



U3A PORT PHILLIP

University of the Third Age Port Phillip
Registered Incorporated Association: A0045047P
ABN: 36 675 645 384

President's Report to 14th AGM, held 2 December 2017

It is a great pleasure to report that your U3APP has had yet another busy and very successful year. There have been numerous milestones and successful initiatives. This could not have been achieved without the enormous effort of our many wonderful volunteers and the extraordinary cooperation and effort that goes on throughout the organisation!

Membership

In 2017 membership increased 6.5% to 505, with over 100 New Members. At last count we had 495 Full members, 18 Associates, 10 Life Members, 18 Honorary members (Tutors)

Volunteers

We have over 125 volunteers, ie. 25% of our membership give of their time. Well over 2,500 hours have been given by volunteers This is a conservative number, as much work is done at home and the Committee of Management hours are not included. We do not have any paid staff, so all activities are undertaken by volunteers with a wide range of skills.

Managing the organisation – done by the CoM of 10 members

Management of the office - capably done by Bev Fryer and Margo Anderson. The office is open during class times, activities are associated with managing the day to day running of U3A, rooms and facilities need to be ready for classes, systems working, volunteers rostered on and skilled to handle their tasks, as well as supported in their role.

There are approximately 40 office volunteers, fielding queries, responding to immediate needs, welcoming people and, at some point, interacting with every single member / tutor and with every activity: IT, Course coordination, record keeping, membership contact, monitoring course attendances, supporting tutors and class monitors, mail collection and purchasing of all sorts of supplies. A unique role involves preparing the volunteer roster, capably done by Desleigh Kent. This year several new people have joined the team, a few will be stepping down at the end of the year and we are grateful for everything they have given. I want to acknowledge particularly Sheila Harris' many years of volunteering for U3APP.

Course Coordination Team - establishes the entire course programme, looks after tutors, finds new tutors, speakers and activities, to ensure we provide interesting and varied classes that cater to the wide range of interests of our community. We owe a big debt of gratitude to the Tutors and CCT who give so generously of their time.

This year we again had the benefit of the experience of Mark Denniston, Helen Donnellan, Ann Gibson, Sunny Acreman, Gerry Smith: they were joined by Geoff Levy and supported by Margaret Byron who waved her magic over the numerous programmes and publications to ensure they are not only informative but also attractive. In addition, we appreciate the help of Mike Perkal for special events and with the sound system and David Robinson for his initiative with learning about the many aspects of film appreciation, and on Fridays convening a wide range of facilitated discussions.

Because of the lease arrangement we have with the CoPP where MKC is shared between users, our programme and need for rooms gets communicated to the CoPP so that the rooms are reserved for us. This system works really well, but does require a huge amount of cooperation between tutors, the CCT, the IT groups, the office and adhering to a tight timetable. The result you see is the smooth delivery of courses and classes.

It is obvious that our members enjoy the range of classes, the learning and social activities, and as a result member numbers have grown. Please make sure you explore next year's Course Guide. It is again fantastic; this special team has continued to be active in coming up with an imaginative and varied programme and has secured the commitment of wonderful tutors.

In 2017 we had 62 tutors and facilitators, many of them have been with us for years. 62 courses were offered in Semester 1 and 66 in Semester 2. Seven tutors delivered more than one course a week.

We presented eight Saturday Seminars, which proved very popular with attendances of over 50 members and quite often their friends, peaking with over 100 at the Seniors Festival presentation by Julian Burnside. Monday/Tuesday Talks were less well attended, perhaps because they tended to clash with other classes.

In addition, U3A again hosted several social activities, including:

- New members event in March with 35 new members attending
- Tutors and volunteers event in June with about 50 members attending
- For Seniors Week in October, we produced a 'Seniors Week Showcase', a joint event by our artists and musicians, where each group demonstrated their works – paintings, drawings. The grand finale was a musical performance by our in-house choir, the Recorder Ensemble and the instrumental group 'Allsorts'. Through an arrangement with the CoPP, a small number of artists working outside of U3A and predominantly from aged care or special needs group also exhibited their works. All of this proved a big hit with a large audience of 70 plus members and visitors.

'Out and About' excursions included visits to the Fire Services Museum, The Shrine of Remembrance, the Houses of Parliament and two visits to the penguins on St Kilda Pier. We have also been on an historical walk in St Kilda, and punted on the lake at the Botanical Gardens.

IT

I cannot emphasize enough how fortunate we are that our IT system has been completely developed in-house at minimal cost to us. This has been achieved through the leadership and knowledge of Helen Vorrath, supported by a knowledgeable team of Karen English, Kate Richards and Diane Boyle.

Some of you may recall that on-line membership was first set up in 2015 to pay for one-off events: it was available for enrolment for all classes in 2016. 2017 was the third year of its existence and the second year of full on-line enrolment. Over 79.5% of members have paid their membership payments for 2017 using the on-line system.

This year the system has been upgraded, the ITEM team (Karen English, Jan Mulder, Lyn Place and Meredith Mancini) set up to provide hands-on assistance when required. Office volunteers have received PC training, detailed manuals and processes have been refined. All these initiatives have greatly increased day-to-day use of the system.

The online system is a critical element for our long-term growth as it enables quicker and more accurate renewal of memberships, greater numbers and significantly reduces the workload for volunteers.

The e-Bulletin goes to close to 850 people, of whom over 60% open it regularly. The website gets 25+ visits a day, often peaking at 100 when the fortnightly bulletin arrives. Our members are kept abreast of U3APP activities, news, courses, opportunities and special notices when matters change at short time.

Specific IT and system enhancements in 2017

- Creation of the e-rolls - Lenovo tablets have been acquired to record course attendance and enrolment. This reduces a lot of manual recording done by volunteers, increases accuracy and will in the coming year remove the need for much of the superfluous paperwork for enrolment lists and roll cards.
- Creation of two views of our Course Guide, by day of week and by category
- On-line cancellations and apologies
- Members are now able to book into listed courses and events at any time and have their enrolment confirmed immediately. The team has made a huge effort to manage class membership and reduce waitlists by negotiating with tutors to raise class limits and weaning out those members whose continued absence was preventing other, keen members from joining.
- Greater use of our Facebook page (thanks to Kate Richards)
- Office Volunteers Newsletter added to the website and sent out regularly to keep people up to date: a special page on the U3APP website, Volunteer section, has been developed for advice of IT changes and updates.
- An Arts Showcase page has been added to the website.

Relationships with City of Port Phillip (CoPP)

Our relationship with the CoPP continues to be strong and supportive, and we are grateful for the large measure of goodwill from the CoPP. We can present our activities in this wonderful location, the City maintains the building, this year new carpets were laid, special

blinds installed in room 3 to enable the showing of DVDs, Council fitted our large TV in room 3, the cleaning roster changed so that our classes on Monday mornings can be held in a clean environment. Jacek helped us with refitting the two storage areas. Street signs pointing to the MKC have been put up to make us more visible. Special thanks to Jacek Przybylski, Samantha Ross and Danielle Fraser and the CoPP in general.

Relationship with Network and other U3As

U3APP actively contributes to Network and regional activities to improve integration, share information, particularly to raise the profile of U3A in the community, in relevant government departments, with decision makers.

U3APP link with the Southern Metro region of U3A has strengthened. This year we have hosted the members at MKC, discussed new course opportunities, sharing tutors and how to learn from each other.

Finances

Our finances are in a strong position; Kevin English will provide you with the details in the Treasurer's Report.

In 2017 we have acquired several major items of additional equipment, to stay up to date with technology –

- a new TV and DVD player to enable delivery of films and DVD's
- improvements to our Wi-Fi system
- tablets for recording enrolments and course attendance
- a top of the range sound system so everyone can hear our speakers and have better sound for presentations; and
- as an OH & S measure, a defibrillator.

We are cognisant that as we grow, we may need to access other venues apart from Mary Kehoe Centre, for which we may be required to pay rent, so we are working hard to ensure we are prepared for that.

For the time being we have kept our membership fees at a modest \$40 per annum.

General

A big thank you is owed to every single volunteer and helper. So many things have been done and initiatives taken, a huge amount of thought and energy provided to improve things at our U3APP. Many volunteers give a large amount of time outside their allocated shifts, their formal meetings, during their holidays or travels.

It is impossible to mention every single person who has contributed. Special thanks to all the tutors, your willingness to share your knowledge, your generosity in giving your time is appreciated by every single one of us. Our reputation is founded on the input of so many: thanks to Mark and his team, to Bev and Margo and all office volunteers, Di Gameson and her helpers for catering for our events on special occasions like today's Christmas lunch. To Helen and Karen and their teams for creating the IT system, making it user friendly, saving U3APP a large amount of money. To Jill Hearman and Meredith Mancini who continue to welcome all new members and contact anyone who is not well or is bereaved. To Margo for creating our beautiful brochure of U3APP.

There are also the individuals who help by fixing things behind the scenes, like Peter Thorne who, together with Ian Shaw, built the trolley for the artists' easels. Peter also repaired the piano keyboard, saving us from having to buy a new one: he came up with the idea of rearranging the storage areas and putting racks in the top room. We thank the Men's Shed for being able to use their facility and machinery. A working bee, led by Peter and Helen, supported by Jacek, with several other U3APP volunteers cleared out the room, moved the cupboards, removed the old shelves to make room for the new ones, examined all items for their potential usefulness for U3APP and carted away those deemed unrequired. Peter, within a few days had installed the new racks which has made a big difference to the members who use the room for their equipment.

Challenges

This year saw the retirement from the Secretary role by Pauline Amos. For the last few months we had the assistance of Pat Ferguson, and for this AGM, Barbara Fisher and Bev Fryer. Your COM has picked up all the other secretarial tasks, which has been a challenge.

As per our Constitution, the coming year will bring several retirements from the COM, the CCT and possibly the IT groups. This provides wonderful opportunities for new volunteers to put their stamp on the organisation and build on the existing foundations. I appeal to all of you who are currently not yet playing an active role here - please give some of your time, U3APP needs you to keep thriving, and you will be rewarded by joining a wonderful group of people.

My compliments and sincere thanks also to the 2017 Committee of Management for their dedication, interest and contribution.

Renate Mattiske
President
2 December 2017