

Myrtleford MAGPIE



MYRTLEFORD & DISTRICT NEWSLETTER
UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE

Welcome to the February 2021 edition of *Myrtleford Magpie* – #30

From the President

I hope that I am not the only one who is feeling this, but there seems to be a buzz in the air in and around Myrtleford. Have you felt it? The place is upbeat. There's activity everywhere and conversations on the street are refreshingly positive. This is a very welcome turnaround for what we were experiencing just 12 months ago. Good therapy, too.

From U3A's perspective, we feel that that we (that means you) are playing our/your part in contributing to the positive vibe out there. The proof is certainly in the pudding – membership numbers are on the rise, courses and most activities are fully or over-subscribed and ideas from members are flowing. Let's keep this momentum going to the point that someone may think it's a "Seniors-led Recovery" – at least the vibe around town.

This month, I have the pleasure of reporting that the Committee secured a community grant for the installation of an Automated Electronic Defibrillator, (AED) to be placed in the Senior Citizens Centre. Alpine Health supported us in our

grant application, both financially and in kind. I thank the Alpine Shire Council for understanding our on-going needs and I thank Alpine Health CEO, Nick Shaw for his kind and compassionate response to our request. More details in the next issue.

Also, this month, the COVID Safe Plan for the Senior Citizens Centre was issued and is available on the website. Our Coffee Speaker session with Gail Owen was very interesting and there is a summary of her presentation, within. And, finally this month, more flesh has gone on the bones of three new courses under development. They are:

- Interesting Buildings and Places (in local area)
- Leatherwork – the Basics
- iPhone, iPad and Computer – Electronic Devices Made Easy

Early next month I will represent our U3A at the North Eastern Victoria Regional Meeting. The aim of these twice-yearly gatherings is to strengthen U3As by sharing local information about courses and activities, administrative procedures and many other matters. Should you wish me to raise a matter for this meeting, please contact me prior to 5 March 2021. I will provide a

brief summary of key outcomes of the meeting in the next Myrtleford Magpie.

Please look after yourself, tell a friend that you're having fun and I will see you 'round the traps.

John Twyford

(President, U3A Myrtleford and District Inc.)

Program for Term 1

Over the past month we have had to make a few changes to the program.

They are:

Coffee/speaker event will now be on the 2nd Friday of the month and in the afternoon.

We found that the 1st Friday of the month was unsuitable as it ran into the March long weekend and Good Friday in April. We also changed the morning to afternoon so we did not clash with Lifeball.

Next meeting is Friday 12 March at 2.30pm

Italian: the start for this class has been delayed to the beginning of Term 2. Nino Mautone, our tutor, is moving into Myrtleford from Eurobin and his moving date keeps blowing out, so we are predicting that by April he will be ready to go.

First class is Wednesday April 21 at 2.00pm.

Painted Silo Tours: due to the popularity of this trip we have scheduled a second trip. Dates are: Thursday 25 March and Monday 19 April. Both of these trips are listed on the website under 'Courses'. Please put your name down and if you have any difficulty contact Yvonne Tabalotny, Mob: 0468 482 971.

Information re this tour is as follows:

Transport will be by bus. The total cost will be \$37. Malcolm McKinnon will be the bus driver and tour leader. Money will be collected on the day.

Meet at the Myrtleford Senior Citizens Centre at 8:30am on 25 March/19 April. Return time is 5.00pm

The tour route will include silos at Gooramab, Devenish, St James and Tungamah. Included in the price is a Devonshire morning tea at the Devenish Hotel. After visiting the last silo, we would head to Yarrawonga for a late lunch. Participants can either bring their own lunch or purchase it from one of the many eateries in Yarrawonga.

Current COVID -19 rules would require all participants travelling on the bus to wear a mask.

Mount Buffalo walks: due to increased popularity of these walks there will be 2 options - a short and easy walk as well as a longer harder walk. We will try to plan for both walks to start at or close to the same place. They will occur on the same day so the group can travel together. Those doing the shorter walk will be able to leave earlier if they wish to.

Our book – For A Better Life

As mentioned in the January edition of Myrtleford Magpie, book sales have generated a profit and the committee is looking for a project that will benefit U3A members, residents of and visitors to Myrtleford. We will have around \$10,000 to put towards a project or projects. The committee is still gathering ideas and plans to further publicise this fact using local media outlets. Subject to agreement by the Committee at its next meeting, it is expected that receipt of ideas will be open until the end of April 2021.

If you have any ideas, for a worthy project, please send it to Jan Mock or someone on the committee. You may be asked for further and more detailed information on your idea that would most likely include how U3A members could participate in delivering the idea, the

benefits to U3A members and the wider community, costings and timeframes, etc. Good luck with your thoughts.

The book, *For A Better Life*, is continuing to sell. It is now available through the Myrtleford Newsagency, the information centres in Myrtleford, Bright and Mount Beauty, Beechworth Books, The Bright Book Shop and Edgars Newsagency, Wangaratta. Copies can also be obtained from Judy Pitts, Yvonne Tabalotny, Philippa Cartwright and Jan Mock.

Gail Owen – Day in the life of a humanitarian aid volunteer

At the last coffee/speaker event on Friday 5 February we were delighted to listen to Gail Owen describe her many adventures as a humanitarian aid volunteer with Australia Assists organisation – the Australian Government’s humanitarian civilian deployment program in countries such as Papua New Guinea, Fiji and Solomon Islands.

Gail spoke about her time in PNG working to support government elections. Have you ever wondered how many pencils would be needed for such an event and how they were to be transported across the country, whether it be by boat, by small aircraft or by foot? That is only the pencils – what about the election ballots and how to keep them safe and then collect them again without losing any of them and keeping them secure? On top of all the requisites that are required there is the problem of disseminating this material; negotiating with the various and numerous tribes that have to be informed of the coming event and to get their support to allow volunteers to enter various region safely to conduct the election. This work, of which only a small part of the logistics has been referred to, is

what Gail was involved in for 9 months prior to the actual election in PNG.

We thank you Gail for coming from Dinner Plain to deliver this fascinating and informative talk. People were truly amazed with your story.



Gail Owen (centre) with Jan Mock and John Twyford.

Speaker, Friday 12 March

Our next speaker is Fiona Nicholls. Fiona is the chair of the Alpine Community Recovery Committee looking at bushfire recovery and the Deputy Chair of Into Our Hands Community Foundation whose work includes Alpine and Indigo shires and Rural City of Wangaratta. Both of these organisations can bring great benefits to our area and it would be great if more people understood the work both of these groups are involved in and how we as a community can feed into them for the benefit of our residents.

Fiona’s talk will be at 2.30pm on Friday 12 March in the clubrooms of the Myrtleford Lawn Tennis Club.

Fiona also has another tale to tell of her life working on environmental management and sustainable development strategies for major mining companies. We will ask her back later in the year to talk to us about that part of her life.



Fiona Nicholls

A special thank you

Our U3A gets a lot of assistance from Sonia and Susie at Myrtleford Library. Both Sonia and Susie are very helpful in helping with any questions we may have; these questions need not be specifically related to using the library.

We always take in copies of this newsletter, Myrtleford Magpie, to the library and they display them as well as hand them to people that they think may be interested in our organisation. Sonia and Susie we thank you very much and appreciate your interest – we can't wait to have you as members.

Another big thank you goes to Club Savoy who are supporting us with meeting space for some of our activities. Thank you and we do appreciate your interest and generosity.

Some U3A facts

Did you know that there are:

- 104 U3As in Victoria, 15 in NE Victoria
- 39,000 U3A Members. We have 130
- Thousands of activities on offer across Victoria

Do you have any photos of U3A activities?

Thanks to Sarah Deas for these photos of the last walk to Mt Dunn on Mount Buffalo.



If you have any photos or articles which could be included in this newsletter please send to Jan Mock, u3amyrtleford@gmail.com

The Senior newspaper – Check it out

The Senior is a monthly paper that is produced in State and Territory-based versions. Its free and you can find it at the Myrtleford Library. For those who are electronic-capable, it is also available by going to: www.thesenior.com.au