

Presidents Report

AGM 10th March 2020

Welcome to another AGM for U3A Frankston. This is my first report as your President and I hope it continues to set the scene I spoke of last year.

Let me begin by thanking your magnificent committee. They have been outstanding in their commitment and continued support of you and of me. I would like to mention Peter Stebbins who stepped down during the year owing to personal commitments and of course Bethy Birch who has taken time out for herself.

To the rest of the committee – you are a remarkable bunch and we are lucky to have you.

When I took over, I had a number of goals in mind for my term as your President. At the end of the first year, I am delighted to report that some of them have already been achieved.

It was a very difficult year – we had been given notice by John Paul College and although it was a reasonable notice, I am one of these people who does not like to hang around if they are not wanted! So the first task awaiting us was to find a new home. The team headed by Dennis Mason worked tirelessly and eventually after a little gentle persuasion, Frankston City Council came good and the rest as they say is history. These premises are the very best we could have hoped for in the municipality and although we are already outgrowing them, they serve us well. First goal achieved.

The second goal was to have classes up and running by mid year last year. They were, together with new equipment and streamlined internet services. This is an ongoing task as well as a costly one and we are working constantly to find the best way to keep up with the modern technology. Second goal achieved.

The third goal related to membership. I have always wanted us to be one of the largest as well as one of the best U3As in Victoria. That means a critical mass of people, tutors offering the very best of courses and having the best facilities. Our membership has increased by nearly 100 since we moved here and we have widened our course offerings. We are now looking at expanding them further and taking more of our ‘activity’ courses off site, to release the classrooms for other things. Third goal achieved.

The fourth goal was to work towards opening our office for longer hours. The experiment continues and I thank all of you who have volunteered to help us either in the office or in other ways – such as the garden, the minutes of meetings and of course the Gurus of the Computer Team.

The next goal was to increase our profile within the Frankston Community and beyond. We held an Expo in October at the Arts Centre. It was an exhausting effort but well worth while. We showcased our singing groups, had a variety of external stalls and in spite of the weather, we had a good turn out. We are now contributing regularly to local committees and groups and submitting regular articles to the media. Our newsletter goes far and wide and we participate in Region and Network meetings.

We have also extended our offering of the BeConnected computer training courses, ably managed by Dennis, Bob and Jo Kidder. Thank you to those who have also offered to take on teaching.

Our final and ongoing goal is to streamline our membership and class fees. You will have received the proposal for this meeting and I hope you will understand why we delayed this by one year. I thank again our volunteer tutors who agreed to contribute to our outgoings for one year and can now say that thanks to our superb Treasurer, Jen, we are on top of these issues and can therefore present our fees proposal to this meeting.

To say that I have enjoyed my year totally as President would not be entirely honest. It has been extremely challenging, sometimes frustrating but in the end we have as a team achieved an enormous amount.

Thanks are sometimes not enough – but I would like you all to take time to thank your incredible committee and continue to support them during the next twelve months.

It is a pleasure working with you.

Thank you

Andrea McCall