

# Newsletter



**YARRA CITY**  
UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE

**March 2023**

**T:** 0459 779872

**E:** [u3ayarracity@gmail.com](mailto:u3ayarracity@gmail.com)

**W:** [www.u3ayarracity.org.au](http://www.u3ayarracity.org.au)

**FaceBook:** <http://www.facebook.com/u3ayarra>

17 Stanton Street

Abbotsford 3067

**Office hours:** Mon 1-3pm, Fri 10-12 noon

(Closed public holidays & school holidays)

## Contents

President's report .....	1
Forums update .....	2
Program report .....	3
Office volunteers.....	4
Poetry group .....	5
Melbourne Athenaeum visit .....	6
Life on the other side.....	7
International Women's Day .....	8
Nola Frawley remembered.....	9
Profile - Peter Moore.....	10
Photo gallery.....	11
Diary dates .....	12

## President's report

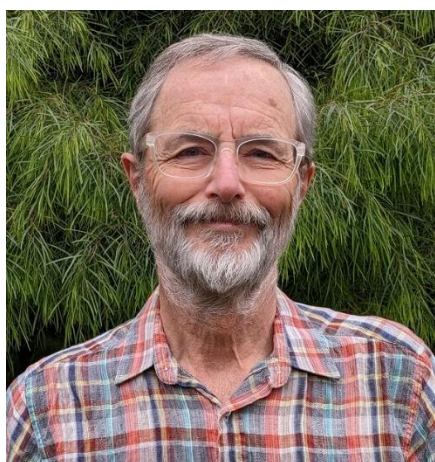
Our 2023 U3A year is off to a great start. Thanks to Frank Moore, our database manager, the new U-MAS membership system rolled out with very few hiccups, and here we are with 358 active members, and 43 courses. We've seen reports of some other U3A groups suffering significant membership drops since COVID lockdowns sent us all into a bit of a spin, but Yarra City has continued to thrive. This is due I'm sure to our members' resilience, and because a large number of us regard our U3A as a significant part of our social network.

We kicked off our new year with a Welcome Lunch, held at Mark Street Hall in March. A fine event, with the opportunity to renew old friendships and to meet new members; thanks to all those who brought along a plate to share. This lunch followed the first Forum for the year, held at Bargoonga Nganjin, North Fitzroy Library. I want to acknowledge the long-term support that we receive from the City of Yarra, and from Yarra Libraries. We have made use of the Bargoonga Nganjin facility since COVID lockdowns but are looking forward to returning to the more centrally located Collingwood Library.

One interesting statistic is that our membership is almost 75% female. I believe this number is very common across Australian U3A groups, but it does present us a challenge... where are all the blokes who could be members? I don't think our courses are inherently gender-specific, and the City of Yarra prides itself on inclusion across all demographics. The number one source of new members is a recommendation from a friend, so a call-out to members to invite your friends and neighbours to join us.

Your Committee of Management meets monthly. Our job is to make sure that U3A Yarra City runs smoothly. The committee members are listed in this newsletter and on our website, and I urge all members to talk to them if they have any questions or concerns, especially if you have any suggestions for new courses. The committee itself is also a welcoming group and always looking for new members.

**Cont.**



*Peter Moore*

***We now have a Publications and Communications sub-committee (Pubs & Coms)...***

We now have a Publications and Communications sub-committee (Pubs & Coms) charged with making sure that all our members are kept informed, and to encourage prospective members to join. Our main avenues are our website and Facebook. Did you know we have a closed Facebook group Connecting U3A Yarra City? Look us up!

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/ConnectingU3AYarraCity>. We are also refreshing our hard-copy brochures and fliers available in libraries and neighbourhood houses. Recently we had new professional photographs taken of some members, illustrating our range of courses. A fun morning was had by all, and I'm looking forward to using these new images.

I do wish all members a fulfilling and enjoyable 2023. See you at one of our courses or events!

**Peter Moore**

## Forums update

The Program Coordinator's role has been handed over to the capable David Lee and his team. I am continuing to coordinate Tuesday Forums. Please direct any queries, attendance, responses etc. to me and timetable, venues, course descriptions and tutor queries to David Lee at

[program.u3ayarracity@gmail.com](mailto:program.u3ayarracity@gmail.com).

Semester 1 Forums commenced in March. The first was an inspiring talk from Jeremy Lawrence of Streets Alive Yarra (you can sign up to it on [streets-alive-yarra.org](http://streets-alive-yarra.org)). We hope some of his plans for a more accessible, liveable and beautiful city eventuate.

On March 14, Chris Friday (*sans* Wendy) showed us photos from their trip to the Kimberley and Kakadu – this brought back happy memories for many who were there.

We are sad that Anne Molloy is not well enough to give us her talk on Chemicals in Food. I think she gets the prize for having the most postponed talk! I wish her well for her treatment and recovery.

Upcoming forums

- April 4, Louis Roller - Complementary Medicines (Bargoonga Nganjin)
- May 2, Louis Roller - Diseases and Medicines in Shakespeare's Time
- May 16, Jeff Atkinson - The Stockade -penal system in Victoria
- June 6, Rodney Spark and colleague - The Voice, part 1
- June 20, Rodney Spark and colleague - The Voice, part 2.

This shortened program reflects forum cancellations and me taking a holiday!

**Lyn Watson**

***We hope some of his plans for a more accessible, liveable and beautiful city eventuate.***

## Program report

***...we are trialling the establishment of a Yarra Seed Library at North Carlton Library.***

At the start of this year, we offered 43 courses, in addition to Tuesday Forums. Most courses are near capacity or full which is very pleasing. Our new courses include Philosophy, offered by Don Just, and 500 cards facilitated by Mauris Bianchin.

Through our Yarra Libraries partnership we are trialling the establishment of a Yarra Seed Library at North Carlton Library. This is a great opportunity to collect seeds from your plants, or friend's plants, and to make connections with keen gardeners.

Next term an important and lively course offered by Susannah Dax and Annie O'Loan returns. Planning for a Safer Old Age explores the range of issues and end-of-life decisions we need to make as we prepare for the 'next stage' of our lives. We are also offering a short course by Rob Salter, Living an Ethical Public Life. The course will consider the actions/in-actions we take that have an impact on others beyond our personal lives. A second table tennis group is now open for enrolments.

I want to thank Program sub-committee members Jan Tinetti and Barry Giddings for the accuracy of course information entered into U-MAS, and for interest in initiating some exciting new courses – watch this space!

The Bulletin provides the latest updates on our return to the Collingwood Library Community Room.

**David Lee**



Tara Behen at the Carlton Seed Library

## Office volunteers

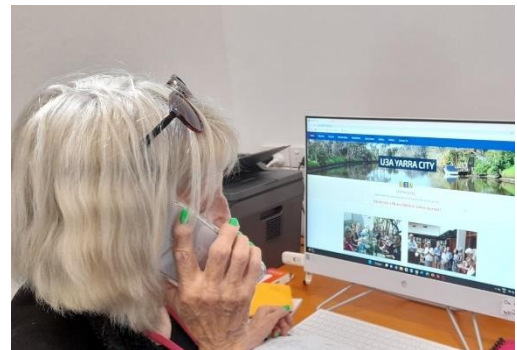
After living and working in New York for a couple of years, I returned home to Richmond and retired.

*... great variety of interesting courses and wonderful people who are happy to chat or talk seriously about a variety of topics.*

A friend – I'm looking at you, Wendy Hall –, suggested I might be interested in joining U3A Yarra City, so I did. I loved it and the great variety of interesting courses and wonderful people who are happy to chat or talk seriously about a variety of topics.

When another friend became the office manager, I signed up as an office volunteer and eventually took on the role of manager.

In those days, about eight years ago, the office was often busy with the phone calls and members coming to chat about various courses, etc. With the move to online enrolment the office is generally quieter now, although it is busy at the beginning of each semester.



Busy or not, we still need our office volunteers to help members and prospective members to access the support they need. Volunteers may be called upon to assist with enrolments, class queries, mailouts etc. For those not comfortable using the computer there are manual systems in place.

Other things you should know working as a volunteer in the U3A office:

- There is a coffee shop in the next street
- Tea/coffee making supplies are available
- The computer provides a link to the newspaper
- There is a selection of books to read
- Help is only a phone call away, if needed.

Why not drop in and have a chat during office opening hours?

**Mondays 1-3 pm, or Fridays 10-12 noon** (school and public holidays excepted).

**Mary Walker**

## Poetry group

The owl and the pussycat went to sea.

Lear's whimsical and delightful poem is well known and loved. There are many memorable sea poems. In fact, I'm sure you can remember one. Or if not, like me, you remember summer's waves and long walks along the sand towards a setting sun. The 'wine dark sea' has inspired artists to chart the mariner's experience while the liminal space between shore and ocean provides a rhythm to a poet's work.

*...like me, you remember summer's waves and long walks along the sand towards a setting sun.*

'When anxious, uneasy and bad thoughts come, I go to the sea, and the sea drowns them out with its great wide sounds, cleanses me with its noise, and imposes a rhythm upon everything in me that is bewildered and confused.' Rilke.

During the latter part of last year, I began to ask around for well-remembered poems about the sea and I steadily composed a booklet for this year's Poetry discussion group - a short course. Over the ten weeks we meet at 'Happy Hour' and embark on a discussion of three poems. Together we challenge the poems and, sometimes, the poets challenge us with their insights or language. We enjoy the spar and I delight in the discussion.



In 2022 my book of poems was on birds, inspired by Paul Kelly's selection. This year 'The Sea'. Perhaps next year it will be a tree.


'I think that I shall never see. A poem lovely as a tree' (Joyce Kilmer).

**Maree Presser**

Email

[crinavirgona@gmail.com](mailto:crinavirgona@gmail.com)  
for details

*A two week musical pellegrinaggio through Sicily and the Eolian Islands.*




*Come with us on a winding path through the musical traditions of Sicily and the Eolian Islands:  
Learn the art of the cantastorie from Luigi di Pino  
Meet the musicologist Maestro Giuseppe Severini and experiment with the sounds of 12th Century instruments  
Walk in the footsteps of Rosa Balisteri around Licata  
Make music with local musicians: Sing, dance and play traditional instruments:  
Sing the crops to grow and the grapes to release their flavour and the food to cook  
Staying in 3 locations - Taormina, Cafalù and Leni (Salina)  
Get involved with cultural activities such as wine making, fishing, cooking:*

Cost: Aprox \$8,000 (depending on numbers)  
Covers workshops with local musicians, domestic travel, some meals, entry fees, accommodation with breakfast... as well as, our dynamic musical director, Elvira Andreoli, our very experienced tour leader, Maria Sancio Bell. Excludes air fares. No musical experience required.  
Information Night - April 12 Register your interest, with Crina Virgona on 0430 589 696 or Email [crinavirgona@gmail.com](mailto:crinavirgona@gmail.com)

Un abbraccio *Crina*

**September**  
2 - 15th 2023

## Melbourne Athenaeum visit

Members of the Galleries group recently visited the Melbourne Athenaeum.

The Athenaeum is a heritage listed building that has been an integral part of the city's cultural fabric since 1839. The building houses architecturally significant theatres, a beautiful library and reading room as well as retail outlets.

*This insight included heritage objects, photographs, theatre memorabilia as well as items from the archives and art collection...*

Senior Librarian Fiona Malcom gave tour participants a 'peek' at performance rehearsals in the theatres and an interesting insight into the building's history, the library collection and its history. This insight included heritage objects, photographs, theatre memorabilia as well as items from the archives and art collection including an Arthur Streeton painting.

Fiona outlined the library's cultural program consisting of musical performances, artist in residence and playwright in residence and various member book and screen clubs.

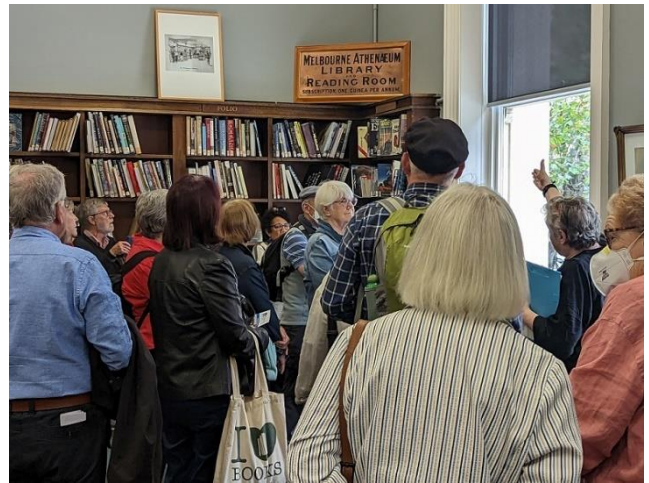
The Athenaeum library is a lending library that anyone can join. Full details and subscription rates are available at <https://www.melbourneathenaeum.org.au/>.

Thanks to Robert Hocking, Galleries tutor for organising the visit.

**Christine Gibbs**



*View from balcony*



*Original Library sign*

## Life on the other side

### One Year On

Making the decision to give up, to stop, to get off the 'work' merry go round, is not easy. For me work was an inherent and profound aspect of who I was. Retirement has meant time for reflection, adjustment and reinvention.

Work was positive, it drove me, gave me satisfaction with a strong sense of purpose. Work was a habit too, it got me up in the morning, required problem solving and creativity especially in the early days of COVID.

My work life was in oncology nursing at Peter Mac in multiple roles for over three decades. Work gave me much satisfaction. I enjoyed caring for patients, educating and supporting them through a cancer diagnosis and complex treatments, and helping their families to navigate the system. Work gave me a specialised body of knowledge with opportunities to continue learning. I also worked with passionate, caring and dedicated health professionals. Work enabled me to have a wonderful opportunity to travel to national and international conferences. And it gave me lifelong friendships.

I retired in late 2021 - I had turned 65. I never wanted work to be burdensome or to lose my passion for patient care. I was ready to hand over to younger staff to give them opportunity to lead with innovation and passion.

And now one year on!

Life has slowed... the sense of urgency is gone without a work schedule, along with the need to have daily priority lists.

I had to learn it was ok to lie on a couch during the day to read or watch a movie. Like so many of my grey-haired compatriots, travel is on the agenda.

But I needed more. I became a participant in community groups joining a U3A cycling group, a ukulele group, sharing a garden plot at the Burnley backyard, and continuing volunteering at Heide. All great fun!

This gave an opportunity to engage, to continue to learn, to have social connections which is fundamental for happiness and provides a sense of achievement and purpose.

But my big undertaking in 2022 has been to become an accredited swim teacher. I now teach children in the learn to swim program at the Richmond pool! I'm not an experienced teacher or even a very good swim teacher but I really enjoy the kid's energy, passion for life and optimism. The kids are so keen to learn! And they do make me laugh!

So, at the end of 2022 I am happy in retirement after 14 months but I often think of my work colleagues at Peter Mac knowing they are caring with great dedication for people with cancer and performing such wonderful and valued work.

### Kathy Watty



## International Women's Day

Collingwood Historical Society (Abbotsford, Clifton Hill, and Collingwood) carries out research into the history of the former City of Collingwood, now part of Yarra. Much of this tends to be centred on men, especially in the nineteenth century when women struggled to have a public role.

***We discovered two fascinating women who lived in St Heliers Street: pioneering gymnasts Harriet Elphinstone Dick and Josephine Russell.***

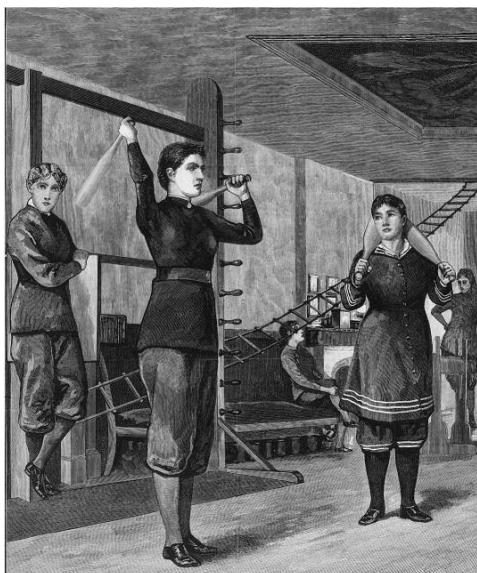
Inspired by this year's International Women's Day on 8 March we have now added a new page to our website: [Collingwood Women](#). This includes an analysis of the 1891 petition seeking the vote for women, listing the names and addresses of the Collingwood women who signed almost one thousand of them! Other topics are Collingwood women councillors, and the role of nurses in World War I. We will continue to add material to this page throughout the year, so if you have any suggestions, let us know.

We have also re-doubled our efforts to add more women to our Notables of Collingwood database. We discovered two fascinating women who lived in St Heliers Street: pioneering gymnasts Harriet Elphinstone Dick and Josephine Russell. Lisa Belleair, Collingwood's first and only Aboriginal councillor, has also been added. Soon to come will be local activist and councillor Marion Miller, and pianist Rieke Parker.

To find out more about women's history in our local area, go to this link:

<https://collingwoodhs.org.au/resources/collingwood-women/>

**Karen Cummings (Collingwood Historical Society President)**



*Women Gymnasts: Harriet Elphinstone Dick and Josephine Russell*



## Nola Frawley remembered

*...a poet, a storyteller and inveterate supporter of the down-trodden, a dyed-in-the-wool Carlton supporter...*

A rainbow coloured hat covered with badges supporting a myriad of causes topped a head crowned with long fair plaits and a body ornamented with cherished jewellery: earrings, beads, brooches, bracelets, rings and anklets, this was Nola. The badges spoke of the person; a poet, a storyteller and inveterate supporter of the down trodden, a dyed-in-the-wool Carlton supporter who cherished her Irish heritage and loved literature and films.

At first sight Nola and her many badges challenged. She wore the hat to get conversations going. On the many many buses and trams she took, children and adults too would often comment or at least, look, with curiosity. Together they could explore the many issues she felt so strongly about. Her views and theirs too.



Nola amazed. How well she managed her life, a feminist and writer to the end. Women in four writing groups will remember her wit. Even after she stopped driving she went to the Woodend poets meetings to read her work. Her poetry gathered awards. Defiant. When did she start having her long hair plaited African style? When did she get multiple ear piercings? When did she start sticking badges on her multi coloured hat? Gentle but with passionate resistance to injustice. She built friendship with young and old, giving warmth and encouragement. Alone but encircled by

friends, no glimmer of self-pity. She made her way in the world finding simple joy even during pandemic isolation.

Nola's poetry so often captured the moment. A poem about an everyday suburban bus trip won her first prize. She addressed, in verse, the bashing of 15-year-old Perth boy Cassius Turvey and the courage of his mother. And during the long COVID lockdown she described a moment in her day that spoke to us all: 'I clear the sink into sparkling order, and feel my innards relax. Breathe out.'

She left on the Brunswick tram from yesteryear. She waved, blue eyes sparkling; threw us a few lines of poetry as she boarded, recalling moments that had formed her. We stared after her not knowing this was the long good-bye. She tossed her opal, her topaz, her glitter away but left us her generous heart and raging hat. Her silver plaits streamed behind her, ribboned in the faithful blue and white. The doors closed and clang, she was gone. No regrets.

### The Memoir Group

## Profile – Peter Moore

Peter Moore became President of U3A Yarra City in October 2022.

### What did you do before retirement?

I worked as a metallurgist and became a specialist in stainless steel – when telling people this at a barbeque it didn't tend to result in fascinated ongoing conversation, more likely bemused incomprehension!

### What first brought you to U3A?

My wife Liz was already a U3A member, and she said it was fun. She asked, 'why don't you come too' and I did, and it was.

### What's the best thing about being a U3A member?

The people. In some ways the activities are incidental, all interesting and useful but people bind it together. I felt this was reinforced with the COVID lockdown. I am a tutor for the 'Walk & Coffee' group and I felt a little anxious about taking this physical activity to Zoom. But the same people joined in (some even drank coffee!) We talked about everything and nothing, including what socially distanced walking we were doing. Some of the group had the opportunity to lead quizzes or small presentations and we just enjoyed each other's company.

### Why was this important?

Inherently people like to connect, it makes us feel good, it combats loneliness, and during the lockdowns we still brought people together when it was needed.



### How did you become President?

I joined the committee in 2021 because it looked like an interesting group and a way to give back to U3A. The Committee is a great group to work with, very talented and hard working. The role of President isn't too difficult when there is such support.

### What groups do you participate in?

I run the Walk and Coffee group every Tuesday morning. Music on Mondays is an excellent introduction to a broad spectrum of recorded music; Table Tennis gets my heart pumping and is great for the hand-eye coordination. I also attend selected Tuesday Forums and of course the U3A Committee and the Presidency are ongoing.

### Other hobbies?

I love the physical challenge of multi-day bushwalks, I am an environmentalist and we have a delightful four month old grandchild, our first.

### Tell us something about yourself that people may not know?

I am a walker, 10,000 plus steps every day, around the local streets and beside the Merri Creek and Yarra River; we are unbelievably lucky to live in such a beautiful natural environment so close to the centre of this large city. I am also a bit of a home handyman; I get great satisfaction from repairing things that would otherwise be thrown away, and in making and maintaining household items.

### Any special message to the membership?

Yes, get your COVID Vax jab!

Susannah Dax

## Photo gallery



*Coffee break OYB*



*Australian Galleries*



*Shy table tennis group?*



*Rodney providing First Nations commentary*



*Walmer St bridge - Historic Walks*



*Sensory Garden walk - Botanic Gardens*

## Diary dates

### 2022-2023

16 Jun: Newsletter closing date – July

17 Nov: Newsletter closing date – Nov

### Semester Dates 2023

6 -23 Apr: School holidays & Easter

24 April - 23 Jun: Term 2

10 Jul – 15 Sep: Term 3

2 Oct – 15 Dec: Term 4



## Committee 2022

*President:* Peter J Moore

*Vice President:* David Lee

*Secretary:* Viv Blanksby

*Treasurer:* Sue Kurt

*Program Coordinator:* David Lee

### Committee members

Margaret Gibson, Barry Giddings

### Other positions

*Program Support:* Sue Kurt, Jan Tinetti, Lyn Watson

### Other positions cont:

*Database/UMAS Coordinator:* Frank Moore

*Database:* Sue Kurt

*Tutor Liaison:* Frank Moore

*Publications & Communications:* Peter Moore, Viv Blanksby, Sue Kurt, David Lee

*Membership Officer:* Viv Blanksby

*Office Manager:* Mary Walker

*Newsletter:* Tina Hocking, Lyn Morgan, Susannah Dax

## Connect with U3A Yarra City

**FaceBook:** Send photos and articles to our email address [u3ayarracity@gmail.com](mailto:u3ayarracity@gmail.com) with Facebook in the Subject line or go directly via [Facebook](#).



**Web:** [www.u3ayarracity.org.au](http://www.u3ayarracity.org.au)

**On Yer Bike:** <https://onyerbike-u3a.org.au>

**News & Events Bulletin:** Latest news communication via email

**Newsletter:** Published March, June and November.  
Email [u3ayarracity@gmail.com](mailto:u3ayarracity@gmail.com) with Newsletter in the Subject line, or post to: Newsletter Coordinator, U3A Yarra City, 17 Stanton Street, Abbotsford 3067.

**U3A Yarra City Reg: AC047182K**

**Printed courtesy of the office of Adam Bandt MP**