

# Bayside U3A

## UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE

Offices: Beaumaris Senior Centre  
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### 2021 TERM DATES

**Term 2** 19 April—25 June

**Term 3** 12 July— 17 September

**Term 4** 4 October—17 December

## NEWSLETTER

### Term 2, 2021



#### Beaumaris Office:

Monday to Friday: 9:30am to 2:00pm

#### Brighton Office

Monday to Friday: 9:30am - 12noon

### FROM THE PRESIDENT :

Dear Members,

Term 2 already – time is relentless! Isn't it good to see people again. I know not all classes can meet face-to-face (depends on room sizes and tutors) but I feel I needed a break from Zoom, particularly running classes or meetings – very tiring. The Committee is back meeting face-to-face and I also chaired a meeting of our U3A region on 16<sup>th</sup> April which was the first 'U3A Network' face-to-face meeting since you know when.



But as I may have said before we are in a time of recovery and rebuilding, unfortunately not as yet entirely 'free' to return to 'normal'. Many ask 'When can we (all) return to face-to-face classes?' and the answer is simply when the density restrictions are lifted (ie 1 person per two sq metres). Obviously this is still in place because we still have significant risk of further outbreaks (I admit to some mixed feelings about 'overseas returnees' and any kind of 'city based' quarantine). And many Zoom classes have been so successful and escape the barrier of classroom size constraints that they may continue for quite some time or become the new norm where tutors and members want to continue this way. Please note the '1 person per 2 sq metres' is still an exemption from 1 person per 4sq metres) if we use the QR codes. We know that some Councils are interpreting this as 'all attendees must 'QR' or the 4 sq metres rule applies' – so please do your best to use the QR system (you might ask a friend to sign you in on their Smartphone).

Some 400 of last year's members have not renewed this year but we have nearly 200 new members – and a very warm welcome again to them. I do hope your expectations are being met. The other alternative to face-to-face or Zoom classes is 'hybrid' classes – with tutor and some members in the classroom and others on Zoom. This is proving somewhat more difficult than expected, but at least now we finally have high speed internet at Beaumaris and Brighton Courthouse, we can start experimenting where tutors are willing. It is recognised that 'hybrid' is much more suitable and easier, for 'presentation' type classes as against highly interactive discussion classes. Most tutors will need, at least in the beginning, a skilled helper to manage the technology. Another U3A's tech guru said that he could get any classroom for any type of class 'fully operational' (under a hybrid set up) for \$100,000! However, 'the guru' still needs to be there to operate/manage it! To assist with our technology presentations, we have purchased four new laptops.

The density restrictions essentially mean we cannot use our smaller rooms at Beaumaris and Brighton (nor the kitchens) which means that Sue Steele has been very busy (even more so) finding some alternatives. We have entered into hire agreements to use the Scout Hall in Whyte St, Brighton and St Martins Uniting Church Hall in Beaumaris, as well as the two Community Halls in the library building at Beaumaris.

(P.T.O.)

**From the President—Continued**

Our AGM on 12<sup>th</sup> March was held over Zoom – 75 members' attended' and we had 132 proxies submitted. Supporters also attending were: James Newbury, State Member for Brighton (also a Bayside U3A Member), Tim Wilson, Federal Member for Goldstein, Martina Ryan, U3A Network Membership Services Manager and Mick Cummins, Bayside Council CEO, who was able to answer some members' questions at the end of the AGM.

Jenny Reece has accepted the role of Chair of our Marketing and Events subcommittee which has been reconvened (most of last year in recess). Mary Downie is assisting Jennie and the subcommittee with planning 'what's happening' in 2021. They will need volunteers for some specific and important roles eg Volunteers Coordinator. We're hoping events such as our morning teas can be restarted, but (as above) the current density rules are still a constraint. AND we are still down some other important roles – Grants subcommittee in particular. Volunteer organisations such as ours, live (or die) on the willingness of members to 'give back' and put in. Once the density requirements are lifted we will have 'room' for more members and we'd like to attract younger members and more male members – so 'put it out there' that U3A is a 'good thing' and well worth being involved!

**Tony Aplin, President**

**Course and enrolment news**

Welcome to term 2. A few more classes have returned to face-to-face this week. We have 25 classes still on Zoom and are experimenting with hybrid Zoom/face-to-face classes for Modern History, Lunchtime Masterpieces and Armchair Archaeology. Decisions on how to run classes are not easy. As well as room issues because of COVID space requirements we have to juggle the large group of members eager to meet up in person with the similarly large group of members who still prefer Zoom at this stage.

Fourteen lucky members enjoyed A Day in Spain on April 16. We are pleased to advise that Juan has generously offered to repeat the class in the July and October breaks. Watch for notice about this if you were on the waiting list for the original session.

**Newly listed course - Journalling Club**

Do you keep a journal? Bring along a snippet from your journal (say a paragraph) and talk briefly about what it means to you. Other group members will be invited to share a similar experience from their own life.

**Course 21148**, 10am Tuesdays (fortnightly) from 18 May at Beaumaris Senior Centre.

Don't forget to look at [our website](#). The latest course information is always found there.

**Sue Steele**

**Thank you Sandra Groves! (Welfare Officer)**

Many thanks to Sandra for her support to members as Welfare Officer. Her regular contact with isolated members during the most difficult lockdown times in 2020 was much appreciated.

I look forward to taking over responsibility for sending well wishes to members and families who are in need of a caring card or phone call.

*I rely on all of you to let me know if you hear of someone in need, so please, contact me directly or via U3A.*

**Karen Hall** [sidonyhall@gmail.com](mailto:sidonyhall@gmail.com) 0402 891 183 (or via [baysideu3a@gmail.com](mailto:baysideu3a@gmail.com))

## **CHESS GROUP**

The members of the chess group are really enjoying the extra space for their games this year. After the cramped conditions of the small entrance room at the Courthouse we are now relishing the breathing space of the main hall.



The classes start with lessons on winning moves from our expert teacher Suzanne Frankham.

Then there is quiet contemplation and concentration as we start to play, inevitably followed later (or sooner) by cries of mixed anguish and laughter when Queens are lost.

A great game and much fun had by all!

## **TAI CHI CLASSES at Brighton Courthouse**



Tai Chi beginners and more advanced students together for the last class of term 1 in the picturesque Brighton Town Hall gardens next to the Courthouse. Then off to lunch at the Sandbelt Hotel organised by our talented tutor, Ellie Viachos.



## **Thanks Deb Stephenson! (Newsletter Editor)**

Since Term 4 October 2016, Deb has continually supported the Bayside U3A community as Newsletter Editor.

Particular mention, thanks and gratitude is extended to her for the 17 special fortnightly editions she published throughout the 2020 COVID pandemic. She has now passed the newsletter mantle onto me.

In order to produce equally entertaining and interesting newsletters for you, (now twice a term), I invite tutors and members to contribute items for inclusion. The deadline for the next newsletter is 1<sup>st</sup> June and articles can be emailed to [baysideu3a@gmail.com](mailto:baysideu3a@gmail.com)



Thanks in anticipation! Sue Newton



## CREATIVE CONVERSATIONS

We are a group of women who enjoy the creative art of hand stitching, be it patchwork, quilting, embroidery, knitting or crochet. Our group's ethos is we learn from each other through encouragement, sharing of ideas and techniques. And along the way we have great conversations. Here are examples of some members' creativity.

A crocheted rug by Gail Williams



Cotton reel rabbits by Lynette Taylor



Patchwork by Janet Weinstock

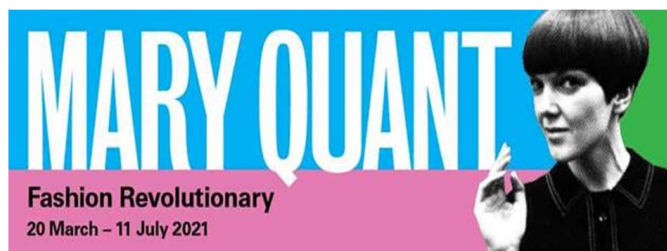


Baby's cardigan by Alison Barnett



The Creative Conversation group in action.....

*The group is very pleased to be meeting weekly in our new home at St Martins in Beaumaris!*



## U3A SPEAKER PROGRAM MARY QUANT EXHIBITION

In association with the Bendigo Art Gallery, Bayside U3A presented a trip back to the swinging 60s as part of its speaker program in early April. Hosted by Libby Goblet

from the Bendigo Art Gallery, we saw an introduction to the Mary Quant Exhibition which is being held in Bendigo until 11 July.

This exhibition was shown at the Victoria & Albert Museum in London in 2019 and features carefully selected garments designed by Mary Quant over her career, as well as examples of her cosmetics and other accessories.

Mary Quant personified swinging London in the 1960s; she challenged conventions, popularised the miniskirt, and was a powerful role model for the working woman. Mary Quant's designs revolutionised fashion with energy, flair and rebellion.

At the conclusion of the presentation, we ran a 1960s trivia quiz – the following two lucky participants each won a double pass to the exhibition: CONGRATULATIONS Helen Graham and Cynthia Parsons



### Let's do Dinner Convenor, Karen Hall



**March** dinners were held at the Hotel Brighton in Bay Street.

The good old pub fish and chips seemed to be the popular order of the day, however there were some other very interesting choices.

We managed to squeeze more than 20 diners on to our two tables on both nights.

It was an Italian flavour in **April** at Il Forno in Benteigh.

The broad menu selection was enjoyed by a small intimate group on Easter Saturday, followed by the usual number later in the month.

The restaurant is well patronised with many other boisterous diners!



Further details for our Thai venue in June will be emailed to those enrolled in the **Course code: 21002**.

### Classical Music - David Peake (Tutor)

I received suggestions for some Organ music and some JS Bach, so I am now satisfying both requests. One week, I was unable to show what I planned, so this is an extra program.



You may recall that a year or so ago, I showed Karl Richter's performance of Handel's Op. 7 Organ concertos. Well, here is his performance of the other Handel Organ concertos, Op. 4. Bearing in mind that this was filmed in 1972, the picture and sound quality is very good as are both performances. Karl Richter, organ and conducting the Munich Bach Orchestra - Handel 6 Organ Concertos Op. 4  
<https://youtu.be/uoixvQhWrKY>

Here is the same Conductor and Orchestra performing Bach's Brandenburg Concertos. Filmed in 1970, the picture and sound quality is again remarkably good. Karl Richter conducting the Munich Bach Orchestra - JS Bach's Brandenburg Concertos Nos. 1 - 6  
<https://youtu.be/hp53Jh6qO6Q>



A selection of Oboe music include :

The Oboe instrument

<https://youtu.be/QNBsgfh4UMY>

Vivaldi Oboe Concerto RV 447

<https://youtu.be/OO24JpFT3wY>

Marcello - Oboe Concerto

<https://youtu.be/LHYHo8wJF74>

Handel - Oboe Concerto

<https://youtu.be/8CyNiP94B-g>



**A Day in Spain with Juan Soler**

Friday 16 April 2021 9am-3.30pm

A wonderful Spanish experience with a fun introduction of a clip from 'Fawlty Towers' with John Cleese as Basil Fawlty teaching Manuel how to speak English!

A road trip from Barcelona to Malaga and beyond to Seville, followed. Visits to cultural and heritage sites including the Gaudi inspired La Sagrada Familia Cathedral, Barcelona and the Salvador Dali home/museum in Figueres. This was followed by seaside vistas of Malaga and then on to Seville and that was just in the morning.

Our lunch of paella was cooked by Juan with 14 very interested onlookers. The result was superb—but no siesta!

In the afternoon, off to Granada to the glorious Alhambra and the Generalife. This southern part of Spain was influenced for 800 years by the Muslim Moorish culture affecting both its architecture and food. All this richness accompanied by delightful guitar music.

Then on to Madrid with photos of the countryside from a speeding 240km per hour fast train with towering mountains to one side and endless olive groves on the other. In Madrid we saw visits to markets and endless varieties of deli items, Plaza Major and a 400 year old restaurant. Juan's recipe for a special fish sauce is below



And we did all of this with no jetlag! Juan gave us handouts on the history of paella and of course, recipes for paella for us to try at home. Thank you Juan!

*Juan has asked us to thank all people who attended on the day.*

**FISH SAUCE**

Salsa Vizcaina (a sauce for just about any filleted fish) is a classic red sauce originating from Basque Country. It's made with red onions, garlic, and choricerro peppers (we can replace these with capsicum). The onions are sautéed in olive oil with the addition of de-seeded choricerro peppers (hard to get here so I use nice ripe capsicums, paprika and vegetable stock). The combination is seasoned with salt and blended until the sauce has a consistency of a tomato sauce. But some people claim that Salsa Vizcaina also contains tomatoes and it's an issue that's caused debates in Spain for many years.

I have no trouble with this debate because I happen to really like adding a little passata to the sauce for texture and flavour. This sauce found its perfect pairing when Basque fishermen brought back salt cod from Newfoundland, but it can also be served with fried potatoes, pork shank, grilled chicken breasts or any other fish fillet for an explosion of flavours.

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|---|---|
| Chop 1 capsicum finely<br>Chop 2 red onions finely<br>Chop 1 clove garlic finely<br>3 tablespoons olive oil<br>1 piece of 2/3 day old bread chopped finely<br>1/2 cup vegetable (or fish) stock<br>100ml passata<br>1 teaspoon ground pepper<br>1/4 teaspoon salt | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In a medium size saucepan, heat the olive oil, add the onions and cook on a gentle heat for 10 minutes until they are very soft but not fully browned.</li> <li>• Add the capsicum and cook for a further 10 min or so until all capsicum looks well softened. At this point the onions should also look lightly golden.</li> <li>• Add the stock and passata - cook for 10 minutes then add chopped bread for a further 5-8mins</li> <li>• The sauce should have the consistency of a chunky tomato sauce.</li> <li>• If you prefer put the sauce in a food processor and blend until fully combined.</li> <li>• Ensure you thin it down slightly (add more fish stock or sherry if you like a sweeter finish.</li> <li>• Pour the sauce over the fish and serve immediately.</li> <li>• Options to experiment with: add a little cumin or nutmeg.</li> </ul> |
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**Tell your friends about Bayside U3A today**

Do you know someone who would enjoy participating in stimulating and entertaining activities with others of similar interests? Perhaps they might like to meet new people or join you at an event Bayside U3A is running. Joining Bayside U3A is a great way to keep in touch and make new friends.

There is a wide variety of social activities to entertain and help people get to know others – going out for dinner, learning to play Bridge/Mahjong, playing lawn bowls, wine tastings ... there's something for everyone.

A good introduction to Bayside U3A would be to pass on this newsletter to your family members and friends. Or suggest they go online to [baysideu3a.org](http://baysideu3a.org) or email the office on [baysideu3a@gmail.com](mailto:baysideu3a@gmail.com) for a membership application form.

**What do you want from Bayside U3A?**

We believe it is key to the satisfaction of the Bayside U3A community to know what you want from your U3A. Do you enjoy the activities you attend? Are there other activities you would like to see Bayside U3A offer?

What do you want from Bayside U3A? We'd love to hear from you.

Send your ideas to [baysideu3a@gmail.com](mailto:baysideu3a@gmail.com) or call the office on 95893798.

**Writers Group - Cheryl Threadgold (Tutor)****Home by Peter Lucas**

He is of a road marched by men  
He is not for here or there  
His home is born of trees  
caves, sand and air.

At night light explodes  
The sound of guns and machines  
The rat-a-tat-tat-tat  
a scream falls in the black  
'I'm not here Mother,' he cries

On the road again fresh blood  
He does not look  
Turns his burning head  
Runs for miles

'He is from somewhere,' they said  
Only a war knows  
His eyes are storms  
And when he breaths  
its heat and dust  
Dust from stars  
heat from wounds  
Wearing his medals like scars

no such word as home  
no place to close a door  
or hang a cap  
no fire side or hand to hold  
only the wind to push him on.

We salute him on his way  
We let him go  
This man who belongs nowhere

**In 1944****by Gwen McCallum**

Dancing at the Palais –Old time and Jive  
under the turning mirror ball.  
bobby sox and swing skirts de rigueur.  
Jungle greens and khaki line the walls.

Romancing casual girls to *Mood Indigo*  
a late supper at the Greeks'  
no worries about the unthinkable.  
blessed with youth  
immersed in this time.

Hot nights in the country town plead relief  
from rations, tedious drills, watchful  
always ready  
going nowhere.

Forward –side- together, teaching the  
Modern Waltz  
*Maria Elania's* soft notes entice but  
rhythm-less boys in hob-nailed boots  
hear only the Sergeant's parade ground roar.  
Surrounding camps stitch together  
a Big Band, a willing service and  
a fair imitation of Glen Miller.  
*We're In The Mood.*

Last dance, a charge  
across the floor, get a partner—  
you hold on tightly because  
parting *is* sorrow.  
*Good Night Sweetheart*

Looking back you wonder...  
If he caught the last bus if he got the letter  
If he made it home again .

**Writers Group - Cheryl Threadgold (Tutor) - Continued****Home Away from Home****by Colleen Dewis**

The young brothers looked forward every year to the long summer vacation at their home away from home, their grandparents' farm. There were only a few easy rules to follow, such as, wipe your feet at the door, wash your hands before meals, no raiding the cake tin before afternoon tea, be careful not to venture into the bull paddock and watch out for snakes in the long grass.

Sleeping out on the verandah in big feather beds under huge ghostlike mosquito nets was an adventure in itself. The boys shared the verandah with a family of talkative willie wagtails who had their nest in a sheltered corner. The grape vines winding along the verandah posts provided a supply of juicy ripe bunches of red and white grapes. Watching the stars from their beds, listening to the distant sounds of animals, frogs and crickets, fed their imagination. This led to storytelling featuring ghosts, aliens and ferocious beasts. As a result, both boys would often end up in one bed with a protective blanket over their heads.

A little creek running below the house paddock was a magnet for the boys. There were tadpoles and guppies to catch and observe and along the bank was a patch of clay which they could use to create their versions of various creatures and make clay bird nests to bake in the sun. The bird nests were placed in tree branches in the hope that birds would choose to make a home in these readymade nests.

Often in summer there would be an exciting sudden thunderstorm with lightning and heavy rain pouring down. The creek would break its banks and become a roaring foaming river for a little while. After the storm it was a perfect time to make paper boats to race downstream, then get out the fishing gear to try their luck catching a fish.

Grandfather sometimes invited the boys to help saddle up the horses and ride out with him to check the fences, dams and the fat grazing cattle. On these occasions Grandma would pack their lunches for an all-day expedition, which included Grandfather traditionally boiling the billy under the shade of a tree.

A daily visit to the hay shed to climb up the haystack was like a treasure hunt. Finding eggs in the hidden nests made by hopeful hens was the prize. According to Grandma, collecting these secret eggs allowed her to keep the cake tins full of their favourite cakes. The indignant hens had to be pacified and escorted back to the coop to plan their next escape. Weekends were reserved for a trip to town to play cricket, socialise and do some shopping.

The brothers would meet friends they only saw at this time of the year. There were lots of fun games to be played and a year's supply of information to exchange. When the idyllic holiday time came to an end the boys' parents would arrive to take them back to the city, telling them how much they had grown and it was time to get haircuts, new school shoes and maybe the next size up in uniforms.

These brothers are old men now and they like to reminisce. At family get-togethers the grandchildren love to hear the stories of their adventures at their home away from home, and beg their parents "please, can we get a farm?"

**Home****by Sue Hardiman**

Sundays are usually fairly relaxed and social. Last Sunday was unusually busy – busy with gardening, household chores, reading the papers and shopping. I had been invited out to a lovely Italian restaurant for dinner and was seriously considering cancelling. However, I decided to go. The food was excellent, the conversation lively and at times mildly heated. Of course politics was the main source of debate – a dinner table of seven, ages ranging from 30 to the high 70s, and occupations and salaries varied is a recipe for lively discussion.

The promise of an early evening at home was disappearing but I was having a lovely time. I was first to leave, home and into bed at 12.30, snuggled up. Sleep was easy. And then the doorbell rang at 3.00am – I put on a tracksuit and rushed to the door, convinced and worried that someone had been hurt on the way home from dinner. I opened the door and was greeted by the smiling face of a long-lost lover. He was meant to be a surprise guest at dinner but airline delays prevented him arriving on time. We sat down to talk and the doorbell rang again – this time I was convinced that someone had been hurt.

My 3.00am friend accompanied me to the door and was greeted by the noisy cheers of the six diners – they certainly were not ready for bed and ensured that I was not returning to the comfort of mine.



**Writers Group - Cheryl Threadgold (Tutor) - Continued****A Home for Peter and Denise by Sandra Stirling**

It was a modest house. The plans had been drawn up to include two bedrooms, a lounge room, a kitchen with built-in alcove, and the amenities. The bricks and timber, so hard to obtain, finally arrived and were carefully stored in a shed on the newly purchased block of land.

Every weekend, Peter and his wife, Denise, would drive from her parents' home to stand and picture where they would eventually live. Denise marvelled at the sprawl of yellow daisies that covered the paddocks opposite their block.

And at last, tradesmen arrived. Calloused hands that had once dug foxholes and fired guns, now slapped mortar between bricks, skilfully removing any excess spillage. Men who had served in the desert now shovelled sand into a cement mixer, occasionally standing to flex their shoulders under a hot Australian sun. Others, whose war-like purpose had been to smash and devastate, now put their backs into hammering nails into the timber frame, colourful handkerchiefs tied at each corner on their heads as protection from the heat. For them all there was a robust pleasure in building rather than destroying.

At 'smoko time', the men sat around drinking mugs of tea and eating large sandwiches from stiff waxed paper. And after much good-natured banter, it was generally agreed that while Peter had been a pilot, he was still deemed 'a good bloke', and one of them.

Over the weeks that followed, 21 Cross Street gradually took shape, until one fine day the house was complete. Peter was indeed grateful for the War Service loan that had made it all possible. Now he and Denise stood on the dusty ground outside the front door, applauding the competence and expertise of the builders.

"It's our very own home, Pete," exclaimed Denise, holding his arm. "You're safely home, the war's over, and everything will be fine from now on."

"Yes, love," smiled Peter, squeezing her arm against his side. And indeed it was. Together, they turned the house into a home, slowly furnishing each room on a careful budget. And outside, lawns were seeded, and gardens turned and planted with vegetables and flowers. A rope clothesline, strung between two posts, was propped up high to set the washing dancing in a Summer breeze. Proudly they invited their young friends, who had also served, to celebrate with them their good fortune.

It was a time to renew life in a peaceful world, a peace they had all worked so hard to obtain, and which had been achieved at such great cost.

**Home by Martin Playne**

'It's a home not an investment' - this has always been our philosophy. As it turned out, it was a great investment.

We arrived in Melbourne with three young children from the tropical north in the winter of 1977. I had an exciting new position in the CSIRO to research the production of liquid fuels from biomass. Melbourne was a vast new metropolis so different from a rather lazy way of life in the tropics. Both my wife Moira and I had of course experienced big cities and cooler climates earlier in our lives, but our three children were all tropical babies. The change would have been really felt by them. On arrival in cool September weather, we started our search for our new home. We spent countless Saturdays being driven around by hopeful young real estate men, who weren't really listening to what we wanted. About 90 per cent of the houses offered, we needn't have even gone into. One Saturday, we were on another fruitless expedition with a real estate man. As we waited with him at the New Street railway crossing for the gates to open, we lost our cool and told him that he was wasting his time and ours. Whereupon he actually 'thought' for once. He said, 'Just a minute, there's a property just around the corner here held by my boss and I think he is considering selling.' We drove into this cul de sac called Lorraine Street. It was on the wrong side of South Road, according to the real estate men. Fortunately, Hampton was not really valued in those days. We fell in love with the house immediately.

Our home was built in about 1919 - it is a two-storied timber weatherboard house, with a steep tiled roof of the Edwardian era. What attracted us was its beautiful three metre ceilings, and somehow its 'character' - hard to define. So why did we buy it? Location, location, location! It was great - ten minutes' walk from the train station and ten minutes from the shops, one minute to the beach, in a quiet street. It was a short bike ride or twenty minutes' walk to the children's school, St Leonards College, South Road.

(P.T.O.)

## Writers Group - Cheryl Threadgold (Tutor) - Continued

The house had an old carport and shed in the backyard when we arrived - both not in a good state of repair. That's all gone now, replaced by a large studio workshop shed. Cars have been excluded from the back garden. We couldn't do without our shed - it's a place of creation, invention, storage, and relaxation. We have quite a sizeable garden, mostly now indigenous shrubs and trees and raised vegetable beds. We find it hard to understand the present trend to huge new houses with small families and no space left for gardening and backyard cricket and tennis ball soccer. It's our home! What a blessing in times of lockdown.

Time has moved on and we are the 'elderly neighbours' now. I think we are the oldest house in this street of some sixteen residences. It's good for another hundred years, but I am not sure that we are.

### Home by Norah Dempster

When I think of home, and I often do, my thoughts always go back to the lake. My home country New Zealand has many lakes, deep and green, washing down from rocky mountains.

But for me there is only one lake. The lake.

And younger visiting relatives recently asked me "Do you miss the lake?"

I spent my childhood beside Lake Waiholo, a small saltwater expanse linked to the Southern Ocean by the Taieri River.

The lake was perhaps ten metres from my front gate. A place where as a child I would visit alone sitting among the rushes beside green moss imagining a land of fairies, a place where my friend and I hid our secret writing in crevices of a rocky bank safe from my teasing brother, a place of looping willow branches and uncertain depths where we dared to paddle before the tide came in.

There was a safe swimming area, further down on a grassy bank and when very young we called to parents sitting on the shore. 'Watch me swim watch me swim.' When older we tested the depths, with feet searching for the shifting sand underneath, our bodies rising in the moving water shrieking to each other "I touched an eel." We never did, of course, they would have disappeared with our movement and noise.

Once we pinched a tethered rowing boat and headed out across the water needing to be rescued by a kind man who saw two silly young schoolgirls adrift unable to manage the large oars. He waded out, swam, and pulled us in.

The lake is where we played hide and seek, sat on wooden jetties, shared confidences, made up games and plays happily allotting parts to ourselves. Recently my friend, also eighty plus, said to me "Remember how I always used to get wet at the lake and your mum would put your sister's dry clothes on me to walk home in." I remember.

At the northern end of the lake was swamp, a place that belonged to our darker imagination where we told scarier stories and made-up tales. We leapt over ditches of water to make wet tracks among tussock and bulrushes. We were always afraid when we were there. There were old decaying boatsheds, long neglected, that harboured ghosts.

Yes, I miss the lake. I shall always miss the lake. And it waits for my return.

### Home by Margaret Boyes-Pringle

1

A young girl sews a sampler;  
An alphabet freize,  
A two-storey house  
Of four windows  
And a central door,  
A central path,  
A row of flowers,  
A chimney with smoke,  
A tree, perhaps a cat,  
Her name in full,  
The date.

11

Memories flung  
like sea spray on a windscreen ...  
Obscure the present  
But catch the light  
And move the mind through  
Landscapes sick with yearning  
Like beads of rain on a blade of grass,  
Each globe a microcosm,  
Embroideries  
Of vibrant silks  
Woven in freer pictures  
Than a young girl's sampler  
Fountain in the blood.

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Mourners at the funeral  
Alive but aperture-frozen  
Wait their turn  
To be hung  
On family walls  
And remembered.

## Get to know your fellow Bayside U3A members

Bayside U3A comprises some interesting and talented individuals and **Suzanne Frankham** is one such person. Better known to some as Bayside U3A's chess tutor, Suzanne also happens to be a successful writer.



Suzanne (pictured left) has recently published her first novel, **Shadow Over Edmund Street**, a thriller mystery that will keep you on your toes. About ninety people crowded into the top floor of the Rising Sun Hotel in South Melbourne at the end of March, for the launch by Suzanne (aka the Chess Teacher for Bayside U3A). It wasn't chess moves she was deciphering this time but murder motives, in the crime thriller set in Auckland, New Zealand. Kiwi Scandi Noir!

In between teaching chess since Bayside U3A began, Suzanne has been writing short stories and completing the novel. Some of her U3A chess class and Sue Steele were there to bolster her confidence.

Launching a book is no different to giving a chess lesson, is it?

Suzanne loves nothing more than sitting hunched over her computer planning a murder or two (fictional of course!). In her prize-winning short stories, she has managed to despatch an annoying bean-counter on a tropical island reef, a dog that had a penchant for a tasty meal of eastern bettings, a sweet old lady in a rest home (collateral damage) and a self-obsessed artist.

In her debut novel **Shadow Over Edmund Street**, Suzanne has significantly upped the body count, as close-held secrets are revealed in the harbour city of Auckland, her one-time hometown. Edwina's death is brutal, with a silent killer who leaves no clues. Her murder seems unsolvable until a casual comment sends Inspector Alex Cameron and his seasoned team trawling through the dead woman's childhood. Can Alex Cameron uncover the link in time to save the next victim?

Bayside U3A is planning a 'Meet the Author' session with Suzanne in the next month, so keep your eyes peeled for this compelling interview where you can ask the questions along with Suzanne's publisher Jen Hutchison.

Lest we forget



## ANZAC DAY 2021

Have you seen the ANZAC Day art installations that have been set up in two of Sandringham's landmarks?

Thanks to the Sandy Street Art Project Inc, a stunning wall of poppies has been created on the Sandringham Rotunda, corner Beach Road & Melrose Street to commemorate ANZAC Day 2021.

You will also find a field of hand made poppies planted in front of the cenotaph at the Sandringham Memorial Gardens on Beach Road by The Crescent. Thanks Sandy Street Art Project!





## **North Australia Observer Unit – the Bush Commandos of WWII**

*(Thankyou to U3A contributor Vicki Cowling, OAM, PhD)*

The North Australia Observer Unit (NAOU), or Curtin's Cowboys, or the Nackeroos as they were otherwise known, was formed in 1942 as an independent surveillance company covering the area of Australia from Derby in W.A. to Normanton in Queensland, with a southern boundary that included Alice Springs.

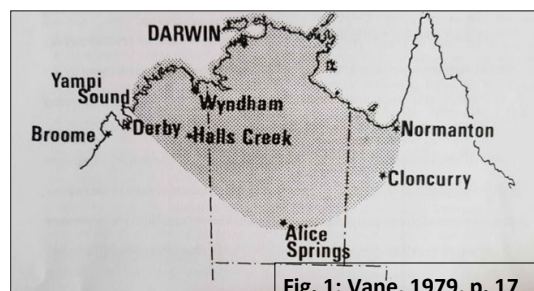


Fig. 1: Vane, 1979, p. 17

The bombing of Darwin in early 1942 and the threat of Japanese forces in the islands to the north, led to the Government deciding that the vast, undefended northern coastline of Australia needed to be guarded against possible invasion. Major W.E.H. Stanner was directed by army Chiefs of Staff to form a surveillance unit as a top priority. The unit needed to be highly mobile, use horses rather than vehicles, have good radio links, light weapons, and was made up of men who had 'an adventurous spirit, and who could live outdoors for months at a time, operating on their own initiative in small groups' (Vane, 1979, p. 18).

Recruits for the new unit were called for from Australian Imperial Force (AIF) training units and were all volunteers, aged between 20 to 40 years, had class 1 medical fitness, had bush experience, needed to be experienced horsemen, possess initiative, resourcefulness and intelligence, and be prepared to serve as follows: "The personnel of this unit will be called on to undertake, in the north of Australia, adventurous duties requiring a high degree of endurance and the ability to act independently." (Walker, 1986, p. 9).

The unit comprised over 500 men, 650 horses – for riding, and as pack horses, 41 motor vehicles, bicycles and motor bikes. Equipment included 6000 horseshoes, telescopes, axes, fishing lines, compasses and mosquito nets. The headquarters of the NAOU was in Katherine, south of Darwin, with small teams of four to six men patrolling on horseback or manning fixed observation posts. The operational role of the teams was to patrol, explore and coast-watch, while accumulating and collating topographical information that could be of value. A key role was the constant observance of the movements of enemy aircraft. To communicate with one another a network of telegraph wirelasses was used. When this system did not work, messages were delivered on horseback. The Flying Doctor service played a role– cattle stations and outback townships continued to use pedal radios to call the doctor and linked in with the NAOU network.

The Nackeroos came to depend on Aboriginal people, who were essential for their survival. Aboriginal people were employed for horse breaking, clearing air strips, but most importantly served as guides on patrols. The NAOU would not have been able to function without the knowledge and dedication of the Aboriginal guides. The Nackeroos learnt from the Aboriginal guides how to supplement their army rations with wild birds, animals, fish, and plants, and to find water.

"We had a lot of trust in [the Aboriginal guides] and on most patrols they were leading us. They were proud of the job that they were doing and they never let us down". (Walker & Walker, 1986, p. 139).

A year after its formation the NAOU was reduced in size and by the end of 1943 was disbanded, with most men returning to southern states for re-posting to other army roles. After their independence and self-reliance as Nackeroos some found it difficult to adjust to the discipline of regular army life.

In 1981 NORFORCE was established in Darwin (North West Mobile Force), in recognition that land based surveillance was still needed in northern Australia. Similar regiments have since been established in Western Australia and North Queensland, and while technological advances have replaced horses and pedal radios, the terrain remains unchanged.

There is a monument to the NAOU and aboriginal volunteers at Timber Creek, on the Victoria Highway, seven hours drive south of Darwin. <https://monumentaustalia.org.au/themes/conflict/ww2/display/80257-nackeroo-memorial/photo>.

Vane, A. (1979). The Surveillance of Northern Australia - its history. The story of Stanner's bush commando, 1942. *Defence Force Journal*, 14, 1979, (p. 15 – 30).[https://www.defence.gov.au/adf/Document/issue\\_14/14\\_1979\\_Jan\\_Feb.pdf](https://www.defence.gov.au/adf/Document/issue_14/14_1979_Jan_Feb.pdf)

Walker, R. & H. (1986). Curtin's Cowboys. Australia's Secret Bush Commandos. Allen & Unwin, Sydney.