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U3A Hobsons Bay/Williamstown Inc

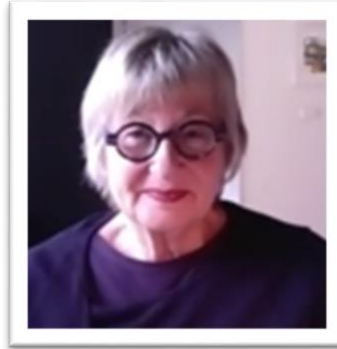
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## Our biggest challenge



Welcome to all our members to the first newsletter of 2021. A special welcome to our new members – our U3A has been one of the fortunate few who have seen an increase in numbers over the past year.

The big challenge for us in 2021 is finding suitable alternative venues for our growing membership and activities. The Cottage is stretched to the limit, is ageing and high-maintenance – as identified by the Committee and Phil Quinn who led the refreshing of the Cottage last year.

We use cafes, members' homes and The Royal Yacht Club for additional venues. Most U3A's have a similar challenge and have to lease additional facilities at a cost. This is not currently an option for us as a low fee paying club.

Hobsons Bay Council understand our need for accommodation and will make available the Senior Citizens Centre (corner of Melbourne Rd and Ferguson St) on Monday and Thursday at no cost for the remainder of the year. It will then be demolished as part of the renewal of Dennis Reserve to make way for a new Multi-Purpose Hub. As sitting tenants, we will have the opportunity to have input into the design brief and future occupancy.

We will relocate some activities in the short term as a commitment to a long term strategy to secure a modern facility which will cater for a wide range of activities with up to date facilities.

Your Convenor will discuss with you if you are affected but at this stage it will be Book Club 2 and Current Affairs and new activities where the Cottage has no availability.

Progress is being made and new activities are being planned so I look forward to meeting you at one of them before too long. Cheers.

**Joan Thompson**  
President

## Finance position ....

As of April, \$6000 has been collected in fees. The AGM decided to keep the membership fee for 2021 at \$40, the same as the previous few years. The Club has been able to have a low fee as it has not had to pay rent for space. With COVID, however, costs have increased with the need for more technology and additional cleaning.

Expenditure to April is \$7806 including both regular recurrent cost and grant activities, The Club also has \$13,317 in savings (with \$10,043 in a Term Deposit) to support longer term capital requirements such as space needs.

## ... and grants

The Club has been fortunate in receiving grants from Hobsons Bay Council and the U3A Network to support the U3A activities: 2020 \$6880 and 2021 \$4000.

These grants have allowed us to run activities to support convenors who without their commitment the club could not operate. These activities included the convenor workshop and development sessions on challenging behaviours, wellness and CPR training.

The grants have also been used to refurbish the cottage and make it COVID compliant as well as pay for improved technology.

U3A HBW is very appreciative of these grants which have funded activities and facilities which would not be affordable with only fee income.

## We are looking for a Secretary to replace Sue Dawkins

After doing the role for two years, Sue Dawkins is stepping down as Secretary at the end of the year. Sue will still stay active in the Club and will be a mentor to the person taking on this role.



As this is a critical role for U3A Hobsons Bay/Williamstown (we can't operate without a Secretary) we are seeking expressions of interest to replace Sue. The person will be formally appointed at the Annual General Meeting next March.

The Secretary is responsible for managing the work of the Committee including preparing agendas and minutes and is the official point of contact for the U3A.

The work involves communication and reporting to external bodies and the U3A Network.

The Committee has nine members and meets monthly on a Tuesday morning. The Committee is dynamic and friendly and is a great way of contributing to your community and to a successful U3A.

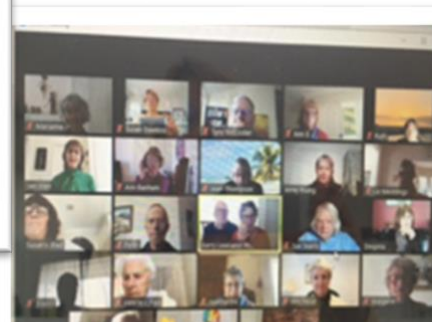
Sue has also been the UMAS System Administrator, grants officer and drafted policy for the Committee. These other roles will be shared across the Committee.



Convenors' Workshop



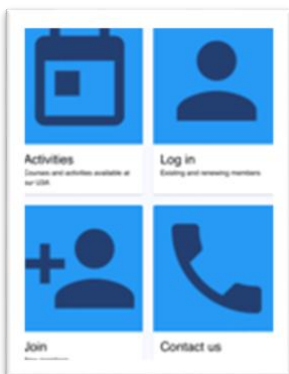
Painting the Cottage



Challenging Behaviours Online Workshop

If you would like to know more about the Secretary role or have a chat to Sue about it, email [info@u3ahbwilli.org.au](mailto:info@u3ahbwilli.org.au)

## Success of UMAS in helping with enrolments



For the 2021 enrolment period the Committee introduced a new online membership enrolment system called UMAS.

The online enrolment system is similar to online shopping or banking system and has allowed current members to reenrol for 2021 and new

members join and select activities.

For a small club with no administrative support the online system has been transformative.

Feedback from members is that they have found it relatively easy to use. Committee members supported members who were unable to use an online system.

The U3A Network who support UMAS are seeking feedback for further enhancements and fixes. Some suggestions were

- i) improving the email function (used by conveners and Committee)
- ii) introducing text messaging (in addition to emails).

Let us know what you would like. Feedback to [info@u3ahbwilli.org.au](mailto:info@u3ahbwilli.org.au)



### Have a question?

FAQs (frequently asked questions) have been added to the website to help members and conveners.

<https://u3ahbwilli.org.au/umas-faqs/>  
<https://u3ahbwilli.org.au/faqs-for-conveners/>

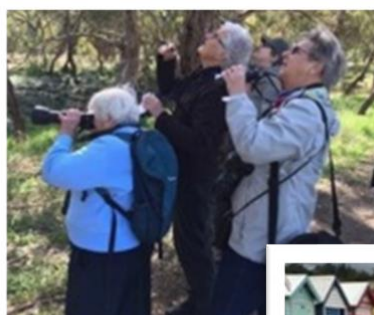
## Courses

Ruth Patching has stepped into Phil Quinn's role of Course Coordinator very successfully while he and Kerry are away touring a big chunk of Australia: (hiking cycling, and from the latest reports fighting off a mouse plague in their camper in Queensland).

The year started very smoothly with all activities, except Bridge, back to face-to-face with masks on in February. The restrictions have eased since February and now NO MASKS which is great but still being very aware of good hygiene and social distancing.

Social Bridge started back in Term two and members have been keen to return to this popular activity. Both Ena Holt and Sue Egan are co-conveners and will work together to ensure this activity continues.

We have more new outdoor activities this year – some of which are cycling,



*Bird Watching*



*Explore Melbourne*

explore Melbourne walking group, local walking group, bird-watching (in the flesh or rather feather) and Art Happenings. These have been augmented by some one-off activities such as rose-pruning at Werribee Mansion, camera club and an expedition to Bendigo to see the Mary Quant exhibition.

After a year of remote activities, it is lovely to be back again sharing, learning and playing together.

If you would have an idea for a new course (either ongoing or one-off) or would like to become a convener contact Ruth on [members@u3ahbwilli.org.au](mailto:members@u3ahbwilli.org.au)

## Mary O'Donoghue: Technology saved me in the COVID lock down:

I came to Melbourne in September 2017 as a single senior of 67 years and it took me two years to make a new life here. By the end of 2019, I had that new life and I was so very happy. And then came COVID 19 and My life changed!

The best thing I did in those previous two years was to join the University of the Third Age (U3A) in Williamstown and the larger City U3A.

When COVID 19 restrictions and social isolation were mandated, I saw how quickly U3A Williamstown and City jumped into highly creative mode and set up on-line meetings via Zoom, a video conferencing service where you can virtually meet with others.



Mary, our Trivia MC at the 2020 Christmas Party.

I joined so many activities: Current Affairs, Trivia Quizzes, seminars on Real Estate and another on Interior Design, and to my delight, an on-line Book Club of which I am now a very happy member.

I also attended U3A Zoom meetings on the challenges that face the world in 21C including demise of USA leadership, the Middle East question, Globalisation and Russia, led by a former University Lecturer who presented us with excellent visual as well as video presentations. I felt like a University student.

Connection was the all-encompassing aspect of my life during that unprecedented time. I have been educated, inspired, in awe of other's knowledge and equally in awe of how U3A, along with State and Local Libraries, responded to the pandemic to provide as much stimulation, involvement and connection that a single senior like me could have ever asked for.

Has it been the best of times? That is questionable but it's certainly not been the worst of times. I never thought I would be saying this but technology, laced with an innate optimism, saved me.

*Mary is the convenor of Trivial Pursuit (meets Wednesday at 1.00 pm). Emphasis is on fun and friendly competition. There are vacancies in this course if you would like to join in and ~~test~~ improve your general knowledge.*

## Happy 90<sup>th</sup> birthday Whiskas

On 21 May 2021 Robert (Whiskas) Ryan will celebrate his 90<sup>th</sup> birthday.

Robert moved to Williamstown in 1977 and joined U3A Hobsons Bay/Williamstown in 2009 to improve his skills using his iPad. Subsequently, he served two years as President and two years as Vice-President and was also our delegate representing club to the Western Region. This was an important role to attend quarterly meetings and report back to the Committee.



Whiskas was awarded Life Membership in 2020

As well as being a member of U3A, Robert keeps himself busy in other ways. He is on the executive of the Assumption College Kilmore Old Collegians. He has been the time keeper of the Williamstown Catholic

Young Men's Society football team from 2005 to 2019 and performed this role for 257 consecutive Saturdays during the football season.

His team was promoted last season, so he is currently time-keeping for the under 19s team.

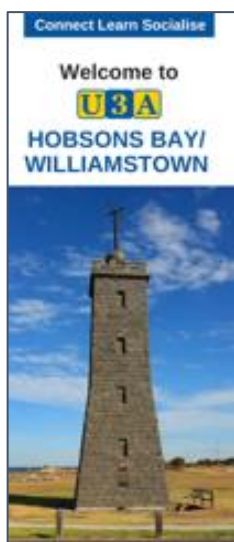
Robert was made a life member of U3A Hobsons Bay/Williamstown at our AGM in 2020.

## Marketing & Communication Update

This newsletter is a trifle late – but we do plan to have newsletters at the end of Terms three and four. So watch out for them in your email inbox. Printed copies will also be available at the Cottage.

Your contributions are very welcome, especially photographs of your U3A activities. (Please make sure you have consent when photographing members and let them know the photos may be used for promotional purposes.)

**Brochure:** We are currently updating our brochure. Network provided the photographs for our current brochure – which highlighted some activities we don't provide in Hobsons Bay/Williamstown. Our next brochure will feature our own members enjoying the many and varied activities we have on offer. So any keen photographers please send in nice photos that we can use.



**Newsflashes:** We also send out email newsflashes with news about upcoming courses. Look out for them in your inbox. If you haven't received any emails from us, look in your Spam folder.

**Facebook:** Have you joined our Facebook group?

It's a good way for our members to stay in touch with each other – especially those lucky enough to enjoy some travel around Australia at long last. It is a private group – so nobody apart from members can see what you post.



So please post your photos, news, comments and activities and share with your fellow member.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/U3AHBWILLI>

## Cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR)

CPR training was held on 25<sup>th</sup> March with 17 participants. The session was very informative and we also had lots of laughs as we managed the practical lessons. We had excellent feedback from the participants. A special thanks to the trainer Marg who was energetic, passionate, engaging as well as delightful. Her session was oriented towards seniors and she said that she enjoyed teaching such a receptive group.



The U3A now has CPR trained members in many of our classes. We are looking at purchasing a defibrillator to have at the Cottage.

## Have you got your badge?



Each member of U3A Hobsons Bay/Williamstown is issued with an identification badge. It's important that badges are worn at all U3A activities. This not only identifies the member during the activities they are participating in (a boon to convenors and fellow members who can't always remember names) it carries important information about emergency contact details on the reverse.

Badges were issued at the beginning of the year and distributed during term one. If you missed out on receiving your badge, it may be at the Cottage. If not, please inform us at [members@u3ahbwilli.org.au](mailto:members@u3ahbwilli.org.au)

New members' badges will be mailed to them.

## Schools back

... it's lovely to be back sharing, learning, playing together. Here are some of our happy faces.



A special welcome to our new members.

Over the last few years U3A Hobsons Bay Williamstown has been able to grow its membership to 167, with 52 new members in the 2021 enrolment period. Overall there are 19% males, increasing for the new cohort to 30%.

Unlike some U3As we were able to continue functioning during 2020 with Zoom activities and outdoor activities when permitted.

In 2021 we have been able to extend the range and number of courses which has attracted new members.

With an interesting range of art, writing, discussion, games, outdoor classes members can try new activities and continue with their favourite subjects. There are also an exciting range of short activities like footy tipping, camera, rose garden excursion and Mary Quant Bendigo outing.

U3A Hobsons Bay/Williamstown remains a small club where you can make friends and enjoy a broad range of classes and activities.

**U3A Hobsons Bay/Williamstown Committee**

