



In this issue:

1. President's welcome
2. Meet your Committee
4. Looking for new secretary
5. Convenor & Member support
Evaluation Report
Grants
Meet Jim Forbes
Vale Ken Gratton
6. Activities Report
7. Debbie Griffiths MSO Choir
8. Sandra Daly Community Garden
9. 5 x 7 Art Prize
10. Facebook
Term 1 Memories

Editor: Ann Banham

We acknowledge the Bunurong People of the Kulin Nation as the traditional owners of these lands and waterways and pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging.

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President's Welcome

This is very exciting – my first newsletter as Editor and President of U3A Hobsons Bay/Williamstown. This means I can combine my two passions: communication and U3A.



I am a big fan of clear communication. This means: keeping our members informed with what is happening within our U3A, being enthusiastic about the activities we are offering and making everyone feel they are a part of a community.

I have been fortunate to be part of this organisation during a time of growth and change. It has been exciting and rewarding.

Our growth has mostly been driven by word of mouth and that word has been positive and I want it to stay that way. I want us to continue to be innovative in our activities offerings. As more people leave the workforce and retire we will be there welcoming them – letting them know that their third age can be the most exciting time of their lives.

We are very fortunate in Hobsons Bay/Williamstown that we are not only part of the local community, we are a caring and compassionate community in our own right – and I would like to reinforce that sense of belonging. We are not just a disparate group doing a couple of classes a week and never meeting. We are very much a fellowship.

I hope you enjoy this edition – we have shone the spotlight on some of our members who are doing extraordinary things apart from their involvement in U3A.

Your feedback is always welcome: I love hearing from our members.

**Ann Banham
President**

Meet your Committee

Ann Banham - President

I waited until I was in my 40s before I undertook a degree. So working full time and married with two school-aged children, I thought "I'm not busy enough" and embarked on a Bachelor of Communications at the University of Technology Sydney majoring in journalism.



Before retirement, I was Publications Manager for an international student recruitment company. I composed and edited newsletters, wrote copy for publications, marketing material, websites etc. So part of the pleasure of U3A HBW for me is the Explore Writing class where I can delve into the creative side of my brain, including writing short stories, poetry and anything else that takes my fancy.

I currently convene the Local Walking and Fun Dining Groups and co-convene the Cycling Group. I also run one-off activities (like the visit to the Clarice Beckett exhibition in May). As well as creative writing, I am in the book club, film group, cryptic crosswords, jazz and trivia. I also produce our quarterly newsletters, send out news flashes, and administer the website and the Facebook group.

Another interest is bike riding, and I am an enthusiastic member of the local BUG (Bike User Group). Yes, I do like to keep busy!

Sue Dawkins – Vice-president



As Vice- President I am keen to work hard to support members and the U3A HBW. Please don't hesitate to contact me with your suggestions and feedback.

My career has been in the University sector, first at Murdoch University in Perth and then the University of Melbourne for 20 years. I worked in senior planning roles as Director of Institutional Planning for Melbourne Uni and Planning Director in the Melbourne Medical School.

My transition to retirement involved moving to Williamstown and working part-time at La Trobe University. I joined the U3A HBW Committee in 2020 when the pandemic hit, and suddenly found myself in the role of club Secretary. I served as Secretary for two years and in 2022 was Activities Coordinator. This year I'm convening several new activities including Philosophy, Travel Talks and Our First Nations I love walking, cycling, birdwatching and travel and posting photos on our U3A Facebook page.

Fiona Williams – Secretary

My passions/hobbies include piano (learning and playing), French language, birdwatching, photography, reading, films - and I've inherited from my husband an enjoyment of sailing but certainly no aptitude! With U3A HBW, I'm enjoying Birdwatching, Book Club 2, the new Non-Fiction Book Group and I convene a film group which meets monthly at the Kino (in the CBD).



I retired in late 2021 but started working a few hours a week (doing part of my old job) in May last year and have discovered that I really enjoy it! My work is in clinical research, mainly supporting researchers doing clinical trials.

John Morris – Treasurer



I spent my pre-retirement life in the packaging industry: mainly glass production and packaging. Initially with ACI Packaging but ended up in global packing conglomerate of Owens Illinois who made one in two glass bottles in the world. Mostly I was in production/technical roles and finally looked after risk and energy for our Asian and Global Groups. Retired in 2010.

(John continued)

My involvement with U3A is mainly associated with Current Affairs but more lately football tipping as well but after the first round I achieved only 5/9 correct and stand 350,00th in the ESPN tipping competition so I might have to review this.

My interests lie with Refugee Support through Westgate Baptist Church and more lately the community meals they provide. I play Bridge on a regular basis (not well) and exercise a fair bit (more latterly with the dog. Having a large family (four kids and ten grandkids) there is a fair involvement with the extended family.

Ian Barclay -Committee Member



During my working career I predominately held managerial roles, regional, state, and national positions in a variety of industries (hospitality, healthcare, utilities and automotive). I

retired in 2020, with the thought of traveling domestically and internationally. COVID put a stop to that, then I found U3A.

My passion is drawing, and painting and I was given the opportunity to share and convene this with liked-minded people in the local community. COVID threw up many challenges to get people together, but what I liked was that there seemed to be endless support when I was attempting the impossible. For this reason, I would like to now be part of that support to help others who want to pursue their passions through U3A and I think with my background I can greatly help in many ways.

I have been a member at the Royal Yacht Club of Victoria for over 35 years. I am currently sitting on their General Committee (Board). I have been and still are an active lifesaver at WSLSC for the past 25 years. Invariably this interest has also involved other members of the family.

Sandy Guest – Committee Member

I had two professions - taught secondary school English and Communications (Technical Schools and TAFE - here and in Canada) My passion was to work with



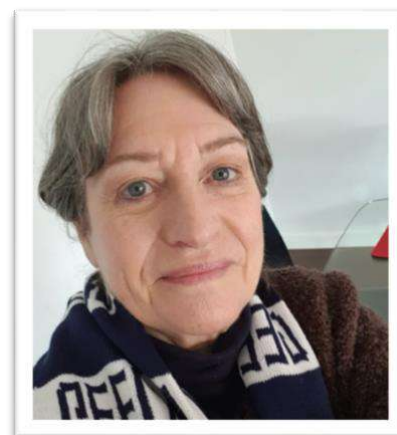
students with special needs including working in the prison system. My second career was with the Public Sector - Department of Primary Industries as Human Resource Manager and a Quality System's Project Manager.

I have always been a passionate traveller and have enjoyed many overseas adventures all around the world. I grew up in Canada so it is a "go to place" still as I have much family and many friends living there. I have been an active volunteer most of my adult life and spent many years living in Shepparton where Community Leadership was a key activity for me. I have been an active volunteer with Leadership Victoria and have enjoyed working with the young African-Australian Community. I am a supporter of the Altona Hockey Club. I enjoy many weekly sessions at the Bayfit gym.

I am a Co-convenor for one of the film groups and a participant in the Current Affairs Group and one of the Book Groups.

Ruth Patching – Committee Member

My working life was mainly in education: primary, secondary and tertiary teaching and administration. I also had the privilege of providing training in a vast array of sectors, including manufacturing, health, hospitality and Local and State Government departments.

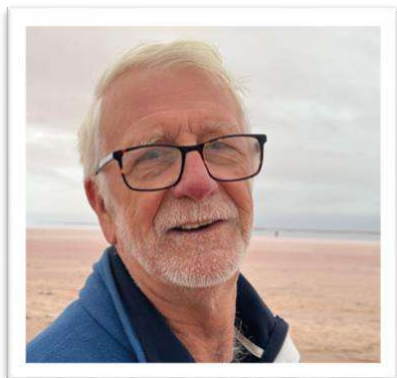


(Ruth continued)

When I retired and moved to the area I was delighted to find our U3A and this fun way to become part of the local community. I originally joined the cryptic crossword group and then Life Writing, both of which provide continuing joy and challenge. This year, as well as some ad hoc activities, I have also joined the Current Affairs group and I am co-hosting the Non Fiction Book Club with Darby.

Besides U3A, I am working on improving my strength and fitness at the local gym early morning fitness sessions, I sing in a choir and I love attending the Newport Folk and Fiddle Club beginner play-along jams. This is my second stint on the Committee, having been co-opted on as Couse Coordinator for 2021. This year I look forward to meeting many more of our members and working with the committee to make our U3A an even better organisation for our members' wellbeing. Please introduce yourself if you see me around the traps and your feedback is always welcome.

Phil Quinn – Committee Member



In a former life I was a trainer, educator and Instructional Designer. This has served me well in initiating, leading and contributing to a wide range of activities in our U3A.

I served on the Committee for 3 years and helped our organisation find its feet again after membership suffered a decline.

Each week for fitness I walk lots of kilometres and cycle about 100 kilometres. I also play over 70s cricket and love to travel.

I am passionate about seeing our organisation prosper and provide local 'mature aged people' the opportunity to challenge themselves physically and mentally, to have positive social interactions and to have FUN!

Vinny Fitzgerald – Committee Member



Before retiring I worked in Finance - my role was managing Credit Departments in various Global Industries. While having a full time position, I completed my tertiary education.

Since retirement I've travelled extensively overseas and in Australia. I recently travelled to Italy Egypt and Jordon and presented my travel journey to our U3A Travel Talk class.

I joined U3A two years ago, participating in many activities such as walks hiking movies tipping fun dinning to name a few.

I will be a Convenor this year taking one off tours around Melbourne (next outing is to Rippon Lea Estate). I love all things outdoors such as camping hiking and lots of walks

We are looking for a Secretary to replace Fiona Williams

After doing the role for two years, Fiona Williams is stepping down as Secretary at the next AGM (March 2024). 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 Fiona. 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 U3A Hobsons Bay/Williamstown.

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.

If you would like to know more about the Secretary role or have a chat to Fiona about it, email info@u3ahbwilli.org.au



Convenor and Member UMAS Support Volunteer

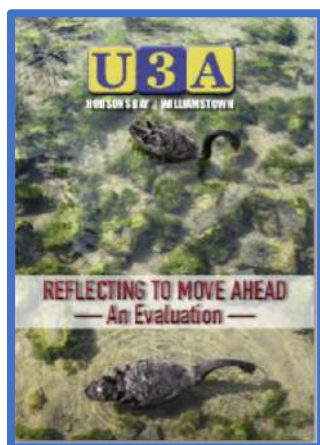
We are looking for a friendly person to help members and convenors use our enrolment and management system (UMAS). This role would help convenors use UMAS to get class lists and send emails and provide support to members having any problems using UMAS.

This is a role you can do anytime and from home. You don't need to be particularly technically minded, just organised and happy to help people. The time commitment is not great. If you are interested, please contact Sue Dawkins to discuss

info@u3ahbwilli.org.au

Evaluation Report

A working group (Sandy Guest, Sandi Fallshaw, Mikael Wagner, Phil Quinn and Kerry Lewis) completed a comprehensive Social Impact Evaluation during 2022. The [final report](#) was presented in February.



The report was endorsed by the Committee and all ten recommendations will be reviewed by the new Committee. They will be a key input into the future planning of our U3A. The feedback from our members and external partners was very positive and there is every reason to be pleased with the organisation. The report details all the suggested Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats and these underpin the recommendations.

Sandy Guest

Grants

U3A Hobsons Bay/Williamstown thanks Hobsons Bay City Council, Bendigo Bank and Viva Energy for their generous financial support.

Sue Dawkins, Grants Coordinator applies for grants, with recent successful grants from Hobsons Bay City Council and Viva Energy. These funds have provided resources to enable a range of programs to be run, including

workshops, promotional materials and banners and the Art & Photo Exhibition. Grants fund the purchase of items that are not covered by member fees. The Viva Energy grant is enabling improvements to the Cottage including hot water and new blinds.



Meet Jim Forbes



Jim and his wife Marg joined U3A Hobsons Bay/Williamstown just before the pandemic. He is part of the bird watching group, plays cards and takes part in the Discover Melbourne walks and bush walks.

During his working life, Jim was Maintenance Manager at the City of Port Philip. We are very lucky that Jim is happy to use his maintenance skills to help maintain the Cottage, such as with the hot water installation, measuring up and sourcing the new blinds (and taking down the old pelmets).

Vale Ken Gratton



It is with great sadness that we inform our U3A Community that Ken Gratton died on Monday, 27th March.

Ken first joined U3A Hobsons Bay/Williamstown in 2005 as a keen member of the art class and was convenor from 2016. In addition Ken served on the Executive Committee, first as Treasurer 2008-2017, Vice-President 2016, then President 2016-2020.

A service celebrating his life was held at the Altona Memorial Park Chapel on 12th April.

Members enjoying 2023 Offerings

There has been positive feedback from members on the wide range of topics and options available this year. We now have over 85 activities running throughout the year with a good mixture of categories including arts/craft/film, languages, discussion, exercise, games and interesting one-off activities and excursions. This balanced program includes: six language classes, four art groups, three writing/poetry, four book groups, 23 outdoor activities, 10 games/cards, four film groups and six discussion groups.

The outdoor groups have taken advantage of the mild weather with some interesting outings. The **Explore Melbourne** group walked along the beach at Mentone and Ricketts Point, Elsternwick through the Yalukit William Nature Reserve and went on the train to see the begonia festival in Ballarat. **Local walking** and **cycling** have been busy, and we have been lucky to have some



Walking Football

one-off and short sessions including **Croquet**, **Yoga**, **historical walks** offered by Victoria University and **Walking Football** in conjunction with Football Victoria. End of the Line activity commenced in April.



Cycle Group

There are now four **art groups** with an increased membership including a new 'en plein air' outdoor group. Demand for language classes is strong and Carmen has opened an additional **Spanish beginners'** class. We have



En plein air art

a vibrant **Craft Group** with talented members who enjoy celebrating special occasions including International Women's Day. Two new **book groups** started this year including a group discussing non-fiction books.

The four **film groups** provide options at Sun Theatre, Kino for



Film Group 2

international movies and National Theatre Live and Opera at the Sun. We have two talented **writing groups, poetry, Jazz** and a popular **ukulele group**. There is strong demand for **Current Affairs** and the class is enjoying the facilities of Digman Reserve.



Wine tasting

Darby Higgs led a splendid evening of **wine tasting**, where members tried obscure varieties of Aussie wines. Games continue to be popular with the **Cards** group meeting in the Steam Packet, **Social Bridge**, **Mahjong**, **Crosswords**, **Cribbage** and **Scrabble**. **Sour dough bread making** is always a hit.

New activities

New activities have been well received with classes filling very quickly. A **morning coffee** hosted by Marilyn, Cheryl and Maria is a great addition, providing an opportunity for members to meet and socialise. Sandy



Jawbone Sanctuary talk

Webb presented two fascinating sessions on the **Jawbone Marine Sanctuary**. There has been a lively **Philosophy class** run during term 1 discussing a journey to a Greek island in search of authentic old age. With members busy travelling within Australia and overseas, we now have a **Travel Talks** series with members chatting about their travels over wine

and nibbles. There are more new activities advertised for term 2 (check the website for details) and more in the planning stage.

Sue Dawkins Activities Coordinator

Convenors and Co-Convenors

This rapid expansion of offerings has only been possible because of the wonderful members who volunteer to convene or co-convene activities. The range of activities we have been able to offer showcases the talented membership, with their diverse career backgrounds and life experiences. The role of co-convenors has been a great initiative to share the load with convenors. We need new convenors and co-convenors to help offer activities and one-off excursions. Running an activity can be fun and a great way to make friends and socialise. If you have an idea to suggest and/or would like to become a Convenor, please contact the Committee at info@u3ahbwilli.org.au

My MSO Chorus experience

Singing with the MSO Chorus has been a commitment and a joy of mine for 24 years. In 1999, while living in Geelong, I auditioned for the (then) Melbourne Chorale, to perform at the opening of the Sydney Olympics Arts Festival, singing Mahler's *8th Symphony*, courtesy of the Australian Olympic Committee, in a huge undertaking at Sydney's Superdome. I easily became hooked. There's always something new and exciting. And we meet internationally-renowned musicians and conductors.

Members must do a ten-minute re-audition every two years. We prepare a solo piece of our choice, with piano accompaniment, followed by several aural tests and a short piece of sight-reading. Sight-reading is essential because of the limited rehearsal time and the complexity



of the music.

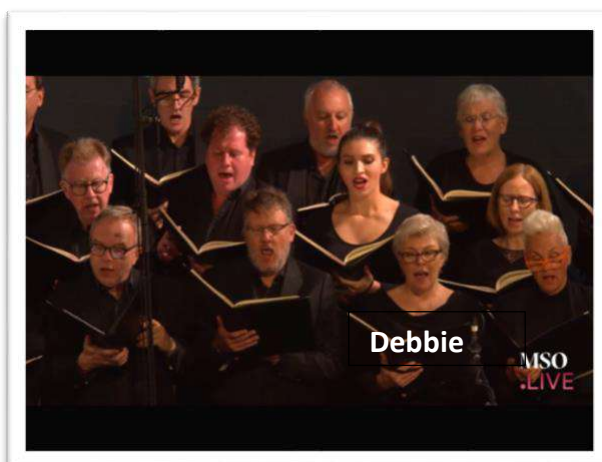
The MSOC regularly accepts new members, with auditions (as mentioned) year-round for anyone interested. But you don't need a great voice. If you can sing in tune, hold your note against others, sight-read (to some extent), blend with those around you, control your tone and dynamics, follow the conductor's beat and are a committed team player, you would be most welcome. At least 80% attendance is expected. Each December we select our concert commitments for the next year.

For *Carmina Burana* we had six chorus rehearsals then three with the orchestra. Like *The Messiah*, it's quite a vocal marathon. For every performance with the orchestra there is a final 'production week': the conductor's piano rehearsal, two or three orchestral rehearsals, including soloists, then one or two performances.

What I love is the wonderful mix of the new and the familiar. Handel's *Messiah* is always sung before Christmas. Favourites like Beethoven's *9th Symphony* or Mozart's *Requiem* will regularly cycle, while there are also premieres of newly-commissioned works. On

occasion we even work with the composers themselves, which is truly an honour: Giya Kancelli (*Styx*), Deborah Cheetham (*A War Requiem for Peace*) and Nigel Westlake (*Missa Solis*).

We have toured regional Victoria, performed in Sydney, Perth, Freemantle and Kuala Lumpur. We've backed



John Farnham at an Olympic fundraiser, performed with The Australian Ballet, and at AFL grand finals. With the MSO, we also provide the live music accompanying film screenings. Coming on 6th June is *Frozen*.

Before MSO Live was born from lockdowns, no concerts were filmed. It's still a rare event. Currently we are rehearsing Benjamin Britten's *War Requiem*, to be performed on 14-15 April at Hamer Hall. Britten was a pacifist who wanted to evoke the pity of war. This work is quite a moving experience. On 2nd June, we sing the sublime Rachmaninov *Vespers* at St Patrick's Cathedral. Neither will be filmed.



As an amateur choir we are not paid, and while there are no joining fees, the transport costs, time away from family and preparation for every performance makes this quite a commitment. But nothing beats making glorious music in superb venues in a committed team, alongside the magnificent Melbourne Symphony Orchestra. It is both balm and joy for the soul.

Debbie Griffiths.

Williamstown Community Garden

In 2021 I relocated from interstate to Williamstown. Having been a passionate gardener for many years I thought I'd join a community garden to meet other gardeners but found to my dismay that there wasn't one in Williamstown! Feeling disappointed and with time on my hands I decided it was time to take on a project to get a community garden established in the suburb.

After speaking initially with the state and federal members, and both the Hobsons Bay elected councillors and council officers it was clear they wanted to know the extent of community support that lay behind this venture. So, a very short Google survey was developed to quantify the level of support for the garden. The survey asked for residents' views on:

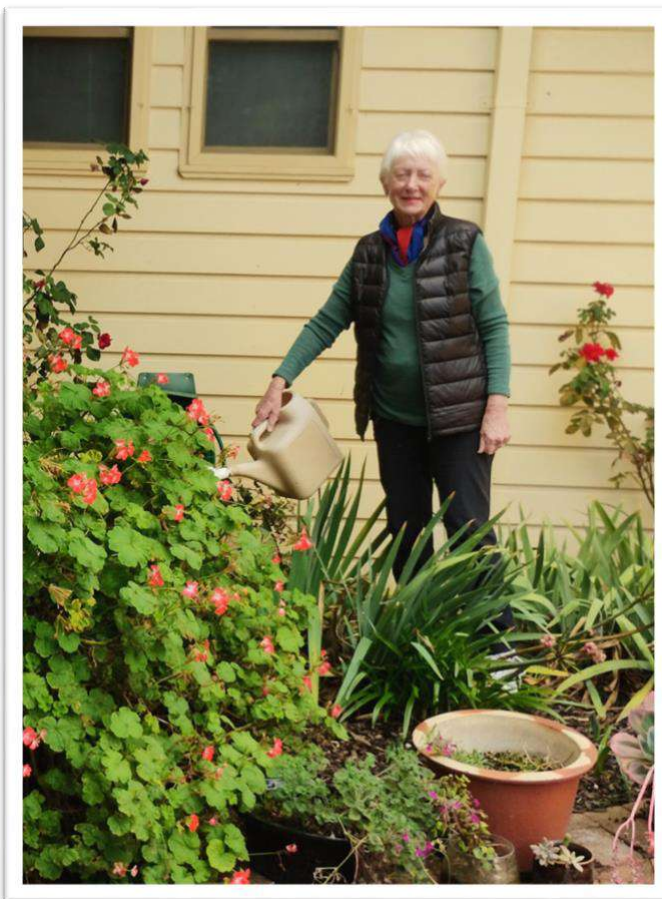
1. whether they wanted to have a community garden,
2. where they thought it should be located in the suburb, and
3. whether they wanted to be involved in its development and subsequent use, and
4. any ideas and suggestions they had for the development and set up of the garden.

The survey was distributed through a variety of groups including the Williamstown Garden Club and the U3A Hobsons Bay/Williamstown as well as a number of friendship groups. Over a five day period 116 people responded to it giving unanimous support for the development of a community garden in Williamstown, if it were centrally located. Google's analysis of the survey results has provided a rich data source with a lot of information to guide the development of the garden.

Recently, well-armed with the survey results, a meeting was held with the Hobsons Bay Sustainability Officer and the manager of Councils' Open Spaces. The results of the survey were tabled and a list was given to the council officers of a number of vacant sites in the suburb. Council officers are now investigating the ownership and contact person for each of the listed sites to enable further discussions to proceed with the owners.

Our next step involved calling for people to join the core group which is tasked with driving the project forward. Fortuitously 12 survey respondents volunteered. The core group will be known as the Williamstown Community Garden Design Group (WCGDG). Their task is to guide the community garden concept forward from a big, brave, bold dream to the practical reality of a functional community garden in Williamstown. Ultimately the outcome of the project will be the community garden, which will be there for all our residents to enjoy for many years to come.

The first gathering of the WCGDG took place at the Williamstown Bowling Club on Tuesday 21st March. There key workers were appointed and information was shared about what has been achieved so far with this project. A forward action plan was developed for the immediate future while the council assesses possible sites.



Meanwhile, the group's momentum and inspiration will be nourished by visiting other nearby community gardens to observe their garden design and to learn lessons from them about what they did to enable them to reach their goal. Reaching our goal may take us some time but as the Chinese proverb says so eloquently, 'A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step'.

Sandy Daly

The glory of gardening: hands in the dirt, head in the sun, heart with nature. To nurture a garden is to feed not just the body, but the soul.

Alfred Austin

5x7 Art Prize 2023

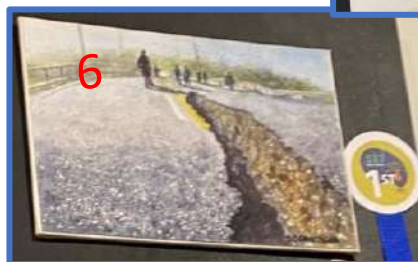
In its 9th year, this community art initiative is a collection of works in 5" x 7" format created by artists from Melbourne's Western Region and Hobsons Bay schools. The theme this year was "movement".

It is put on by the Hobsons Bay Arts Society and supported by Qenos and Hobsons Bay City Council.

U3A Hobsons Bay/Williamstown was very well represented by members of our different art groups. It was particularly pleasing that Debbie Griffiths who participates in several art activities with U3A HBW was awarded first prize for her work entitled "Quake". Debbie's daughter received the award on her behalf.

The opening night was Friday, 14th April. Here is a selection of some of our artists and their work (sorry if we missed you.)

1. Yuri Akamatsu, Vivian Axelson, Debbie McDonald & Paula O'Shea
2. *Shake*: Paula O'Shea
3. *Speeding*: Bridget Sun
4. *Late Summer Breeze*: Nola Anderson
5. *Movement: The joy of it*: Margaret Dugdale
6. *Quake*: Debbie Griffiths
7. *Deep Water Swirling*: Vivian Axelson
8. *Tampopo*: Yuri Akamatsu
9. *Rex and his ball*: Regina Goetz
10. *Mouse stuffed as cat moves*: Richard Pannell
11. *Tropical Storm*: Deb McDonald



Facebook



We have a very vibrant [Facebook Group](#) with 146 members at the time of writing. We generally get at least one new post a day. It is a private group – only members can see posts.

If you are a member of U3A Hobsons Bay/Williamstown you can apply to join: just answer questions to verify you are a member and agree to:

- Be courteous and kind to each other
- Be respectful of people's privacy
- Only post original content/share with consent

Some Memories from Term 1 2023



Beating about the Bush Exhibition,



Cycle rides



Local Walks



Footy Tipping



Beach Walks



Bird Watching



Craft



Croquet



Ballarat



Coffee Morning