September Newsletter 2019

Editors : Tony Keys | Publication Date : 30th August 2019

Albury-Wodonga U3A 2018-19 Committee Members

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Tony Keys (Newsletter) • Rod Farr • Lyn Reed • Anthony White

September Coffee Morning

Uta Wiltshire

Recording our own Personal and Family History

Term 3

29th July - 20th September

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Next Committee Meeting

Friday 6th September

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Coffee Morning

Friday 13th September

Morning Tea 10:00am
Talk: 10:30am
August Coffee Morning
The Importance of Being Earnest
Act II & III

A fun time was had by all as we were entertained by the group's radio play rendition of Acts II & III of this theatre classic.

“All women become like their mothers. That is their tragedy. No man does, and that is his.”

“I hope you have not been leading a double life, pretending to be wicked and being good all the time. That would be hypocrisy.”

Presented by the U3A Play Reading Group - Directed by Helen Casey

The Cast (in order of appearance):
Narrator - Penny Shilling
Miss Prism—Elizabeth Grant
Cecily—Linda McCarthy
Merideth—George Pender
Dr Chasuble—Martin Stevens
Algernon—John Shilling
Jack—Ian Price
Gwendolyn - Ang Kuzeff
Lady Bracknell - Helen Harbutt
September Coffee Morning

**Uta Wiltshire** retired 18 years ago after 32 years in the Public Service and has lived an active community life. Her involvements include Secretary/Treasurer of Wodonga Historical Society, previously member of Wodonga Show Society, and previously treasurer of Ladies Auxiliary Wodonga Show Society.

She has set up and administered Facebook pages and websites for the Historical Society and Show Society.

In 2018 she was awarded Wodonga's Citizen of the Year.

She will expand on her Australia Day speech talking about the importance of recording our own personal and family history.

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**U3A MEMBER INTERVIEW: CLAUDIA KLEMM**

“I am very happy and contented. I have been living here for 26 years surrounded by the things I love. I am grateful that I can keep guinea pigs. There’s just one at the moment since his mate passed away last year; his name is Quentylein.”

The sun shines through Claudia’s window bringing to life the many glass balls fastened to the curtain. Her mother bought these colourful baubles over the years from the German Christmas markets, sending them to Claudia in time for her birthday in February.

Claudia was born in **Ulm** in West Germany in 1948. Though this was in the aftermath of WWII, Claudia was too little to realise what was going on. Her mother tells her that she once stood in a queue for hours to get a carrot for Claudia. Despite that, Claudia’s memories are of always having plenty to eat in her family consisting of father, mother and sister.

Ulm is a beautiful city located on the north side of the Danube. Across the river lies the twin-city of Neu-Ulm. Claudia is reminded of our own twin cities of Albury and Wodonga on the Murray. Her best memory growing up is of the Christmas decorations in the city – they were everywhere: on factories, rooftops as well as the Cathedral, comprising the highest church spire in the world.

After finishing high school, Claudia trained in the law courts as a Court Official. She worked there for four years, and when she met Gerhart through friends,
they married in 1970. In 1971, much to Claudia’s delight, they moved to Upper Bavaria where she had always wanted to live. But then her world shattered when Gerhart said he wanted to emigrate to Australia. At that time there was very little information available, certainly no pictures of this country the other side of the world. Canada was another option Gerhart was considering. Claudia was more familiar with this country with its dramatic scenery and white settlement being 100 years older than the white Australian history.

The couple did land in Australia in 1973 on 20th July, her husband’s birthday. One thing after another seemed to tarnish their arrival. Their luggage had been destroyed by sea water as there had been a hole in the cargo hold. They had brought everything to furnish a flat except the furniture. Their losses included their front-loading washing machine. At that time, that type of washing machine was completely unavailable in Australia. Claudia had bought books with photographic plates of scenic Germany to remind her of home. All their photos were destroyed. The salt water even destroyed the cutlery. A room was assigned in a migrant hostel to try to dry out their luggage, and then to her dismay, some self-made Christmas decorations were stolen. Claudia took these events hard.

Gerhart continued in the job that had been organised for him; however they subsequently decided to move to country Victoria. There were no other migrants living in the area, and in 1977 Claudia separated from her husband. She thanks Lionel Murphy that after one year she was able to get a divorce due to “irretrievable breakdown of marriage”.

Claudia worked in an aged care home as Relieving Assistant Supervisor. The position came with a flat as she was on duty 24 hours a day. Then in 1980 Claudia returned to Germany for eight months in search of a German husband. This did not eventuate, however her homesickness only increased and she was tempted to stay anyway. She missed the scenery, the history. Seeing a thousand-year-old castle would make Claudia “go weak at the knees”.

Then in 1983 Claudia moved to Albury. She returned briefly to Germany in 1984 after her sister’s premature death. In the meantime, she had begun study in a Fine Arts Course at the Riverina College of Advanced Education, the forerunner of CSU. At this time she was also employed at Albury TAFE as a life model.

Nevertheless, her heart still longed for her homeland in Germany. Though she would need her parents’ help to return permanently, she did not want to ask for their help. So in 1987 she revisited once again for several months’ holiday, without telling them. Claudia speaks of this time as “a fairy-tale come true”. It was “a magical time” meeting “heaps of people” who were so impressed that she was travelling on her own.

On her return, Claudia realised that it had been “the worst mistake of my life to come to Australia”. She subsequently experienced a complete breakdown in 1989, lasting almost a year.
Then in 1993 two important things happened. Firstly she moved into the unit where she lives until this day. Then when her father became ill in the early 2000’s, she went to visit him in Germany. For the first time, she realised she was not so homesick any more. Claudia was working at the Continuing Education Centre (CEC) teaching German, a position she enjoyed for more than 20 years.

Claudia returned to Germany in 2010 after her father’s death, spending a month with her mother. This relationship remains difficult, though after returning for the last time in 2013 she still keeps in regular phone contact each week with her mother, now 96 ½ years of age and living in a Seniors Home.

Australia is home now to Claudia. She says she always wanted to be buried in the family grave back in Ulm, however now she prefers to have her ashes scattered here. She still gets homesick at times, but most of the time she can cope with it. Looking back, has it been worth it? Claudia believes personally, she is not better off than if she had stayed in Germany. As well there has been “too much heartache”. Paradoxically though, she says she “prefers Australians to Germans”. And since 1999 she has had her guinea pigs.

Claudia reflects, “I am happy and contented. I have made my peace with Australia. I am at home now, though I will probably never take the Indian Pacific. It helps living in the best area in Australia – apart from Tasmania. And the mountains are nearby.”

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Course Titbits

Sentimental Journey

Participants’ Comments (omitted from the last newsletter—Editor’s error)

Sentimental Journey commenced at the beginning of the year 'for just one term', but it continues on, the original premise (1929 to 1965 - minus the War years) evolving over time to run through to 2000 in Term 2. In Term 3, it morphs again along 'some significant detours'!

We have enjoyed excerpts, both historical and musical. The Great Depression - not exactly 'sentimental' for us, but as it affected our parents, it also textured our own lives. Over the following weeks, 'history' came within our own timeframe and sharing knowledge became sharing experiences.

Sentimental Journey is a social history lover's delight, shared with enthusiasm, great research and a pinch of serendipity.

Glenys

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Glenys
I have been in this course from its beginnings. Its aim was to cover baby boomers' experience of life in our local and national community. It followed a chronological approach starting with the pre-war period. Each session starts with a song typical of the period, be it Vera Lynn Doris Day or Don McLean.

As class members have "lived" the events, we have wonderful discussions which enhance the sentimental tone set by our genial leader, John Whale.

This term the course has taken a more thematic approach. So far we have looked at All things Greek, Roads and Westerns. The sessions are entertaining and well prepared with interesting visuals and videos.

Tony

INSPIRED TO WRITE (with Aprile Alexander)

2 Stories from the Class

Teak’s Visit To Willows Reserve

Teak the family dog that is a Jack Russell enjoys being taken often by his owner William to the Willows Reserve for his exercise and socialising with other dogs. Teak is 14 years old and has a typical Jack Russell body with short legs, long hair coat, a gorgeous small beard around his mouth, and long hair covering his paws that adds character to his presentation.

The trip from home to the reserve is in his owner’s car and one of the windows is lowered to allow Teak to smell the surrounding air and view the passing scenery. Before departure a water bottle and plastic bowl are placed in the car which is greatly appreciated by Teak to drink when he finishes all of his exercise playing with his friends at the reserve.

On arrival at Willows Reserve Teak becomes very excited and jumps from the car as soon as his owner opens the car door to run towards his friends which are a mix of Fox Terriers, Border Collies, Labradors and Jack Russell dogs. William also enjoys meeting the other dog owners who sit around a couple of park benches to talk about items of interest while having a nice hot cup of coffee or tea from a few thermoses brought by a couple of the dog owners.

The landscape of the reserve is very attractive with a walking track on its perimeter. There are many mature weeping willow trees scattered throughout it amongst garden beds surrounding a few designated soccer fields. Teak gets plenty of exercise chasing the other dogs and
sometimes there are growls and barking being made by the dogs with excitement.

Soon Teak’s owner attaches the dog lead to his collar and guides Teak to the perimeter walking track for the last part of the adventure. Teak is kept very busy smelling the various scents around the shrubs as he is led along the track and then sadly it all comes to an end when they arrive back at the car.

Teak’s owner then obtains from the car the water bottle and the plastic bowl which he fills with water while Teak is standing nearby to quench his thirst. Teak on finishing his drink takes a last look around the carpark and the reserve and then jumps up onto the rear seat of the car getting ready for the trip home.

_John Hase_

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**The Skittles Machine at U3A (a very short story)**

Our Writing group at U3A were asked to write a completely fictional piece about a feature or something we had observed at our Albury Wodonga Community Collage. This is my offering.

In the tea room there is a colourful Skittles machine and I’ve noticed that if you put 20c in it and hold a small bag under the spout you may receive skittles or lollies that sort of resemble smarties. I quite like chocolate and am quite partial to eating them all at once. Of course I don’t do this if there are other people about.

Well I decided that as no one was about I would indulge my little weakness and get a bag of skittles. So I put 20c in the slot and the Skittles machine said, “Not today Linda! You get no skittles today!”

“Why?” I asked. It was completely amazing that I wasn’t freaked out about the machine talking to me.

“Because you were late to your class and I noticed you running up the hall! Besides don’t you know you shouldn’t be running about at your age?”

“Baloney!” I replied but I could have said worse. Then it occurred to me that machines were listening to everything we said and judging everything we did. What had this world come to when a Skittles machine thought it had the right to judge me?

“What is baloney?” the Skittles machine said.

“Ah ha”, I replied and thrilled that I had beaten the machine, “I am not telling you because you are just a machine and I have had enough of you, so please be quiet.”

I walked slowly back to my class and decided I wasn’t going to tell anyone because of course they wouldn’t believe me.

_By Linda McMaster_
Laughter is the Best Medicine

From one of our members

Most seniors never get enough exercise.

In His Wisdom God decreed that seniors become forgetful so they would have to search for their glasses, keys and other things thus doing more walking. And God looked down and saw that it was good.

Then God saw there was another need. In His Wisdom He made seniors lose coordination so they would drop things requiring them to bend, reach & stretch. And God looked down and saw that it was good.

Then God considered the function of bladders and decided seniors would have additional calls of nature requiring more trips to the bathroom, thus providing more exercise. And God looked down and saw that it was good.

So if you find as you age, you are getting up and down more, remember it’s God’s will. It is all in your best interest even though you mutter under your breath.

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Nine Important Facts to Remember as You Grow Older:

#9 - Death is the number 1 killer in the world.

#8 - Life is sexually transmitted.

#7 - Good health is merely the slowest possible rate at which one can die.

#5 - Give a person a fish and you feed them for a day. Teach a person to use the Internet and they won't bother you for weeks, months, maybe years.

#4 - Health nuts are going to feel stupid someday, lying in the hospital, dying of nothing.

#3 - All of us could take a lesson from the weather. It pays no attention to criticism.

#2 - In the 60s, people took acid to make the world weird. Now the world is weird, and people take Prozac to make it normal.

#1 - Life is like a jar of jalapeno peppers. What you do today may be a burning issue tomorrow.

Don't ignore this message. This is your only warning.

A friend sent this to me - he must have mistakenly assumed I was ageing!
Astronomical Society of Albury Wodonga presents

‘Dishing up the Data - Parkes and Apollo 11’

A public talk with John Sarkissian OAM
Operations Scientist at CSIRO Parkes observatory

Ever seen the movie 'The Dish'?
Ever wondered if it was all true and marvelled at the role a humble Australian observatory played in the Apollo 11 landing?

2019 marks the 50th anniversary of the Apollo 11 landing. Our guest speaker John Sarkissian OAM was a technical adviser for 'The Dish'. But that is just a snapshot of his work and the incredible role played by the Parkes Radio Telescope then, and to this day in supporting interplanetary spacecraft and deep space tracking.

Today John’s role includes science operations and support of remote astronomers with their observations. He is also involved in pulsar research - an exciting field of radio astronomy!

7pm Wednesday 4th September 2019

* Main Lecture Theatre,
La Trobe University

ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY OF ALBURY WODONGA