



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"

NOVEMBER 2016

JABBERFEST-10AM 14 NOVEMBER 2016-GRAFTON COMMUNITY CENTRE

HILLIS IN HELLES OR DOROTHY IN GREECE

A hilarious account of a less than terrific visit there by Dorothy Hillis

Our November guest speaker, U3A member Dorothy Hillis, will provide an entertaining account of her misadventures on a visit to Greece. Dorothy is well-known to us all from her presentation describing her sailing adventures in the Pacific around Papua-New Guinea, New Britain and the Solomon Islands with partner Ralph Junger. In addition, she has often recited the odd poem or amusing story at Jabberfest. She has been writing since childhood including nine plays, seven of which have been performed by the Grafton Theatre Company including a comic but sensitive drama about seniors set in Grafton. She currently tutors the Creative Writing group.

Dorothy was born in Wales and came to Australia in 1968. She has degrees in Education and World Literature and has worked with handicapped children in Special Education roles. She has three children, six grandchildren and five great-grandchildren. *Mary-Lou Brown*



CHRISTMAS PARTY – **Final opportunity to book**

Date: Monday 5 December 2016

Where: Grafton District Services Club, Mary Street Grafton

Time: 12 noon.

Cost: \$25.50

Details:

- ✓ There will be two courses with tea and coffee available. The bar will be open for you to purchase your own drinks.
- ✓ Names and money will be collected at **November** Jabberfest from Carole Cairns. **Tickets will not be available on the day of the luncheon.**

Do put your thinking caps on for your "Best Dressed" Christmas outfit. There has been a high standard set in past years. *Fiona Duggan*



PRESIDENT'S LETTER... Dear Members



It was great to have Greg Butcher as our guest speaker to share his life Journey, but, I must admit I almost felt exhausted listening to the range of activities in which he is involved. As Maree Burrows said how is it, that he hasn't been head hunted by the talent scouts from the city. How lucky we are to have him helping our talented children and adults in the different schools to experience playing in groups or as an orchestra such as the Proms or the Anzac Day concerts. Not only has this been a boon for Grafton but these events have raised in excess of \$26,000 for Grafton charities. A point not mentioned by Greg is the fact that he is also Secretary of Grafton Midday Rotary club and is very active in its activities. Thank you Greg and to Gladys for her story on "how to give a cat a pill". Alysyan Pender will be the November

Chair followed by the Christmas Party in December at the Grafton Services Club so get out your colourful clothes. Please note that Fiona will be away at the November meeting so Carol Cairns will be the point of contact for tickets and payments.

Due to the non-appearance of a number of members who had booked for the recent informal luncheon at the 5 Mile Hotel, U3A had to pay for those meals so the committee has decided that in future a minimum non-refundable fee of \$10 will be required for such events. For those attending the events, the fee will be deducted from the cost of the meal etc.

Following a request from the Lower Clarence River U3A President, the committee has agreed that if space is available in the interest groups members of either U3A can attend one group of the other U3A per year. We will need to ascertain the groups and leader details for each U3A.

David Thompson

Phone – 6644 7782

OCTOBER JABBERFEST WRAP

President David Thompson opened the meeting with a welcome to the 83 members present. After providing details of the upcoming committee meeting, he introduced Gladys Andersen who narrated a highly amusing tale titled "Giving a cat a pill". Social events coordinator Fiona Duggan then briefed members on details for the end of year Christmas Luncheon to be held at noon on 5 December at the Grafton District Services Club. Course coordinator Alysyan Pender then provided updates on a number of the courses and interest groups. Following the traditional cuppa Jabberfest coordinator Mary-Lou Brown introduced guest speaker Greg Butcher. With the use of slides Greg took the audience on a journey from the beginnings of his musical career in the RAAF, initially as a trombonist, through musical performances, both nationally and internationally, study at UNE for a Bachelor of Arts (Music) and freelance musical undertakings culminating in the founding in 2014 of the Clarence Valley Orchestra and Chorus as its artistic director, conductor and composer. Performances to date have raised in excess of \$25,000 for local charities. Following his presentation, Greg took a series of questions from the audience before being presented with a creation from the Mens Shed artisans. The lucky door prize was won by Marie McKenzie. Members were reminded that the next meeting would be 10.00am on 14 November and President David then closed the meeting.

NEW MEMBER

We welcome new member – Lorraine Goodbar. We trust that you enjoy your association with Grafton U3A and take the opportunity to avail of the various courses/interest groups on offer.

Impressions of Wynn Lee

The following tribute to Wynn Lee was recited by Fiona Duggan at Jabberfest on behalf of the Creative Writers Group of which Wynn was an active member.

*Sedate yet holding a myriad of stories in her mind.
Wynn, lovely smile, moving on, how many stories sadly left untold.
Harsh early life, much reason to complain yet accepted with grace.
Small silver hair, wise eyes, clear soul expressed in clear prose.
A walking stick revealed he age, her mind revealed a gracious life.
Scary, funny witty tales bravely birthed in a time of war.
A wisp of grace. You left me. Footprints, a smile, your stories of life.*

By Sharon, John, Dorothy and Fiona. U3A writers group

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A letter to all financial members

I have now been the Treasurer of Grafton U3A for twenty eight months and see my position to administer or manage the financial assets and liabilities of the Incorporation. I am responsible for the receipt, care & disbursement of monies and the reporting of same to the committee each month. I also see my role as seeking ways of saving money where necessary and utilising members funds to the best of our ability.

At times, I need to make suggestions to the committee to make changes. In recent times, we have reduced our postage costs with "Print Post" (a better rate), cancelled the projector screen (not being used) at Jabberfest, printing less Jabber Journals and spending less in general where practical. On the basis of ensuring that costs are met, I have made a recommendation to the committee that entry to Jabberfest be increased for the following reason:

- **For the 2014/15 year** the shortfall in meeting our costs was **\$ 323.00**
- **For the 2015/16 year** the shortfall in meeting our costs was **\$ 486.00**
- **For the 4 months of the 2016/17 year** the shortfall is **\$ 393.00**

When I took on the role of Treasurer, the cost for Jabberfest was \$ 165.50, which increased last year to \$174.30 and now has risen to \$194.25 each meeting. As stated above, we are already at a loss of almost \$ 400, just four months into the current financial year. In 2014/15 we met our costs on only two occasions, in 2015/16 we met our costs only three times and currently in 2016/17, July was \$ 30 in arrears to cost, September was \$107 in arrears to cost and this month October we were \$ 50 in arrears to cost. That's not good management. I have requested to the Committee that **Jabberfest entry as of 1 January 2017 be \$ 4.00**, which was voted upon and accepted. I would point out that it is not the cost of a cup of coffee or tea and biscuits that you are paying for but the usage of the Community Centre and its facilities for your benefit.

I also suggested to the Committee that we lease room 7 in addition to rooms 8 & 9 in Dougherty House in Prince Street as this would allow us to expand and also utilise our assets more efficiently by paying rent for a lesser number of premises. I have signed a new lease with Matt Dougherty through First National for the three rooms. The committee applied for and received a grant for two new remote air conditioners for rooms 8 & 9 and just recently we had new carpet laid in room 7. We will also be putting up new blinds in room 7 shortly. With the assistance of the Mens Shed, we will be placing a locked box within a table in one of the rooms where tutors will be able to leave the fees after their classes and not have to take any monies home - more secure. The rent has increased from \$184 a month to \$715 a month. As a result I am urging you, the member to help increase patronage of our rooms at Dougherty House or look at more new groups to start. I again asked the committee to increase the fees for use of Dougherty House rooms **as of 1 January 2017 to be \$3.00 per class**, which was voted upon and accepted.

I would like to apply for another grant to upgrade the kitchen facilities to make it more inviting for you the member to use. I believe that since there has not been any increases in fees over the last 5-10 years it may seem a lot to be hit with these changes, but it will help to put us in a better position in the future.

I leave you with the following from **Charles Dickens – "Great Expectations"** Mr Micawber's famous, and oft quoted, recipe for happiness.

"Annual income twenty pounds, annual expenditure nineteen pounds nineteen shillings and six pence.
Result - **happiness**."

Annual income twenty pounds, annual expenditure twenty pounds nought & six pence.
Result - **misery**"

Bruce Carle
Treasurer
Grafton U3A Incorporated

COURSES/GROUPS UPDATE

COURSE NEWS – Alysan Pender

As Jacaranda festivities continue, we are slowly winding down towards year-end. Changes and updates to courses follow:

ARMCHAIR TRAVEL

Our final meeting for the year will be held at the U3A rooms at Dougherty House on Tuesday 22 November. Debbie Handley will be talking about her travels in Ecuador - the Galapagos and Amazon areas. It promises to be very interesting.

CREATIVE WRITING

Activity has now concluded for the year.

GERMAN

This course is now discontinued. Thanks to Ralf Junger for his tireless efforts over these past years.

INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION

This course is now completed and was much enjoyed by those who attended.

THE POWER OF MYTH - NEW

This course comprises a series of interviews between Joseph Campbell and journalist Bill Moyes and is described as "A journey into mankind's search for meaning". It commenced on 28 October running for six weeks until 2 December at the U3A Rooms from 10.00 – 12 noon.

NEXT YEAR

Woodwork for women will hopefully be offered early in 2017 – watch Jabber Journal for details.

Our lovely new room adjacent to the current U3A rooms is slowly being organised and will hopefully be fully functioning by next year. Carpeting and painting is now complete and extra chairs are on order. We will probably also organise a few extra tables. There are still a few matters to be organised - TV, DVD and computer connections, whiteboard and vertical blinds. We now have less clutter in the old rooms, too. Hooray!

COURSE NEWS – Nick Reeve

CLIMATE CHANGE and the end of the NSW Solar Bonus Scheme

Global average temperatures continue to rise. The last three years have each set new records with each successive year higher than the year before and the world-wide concentration of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere has now reached an unprecedented 400 parts per million.

There is some good news - the level of global emissions of CO₂ has fallen. On the other hand, since the abolition of the carbon tax in 2013, Australia's Greenhouse Gas Emissions from fossil fuels (power generation and transport) have increased, by over 3%

(from 2013 to 2015) and are projected to increase a further 17% above 2000 levels by 2020.

Australia's pledges to reduce emissions are judged by Climate Action Tracker to be 'inadequate' and if all nations followed our practice by 2100 the Globe would be warmer by 3 to 4 degrees centigrade. Locally, there is some encouraging news. A number of states and local councils have adopted progressive policies with more ambitious targets, both to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions and move towards clean energy. In the Clarence Valley, many roofs can be seen covered with solar panels. Now these 'solar citizens' need to make new arrangements as the NSW Solar Bonus Scheme comes to an end on 31 December 2016. Those on the scheme should have received a letter from the NSW Department of Industry, Resources and Energy pointing to:

- A. The possible need to change your electricity meter, and
- B. The need to consider your electricity usage and the terms of your contract with your electricity supplier.

They refer to their website:

www.resourcesandenergy.nsw.gov.au/energy-consumers/solar/solar-bonus-scheme or to phone Service NSW on 1300 767 955. The website explains the difference between 'gross metering' and 'net metering' and the way the 'feed-in-tariff' will be affected by the ending of the scheme. In future you will only be paid the difference (net amount) of electricity exported to the grid, so if you generate more than you use you will be paid the new, reduced, feed-in-tariff of between 4 to 6 cents per kilowatt hour for the excess (depending on your supplier).

THE GREAT COURSES

These half hour lectures by top level university professors have provided the material for many of the courses offered to U3A members over the years. The comprehensive range covers everything from the arts and science, including history, literature, music and travel, psychology, philosophy, maths, languages, photography, astronomy and much else besides.

All the courses come up 'on sale' from time to time, at very affordable prices. It is worth looking at the catalogue of courses on the website: www.thegreatcourses.com.au or www.shopgreatcourses.com.au to see if anything interests you that you might be prepared to use as material for a U3A course or interest group. Catalogues can also be seen on the Courses desk at Jabberfests.

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 the December edition of the Journal is **Monday 21 November 2016**. Editor Dennis Kelly thehifields@bigpond.com