

Presidential Ponderings Update and December

Dear All

Well at last we can breathe a sigh of relief as life begins to return to a level of normality we have not seen since March 2020!!!! Hurrah. This will be my last Ponderings for 2021.

Your committee have been in constant contact with FCC and have devised and implemented a Covid Safe Plan for the immediate future.

As of Monday, some of your hard working and longsuffering tutors will be returning to Karingal Place for the remainder of the year. Graham has been in touch with them and no doubt they will let you know.

We have agreed that we prefer for masks to be worn where possible, but the density limits in classrooms are removed. Please continue to enter and leave by the rear door and of course continue to use the QR code and sign into your class. The kitchen is open but not for sitting and congregating. This is a good outcome for us all.

On 12th January we will open membership and enrolments. Remember that membership now covers all your class enrolments, and you are welcome to join as many or any classes you choose at no extra charge. The membership fee is \$100 for the full year, or you may prefer to pay for half the year. We would prefer the full fee to be paid up front as we anticipate our costs will increase exponentially from December onwards.

We are also looking to award a couple more life memberships at the next AGM. If you have any suggestions of a worthy member, tutor, or committee member, please forward your nomination to the office.

The AGM has been set for 22nd March at 1pm in Room 2. Several of the committee will be standing down, including me and I would ask all of you to consider nominating to help and support U3A Frankston. It is a great place and is filled with wonderful people with outstanding skills and abilities. The club is well run and is I am glad to say, solvent! Please give this some serious thought. The time commitment will never be this onerous again and we would welcome new blood and new ideas. Thank you.

December marks a hectic month in many people's calendars. After such a long time in limbo, I hope you will have time to catch up with family and friends, but do not overdo it too soon! I think we need to ease ourselves back gently into normality. I have noticed the standard of driving on the road has deteriorated dramatically and there is a certain fanaticism in the eyes of those shopping. Slowly does it!

During the last nearly two years, I have found time to read many books as my Tales of Murder Mystery and Mayhem class will tell you. It was fitting that the last book I read during lockdown was called "The Last Convict" by Anthony Hill. It tells, through the mirror of fiction, the life and times of our last known convict Samuel Speed who died in Perth in 1938. Anthony Hill uses considerable extant material including an interview with a Perth journalist just before Sam died. He weaves it into a wonderful tale of human endurance and suffering. I loved it. It put our recent plight into sharp focus and was a sobering tale. I highly recommend it.

We have experienced some severe weather in the last month. I was without power for three days and without water for 12 hours. Thankfully, there was minimal damage around me, but I feel for those who have months of repairs and upset ahead of them. Australia never ceases to remind us of how extreme our climate can be and how we need to be vigilant.

As this is my last Ponderings of the year, I would like to thank all of you for your outstanding support of me and the committee. We have struggled, we have faltered occasionally but above all we have kept your club going where many others around Victoria have not. We have learned Zoom; we have played Trivia Quizzes and we have learned to keep in contact with each other by any means possible.

For some of us the last two years has meant a goodbye to loved ones or family contact by long distance. It has been tough on us all, but we have made it to the finish line. Well done to us all and thank you.

I wish you a very safe and successful Christmas season. For those of you who are religious, it is a time for reflection and for optimism. For those who are not, it is a reminder of the importance of generosity to those less fortunate and for the value of love and family.

Best wishes, Merry Christmas and to the next phase in U3A Frankston

Andrea McCall

President