

U3A BRIGHT DISTRICT

GOOD COMPANY, LIFELONG LEARNING, STAYING ACTIVE



President's Report

JUNE 2023

Hello everyone,

As I write this it is a bleak winter's day, but the memory of washing my car in glorious warmth & sunshine on Sunday reminds me that there is always something to look forward to here in the amazing North East of Victoria. Frozen mornings that give way to clear blue skies & sunny days, storms that leave brilliant white snow on our mountain tops and life-giving rain preparing the trees & plants for the burst of life around our beautiful towns and countryside in Spring. So, make sure you rug up, get out and about and enjoy this season.

Staying active & healthy is sometimes a challenge but here at U3A we offer plenty of indoor pursuits to enjoy and there are also the Senior Citizens Bridge sessions and indoor bowls. Check out our courses website and the paper copy of our programs on the noticeboards at H.Q., to find something to engage you and give you an opportunity to socialize with friends this winter.

Although it is not much in the news headline anymore, Covid is still very active and the cold & flu season is well and truly upon us. Did you know that the Alpine Shire offers FREE Immunisation clinics at the Bright Alpine View Childrens' Centre, 23 Deacon Avenue Bright, on the last Friday of every month, from 9.30-10.30am?? No appointment is necessary. Immunisations offered, apart from the regular children's immunizations, are ADULT Diphtheria, Tetanus, Pertussis (whooping cough) and OVER 65 Influenza injections. These clinics are also held at Myrtleford Senior Citizens Centre, Smith Street, on the last Thursday of the month from 9.30-10.30 and at Mt Beauty Lakeside Children's Centre on the last Wednesday of the month 9.30-10.30. It is crucial that we protect ourselves, friends and family from illness if possible, so if you are feeling at all unwell, please stay at home to recover and return to your classes and activities when you are feeling well again.

Our new course offerings are proceeding really well, with Irish language and yoga nearing capacity. The casual cuppa, cake & conversation has seen large numbers of our U3A members and Senior Citizens friends enjoying great company, food and conversation on the first Friday of the month. Due to the July school holidays, the next casual cuppa, cake & conversation will be held in our hall at 10.30am Friday AUGUST 4th.

Coffee Morning

**Friday June 23rd at 10am
2 Cobden St**

Guest Speaker - John Simpson

**Duty Groups
MAHJONG, CARD GAMES,
WOODWORK & WRITING.
(Please arrive at 9.45 to set up)**

**Next
Casual Cuppa, Cake 'n
Conversation
will be held on
Friday 4th August at
10.30am.
Cost \$2**

New Activity.....

Perennial Gardens
run by Julie Hulbert from the nursery near Harrierville. Some sessions will run at U3A and some at her nursery. Classes will begin on August 16 and run on Wednesdays from 9.30 to 12.30 each second week.
The class is on UMAS so you can sign up now.

Bright U3A Contacts.

Treasurer: Robyn Cirulis...members@u3aBright.org.au.
Web Admin/Newsletter: Helen Brecknell.....media@u3aBright.org.au

Secretary: Dianne Mayorga.....info@u3aBright.org.au
Courses: Linda Hayes.....courses@u3aBright.org.au.
Social Sub-Committee: Jan Smith.....social@u3aBright.org.au

Senior Citizens Activities

Senior Citizens is keen to get more people at their activities, so U3A has included indoor bowls & the Bridge group in the COURSES section of our website.

If you would like to join them go to 2 Cobden St for Indoor Bowls on Tuesday at 1pm and to Bridge on Tuesday evening at 6.30. You may speak to a senior cits member who will assist you to enrol.

The Probus Club of Bright has very generously given us on permanent loan, a portable P.A.system, which will be available to all users of our shared facility and we thank Probus for their generous community spirit. At our Autumn end of term coffee morning, Tim May, a Bendigo Community Bank Board member really gave us insights into the incredible amount of support the Bank gives local organizations in the district, by donating 80% of their profits back into the community. They are our U3A bank of choice and are staying right here in our towns as bigger banks depart. We will be applying for funding grants in the near future and we thank the Bendigo Community Bank, Bright, for their ongoing support. You may have noticed some very stylish and comfy furniture in the hall, part of which was funded by the money raised at the Bright Brewery Community keg, so well done and thank you to all those drinkers and friends who made the night such a success.

Last year, a group of us enjoyed a sumptuous Christmas in July lunch at the Happy Valley Hotel. This year, Lyn is putting together another special menu for our Boxing Day in July lunch on WEDNESDAY 26th JULY from 12.30-3pm. There won't be any cricket but I can guarantee great food, fun and company. The cost will be \$36 per person for a 2-course meal. Please check out this activity on our COURSES section of the website from next Tuesday, June 13th, for full details. Hope to see many of you there!

If you haven't already claimed your \$250 Energy Saver rebate from the Victorian government, you have until June 30th, so log onto the Victorian Energy Compare website before it's too late.

Our next end of term coffee morning is coming up on Friday 23rd June at 10am in the main hall. Guest speaker will be our very own John Simpson, talking about his experiences in Ethiopia. The duty groups this time are MAHJONG, CARD GAMES, WOODWORK & WRITING.

Until next time, I'll leave you with this... It's not just the years in your life, but the life in your years that count!

President

Marianne Dredge



Boxing Day in July

Happy Valley Hotel - Wednesday 26th July 12.30 - 3pm

Cost \$36 pp

Book using the U-MAS system after 13th June

Digital Cards

In the coming months Seniors Card holders and Seniors Business Discount Card holders will have the choice to load a digital card to their Service Victoria app on their smartphone

Digital Seniors Cards and digital Seniors Business Discounts Cards will be available in the Service Victoria app in the coming months.

Senior Victorians will soon have the option to store and use a digital version of their Seniors Card or Seniors Business Discount Card, using the Service Victoria app on their smartphone.

The choice is yours

The digital card is a choice and not mandatory – senior Victorians can continue to use physical card if they prefer.

Senior Victorians will be able to use a digital Seniors Card or digital Seniors Business Discount Card the same way they use a plastic card to get discounts and other benefits. These digital cards provide cardholders with access to the same range of discounts from participating businesses, Victorian fishing license exemptions and public transport concessions.

Service Victoria app

Many Victorians may already be familiar with the Service Victoria app to store their COVID-19 vaccination certificates.

The Victorian Government's Department of Families, Fairness and Housing and the Seniors Card program is working closely with Service Victoria to develop the digital cards for those who want them.

Create your account in the Service Victoria app

The digital Seniors Card and digital Seniors Business Discount Card will be launched in the coming months, and in the meantime, Seniors Card cardholders who are interested in having a digital card can create an account in the Service Victoria app, so they are ready to add a digital card, once they are available.

You can create a Service Victoria account for free in the Service Victoria app or on the Service Victoria website:

service.vic.gov.au/account

Energy Rebate Scheme Victoria

On 24 March 2023, a new round of the Power Saving Bonus program commenced. Victorian households are now able to receive a new \$250 payment, including any households that received a payment through previous rounds of the program.

Before submitting an application for the bonus, please read the eligibility requirements:

Eligibility requirements:

- You must be a residential energy consumer (i.e. have a residential electricity account)
- You must be the account holder
- Only one payment is available per household

As part of the Power Saving Bonus application process, we will present you with information about the best priced electricity offers available in your area. You are not required to switch offers or retailers.

The application process will take five to ten minutes of your time, and you will need to have a recent electricity bill with you.

<https://compare.energy.vic.gov.au/>



Scams target everyone

Scams target people of all backgrounds, ages and income levels across Australia. There's no one group of people who are more likely to become a victim of a scam, all of us may be vulnerable to a scam at some time.

Scams succeed because they look like the real thing and catch you off guard when you're not expecting it. Scammers are getting smarter and taking advantage of new technology, new products or services and major events to create believable stories that will convince you to give them your money or personal details.

Protect yourself

- **Be alert to the fact that scams exist.** When dealing with uninvited contacts from people or businesses, whether it's over the phone, by mail, email, in person or on a social networking site, always consider the possibility that the approach may be a scam. Remember, if it looks too good to be true, it probably is.
- **Know who you're dealing with.** If you've only ever met someone online or are unsure of the legitimacy of a business, take some time to do a bit more research. Do a Google image search on photos or search the internet for others who may have had dealings with them. If a message or email comes from a friend and it seems unusual or out of character for them, contact your friend directly to check that it was really them that sent it.
- **Do not open suspicious texts, pop-up windows or click on links or attachments in emails – delete them:** If unsure, verify the identity of the contact through an independent source such as a phone book or online search. Don't use the contact details provided in the message sent to you.
- **Don't respond to phone calls about your computer asking for remote access – hang up** – even if they mention a well-known company such as Telstra. Scammers will often ask you to turn on your computer to fix a problem or install a free upgrade, which is actually a virus which will give them your passwords and personal details.
- **Keep your personal details secure.** Put a lock on your mailbox and shred your bills and other important documents before throwing them out. Keep your passwords and pin numbers in a safe place. Be very careful about how much personal information you share on social media sites. Scammers can use your information and pictures to create a fake identity or to target you with a scam.
- **Keep your mobile devices and computers secure.** Always use password protection, don't share access with others (including remotely), update security software and back up content. Protect your WiFi network with a password and avoid using public computers or WiFi hotspots to access online banking or provide personal information.
- **Choose your passwords carefully.** Choose passwords that would be difficult for others to guess and update them regularly. A strong password should include a mix of upper and lower case letters, numbers and symbols. Don't use the same password for every account/profile, and don't share your passwords with anyone.
- **Review your privacy and security settings on social media.** If you use social networking sites, such as Facebook, be careful who you connect with and learn how to use your privacy and security settings to ensure you stay safe. If you recognise suspicious behaviour, clicked on spam or have been scammed online, take steps to secure your account and be sure to report it.

staying active

- **Beware of any requests for your details or money.** Never send money or give credit card details, online account details or copies of personal documents to anyone you don't know or trust. Don't agree to transfer money or goods for someone else: money laundering is a criminal offence.
 - **Be wary of unusual payment requests.** Scammers will often ask you to use an unusual payment method, including preloaded debit cards, gift cards, iTunes cards or virtual currency such as Bitcoin.
 - **Be careful when shopping online.** Beware of offers that seem too good to be true, and always use an online shopping service that you know and trust. Think twice before using virtual currencies (like Bitcoin) - they do not have the same protections as other transaction methods, which means you can't get your money back once you send it. Learn more about [online shopping scams](#).
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This is general information to help protect yourself against scammers. It has been obtained from the official ACCC website <https://www.scamwatch.gov.au>. If you wish to use these services please don't use google as I found several sites that seemed to be OK, however looking at the web address it was not the correct **.gov.au** that you should find when accessing an Australian government site.

It is good practice when going to websites to NOT CLICK ON LINKS in any document! Also you should be aware that there are many websites - maybe legitimate or may not be - that come up at the top of a google search and have AD or SPONSORED preceding the website name. DO NOT click on these as they can take you where you don't want to go. They can be legitimate and sometimes are not.

A guide to naming conventions used by legitimate websites is to look at whether it is a .COM a .ORG or a .GOV. The GOV one should have .AU as well to designate that they are Australian.

Many Australian companies may have only a .COM and still be registered here is OZ however it is quite often that they are based in the US. You will find that the end suffix will designate the country of origin. Only US based companies generally don't have a country designation.

If you are contacted by phone - and many scammers already have your phone number - DO NOT give any personal information to them even if they say that they are the bank and you have had unusual transactions on your account and they need to look into it. If you do go so far as to log into your account then under no circumstance are you to read the numbers given to your phone to verify that it is you to that person on the other end.

NO BANK WILL EVER ASK YOU TO DO THIS!

If you have been contacted by email please look at the top of your email to check where it is coming from. If you don't recognise it - don't open it.

Many scam emails and phone calls may also use threatening language - this is a SCAM - don't fall for it.

Most companies these days have the facility to report these to them. They take this sort of thing quite seriously as for one their reputation is being tarnished. I myself have reported many to Telstra and they do what they need to do in the background. You don't find out yourself but rest assured there has been 'stuff' happening.

Scamwatch, run by the ACCC (Australian Competition and Consumer Commission) has a very comprehensive reporting page that is easy to access.

<https://www.scamwatch.gov.au>.

Recycling at its best! Woodwork by Mike Roberts

A modern take on a traditional camphor laurel chest was crafted by Mike Roberts. As a U3A woodworker, Mike was able to call on the eagle eyed and infinitely patient Glen O'Connell for assistance.

The chest is made from recycled laurel boards top and bottom. At 100cm by 50cm by 50cm the chest is already full of blankets, doonas etc and has many centuries of deterring moths and silver fish ahead of it.



Camphor laurel was introduced into Australia from Asia in 1822. It has been planted as a garden ornamental throughout Queensland.

Camphor laurel is an attractive shade tree, but can be very destructive as it aggressively replaces native vegetation. The long-term consequences of its spread may result in the loss of

native wildlife and agricultural productivity over large areas of South East Queensland.

Camphor laurel invades pastures and disturbed riparian systems. It tends to germinate under fences and power lines (wherever birds rest and deposit the seed). As a result, it can push fences over and disrupt power facilities.

It is a troublesome weed on dairy farms throughout south-east Queensland and northern New South Wales.

Along the waterways of south-east Queensland, camphor laurels are replacing the native blue gums thereby threatening koala populations.

Impossible Pie (cos it's impossible to muck up)

Ingredients

4 eggs
½ cup melted butter
½ cup plain flour
2 cups milk
2 teaspoons vanilla
essence
1 cup sugar
1 cup desiccated
coconut



Method

Mix all ingredients together. Pour into pie dish and bake until firm in moderate oven.

Serve & enjoy

From the Editor

I am constantly looking for articles of interest to our members.

This month Mike Roberts kindly sent in a photo of a wooden box he made to store blankets etc. Being kind to the environment, he recycled some timber but also used timber that is considered a pest!

How good is that?

And from Marianne Dredge, for the bakers amongst us, here is a recipe that is sure to please.

If anyone has something they would like to share don't hesitate to contact me on

media@u3abright.org.au

I am even happy to come a take a pic or two!

Out 'N About

Seen around our region

