

# Learning for Life



Newsletter # 18

November 2019

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## EDITOR Diana March



It's our 5th birthday so time to reflect—to take a look at where we began and what we've become.

We've reached an amazing milestone with membership increasing to 220. Our Riverland community has embraced U3A with zest and such growth can only be attributed to the generosity of our volunteers who keep the engine running. To our

committee (some now in their 5th year) and to all our tutors/facilitators, a huge thank you for "putting in" for your community.

Some activities have grown significantly. Snooker began with a few, who I suspect remembered their youth in pool parlours. Now 17 members have embraced this activity. Similarly, Bridge has grown to 17 and though the experience and knowledge of players varies, everyone is learning. Yoga seems to grow weekly with about 20 members. The groups that are constantly "full" include Book club, Tai chi, Art and French.

Beginner's Italian began in Term 4 with 12 members and we're grateful to Mario Morena who offered his expertise.

I reflect back to our public meeting in November 2014 when we were overwhelmed with interest from our widespread community. We have a few members travelling huge distances to attend French ... I hope that makes you feel good Helen.

The Writing group tackle various topics each fortnight and some of their work can be found in this issue. Some met with author, Noel Braun, an inspirational 85-year-old who has walked over 2000km on various Caminos in remembrance of his wife who took her own life. He is also the author of other books related to suicide.

Don't forget to visit your local library to pick up a copy of the latest activity schedule or read the latest newsletter. Remember too, that both of these are on our website: [u3ariverland.org](http://u3ariverland.org) which can also be accessed at your local library.

I have enjoyed a variety of activities this year, though wracking my brain with Italian!

I would like to wish all of you a very happy and safe festive season and hope to see you at our Christmas lunch on December 6th. Geoff and I are "childless" this Christmas so will spend December in Sri Lanka with friends, where we'll celebrate Christmas and New Year.

## President's Report

My term as President began almost 12 months ago after a 4-year reign by Brent Morrell ... big shoes to fill.

As an organisation we have gone from strength to strength with a current member base of 220. It is a credit to all concerned that we will celebrate our 5th birthday on such a positive note.

We have been lucky enough to have increased our Tutor numbers and are now offering more than 20 activities. Art remains the most popular activity followed closely by Tai Chi, Funky socks and Yoga. A number of attempts were made to encourage a Waikerie connection, but sadly not to be at this time.

Our presence at the Riverland Field Days proved to be a very valuable activity as a number of suggestions from the public have been taken on board.

We continue to share the RSL clubrooms and now have a new sign

to promote our tenancy. We recently met with the Berri/Barmera Council to ascertain our future usage of this facility after the RSL relocates. We were assured that there were no plans to change anything in the foreseeable future.

This will see us responsible for the whole building, which in turn gives us more rooms for activities. However, it could also see us committing more of our finances to its upkeep and ongoing costs.

U3A Adelaide Hills hosted the 2019 Rendezvous, which proved very popular with a number of our members who attended. It is pleasing to note that this activity began in the Riverland two years ago, as the brainchild of our past president, Brent Morrell. It could well be the beginning of many more years of gatherings of like-minded U3A members from around the state.

All being well, we will get the chance to attend the next Rendezvous in

2021, hosted by Tea Tree Gully U3A.

We are fortunate to have an active and talented Committee who work tirelessly to provide members with opportunities to stay Active: mentally, physically and socially. I personally thank them, together with all the volunteer tutors who help to make our organisation such a thriving success.

A special thanks to Anne Chase who has stepped in as Secretary, while Daina takes some family time.

Remember, we are always looking to broaden our offerings, so if you have an activity you would either like to attend or facilitate, please let us know.

Helen Slade  
PRESIDENT



# RENDEZVOUS

# 2019

## A TANTALISING TASTE OF THE ADELAIDE HILLS

Eight members of U3A Riverland ventured to Hahndorf and surrounds for the second U3A South Australia Rendezvous from October 22-24.

The Mount Lofty Ranges were at their absolute spring time best for the occasion. It was so pleasant to see some non-irrigated green and wonderful colours.

Adelaide Hills U3A prepared an excellent and varied program of walks, history tours, delightful gardens and an interesting range of small group activities. I think all of our group took the opportunity to take a guided tour of Hans Heysen's studio and home.

Kath and I attended a diverse selection of activities including Family History, Poetry Appreciation, Managing your Medications and a clever presentation of excerpts and stories from opera and ballet classics by Colin McDonald, retired

presenter from ABC Classic FM.

Two dinners, the first at the Hahndorf Old Mill and the second professionally catered for at the Bowling Club gave plenty of opportunity for mixing with other U3A groups. TV personality Michael Keelan entertained us with a light-hearted presentation on the benefits of gardening to people of a certain age.

Registrations for the event were up somewhat on the first Rendezvous held here in the Riverland and I hope that future Rendezvous continue to grow.—Tea Tree Gully has offered to host the next one in 2021. The social interaction, exchange of ideas and varied activities offered make for a really worthwhile few days. I thoroughly recommend this event to all members.

Brent Morrell



Thanks to Tim Grieger, Riverland U3A was invited to exhibit at the 62nd annual Riverland Field Days in September. This enabled us to advertise our programmes and inform people of our existence.

Members generously gave their time to set up our display, man the site and dismantle at the end of the 2-day event. Special thanks go to: Terry Marter, John Penna, Brent Morrell, Daina Braddock, Shirley Sims, Anne Chase, Lianne Pannell and Judy Sykes.

Anne and Lianne proved adept at enticing passing visitors to explore our U3A offerings. I was somewhat surprised to find that a number of Riverlanders still did not know of our existence—we made sure that was no longer the case! Visitors took away bookmarks, current activity lists, enrolment forms together with a leaflet explaining the history and culture of U3A.

We had an awesome display of art and writing from the respective groups, together with as a series of posters by Di March depicting all our activities and promoting the 4 language classes now running: Beginner's French, Conversational French, German and the newly-formed Italian class. A continuous loop PowerPoint presentation by Terry depicted U3A visually and proved popular.

All in all it was a successful 2 days. We received great feedback from a number of visitors, including suggestions for other activities together with names of a few willing to be facilitators. A couple of new members also came out of the exercise. It is exciting that 5 years on, we continue to grow.

Helen Slade  
President

## RIVERLAND FIELD DAYS





# farewell

**SARAH SUMMERSET**  
(6/1/30-18/10/2019)

It was with great sadness that we learned of the passing of our much-loved Sarah, on 18th October 2019. Daina Braddock and Meredith Dunn (both art tutors) attended Sarah's funeral in Adelaide.

As one of our oldest members Sarah was the first to be profiled in our newsletter (#15). She attended U3A art classes almost from inception. Sometimes she achieved a lot and on other occasions (especially this year, when she was notably more frail), she came just to enjoy the company. "U3A Art saved my life" she said.

A talented artist, Sarah added much "colour" to the class and we will all miss her very much.



Please join us for our  
**ANNUAL CHRISTMAS LUNCH**  
at 12 noon  
**Friday 6th December**  
Barmera Club  
on the lakefront

**RSVP** Anne Chase by Monday 2nd December  
PH: 85821954 or Email: [ajchase1@bigpond.com](mailto:ajchase1@bigpond.com)



**U3A LANGUAGES**  
RIVERLAND

**French conversation**  
**French for beginners**

*Bonjour! Ouch La La  
Excusez-moi Très bien Paris  
Je t'aime Merci  
Ça va La tour Eiffel Bon  
café C'est la vie*



**U3A LANGUAGES**  
RIVERLAND

**German conversation**  
**German for beginners**

Wie Geht's

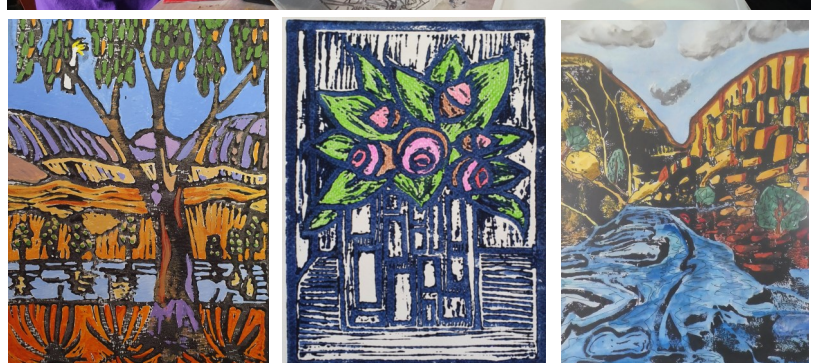


**U3A LANGUAGES**  
RIVERLAND

**Italian for beginners**

Parlo Italiano

article italiano studiare teach translate italiano definite the Parlo Italiano English ristorante parlare the



First it was French  
Then it was German  
Then it was Italian  
Now we are excited to offer a fourth language to our members.  
Theresa Andrew, an experienced teacher, is keen to offer **Indonesian Language** with games and fun activities starting February next year. This activity would be held on Monday afternoons at our rooms in Berri.



**FRIDAY DECEMBER 6, 2019**  
Christmas Lunch and 5th birthday celebrations  
**MONDAY JANUARY 20, 2020**  
Registration and meet the tutors morning tea  
**MONDAY FEBRUARY 24, 2020**  
Annual General Meeting

# Writing for pleasure

*Into its 5th year, this group has produced a huge variety of work: - short stories, poems, Haiku, bush ballads etc. It takes courage to put pen to paper and then read it to the group. Sometimes topics are discussed before writing—other times a prompt is provided and the writing begins.*

## THE DINNER PARTY

by Sally Black

Having never pickled olives before, I was flying by the seat of my pants. Our Real Estate Agent said salt them for a fortnight. After that length of time in the brine, they didn't taste too good to me. Watching Pete Evans on SBS, he said to soak them in brine for a least 3 months, but I still needed some more advice, so why not call a friend?

We had recently made contact via email and I was wanting to use his heritage. Surely, he would be able to give me advice about pickling olives – after all with the name Athol Economou, he had to be Greek and by instinct, know everything Greek.

I had sent him a photo of my latest project, of me up a ladder, painting the kitchen in my new house at Paringa. We go back a long way and he was a school mate of my ex. Later, he was a Director of a Company I was working for, reminding me yet again how small the world is.

Disappointed, that 'no' he hadn't pickled olives, he kindly passed on a handy tip of his Father's—in order to make a good brine, float an egg in the salted water and the egg exposed above the mixture, should be the size of a ten-cent piece. That was about twice as much salt, as I had been using.

Now armed with the two bits of vital information, I was on my way, oh the olives were anyway.

The photo of my new kitchen prompted further discourse.

"Of course, you know Sally, an expensive kitchen with the latest appliances, doesn't necessarily mean the food produced will be guaranteed". His Mother of course, was the best cook and could produce the best of meals, from the crudest of appliances.

Fortunately, because Les is the cook in our house I wasn't too offended, and as long as I don't have to cook that suits me. I don't have a problem with the quality of food Les presents, either.

But Athol's words did ring a bell with me.

Not a 'dinner party' but a 'lunch'. We were with my Step-Uncle in Warwick Queensland. We were dining in one of the oldest wattle and daub kitchens in Queensland at Canning Downs, which is a famous station in Queensland, formerly owned by the famous Leslie brothers. Canning Downs was also the birth place of Jackie Howe, who is known for holding the record for shearing the most sheep in one day with hand shears.

Canning Downs has been home for many successful racehorses and the tradition is still being continued today. We had been given the most interesting farm tour, admiring all the race horses now back to stud.

"We bought this filly for \$80,000, oh this one was bought for \$120,000 at the yearling sales at the Gold Coast but we sold five for...."

(Continued on page 5)

## HOMELESS

by Jenny Sanders

My mind quivers as day closes in  
Another night without sleeping  
Covered in newspaper from a nearby bin  
How frail is this hope that I'm keeping

I huddle away from the warmth and the light  
I must not be seen on the street  
Heavy footsteps approach – I take flight  
And the rain and the wind turn to sleet

How did I come to this?  
Where did my choices go?  
Where are the friends that I miss?  
The love that I used to know

Curled up in an open doorway  
Trying so hard to get warm  
Please let me be safe I pray  
And keep me away from harm

Then a hand comes out of the darkness  
And my heart lurches in fright  
"You alright love?" says a voice  
And I am saved for another night

## ALONE

by Diana March



"How do you do?" he heard her say  
A voice from countless miles away  
The love he knew endured no more  
How could he tell her what he saw  
She loved me ... She loved me not

The sun kissed glow of early dawn, a wonder to behold  
Setting sun, red towering cliffs revealing specks of gold  
He still dreamt about Miranda, his memories going back  
But couldn't rid the vision of endless night attack  
She loved me ... She loved me not

They really never listened after he came home  
They really never heard the noise that made him feel alone  
An endless search for answers eluded all who tried  
It seemed to cause much pain for all and widened the divide  
She loved me ... She loved me not

The screeching birds that sit on high  
Against the cloudless deep blue sky  
The banks are lined with golden grass  
He's invisible to all who pass  
She loved me not

Dear Mum and Dad, I wish I knew  
The words that I should say to you  
I served my country as expected  
But now I feel just so rejected  
She loved me not

The shot rang out across the land  
Another life by his own hand  
"How do you do" he heard her say  
"I'll take you home with me today"  
"I loved you"

(Continued from page 4)

The figures were all a bit daunting but I did note that the more money they paid for the horses, the more likely they seemed to be pre-disposed to injury, or even death. They also pointed to the large Clydesdale mares they were using to foster some of the foals whose thoroughbred mothers were not feeding them well enough. The mares also had a calming influence on the flighty foals.

It was fun seeing through the old stables that they had recently done up together with the renovations to the old homestead.

Among the new kitchen acquisitions was a very large AGA stove—a replacement for the one I remembered had been in

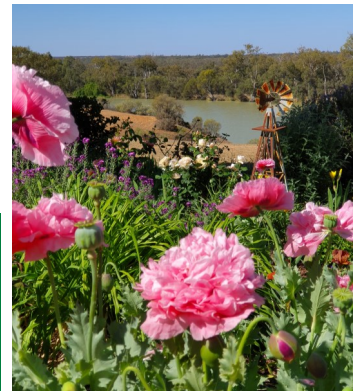
the kitchen for many years. Maybe a \$25,000 investment, which really was insignificant when one compared the outlay for a filly.

Well now for the trial test. Two chooks came out of the oven, but obviously not cooked, as the blood ran out. Oops! Try again. Half an hour later, they were still not cooked, so an hour after we had sat down to the lunch, we eventually had some chicken but cooked - not really.

Athol's words came flooding back to me—"Appliances, no matter how sophisticated, don't necessarily make for good food".

# Out & About

The Renmark Rose Festival, with its open gardens, magnificent floral displays and art trail, attracts visitors from near and far. This year, two U3A artists, Daina Braddock and Lyn Anstey, had stand-alone exhibitions and Charlene Santos, who attends a number of U3A activities, had her glorious garden open for display.



A game of snooker involves about an hour of easy walking around the snooker table. This gives the body all the benefits of walking up to 1 kilometre with the added advantage that this doesn't strain you, as a continuous walk or run might, but derives the same benefits. A game of snooker involves stretching activity which helps make the body flexible and will also help tone up the leg muscles & hindquarters. Terry Marter



# AGE: NOT JUST A NUMBER

Dr Francesca Ghillani

<https://www.ageing.ox.ac.uk/blog/age-not-just-a-number>

Dr Ghillani is a Research Fellow at the Oxford Institute of Population Ageing. Francesca was awarded a DPhil in Sociology from the University of Oxford. Her doctoral research identified four key dynamics that regulate the interplay between ageing, migration, and bodily practices.

It was announced recently that our lives as plain “adults” - without age qualification - are longer than we had thought and that we are not to be considered “old” before the age of 75. The announcement postpones access to the dreaded category of “elderly”, which was previously set at 65.

During the National congress of the Italian Society of Gerontology and Geriatrics, Dr Niccolò Marchionni explained that today, thanks to a healthier life-style, an Italian of 65 years of age can expect to have another 20 years of reasonably healthy life. And there is more: at 65 years old, Italians are fitter than ever, they have active social lives, and they are also able to take care of their families, including grandchildren and those relatives who might be younger but not in good health. A person with these characteristics, it has been argued, should not be considered “old”.

The shift from 65 to 75 has been welcomed in newspapers and on TV news programmes. This attention has prompted a question for me: what is the significance of a number in defining a person's life? Here, I want to share some reflections.

In November this year, a Dutch man launched a legal battle to change his age. He argued that he didn't identify with his chronological age, 69, and felt younger ... precisely 20 years younger in fact. This man says not only that he regards himself as 49 years old, but that he is entitled to be regarded as such in law, to avoid unfair discrimination. To insist that 69 is his 'real' age - when he feels so much younger, materially reduces his opportunities - is unfair. It makes it very hard for him to find what he regards as appropriately aged partners on dating websites and it diminishes his access to jobs commensurate with his capacities.

He knows very well that these days many businesses in his field are not keen to employ someone his age.

His case was rejected by the court, which took the view that there are rules, rights, and obligations connected to a person's chronological age and these have to be preserved. He cannot lawfully change his age.

In our societies (and I don't just mean

Italy or the Netherlands), the number of years since birth - our chronological age - is of great importance in organising and partitioning our life-course. There are ages that are considered turning points, even though they might be different from State to State. In Italy, 6 is the age when children must officially begin their formal education at primary school. 18 is another crucial age: when a person can obtain a driving licence, they can vote, they have the permission to drink alcohol. For women, 35 is another turning point: up until quite recently pregnant women who are older than 35 were said to have “geriatric pregnancies” and even though the unfortunate label has now been dropped, 35 is regarded as an age marker for medical intervention to reduce the increased risk in pregnancy (i.e. more testing and counselling).

At older ages, there seems to be more scope for confusion, as boundaries are less clear. Earlier this year, Dr David Goodall, a London-born scientist based in Australia, decided to end his life at the age of 104. According to his friend Mrs Carol O'Neill, Dr Goodall was still academically involved in the scientific community when Perth's Edith Cowan University, where he was an Honorary Research Associate, ordered him to work from home, due to safety concerns related to his age. Dr Goodall, who was very unhappy about the decision, appealed and was provided with a working space at a campus closer to his home. The upshot of this was that Dr Goodall was unable to meet and chat daily with his old colleagues. He felt isolated from his community and less able to participate and contribute to academic life. This, his friend says, was the beginning of what Dr Goodall described as “ageing disgracefully”.

Sometimes it is clear that what society considers old doesn't match the individual's perception of their own age. In the past, there used to be a very precise turning point defined by participation in the workforce, with retirement being seen as a signifier of old age. Because men typically used to retire at 65 and women at 60, these were considered as marking the threshold of old age. In the past few years, these limits have changed and a great confusion in rules and regulations

has followed, so much so that today someone in their early 60's might not know when they will be able to retire. Behind our uncertainty about retirement, there is another seemingly more perplexing question: if old age does not begin at retirement, when does it begin?

The quest for this number is culturally, politically, and ethically charged. On the one hand, focusing only on physical and medical aspects would reduce ageing to something that happens to an object, the body, not to a human being. On the other hand, existential aspects of our lives, such as happiness or the sense of purpose, cannot be forgotten but are possibly difficult to measure. Nowadays, life experiences are more diverse than ever and the same number of years lived might not equate to the same level of health, fulfilment, joy. Also, we shouldn't forget that inequalities accumulated during the life-course play a crucial role in ageing. Nevertheless, governments need to regulate many aspects of their states, grounding their decisions on how many older people are present in their populations.

Will scholars be able to formulate a better framework to define old age, based not on a simple number for chronological age, but rather on the multiple characteristics of the final stretch of human life? This is a great challenge.

*I'm sure many of us can identify with the sentiments of this article. When I turned 60, I advised my friends that “60 is the new black”. As I nudge closer to 70 maybe I'll change it to “70 is the new black”.*

*Better still ....*

