

PRESIDENTIAL PONDERINGS FOR AUGUST 2021

Dear All

Let me begin on a couple of positive notes. Firstly, we will be back at Karingal Place from Monday 2nd August. Classes will be reduced in size and the office will only be open from 10 to 2pm each day. Please always wear masks and enjoy being back to a form of normality for the time being. Thank you to you all for sticking with us during this very trying time.

My second positive note is the Olympics. I suspect many of you, like me, were sceptical about whether they should go on. I am very glad they did. They have turned into a welcome distraction from the difficulties we currently face. I have enormous admiration for our young people who have trained through very tough times and have performed so splendidly on the world stage. I would also like to single out our wonderful table tennis player – a Chinese/Australian woman in her late 40s. It is good to see that age is no barrier to competing at the highest level. I must confess to being glued to the television and to becoming entranced by some sports I did not even consider before. Surfing? Who would have expected that to be an Olympic sport?

Well done to all our sportsmen and women who have made the journey. To compete is the greatest achievement.

August marks the third month of winter – and it has been a bad winter this year. We have experienced another lockdown in Victoria and an appalling outbreak in New South Wales. It is very clear that this Delta variant is contagious and persistent. Stay Safe. I am typing this looking out at some winter sunshine and have noticed that the daffodils and narcissi are already flowering. It is a lovely sight.

I also feel for the residents of the Dandenongs who have experienced more storm damage and more disruption to their lives. We have been lucky here and I hope that continues. Spare a thought for those people who must rebuild their homes and amid the pandemic, their working lives as well.

We have managed to hold a couple of our Winter Warmer talks so far, despite lockdowns. I believe they have been well received and I thank our speakers. We would like to continue this series in future years and would appreciate suggestions for topics and speakers. Your feedback is always welcome.

There are some interesting dates in August. I was born in Yorkshire and 1st August is Yorkshire day so I suspect a coup of Yorkshire tea and some Yorkshire pudding may be called for. 4th August 1914 marks the declaration of war on Germany and 20th August 1940 the Battle of Britain in which Australian and New Zealand pilots participated. Sadly, 6th August marks the anniversary of the bombing of Hiroshima and oddly enough is also International Beer Day. August also marks the birth months of some very distinguished people – Alexander Fleming (discovered and developed penicillin along with our own Howard Florey and Sir Ernest Chain) and one of my favourite children's writers Enid Blyton (Noddy and Big Ears). If you are lefthanded, 13th August is your special day!!

To those members who are still unwell or have been unwell over the last month, we are thinking of you. Please take care. You are all precious.

On behalf of your committee, I wish you a safe August and look forward to welcoming as many of you back as possible to Karingal Place.

Andrea McCall, President

PS. Reminder that 10th August is Census Night. Prepare to be counted on!!