

The Quarterly connections

U3A Bentleigh September 2024

Spring is in the air...

FEATURE ARTICLES
& EXPERT ADVICE

Live well. Age well.
Expert advice on
Health and
Technology
Teachers tell about
their classes
Members' travel
adventures and
creative writing



<https://u3abentleigh.org.au>

about our
NEW
Publication

This publication represents more than just a new format... it's a platform for our members to shine and for our collective achievements to be celebrated. We believe that The U3A Connections will foster a deeper sense of community, encourage engagement, and provide inspiration to all.



President's Ponder

Hi Everybody

Welcome to the first issue of our Magazine style communication. The idea behind it is that it's not only For You but also to a much greater extent By You.

I know that Dot Tane (our editor) has put a lot of effort and I believe has received a lot of enjoyment in bringing this baby into the U3A Benteigh world. I have only just read this myself and my reaction - WOW! Well done Dot. This is not something to read in one sitting but something to be enjoyed over the next month or so. There will be a few copies in the kitchen area for everybody's perusal.

Some news to bring to your attention: We have had a few new volunteers to the Front Office - please make them feel welcome. We love our volunteers.

I hope you are enjoying the new furniture in both the kitchen and in the corridor. This has been contributed to us by the Glen Eira Council for the enjoyment of all and it's lovely and looks so much more comfortable and welcoming to our area.

Am hoping that we will be getting some curtains on the window courtesy of Kerrie Dugdale and her team to complement the new look and also to make reading the dial on the microwave a lot easier.

You might have noticed that we have a new tenant in the wing - Southern FM 88.3 radio is now in Moorleigh Village and Pat Watts our Vice President does a Tuesday morning session each week and would always love to hear from our members and promote anything you would like to put out on the airwaves.

I also want to give a BIG welcome to 2 new members of our Committee of Management Team. Jo Burnell is taking on the Publicity portfolio and Ulrich Seydel will be helping with the Technology side. Excellent to welcome new talent.

Thank you all contributors and please read with pleasure. Feedback always welcome.

Ciao

Erika Fleming

President, U3A Benteigh

Editor's Note

Dear Readers,

Welcome to the first issue of the U3A Quarterly Magazine! As we step into this new venture, we're excited to share with you a collection of stories, achievements, and insightful articles that celebrate the vibrancy and diversity of our U3A community.

In this edition, we spotlight some of the fantastic projects and activities happening across U3A Benteigh. From fascinating classes and workshops to inspiring member stories, you'll find a wealth of content designed to engage, inform, and entertain. We delve into the impact of lifelong learning and how it enriches our lives, featuring contributions from members who have embraced new skills and passions with enthusiasm.

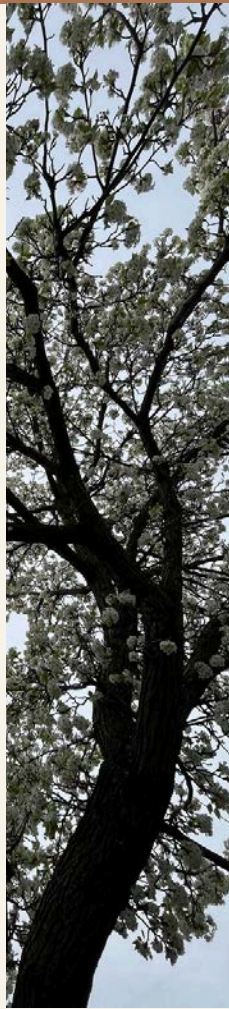
We also take a moment to reflect on recent events and look forward to upcoming opportunities for connection and growth within U3A Benteigh. Your participation and feedback will drive the success of our magazine, and we are deeply grateful for your ongoing support.

Thank you for being a part of this wonderful community. I hope you enjoy this issue as much as I enjoyed putting it together.

Warmest regards,

Dot Tane

Editor, U3A Quarterly Connections Magazine



Live well, age well. In contemplation

by Olive Collingwood

A few weeks ago I had an in-home assessment by the 'My Age Care' team. After what seemed a multitude of questions over a period of an hour I found myself in a different space. I was advised to consider accepting in house cleaning of 1 1/2 hour once a month even though I had said I could manage the task myself. Then there was the cleaning of outside windows and clearing of gutters both I admit were becoming a problem. The most obvious need were grab rails at the back entry of my house where there are several steps. None of these recommendations were urgent yet needed recording so that I could be allotted a number then for the future if I needed assistance my number may have moved up the list. Despite this and the fact that I had done such similar assessments in my previous occupation and knew the reason for them I felt quite down in spirits for several days.

Was this the end! Was it all a reminder that I was fast approaching the loss of my independence? I had been pressured, no rather advised and encouraged by friends to get the all important number, a number much different in meaning to the one we are allocated at U3A which means we belong.

Within days a wad of documents appeared in my letter box confirming that I was on the list so there was now no escape.

As I attended U3A I became my old self again, my spirits lifted. In my role as welfare coordinator I frequently assist others to think positively in their difficult periods so this position gives me a sense of usefulness. My own feeling of self worth and independence soars.

Life learning groups such as U3A can save lives in having a purpose to get out off bed in the morning and connect with others of like mind. To age well is to live well. Dr Stephen Ames says 'It can nurture a larger sense of self worth as the years steal away our physical abilities' through wear and tear. 'It is not that there is something wrong with us when our bodies decline but that we are in common with nature, with all of creation'

In ageing well we have time to focus on sharing. Those who have the leisure of freedom can align these energies in new interests and pursuits. Sir Winston Churchill once said "We make a living by what we get but we make a life by what we give."

At our U3A there is a rich mix of people with whom one can nurture relationships. Rather than being task-oriented as in earlier years, one can relax in the freedom of allowing one's own personage to evolve as one steps away from the necessity of earning a living. Latent skills resurface and an opportunity to revisit them with others so ready to listen opens up what may have become a closed world.

To quote Jung "Not to visit one's past is to suffer a great loss." These words surely tell us that we have hidden qualities. Kierkegaard a 19th c philosopher said "While life is lived forward it is understood backwards."

At U3A our motto is 'To live learn and enjoy.' So let's do it!



Expert Advice on HEALTH

by Rhonda Hill

Falls Prevention

Don't fall for it... falls can be prevented

“Peer Group Educator”. Rhonda Hill (Volunteer 18 years Bentleigh Bayside Community Centre, now Better Up Heath)

Falling is a leading cause of injury in people aged 65 years and over.

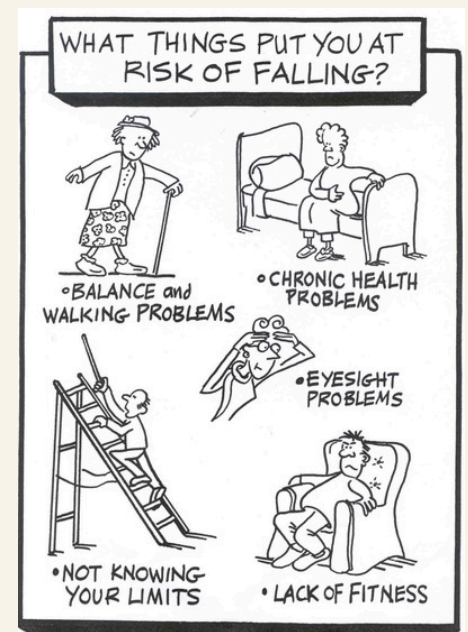
Almost 75% of people report slips, trips and loss of balance as the cause of the fall.

The good news:

- **Many falls are preventable**
- **Injury from falls can be minimised.**
- **Ageing does not have to mean a loss of independence.**

Introducing some strategies to hopefully prevent your risk of a fall. Research shows there are 8 major risk factors involved in a fall.

1. Poor eyesight
2. Lack of Balance and Co-ordination
3. Incorrect footwear – not looking after your feet
4. Lack of exercise. Becoming isolated and sedentary impacts on muscle tone and bone strength etcetera.
5. Poor Nutrition. Dehydration. Inadequate sun time.
6. Medication – not understanding side effects or correct dosages.
7. Chronic Health conditions
8. Hazards in and around the home



FALL-PROOFING YOURSELF

Poorer eyesight: We may find we can't see quite as clearly, are less able to judge distances and depth or can't cope with sudden changes in light levels or glare. Be aware when going indoors from outside, give your eyes time to adjust, just in case the furry friend or anything else may trip you up as you step inside. Brim hats are a good protection against this. Have your eyesight and glasses checked by an optometrist at least once a year. Eye exercises are also beneficial. Hydration is very important in keeping our eyes nourished. Natural herbs to enhance healthy eye function, aid night vision and promote healthy blood circulation, such as Pharma Botanica Eyes Bright. Always consult with your Physician or Health care provider.

Lack of Balance and Co-ordination: Worse balance, weaker muscles and stiffer joints change the way we walk and move around. Less feeling in the feet and legs leads to increased likelihood of pain, changes to the shape and flexibility of our feet, slower reaction times and more difficulty concentrating on several things at the one time. Keep as active as possible. Make sure you hydrate adequately. Stand up slowly after lying down or sitting. Start taking on some balancing exercises.

Keep yourself mobile: Sitting too long is now regarded to be as bad as smoking. Inactive or unfit people tend to have poorer balance and weaker muscles and can be unsteady when walking. These can all increase the risk of falling. Walking less makes joints stiffen, which leads to worse balance and makes you more prone to falls.

by Rhonda Hill

OUR BODIES ARE DESIGNED TO MOVE: In order to improve balance, muscle strength and flexibility, as well as keep bones strong. By improving bone and muscle mass, energy levels increase. Help with sleeping problems lead to better controlled blood pressure, blood sugar levels and weight. All these could help you feel good about life and motivated to join in.

What can you do: Be physically active every day, aim to spend at least 10 to 30 minutes per day, 5 days per week. Seated chair exercise will also benefit. Nothing needs to be too strenuous. Enjoy!

Being physically active means: If you stumble, you have a better chance of saving yourself and not actually falling, because your legs are stronger and your co-ordination and reaction time is better.

If you do fall, you are less likely to fracture a bone because your bones are stronger. Being active doesn't mean you have to sweat or strain and get tired. Find an activity or exercise that suits your base level of fitness and health and your interest. Consider swimming, hydrotherapy, tai chi, strength training, bowls or tennis. Make it a fun time! Falling may result in being too afraid or anxious of falling again. Pick yourself up, dust yourself off and start all over again, to regain your confidence.

Medicines: Be aware of what you are taking and mixing with it. Have adequate hydration. Possible side effects maybe drowsiness, confusion, unsteadiness and dizziness. Seek a Medication review with your Doctor. Store your medication correctly and ensure your medicine packs are well organized.

Footwear: One of the causes of falls is wearing the wrong shoes. Make sure you have good fitting shoes, room for the toes, soles that grip and supportive firm arch support that covers most of the foot.

What you can do: See a podiatrist or Doctor if you have painful or swollen joints, tingling or pins and needles in your feet or changes to the shape of your feet eg. Bunions. Don't wear poorly fitted slippers or walk in socks. Your podiatrist may suggest ways to find suitable shoes or reduce pain in your feet.

Hazards in and around the home: Consider fall proofing your surroundings. Sixty percent of falls happen in and around the home. Try not to shuffle when you walk. Tripping: As we lose the "spring in our step" we don't pick up our feet as much when moving around, so we are more inclined to trip over even small things.

What can you do: Declutter the inside and outside of your home. Keep walkways clear. Tuck electric cords under furniture. Check out door paths for cracks and uneven areas. Make sure quilts, bed-spreads and curtains do not fall across the floor. Remove mats and rugs or have them secured. Roll up the hose. Check where your pet is before you move. Have adequate lighting. Avoid slippery surfaces, do not place sprays on tiles or vinyl. Check with the council for hand rails or seats. Ensure walkways around the house have non-slip surfaces. Highlight edges of steps.

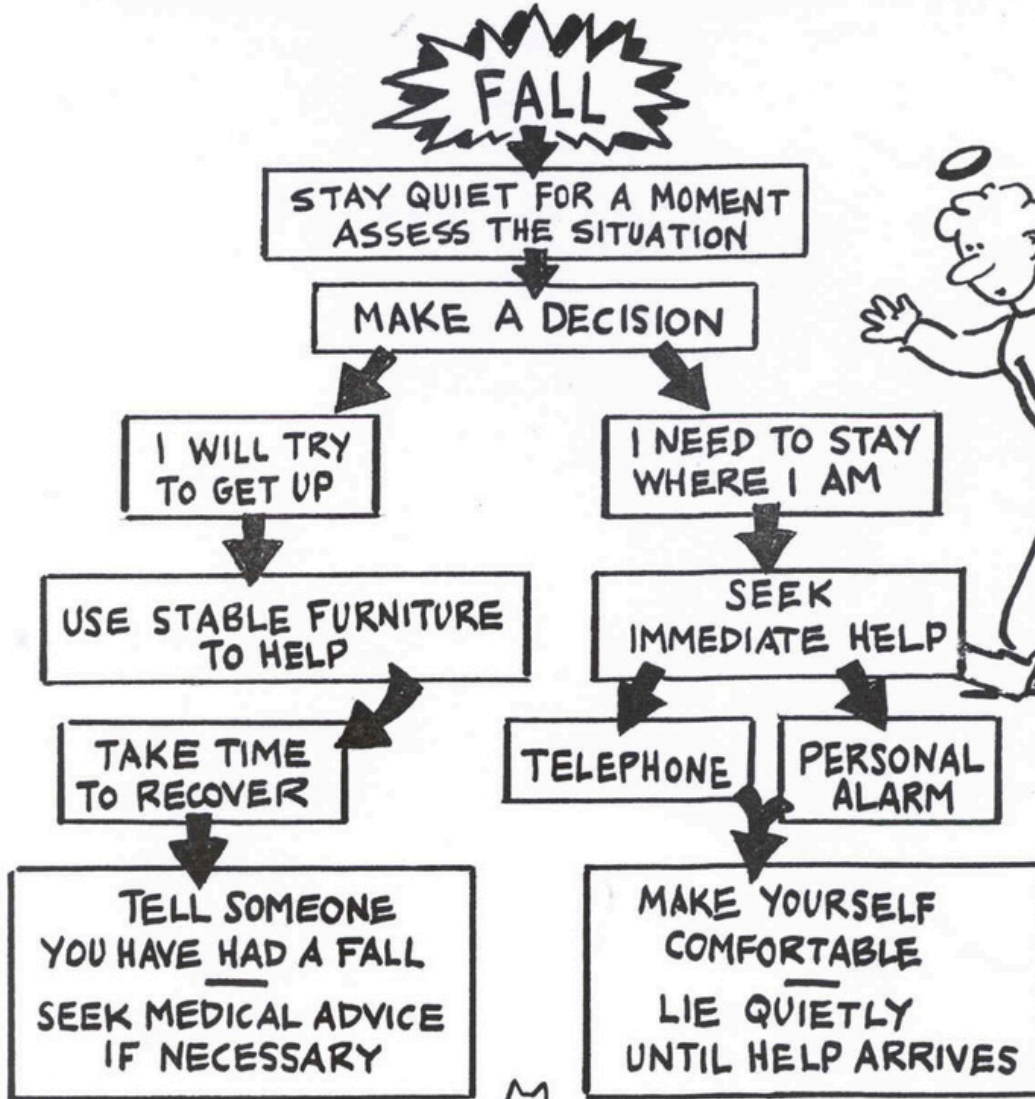
Common problems areas are lighting, tripping, slipping and structural hazards. Don't rush, take your time. KNOWING YOUR OWN LIMITS...

Don't try climbing ladders or standing on chairs to reach things. Stay ALERT.

THE MAIN MESSAGES: Don't fall for it... falls can be prevented!

- 1 MOVE IT OR LOSE IT. Healthy ageing involves physical activity, healthy eating and a little sunshine.
- 2 Keep actively involved with friends, family and the community. The more you do, the more you can do.
- 3 Be sensible, and recognize your limitations. Do things safely and don't be too proud to ask for help.
- 4 Manage your health problems and medicines well. Speak to your Doctor about it.
- 5 Make your home and its surroundings as safe as possible.
- 6 Have a plan of how to get help in an emergency.
- 7 Take steps to minimise any harm done in the event of a fall.

WHAT IF YOU FALL AT HOME?





by Eric Aston

Computer Tips For Windows Users:

Did you know that in addition to using the mouse to select actions for the computer to carry out, there are many shortcuts involving multi-key commands that can be used instead? We have recently been looking at some of these multi-key commands in our Thursday computer classes.

What is a multi-key command? A multi-key command involves holding down one (or more) modifying keys whilst you hit another key, after which you then release the modifying key(s).

The most common modifying keys are the Shift, Ctrl, Fn, Windows and Alt keys. These keys are used alone or in conjunction with other modifying keys. All of these keys are located in the bottom left-hand corner of the keyboard. On some keyboards some of these keys are repeated elsewhere on the keyboard. Some keyboards may label these keys in a slightly different way.

An example of a multi-key command is how you type an asterisk. To type an asterisk you hold down the Shift-key while you hit the 8-key, after which you release the Shift-key. Other examples would be for typing the @, \$, and % symbols; all of these are done by holding down the Shift-key while you hit the appropriate number key, after which you release the Shift-key.

Typing these special symbols (which are usually printed on the relevant numeric key) is probably familiar to you. However there are many multi-key commands that are not so obvious or visible.

One multi-key command that I often use is Alt-F4. (This is how a multi-key command is written. In speech we simply say "Alt F4".) Alt-F4 means that you hold down the Alt-key while you hit the FunctionKey-4, after which you release the Alt-key. (Please note you do not hold down the Alt-key while you hit the F key followed by a hit of the 4-key.) The Alt-F4 multikey command will immediately close the active Window. Using Alt-F4 is often much quicker and easier than hunting for the little x in the top right-hand corner of the window to click to close the window. You can use the Alt-F4 multi-key command repeatedly until there are no more Windows to close.

If you use the Alt-F4 multi-key command when there are no active windows you are given a set of options, one of which is to shut down the computer. Once again this is often much quicker or convenient than using the mouse.

A lot of information about multi-key commands and other shortcuts can be found at

<https://technastic.com/windows-10-keyboard-shortcuts>

If anyone is having difficulties using multi-key commands you may email me at ericaston5810@yahoo.com.au outlining your problem. More computer tips in future issues of The Quarterly Connections.

Expert Advice on TECHNOLOGY

by David Hutt

Smartphone Snippets

Once upon a time, a mobile phone simply made telephone calls and little else. How times have changed. Now people complain if their “Smartphone” doesn’t do everything for them. Today smartphones not only make telephone calls but also make calls with video, play music, take photographs, search the internet, and provide directions (GPS) to name a just few things.

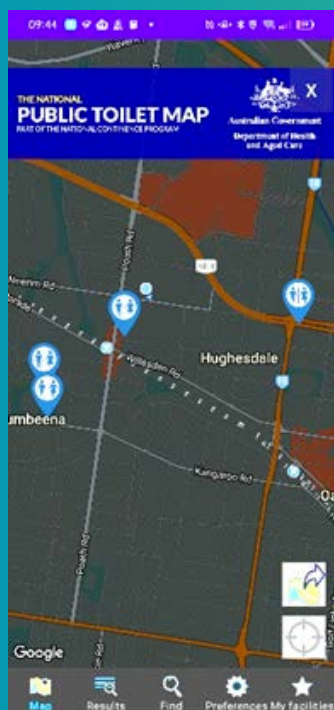
I am an Android smartphone user but most of the things I’ll be talking about are available for iPhone users too. The purpose these snippets is to introduce some applications (or Apps as they are known) that may be of use to you. The Apps are to be found on Google Play for Android users and the App Store for iPhone users

This time, an App that I am sure will be very helpful for many of you. Many is the time when out walking or driving people have been caught “short”. Wouldn’t it be great if we had a way of finding out the location of the nearest toilet.

The “National Public Toilet Map” App is the answer. The App was developed by the Australian Government (Dept. of Health and Aged Care) and is very easy to use. The App uses the ability of a Smartphone to know your location and shows on a map where the nearest toilets are to be found.

(N.B. You may have to give the Smartphone permission to know your location.)

Once the App has been installed you will see wherever you are, a map of your location and that of the nearest toilets.

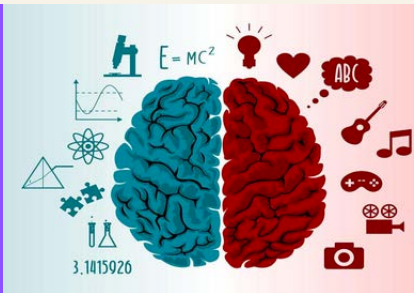


You will also to be able to select your preference for the sort of toilet you wish to find, disabled, male/female, baby change facilities etc. by using the “Preferences” icon at the bottom of the screen. You can scroll down for more options

Unfortunately, it is not possible to go into more detail here. If you are interested in the App, have installed it but are not sure how to set it up or use it, it is suggested that you attend the “4th Friday Technology Corner” in Room 41.

Use Your Brain... about the class

by Carolyn Ruddick



My name is Carolyn Ruddick. I have been a member of Bentleigh U3A for 10 years or so and I took over the running of the 'Use Your Brain' class about 4 years ago. I'm proud to say that it has been very successful. We are a relaxed,

friendly and cheerful group, where new contacts are made and friendships forged, and, hopefully, where a little learning is taking place!! I have a background in health and health education, and I have a strong commitment to life long learning, not just for interest, but now, to help hold off the dreaded dementia, which strikes fear into the hearts of all those who have had any experience of it.

The class has had full subscription for a number of years now, largely due, I think, to the fun that we have, the diversity of the exercises we do, and the fact that the year is punctuated by lunches out at various places, where pure social interaction, and relaxation is the goal.

The exercises are varied—geography quizzes, trivia, maths problems, sudoku, crosswords, memory tests and creative writing, just to name a few. Class members do not get off scot-free!! They are expected to do their own research, and contribute exercises as often as they can. It is not competitive! We all do what we are able to, with a little push to improve next time.

I recommend 'Use Your Brain' to those who are looking for something different for 2025, but please book as soon as the enrollments open, so as not to be disappointed.

Remember to always keep your brain moving, as well as your body!

Cheers Carolyn Ruddick



REBUS PUZZLES 5

gnish fish	ANIMAL	TOUCH
B	STONE	Love sight sight sight
OVER	A N	cat
The w KING oods	SAND	BIRDS

Answers: Fishing Hook; Farm Animal; Touchdown; Honeybee; Cornerstone; Love at first sight; Freeze Over; Cavenan /Man Cave; Catwalk; Hiking in the woods; Sandbox; Lovebirds.

Are you breathing properly? about the class...

by Mannuel Goldberg

Do we really know how to breathe properly?

We all think we know how to breathe, but in an emergency do we know the proper methods in this situation?

My class teaches the proper procedures, making you fully aware of where you are and what to do in that situation...

We all have ailments, especially as we grow old...

The point I want to raise here is how do we combat these dis-eases and get back to the road of recovery?

There are many methods by going to your local physician and getting a 'quick fix!'

Then there is the other 'holistic' way that incorporates breathing and exercise, making yourself 'aware' of your body and then putting that into a 'health plan'.

It could be something as simple as changing your dietary intake ie having wholemeal bread, rather than white bread, having raw sugar rather than white sugar etc. These are simple ways that could give you a new aspect in becoming healthier in your life and not relying on your doctor etc.

My breathing exercises that I teach is an alternative way of making yourself aware of the 'breathe' and how to utilise this in your everyday life activities!

Yogonanda quotes

"THE GREATER THE WILL,
THE GREATER THE FLOW OF ENERGY"

'Energization Exercises' every Thursday 10:30am

AT THE HEART OF EVERY SUCCESSFUL ORGANIZATION LIES A TEAM OF DEDICATED INDIVIDUALS...

A word from Ann Nguyen

U3A BENTLEIGH COURSE COORDINATOR :



My name is Anne Nguyen. I was working in Australian Taxation Office for 30 years. My last role in ATO was Project Manager for 18 years and I retired from the Tax Office in 2019.

I'm currently the Course Coordinator at U3A Bentleigh where I develop, promote and arrange new courses. I support and communicate with course Tutors in conjunction with Glen Eira Council Liaison and U3A Victoria Network.

I joined U3A Bentleigh as a member in August 2022 to the Cloth and Yarn class on Thursday weekly where I found amazing Tutor support who taught me how to do the Patch work, the group is cheerful with great friendships, we are sharing craft experiences and help each other to build up the hobby which interested us.

My hobbies are clothes sewing, patchwork, long and short embroidery and cross stitching.



Along the line, as new U3A Bentleigh member, I started as a volunteer at the Reception, then I had offered to undertake the Courses Coordinator roles in 2023 where at first, during transition period - I was working with amazing mentor Rosemary Browning (former U3A Course Coordinator). Rosemary is an exceptional mentor who helped me during the transition.

As a member of the U3A Committee, I contribute my years of experiences in ATO to the Committee for day to day operations with the improvement process and procedure.

After retirement I was grateful that I found U3A Bentleigh where I found great friendships, who share U3A Bentleigh vision with hard work and desire to maintain and keep up good reputation for the Centre. U3A is the place where I can find the happiness of continuing learning, enjoy life with great friendship toward end of my career life.



AT THE HEART OF EVERY SUCCESSFUL ORGANIZATION LIES A TEAM OF DEDICATED INDIVIDUALS...

A word from Ann Watts

U3A BENTLEIGH ADMIN :



Hi, I'm Ann Watts and you will see me every Friday morning volunteering in reception and covering other shifts, when there is no volunteer available. I joined U3A when I was about to retire, was new to the Glen Eira area and needed something to keep me occupied and meet new people. I had enrolled in the marvelous Monday Exploring Drawing class with Ken and Renate when Neville Curtis asked if I would help out in reception. Why not? New things to learn and the satisfaction of helping people.

Then along came Covid to disrupt our lives, member numbers fell drastically and I could see the need to focus on promoting our organization if the then U3A Moorleigh was going to survive. I joined the Committee of Management and had to be creative in advertising and promoting U3A; this was really a steep learning curve but with the support of fellow members, we spread the word and numbers improved. Now I feel I can relax, look after reception duties and fit in a few classes. My great love is watercolour painting. I say love but it's a very frustrating medium to master, which is probably what keeps me plugging away with our tutor, the very talented Kath Raulings who makes it all look so easy! I also make the games room available on the first and third Saturday of the month for those who enjoy playing cards and next year we will add board games, so if your weekends are a bit lonely, come and join us. We need more volunteers, particularly teachers and if you have an interest, hobby or skill and want to share your information with others, go and talk to the other Anne (Nguyen). After all, we're only as good as our curriculum. Volunteering makes you feel good and supports your community so think about it.

Chess Sets Needed

Last semester tutor Eric Aston was teaching beginner's how to play chess. He was so successful that several of those members have now enrolled in Friday's chess class and are putting what they learned into practice. The Friday chess class is now full and we are asking if anyone has a board and chessmen that they don't use, would you consider donating them to U3A? Two sets would probably see us up to date. Doug Kennedy, who runs the chess class is overjoyed at the change in his fortunes!!



Your Role in keeping the ROLL!

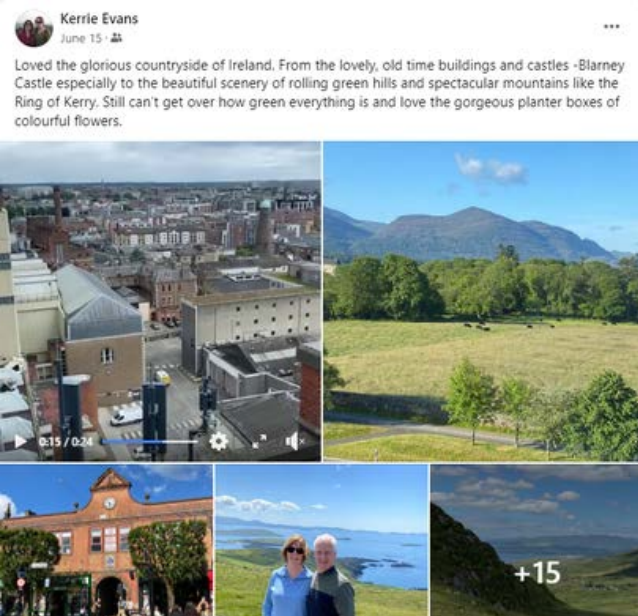
We need your help in keeping the class attendance rolls accurate. For the first time since returning from the Covid lock downs, we have a small team of volunteers who will attend Umas online activities and follow up on class absences so we can move members from a wait list into a class as efficiently as possible. If you have been asked to act as a class coordinator and manage the attendance roll, 'Thank You'. If your class needs a coordinator you might consider volunteering. It is NOT the tutors role. When you attend a class you MUST wear your badge. and you MUST ensure that your presence in the room is noted on the roll by putting a TICK next to your name on the day you are there. If we did have an emergency we need to know who you are and that you are safe. The only other marks needed are to circle that tick if you leave early or write AP (apology) on a future day if you know you can't attend. These simple marks will help the office staff see quickly what is happening in a class rather than interpreting a multitude of squiggles! Also it has come to notice that many members send an apology to their tutor but don't let the office know. Always advise the U3A office of your inability to attend; This can be done in class, by phone, email or online . Your assistance with these simple steps will make the office staff very happy. Thank you

Member's Travel Adventure...

by Kerrie Evans



During June and July this year, my husband and I travelled to London to begin our 6 week UK/European holiday. Our vacation began with a 12 night bus tour with Insight Vacations. We explored many places in England, Scotland, Ireland and Wales. We then travelled by ourselves back to London, Paris, Belgium followed by Leiden and Amsterdam in the Netherlands. Finally, we concluded our trip with a 15 day river cruise from Amsterdam down the Rhine and Danube through Germany, Austria and finishing in Budapest Hungary. We docked every day along the river at a new destination and were able to explore some beautiful majestic towns, villages, palaces and many amazing castles. We highly recommend both Insight Vacations bus tour and APT river cruises for looking after us so well. We were treated like royalty with fabulous accommodation, wonderful food, amazing experiences and extremely knowledgeable and fascinating tour guides. We would also like to highly recommend Gemma Sergeant from Flight Centre Southland who organised our entire trip for us! This made our trip truly memorable. Now the problem... where to next?



Therapy Dogs at U3A Benteleigh

by Helen Campbell

We have two therapy dogs Tango and Faery whose role is to give affection.

They come on Monday morning so please come for a hug at lunchtime especially if you have no pet at home.

Dog hugs are especially good for those who have recently lost a loved one.

If you need help with dog training I am happy to help.



What Are Therapy Dogs?

Definition: Therapy dogs are trained to offer emotional support and comfort to people in need. Unlike service dogs, which are trained to perform specific tasks for individuals with disabilities, therapy dogs focus on providing emotional and psychological benefits.

Training: Therapy dogs undergo specific training to ensure they are well-behaved, calm, and comfortable in various environments. They are trained to interact gently and reassuringly with people and to follow basic commands reliably.



Benefits of Therapy Dogs

Emotional Support:

- **Stress Relief:** Interacting with therapy dogs has been shown to lower stress levels and improve mood. Petting a dog can trigger the release of endorphins, which help reduce anxiety and increase feelings of happiness.
- **Comfort in Difficult Times:** Therapy dogs provide solace and comfort to individuals facing challenging situations, such as illness, trauma, or loss. Their presence can be especially comforting in hospitals or care facilities.

Social Interaction:

- **Encouraging Communication:** Therapy dogs often serve as icebreakers, helping individuals initiate conversations and build social connections. This can be particularly beneficial in settings like schools or therapy sessions.
- **Reducing Loneliness:** The companionship of therapy dogs can help alleviate feelings of loneliness and isolation, fostering a sense of connection and support.

Physical Benefits:

- **Encouraging Physical Activity:** Engaging with therapy dogs can motivate individuals to participate in physical activities, such as walking or playing, which can be beneficial for overall health.
- **Improving Motor Skills:** Activities involving therapy dogs can aid in developing and maintaining fine and gross motor skills, particularly in rehabilitation settings.



The Joy in Mentoring

by Katie Shafar

Years ago I spent a huge amount of money going to lots of different seminars, and although they concerned property, mostly they were around mindset... The teachers were all my mentors. I learned the power of being a mentee and the power of having a mentor in my life.

First and foremost, I learned to have a glass half full approach to life and this is the big take away that I try to share with those I am blessed to mentor!

Do not underestimate the impact of a mentor. You all have it in you! The impact of mentoring can be so subtle yet be so enduring and last for a life time. It's like a pebble in the pond – your impact can go on for many generations and you will never ever know....

I am now proud to have had several mentoring experiences.

In planning my retirement some years ago, and having worked on Nauru in 2015, I knew that I wanted to be a mentor to the disadvantaged, and asylum seekers / refugees. Mentoring this group has not been easy.

One big lesson has been about setting boundaries, very careful note taking and good support - so very important.

Mentoring is so very rewarding and can help you put your own troubles into perspective... Even though I was not able to make lasting change for one in particular, I was privileged to have been a part of his very troubled life even for 6 months. I hope the pebbles in the pond did indeed make some ripples of positive change in his life. I know it did for me. I learned so much!

A MENTOR
IS SOMEONE
WHO ALLOWS YOU
TO SEE THE HOPE
INSIDE YOURSELF
Oprah Winfrey

There are mentoring opportunities everywhere. We need to be curious, be interested. Reach out. SO MANY PEOPLE NEED HELP AND SUPPORT – YOU ALL HAVE GREAT SKILLS TO SHARE. Think you can't make a difference, think again – you are!

Ladies who Lunch

by Ann Watts

Thanks to an invitation from Crystall Mousious, the Community Connect manager for Keyton Retirement Villages, a group of U3A members had a wonderful afternoon out at the Classic Residences in Brighton East. Our visit started with an inspection of a typical apartment at Classic and followed with a tour of the wonderful facilities offered in the village. We then made our way down to the events room where we were served a choice of two main courses and deserts, all cooked in the Classic's kitchen. The food was tasty, light and elegant (we even had linen serviettes!) As we ate, Donna, the owner/manager of U & I Designs talked us through some of her Spring range of clothes styled specifically for those over 55years. Models paraded and we could see how outfits can be put together to best effect. U & I are based in Benteigh and provide a mobile shopping experience and a styling studio. Well of course, we had to do some shopping after being so inspired, so expect an improvement in the sartorial standard on members very soon! We do thank Keyton and Crystall particularly for always thinking of U3A Benteigh when she has a promotional event.



Pamela's Birthday

by Lorraine Harris



On August 15th Pamela Nicholls who has been a member of this U3A since 1997 celebrated her 101th year. She has been a member of the Creative Writing class at U3A Benteigh (formerly Moorleigh) for many years. Pamela's class mates celebrated her birthday during their class on Tuesday 14th August. Members enjoyed dumplings, tasty biscuits and rich chocolate cake all washed down with champagne as they sang Happy Birthday to Pamela. Pamela is an inspiration to her fellow class members. She attends regularly and contributes, with her creative writing pieces, to the class. The other class members are in awe of her longevity, creativity, and resilience. She credits her good health to the support given to her by the class. Pamela is a testament to the benefits of living a rich and fulfilling life and an excellent advertisement for the benefits membership of U3A can confer.

Thoughts on the Art of Drawing

by Costas Pothoulakis... The Art Tutor

What is art really? This is a question that if you ask ten people, you will receive twelve answers because two persons had second thoughts about it. To distill the answer down to its basest, I will say this. **Art is the act of creation of an idea or a vision into a form shape, sound or motion.** In other words, in sculpture that idea is turned into a form by the sculptor, a shape by the painter, sound by the musician, and dance by the dancer. All those disciplines though have something very important in common. The power of thoughts and visualisation which without it, art cannot exist. It is at the same time important for one to understand that the final art product is only the result of other disciplines the main one being the study of drawing, which again is the result of other abilities. You see in art, nothing stands alone. Every step from the final going backwards to the first step, one is a result of the previous in line. I will explain as simply as I'm able to. Take any masterpiece, say the Last Supper. It is the result of a detailed drawing study. That drawing study is the result of a mental vision. That vision is the result of an original idea. Now this truth is "carved in stone" and as such has an no room for either doubt or argument. But let us concentrate on the discipline of drawing, and why we must realise that when I say that **"drawing is not just drawing"** I mean that the act of drawing is the product of something else, or rather a series of other things. Because as I said above, no part of art stands alone.

One cannot attempt to learn how to draw, without activating imagination, to visualise. Visualisation in turn, activates ones ability to judge light, shade, size, distance, etc. So we must agree that one cannot start drawing who finds an art instructor who gives attention to the mental part of the study, the understanding, parallel to the technique. Unfortunately not many students pay enough attention to the importance of the mind work described here, resulting in work of inferior quality. Students of drawing, often fail to understand the importance of this discipline because discipline it is, and the immense satisfaction it offers when done well. Not only this, but as mentioned previously here, by studying drawing, without knowing one studies painting at the same time because drawing and painting are interlocked. Additionally, by learning how to draw, one learns how to look at nature with a "different" eye. I mean that one starts to notice details in nature that did not notice before. Sbtle nuances adn details shades, colours, textures and a myriad of other details previously not having paid attention to. Some call this the "artist's eye". Now of course one might ask, but wouldn't it be hard for a grown up to learn how to draw? After all don't they say abolut old dogs learnign new rticks? And I am here to say, no, it is not. The difficulty does not lay in the learning to draw, but in learning to suppress ones ego, and learn to accept the teaching with humility and attention. Only by doing this great satisfaction will follow. Do not make an enemy of the tutor who will critique you work negatively. Be thankful for telling you the truth, so you know you have to enhance your efforts. Because if he compliments a bad work, he is shutting the door of advancement. These are some of my thoughts about drawing in an nutshell. Of course volumes more can be written on the subject both philosophical and technical but I'd leave this task to others.



The Pale Blue Dot

by Neville Curtis... The Astronomy Tutor

The pale blue dot...



In 1990, the Voyager 1 space craft, in the early stages of its voyage out of the solar system into interstellar space, turned its camera back and took a photo of earth.

In these troubled times, it would do well for humanity to view and listen to the reaction of the renowned scientist and educator, Carl Sagan, to this photo.

If all eight billion citizens of the earth viewed this short video, the earth would be a better place.

It can be seen by keying Google "Pale blue dot video" and selecting the best version.



THE PALE BLUE DOT

"TO ME, IT UNDERSCORES OUR RESPONSIBILITY TO DEAL MORE KINDLY WITH ONE ANOTHER, AND TO PRESERVE AND CHERISH THE PALE BLUE DOT, THE ONLY HOME WE'VE EVER KNOWN."

- CARL SAGAN

Found and Then Lost

by Lorraine Harris

Time and Tide

Life is one funny business. We begin what we hope will be a long and eventful journey as a tiny helpless creature. Childhood can be rocky. We are cajoled, coerced and compelled to jump through a myriad of hoops in order to become socialised. The childhood years are a staging post where the skills for the future are imbedded.

And then we slough off the crippling dependency that has worked to curtail the creativity and exuberance with which we were born. We emerge like trembling butterflies shucking off a chrysalis into our late teens/early twenties. And what a bonanza awaits. With some basic employment delivering finances to squander, a driver's licence conferring mobility and the constitution of an ox we are off.

Suddenly night clubs beckon and we have the physic to meet their challenge. Early mornings, staggering home the worse for wear, become the norm. After a little initial discomfort the next day our stamina is such that we can arise and with some medicinal help, plunge back into the party scene again. We look in the mirror to discover bright sparkling eyes which, when scanning the future can see nothing but an endless horizon of potential. Our hearing vibrates with potency allowing us to gyrate to the loudest of beats and still hear the birds singing the next morning. Balance and mobility ensure that we can creep past the old folks bedroom in the early mornings and, despite the alcohol floating around our systems, avoid the squeaky floorboard.

The years pass so fast as we transition into the world of responsible adults, securing careers, incubating the next generation, accumulating wealth. We are too busy to catalogue our losses. Until the decades roll by and one day we hear ourselves saying - "You know I don't really drive at night any more". The first time you get on a crowded tram and someone scurries to give you a seat hits like a hefty punch to the solar plexus.

Suddenly you are "elderly", sporting aids to perform the basics. The freedom you found as a young adult has gone. In middle age you accepted that loss phlegmatically coinciding as it did with the arrival of confidence, security and a family to love. But now the loss is different. The thought of staying out all night would fight a losing battle if put up against the thought of snuggling into a soft comfy bed with a good book. The prospect of quaffing champagne until the wee small hours would lose out to the sound of the kettle boiling to produce a strong cup of tea. The penchant for loud music is lost as we now contemplate the sentimentality of Andre Rieu.

But when Monday afternoon rolls around and I set out to pick up my grandkids from school I know that it is only a matter of time before they too find those joys that for me are now just a memory. I hope I am around to pick up the pieces should it be necessary.

enjoy
THE
Journey

The Battle in the Grocery Store

by Ling Wang



One bright Sunday morning, I strolled into my local grocery store, expecting nothing more than simple shopping, ready to buy some fresh food. But as soon as I pushed open the old door, what a sight met me. Right there, between the fruits and vegetables, an intense showdown was unfolding.

It all started with Apple, perched high up on the fruit shelf, looking down at the other products. Apple was feeling particularly proud and belittled Carrot, who was sitting on the opposite vegetable shelf.

“Look at your orange skin, so dull and plain! You’ll never be as shiny and bright as my red peel,” Apple sneered, its voice full of arrogance.

“At least I’m rich in vitamin A! I’m great for people’s eyesight. And you? You’re just full of sugar and calories!” Carrot shot back.

Apple, furious and unwilling to back down, rolled off its shelf, determined to teach Carrot a lesson. But Carrot was quick. He leapt to the side, letting Apple crash to the ground.

Banana, observing the drama from a nearby shelf, quickly rushed over to help Apple up. “Don’t think your veggies are the only nutritious ones!” Banana yelled at Carrot, “I’m packed with potassium, which is super important too!”

Carrot was unimpressed by Banana’s outburst. “And you,” Carrot said with a laugh, “you’re so delicate that you bruise if someone even touches you heavily! Stay out of this...”

Just as the argument was getting heated, Tomato jumped in, “Stop this nonsense!” he shouted, “Can’t you see we’re all part of the same team? I’m both a fruit and a vegetable, and I say we shouldn’t be fighting. We all bring something unique to people.”

Tomato’s words made everyone pause. Carrot took a deep breath and admitted, “You’re right, Tomato. We may be different, but we’re all healthy and important in our own way.”

Apple nodded in agreement. “Yes, we should appreciate each other’s strengths instead of focusing on our differences.”

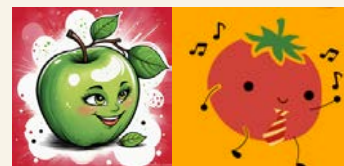
With that, the fruits and vegetables decided to call a truce, realizing that by working together, they could bring more health and happiness to everyone who visited the grocery store.

As I walked out of the grocery store, my cart was filled with a variety of fruits and vegetables. I couldn’t help but reflect on the surprising lesson I had witnessed.

Watching Apple, Carrot, Banana, and Tomato argue about who was more important, I realised how often we, as people, do the same. We get caught up in comparing ourselves to others, focusing on our differences instead of recognising the unique strengths of each of us.

It’s just a reflection of our own lives and relationships. How often have we failed to see the value in someone else’s contributions because we were too focused on our own values?

Apple’s pride in its bright red peel and Carrot’s boast about its vitamin A content are just different expressions of the same truth: they both have something valuable to offer.



We meet no ordinary people in
our
lives. If
you
give them
a chance,
everyone has something
amazing to offer.

Lucky for the Aardvark

by Jan Sullivan



It was a dark and stormy night. The clouds were moving quickly across the sky and there were lightning flashes in the distance. Suddenly the doorbell rang. The shadow of their late night caller could be seen through the glass front doors.

‘Just a minute...’ thought Dorothy.

That won’t work. She had a feeling she’d heard that opening phrase somewhere before. It sounded like a great opening line until one realised it was because it was so familiar. Her work needed to be totally original if she wanted to get published. Perhaps she could start with something that sounded similar but wasn’t the same. If a ‘dark and stormy night’ worked, so could something that rhymed.

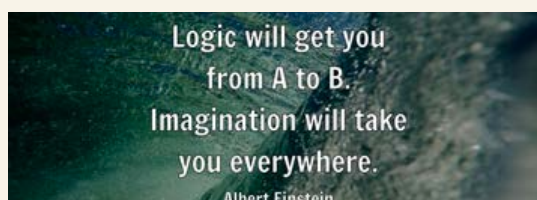
‘She was in the park when she spotted a thorny sight.’ Her story could be about a garden, gardeners or even a rare plant, thorny of course! She could have a garden competition or even a murder with the detectives being the visiting gardeners. Oh, that’s right. It was suddenly coming together because Dorothy realised she’d just outlined the synopsis for one of her favourite TV shows, Rosemary and Thyme.

She pondered and thought hard for a new opening line. What about, ‘It was the mark of a horny flight.’ This might work. After all, ‘50 shades of Grey’ had been a publishing sensation. Maybe the reading public, the airport book shoppers and romance novel crowd were waiting to read about the exploits of the flight crew at 0500 instead. The trouble was, of course, Dorothy had no idea what exploits they could be having or how to write them. She felt embarrassed even thinking about ‘a throbbing member’ let alone putting it on the page.

Dorothy stood up from her desk and stretched. She’d wanted to write a new novel for a while now and had finally started last week. Getting started was probably not accurate. The whole procedure of getting some of her ideas down in print was causing her more grief than she’d expected. What she’d actually done in the past week was drink copious cups of tea, read a couple of novels that had sat next to her bed for months and started that new ‘Impossible’ jigsaw that had been waiting for her attention on the dining room table.

‘It was an aardvark she saw in the morning light.’ Yes! Of course, an aardvark! Now Dorothy was inspired. She sat right down again, flicked the computer back on and started typing furiously. First she’d describe the aardvark, what it was wearing and what it was doing in the kitchen. Then she’d develop a whole family of aardvarks so she could write about their adventures. There’d be Adeline the mother aardvark, Alan, the dad, and perhaps a few children, Anson, Artimus and Aristotle, to start and then she’d add some girls to even out the cast of players.

Dorothy typed on furiously. One page quickly became ten. Ten became twenty. Who knew the aardvark family would be so engaging? The day wore on. She’d have to put some lights on if she was going to continue working. The weather was changing too. It looked like it was going to be a dark and stormy night.



Laughter is essential because it serves as a powerful antidote to stress and negativity, fostering a sense of connection and joy. When we laugh, our brain releases endorphins, which not only elevate our mood but also improve our overall well-being. This natural response can lighten the weight of daily challenges, making difficult situations seem more manageable. Additionally, laughter strengthens social bonds and builds a sense of community, helping us navigate life's ups and downs with a lighter heart and a brighter perspective. In essence, laughing enriches our lives by bringing moments of levity and shared happiness into our everyday experiences.

Funny jokes to brighten your day:

Why did the scarecrow win an award?
Because he was outstanding in his field!

How does a penguin build its house?
Igloos it together!

Why don't skeletons fight each other?
They don't have the guts!

What do you call fake spaghetti?
An impasta!

Why did the bicycle fall over?
Because it was two-tired!

How do you organize a space party?
You planet!

Why did the math book look sad?
It had too many problems.

I hope these bring a smile to your face!



for seniors

Talk to yourself... there are times you need expert advice.

“in style” are the clothes that still fit.

You don't need anger management.
You need people to stop irritating you.

Your people skills are just fine. It's your tolerance for idiots that need work.

The biggest lie you tell yourself is:
“I don't need to write that down. I'll remember it.”

“on time” is when you get there.

You've noticed people your age are much older than you.

Ageing has slowed you down, but it hasn't shut you up.

You still haven't learned to act your age and I hope you never will.

“One for the road” means peeing before you leave the house.



Dear Readers,

I can hear you whisper... WOW!

I appreciate feedback with the view to **make our magazine better** and more aligned with your interests. **Your feedback matters in helping to achieve that goal.**

I would love to hear your thoughts about...

1. Content: What would you like to read about? Which topics would you like to see covered?
2. Design: How do you feel about the overall design and layout of the magazine? Are there any changes you would suggest to enhance readability?
3. Features: Are there any new features or sections you think would add value?
4. General Impressions: What do you like most about the magazine?

Your insights are much appreciated. Please share your thoughts via email: magazine@u3abentleigh.org.au. **Thank you** for being a valued part of our community!

Kind regards,
Dot Tane
Editor, U3A Quarterly Connections Magazine

Ready for More **SURPRISE?**

The cosy neighbourhood café **Murrumbeena Pantry** serves the best coffee from Industry Beans. The café is open seven days a week. It is also known for its freshly baked pastries and breads from Penny for Pound, gourmet cakes from Cremorne St Bakers, and an excellent selection of vegan and gluten-free treats from The Plant Bakery. We became famous for serving a wide selection of sandwiches, award-winning Wonder Pie pies, daily homemade salads, and soup for lunch.

Murrumbeena Pantry just celebrated 18 months of trading under the new management of Elinor Mofkadi and Sylvie Gruber. Elinor said "It is a journey with a big learning curve. I enjoy interacting with so many beautiful people. My background is in education. I worked as a teacher. I'm touched by the Google reviews. It truly means a lot to me." Sylvie is the creator of A Baking Journey and recently published her first book Bite – Size French Pastries for the beginner bakers. Sylvie said "I love putting a smile on a customer's face by serving them a nice cup of coffee, treating them with one of our decadent cakes or pastries or making their lunch break special with a fresh sandwich or pie. We've built such a lovely community over the last 18 months and it's been an honour to bring a little bit of joy to our customers every day!"



COMING SOON

**for members
by members**

Looking forward to your contributions for the Quarterly Connections.
magazine@u3abentleigh.org.au

Email me your...

- Letters to the editor
- Favourite recipes for breakfast, lunch or dinner
- Gardening Tips
- Short stories
- Art work... photos...
- Saving money Tips
- Articles