

Presidential Ponderings for April 2021

Dear All

Easter is for many of us a time of renewal – a time to reflect and to look forward to the year ahead. I hope it is for many of you who are religious and for those of us who are not.

Go easy on the chocolate but celebrate where you can with your nearest and dearest! I have a good supply to keep me going.

We have endured a difficult few months and I can assure you that your Committee and I are now looking forward to the balance of the year being much busier and more positive.

When we return on the 19th of April you will see that many of the classes have been scheduled back to their original times and that some of those courses held off site will be returning to Karingal Place. Details on the timetable will be issued soon and I thank Leonie, Graham and Peter for their hard work. It will be good to see more of you back in class, but I ask you to continue to be vigilant with hygiene until we have all been vaccinated. Your tutors will have the final say on class sizes and we will let you know as soon as possible.

Some of the classes on Zoom will of course continue until further notice. I am conscious some of you are still reluctant to return to face to face so we will accommodate you where we can.

Last Tuesday we held our AGM, and it was a rather surreal experience. The committee was present in Room 1 together with our guests, Susan Webster (President of U3A Network) and Anne Grigg (U3A Kingston). We had a good crowd on Zoom – including a couple in the room next door! And we had over 75 proxies. Susan gave a short speech at the end and endorsed the good work of all U3As around Victoria, particularly Frankston. Thank you for your support and for your interest in your U3A. A copy of my report and that of our treasurer is available now on the website. Please note that both the treasurer and I are now in our final year, so we are actively looking for our replacements. I urge you to consider a role – your U3A needs you.

As a result of the AGM, we have continued with our fabulous Committee, with the addition of Don McDonald as Vice President and Anne Williams as General Committee. A full list of our names and roles is on the noticeboard. We may resist photos!

As winter approaches, I tend to start thinking about projects to do inside. These of course include research for my Tales of Murder, Mystery and Mayhem classes and so Booktopia will be hearing from me very soon! However, I also get the tapestry organised, the knitting patterns ready and check on the status of my crossword and jigsaw puzzles. Last year's lockdown made me very aware of tasks and hobbies required to keep us busy. I suspect our houses have been decluttered to within an inch of their lives along with the contents of our wardrobes (I mended, darned and repaired like never before). My shoes were polished, and

I think the local Opportunity Shops were overwhelmed with goodies. No doubt many of you did the same.

Journals are a great way of recording our many and varied experiences and I know that the Creative Writing Class has been exploring the more imaginative ways of recalling our lives. The Art Classes can enable us to express our talents in other ways and I know that Michael, our wonderful gardener has demonstrated how lucky we are here in Australia, by growing and tending to some plants and flowers in our little patch of sunlight.

On 14th May, several of our U3A Members will be celebrated at the Frankston Arts Centre when FCC launches a collection of our memories of 2020 called Stories at the End of the Line. I know that Anne Simic and Bev Allen contributed along with yours truly so it will be a fun event to see our words in print.

Recently I attended a concert back in Melbourne at Hamer Hall. The atmosphere was so positive and the audience so receptive that it felt good to be part of it. Let us hope that this positivity continues.

As I look out of the window onto my beautiful garden, I am enjoying the best of our autumn sunshine. The clocks go back on Sunday morning – a stark reminder of the changing of the seasons. Enjoy the extra hour of sleep.

It has been terrific to see so many of you back at Karingal Place and the atmosphere has been so positive and friendly. Thank you to all of you for your cards, wishes and little gifts. They are truly appreciated.

Keep safe, keep healthy and have a good Easter and school holidays. For those of you with grandchildren duties – stay sane!

Best wishes

Andrea McCall

President