

JABBERFEST – 10:00AM MONDAY 11 MARCH 2024
NEW LIFE CHURCH CENTRE – ARTHUR STREET GRAFTON

SESSION 1



Action Coaches has been operating in New South Wales and Queensland for the past 25 years providing safe, comfortable transportation and travel adventures far and wide to ensure guests have an enjoyable experience. Their representatives will be joining us to day to share details of the services they provide including details of upcoming tours and shuttle services. Brochures of upcoming tours will be available on the day.

SESSION 2

HOW TO TALK TO A DEAF OR HEARING-IMPAIRED PERSON IN AN EMERGENCY
PRESENTER JAMES READ (SES)

People who are deaf or have impaired hearing are likely to be more susceptible to the impact of storms, floods and other events. Our presenter James is going to explain to us how to communicate with them during an emergency in sign language. He will not be using PowerPoint or notes and suggests that a pen and paper may be handy to jot down any questions members many have. bringing a pen and paper to list any questions members may have. It will be an enjoyable presentation and does involve some light hearted banter.



We welcome new members Sue Adams, Maggie Clarke, Leanne Warwick and David Wormald. We trust that you enjoy your association with Grafton U3A and take the opportunity to avail of the various courses and interest groups available.

PRESIDENT'S LETTER



Here we are, just two weeks into a new U3A year. Happy memories of the Christmas break and relaxing at the beach are fast receding in the rear-view mirror. All the NewYear tasks are crowding in – appointments to make, jobs left over from last year still to complete, bills to pay, diaries to organise, plans to make for the coming year, pet projects to consider, things to fix, etc etc. Sigh!

At least most of our U3A plans are falling into line nicely. Most of our established groups are all back and running along as per the regular programme printed in our February Jabber Journal and even some of the new/ unusual groups are being slowly coaxed into shape. At February Jabberfest, I put out Expressions of Interest for 4 smaller/untried groups and I am pleased to say they all gained sufficient interest to get started. We have a date now for the Bird Watching Group (28th February at Fiona & Morrie Duggan's home); a date for Singing around the Pianola (Friday 15th March at Helen Hearnshaw's home in Miller Street); and Poetry Writing also gained sufficient interest to get started. I will contact Poetry Writing Group members shortly to arrange an initial group meeting hopefully early in March. That just leaves the Art Gallery visit to arrange - probably after Easter in April.

Also, at our first Jabberfest of the Year, Nick Reeve put out an Expression of Interest about the Climate change Group. He has sufficient interest to start up a small group again on the third Thursday of the month at Dougherty House. And will hold its first meeting for this year on Thursday, 21st March, from 10.00 am to 12.00 noon.

Finally, a reminder that we are **STILL** looking for more volunteers:

- We have two vacancies on the committee (this would require you to attend one committee meeting per month and hopefully most Jabberfests). In view of the fact that our committee is currently attempting to function with insufficient members, we have decided not to arrange regular social functions at present.
- We are looking for volunteers to help with morning tea at Jabberfest. We are also seeking two people to take on the regular supervision of the Jabberfest morning tea. None of these roles are onerous. We put out Expression of Interest forms at February Jabberfest for these positions, but WE STILL NEED MORE VOLUNTEERS FOR THE ROSTER. Could somebody please come forward to undertake the organisational role from Anne & Nick Reeve? They have done sterling service for years, but now they are getting very tired. We will then be very thirsty if we are unable to find replacements for them.

Isn't it good to be back in the U3A routine! I look forward to seeing you all on 11th March.

Alysan Pender

GRAFTON U3A COMMITTEE VACANCIES

Due to a relocation and an illness, there have been, for several months, two vacancies on the committee of your Grafton U3A. In order for the committee to function efficiently in undertaking the tasks associated with managing the activities of Grafton U3A, it is essential that we have a full complement of members of that committee. The tasks associated with membership of the committee are certainly not onerous. All members are therefore asked to give serious consideration to putting themselves forward to serve on the committee. Should you require any information or have questions please feel free to approach any member of the current committee or our President Alysan Pender who can be contacted on 0447 270 997.

COURSES AND INTEREST GROUPS update – ALYSAN PENDER

Please see the Courses & Groups list on page 4 of the February Jabber Journal for details. Some groups have had a slight change in starting times. Please contact your group leader if you have any questions.

ARMCHAIR TRAVEL has now resumed and next meeting will be held on Monday 25th March at 2:00 pm. Enquiries: Magda Mussarad 66449309.

BIRD WATCHING – We will be holding our first birdwatching group of the year on 28 February. We will be visiting Fiona and Morrie Duggan's property at Braunstone and are planning to set out early in the morning in an effort to beat the heat. Meet at McDonald's carpark 7:00 am & hope to be back in Grafton by 11:30 am.

SINGING AROUND THE PIANOLA will be held at Helen Hearnshaw's home on Friday 15 March from 1:00 to 3:00 pm (**note new time**)

Sufficient interest having been shown by members, a **POETRY WRITING** group will be established. I hope to arrange a meeting shortly to determine date/time/frequency etc of our get-togethers. Once determined the group should commence early next month. Enquiries: Alysyan Pender 0447270997

ART GALLERY VISITS will hopefully commence in April, after Easter.

CLIMATE CHANGE GROUP will commence on the third Thursday of each month commencing 21 March from 10:00am to 12:00 noon at the U3A rooms, Dougherty House. Leader: Nick Reeve 0408 001 541.

PLEASE NOTE: (1) ALL OF OUR GROUPS WOULD WELCOME MORE MEMBERS.

PLEASE NOTE: (2) IF YOU WISH TO START ATTENDING A GROUP, PLEASE CONTACT THE GROUP LEADER AS A COURTESY BEFORE TURNING UP.

The Gadarene Swine

'Back in the day', ten to fifteen years ago, the analogy to illustrate the threat of Global Warming was **'the simmering frog'**: we don't recognize the seriousness of the threat until it's too late. Today, in 2024, a more appropriate analogy is **'The Gadarene Swine'**: mindlessly rushing over the precipice to disaster and collective death. The threat is no longer 'Global Warming', it's 'Global Boiling'. My generation of octogenarians can no longer ignore it; no longer dismiss it as a problem for our children or perhaps grand-children, in their retirement. It's our problem, we caused it, it's right here and now, and it's coming to get us.

To deny the immediacy of the threat: 'there have always been floods and droughts', is to ignore the long considered, thoroughly tested, collective opinion of **99% of the experts** in the field of climate science. It also requires us to **turn a blind eye** to the evidence around us, to the **personal experience of extreme weather events that have occurred** here and **around the globe throughout the last year**.

Why is this so? Why do we deny the undeniable evidence all around us? Is it a matter for other people, the experts, while we have problems of more immediate concern: 'cost of living', Covid, health issues, or is it that 'war in the Middle East', or local issues fill the news and push aside the **existential threat of climate change**. Climate warriors cannot ignore these other concerns. They need to be addressed but not to the exclusion of action on Climate Change.

The truth is that the climate and **ecological systems** that have supported our comfortable existence for the past thousands of years **are breaking down**. Polar ice and glaciers are melting, causing the sea to rise. Permafrost is melting, releasing tons of CO2 and methane into the atmosphere and the weather systems are becoming disrupted.

Failure to keep global temperature increases to 1.5 degrees centigrade threatens a 'cascade of tipping points' with accelerating temperature increases and catastrophic effects: extreme weather events, huge sea level rise, agricultural failure and subsequent civil unrest.

We made this problem and **we can still avoid the worst consequences**, but not while we remain in collective denial, not while we allow ourselves to be distracted by less important issues. Addressing Climate Change (or Climate Boiling) trumps all other priorities, whether they be wars in the Middle East, in Ukraine, or Taiwan; the 'cost of living' or Australia Day goods sold in Woolworths.

According to the IPCC we need to stop burning fossil fuels now; by 2050 it's too late. Fossil fuels include gas as well as coal and oil. We need to address the threat with the urgency and determination that my parents' generation met the threat of National Socialism and fascism in WWII.

And it's a problem for all of us; in the words of John Donne - **"Ask not for whom the bell tolls, it tolls for you"**.

To those dwindling sceptics, who remain to be convinced, I ask you, challenge you, to visit the website of the 'Climate Emergency Forum'. Watch their video 'Tipping Points in the Climate Casino'. *Nick Reeve*

FEBRUARY JABBERFRST WRAP

President Alysan welcomed members back to the first Jabberfest for 2024 before also welcoming several new members to Jabberfest. Members were reminded to refer to page 4 of the February edition of the jabber Journal for the updated list of current courses and interest groups on offer to members that in some cases now have new start/finish times. Old copies of the courses list should be binned as they are out of date. Due to Helen Daniels unavailability due to illness, Alysan gave a very big thank you to the ladies from the Mahjong group who had kindly stepped in and provided the U3A rooms with an overdue spring clean. The ladies also advised that they will continue to do so. Nick Reeve came forward and gave a brief update on Climate Change and advised that the group will resume on 19 March. Alysan then provided updates on the following current courses as well as a proposed new course as follows:

SINGING AROUND THE PIANOLA

ARMCHAIR TRAVEL

ESSENTIAL ITALY BIRD

WATCHING

POETRY WRITING – NEW

Members were also reminded if they wish to join a group to contact the group leader as a courtesy to inform them rather than just turning up.

With regard to the Jabberfest morning teas Alysan advised that Nick and Ann Reeve who have organized the morning teas for a number of years and are looking for volunteers to replace them in managing the morning tea sessions. In addition, volunteers are also being sought to assist with the morning teas. Expressions of interest for both was available at Jabberfest.

A representative of the Grafton Bridge Club provided details of an introductory Bridge course that their members offer at no cost to any members who may be interested and Expressions of Interest were being taken at Jabberfest. The meeting then adjourned for morning tea.

Following the traditional cuppa Alysan introduced Kevin Dixon – photographer extraordinaire 25 years on to reprise his journey to the Antarctic in February/March 1999 via a PowerPoint display of images from the trip and an accompanying address. The trip was undertaken with a group of fellow photographers on board a Russian Ice Breaker. The area is the coldest place on earth and is home to many types of whales, seals and penguins. A wonderful presentation of spectacular images and accompanying commentary by a very knowledgeable and well credentialed award-winning photographer.

The lucky door prize was won by Maree Burrows. President Alysan then closed the meeting.

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 April 2024 edition is **Friday 22 March 2024**. Contributions to the editor: Dennis Kelly email: thehifields@bigpond.com

WINSTON CHURCHILL'S PARAPODIAS – CONTRIBUTED BY ALYSAN PENDER

Winston Churchill loved parapodias, figures of speech in which the latter part of a sentence or phrase is surprising or unexpected.

- Where there's a will, I want to be in it.
- The last thing I want to do is hurt you, but it's still on my list.
- Since light travels faster than sound, some people appear bright until you hear them speak.
- If I agreed with you, we'd both be wrong.
- War does not determine who is right - only who is left.
- Knowledge is knowing a tomato is a fruit. Wisdom is not putting it in a fruit salad.
- I thought I wanted a career. Turns out, I just wanted pay checks.
- Women will never be equal to men until they can walk down the street...with a bald head and a beer gut, and still think they are sexy.
- Behind every successful man is his woman. Behind the fall of a successful man is usually another woman.
- A clear conscience is the sign of a fuzzy memory.