cohen (Let's Talk Books)

I have been running *Let's Talk Books* with Zoom for two terms. It has worked very well for all of us, once we got used to the technology! Peter began his Astronomy class on Zoom this term as well. His PowerPoint slideshows are much appreciated by the group as they retain all the colour and detail that is usually lost on the big screen. And the participants of both groups are pleased to see each other after such a long period of social distancing. Advantages over this long cold winter are being able to sit in a warm room and keep your slippers on. We are able to go overtime if we want to, so discussion doesn't need to be cut off after exactly one hour. Many participants enlist the help of children and grandchildren in getting started and after a couple of meetings it's easy. Participants are invited to join the meetings and must download Zoom to their computers before they begin. If you don't have a computer you may know someone who is in the class you want to attend and you can sit in with him or her (1.5 metres apart of course). I have two members in my group who do that. Alas, we can't adjourn to the Common Room afterwards, but we can still enjoy the learning experience together.

Summer Program Anybody?

Normally plans for the summer program are well under way by early August but this year is different, thanks to Covid, as planning ahead these days is almost impossible.

Two things we know. If there is to be a summer program in 2021, it won't be in its usual form of a series of lectures in the Philip Smith Centre as social-distancing requirements currently limit attendance to 20 in the lecture theatre. It also won't be convened by me. I have stood down in the hope and expectation that someone out of our six hundred or so members will come up with new and different ideas for summer entertainment and education.

It seems that a few outdoor events are our best bet for a Covid era summer program and we welcome all suggestions. A picnic and a guided walk have been a successful part of the program for the last three years, so can we expand on that?

Would you be prepared to organise and host a simple outdoor event? It could be a barbecue, a walk, a concert, a boat trip, bush

poetry, a fashion show, whatever you can think of ... the sky's the limit ... although we might draw the line at hang gliding!

There are only a few requirements: Parking, accessible toilets, seating, shade.

In many cases Covid has led to creativity so we look forward to your suggestions. It would be a shame to let the summer go by without our U3A community marking it in some way.

You can send your ideas to me or to Rose Farrell our U3A Secretary.

There is plenty of time but the committee would like to have a plan by mid-October so events can be announced in the final newsletter for the year.

Cheers,

Rosey Marwick

Rosenet50@hotmail.com

HAVE YOUR SAY (cont.): FOUR ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS

These questions are supplementary to the online questionnaire on page 2. Please share any thoughts you have, or contributions you want to make, after you read Rosey Marwick's statement above. Answer **IN WRITING** all or any of the questions below and mail to The Secretary, U3A Hobart, PO Box 71, Sandy Bay, TAS 7005.

1. U3A has normally conducted a Summer Program at the start of each year. If you attended one or more of these activities in 2020, what were your impressions?
2. Do you have suggestions for activities that you would like to see offered as part of a 2021 Summer Program, considering that, due to Covid-19, the Phillip Smith Centre may not be available?
3. Do you have any thoughts concerning the 2020 end-of-year Christmas Luncheon should this be offered?
4. What have you have missed most during 2020 due to the Covid-19 shutdown?