



JABBER JOURNAL

GRAFTON U3A INC. (UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE)

PO Box 688 Grafton NSW 2460

www.grafton.u3anet.org.au

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

DECEMBER 2016



Another Day, another Month, another Year,
another Smile, another Tear, another Winter,
A Summer too, But there will never be Another You!

May Lovely, Happy Times
Decorate this Time of the Season.
May Warm, Special Memories brighten your New Year,
may the Wonder of Christmas be with you Forever.





NOVEMBER JABBERFEST WRAP



Alysan Pender opened November Jabberfest welcoming 86 attendees with a special welcome to new member Bill Greenlees and Sue Heath, a returning member. She then congratulated organisers on the staging of the just concluded and very successful 2016 Jacaranda Festival. before providing brief updates on the following interest groups – Guitar, Ukulele and Good Vibes before informing members that the first block of Great Tours: Greece and Turkey will be running up to calendar year end. Members were also alerted to the range of programs available from the Great Courses. Brian Carter then narrated an amusing tale titled “A little misquote from the Bible to put a smile on your face” which will be printed in the February edition of the Journal. David Abrahams then presented an overview of the recent innovation distributed to members - the In Case Emergency Card, which when completed provides emergency personnel with safe access to your list of emergency notifications and other critical information in the event of a crisis. Bruce Carle then addressed members regarding the need for fees for Jabberfest and courses to be increased as set out in his article in the November Jabber Journal. Following morning tea Nick Reeve addressed the meeting on Climate Change, the effect on participants of the ending of the Solar Bonus Scheme and the emergence of Enova Community Energy Limited operating from the Clarence Valley to the Tweed Coast. Alysan then introduced guest presenter Dorothy Hillis who provided an entertaining talk on her less than terrific visit to Greece detailing her misadventures. From the Chios to Lesvos inter-island ferry trip, Mithymna, Mytilene, Thessaloniki, buses and their rude drivers, coach tours, mountain villages, castles and “authentic” Greek restaurants (not!). However, after another forgettable ferry trip the journey ended on a high as she made her way, in the pre-dawn hours, up a winding cobbled lane to a railway station to join a very slow train to Yugoslavia. A group of backpackers swooped on her and a wonderful Aussie voice yelled “come on Nana!” and she and her trolley containing her backpack were transported to the station and onto the train. Whilst her Eurail pass entitled her to a first class seat, she did not have the heart to abandon her newly acquired children who had adopted her with whom she shared their supplies of bread, cheese, fruit and wine and she was “Nana” to them all. This cosmopolitan crowd of Aussies, Dutch, German, French, Scandinavians and Americans played cards, sang and swapped life stories as they crossed Yugoslavia. She had fallen in love with them all by the time they reached the Austrian border and they departed to “do” Salzburg. Dorothy was thanked for her address and presented with a memento created by artisans at the Mens Shed. The lucky door prize was won by Dorothy Hillis. Alysan reminded members of the Christmas luncheon to be held on 5 December at 12 noon before closing the meeting.



PRESIDENT’S LETTER... Dear Members



Having just returned from cruising around Australia, I find that Christmas is just around the corner and our end of year U3A celebration is almost here.

Were you aware that we are one of the few U3As that has a Jabberfest as well as having many small interest groups. Jabberfest provides a wonderful opportunity to meet members we don’t know as well as to hear many interesting talks. Perhaps you are like me and find it awkward to attend groups when we don’t know anyone, but it doesn’t take long to make new friends and it is really worthwhile as I have found. Please don’t be afraid to volunteer to help out when required as it is also a great way

to help us keep costs down and meet others.

I would like to wish everyone a happy and safe Christmas and also to thank the great committee I have to support me. If you are not attending the Christmas luncheon, I look forward to seeing you at our next Jabberfest in February 2017.

David Thompson



Phone – 6644 7782

COURSES/GROUPS UPDATE

MAHJONG

Congratulations to Roz Chessell (pictured) who recently played a magnificent Mahjong hand with a score in excess of 28,000. Magnificent memorable Mahjong!!! Sue Hereford-Ashley



a lot of money but he just loves his guinea pigs. Is there anyone that could house his accommodation bank and allow him to be able to access the bank to clean & feed his guinea pigs?

If you might be able to assist, please contact Bruce Carle 0409225536. Thank you.

UNSOLVED MYSTERIES

This group has been operating since late last year and has proved to be a very successful addition to Grafton U3A. It began with a few hiccups in getting the content just right, finding that some members were not too keen on crime/gory stuff so we have concentrated on other subjects that are a mystery for numerous reasons. We have looked at Spontaneous Human Combustion/Appearances/Disappearances/news on Loch Ness Monster/new findings on missing Beaumont Children/Ghost appearances experienced by members and finished the year with some Mysteries with a Christmas Theme. Members of the group enjoy a high level of participation bringing forward many very interesting ideas. We begin with some reading or view a DVD followed by discussion time, which is the highlight of the afternoon. We meet once a month on the last Thursday at 2pm at U3A Rooms and additional participants would be most welcome. If you would like to join, just call me on 66421640 or email magar1@inet.net.au Maree Burrows

MENS SHED



The Men's Shed was recently engaged to build a guinea pig bank (pictured) for Michael who lives with his parents and has been told he can't keep them there anymore. As a result, he is spending a lot of money having this accommodation built for his guinea pigs. He is moving them out of town and doesn't have



THE CURIOUS TALE OF THE MISSING TABBY

My cat took off up Bent Street South Grafton one evening as if the devil himself was after him. Abbey, a grey and black de-sexed and microchipped male tabby with four white feet a collar and name tag. As there was no sign of him over the next couple of days, my daughter had flyers printed and we distributed them in letter boxes in the area. Over the following few days my daughter and I walked up and down streets knocking on doors, meeting some very nice people while travelling along some streets I had never heard of! I received a call from a lady saying "I have seen your tabby with four white feet at the end of Tyson Street a few blocks from home". My daughter and I arrived there but there was no sign of him. I then met a very nice chap called Bill who said there had been a tabby cat with four white feet sleeping in his garden lately at night. He suggested I get a trap from the pound and he would catch him for me which he did - hooray! But is it him? He is a tabby with four white feet but no collar – he had probably lost it as three weeks had passed since he went missing. The next day I take him to the Vet to check him over. The Vet picks him up and exclaims "you have someone else's cat! This one is not desexed – best take him back". Oh dear I had overlooked the obvious! Two weeks later I receive a call from our lovely U3A member Dorothy Hillis of Powell Street Grafton "I have your cat". No I exclaimed, he has been lost in South Grafton. She replied "Well, I have his tag with your phone number and I rang you."



Where had he been? How on earth did he cross the bridge? Perhaps, he hitched a ride in the back of a Ute? **Who knows – only the cat!!!** Hilda Smidt

THE MISSING TEN DOLLAR NOTE

Chip George worked for the Post Office and his job was to process all the mail that had illegible addresses. One day just before Christmas, a letter landed on his desk simply addressed in shaky handwriting: 'To God'. With no other clue on the envelope, George opened the letter and read:

Dear God,

I am a 93 year old widow living on the Aged Pension. Yesterday someone stole my purse. It had \$200 in it, which was all the money I had in the world and no pension due until after Christmas. Next week is Christmas and I had invited two of my friends over for Christmas lunch. Without that money, I have nothing to buy food with. I have no family to turn to, and you are my only hope. Can you please help me? Chip George was really touched, and being kind hearted, he put a copy of the letter up on the staff notice board at the main Fareham sorting office where he worked. The letter touched the other postmen and they all dug into their pockets and had a whip round. Between them they raised \$190. Using an officially franked Post Office envelope, they sent the cash on to the old lady, and for the rest of the day, all the workers felt a warm glow thinking of the nice thing they had done. Christmas came and went. A few days later, another letter simply addressed to 'God' landed in the Sorting Office. Many of the postmen gathered around while George opened the letter. It read,

Dear God,

How can I ever thank you enough for what you did for me? Because of your generosity, I was able to provide a lovely luncheon for my friends. We had a very nice day, and I told my friends of your wonderful gift - in fact we haven't gotten over it and even Father John, our parish priest, is beside himself with joy. By the way, there was \$10 missing. I think it must have been those thieving fellows at the Post Office.

George could not help musing on Oscar Wilde's quote:



'A good deed never goes unpunished'



NEW MEMBERS

We welcome new member Bill Greenlees as well as returning member Sue Heath. We trust that you enjoy your association with Grafton U3A and take the opportunity to avail of the various courses/interest groups on offer.

THANK YOU

I would like to say a special thank you to all the contributors to the Journal throughout 2016. The journal is very reliant on a constant supply of articles of interest and details of course and group activities to keep members informed. I am grateful for the support of the committee, course/group leaders, members and others. A special thank you to David Abrahams for his assistance during the year. *Editor*



OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD

Thank you to the donors of the shoeboxes which have now started their journey into the hands of children who have so little but now will receive, for many of them, their first ever gift. This year there were 2,322 shoeboxes from the NSW North Coast – a great result for 2,322 children.



MORNING TEA SUPER HEROES

Firstly, I want to thank all those wonderful people who have helped in the kitchen at Jabberfest, They selflessly help whenever I ask them and never complain about missing any of the guest speakers words of wisdom. I will name them all next year when I call for some new helpers. At this time, I would like to thank those who have always given more than has been asked for. First, there is Helen Daniels who looks after our rooms at Dougherty House. She collects the left-overs from Jabberfest and takes them to the rooms, buys heaps of biscuits on special and basically keeps an eye on everything. Then, additionally, in the super-hero class are Joan & Brian Carter, Frank Heppel and Warren Grant. Joan, Frank and Warren have been unwell lately and we wish them a speedy recovery. Finally, a thank you to Dennis Lane-Mullins, sadly gone from us now but warmly remembered. In January, I will mention the names of more wonderful helpers and invite more of you to join this great band of workers. Happy safe Christmas and a top New Year. *Mary-Lou Brown.*



EDITOR

Contributions to the Jabber Journal are always welcome. We reserve the right to edit or refuse material submitted for publication. Closing date for the February 2017 edition of the Journal is **Monday 30 January 2017.** Editor Dennis Kelly thehifields@bigpond.com

CONTACT