



President's Report

Network AGM

The Network AGM was held via Zoom this year. There was a considerable difference in presentation but thanks to the good will of participants and the technical assistance of Greg Taylor from U3A Brisbane, all went well.

The Network Constitution (2019) provides for ½ committee elections and this year the positions of president, treasurer and 3 committee members were up for election.

One additional committee position became available with the resignation of Julie Porteous.

There was only one nomination for each position. The names and portfolios of the 2020/21 Network Management Committee are:-

President – Gail Bonser - Policy; Vice-President – Wendy Sanders – Strategic Planning; Secretary – Alison Taylor – Ethics Sub-committee and Arts Competition; Treasurer – Bronwyn Pedler; Editor, Network News Julie Barnes; – ; Margaret Cook – Grants; Colin Maddocks – Communication; Tony Nobbs – Assistant, Network News Editor and Grants; and Larry Frazer – Assistant Treasurer.

Congratulations to all newly elected members and welcome to those who are also new to the Management Committee.

Other important business covered at the AGM included the receipt of the audited financial statements 2019. Maria Licence noted when introducing the financial statements that the Network is in a sound financial position. The budget for 2020 will be underspent because of the shutdown but of course some of those expenses have been moved into the 2021 budget. The membership fee for 2021 was set at 54 cents per member, which was the lowest figure that would allow Network to work efficiently.

The Annual report recorded that the Network had accomplished a considerable list of projects in the fore-shortened business year including the new website, new grievance procedures to meet the impact of the revised Associations Incorporation Act 1981; a Webinar to introduce the changes; registration of the Network with the ACNC; extension of the insurance scheme for three months at a very small additional cost; reorganisation of the committee to give portfolio responsibilities; delivery of regional President's Council meetings and development of policy and procedures to enhance committee governance. The report also recorded that there had been a variety of additional communications from the Network committee as members strove to support U3As, maintain engagement and assist with the assessment of risk around re-opening as COVID related restrictions were eased.



Goodbye to Some Familiar Faces

At the AGM we bid farewell to Julie Porteous, Greg Doolan and Maria Licence. All had been long serving members and great contributors to the Network Committee and U3A generally.

All three brought their special expertise to committee work. Julie had been variously President, Vice President twice and committee member during her nine years of service. Julie led many new initiatives during her time on the committee. Maria served as a committee member and as Treasurer. As Treasurer, Maria managed the finances and also the negotiation and administration of the Network insurance scheme and copyright licence. Her careful management of the finances has been significant in ensuring that the Network has a sound financial position while managing to engage in many important projects. Greg had served as committee member, Vice-President and Publicity and Promotions Officer. Greg has made himself available to assist many U3As with their promotion. Greg has been our “go to” person for training and assistance with electronic devices. Thankfully he has agreed to serve on the Communication Sub-Committee.

To all of them we express our heartfelt thanks for a job well done. Their contribution around the committee table will be sadly missed.

Committee Structure

Each committee member has a portfolio responsibility, as listed previously. There are three portfolios that may require a little explanation.

The Communication Portfolio

This portfolio is managed by Colin Maddocks. The portfolio covers external and internal communication, publicity and promotion and document and website management.

To assist him in this role, Colin has a Standing Sub-Committee, the current members of which are Greg Doolan, Julie Barnes and Tony Nobbs.

Where necessary for the achievement of specific tasks, Colin may co-opt others to assist.

NB: In the event that you have news to share, a story to tell, a question about promotions strategy or website

Contact: *Colin Maddocks* – Email: communication.u3aqlld@gmail.com

Strategic Planning

Vice-President Wendy Sanders has responsibility for this portfolio. The most pressing task in this portfolio is to review the current Strategic Plan and produce the next iteration, which will run from 2021 – 2024. To assist Wendy in this task, a sub-committee has been formed for which Colin Maddocks is Executive Officer and individual members are Rhonda Weston, Des Taylor, Jim Hales and Phil Ackman.

Wendy and her committee will shortly be surveying all U3As and the information gathered will be a great help in formulating a new plan that is concentrated on delivering what U3As most need from Network.

Contact: *Wendy Sanders* at vp.u3aqlld@gmail.com

President's Report Continued

Secretary, Ethics and Arts

Alison Taylor is U3A Network Committee Secretary. The responsibilities for that position are well known. As secretary Alison is responsible among other things for incoming and outgoing correspondence. She is diligent about redirecting queries or comments to relevant parties for action.

It would greatly assist the efficiency of the Network committee if you could please direct all correspondence to Alison secretary.u3aql@gmail.com

Alison also has the immediate responsibility for managing an Ethics Sub-committee, the task of which is to recommend the ethical standards by which the Network Committee will abide. To assist her in this task Alison has co-opted Ian Richards from U3A Noosa.

The Arts Sub-Committee is also managed by Alison. To assist her Alison has co-opted Elizabeth Jeffs from U3A Redlands and James Parsons from U3A Twin Towns. The sub-committee is currently formulating ideas for an arts competition the details of which will be announced at the 2021 Network Conference in Stanthorpe..

The Conference in 2021

The U3A Granite Belt Conference Organising committee is developing a program that offers new learning and U3A relevant information sharing. Without divulging any secrets, I can say that their key note speaker will be a highlight of the program.

The committee is working within COVID restrictions, to ensure that the health of all delegates is protected.

The committee will be releasing information about accommodation options well ahead of the conference so keep your eye out for that and other conference news

The conference is a great reason to go to Stanthorpe and Stanthorpe has much to offer as a tourist destination.

I look forward to chatting with you at one of the pre-conference activities and on conference days.

Gail Bonser

President

Conference 2021

As you would know, the 2021 Network Queensland Conference will be held in Stanthorpe on 11th, 12th and 13th May.

The Conference will be held at The International Club in Stanthorpe. The Conference is being planned to ensure all physical distancing requirements will be observed during the conference and the pre-conference exploration of the Granite Belt.

The International Club is within walking distance of the Top of the Town Caravan Park.

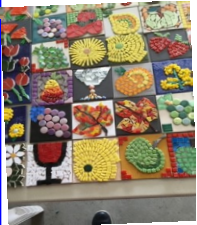
May is a beautiful time of the year on the Granite Belt. The photo shows an example of the Autumn colours that will be on display in May.



Good News Stories from Member Groups

2020 has been a distressing year for many people throughout the world. It has been incredibly uplifting to hear of the positive stories that are emerging from U3A members in the state.

Granite Belt



The Mosaics Group usually meet monthly in “Pete’s Shed”, the group’s usual meeting place however, the group had to go into hibernation due to COVID.

At the end of the lockdown, a small group of the members undertook a huge project for the 2021 Conference and decided to meet every Tuesday. The project is now nearing completion—only the cleaning and grouting of the tiles to be completed. The positive side effects of the project has been the chatter, laughter and good humour each member of the group has shared with the other members, some of whom are isolated from families either overseas or interstate.



Maryborough

Pat Dorland

The Management Committee is eager to return to more normal activities but only want to do this when it is completely safe to do so. At a meeting on 8th September held together with tutors and hall management, it was decided that classes could not restart until 2021 at this stage. The Health Department recommendations for older Australians is still the 4 square metre rule, and there can be no shared equipment. (i.e. cards, mahjong tiles etc) We understand that many members may be disappointed, however it is for the health and safety of all that this decision was made.



The current advice is that it is that social distancing must be maintained and with the nature of U3A Maryborough’s activities and numbers per class, this is not feasible at the present time. The Senior Citizens Centre and St. Stephens Auditorium would not allow sufficient numbers for the classes to be conducted with the members registered.

I would like to sincerely thank all tutors for attending and their continued support to commence classes again as soon as possible.

Another meeting will be held with tutors to determine how we can recommence in 2021. All fees paid will be transferred over to 2021 and the scheduled increase for new memberships next year will not proceed at this time.

Gympie

Yvonne (Evie) Artho

We started back to face to face classes at the beginning of the term. Because of social distancing, we have had to change quite a few venues. But all members took this in their stride. We also held a sign on morning at a park, where there was plenty of room for everyone to say hello and register for their class.

This is going to be an ongoing event now where we will have a sign on day every term—just so we know how many are attending classes.

The aqua exercise group isn't starting back until next term. So far nearly 40 students have enrolled in the aqua exercise group. Everyone is looking forward to getting back in the pool!!

U3A Beachmere Surges Ahead

U3A Beachmere may have only been around for less than two years but it is already making an impact.

Members of U3A Beachmere met in August to vote on Incorporation. After nearly two years under the auspices of Bribie U3A the large attendance and several Proxy votes voted to incorporate and become a separate entity.

The Beachmere U3A Committee have spent some time working on their new Constitution and documents will be filed in a concerted effort to have the new entity operating from Term One 2021.

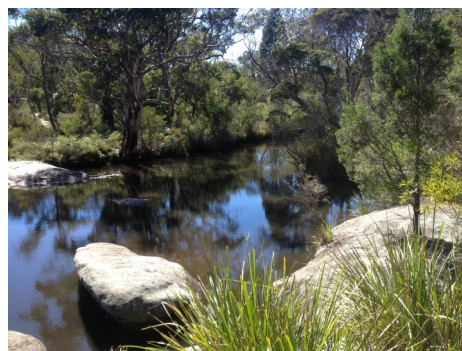
U3A Beachmere have also been able to secure class rooms in a newly renovated and refurbished local building – the Beachmere Hub.

The U3A Beachmere Committee was happy with the attendance at the meeting and pleased that the decision had been made.

“Beachmere U3A is growing fast and there has been a steady flow of members getting back in touch – first to join up for our Mini Term Three Program and to have a tour of our lovely new premises – the Hub,” a spokesperson said.

“It was a great way to get everyone back into the U3A “swing” and learn to deal with the new protocols that Covid-19 has brought to our lives. Everything is working well and, apart from a short delay when signing in to each class with temperature checks, we have had nothing but smiles and laughter.”

“We have recently launched our Term Four Program which has been well received. We have reduced the numbers of classes and workshops from last year but we are confident our Tutors will return and we will build our Programs for future terms. We have our AGM planned for November and we have some really great initiatives planned for 2021.”



Maria and Alison enjoying the sights of Stanthorpe or learning how to use the camera?????



Warwick U3A

The intent of *Journal as a Way* - was to “get us thinking and talking, sharing ideas, experiences, memories, beliefs and thoughts with a new topic each week.” The group was in its infancy and building up trust amongst the members when COVID 19 struck. One of the group started a conversation on WhatsApp. We were all new to this technology but most of us embraced it quickly as a way to exchange our thoughts and ideas.



When the local coffee shops reopened we met at 5 tables set apart for social distancing. We had started out meeting in a coffee shop with a cosy private room so we were comfortable with this.



We have since been able to return to our favourite coffee lounge and we all feel good that we are still putting our money into the economy. We were in fact ideally suited to the changing circumstances. We have chosen to meet as a social group rather than as an official class however we all enjoy discussing a weekly topic.

Although there was a basic structure the course outline stated that “group members will largely determine what happens at each meeting”. One member has taken us along the route of *Junk Journaling* which involves making the journal rather than writing in it. (Check that out on the internet.) The creative energy is great and has occupied many a quiet day at home. We also love to share and celebrate our explorations.

Some positive feedback from group members - -

“staying connected to my U3A Journalling group has made dealing with the restrictions of COVID easier to handle. We meet for an hour of fun and laughs. These contacts motivated me to keep writing and explore other forms of journalling. U3A has been an important part of my life under COVID. *Helen*

“we made it happen and built on the emerging new friendships making Friday's get together one of the highlights of the week. *Rita*.

“we changed the channels of communication. Talking with these lovely ladies, both online and face to face is the high spot of the week for me and has become the unexpected silver lining of COVID.

Sally

Many thanks to Mackay U3A for these jokes to brighten your day.

When I want a family meeting, I just turn the wi-fi off and they all come running.

A bunch of lawyers were sitting around the office playing poker.

"I win!" said Johnson.

Henderson threw down his cards. "That's it! I've had it! Johnson is cheating!"

"How can you tell?" Phillips asked.

"Those aren't the cards I dealt him!"



A man finds his seat in the cinema, but it is too far from the screen.

He whispers to the usher, "This is a mystery, and I have to watch a mystery close up. Get me a better seat, and I'll give you a handsome tip."

The usher moves him to the second row, and the man hands the usher a fifty cent piece. The usher looks at the coin and then leans over and whispers, "The wife did it."

A university lecturer asked her students to describe in a page or less the difference between ignorance and apathy. She was forced to give an A-plus to the student who replied, "I don't know and I don't care."



It's been a bit of a strange day. First, I found a hat full of money. Then I was chased by an angry man with a guitar.

Picked up a hitch-hiker. Seemed like a nice guy. After a few miles, he asked me if I was afraid that he might be a serial killer. I told him that the odds of two serial killers being in the same car were extremely unlikely

My wife asked me to take her to one of those restaurants where they make the food right in front of you. So, I took her to Subway.