

**JABBERFEST - 10:00AM 19 JUNE 2023
NEW LIFE CHURCH CENTRE – ARTHUR STREET**

SESSION 1

SURPRISE FUN HALF HOUR



Fiona Duggan will be hosting this session where groups of 5 or 6 members will be given a real word, the meaning of which they are unlikely to understand, to use in writing a story otherwise known as "And Now For Something Completely Different – A Short Story". So, remember to bring a pen and join us to participate in what promises to be a **Surprise Fun Half Hour**.

SESSION 2

THE WAR ON CANE TOADS – ANNETTE COOK - CLARENCE LANDCARE



We, as members of the public, are at the forefront of this war. Our guest speaker today, Annette Cook – Project Officer Clarence Landcare, will provide an update as to the locations of the current battlefronts and the circumstances that have helped them migrate there. Toads are moving ever closer to our area if not already here. Annette will explain how to identify them, (don't want to confuse them with the natives!), what they need to breed, their ideal habitat and their differing behavior

from other frogs and toads. As they are toxic consideration needs to be applied to handling and so various collection and disposal methods will be explained. Have you ever taken part in a toad hunt? Kids are very good spotters. Do you know how to toad proof your property and what to do if you spot one? These important questions will be covered.

By way of background. some years ago, Annette packed her 4WD and embarked on a two-and-a-half-year trip around Australia, an extensive discovery tour to acquire a greater appreciation and understanding of Australia's diverse environment and a determination to contribute to its protection. Her subsequent academic pursuits and employment history are an indication of that commitment.

She has guided and operated camping and ecological tours in the Northern Territory and Kimberley region in Western Australia, and day tours in the Daintree and western Tasmanian World Heritage areas. Client groups represented a diverse range of cultural and professional backgrounds. She was privileged to work with indigenous groups in remote communities, enabling her to learn first-hand about indigenous culture and their connection with country. As a research assistant, research student, and more recently as a research scientist I have conducted research in remote locations and been responsible for the planning and logistical coordination of projects. Much of my research has focused on the threatened northern quoll *Dasyurus hallucatus* in the Kimberley and Pilbara regions in Western Australia and the Northern Territory. As project officer with Clarence Landcare her current focus is on cane toad control and public education.

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Good afternoon, everyone.



Here we are approaching the sixth month, almost half way through our U3A year and definitely starting to feel the chill of winter. Suddenly it's time to gather wood for the fire and rediscover the joy of the electric blanket. How does the year go by so quickly? I hope you enjoyed our Jabberfest in May. I enjoyed Greg Crompton's talk about the significance of wood in the history of mankind. But I continue to be concerned that we are not treating our forests with the respect they deserve – we have lost so much forest cover in just 230 years of European settlement here, to the detriment of so many of our precious native animals, and the land itself. I have never been a fan of clear felling for the sake of "development" and wonder if we will ever come to our senses.

In our first Jabberfest session, our speaker from Connect You Too gave us valuable information about the Community Transport options in the Clarence Valley, particularly in relation to medical appointments. Only a few days after that Jabberfest talk I was suddenly told I had to attend Grafton Hospital for Day Surgery at 7.15 am. I wasn't allowed to drive for 24 hours after the procedure and I knew how popular I would be if I asked any of my Grafton friends to pop out to collect me at Southgate at about 6.30am on a cold morning. So, I contacted the Community Transport people, they agreed to organise a car to collect me (for a modest cost) and all went to plan! Isn't it amazing when a plan comes together? It is indeed an excellent service they offer.

At our June Jabberfest the guest speaker will be Annette Cook, from Clarence Landcare, who will be talking about Cane toads. They are such a blight on the Australian landscape, with no natural predators here to keep them in check. When I was living in Far North Queensland, in a typical old house open to the elements, they would hop gaily around our downstairs living area. AAARGH!!

Now it's only 2 months until our AGM in August. At least two of the current committee members are now at the stage of counting the days until they're off the chain. Who will replace them? We have a committee which operates quite well, I think, with everybody making a contribution, and not too many time-consuming discussions. We have only one Committee meeting per month, plus Jabberfest, and need people alive and thinking who could contribute to our little band.

I'll look forward to seeing you all in June. Can't wait to learn more about cane toads!

Alysan Pender

AFTERNOON TEA – REMEMBER WHEN COTTAGE MUSEUM

Sunday, a lovely warm sunny day for our 10 members who enjoyed a wonderful guided tour of the property by our very knowledgeable hostess Linda walking and talking us through a wonderful trip down memory lane to the times of yesteryear highlighted by extensive displays of memorabilia. Following the tour, we were greeted with a lovely Devonshire tea prepared by co-host Michael. A truly memorable afternoon with thanks to wonderful hosts Lindy and Michael.



COURSES AND INTEREST GROUPS update – ALYSAN PENDER

BIRD WATCHING – The birdwatching group held its first outing in April, which proved to be a most enjoyable morning in the outdoors. We will conduct another outing on Wednesday, 7th June. Meet at McDonald's car park at 7.30am.

SINGING AROUND THE PIANOLA –The first session of this group was held on 19th March and was enjoyed by those members in attendance. We hope to offer another meeting at Harry's house late in July, date to be advised.

ART GALLERY VISITS – We held our second Art Gallery visit on Thursday 25th May. The morning session included an Artist's Talk, which proved to be most interesting. It is intended to continue to attend the Artist's Talk at future exhibitions. Our next visit to the Art Gallery will probably be in late July, date to be advised.

ARMCHAIR TRAVEL - Alas we are forced to cancel our June and July Armchair Travel groups due to lack of willing speakers. We hope to have a speaker for August.

500 GROUP – This group has decided to relocate to the home of Carmel Easterbrook, due to the elephantine thumping from the ballet studio upstairs. It will remain as a U3A group, with a reduced fee of \$2 per session. It will be commencing at 12.00 noon on Tuesday afternoons from Tuesday, 6th June.

Enquiries: Alysan Pender, Course Coordinator, ph 0447270997

PLEASE NOTE: (1) ALL OF OUR GROUPS (INCLUDING THOSE LISTED ABOVE) WOULD WELCOME ADDITIONAL MEMBERS.
PLEASE NOTE: (2) IF YOU WISH TO START ATTENDING A GROUP, PLEASE CONTACT THE GROUP LEADER AS A COURTESY BEFORE TURNING UP.

NEWS FROM THE GROUPS

“SINGING AROUND THE PIANOLA”

A small gathering of 9, including Bev Dowell (the original Pianola owner), warbled their way through quite a few of the more popular rolls. There were some teething problems as there is a real technique in pumping those pedals. An Intermission was called and afternoon tea was enjoyed, (Warren expressed his like for 'Australian Afternoon Tea'). Playing was continued before the party finally broke up. A very pleasant afternoon with everyone contributing vocally. An avenue for future recitals hopefully will see more participants. *Harry Jones.*

UPCOMING EVENTS OF INTEREST

FRIENDS OF GRAFTON GALLERY ANNUAL WINTER SOLSTICE SOUP DAY

This event is set down for Sunday 18 June 2023. The cost is \$35.00 payable online. For further information, contact FoGG on 6643 4044 or email friendsofgraftongallery@gmail.com

2023-2024 MEMBERSHIP FEES are now able to be paid since 1 May 2023. Fees: \$35.00 a single \$60.00 a double.

Complete the form at the following link and then pay online.

https://grafton.u3anet.org.au/?page_id=1182 Electronic Payments can be made to:

- Account Name: Grafton U3A
- BSB Number: 637 000
- Account Number: 780 236 035



Annual
Membership

HAVE YOU GIVEN ANY THOUGHT TO SERVING ON THE COMMITTEE?

- As you are aware Grafton U3A Inc. is a voluntary, non-profit association. Like U3A groups worldwide, Grafton U3A has the philosophy of engaging members as volunteers to fulfil all the management, administrative, organizational and tutoring tasks necessary for its effective and successful operation.
- The management role of U3A is undertaken by your committee, without which the organisation is unable to function. Your committee comprises a four-person executive and seven additional members with various responsibilities.
- At the upcoming Annual General Meeting to be held in August, several vacancies will need to be filled as a number of the current committee, after considerable service, have indicated that they will not be re-nominating for the upcoming year.
- The committee is therefore in need of new blood to bring fresh ideas to the table. Membership of the committee is not an onerous task, but is very fulfilling with each member having a set area of responsibility. The members of Grafton U3A as a group have extensive experience in many fields from their working lives and serving on the committee offers an opportunity to utilize those skills and ideas for the benefit of all members of Grafton U3A. So please do give this opportunity to nominate your serious consideration.

MAY JABBERFEST WRAP

Another very interesting Jabberfest on Monday 8th with President Alysan bringing us all up to date with regard to the various programs as well as other matters of interest such as the Arthritis seminar on 16th May and the Stroke Foundation's blood pressure testing and dementia research. Alysan then introduced Rebecca Spence from the Connect You Too Community Transport organisation advising of the various transport services available to members. Transport door to door from home to hospital and return for day surgery or for return home after hospitalization. It is essential to make a booking to receive these services, which are available at a very reasonable charge. For example, a return trip from Grafton to Lismore Base Hospital door to door would cost \$35.00. For ongoing treatment requiring trips to Lismore, Coffs Harbour, Ballina and the Gold Coast such services are available with the patient also having access to IPTAAS (the NSW Government's **I**solated **P**atients **T**ravel and **A**ccommodation **A**ssistance **S**cheme) to defray costs. The services do not operate on Sundays. The organisation has 17 vehicles and with volunteers has approximately 40 drivers available. Their office is located at Unit 1 134 Jubilee Street Townsend and the phone number for bookings is 6645 3200. Community transport is also available for Social Groups.

Following the morning tea break Alysan introduced guest presenter Greg Crompton who spoke on the topic of The History of Wood Technology outlining the uses of wood in our culture from the early stone ages to present times. The first known use of wood as a tool was as a handle for a stone axe about one and a half million years ago. Later wood was shaped into a totem pole for an ancient tribe and then the development of actual farming of trees for use as timber. Some five thousand years ago Egyptians and the Chinese had found many uses for wood with a great example of the numerous uses being the discovery of the differing artefacts uncovered in the tomb of Tutankhamen. Trees were hollowed out to become canoes while fishing boats were and continue to be made of wood being held together using no nails or glues. Buildings and temples built of wood have the inherent quality of being able to survive such disasters as earthquakes whereas buildings of stone crumble under such an impact. Over a thousand years back large ships were constructed from timber and enabled the discovery of distant lands and peoples facilitating trade between nations also requiring countries to construct their naval ships not only to protect their merchantmen but also to engage in warfare on the seas. Tools for woodworking were originally also made from wood with cutting blades retained in the planes with wooden wedges. Technology has developed over the years allowing wood to be shaped into curved planks. It is five hundred years since the development of glues enabled artisans to craft musical instruments using various timbers. Technology also enabled wood to be turned into pulp and processed into paper that was then utilized for documentation and the printing of books. The evolution of printing presses made possible the widespread circulation and distribution of books to all and was also used in the construction of wind and water mills for processing of grains into flour on a greater scale than in the past. Pumping water facilitated the development of canal systems permitting the transport of goods overland. Mills were established using timber machinery to weave cloth from cotton, wool and other fibres and were the early forms of computer machinery. In addition, timber has always been used as a fuel with such usage leading to the earliest steam engines, railways and also the motive power for ships that eventually saw the demise of sail for ocean trading ships. Timber sleepers on which railway lines were bedded facilitated railway networks. Timber is still widely used in the building of houses and commercial establishments with even high-rise commercial buildings being constructed entirely of timber. Examples of such technology already exist overseas in Norway and there is one multi storey building in Brisbane with more scheduled for construction. Greg was thanked for a most entertaining presentation and presented with a gift crafted by members of the Mens Shed. The lucky door prize was won by Paul White. *Brian Carter.*

We welcome new member Helga Kunde. We trust that you enjoy your association with Grafton U3A and take the opportunity to avail of the courses and interest groups available.



EDITOR CONTACT

Contributions to the Jabber Journal are welcome, however, we reserve the right to edit or refuse material submitted for publication. Closing date for the July 2023 edition is **Friday 23 June 2023.** Contributions to the editor: Dennis Kelly email: thehifields@bigpond.com