



O.W.L.S.

OLDER WISER LEARNING SENIORS



President's piece Andy Fechner

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May 2020

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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 |
| Carol Castles | Denice Knight |
| Rita Evans | Rosemary Ryan |

To register as a friend of the committee, please contact Andy Fechner

P 5541 2072
E andyfechner@bigpond.com

Just a few weeks now have gone by since our AGM, when we were on the verge of the introduction of the drastic measures that the Government has taken to try to minimise the effects of the spread of Coronavirus. As I write this piece, Easter has arrived, and the roads here are as quiet as I have ever seen them. There is certainly no traffic on the Mount Lindesay highway heading out to camp grounds or holiday destinations. There normally would have been hundreds if not thousands of caravans, campervans and RV mobile homes travelling past over the past few days. I could just about run a game of neighbourhood cricket on the highway and not have to worry about the traffic.

Several of our groups have been trying to keep in touch with each other. I have seen plenty of photos from the BUGs gardening enthusiasts. Like all of us, they now have plenty of time to catch up on those outdoor chores. It is a busy time just now, preparing for the coming of cooler weather, mowing grass off before the growth slows down, and planting the winter vegetables. The discussion group is being driven online by Cheryl Folley, with weekly items being contributed by each member. I know that Marg Arnold has been reaching out to the line dancers with good information about where to get videos of dances and music.

For those of us with wood burning heaters or stoves, it is also time to

brush the spiders off the chainsaw and start to get the firewood pile stacked up.

We have a wood combustion stove here for winter use, and it usually runs pretty much nonstop over the colder months. Just as well I have access to plenty of fallen timber.



Recently one of our members Pat Millard had a fall and broke her hip, but eventually returned home after successful surgery. However, at the time of writing she is back in Logan hospital in ICU with serious circulatory problems affecting her cerebral function. Pat was a committee member since we joined with U3A Jimboomba, and also an active card player and croquet enthusiast. We hope for a full recovery, but will keep you advised.

Finally, a big "thank you" to all those members who have contributed articles, photos and items of interest to us to help make our OWLS newsletter so readable. Please keep them coming to: secretaryu3abeaudesert@gmail.com, I know Yvonne appreciates them.

Until next edition, keep safe and isolate!!

Andy



Best wishes for a very **happy birthday** to our members celebrating birthdays in May:

- | | | |
|-----------------|---------------|-----------------|
| Helen Atkinson | June Carey | Janice Cornwall |
| Helga Davidson | Andy Fechner | Laurel Fechner |
| Cheryl Gay | Pip Harris | Harry Jackson |
| Shirley Kendall | Carol Lucas | Lynne McKechnie |
| Lesley Paton | Rosemary Ryan | |

If your birthday is in May and is not listed above, please let us know so we can update our records and include you.

GAS IS FINALLY AFFORDABLE AND WE CAN'T GO ANYWHERE!

FIRST TIME IN HISTORY WE CAN SAVE THE HUMAN RACE LYING DOWN IN FRONT OF THE TV AND DOING NOTHING LET'S NOT SCREW THIS UP



Current courses - term two

20 April-26 June 2020

Course coordinator | Tina Jones
Phone 0418 780 861 | Email t.j.16@bigpond.com

Nordic walking/walking - still in action!

Meet by the pool/library Monday, Wednesday, Friday, walk 6.30 am-7.30 am. Nordic walkers will require a pair of poles, comfortable sports walking shoes, bottle of water. Walkers - poles not needed.

Contact Liz 0488 155 506

Something new to try during lockdown - U3A Online

Beaundesert U3A has joined U3A Online. And what a bonus this could prove to be for our members during the coronavirus lockdown!

The wide variety of courses comes under the general headings of:

- Lifestyle
- Nature
- Science
- World affairs and history

For a look in depth, go to the website www.u3aonline.org.au and I guarantee your major challenge will be which course (or several!) to choose.

This is how it works. Organisational members such as Beaundesert, pay an annual fee of \$15 then pay \$20 per course to use with their own members, who don't have to become individual Online members. Our president has

suggested that providing a minimum number of our members choose any particular course, U3A can carry the cost. The sponsoring U3A can enrol for multiple courses.

Course members study at home and use an online discussion forum to "talk" to each other. They're given their own U3A group's log-in and password.

Volunteers running U3A Online stress that the demand for courses following the coronavirus lockdown is something they have never done on such a scale and ask people to be patient if there are occasional glitches.

We have a new course coordinator, Tina Jones, in Beaundesert, who would be the contact person for any U3A Online interest. Her details are mobile 0418 780 861, email t.j.16@bigpond.com.

Suggested courses are listed at the bottom of this page.

Aqua - Trish

I would like to say a big shout out to my aqua team. Each session was ably set up and all gear returned to its rightful place at the end of each session. You all work together so well and are able to take the class if I default.

I hope you are thinking outside the square and finding ways to incorporate some of the strength exercises into your daily programme. You do realise you need a set programme for each day so that we get through this dreadful time still with our wits and health. Working on our own is sometimes the hardest task of all. (That is how it is for me anyway, self motivation is very hard for me.)

On a lighter side, Mick mentioned he would like for some of our group to join his evening classes. WHY? Because no one offers to help him set up and pack away. He tells me, I am spoilt.

Thanks team. Stay strong and healthy, breathe, tuck that tummy in and scrunch up the buttocks.

BUGS - see page 3 for more stories



BRENDA MOSS

Two areas of my garden. I have also spent lots of time in the garden - weeding replanting and reorganising my compost.



Line dancing - Trish

A big thank you to Andy and Laurel for all their dedication to keep us on our feet and dancing. Again, a great team of helpers, setting up all our gear and carrying it out again. Our leaders in dance are very talented, keen and very willing to step up and take the floor, when I am not capable of fronting up.

My feet are enjoying the break, but naturally it isn't helping my health, but if anyone has the magic answer for fibromyalgia, I am listening.

You can join Margie, she has mentioned on Facebook, in a class on the net. I haven't got there yet, as I am trying to finish a quilt for my grandson's birthday.

TAG - Ray and Kirstey

Along with most of Australia, our travel group is in hibernation!

The boat cruise which we were going on at the end of March can be done later in the year, all going well. Jim from Brisbane Cruises will hold our money till then. If anyone wanted a refund instead, we suggest you contact him to discuss it. Denise Martin has been in touch with staff from Norfolk Island Travel. They are trying to defer our trip planned for the Bounty celebrations in June to the same time next year -- still to be confirmed.

As of today, there are still four of us going to the Cook Islands in late November but a question mark hangs over this as well.

Currently we are researching the Australian Silo Art Trails. We are awaiting maps and information that has been posted. There are dozens of silos, water tanks, sheds etc with amazing art works painted on them. Plus lots of other attractions to include in a trip by caravan or car. Look it up on www.australiansiloarttrail.com Be inspired!

Hope your feet aren't getting too itchy!

U3A Online - Choices, choices where to start??

A few suggestions to simplify our start into this wonderful array of courses:

- | | |
|---------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Lifestyle | .. <i>Maintaining Independence</i> |
| Nature | .. <i>Australian Flora</i> |
| Science | .. <i>The Night Sky</i> |
| World Affairs and History | .. <i>Kings and Queens of England</i> |
| Writing and Creativity | .. <i>Writing for Pleasure</i> |

I look forward to your responses.

Tina Jones mobile 0418 780 861, email t.j.16@bigpond.com.

What's going on in the garden?

BUGs convenor Liz A has been maintaining an open email conversation for members to contribute pictures and stories. Here are some of the activities members have been busily engaged in while "stuck at home".....

CHERYL FOLLEY

I have, of course, been spending heaps of time in the garden. (Well, who knows how long those 20 books from the library will last?) Wish I'd taken up the offer of 40!! Have demolished an entire compost heap and spread the contents, dug in and then planted seeds. And pulled out probably thousands of nut grass plants that established themselves in our vege patch walkways while we

were living in the Annalee Motel after our kitchen fire - that rain and flash flood just created perfect conditions for them. The only veges which are bearing at present are egg fruit (which I don't even like much but they are very pretty!), snake beans which are so prolific we have them every second meal it seems, and pumpkins enough for eight months, I calculate. The last of the mini tomatoes are fruiting also.

DERANI GEAREY (Below and right)

Just a few shots of my garden over the period since the earlier rains. Unfortunately we have had no follow up rain so the garden is needing watering, hence the shot of me using our watering system which Stuart has adapted to pull behind our mower. Throughout this time I have been doing maintenance work and the main one was to inhibit the growth of grass on our boundaries.

Also included is a shot of our dam with water in it which is always lovely. We also have a bird feeding area. We use wild bird mix but only a couple of small pans. We have mainly at this time of the season, galahs, corellas, ducks, pigeons, lorikeets to eat the grain.

It is still reasonably hot throughout the day so we are still seeing growth in the plants. I am not the vege grower in this family so at the moment we are just having sweet potato and carrots.



(Below) That upcycle queen, Shirley Schwarz, has repurposed her incinerator from 1976 into a strawberry bed.

WENDY VENZ (Below and right)



Recently we have had our retaining walls replaced. Pete and I have pulled out all the overgrown grass and weeds. We then added manure and fertiliser and pruned back all the dead wood on the roses. They are all now reshooting and looking very healthy. There is now room for more roses and other plants too. Can't wait to go shopping.

Good work Shirley. Makes me want to plant strawberries as well.



LYNNE MCKECHNIE (below)

I'm a newby to gardening but this is my vege garden. Four aboveground gardens assembled, nearly 1 cu metre soil moved and over-planted, but it was either that or throw seedlings away; I had already given my neighbour some.

Here's hoping in a few weeks I have nice fresh vegs. Planted broccoli, cauliflower, coz lettuce, various tomatoes, capsicum, broad beans and English spinach. Still looking for beetroot and other salad greens.



PATRICIA LAMB

All that great rain made my garden pop



Cheryl Folley introduces the new on-line discussion group forum...

To get started - what are the positives of coronavirus social distancing for you? And the downsides?



For me, the positives are the time and space to do all the sorting of "stuff" that has accumulated over more than 50 years... and I imagine that will be a common goal during this time. Have been working hard also in the garden which is normal for March, as it is a major planting time for winter crops.

Downside? There are virtually no vegetable seedlings to be had, which means no jump start for the stalwarts such as broccoli. I usually plant heaps of seeds also, but it's always good to get those first few vege seedlings into the ground with the five weeks' growth that means early results.

Positives - all my windows have been cleaned! I've unearthed some beautiful sepia photos of my mother and her best friend in the early 1930s, which had been stored unseen for ages. Downside? There are eight or so large boxes of photos still awaiting attention....

And a closing thought - quote of the week, not really surprisingly, from Donald Trump, on the rapid spread of the virus he initially claimed was fake news - *"People are dying who have never died before."*

JOAN GRAY

I have been exploring recipes for some unexplained reason and also going back to things I used to make and had forgotten about- lentil patties, cheese loaf, cornflake biscuits etc. Because I'm the only one here my freezer is gradually filling up with leftovers. Perhaps it's nostalgia for times past. I do think some of the restrictions are a bit much. Sitting on a park bench by yourself or separated from a friend is more beneficial for you than being cooped up in a small unit.

I guess it is difficult to have regulations simple enough to police. Can't see a problem with going for a drive either if you are not getting out of the car.

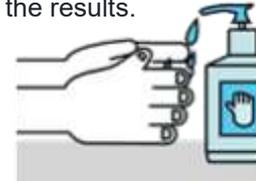
KIRTSEY ARTHY

I haven't been to town for two weeks! Fortunately we have heaps of frozen food and Ray has replenished our fruit and veges from the Big Pumpkin.

Our son-in-law works for Beenleigh Rum Distillery and we hear that they're flat out

making neutral spirits for the sanitisers used by police and Queensland Health. I've made our own hand sanitisers - we had two bottles of Isocol and I used a recipe with those plus aloe vera and hand cream. It is very liquid compared

with the commercial ones, but I'm happy with the results.



RAY FOLLEY

I think the unexpected arrival of Covid-19 has been a massive wake-up call for the world - from the United Nations to the World Health Organisation and the Global Banking System all the way down to ordinary families and individuals. It is causing all levels to re-think what is important. Isolation from family and friends is triggering basic instincts about their fundamental importance to well-being. Nations are wondering about their loss of self-sufficiency in critical goods and services. Should they have embraced the seductive

economics of globalisation in trade to the extent that it has left them vulnerable? The "she'll be right" or "ignore and it will go away" approaches have been proven not to cut it with Covid-19. Governments are learning just how hard it is to communicate and "get through" to their populations. It will be interesting to see how the forces of Covid-19 shaped our thinking and the way we live and work in a year and five years ahead. Will we be better prepared for the next big uncertainty? And where will all the subsidy money come from then? feel optimistic. Individuals and nations bounce

CAROL CASTLES

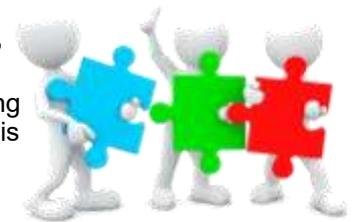
My new challenge for this week was to do a jigsaw puzzle. I contacted Sandy, made arrangements to pick up the jigsaw 500 pieces (easy breezy), came home full of enthusiasm, cleared the dining room table, tipped out the pieces all ready to get started. Mind you I have never done a jigsaw before as when we were kids we played outside, and my kids were all into sport, so this was a new venture for me (easy breezy).

After tipping out all the pieces I then realised I would have to turn them all over; this took a considerable amount of my precious time and I hadn't even started on the main picture.

It was time for a coffee. Coming back to the puzzle and looking at the picture I realised I would need to get the tape measure to measure the length and width of the perimeter, (or is the box the correct dimension?) Into the garage I went, knowing full well that I had a tape measure somewhere. Eventually I found it and set up the perimeters of the puzzle, however seeing as I had spent too much time on the initial phase of setting up I left it till the next day. Next day I was going to sit down to start the puzzle but realised I needed to stand so I could put all the relevant coloured pieces together to make it easier to work out (not so easy). My back was killing me so I sat down and started on the outside. I have been at the puzzle for nearly a week now and have nearly finished the perimeter, but I think some pieces are missing (have to admonish Sandy!)

Somehow I don't think I have the patience to do jigsaw puzzles. I have left it isolated on my dining room table and walk past thinking to myself I will not let this defeat me. I hope no one else has this puzzle booked it may be years before I work out the picture on the front of the box.

This has been my week of discussion with myself that maybe I need to buy a couple of kiddy jigsaw puzzles and start off with an easier one.



Thank you to all of our sponsors



ANDY FECHNER

As Cheryl has indicated, there are positives and negatives to the current social distancing situation. Given most of us fit into the category of "over 70" and thus higher risk should we contract the virus, I am sure that we are all paying attention to the directives.

My outings have shrunk to the basics: food, fuel and medical. We were never much of social butterflies in any case, but I do miss the occasional outing to a local restaurant or coffee shop. It goes without saying that the cessation of activities of U3A has left a significant hole in my weekly calendar. I have been filling these with heaps of time in the yard and paddocks, finally catching

up with the growth of the grass. With 50 acres to attend to as well as the house yard of 3 acres there is plenty to do. Laurel has been limited in what she could do due to a mending leg wound, so I have discovered that a "woman's work is never done."

Over the next few weeks the chainsaw will keep me fully occupied as I start sawing and splitting wood in preparation for winter, with a wood combustion stove and a fireplace to feed. I can also see some more jam making ahead, as we have found more time available to experiment with recipes and do extra baking.

I feel for those who do not have the distractions that I have at home, and I count myself fortunate to have all the

chores that are here. There are also opportunities to indulge in more time reading and getting out old board games and jigsaws. It is times like these when you get a new perspective on how fortunate one is to still have a partner.

I do miss the ability to visit my aged parents who entered nursing care just prior to Christmas, and are still coming to terms with their position. The telephone is just not the same is it?

I feel desperately sorry for those who have lost their jobs, their businesses, and their livelihoods. There are some benefits in being a retiree, though my superannuation has been decimated like so many others.

On the scales of for and against the plus ledger is sadly outweighed.

Let's take a break - at the Fechner's!



Some of our daily visitors relaxing in the shade this morning. One mum looks tired of carrying this big load. A teenager who won't leave home!



RON AND KAY ANDREWS

Returned from a visit to son Simon in Thailand and self-isolated immediately. We had such a good time in Thailand that it has taken a while to settle down to what used to be normal but has now been turned on its head. I'm only hoping I have enough books to last out for however long it takes.

People were wearing masks on the planes we travelled on and social distancing was in use even in late February. Kay and I felt the local's fear of foreigners when we were waiting for a meal in a restaurant in Bangkok. We were sitting outside when a "local" who was inside the restaurant came out. On seeing us he immediately put his T shirt

over his nose and mouth and went inside again through another door. As soon as he was inside again and past us he uncovered his face. That sure makes you feel comfortable. On a lighter note, we were visiting a school and a little fellow came up to me and started rubbing my arm. Unaware of anything strange I asked what had fascinated him. It seems that my arms are very hairy -- a condition not common in Asian men I'm told.

For us there were no luxury hotels or touristy things. We stayed in Simon's flat so lived very much like locals. Fortunately we had a very experienced driver in Simon as traffic conditions were organised chaos to say the least. I had to learn the local rules, where a red

light does not necessarily mean stop and a green not necessarily go, as I was sitting in the front seat and could be heard saying I needed a beer and a change of undergarments quite regularly. In our last week we learned that being old in Thailand has its benefits as over 70s, and pregnant women, get priority parking. Could be a thought for Australia as well.

Being in 'lock down' has its benefits. Like you we are lucky to have a patch of land to walk on and the ability to observe the wildlife and plants. Unfortunately I have ocean-deprivation sickness but have a curative dose coming up soon.

Social lunches

U3A lunches may be a thing of the past temporarily, but social convenor Di Johnson is still enjoying a good red and a slap-up Easter meal in a restaurant-for-one (with Mr Winston for company).



Clouds

Teeny clouds up in the sky
Teeny clouds go floating by

Rules now say I must stay home
And all my hours must be alone

My heart is filled with hope from Above
That I'll soon be back with those I love

Teeny clouds float on and on
And say this dark time will soon be gone.

Roberta



Contributed by Gay Robson

I'm normally a social girl
I love to meet my mates
But lately with the virus here
We can't go out the gates.

You see, we are the 'oldies' now
We need to stay inside
If they haven't seen us for a while
They'll think we've upped and died.
They'll never know the things we did
Before we got this old
There wasn't any Facebook
So not everything was told.



We may seem sweet old ladies
Who would never be uncouth
But we grew up in the 60s -
If you only knew the truth!
There was sex and drugs and
rock 'n roll
The pill and miniskirts

We smoked, we drank, we partied
And were quite outrageous flirts.

Then we settled down, got married
And turned into someone's mum,
Somebody's wife, then nana,
Who on earth did we become?

We didn't mind the change of pace
Because our lives were full
But to bury us before we're dead
Is like a red rag to a bull!

So here you find me stuck inside
For four weeks, maybe more
I finally found myself again
Then I had to close the door!

It didn't really bother me
I'd while away the hour
I'd bake for all the family
But I've got no bloody flour!

Now Netflix is just wonderful
I like a gutsy thriller
I'm swooning over Idris
Or some random sexy killer.
At least I've got a stash of booze
For when I'm being idle
There's wine and whiskey, even gin
If I'm feeling suicidal!

So let's all drink to lockdown
To recovery and health
And hope this bloody virus
Doesn't decimate our wealth.

We'll all get through the crisis
And be back to join our mates
Just hoping I'm not far too wide
To fit through the flaming gates!

Contributed by Sandra Anderson

GLENDIA HICKS

These are indeed strange and somewhat
challenging times!! A great time to declutter or
tidy those cupboards that we all put off for
another day.

I love my push bike and start the day off with a
ride and no, I don't wear lycra. My daughter lives
with me and her support services are put on hold



until further notice. I have to keep her occupied
which is not always easy! I am very fortunate to have
a table tennis table in my shed so she and I have had
some awesome rallies!!

I miss seeing family very much. Thank goodness for
face time. And I'm missing catching up with my line
dancing group and table tennis too. Hopefully no one
is spying on me while I practice the Git Up dance!!
My daughter thinks I'm hilarious.

I was at the supermarket earlier. A lady was looking at
frozen turkeys and she could not find one big enough. She
asked the stockboy, "Do these turkeys get any bigger?". He
replied with a straight face, "No ma'am, they're dead". Made
my week.

Never be afraid to try something new. Remember,
amateurs built the Ark, professionals built the
Titanic.

Thanks to Lise Leatherbarrow

Reminiscing - 1963 the year my "grown-up" life began *Cheryl Folley (and Ray Folley)*

When people used to ask me what I
wanted to be when I grew up, I always
had two answers – a journalist or a
botanist. In 1963 I stepped on to the
path to achieve the first of those two
ambitions (and just as well I didn't opt
for botany: my interest in plants was
strong, however my chemistry results
were anything but!)

I spent the northern hemisphere school
year 1961-62 as an AFS exchange
student in Knoxville, Tennessee, in the
foothills of the Great Smoky Mountains.
At the time I barely realised it, but
Australia and the US were only 16
years on from World War II. What
courage it must have taken for one of
my friends in Knoxville, Keiko Sato, to
travel to the US and live among people
who had been her country's sworn
enemies!

On my return to Adelaide I applied to
the State newspaper, *The Advertiser*,
for a place as a cadet journalist and
began work late in 1962 as the newest
member of the Women's Department.
In those days, that was what girls did –
not for them the gritty world of the
general news floor, but the quieter
upstairs 4th floor where we produced
several pages of "women's" news each
day. I remember that we had a
wardrobe with various hats and gloves,

and if attendance was required at a
sombre event such as Remembrance
Day, the journalist assigned would
choose the appropriate accessories
from the cupboard.

There was a strict hierarchy and juniors
were often sent to the composing room,
a noisy machine environment where
stories were type-set in metal, to be
inked and printed out for the next day's
newspaper. We'd collect the page
proofs and take them back to our office
for reading and correcting. It's so easy
to write, edit and publish stories today,
by comparison!

Cheryl Folley

Addendum to the above - In 1963 I
was a year into my job as a graded
journalist at *The Advertiser* and
sometime in mid-year was assigned to
research the *100, 50 and 25 years ago*
daily column for the paper. I would haul
an armful of archived newspapers to my
solitary small room on the 3rd floor,
opposite the lifts – and very soon
became aware of a bright and friendly
new cadet who would stop and chat
while she waited for the lift.

One day I gathered my courage and
asked her to an *Advertiser* beach party.

The rest, as they say, is history!

Ray Folley

More reminiscences

My name is Anne Fawcett, my husband
Albert and I came at the end of October
to live in Beaudesert. We are from UK
and are young geriatrics (late 70s.)

We are self isolating but coping well.
Just thought the picture might give
someone a laugh and stir a few
memories for youngsters like ourselves.
The photo shows a picture of items I
recall being stored under my bed when I
was very small. I still store them today.
Keep up your spirits every one.

