



# JABBER JOURNAL

Grafton U3A Inc. (University of the Third Age)

PO Box 688 Grafton NSW 2460

[www.grafton.u3anet.org.au](http://www.grafton.u3anet.org.au)

"Sharing our knowledge, skills and experience in a friendly convivial way"

**MARCH 2015**

**JABBERFEST \* 10.00AM – 9 MARCH 2015**  
**GUEST SPEAKER – RICHIE WILLIAMSON**  
**MAYOR CLARENCE VALLEY COUNCIL**  
**GRAFTON COMMUNITY CENTRE – DUKE STREET GRAFTON**

Our guest speaker for March Jabberfest is Mayor of Clarence Valley Council, Richie Williamson. He was elected at the initial intake of councillors for the newly formed Clarence Valley Council in March 2005, 10 years ago. Re-elected to Council in September 2008 with the highest 1st preference vote, he was appointed Mayor and continues in that role today.

Whilst his presentation is not limited to any particular subject, his office has been made aware of U3A members' particular interest and concern in the following topics:

- Councils' attitude and policy in regard to renewable energy including active responses from the community;
- Demise of Midnight Basketball;
- Future of the coffee shop at the Grafton Art Gallery;
- Whilst not a Council issue – an update on the Nymboida Coaching Station.

Do take this unique opportunity to attend Jabberfest and hear first-hand Council's plans and views on matters of concern to you.



## **FEBRUARY JABBERFEST - WRAP**

President Maree opened proceedings by welcoming guest speaker Chris Gulaptis, Member for Clarence complementing him on being a "most handsome guest" to which the audience responded with applause. Chris was invited to speak by Nick Reeve, a committee member who is passionate about the subject of Climate Change and runs classes on the topic. He is to precede our guest speaker with a short address. A special welcome was extended to new members Peter Nixon, John Gilmer, Annie Wolff, Mazza Verdante, Peter & Roz Chessell, Judith Cardow, Terry Byrne, Lois Simpson, Joy Ricketts, Paul & Eija White, George & Denise Chrisian and Janice Baranzuela were then welcomed. Maree advised members that the Jabber Journal, our monthly newsletter, is available online or through the post. It is appreciated that some members do not have access to computers or email and therefore need to receive the Journal by post. However, those who have access are encouraged to consider arranging to receive the journal online which was borne out recently when Maree was being shown the latest edition by David Abrahams on his tablet. He remarked what a shame it was that all members did not receive the Journal in this form because of the beautiful colour in the featured photos which do not look the same when viewed in black and white. So again, if you have access to email or computer do consider changing – you will be pleased with the result. Contact Carole Cairns (66424615 or [cicairns@iinet.net.au](mailto:cicairns@iinet.net.au)) to be added to the email list.

Mention was made of the diversity and number of courses and interest groups available to members – currently 23. Members were encouraged to review the list as there is something for everyone. It is also lovely to note that we are blessed with some wonderful/devoted teachers who continue on year in and year out. Mary Lou Brown, committee member and Jabberfest morning tea supervisor, is seeking volunteers to be rostered to assist with the clearing up after morning tea. Name and contact details can be left on the list provided or contact Mary Lou on 6644 5167. Our next Jabberfest will be 10.00am 9 March 2015.

## **FEBRUARY JABBERFEST – CLIMATE CHANGE V RENEWABLE ENERGY**

A good audience of 104 listened intently to two interesting speakers. Committee member, Nick Reeve, prefaced the main guest speaker with a presentation on renewable energy and, particularly, CORE (Community Owned Renewable Energy), a sort of 'do it yourself' reduction of the 'carbon footprint'.

At Wildpoldsried, a village in Bavaria, the community has enthusiastically embraced 'energy farms' using solar panels and wind turbines, to try and create a joint sustainable energy future. And, apparently, at our own Byron Bay, they have Australia's first community owned power generator, with solar panels and methane gas employed. The basic problem at the moment is that, with ample coal supplies available, the cost of renewable energy cannot compete.

After morning tea, our guest speaker, Chris Gulaptis, MP, Member for Clarence, was introduced. Although his published address subject was 'Climate Change', we are happy to report that he made no reference to this phrase during his interesting talk. 'Climate Change' has been, and will be, with us forever. Chris had the good sense to talk about the urgent need to limit pollution of the atmosphere – which we all certainly agree with – and the role of renewable energy as a part of the solution.

The problem is that Australia has an abundance of coal available and our economy is part based upon this. It produces energy more cheaply, at the moment, than renewable energy sources such as solar panels, wind turbines or tidal generation. Some community members just cannot afford the infrastructure of renewable energy and governments are hard put to make tough decisions regarding their financing.

However, there has been good progress. NSW has committed to a 2020 target of producing 20% of required power by renewables and, already, 45% of renewable industries are in NSW. And, in Nyngan and Broken Hill, AGL are investing \$450,000,000 in renewable energy production, with \$65,000,000 help from the Federal Government.

Chris's very interesting talk was followed by a lively question and answer session, in which a good number of members participated.

A most interesting and thought provoking experience. *R.A. Cuming*

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## **FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK**



I feel very confident in saying that we have started the New Year on a very positive note with February Jabberfest being a huge success attended by a bigger than average crowd. Apart from the World War II memories presentation by the Mussareds, I do not recall having as many positive comments after a Jabberfest. Members have gone out of their way to make affirmative comments to myself and committee members. I think it was so refreshing to hear a politician staying with the subject and not sounding like a politician. We look forward to another interesting Jabberfest in March with our Mayor as Guest Speaker.

Classes and Courses are getting underway with good attendances. It was a shame that the Sunday lunch outing had to be postponed but we can do little about the weather. The decision was taken after the despatch of many emails to all committee members to gauge opinions. I am confident we made the correct decision as we thought not only of those possibly cut off by flood waters but of those nervous of going out in bad weather because of

the danger of falling on slippery surfaces - I know the feeling. Here's hoping the rest of the year will be as good as the start – your committee is there to enable this to happen.

Maree Burrows

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## **SOCIAL ACTIVITIES**

### **MARCH SOCIAL JAUNT**

Join us for a fun trip to the Lawrence Bell Collection followed by a scrumptious lunch at Maclean Bowling Club.

<b>DATE:</b>	<b>29 MARCH 2015</b>
<b>PICK-UP:</b>	<b>BUNNINGS 10.00AM</b>
	<b>SHOWGROUND 10.15AM</b>
<b>COST:</b>	<b>BELL COLLECTION \$5.00</b>
	<b>BUS \$10.00</b>
	<b>MEAL (OWN EXPENSE) \$14.00-\$25.00</b>
<b>RETURN:</b>	<b>2.30PM (APPROX)</b>



**BUS SPACES ARE LIMITED AND CAR POOLING MAY BE AN OPTION**  
**PAYMENT TO CAROL CAIRNS AT MARCH JABBERFEST**

## NSW SENIORS WEEK \* 14 – 22 MARCH

Celebrate NSW Seniors Week at one of the undermentioned activities in Grafton designed for and celebrating Seniors! Representing almost 30% of the Clarence Valley population, seniors over the age of sixty are significant contributors to the economy of the valley. Almost 20% volunteer their time to sporting, community, aged and disability groups. In recognition of this, Clarence Valley Council Community Development, libraries and Care & Support Services, local business and community organisations are hosting in excess of thirty events across the Clarence Valley. Educational, cultural, creative and entertainment events are on offer throughout the valley. "Light at Both Ends" – Lantern Making Workshop, Seniors "Young at Heart Film Festival", a Bush Dance featuring the Tallowood Bush Band and the Clarence Healthy Seniors events have been organised by the Clarence Valley Council Community Development team. In addition, the Community Development team are supporting "The Second Best Exotic Marigold Hotel" screening that has been organised by Australian Hearing. Clarence Community Transport will provide transport throughout the week and will run a service so that you can attend Yamba Seniors morning tea and lunch on Sunday 15 March and the Bush Dance at Brushgrove on Thursday 19 March. Transport must be booked 3 days in advance. For these two events a bus will only run if there are sufficient numbers booked and will require a gold coin donation. For further details go to any of the Clarence Valley Council offices or access the website [http://www.clarence.nsw.gov.au/cp\\_themes/metro/page.asp?p=DOC-QTG-24-18-80](http://www.clarence.nsw.gov.au/cp_themes/metro/page.asp?p=DOC-QTG-24-18-80)

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## COURSE/INTEREST GROUPS UPDATE

### ARMCHAIR TRAVEL

Next meeting will be held on 24 March 2.00 – 4.00pm at the U3A Rooms Dougherty House. Our presenter this month will be Alysian Pender recounting in adventures in the Scandinavian countries. Do come a long for an entertaining afternoon. Enquiries to the convenor Magda Mussared 6644 9309.

### BUSH WALKING

Our first outing for the year will be Monday 23 March. Meet at 7.45am at McDonalds car park for carpooling. Drive to Yamba to catch the ferry to Iluka. Walk along the beautiful bayside then through the littoral rainforest of World Heritage Iluka Nature Reserve to The Bluff for a swim (optional) and lunch. Wonderful views reward the climb to the lookout. Return via beach or forest to Sedger's Reef pub for cheerful refreshments before catching the ferry to Yamba and then drive home to Grafton.

Bring lunch, hat, walking shoes, sun protection cream, mosquito repellent and swimmers. Wear sun protecting clothes and a smile that will last the day. This walk is 10 kilometres plus but worth the effort. Names to Peter Mears at 66435748 or sign up at Jabberfest. *Barbara Fahey*

### BOARD GAMES

Please note we continue to meet on 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of the month **but note change of time to 1.30 – 4.30pm** instead of mornings. *Vanda Geremia*

### ALL CHANGE for CHANGING CLIMATE

This course will include six of the best half-hour lectures by Professor Richard Wolfson, Professor of Physics at Middlebury College USA, together with video clips, blogs and newspaper commentary/reviews on the current state of climate change.

We shall also look at the science:

- **The theory of the greenhouse effect** - The composition of the greenhouse gases.

We shall also look at the current issues:

- **The carbon budget** - We currently have known reserves of fossil fuels five times more than we can afford to burn.
- **The renewable energy target** (RET) – Putting a price on carbon.
- **Growth** – What sort of growth?
- **Renewable energy**
- **Community Owned Renewable Energy** (CORE)

**The course runs for six weeks commencing Thursday 19 March 2.00 – 4.00pm. Location – to be decided.** *Nick Reeve Course convenor* Telephone 6642 5367 or 0408001541 or email [nickreeve@bigpond.com](mailto:nickreeve@bigpond.com)

### ITALIAN

Classes will commence on Wednesday mornings at the U3A rooms and will be held each week from 9.30 – 12 noon commencing Wednesday 25 March. Please bring a USB stick and a notebook when attending the group. The tutor will be new member Graeme Watchirs. If you would like to join this group please contact me on 6644 5397. *Alysian Pender*

### UKELELE

Leonie Hayes will be starting this group in March. The group will meet on a fortnightly basis, every 2nd and 4th Wednesday afternoon from 1.30 to 4.00 pm. It will be held at the U3A rooms, commencing Wednesday 11 March. Expressions of interest will be taken at the March Jabberfest. Please see Pat Connelly or Leonie Hayes if you have any questions, as I will be away. *Alysian Pender*

## TUTOR OF THE MONTH

This month the spotlight falls on Tom Dennis.

Tom Dennis and computing classes for Grafton U3A have been running together for some ten years. In the early days, in order to have access to computers, classes were held at the Community College and also at the TAFE Campus. Later, mainly through the generosity of Westlawn Finance and the help of the Men's shed, pre-used computers were set up in the U3A rooms. Now the desk tops have gone and class participants are able to bring their own laptop or tablet. When I was first approached to conduct the classes I agreed on the proviso that two other members would join me, which brought on board David Abrahams and Carole Cairns.

In 2013, several U3A members requested classes in iPads. With no subject knowledge, I advertised the proposed course and waited! To the rescue came Don McLeod and classes have been popular. Now, somewhat 'tongue in cheek', you could say the leadership team of computing studies in Grafton U3A has undergone a metamorphosis from the three wise monkeys to the four musketeers. *Tom Dennis*

*The above article was written by Tom Dennis at my request. As a result, it does not reflect the wonderful contribution Tom has made to Grafton U3A. His caring/non-judgmental approach to students is much appreciated by those who attend. Tom is always there and manages to teach the most confused computer users (including me) to be successful and efficient. Many thanks Tom - a great asset to Grafton U3A. Maree Burrows*

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## IN MEMORIAM

The death occurred on Sunday 22 February of Rob Warrilow. You may recall his wife Judy (David Abrahams' sister) died last year, so David and family are having to endure two sad times quite close together. On behalf of all U3A members I wish to offer sincere sympathy to David and family. *Maree Burrows*

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## MORNING TEA ROSTER

Additional volunteers are still being sought to assist with morning tea clearing up at Jabberfest. A signing sheet will be available at March Jabberfest for those who would like to assist. The more volunteers available, the less everyone is required. A huge thank you to those who are already on the roster and continue to be available. *Maree Burrows*

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## CHRISTMAS LUNCHEON PHOTOS

If you attended the Christmas Luncheon and would like a copy of any photos taken that include you, please see me at the **April** Jabberfest to provide me with your email address. I cannot print hard copies for members. *Fiona Duggan*

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## MEW MEMBERS



We warmly welcome Graeme Watchirs, Janice Balenzuela, Terry Byrne, George & Denise Christian, Peter Desborough & Helen Nickless, Lorraine Grayson, Kerry Hughes, Paul & Eija White, Jan Jarvis, Joy

Ricketts, Trevor Smith and Lois Simpson. We trust that you enjoy your association with Grafton U3A and avail of the courses/interest groups available.

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## SENIORS WEEK EVENT - GRAFTON LIBRARY

**Peter Yeldham – Author Visit**

**Promoting his new book "Above the Fold"**

"The second World War is raging in the Pacific.....Luke yearns to be a journalist...but the pursuit of his dream will keep him away from Australia and Claudia with surprising consequences for them both."

Refreshments provided bookings essential 66410100

**Thursday 19 March 5.30pm for a 6.00pm start**

**Don't miss out on this great opportunity**

**Book your spot today.**

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**The Art of Belonging**  
NSW Network Conference  
April 29 – May 1 2015

U3A Southern Highlands extends a warm welcome to ALL U3As.

- ✓ Keynote Speaker Hugh Mackay
- ✓ Tony Whittingham on E-Learning
- ✓ Sarogini Millott on Insurance
- ✓ Wonderful Workshops
- ✓ Great before & after Activities.
- ✓ Help Celebrate our 20<sup>th</sup> Birthday

The Conference aims to be enjoyable, informative and to provide the opportunity for the exchange of ideas.

**CONTACT:**  
The Conference Secretary  
P.O. Box 421  
Bowral 2576  
Ph: (02) 9990 6650  
Email: [admin@sohiu3a.org.au](mailto:admin@sohiu3a.org.au)  
Web: [www.sohiu3a.org.au](http://www.sohiu3a.org.au)

## IMPORTANT NOTE

**The April edition of the Jabber Journal will be produced by David Abrahams in my absence. All submissions for that edition should be directed to him at [dga@hotmail.net.au](mailto:dga@hotmail.net.au) or 6642 2540.**

**Closing date for the April edition will be 30 March 2015.**

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