

# U3AAA BULLETIN No 4

April 2012

## ALLIANCE CHAIR MOVES TO VICTORIA

*Founding Chairman Ron Browne has stepped down as the executive office moves from NSW to Victoria. The incoming Chairman is Lindsay Glen. Many thanks to Ron for a job well done. Setting up a national body to represent all U3As in Australia was not an easy task and the initial success owes much to his drive and diplomacy. Well done! The consolidation phase now falls on Lindsay's shoulders and we wish him well for his term in office. Thanks must also go to Ainslie Lamb for her outstanding contribution as foundation secretary.*

### FROM THE CHAIR

I must report that my initial meeting with Alliance delegates Ainslie Lamb, James Nichterlein, Diane Delchau and Allan Haggarty during last month's NSW Conference in Port Macquarie, was a pleasant experience. The importance to our movement of Conferences and similar stimulating opportunities to meet with fellow members and observe how our many common problems are managed should not be underestimated. This is of course, a vital part of the learning and sharing process which underpin U3A's objectives. Ron Browne, who was the driving force in establishing the U3A National Alliance concept, has decided to step down as the responsibility for Chairing the Alliance rotates to Victoria. We all owe him a substantial debt for his foresight and his tenacity in bringing our National Networks together enabling a structure by which we may leverage the national position of our U3A movement. Ainslie Lamb, who served as our Secretary, will also be stepping back from her Secretarial responsibility as the Alliance Secretariat also moves to Victoria. I am sure that all would join me in congratulating these stalwarts for their outstanding long term contributions to both NSW and latterly at a national level of our organisation.

Allan Haggarty, the newly elected President of U3A Network NSW, will succeed Ron as NSW Network delegate on the Alliance. Allan also took the opportunity to join our discussions in Port Macquarie.

We are looking forward to capitalising upon our early efforts to forge the Alliance into a body capable of supporting and representing U3As at a national level, facilitating the exchange of ideas and expanding upon successful initiatives achieved at state level.

At this stage our resources remain limited relying upon those who are already busy with parallel U3A and other responsibilities. During our brief but unofficial discussion at the conference venue, we covered a small number of issues including how we manage both procedure and decisions arrived at from our virtual meetings how we ensure that there is action upon those positive results from U3A submissions to the Advisory Panel on the Economic Potential of Senior Australians, and our reaction to any impact arising from Treasury's review of Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR) status upon community organisations such as ours.

I am looking forward to furthering the work carried out by the Alliance, increasing our relevance to our State bodies whilst expanding national recognition of the benefits of our simple and low cost concept to a diverse and increasingly competitive society.

*Lindsay Glen, Chairman*

# QUEENSLAND



U3A QUEENSLAND STATE CONFERENCE      JUNE 5 & 6 2012

## **‘GO4GOLD - AGEING WITH VITALITY’**

This year’s conference will be held in our state’s tourist hub, the famed Gold Coast and location for the 2018 Commonwealth Games. The venue is the new state-of-art Southport Community Centre.

The 2 day programme provides presentations from professional keynote speakers on a range of topics including community life, fitness and health, motivation, volunteering, education, people skills, and living life with vitality. In addition delegates have a choice of 8 vital interactive workshops. The large Harmony in Paradise Chorus has been invited to provide both entertainment during the morning break and to conduct a feature workshop.

The U3A Queensland Network Annual General Meeting is at 2pm on Tuesday 5 June followed by The Members’ Forum giving everyone an opportunity to voice their concerns and share solutions.

The Celebration Conference Dinner is on Tuesday 5 June at the Southport Yacht Club’s glamorous function room which offers views over the Marina and expanse of the Broadwater. The evening allows time for everyone to relax and mingle, enjoy the entertainment and an excellent 2 course dinner.

The Conference hosts are U3A North Gold Coast Inc, a group established in May 1991. The conference dinner will also mark their 21<sup>st</sup> birthday, a great reason to celebrate.

The ‘Early Bird’ fee of \$50 per person has been extended to Friday 27<sup>th</sup> April then becomes \$70 per person for the two days including all morning and afternoon teas and lunches and a conference bag. The Celebration Dinner an extra \$35 per person.

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The new U3A Online Web Site was launched in December and the comments received have been very favourable. People like the new fresh look of the site and its ease of use. It still has the features of the old site, the Find a U3A Directory, Research papers, links to other useful sites, GEMs and a link to the Broadband for Seniors lessons but it also has more information about membership, course study options etc which makes it much more friendly. The launch of the next stage, Members Lounge, is expected to be completed in the very near future.

A package is being sent to all U3As in Australasia with the published research on U3As done a couple of years ago. This shows the value of volunteering within the U3A family and shows individual U3As how they can calculate the in kind value of their volunteers when applying for grants or making submissions to government bodies. It also contains advice on the current U3A courses and the advantage of site licences to U3As. The annual statistics for U3A, which is undertaken by Rick Swindell and published in GEMs every year, will also be included.

Allan Thompson has been kept very busy updating all the information for the Find a U3A Directory in readiness for the mail-out. Our thanks go to all the U3As who sent in their updated information, especially the updated number of members which was necessary to give accurate figures for the annual statistics.

U3A Online has a new Secretary, Bev Tapper, who has taken over the job that Anthony Baker has done so efficiently and with such dedication since 2004. He has been forced to step down due to ill health but he remains a valued member of the committee.

With the resignation of Kathy Rossini as the course developer, to pursue other personal interests, we have been lucky to have Pat Corby trying her hand at course development and so we hope to have more new courses available during the year.

The new site has presented some administrative challenges and involved a lot of work but I have no hesitation in saying that it has all been worth the effort.

Di Delchau

## **NEW SOUTH WALES**

Currently, the New South Wales government is inviting submissions as to how it can best develop its *Whole-of-Government Ageing Strategy*, planning for an ageing population. The NSW U3A Network Committee has just submitted a number of suggestions, including an integrated approach by both State and Local government to developing positive ageing policies to encourage older people to remain mentally and physically agile and as independent for as long as possible; for the provision of accommodation for U3A's lifelong learning courses in growing 'retirement' locations such as Port Macquarie and Bateman's Bay; and financial support for community based 'third age' activities that celebrate experience and creativity.

Relating to this, it is clear that there is a quickening interest on the part of many U3A groups in NSW in working with their local Councils and this will be the focus of a workshop to be conducted by Network Secretary – Ainslie Lamb – at the Network's forthcoming conference to be held at Port Macquarie on the 29-30 March.

The Network Committee is in the process of distributing a range of promotional items, including bumper stickers, generic leaflets, pens - to interested U3A groups funded by a grant from the NSW Minister for the Ageing; the grant will also provide for advertisements in Seniors magazines and, hopefully television and radio ads..

Seniors Week is celebrated in New South Wales during the week 18 – 24 March and U3A groups will be celebrating the event with a wide variety of activities.

Ron Browne, President

## **WESTERN AUSTRALIA**

Progress towards the formation of a State Network continues. The Steering Committee have completed a statement of aims and objectives which has been accepted by most groups. A Foundation Meeting will be held in July in conjunction with the Perth U3A's annual seminar. This will be held on July 4 at the University of Western Australia.

U3A Mandurah continues to show the way in matters technical. Norma Vaughan reports that they have just finished a successful 12 month trial of Cloud Computing using Dropbox. They have also published 250 articles on their website which is a living record of their past three years' activities.

John Leach is the new President of U3A (UWA) Perth taking over from Margaret Petrovich who has completed a very productive two year stint in the position.

During a recent trip to Margaret River I chaired a meeting to set up a U3A Group in the town. This was well attended and an enthusiastic steering committee was set up. We look forward with some optimism to the formation of a lively group.

Peter Flanigan

# SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Within the State Alliance there is little to report as we cut our Term One meeting as part of our belt-tightening measures following last year's loss of funding. However, we have not been entirely without reasons to celebrate.

On Friday 30 March we gathered to mark the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the State Alliance's biggest, oldest and most successful member, Tea Tree Gully U3A, at their impressive campus, formerly the Modbury Junior Primary School.

(An explanation for interstate readers: It is Tea Tree Gully U3A, in Adelaide's northern suburbs, about 30 minutes from the GPO, which has provided meeting space for our Alliance and the original motivating personality, Betty White, who at one time chaired both groups.)

Like many U3As, Tea Tree Gully struggled over the years to find suitable accommodation. They used a hotch-potch of venues: eventually-condemned classrooms at a local school, church halls, rooms in aged care facilities, etc.

Its fortunes were transformed by some skilful and persistent lobbying, and visionary thinking from two tiers of government. The Education Department had a school bigger than current demographics warranted, while the local council had some land the State government desired. A swap was done and the Tea Tree Gully Council acquired a very sound building with 10 classrooms and all associated offices with enough cash thrown in for the necessary refurbishment. The major beneficiary of this Modbury Community Learning Centre, which opened in 2007, was TTG U3A. They share one of the classrooms with a local art group but apart from that the building is theirs to use and sublet as they see fit.

Showing what proper premises can do for a U3A, their membership skyrocketed and now 700 members fill the building with a constant eager buzz. TTG offers about 80 classes, led by 60 volunteer group leaders. A second car park has been constructed to cater for demand and pressure for teaching space has become such that they are revising their timetable to squeeze three sessions into each room each day. To find a room free for our meetings, the Alliance meets in school holidays.

It is a truly inspiring development and a great asset to the community. Tea Tree Gully U3A's success shows the importance of long-term engagement with politicians from all tiers of government. Inspire them with your cause and set them to work on your behalf.

*Claire Eglinton, Secretary, SA Alliance*

## FROM THE EDITOR

*Many thanks to all who have contributed to this issue. Please forward as widely as possible. (Only one email will be sent to each Network member). The next issue will be in July. Deadline: July 10.*

*Peter Flanigan*