



NEWSLETTER

Volume 1, Issue 1

November 2018

A few words from the President...

Warm greetings to you all. This is the inaugural Newsletter for Indigo U3A, and it is my pleasure to write a few words for you.

Firstly, my thanks to all the many members who completed the survey – an excellent response which will be of great help to the Program Planning Group looking ahead to 2019. Also, a big thank you and well done to those who attended the Brainstorming Session – an excellent job; the enthusiasm was palpable. More will be in this edition for you to read. As you know, your feedback and encouragement is always welcome.

This year our membership topped the century – a very pleasing result for us all. Planning for 2019 is well underway as I write this. With further interest continued growth

is ensured. We can all spread the good word about our wonderful and generous presenters. They are the mainstay of our success, and I most sincerely thank them all.

I also thank all members of the Committee of Management for their considerable contributions and further thank all members who have contributed to Portfolio groups.

Looking forward to our Christmas function, please ensure you enrol and pay by the deadline. I want everybody to have the opportunity to attend, so we do need accurate numbers for catering purposes, and of course your money. I hope to see many of you there.

The plan for next year is to have a newsletter for each term, ie four for the year.

I take this opportunity to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a healthy and prosperous New Year.

John Meyer
President
Nov. 2018



INSIDE THIS ISSUE

2018 in review (continued).....	2
War Graves of Ambon.....	2
2018 Members Survey.....	3
2018 Members Brainstorming.....	3
Survey Results	3
Future Newsletters.....	3
Looking Ahead to 2019.....	4
Your Website/Who We Are.....	4

2018 Christmas Party...

On Wednesday 12 December we return to the Old Stanley Primary School for our Christmas Party.

Cost: \$30.00pp: includes nibbles, spit roast and salads, wine, beer and soft drinks*.

Time: 5.30pm-8.30pm

RSVP: Friday 30 November.
Bookings essential.

*Any special dietary requirements, please advise Joyce Wilkinson at courses.indigo.u3a@gmail.com as soon as you have booked.



2018 in review...

.... Continued page 2

It has been a busy year for our U3A, and it is worthwhile listing all the courses and activities that have taken place throughout 2018. They were ..

- Abstract Painting
- Antiques Roadshow
- Artists of the Heidi Circle
- Book Swap
- Conversations
- Family History
- Fourth Thursdays Walks [see A & B]
- Handmade Jewellery
- Demonstration
- Hearts of Gold & Minds of Mettle
- I've Got This Great App

Iconic Australian Photographers
Indigo Gardens Tours [see C & D]



- International Relations
- Justice – An Ethics Course
- Members' Coffee Mornings
- Men's Book Group
- Modernist Australian Architecture



Tastes [see E]
 Tech Savvy Seniors
 The Europeans
 Twenty Years in the Foreign Service
 War Graves of Ambon (see below)
 Winter Warmer Fireside Lunch

Mysteries of the Universe
 Plant-based Nutrition
 Summer School



Working as a Midwife in the East End of London in the 60's



'War Graves of Ambon' presented by Carole O'Neill (1 & 2 November)

What a delight to have our inaugural president and life member Carole O'Neill return to Beechworth on a visit and to give two insightful talks on the Commonwealth War Graves in Indonesia.

Carole began her research through the boxes of material left by her father, Major Keith Proctor, an Australian army officer who served in WW2 and in the Occupation forces before joining the War Graves Commission around 1960.

Her father had never discussed his work with her.

There were two major areas of his War Graves work. First Ambon which initially had the Australian troops of Gull Force (1100 men) assigned there early in the Pacific War. They were ill prepared for jungle fighting and totally lacking in support. The Japanese came and they were quickly overrun with many casualties the rest were imprisoned.

After the war the Indonesians made isolated Ambon one of the two places where Commonwealth Graves could be built.

Carole's father went around various areas of conflict, including Banka Island where 22 Australian nurses were gunned down, retrieving bodies for reburial in Ambon. Over 2,000 are buried at Ambon, more than half are Australians. There is also a memorial to all Commonwealth Forces personnel who were lost in the area. The beautifully tended gardens are testament to the work of Major Proctor.

Carole's second talk was based on the events surrounding Sandakan in Borneo.



Carole O'Neill

Over 2,300 Allied troops were marched in three groups over 200 kms from Sandakan to Ranau on a rough track through oppressive dense jungle.

This occurred towards the end of the War. Only six survived by disappearing into the bush and being looked after by locals. This story has been long suppressed although the locals are very proud to be associated with Australia and there are many locally erected plaques and monuments.

Major Proctor was engaged in both researching these events; and in developing a garden at Ranau to mourn the atrocities that occurred and to commemorate the bravery of the prisoners.

Carole's message was one of love and peace and of creating an awareness of the evil that war brings. Thank you, Carole for your inspiring talks and we look forward to welcoming you back again.

Heather Meyer
 Member, Program Planning Group

Survey summary

The Committee of Management was pleased to receive 54 fully completed responses to the online Survey of Indigo U3A members conducted in July 2018.

The internal weekly email "What's On" was by far the most used method for members to monitor courses and we are working hard to ensure events are notified accurately and also to include other activities of interests within the community.

Improving communication is on-going, both to and from the membership, and this inaugural Newsletter we believe will help us to fulfil our commitment in that area.

Major findings from the Survey have helped shape the approach of the Program Planning group to the 2019 program. The most popular topics nominated by members were cultural (a very broad church), politics/current affairs and philosophy/ethics, followed closely by environment/sustainability, history and social activities.

We hope members will be pleased with what is on offer during both the Summer School and the first Semester of 2019. However, courses don't run without the dedicated people who generously donate their time; expertise; skills and life experience required to get a course off the ground and into reality.

Volunteers are the lifeblood of any successful organisation and Indigo U3A is no exception. Whether as a committee member, a facilitator, a tutor or a guest speaker, the assistance of members in driving our organisation forward is critical for our success.

Joyce Wilkinson
 Convenor, Program Planning Group

Brainstorming Session summary

Participants engaged in lively and productive discussion at our brainstorming session on September 24th. Ideas abounded with possible program offerings for Indigo U3A for next year. Discussion was on-going over an enjoyable sausage sizzle lunch.

Members circulated through the room adding and modifying ideas under these headings..

- Health and Well Being
- Cultural Appreciation
- Awareness Raising & Life Skills Building
- Science and Technology
- Social and Leisure Activities.

Some ideas proposed, which are different to those offered in the past, are group participation eg Play Readings, Comedy and Song; Science Fiction and What Has Come to Pass. Another suggestion which received strong support was Financial Health.

A very strong set of suggestions occurred in the cultural arena – Art, Film, Language, Literature, Music and Theatre through both external visits and in-house events.

The Program Planning Group is at present fleshing out all ideas and will be adding them to the program throughout 2019. Thank you to all participants for your enthusiasm in further enhancing our offerings.

Heather Meyer
 Member, Program Planning Group

2018 Member Survey Results....



- Cultural – art, music, film, literature (65.5%)
- Politics/current affairs (61.8%)
- Philosophical issues/ethics (54.5%)
- Environment/sustainable living (45.5%)
- History (43.6%)
- Social activities - learning and leisure; food and wine (43.60%)
- Technology, including using tablets, smart phones, laptops, desktops (36.4%)
- Health and Wellbeing (34.5%)

Future Newsletters ...

We're sure you all have great stories to tell, the fabulous and funny, the moving and amazing. Please feel free to jot these down and send them in to be shared.

Maybe you want to express an opinion or have a mild rant or perhaps the following topics could inspire you:

- A Week in the Life of ...*
- Books/Films I have enjoyed.*
- Travellers' Tales*
- In my opinion....*

Or perhaps you enjoy writing verse and would like to share one with us .. like the one from Phil Bunn, highlighted on page 4.

Ongoing Courses for 2019

We are fortunate indeed that our most popular regular courses are being offered again next year, meaning the significant number of new members who joined Indigo U3A in 2018 have more opportunity to enjoy and hopefully be engaged by a variety of different topics.

Conversations with Michael Evans addresses a wide variety of issues from a philosophical perspective always generating avid discussion across the spectrum of opinion.

International Relations with Gerry Engwerda is presented every fortnight. Gerry offers insight into global current affairs and issues, within the context of the historical, geographic and political framework, using PowerPoint presentation as well as offering opportunity for vigorous discussion.

Tech Savvy Seniors with Garth Blackman will continue weekly by appointment. Garth will assist with a wide variety of IT issues and problem solving know how.

Tastes is a monthly event for foodies currently organised by Joyce Wilkinson. The group meets at various private homes, or at businesses; restaurants or cafes to share and discuss food, sometimes wine and always good times and great conversation.

Demonstrations, business tours and guest speakers are included in the mix from time to time.

The 2018 highlight was definitely the Mad Hatter's Tea Party followed closely by a European Christmas in July and a (Queen's Birthday) Mocktails and Cocktails event.

Fourth Thursday Walks guided by Gerri Boland are monthly walks (except during exceptionally hot weather) and are usually local, dog friendly walks around the beautiful environment of Beechworth.

Men's Book Club has proven popular this inaugural year and will continue monthly in 2019, led by Michael O'Flaherty.

Monthly Coffee Mornings continue next year: a low key catch-up for coffee and a natter, watch "What's On" to find out where to go each month.

.....Also on offer will be some stimulating short courses and one off presentations, with topic choices in part guided by the results of the members survey of August 2018 and the Brainstorming Session in September.

Joyce Wilkinson
Convenor, Program Planning Group



Information about Indigo U3A and the courses and activities available to members will be found on our website at www.indigou3a.net.

We encourage you to visit the website regularly to check for updates and new offerings, and we welcome feedback and suggestions.

If you wish to attend any course or activity you must enrol on the website using your U3A member number and password. Go to 'How to Enrol' instructions under the 'Courses & Activities' tab on the website.

We know that not all our members are confident in their ability to navigate the internet, so please contact us if you need help.

Who We Are

Indigo U3A Inc.

Old Beechworth Railway Station
Harper Avenue, Beechworth

website www.indigou3a.net
email indigo.u3a@gmail.com
tel: 0431 834 309

2018/19 Management Committee

President : John Meyer
Vice-President: Joyce Wilkinson
Secretary: Frances Baker
Treasurer: Richard Maskiell
Committee Members: Harvey Anderssen; Michael Bydder; Michael Evans; Rosemary Ryan

2018/19 Program Planning Group

Convenor: Joyce Wilkinson
Group Members: Harvey Anderssen; Frances Baker; Heather Meyer; John Meyer; Brenda Nicholson; Maureen O'Flaherty

2018/19 Publications

Website: Rosemary Ryan
Newsletters & Event Fliers
Editor : Rosemary Ryan
Graphics & Layout: Carolyn Barratt

Brain Strain.....

*Alzheimer's, please go away
until some far and distant day.*

To keep dementia well at bay

Indulge yourself - join U3A

...By Phil Bunn