



OLDER WISER LEARNING SENIORS



President's piece Brendan Dever

Volume 12 Issue 4
April 2022

Management committee members

<i>President</i>	
Brendan Dever	Ph 0418 192 999
<i>Vice president</i>	
Tina Jones	Ph 0418 780 861
<i>Secretary/newsletter</i>	
Yvonne Berry	Ph 5541 2604
<i>Assistant secretary</i>	
Grace Gregory	Ph 0407 436 701
<i>Treasurer</i>	
Helen Atkinson	Ph 0488 411 755
<i>Assistant treasurer</i>	
Stuart Gearey	Ph 0404 861 266
<i>Membership secretary</i>	
Derani Gearey	Ph 0411 828 028
<i>Course coordinator</i>	
Tina Jones	Ph 0418 780 861
<i>Webmaster</i>	
Peter Venz	Ph 0408 588 399
<i>Facebook</i>	
Patrick Hughes	Ph 0408 067 466
<i>Social activities facilitator</i>	
Di Johnson	Ph 0468 849 448
<i>Publicity</i>	
Cheryl Folley	Ph 5544 2024
<i>Assistant publicity</i>	
Diane Rewko	Ph 0434 724 991

My first 'President's piece' for the OWLS newsletter opens with a huge thank you to Andy Fechner for his contributions as president of our U3A Beaudesert over eight very successful years guiding the provision of vital services to our members and the community. Andy has set the bar very high - for 2022 and beyond I will be relying on your support and I promise my best efforts in contributing to the continuing success of our association.

My first response to an approach to nominate for the position was a simple 'no thank you' - while appreciating the suggestion I felt that there must be many more suitable candidates with a better overall knowledge of Beaudesert U3A and the skills required to continue its success.

Many factors helped change my mind - approaches over the past weeks from many members to re-consider nomination have been humbling; the prospect of U3A Beaudesert ceasing operations wasn't an option to be accepted; and not least the expressions of support for my nomination and offers of guidance from Andy and the management committee.

More of 'my story' in a future OWLS.

The 2022 AGM was held on Friday 18 March with the kind assistance of Cr Michael Enright in conducting the election of office bearers and the management committee. (Unfortunately I was unable to attend due to a family

commitment).

On behalf of all Beaudesert U3A members I wish to convey our thanks to the management committee members for their dedication in guiding us successfully through the past year, an already tough job made more difficult with the ongoing challenges of covid, vaccination mandates, and gathering restrictions.

To the committee members who are stepping down, George Evans and Michelle Goucher, a special thank you. (see page 4).

Thank you to the committee members continuing their key contributions to the smooth running of our Beaudesert U3A - Yvonne Berry, secretary/newsletter; Helen Atkinson, treasurer; Stuart Gearey, assistant treasurer; Cheryl Folley, public relations; and Di Johnson, social activities facilitator.

To the members taking up new roles on the committee, welcome and thank you: Tina Jones, who is taking on the role of vice president in addition to her duties as course co-ordinator; Derani Gearey, membership secretary; Peter Venz, webmaster; Pat Hughes, facebook; Grace Gregory, assistant secretary; Diane Rewko, assistant PR.

We're looking forward to the first meeting of the U3A Beaudesert committee for 2022, and for me the commencement of a steep learning curve!

Till next edition,

Brendan

Friends of the committee

If you would like to join with the following people who have nominated that they will help where they can at occasional events, outings and functions, your involvement will be most welcome.

June Carey	Patricia Castles
Denice Knight	Rita Evans
Rosemary Ryan	Carol Castles

To register as a friend of the committee, please contact Brendan Dever

P 0418 192 999

E presidentu3abeaudesert@gmail.com



A warm U3A Beaudesert welcome to our new members, Christie Daley, Shell Hibberd, Barry Kenny, Sharon Turner, Chris Stone, Margaret Paynter.

We look forward to seeing you at the activities you have chosen for yourself where, we are sure, you will make many new friends.

Best wishes for a very **happy birthday** to our members who celebrate their birthdays in April:



Sue Atherton	Marlene Beavis	Ray Carter	Verlie Dever
Janis Fiebig	Rachel Gillow	Lyn Hand	Helen Hugo
Di Johnson	Barbara Markwell	Debby Reid	Lorraine Rowe
Julie Sansom	Gwenda Schneider		



Current courses - term one 2022 24 January-1 April 2022

Course coordinator | Tina Jones
Phone 0418 780 861 | Email coursesu3abeaudesert@gmail.com

Aqua aerobics

Tuesday and Thursday mornings, 7.30 am-8.30 am
Beaudesert pool. Suggested wear clean sports shoes/aqua
shoes, sun protection, hat, sunglasses. Pool entry \$3.50
pensioners

Contact John 0417 073 190

Art group - all mediums

Wednesdays 9 am-12 St Thomas's Anglican Church hall.
Contact Denice 5546 9879 or 0402 012 267

Card playing - Beaudesert

Every Monday 12.30 pm-4.00 pm RSL function room. Enjoy
500 or Bolivia.

Contact Di 0468 849 448 to confirm attendance.

Card playing - Bolivia - Jimboomba

Meets every Thursday 12 noon-4.00 pm at the Anglican
Church Hall, Jimboomba

Contact Di 0468 849 448

Computer/other technologies

This group is now an advisory group only, for issues with
computers - no computer repairs or house calls.

Contact George 5541 0706, email dreeemboat@iinet.net.au

Croquet club

Play Tuesdays 8.00 am-11.00 am at Everdell Park Gleneagle

Contact George or Rita 5541 0706

Exercise for seniors

Now in recess until term 2 2022. Refer to aqua aerobics.

Contact John 0417 073 190

French

Every Monday 11.00 am-2.00 pm RSL Sub Branch rooms,
1st floor, corner William and Brisbane Streets, Beaudesert.

Contact Jayne 5463 4841

Gardening group - BUGs

Meet third Friday of each even month 10.00 am-12 noon
Beaudesert RSL club function room; away visits odd months

Contact Brendan 0418 192 999 or Carmel 0408 711 401

General discussion group

Meets Tuesdays 9.30 am-11.30 am Beaucare Community
room, 44 Tina Street. General discussions on any subject
group members propose.

Contact Andy 5541 2072



Indoor bowls

Friday mornings from 9.00
am at St. Thomas's

Anglican
Church Hall, Albert Street,
Beaudesert

Contact Terry 0428 627
673

Jigsaw library

Select a jigsaw (or a
wasgij) to use from the
library. To select and
collect, contact Sandra
5541 0978

Line dancing/dancing

Tuesday from 12.45 pm
\$3 per session The
Centre, Brisbane
Street Beaudesert

Contact Marg 0422 415 145

Mahjong - Jimboomba

Meets every Tuesday 11 am-2 pm Davidson Road,
Jimboomba.

Contact Elizabeth 5546 9689

Mahjong - Beaudesert

Thursday afternoons 1 pm-3.30 pm Arts & Information
Centre.

Contact Michele 0459 335 403

Mosaics Meet Mondays 1.30 pm-3.30pm at Arts &
Information Centre, Beaudesert a hands-on course in a
fascinating art form. \$3/session payable on the day.

Contact Tina 0418 780 861

Nordic walking/walking

Meet Monday, Wednesday, Friday mornings. Contact Liz for
start times. Nordic walkers will require a pair of poles,
comfortable sports walking shoes, bottle of water. Walkers -
poles not needed.

Contact Liz 0488 155 506

Scrapbooking

Second Monday of each month, 9.30 am-11.30 am, 142
Lambert Road, Nindooindah. \$10/session for materials
payable on the day.

Contact Anita 0408 452 584



Social lunch

The next social lunch will be held on Friday 8 April at
Crunchy's Jimboomba. RSVP to Di phone/text 0468 849 448,
email candyroxy1946@gmail.com. (See page 6)

Social tennis

Wednesdays 8 am-12 noon venue Beaudesert tennis courts
Boonah Road

Contact Paulette 0409 898 147

Table tennis

Thursdays 9 am-12 noon held at the St Thomas's Anglican
Church hall.

Contact Glenda 5541 4290, 0418 771 758 or Ken 5541 1498

Travel and Adventure Group

Meet second Monday each month on the deck, Beaudesert
Library 10.00 am onwards.

Contact Ray raymondarthy@gmail.com, ph 0447 554 480

Trivia puzzling

Wednesday afternoons from 1.30 pm at St Thomas's
Anglican Church hall, Albert Street, Beaudesert

Contact Jenny 0439 138 212

Ukulele

Meets Thursday afternoons St
Thomas's Anglican Church
hall, Albert Street, Beaudesert,
1 pm-2.30 pm.

Contact Finella 0439 414 491



Contact details facebook

As most members already know, we have a facebook page
(U3A Beaudesert) and Pat Hughes has kindly taken over as
coordinator. If you have any notifications of events, photos
or videos, messages, etc that you would like included on our
page, please contact Pat:

- Phone - 0408 067 466
- Email - u3abeaudesert.facebook@gmail.com

Eight years as president - Andy steps down

Cheryl Folley

It's time. Andy Fechner, our highly regarded president of Beaudesert U3A for the past eight years, retired at the recent AGM and is now planning to follow up some personal projects. There's no doubt however that he will be seen around at a number of activities and will continue as facilitator for the U3A discussion group.

Friends are betting that he may have a few withdrawal symptoms, after working non-stop 30-hour weeks during his time as president.

"People often don't realise the work that he has put in behind the scenes," says Laurel, his wife of 54 years.

It is a work ethic that guided Andy from an early age, growing up on the Gold Coast in Southport and then rising through the ranks of a number of jobs to become eventually the director of sales and marketing for Bidvest, Australia's largest wholesale food service company. It is his corporate background and commercial discipline that show up so clearly to members of the U3A committee in his organisational capacities and well-honed connections with various local bodies to keep communication at a high level.

He met Laurel at a TAFE college on the Gold Coast, he studying academic subjects and she doing a typing/shorthand business course. His opening gambit was to offer her a cigarette - which she as a non-smoker refused.

"It was interest at first sight, then love grew," she recalls.

The couple married and moved to Darwin with his original company (in van sales) and lived there for three years before the terrible hours of Boxing Day, 1974, when Cyclone Tracey devastated the city. Although Laurel - with toddler Colin and pregnant at the time with Steven - returned to Brisbane three days later, it was April before Andy could get back, driving an eight-tonne truck with all the worldly goods they could save.

Soon they built on acreage at Jimboomba and stayed for 33 years - "a great place to raise children."

Andy and Laurel retired to 50 acres at Josephville in 2009, building a house high on a hill - known to regular travellers on the Mt Lindesay highway as "the blue house" and to others as "the place with the windmill."

They had always kept a few chickens, mainly Lohmann browns, some leghorns and Rhode Island reds, and continued at Josephville, while also enjoying the experience of raising some steers.

"Of course it was my job to clean out the pen and feed the chooks whilst Andrew took pleasure in collecting the eggs!!!" says Laurel. (While he is Andy to members, Laurel has always called her



husband Andrew, a name with strong family connections).

Andy became aware of U3A after Laurel had been to an Open Day and showed him a brochure of the activities. He soon became involved in the discussion group and facilitates that to this day.

Soon he was asked to stand as secretary - which wasn't his forte - but the president was stepping down and Andy saw the opportunity to bring his own particular skills to that role.

He says the highlights of his time have included extending the course offerings, joining the U3A Queensland Network for three years and in Beaudesert, overseeing the growth in membership from under 200 to well over 300. He has also enjoyed the new friendships and establishing the first subsidised members' Christmas party which has become a tradition.

In this second "retirement," Andy and Laurel plan to enjoy the freedom to get up and go, to travel within Australia to see some out-of-the-way places and also Tasmania.

Members' tributes

"Andy has been instrumental in drawing together a like-minded group of people that make Beaudesert U3A a very successful and harmonious committee which is no mean feat. He has networked with all the relevant community groups to spread information and made all feel welcome in a mix of courses which has nearly trebled the membership in his time as president.

I have been aware of U3A for many years and did belong to Boonah U3A where I did a creative writing course; however the travelling over there was proving to be time-challenging.

I met Andy's wife Laurel first. John and I were members of the local choir "a-choired taste" when Laurel came along with Bernie Grodecki to see if she would enjoy it and we hit it off

from day one. About then Andy became involved with Beaudesert U3A. He and Laurel both encouraged people to join the different activities U3A had to offer.

I do enjoy playing cards and John had tried for years to make time to learn to play the guitar. Hence I started to wind Laurel up as we had neither of these things at U3A Beaudesert. She found a card group and I found someone willing to give their time to pass on their vast knowledge of guitar and Bob's your uncle!

I have enjoy being part of U3A and loved being part of the committee as vice president and meeting people from all aspects of our community." - *Lise Leatherbarrow*

"Under Andy's stewardship, Beaudesert U3A has flourished and the membership has exploded, mostly due to him. He has a business background and has treated his term as president in a businesslike way, despite occasionally having to wrangle the volunteer tutors and facilitators of the wide variety of courses available.

"As a facilitator myself I can attest to how supportive and encouraging Andy has been and he, along with wife Laurel, has gone above and beyond to ensure the success of this very important group in our community." - *Liz Avery*

"Under his leadership U3A has grown to what it is today with an expansion of available activities" - *Carol Castles*

"Andy has a sense of humour, he is a gentleman" - *Di Abbott*

"Andy always finds time for people and takes the time to explain U3A details" - *Sue Estbergs*

"What is an Andy Fechner?"

A dedicated leader

A creative innovator

A mindful director

A flexible forward thinker

A willing doer

A knowledgeable mentor

who fulfils all these roles with a caring, understanding and humorous attitude.

Thank you for your guidance to me in

my role as secretary over the past six years, and thank you for your offer to continue to be available to me (and the committee) for any matters that we need help with". - *Yvonne Berry*

With sincere thanks

Andy Fechner

As a newly minted past president of your U3A, I wish to thank all those members who have given me such wonderful support and assistance over the past eight years to make U3A Beaudesert the exciting community group that it is today. Those who have volunteered to accept committee positions, and those who have taken the roles of course tutors and facilitators have made our success possible.

At our 2022 AGM on Friday 18 March I was afforded a truly exceptional honour, being awarded a Life Membership of our U3A. I was very humbled by such a gesture and will always treasure the sincere words of appreciation which accompanied it.

A new committee is now elected, and I extend my best wishes to your new president Brendan Dever, and all duly elected members. I am sure they will have a great year.

With thanks, Andy Fechner.

A special "thank you" George and Michele

Two of our committee members also "retired" from the committee and their contributions to U3A Beaudesert were acknowledged at the Annual General Meeting when a certificate of appreciation was presented to each of them.

George Evans

Cheryl Folley

Our Webmaster George Evans is retiring from the committee but as with Andy, that's hardly the end of his U3A involvement. He and wife Rita will continue to run the croquet group which meets every Tuesday morning at Everdell Park, Gleneagle. They were the instigators of this group along with Trish Alexander and Tex and Margaret White.

For George it has been a long and enriching journey from his early days in London. He had many adventures as a member of the London Fire Brigade and went on to life in New Zealand and time with the NZ Fire Service, before changing employment after an injury and into advanced computer work within the New Zealand National Defence structure.

And then came Australia, following his son and family who lived here - firstly to Park Ridge and then Beaudesert 12 years ago, when the couple became aware of U3A though publicity announcing the AGM

With his computer experience, George

soon became webmaster and also ran a computer group which gave advice and support to members.

And these days - if you can corral him over a gin and tonic - George can tell tales of all his past lives, but particularly his experiences in London and his rescue of an 18-stone woman from the first floor of an apartment building.

"I climbed the ladder with a crew member close behind," he says.

"There were flames already issuing from the top of the window where we'd seen someone waving, and I fell head first through the window on top of that person.

"Harry my crew member shouted when he was ready, so I managed - with great difficulty - to drag the woman up into a sitting position and raised her into a fireman's lift and pushed her feet first out of the window....I hung on to one arm and when I let go, Harry started screaming."

As George recalls, matter-of-factly, "this threw me into a bit of a panic as I was

"THINKING"

(an extract from a poem by Walter Wintle)



If you think you are beaten, you are
If you think you dare not, you don't
If you think you'd like to win,
But you think you can't
It is almost a cinch you won't

If you think you'll lose, you've lost
For out in the world we find

Success begins with a fellow's will
And it's all in the state of mind.

contributed by Barry Owen



getting cooked and needed to get out.

"I almost fell out and grabbed the underside of the ladder, still hearing Harry scream, then there were just stars in front of my eyes and I woke up in an ambulance, with Harry in the same ambulance and the woman already on the way to hospital in a previous ambulance."

George eventually found out why Harry was screaming - he'd suffered a dislocated shoulder as he grabbed the woman from George at the top of the ladder!

One year later, George and Harry met again on the job when they rescued two German Shepherd dogs in a timber yard fire and were photographed later with the head of the RSPCA presenting certificates to them both.

That rescue gathered much more publicity than the first, which the local paper mentioned briefly with "Firemen rescued a woman in Woolwich last night; she is recovering in hospital."

Michele Goucher

Cheryl Folley

retired to Beaudesert with her husband.

An Ipswich girl originally, she moved to Darwin with her family and went to school there before joining a chartered accountancy firm where she was first introduced to book-keeping and continued in this role over several future jobs, including stints in eastern Canada and again back in Darwin. Her last full-time role was with a property development company in Springwood, Brisbane, where she stayed for 22 years.

Michele filled both roles in U3A as assistant treasurer and assistant membership secretary before taking on the single membership role this past year. She is a keen mahjong player.

Our retiring membership secretary Michele Goucher had an extensive background in bookkeeping and administration in Australia and Canada before she



The thoughts and opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the named individual contributor alone and do not necessarily reflect the views of the editor, U3A committee, U3A, or its members.

U3A Beaudesert committee for 2022



(L-R) Grace Gregory, Pat Hughes, Di Johnson, Yvonne Berry, Derani Gearey, Helen Atkinson, Stuart Gearey, Peter Venz, Tina Jones

(Inset L-R) Diane Rewko, Cheryl Folley, Brendan Dever

Our Annual General Meeting for 2022 was held at The Club Beaudesert recently and was attended by 39 members. The election of office bearers and committee was conducted by Michael Enright.

A feature of the AGM was the awarding of life membership to Andy for his selfless services to our organisation, an award that can only be given to any two people at one time. Andy is the first U3A Beaudesert recipient. A well-deserved award that was enthusiastically supported by all present at the meeting.



BUGs

Brendan Dever

Images from a very enjoyable St Patrick's Day visit to the Tamborine Mountain Botanic Gardens. The very impressive gardens are on a 12-hectare site with a mix of rainforest, palm groves, mountain streams and a lake. The gardens are supported, maintained and administered by a team of 35 volunteers.



Social lunch March

Di Johnson

Jimboomba House was a great choice for our monthly lunch on Friday 11 March. A total of 27 members and guests attended, a few of whom were new members. The food and service was excellent and enjoyed by all. Once again, a most enjoyable and successful lunch.

The April social lunch will be held on Friday 8 April at Crunchy's, Jimboomba. They can only accept a booking for 20 people so if you would like to attend, please contact Di quickly. (See page 2). Check out their website www.crunchys.com.au.



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