

Presidential Ponderings – January 2023

Welcome to the new year. The tinsel is fading, the leftovers are reducing, and you have ironed the wrapping paper ready for next year, put the unwanted gifts into your re-cycling box and put the empties in the bin. It is now that time for new year's resolutions – you remember those, eat less, drink less, exercise more etc. Well put coming to U3A Frankston at the top of those resolutions and participating in a variety of courses throughout 2023.

Remember enrolments open online on 11th January at 10:00am sharp, so let your fingers do the walking. If, however, you are confused or having problems, call the office on 9770 1042 and one of the team will help. Please don't come in that day as the Centre is not officially open. Classes recommence on 30th January and for those of you attending my class, I will be sending out a reading/study list in advance of our first class.

2022 was the third year of Coping with Covid and it appears the little monster has still not moved on. We seem much better able to deal with the variants and if we continue to be vaccinated and vigilant, things will improve. Continue to take care and with the advent of the antivirals, our recovery time is shortening.

The list of famous faces we lost during the year seems to be especially long, but none are sadder than those of Queen Elizabeth and Shane Warne. We ended the year losing Pele and Vivienne Westwood as well. We will miss them all for so many different reasons.

However, the sport offerings have been marvellous – how many of us shed a tear when David Warner made his 200 at the MCG and then staggered off the ground beyond exhaustion but elated. He was an example of an Aussie larrikin spirit to inspire us all.

I love the start of the Sydney to Hobart yacht race, but particularly watch for the small two-handed boats staying clear of the maxis. This year it was thrilling to follow the progress of the two women in their late 60s sailing alone on the small yacht Currawong. Go girls!

January is also Australian Open time for us tennis fans. No Ash Barty but who knows which new faces may emerge at Melbourne Park – and who knows what the weather will serve up to keep us guessing.

Later this month is Australia Day. There is much debate around as to whether we should continue to recognise it. Opinions are strong and divided. For me it marks the day in 1985 when I became a Citizen and made the choice to put Australia first. No trouble with that until we play the Ashes!!

The gardens around us are a mass of flowers and growth. The heavy rain followed by a few days of sun have encouraged massive growth but with that comes the risk of bushfires. I hope all of you living in greener areas have taken and continue to take all the necessary precautions to ensure your safety and that of your animals and property. If you are out in the heat, please remember the slip, slop, slap slogan from years gone by. As a fair skinned ex Pom, I tend to sit in the shade with a book and a glass as I burn very easily!

Let us hope sincerely that 2023 is a good year for us all. In March I step down as President after a gruelling four years, but an equally rewarding one. May I wish you all a very happy new year and a peaceful time for you and your family and friends.

Regards – Andrea McCall