



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"

JUNE 2015

JABBERFEST * 10.00AM – 15 JUNE 2015

GUEST SPEAKERS – RICK PANKO AND KERRIE BIRCH

"PRACTICAL SUPPORT FOR SENIORS WISHING TO REMAIN IN THEIR OWN HOME"

GRAFTON COMMUNITY CENTRE – DUKE STREET GRAFTON

For most people, living as independently as you can in your own home as you age is what you want. But sometimes you might need some help with daily tasks that you can no longer manage as well on your own. For example, you might need help with home maintenance, such as changing light bulbs or mowing your lawn. You might also need aids and equipment, like a walking frame, to help you get around your home safely and easily or you might need help with tasks like dressing or preparing meals. As you get older, you may also need some level of nursing care to stay in your own home. Our guest presenters this month, Rick Panko and Kerrie Birch from Clarence Valley Council Care and Support Services will provide details of the range of services available, how one can access these services and the cost.



Rick Panko grew up in Saskatchewan, Canada and has always had a passion for helping people and has worked in the social work field for most of

his young life. He gained his Bachelors of Social Work at the University of Regina, Canada to enable him to continue helping people with mental health challenges and disabilities and was then employed as an Addiction Counsellor with Saskatchewan Health for over four years.

A few years ago, Rick emigrated with his wife and dog to Australia after gaining permanent residency and settled in Yamba where he was employed with the Clarence Valley Council as an Intake and Information Officer. Rick loves to travel and meet people from all different backgrounds and cultures and has recently returned from traveling throughout Thailand. He is particularly passionate about providing access to information for aged people in the Clarence Valley. Rick has recently completed the Care and Support Service Website and Facebook page.

Kerrie Birch is a Senior Programs Coordinator with Clarence Valley Council's Care & Support Services. She has over 30 years experience working in the human services sector including both



residential and community services settings. After leaving school she completed her Nursing Certificate in Disabilities and then continued working with people with disability in residential and day program services in Sydney and Newcastle for about 24 years. The birth of their first child and a desire for a sea change brought Kerrie and her family to the Clarence Valley where she has been working with people who are aging or have a disability and their families or carers across the Clarence Valley and whole Far North coast region.

INVITE A FRIEND TO JABBERFEST

The committee is asking all members to invite a friend to **JULY** Jabberfest. So, if you enjoy being a member of Grafton U3A, why not tell a friend and invite them to come along to **JULY** Jabberfest to see at first-hand what Grafton U3A is all about. A reminder will appear in the July edition of the Jabber Journal. It is hoped that the concept will become an annual event.

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK



As I typed this report for the June Journal, I stopped and looked – JUNE – Wow - almost half the year gone. There is definitely a change in the weather. Although the days are lovely and quite warm, early morning and nights are getting decidedly 'nippy'. I actually wore a scarf and beanie for my morning walk this week. Another reminder to ensure you have had a flu vaccine injection - very important and do keep warm – as the days get colder put on another layer of clothes. I think I just might be starting to sound like my mother – oh well I could do a lot worse.

As most of you would know, I am involved in 'Wraps with Love'. I do lots of organising of knitters in Grafton and my sister Alma Bailey looks after the Lower Clarence – as she lives in Yamba. Our very generous Men's Shed members give donations regularly to this charity and these funds are used to purchase wool for re-sale at a good price to our knitters and in some cases given. The wool is then made into rugs to warm people all over the world and I mention this as I have recently been asked whether we sent rugs to Nepal after the shocking earthquakes. I put the question to Wraps head office in Sydney and the lady in charge said "sadly, what we have done for Nepal is NOTHING". The reason being that the primitive roads there have been destroyed and the airport, which is usually used for all transport is just GONE and not even helicopters are able to land. Wraps with Love is advising its supporters to donate to reputable charities if they wish to help as there is food and other supplies available in Nepal but the volunteer workers need funds to supply it to the needy. Fortunately, 1500 rugs were sent to Nepal just before the disaster.

Mary-Lou Brown, our committee member who organises Jabberfest, recently informed me of the presenters she has booked for the remainder of the year and I am sure everyone will be very impressed with the calibre of the speakers. If anyone has a request for a speaker on a particular subject – we are always happy to listen.

Maree Burrows

MAY JABBERFEST – HOME SAFETY FOR SENIORS – SENIOR CONSTABLE DAVE FISH

The guest speaker for our May Jabberfest was Senior Constable Dave Fish, Crime Prevention Officer with the Coffs/Clarence Local Area Command. He commenced by providing a brief overview of the drug ICE, which has been the subject of concern for governments and local communities. Whilst only used by a small percentage of people, it can have an effect on the wider community. Its regular use can cause dependence and the need for ice just to undertake normal activities. There is no medical treatment with counselling being the only remedy. Senior Constable Fish then spoke to his topic of Home Safety for Seniors and provided insights into areas and actions relevant to ensuring our safety, particularly in our own homes. He provided practical tips under each of the following categories:

Personal safety

- ✓ Avoid walking alone
- ✓ Don't take short cuts through unfamiliar areas or badly lit places
- ✓ Secure handbags
- ✓ Avoid carrying large sums of money
- ✓ Have keys ready before getting into car or entering your home
- ✓ Keep cash valuables out of sight
- ✓ Report any suspicious activity

Home security/safety

- ✓ Fit locks to doors and windows
- ✓ Photograph, jewellery, video cameras etc
- ✓ Consider installing sensor lights or alarm systems
- ✓ Ensure there is good lighting around the house
- ✓ At the front door, have a peep hole or solid screen door
- ✓ Keep garage doors locked
- ✓ Have telephone programmed with emergency numbers
- ✓ Do not admit strangers to the house

Going away

- ✓ Arrange for mail to be collected
- ✓ Have a neighbour bring in empty garbage bins and park their car in your driveway

Property identification

- ✓ Make a list of property items including description, make, model and serial numbers. Photograph valuable items of jewellery etc

Con artists/cams

- ✓ Be on guard for strangers offering to do work at cut price rates. If unsure ask for licence details and contact the appropriate authority for verification
- ✓ Be aware of computer scams and phone enquiries asking for credit card details.

Following his presentation Senior Constable Fish responded to a series of questions from members before President Maree thanked him on behalf of the members and presented him with a creation created by the Mens Shed in appreciation. Copies of a brochure titled Home Safe were distributed to members together with fridge magnets containing useful information and emergency contacts.

COURSE/INTEREST GROUPS UPDATE

ARMCHAIR TRAVEL

The Armchair Travel presenter for 23 June is Mike Gillespie. Mike will take us through a tour from Paris to Rome in 2013, which included time in Avignon and the French Riviera; followed by several days in Tuscany and Umbria in Italy, sightseeing in Rome and a visit to Pompeii. Enquiries to Magda Mussared 6644 9309.

BUSHWALKING

The next bushwalk is scheduled for Monday 29 June. Our destination is Gibraltar Range NP for the loop walk of medium difficulty with a distance of approximately 7 – 8 kms through a delightfully diverse landscape, home for equally diverse birds. Meet at McDonald's car park at 7.45am for carpooling and 8am departure. Names can be added to sheet at Jabberfest or given to Peter Mears on 6643 5748. *Barbara Fahey*

HISTORY CLUB

Members writing their 'Life Story' have commented in class that they had little trouble writing up their early years as it was mostly from documents, parent's stories handed down, and snippets from their own memories. However, the years from young adulthood forward were becoming more difficult to write up. They wanted to be true to their interpretation of their own lives, but they did not want to start 'World War III', by writing what they really think about certain 'friends' and family members!

Robyn Higham and team are continuing with their project on Midwives and are keen to speak to people who have memories of Nurse Emily Reid, documents or information of Nurse Cahill of 'Cranbrook' Private Hospital Grafton c 1908-10 and Nurse Batty of South Grafton. Contact at Jabberfest or phone 6643 3196.

Peter Smyth is delighted with the assistance he has been given in recording the small shops and businesses in Grafton for the 1950's-1960's time period. He is seeking information about businesses being run by craftsmen from 'their back sheds', particularly furniture and iron craft. Contact at Jabberfest or phone 6642 1692.

All members are welcome to join the History Club on the 1st & 3rd Tuesday afternoons 2-4 pm (2nd & 16th June) U3A Rooms Dougherty House, Prince St Grafton. *Nola Mackey*

THE OTHER SIDE OF HISTORY – NOW ENDED

This course that is now completed comprised a very interesting series of lectures on the daily life of the poor, disabled, peasants, soldiers, women etc. stretching from Ancient Egypt to Medieval Europe. Many thanks to Vreni for starting this group and to Vanda for taking over leadership after Vreni moved from the district. *Alysan Pender*

MAHJONG

Members took time out recently to celebrate the 96th birthday of Joy Henderson. We take the opportunity on behalf of members to wish Joy many happy returns.

Photo by Peter Sinfield.



MENS SHED

Been to I-Scream lately and sat in the new booths crafted at the Men's Shed? Another example of the variety and quality of work carried on there - major craftsman Terry Byrne – table tops and upholstery contracted out. *David Abrahams*



23 GREATEST SOLO PIANO WORKS – NEW

This new course running from 10.00 to 12.00 noon on Friday mornings will commence on Friday 19 June. The course comprises 24 sessions delivered through the Great Courses series by Professor Robert Greenberg. During 2014 and early this year, we had conducted a course titled The 30 Greatest Orchestral Works, also delivered by Professor Greenberg, who proved to be an informative and entertaining lecturer. It proved to be an excellent series, which introduced group members to some beautiful music and significant composers.

Leader of the new group will be Peter Roland, ably assisted by Warren Grant and Vanda Geremia. Expressions of interest for this group will be taken at June Jabberfest. For Enquiries, contact Peter or Vanda.

MEMBERSHIP – Important!

Enclosed with your journal, for those members yet to pay their annual subs, is a renewal notice (attached to email) for your attention. Your response will be welcomed. If you wish to discontinue membership, a call to Carole Cairns 6642 4615 or a note to that effect would be appreciated - thanks.



TUTOR OF THE MONTH NANCYE EGGINS – TAI CHI

Nancye has been with Grafton U3A from the very beginning, being one of the people who attended the first meeting convened by Mary Carlton. She was a member of the inaugural committee, which set the foundations for the organisation we enjoy today. Over the years, she has had a “finger in a few pies” but at the moment is involved with running The History Club in conjunction with Nola Mackey, and also the Tai Chi group.

The History Club meets at the U3A rooms every 1st and 3rd Tuesdays of the month. Members of this group are working on various projects: -

- Writing your Life Story;
- History of early midwives in Grafton and South Grafton;
- Collecting information on small shops and businesses in the area; and
- Conducting Interviews.

Nancye describes herself more as a facilitator than a tutor of the Tai Chi group. Vreni Voigt started the group, which has been going for at least 7 years. Nancye, with the help of Raelee Baird and Ann Nicholl, took over as leader when Vreni could no longer attend.

The Group meets at the South Grafton Club at 11.30am on Tuesday mornings following the Meditation Group. The session lasts for approximately 30 minutes.

There are many styles of Tai Chi. The style that the group follows is QIGONG – Shibashi which is a set of 18 energy techniques – exercises – for strengthening internal health and developing Qi (Chi) energy. The exercises are based on Tai Chi movement and principles. Qigong Shibashi works to aid relaxation, increase the body's flexibility, improve abdominal breathing and focus the mind in meditation. It is also an excellent introduction to Tai Chi, laying the foundation for good posture, deep breathing, and physical and mental relaxation.

Members who attend regularly will attest to all these benefits.

NOTE TO COURSE/GROUP LEADERS

Pat Connolly has been able to make contact with a number of the group leaders in recent times. He has indicated that if there are any problems or queries in your group to please contact him on 6642 6695 or email 007connolly@gmail.com

NEW MEMBERS – welcome!

This month we welcome Tricia Spitzmacher and Lesley Grebert. We trust that you enjoy your association with Grafton U3A and avail of the various courses/interest groups available.

EMAIL DELIVERY OF JABBER JOURNAL

If you have access to email but still receive the Journal by post, please consider assisting us by choosing the email option in future either by marking your membership renewal accordingly or notifying Carole Cairns (Secretary) – 6642 4615 or email cicairns@inet.net.au Not only is the printing and postage cost reduced, it also lessens the work of committee members at mail-out times. An additional bonus is that all photographs appear in living colour.

GET IN THE RHYTHM

June 1-7 is Heart Rhythm Week with people being urged to become more aware of arrhythmias and learn how to perform a quick life-saving action – **check their pulse**. Arrhythmias are responsible for between 23,000 and 33,000 sudden cardiac arrests each year, many of which could be avoided with greater awareness of the risks and symptoms. The most common form, atrial fibrillation, affects 240,000 Australians and increases the risk of stroke fivefold. How to take your pulse:

- Have clock handy and sit for a few minutes so you have a resting pulse rate.
- Hold your left or right arm out with palm up.
- Place index and middle fingers on wrist at base of thumb to locate pulse.
- Count for 30 seconds and double it to calculate your heart rate in beats per minute.

When testing a pulse, it is important to measure the number of beats per minute, the regularity and the strength of each beat.

If the number of beats is outside the healthy range (60-100 beats per minute at rest) or irregular, a visit to the doctor is encouraged.

CLOSING DATE – EDITOR CONTACT

Contributions to the Jabber Journal are always welcome. We reserve the right to edit or refuse material submitted for publication. Closing date for July edition is **Monday 29 June 2015**.

Editor Dennis Kelly thehifields@bigpond.com