

## Presidential Ponderings

Dear All

I thought I would write the September ponderings early as we seem to be stuck in lockdown again for an indefinite period. The vaccination figures are encouraging and hopefully we will reach our goal of at least 70% before too long. I urge you to keep up the good work – get tested if any symptoms and be vaccinated as soon as you can. We will get through this.

I have just read the book Vaxxers – the story of two of the women who made the Astra Zeneca vaccine at Oxford University. For a nonscientist, I found it uplifting, optimistic and felt so proud of the achievements of this hardworking team. Their background is impressive having worked on the SARS, MERS and Ebola vaccines before this.

One bright thing is that the days are getting longer; the weather is improving. The gardens are beginning to 'spring' into life and whereas our movement outdoors is limited, it is at least going to be a little more comfortable.

Your committee have been working on ways to keep you involved and to keep you informed. Some of our tutors have agreed to run extra classes to fill the time. My two classes will now be on Zoom. Dr John Beaney has kindly agreed to run a series of classes on a Monday morning for us and I know some other tutors are considering it. John's email address is [ozebeanz@gmail.com](mailto:ozebeanz@gmail.com). So do let him know if you want to join the class. We will do our best to keep the news coming!

Although the Expo for Seniors Month on 6<sup>th</sup> October has been cancelled, we at U3A Frankston would like to continue to organise our Open Day for 13<sup>th</sup>. Who knows where we will be by then? We have also volunteered a stall for the Mount Eliza Neighbourhood House fete on 13<sup>th</sup> November. If anyone is feeling creative, we would welcome contributions such as jam, chutney, knitted items or even cakes, biscuits etc. I am not sure when we would organise to receive them, but that is for the future to decide!

Sometimes it is easy for us to become focussed on those small things that affect our day to day lives and to blow them out of proportion. I have noticed that some people are overreacting to things said or done and sometimes behaving in a way that is quite uncharacteristic. These signs are all signs of stress and the more aware we are of them, the easier it is to cope. Please take good care of yourself by keeping contact with friends and family on Zoom, Skype, email or telephone. We are so much luckier to have these tools than those from WW2 (such as my mother who lived in occupied Belgium for six years) or those amid the tragedy unfolding in Afghanistan. It is I know always easier to focus on the negative, rather than the positive. It is one year since I lost my beloved father right in the middle of the lockdown that lasted. I still miss him but am grateful he is not here to endure yet another one. We must stay positive.

I will send another Ponderings in a couple of week's time, when we have a better idea of the path forward out of this lockdown. Until then, please join any Zoom classes you can if there is space and stay well, stay safe and stay in touch.

Best wishes

Andrea McCall

President