

Staying in Touch

26 June 2020

From the President

It is almost the end of Term 2 in what has been, and still is, a very different 2020.

Over the past few weeks I have listened to a lot of people from U3As all over Victoria talk about how their groups have approached these challenging times. Some have closed down for a period, whilst others have utilised Zoom or FaceTime to continue courses. The large U3As have tended to run quite a large programme.

I have felt very appreciative and proud of what U3A SurfCoast, as a smaller U3A, has managed to offer and the considerable work and enthusiasm that has been forthcoming from members, tutors and our Committee.

At this stage the information coming in from venues is that they will not be opening in the short term. The Committee feels a strong duty of care towards members, recognising our age demographic. This is a difficult time, but please watch the website for news.

Now Forward to Term 3!

The success of Zoom trial classes in Term 2 has resulted in U3A SurfCoast being able to offer about 10 different classes in Term 3. There will also be at least one Occasional Lecture which is currently being finalised.

The two new trial classes, *Money Matters for the Third Age* and *Cryptic Crosswords* will start again from Lesson One to allow members to enrol in Term 3 without feeling they have missed anything.

Most classes will have vacancies, so this is a fresh opportunity to try a new programme! The new class lists are being taken from those involved in the trial classes. Please check that you are enrolled, and if you are tempted to trial a course on Zoom it is very easy and we are here to help.

Please keep safe and warm,

Sue Crowe, President

Making Zoom Classes happen

Baz Cock - The man with a thousand Zoom backgrounds

When I first took on this task, I thought to myself "Baz;



How hard can it be?"

In this case, it actually turned out to be a lot easier than any of us thought possible. We

asked tutors and students to consider having a go, and we received an immediate and upbeat response. This led to us purchasing a *Zoom Pro* Licence for U3A SurfCoast in May 2020, and it is fair to say that things have not stopped since then. (A big thank you to Jo Turnbull who jumped in to help, not only doing a lot to help technically, but also adding some laughter along the way!)

For most students, joining a class has been as easy as clicking on a Zoom link sent to them by a tutor, and following two or three obvious prompts on the screen. We have had ongoing feedback, overwhelming not only in volume, but also in candid positivity. It has been an absolute pleasure to be part of this, and I have made many friends with like-minded people along the way.

Thank you to everyone who has been involved so far, and thank you to the U3A SurfCoast committee for your enthusiasm and support to keep our classes going.

I am really looking forward to "Zoom Term Three", where we already have students who were not part of "Zoom Term Two", putting their hands up to become part of this too.

Come and join our party – I Dare You!

Jo's thoughts on Zoom

How much fun I've had assisting Baz to mentor our tutors, and in turn our students, to embrace the world of Zoom in our efforts to continue our classes in this new normal. We've managed to keep so many of our members connected. It's been a real extension of *Improving Your Computer Skills* for everyone across all classes. I'm looking forward to Term 3 classes operating with confidence and enjoyment for all involved.

If you haven't had a go at Zoom yet it's not too late, I'm sure your tutor will accommodate your enthusiasm to try it. Go on, give it a go. (*Jo Turnbull*)

Learning about Money

The first session of Richard Drury's Zoom class *Money Matters for the 3rd Age* was most informative and very participant-friendly with a variety of resources and activities. I enrolled in this class because I felt that my financial literacy needed updating, especially in these uncertain times. I have already learnt a lot, e.g. about neobanks, and I am looking forward to the rest of the course. Thank you Richard.

(Pauline Rogan)

Cinema studies is zooming!

With the suspension of face to face meetings, *Cinema Studies* has taken the challenge and is now Zooming our sessions. Our enthusiastic group has decided to continue in the same format in Term 3, so if you want to join our Zoom discussions let us know. You watch the movie before our session and then 'Zoom' in and talk about/critic the film, a format that has proved to be animated and fun.

To make it easy, we are sourcing movies from the Geelong Regional Library's Kanopy facility which is easy to access if you are a library member (and if not, it isn't hard to join). Our sessions have been at 12 noon for about an hour on Wednesdays. *(Richard Porter)*

Poet's Corner

Zooming with the U3A poetry group has sparked the creative juices by opening new avenues of thought after discussing poems emailed out during the week. An introduction to Ali Whitelock's poems was exceptionally inspiring, and the feedback from homework helpful. Being made aware of different writing styles, including the effects of various types of spacing and why capital letters might not be chosen, all add to carving enjoyable paths into the literary world. On top of that the company is fantastic. *(Jean Bohuslav)*

Beginner Yoga And Meditation

Annie's class has taken on a new look via Zoom.

Although the class had only 4 participants this term, Annie is hoping that a few more of her existing class give it a go.



The class begins with a brief chat to see how everyone is, then Annie

'mutes' the class as they watch and listen and follow the meditation and yoga practice for the day in the comfort of their own home. Annie can view the participants on her screen and communicate as needed.

At the end of the class there is time to chat again to see how Annie's yogis found the class.

Caty's comment

I have really enjoyed the yoga lessons and have felt a much needed, positive shift in my life.

So while I was a bit apprehensive about the "Zoom Thing", I was so keen to continue the yoga sessions, and while I'm not too savvy - I made an effort to master Zoom.

It wasn't too difficult! *(Caty Marshall)*

Oh now I see...

Our Cryptic Crosswords course tutor is Kevin James who has been uncovering the mysteries of Cryptic Crosswords for some years, albeit face to face until now. The two sessions planned in Term Two have allowed Kevin and students to get up to speed on learning via Zoom and enjoying solving some tantalising cryptic clues. Some of Kevin's tips included – ignore punctuation (mostly!); look for the straight clue at the beginning or end of the statement; use a set of stock abbreviations; say the clue out loud to get different meanings from the words and best of all – have fun. *(Toni McCormack)*

U3A SurfCoast Committee of Management 2020/2021

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