



**Newsletter of
Canberra's University
of the Third Age**

www.u3acanberra.org.au

[https://www.facebook.com/
groups/u3a.act/](https://www.facebook.com/groups/u3a.act/)

September 2026

Volume 40 Number 3



Spring – Kim Pendreigh

Editor Jan Febey / Janice
Munro
Publisher Alex Gosman

ISSN (print) 2205-6106
ISSN (Web) 2205-6076

From the President

Volunteers – Supporting U3A Canberra's Future



Volunteers are the lifeblood of U3A Canberra. As a wholly volunteer organisation, we rely on members to run courses and undertake a wide range of administrative and support roles. We are fortunate to have many dedicated volunteers, some of whom have contributed for decades.

Like many community organisations, however, we are finding it increasingly difficult to attract volunteers. Recent calls

for assistance with the Committee, course administration and communications have had limited response. Reality is that we can only expect so much from our existing volunteers who have their own family, lifestyle commitments. If we cannot obtain volunteers for critical positions, then we face the option of scaling back that activity and or looking at options to pay for support.

As part of implementing our **Strategic Plan 2026–2030**, we are taking a more strategic approach to volunteering. We have engaged **CLUBMAP**, a consultancy specialising in planning for not-for-profit organisations, to help us strengthen volunteer recruitment, retention and succession planning. CLUBMAP will conduct a workshop to identify our specific needs and develop a detailed plan for attracting and retaining volunteers. Succession planning will be an important element of this exercise as we look to a more strategic approach.

We are also seeking members interested in joining the **U3A Canberra Committee**. While we have been fortunate to have a highly committed Committee with expertise across strategic planning, IT, communications, administration and finance, several current members will not be seeking re-election at the AGM in November.

We welcome members who would like to contribute their skills, experience and ideas to help shape U3A Canberra's next phase of development.

More information, including the areas where we need assistance, what is involved in being a Committee member and how to find out more, is available in the newsletter.

Alex Gosman, President

U3A Offices

Office at Hughes (ph. 6281 6998) is in the Hughes Community Centre, 2 Wisdom Street, Hughes. It is usually open Monday to Friday from 9.30 to 4.30. All general enquiries should be directed to this Office.

Our Cook facility (ph. 6251 8005) is in the Cook Community Hub, 41 Templeton Street, Cook, and has the same opening hours.

Our Flynn Teaching Rooms (Course activities only; No public or member enquiry services available) are at Flynn Community Hub, 21 Bingle St, Flynn. **Please note:** Access to U3A facilities at the Flynn Community Hub is from Hedland Circuit. For more information on holding a course at Flynn please contact the course coordinator for Flynn at flynn@u3acanberra.org.au.

Our mailing address is: U3A ACT Inc.
Hughes Community Centre
2 Wisdom Street
HUGHES ACT 2605

CONTENTS

FROM THE PRESIDENT	1
VOLUNTEERS – SUPPORTING U3A CANBERRA’S FUTURE.....	1
U3A OFFICES.....	1
CONTENTS	2
FROM THE EDITORS.....	2
U3A COURSE NEWS.....	3
A BURST OF COLOUR.....	3
THE PLAY’S THE THING	3
WARRANI CHORALE	4
ENJOYING LITERATURE.....	4
PHONE PHOTOGRAPHY.....	5
MAKING A MARK	7
RECORDER ORCHESTRA	7
PETER WHITE’S COURSES	8
THE WRITE STUFF.....	9
P(L)AYING IT FORWARD	11
CREATING A COURSE	11
MANAGING YOUR COURSE	12
JUST WRITING.....	13
WRITING ABOUT HEALING	14
DISCOVER THE JOY OF ARGENTINE TANGO!	14
EXPANDING OUR ACTIVITIES	15
COURSES, INTEREST GROUPS AND EVENTS.....	15
LIKE-MINDED AND JOINT PROGRAMS.....	16
ECHOES OF HUMANITY: AN AFTERNOON OF WONDERFUL MUSIC	16
FILM ARCHAEOLOGY CONTINUES AT THE NFSA.....	16
IF AT FIRST.....	17
HAWKER REPAIR CAFÉ.....	17
ACT SENIORS AND BETTER AGEING EXPO	17
U3A CANBERRA COMMITTEE MATTERS	18
COMMITTEE NOMINATIONS	18
HELP DESK APPEAL	19
SPRING IS COMING!.....	19
U3A CANBERRA MEMBERS’ CALENDAR 2026.....	20
U3A KEY CONTACTS	21

From the Editors

Welcome to our September Newsletter. We’re sure you will enjoy this edition. It showcases high quality work from some of our creative groups with painting, photography, and creative writing for you to enjoy.

There are reports from some of the courses we have been running, and introductions to some very interesting courses that may include just the one you have been waiting for! And if that course you have been searching for is not there, perhaps it means that you should be running one! Our volunteers on the Course Leader Assistance Team are running courses to help you set up and run your own course!

Alongside the President’s update on the dedicated work of this year’s Committee in strategic planning for the future of U3A Canberra, there are appeals for volunteers – to join next year’s Committee, and to provide technical support for our course leaders. Having had a few years now as members of one volunteer group, we would highly recommend enjoying the camaraderie of these opportunities to volunteer.

Don’t miss the activities of like-minded organisations for September activities to enrich your month.

Please note: Our next and last quarterly Newsletter for 2026 will be available through the website in early December. **The deadline for items to be included in the December Newsletter is 17 November 2026.** Please email the editors with your contributions at newsletter@u3acanberra.org.au

Jan Febey /Janice Munro, Sub-editors

U3A Course News

A Burst of Colour

A burst of colour has arrived in the foyer of U3A's Flynn Community Hub! Two of our art classes have combined their talents to create a beautiful new exhibition, and the results are well worth seeing.



The featured artists come from two Flynn groups: **Introduction to Acrylics** (Wednesday mornings) and **Acrylics at Flynn** (Thursday mornings). Together, beginner and experienced painters are developing their skills side by side in a supportive and creative environment.



These courses are designed for anyone starting out, returning to art after a break, or simply wanting to continue learning. As every artist knows, painting is a lifelong journey of discovery—and there is always something new to learn.



The classroom experience makes a remarkable difference. Participants enjoy engaging PowerPoint presentations packed with practical theory, tips, and techniques, along with live teacher demonstrations and plenty of hands-on painting time. The classes reinforce essential foundations such as tonal value, composition, and colour theory, while also exploring popular techniques including palette-knife impasto, scumbling, and dry

brushing. These recent activities have inspired wonderful creativity and produced some outstanding results.

As the accompanying photographs show, the exhibition includes both class projects and works created independently in home studios. The collection features a range of media, including oils, watercolours, and, of vibrant acrylics on canvas and wooden panels. We invite you to visit the foyer.

The exhibition will remain on display until close to the end of term, and many of the artworks are available for purchase—offering a unique opportunity to acquire original, affordable art. If a piece catches your eye, or if you would like information about joining a class next term, please contact the tutor, Vicki Coleman.

Creative talent this vibrant truly deserves to be seen up close.

Vicki Coleman, Tutor

The Play's the Thing

Belonging to a play reading group is huge fun and can also be surprising. Surrounded by a group of encouraging friends, and working from a printed text, for a brief time you become someone else. Just who that is varies enormously – for an hour or two you may be a villain, a bore, a puzzling, cryptic figure. You are interpreting the words of a playwright and trying to understand and project a faithful but creative image of the person the author has created. If you have not done this since you finished school this can be daunting initially, but you will be surrounded by help and encouragement. You will certainly have a good time.

When I joined **The Play's the Thing** about four years ago, as a 'not having been on stage since school' person I joined a long-standing group of members with an astonishing range of experience, all of them enthusiastic and dedicated. Over the last four years we have read a wonderful selection of plays – they range in time and place from ancient Greece to contemporary Australia. In 2026 for instance, we have read plays by Ibsen (*A Doll's House*), Shakespeare (*Othello*), Priestley (*An Inspector Calls*), Alan Bennett (*The History Boys*), Susie Miller (*Prima Facie*) and Jessica Swale (*Blue Stockings*), and there are more to come.

The way we work is that we select plays as a group, then one of us takes responsibility for presenting each of them: this includes doing some research into the play and its background, as well as deciding just how the play reading within the group is to work, including of course who will take which role. These days after we have finished the reading, we often try to source an online production which gives us an idea of how another group, normally a professional company, 'saw' the play.

We meet on Wednesday mornings at Flynn, and would welcome new members for term 4, when we will be starting on 14 October with some comedy: *Pygmalion* (G B Shaw), followed by *Lettuce and Lovage* (Peter Shaffer), and more.

If you are interested in joining, or just finding out more about this group, please contact Sharon O'Brien by email shazzaob354@gmail.com OR by phone: 6292 7572

Nancy Clarke, Contributor

Warrani Chorale



If you are passing by Yarralumla Church Hall on a Wednesday morning, you will hear the singing of the Warrani Chorale, which practises there each week. Now into their second semester for the year, this U3A ladies' choir, which sings in four parts, is busy learning the music for their end-of year-concert.

Our inspiring conductor, Helen Swan and accomplished pianist Brigid Cummins ensure that good music and great singing are top of the agenda each week and that everyone goes home from choir practice with renewed spirits.

Brought together initially by their love of singing and music, Warrani choristers

have become a caring group of friends who look out for each other and who acknowledge members' birthdays each month with handmade cards by our superb card lady, Lutana McLeod.

If being part of Warrani Chorale appeals to you, please contact our Membership secretary Bev Payne for details. Email: bev.payne2020@gmail.com phone: 0418 110 808

Our next concert: This will be held at Weston Creek Uniting Church, Parkinson Street, Weston on Wednesday, 18 November at 10.30am. Admission by gold coin donation.

Join us for a lovely selection of old favourites such as "Can't Help Lovin' Dat Man," and "Caro Mio Ben" plus enjoyable Christmas music and community singing.



Margaret Martin, Contributor

Enjoying Literature

The members of this self-directed group all enjoy discovering new authors and titles as well as reminiscing about old favourites. We have a wide range of backgrounds and literary interests. It is a very welcoming, inclusive and sociable group that encourages members to present an author, book or topic of their choice as an individual or group presentation. It can take the form of a PowerPoint, reading from notes, a list of discussion questions or a general theme or topic.



A weekly update and timetable of presentations is emailed to all members. Topics range from Man Booker prize finalists, modern and classic fiction, non-fiction, biographies, poetry and general thematic sessions. At the commencement of each term, we have a sharing of what we have been reading in the previous holiday, and the list is distributed to all.

For any U3A members who love learning about and discussing a variety of literary works please join us. I am happy to provide further information or share some of our previous timetables with anyone who is interested.

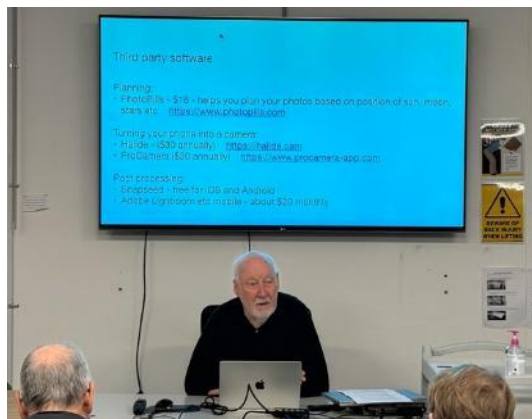
Lynette Sebbens, Co-ordinator

Photo by Lee

Phone Photography

Many of us have learned to use a variety of cameras over the years. We are a very flexible generation, eager to learn and explore new things. Mobile phones are now offering us technically sophisticated cameras with a range of automatic and manual settings to create excellent digital photographs.

Members of the U3A Photographic Group recently enjoyed a presentation from David Wilson, with additional information from Rob Douglas, about how to create better pictures using the cameras on our phones. The following is an amalgamation of their insights and other general information to share with U3A members.



Some general hints for beginners:

1. Make sure your camera lens at the back of your phone is clean
2. Check the camera's Aspect Ratio. The standard or default is usually 4:3 (relationship between width and height). However you can choose 16:9 to create a wider screen for your photo or 1:1 for a square look.
3. Understand the different camera modes your phone offers such as:
 - a. Photo: Used to take still photos, with often up to 10x zoom function
 - b. Portrait: Apply a depth-of-field effect to your photos, where the subject is in focus and the background and foreground are more blurred.
 - c. Spatial: used in landscape orientation, this mode creates a wide and 3D like view
 - d. Panorama: Takes a series of images and stitches them together, blending them into a wider or taller, elongated photo. You need to move slowly and steadily across the image, following the arrow along the guide line
 - e. Video: Records actions over a period of time for added interest or special memories Take care with the size if you want to email a video. Videos under 10 seconds are easily transmitted.
 - f. Macro: adds clarity to images when you are very close to a subject, for example flowers or insects. This option may appear automatically or need to be chosen.
 - g. Some phones offer additional features like SloMo (Slow Motion), Time Lapse, Cinematic. You can look up how to use these features on the Internet
 - h. Live (Motion photo): captures and saves a burst of photos. You can choose the best one. It may be turned on by default but can be turned off.
4. Find the location of the timer and the flash option for your camera. Using an iPhone, you can access these and other options by sliding upwards on the screen with your finger within each camera mode. With an Android phone these options may appear at the top of your screen for each camera mode. The self-timer option can be set to allow you to be in the photo with others.
5. Avoid zooming in from a long distance from your subject, move closer if possible to ensure better resolution or use the pre-set zoom options provided by your phone. If you use your fingers to zoom in, the graininess of the picture could be increased as digital zoom is used.
6. Find the option to turn on the 3x3 grid lines (found in Settings) and learn about the Rule of Thirds. These gridlines help with composition for your photo. They don't appear on the image itself. They can be turned on and off.
 - a. When in portrait mode, one suggestion is to have part of your subject in the top left or right square, or on the intersection of two vertical and horizontal lines
 - b. In photo mode and using landscape orientation, one suggestion is to place the horizon of your picture on either the top third horizontal line or the second third horizontal line. Place the focal point of your subject at the intersection of vertical or horizontal lines, tap your subject to lock in the focus and adjust the exposure.
7. Understanding Exposure
Exposure is the total amount of light your image receives when the photo is taken, preferably not over-exposed (too much light) or under-exposed (too little light) unless you want to create a special effect. Options for manually

adjusting the exposure can appear when you tap the subject in your photo and an image of a sun appears (sun icon). You can either adjust the light up or down or use another menu to increase or decrease light.

Information for more experienced phone camera users

(Note: many of the following examples relate to iPhones but the principles apply to all phones)

Phones have a range of built-in image options:

- formats - JPEG / HEIF / RAW / ProRAW
- resolution - 12, 24 or 48 MEG usually
- photographic styles or filters
- aspect ratios - 1:1, 4:3, 16:9

Different phones provide a range of different lenses. A recent iPhone for example includes a:

Wide Angle Lens which is the standard 1x lens

- For 15-17 iPhones, a wide lens has a 24mm focal length, a $f/1.78$ aperture and a resolution of 48 Megapixels.

Ultra Wide Angle Lens

- They have a 13mm focal length (0.5x) and a $f/2.2$ aperture on an iPhone.

Telephoto Lens

- The Pro models of 11-17 iPhones have a telephoto lens (4x to 8x).
- The iPhone 17 Pro telephoto lens has five optical zoom options — 0.5x, 1x, 2x, 4x, and 8x with a focal length of up to 200 mm and a $f/2.8$ aperture

Using different lighting effects in Portrait mode changes the image:

- Natural Light: Sharp focus with a blurred background
- Studio Light: Bright, clean lighting surrounding your subject
- Contour Light: Dramatic shadows with highlights and lowlights
- Stage Light: Spotlight effect against a darker background
- Stage Light Mono: Stage Light effect in black and white.

Adjusting the background blur in Portrait mode:

- Tap on the Depth Control slider (dots at top right of photo) to turn on the option to adjust the level of blur in your portraits
- Tap Aperture, then drag the slider to adjust the effect.

Using Photographic Styles (My Filters is a similar feature on android phones)

The Styles option provides choices (up to 11) to adjust specific colours to customise your photos.

- Tap or swipe up from the camera modes at the bottom of the screen
- Tap Styles, then swipe left or right to preview styles to fine-tune tone, colour, intensity
- To customise the style, do any of the following:
 - Drag your finger to simultaneously adjust the tone and colour
 - Drag the slider to control how strongly the style affects your photos
 - Drag the Tone and Warmth sliders to control how strongly the style affects.

Some Third Party Software to explore

- Snapseed - free for iOS and Android
 - <https://www.photoworkout.com/how-to-edit-photos-in-snapseed/>
 - <https://apps.apple.com/au/app/snapseed-photo-editor/id439438619>
 - <https://www.androidauthority.com/snapseed-4-android-app-hands-on-3666241/>
- Adobe Lightroom etc mobile - about \$20 monthly
- PhotoPills - \$18 - helps you plan your photos based on position of sun, moon, stars at any given time or day. <https://www.photopills.com>

Turning your phone into a traditional camera:

- Halide - (\$30 annually) <https://halide.cam>
- ProCamera (\$30 annually) <https://www.procamera-app.com>



And then there are accessories to help you take selfies or set up timers or improve lighting or decrease camera shake.

David Wilson, Contributor

Making a Mark



Have you seen our completed artworks?

They are displayed on the main wall of U3A Room 3 at Cook. We hope that everyone who visits Room 3 enjoys our exhibition and gains as much pleasure from viewing the artworks as we do from creating them. Our "Art Wall" exhibition is refreshed at the end of each term to make way for the next collection of members' work.

The *Make a Mark 1 Art Group* was established in 2010, and, with only a few exceptions, the original members have remained together since then. It has been a delight for everyone to explore and develop their artistic skills in watercolour, acrylic, oils, and freehand sketching alongside a group of like-minded art enthusiasts.

A different subject is chosen for each session, giving members the opportunity to decide which medium they wish to use and to apply a variety of artistic techniques and skills to their work.



Paul Humphreys, Convenor

Recorder Orchestra

The U3A Canberra Recorder Orchestra has a long history of performing in schools, retirement facilities and churches, including concerts in the High Court of Australia, the Wesley Music Centre and the Spiral community group..

We also enjoy hosting special playing days for different configurations of recorders. For these, we invite players from U3As around Eastern Australia to join us for a day of music -making and socialising, in what amounts to practical U3A net-working.

Our next performance, in September, will be a return to Chapman Primary School, as a gift to their music teacher, my daughter. She has been involved with the school for 20 years as parent and teacher. For the past decade or so, she has run a rich music program there with recorders, percussion and a lovely choir. As she approaches 60, she has decided to hang up her baton at the end of this term, so we'll help her go out with a bang. We shall present two concerts - one for the Infants department, followed by one for the Primary department.

We'll play some Renaissance and Baroque pieces to showcase some of our larger recorders which are not part of any school's equipment: great basses, contra bass, sub great bass and sub contra bass recorders.

We'll include music from different countries, one being a modern piece based on a Native American song, arranged by a Berlin composer. The recorder playing is introduced with everyone singing about a river wending its way to the sea. The children will learn the song and sing with us.

And who knows? My daughter might, in her retirement, be persuaded to humour her mother, and join the Recorder Orchestra or the Sarabande Recorder Ensemble!

Margaret Wright, Convenor

Peter White's courses

Are you one of the hundreds of U3A members who have enjoyed one or more of Peter White's repertoire of 10 courses, which he has run some 50 or more times for U3A over the last 20 years?

An interest in archaeology, especially after retirement, has encouraged Peter to research and deliver these courses for U3A since 2007, often on a rotational basis, with continuous incorporation of new material as it emerges.

I interviewed Peter in his amazing two-storey library recently. He said that he viewed the many, many hours locating and reading sources, analyzing and preparing Powerpoint slides and creating the accompanying commentary as an enjoyable intellectual challenge, which kept his brain working. Lifeline book fairs continue to provide a wonderful array of sources.



The first course he offered was about Aboriginal people and their long occupation of Australia - his favourite area of study and one where he had learned much from participating in archaeological digs. He commented that in 2007 it was generally accepted that Aboriginal people had been in Australia for 50,000 years - it is now more acceptable by the professionals to believe that 70,000 years is more likely with many new insights being revealed. Peter continues to evolve this primary course to incorporate the expanding knowledge of how Aboriginal people have successfully lived and managed our continent. This can be quite time consuming. The 2026 version of this course was a presentation for 2.5 hours once a week for nine weeks, called "A history of Aboriginal Australia before the Europeans". During this year he has also run a different 10 week course talking about the experiences of people on both sides of the frontiers during colonial times called, "Contact on the Frontiers of Australia".

Other history topics Peter has offered for members include Ancient Egypt and Ancient Greece, The Vikings, Pompeii, and most recently two courses about Central and South America from first settlement until the arrival of Europeans.

Peter has an archaeology degree from ANU, achieved while enjoying a career as a survey statistician at the Australian Bureau of Statistics. During periods of leave and on holidays he worked as a volunteer on archaeology projects in Australia. Some memorable ones included spending weeks on a remote island in the Gulf of Carpentaria camping next to a lake, before the crocodile signage was erected. He was also on a dig in Coffs Harbour on 11 September 2001, when work stopped, but only momentarily, to watch the events unfold that day.

Peter currently runs his courses at the Flynn campus of U3A with excellent facilities and support, and the ability to set up the large room he requires the night before. He first began working at Hughes when presenters had to lug a huge projector out of the storeroom and set it up with their own laptop on a table in the middle of the room, then project pictures onto a bumpy wall. Peter improved the images by creating his own projection screen with plywood, timber and paint. Peter has his own laptop and uses the U3A headset microphone to ensure everyone has a good listening experience.

His main issue in running his short courses is accessing the one large room available to hold 50 people at the Flynn campus. There is a lot of competition from smaller groups and courses that run for the whole year.

Peter is keen for U3A to establish a regular forum for course presenters to meet and discuss insights and support one another. As an experienced presenter who has lots of good ideas about what works well and what does not, he is happy to share his knowledge and learn from others. He is doing so in other community groups such as the Melba Men's Shed, the Charnwood Community Garden and in entertaining his grandchildren.



Interviewed by Janice Munro

The Write Stuff

The Write Stuff Short Story Writing Group has been running for well over ten years, with several of the original members still participating. It seems that only age and/or illness causes resignations! Each month members are given three or four potential topics to choose from, and stories are circulated via email. We meet once a month at Hughes, to discuss various aspects of writing, such as inspiration, grammar (no rules, did you know!), editing, writing from life, etc., enjoy afternoon tea, and to hear some held over stories from the previous month. Collegiate, fun, and interesting with some excellent writing being shared. Here is one of the stories.

Peter's Boat

I

To know where you are heading, you need to look back to where you've come from and acknowledge where you stand in the present.

When cancer spread throughout Peter's body, he would not lie down to it: literally. Gardening and tending the lawn occupied his days. He spent long nights at the kitchen table with the daily crossword to occupy him. To get through the night, always ready, on the table lay an Oxford English dictionary positioned close to where rested his right hand. An ash tray, Rizla cigarette papers and a tin of Golden Virginia tobacco close to where he rested his left hand. The skinny roll up cigarettes he sucked on helped distract him from pain radiating through his cancerous bones.

Peter's children tried to get him to rest in bed, but each time they checked, the bedclothes remained undisturbed. When struggling to sit upright for long spells during the night and at risk of falling in the garden, Peter finally agreed to a trial of resting in bed. To make life easier for Peter and those caring for him, a hospital bed was arranged. The two young men who delivered the bed to his house talked to Peter like he was a colleague, not a dying man. "What do you think, Peter? Should I use the Phillips head screw driver? The younger of the two men passed Peter a hammer and an oil can to hold – "just in case". Those men and Peter built a structure fit for the voyage of a lifetime.

II

I linked my arm with Peter's while his daughter, Abigail, did the same on his other arm. We walked with him through the house to the bedroom, each step taking him closer to the newly delivered hospital bed. When I asked him if he would like to get in to bed, he replied "only if you join me". The laughter in the room softened the seriousness of the moment. I watched Abigail and the family laugh, blink and swallow hard. Laughter not that far from tears. Laughter in the face of death; incongruous yet common.

As Peter's long serving, general practitioner, I took my lead from the family. I laughed at appropriate times even though I wanted to cry. It took a long time and a wise mentor to help me understand that a patient or carer's sadness is not mine. What good would I be to patients and families if I started crying every time I witnessed suffering?

Days later, when I returned on a house visit, I noticed that Peter's hands were moving gracefully here and there. He was holding, fixing and knotting something invisible to my eye but not to his. Abigail and her siblings were taking turns to sit with Peter in solidarity and to counter the loneliness that accompanies dying. She touched his arm as she turned to me and said "he's fishing". I looked at his hands, wide apart, holding, in the way his body remembered, a length of fishing line. Passing it to me, he said "hold this".

I reached out and took the invisible length from him. Peter was back in the lochs and was fishing once more. He leaned over the bed rails towards me and talked of the water, the wind and shadows. His bed, now a small boat, traversing a great loch.

Peter was deep in his journey to a destination that he was holding steady in his mind's eye. Now and then he gestured and spoke to invisible people - his crew he told me. When he asked me for scissors, I was reluctant. Abigail's head dropped, sensing my reluctance. Against my better judgement, I passed the scissors to him.

The infusion line delivering morphine was lying by his side. Abigail whispered to me that she'd seen her father with his rod and reel so many times and trusted that he knew the touch, feel and width of fishing line.

As a doctor and in a different context, I would describe what I was seeing as 'terminal restlessness', agitation or delirium and prescribe a sedative. However, here at home with Peter, it was simply a fishing trip with a man calmly sailing his boat, rod in hand. Peter was the author of his story, captain of his crew and master of his destiny. He settled into his voyage, trusting he would find his way back to the lochs.

Leaving the house, Abigail walked me to the gate. "You know, doctor Wright, there is something mysterious in casting a fly and waiting until it sinks into unknown water beneath the surface. Fishermen can't see trout in deep water and hope not to be seen by them. And yet, when they strike, it is always unexpected – just like death".

III

The day after my dad died, two men on the brink of retirement, arrive at the house to remove the hospital bed. They efficiently dismantle it in front of us, his grieving children. That bed, his boat, now shipwrecked and in pieces, no longer needed as the journey is over. Not so for us who find ourselves cast asunder, cut adrift, lost in the doldrums.

After months passed since my father, Peter's 'departure'. Time has no meaning for me. A moment can last a second, a heartbeat, or even another lifetime. Time no longer displays its reliable nature to me. Work, mealtimes, gym classes are no longer routine. Well-meaning friends tell me time heals, but how much time? I lie awake most nights wondering whether it's not time that heals, but more what grief does to your mind, your memories and your resolve. Could it be that grief heals?

Sitting in the waiting room, I hear the receptionist on the phone, "Dr Wright, your next patient is here to see you"

"Come in, Abigail. Take a seat". Sitting across from me, Abigail is hunched, pale with dark circles under her eyes. Her thumb and forefinger, caress a silver circle at her neck, dangling from a chain. She begins by telling me she feels untethered, cut loose. I glance at my computer screen and am relieved to see that she has booked a long appointment

Staring out the window she says, "I am here but I don't know where here is anymore. I know that he is in another place. People tell me so. Some say a better place. How can they know since they are here and not there?"

Abigail is one of those rare people I've come across in my years of general practice. Those who give themselves completely over to grief only to find themselves suspended in time and space. Body here, mind and spirit elsewhere. Lost in the universe.

Now sobbing and moaning, Abigail lays a palm over her heart. "I feel it here and sometimes it catches my breath and I'm afraid I'll drown", she gasps between sobs.

"Dr Wright, how can I work in with these feelings? How do I make friends with grief and derive meaning from it?"

It is no easy task working with those searching for a landmark to navigate their way back to themselves. Many struggle to give words to their feelings because they are so primal, universal and sacred. Others are caught in a mystery that they don't even seek to understand. Grief's power scares me, its silence deafens me and its beauty moves me. It wasn't always that way.

Abigail is intuitive, intelligent and courageous. It would be clinically correct to diagnose complex grief for, yet not appropriate to her situation. She cared for her dying father for 3 months fulfilling his wish to die at home. She walked to the threshold with him and it is a long, hard road back from there. It feels wrong to medicalise the way she is expressing her feelings. After all, what is simple grief?

As expected, Abigail declines my offer of a referral to grief counselling and rejects any idea of pharmaceutical support. "No doctor, I need to start by knowing what grief is for me. Perhaps if I can name, describe, feel and express it, I can release it from me?"

I am moved by her determination to honour her feelings as an act of love to her father. Her commitment to put her experience to good use, grow from it and gain wisdom. Abigail takes up my offer of a sick certificate and regular follow up appointments. After she walks out of the room, I reach for the tissues. If only my mum could have shared her grief when my father died, 7 years after I was born.

IV

On the first anniversary of Peter's death, his six children, partners and grandchildren go on a trip. Gathered around on the top deck, Abigail holds an urn in one hand and a champagne glass in the other. The family raise their glasses with eyes fixed on Peter's ashes which float on the breeze, before landing on the loch, not unlike a fly line being cast. One of the children yells out, "look! It's a full moon". He knows the trout will feel its gravitational pull. Abigail knows Peter will.

Maureen O'Brien, Author

P(l)aying it Forward



Margaret Wright's many and varied achievements over her lifetime were recently highlighted in a City News article (<https://citynewsqbn.com.au/2026/margaret-shares-the-wright-way-to-learn-and-give/>). From illustrator and chess player on an ocean liner with now famous people and hitchhiking to Marrakesh to blitzing the Canberra eisteddfod with her Urambi primary school students, Margaret has continued to expand the horizons of others in U3A and beyond. Most of these roles have involved teaching others to read and play music, which has continued with the U3A recorder orchestra and even younger players.

When my grandson Quinn, in Brisbane, took up playing the recorder, it triggered conversations with Margaret about these instruments, and I also shared my expression of pride in Quinn's progress. With Quinn coming to Canberra during this year's winter school holidays, I asked Margaret whether she would be interested in hearing Quinn play and chatting with him about recorder playing. Margaret generously offered to gather a dozen or so players from her two U3A recorder groups for a special session on Mediaeval and Renaissance music for Quinn to join.

Margaret assembled an extensive list of pieces and conducted a full-on class for the gathered ensemble and for Quinn. Together they worked through many pieces, which were new to all the players, with Margaret explaining how modern music notation evolved from the initial efforts of monks to capture chants on paper.

Quinn really appreciated the opportunity to learn from fellow enthusiastic recorder players and enjoyed the ensuing conversations. Many thanks to Margaret and the other U3A members who encouraged him with his playing.

Here are a few videos and stills from the occasion that are on the web. I particularly chuckled in one piece working up the scale when Margaret explained "no, not ti ... ti hasn't been invented yet"

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/198eV-tK64vb_aQagMSDdrib003VFTpcP.

Bill Blair, Contributor

Creating a Course

David Whitbread, U3A member and course leader is offering two sessions in September for anyone wishing to consider running a course and interested in knowing how that works at U3A Canberra. The course will be offered at the Flynn Campus of U3A on two consecutive Saturdays.

David was a teacher for 40 years at all levels, from infants, to TAFE and university students, presenting at conferences, and offering workplace training. He says, the most fun he's had teaching is in the last 5 years when teaching a 10-week course at U3A, 'How to write, edit, design and print your own book'. It has run four times with more than 100 members and at least 10 books published!

The title of the course is: **How to Create and Present a Course on Anything**

Session 1: Creating your course (Saturday 19 September – 10am to 1pm)

Session 2: Presenting your course (Saturday 26 September – 10am to 1pm)

These two Saturdays will give you **confidence to start your course** by sharing tips and tricks about:

- Organising content into bite-size chunks
- Teaching techniques to vary your presentation
- Encouraging discussion and connection
- Making your course a great social experience
- Speaking clearly and confidently in public
- Using PowerPoint, white boards and other visual aids
- Writing succinct handouts that summarise your content
- Telling stories to help people feel comfortable
- Inviting outside people to increase the enjoyment.

Previous participants have commented: ‘excellent course with many practical ideas’ (CT 2025) and ‘well worth giving up two Saturday mornings for!’ (SL 2025). One participant, who was one of a number who then presented their first course for U3A this year, said, ‘I couldn’t have done it without your great advice. It gave me the confidence to put it forward.’ (RK 2026)

To sign up for the course please email David at david@TheDesignManual.com

David Whitbread, Presenter

Managing your course

Do you know that our U3A offers hundreds of courses each year, yet our members still want more? You might also have heard that some members have tried to get in some courses for ages, only to face growing waiting lists that make it impossible to join. You might even have experienced this yourself!

Our U3A is a lively community full of energy. Our members have broad interests and always enjoy learning and socialising. Each of us possesses a wealth of knowledge, skills, and life experience to share. Some of us (possibly many!) have thought about running a U3A course or group, but felt it might be too difficult or complicated.

Good news! U3A has a team called Course Leader Assistance Team (CLAT) to help you through the process. And over the past years, U3A has streamlined its systems to make it simpler and more useful. It’s not as difficult as you might think!

CLAT is holding a two-hour information session to give you an overview of how to run a course with U3A. We will cover everything from submitting a course online through to managing the course.

Whether you are thinking of joining David Whitbread’s course “How to create and present a course on anything”, or you are already comfortable with planning and preparing your own course, why not take the next step and join this information session?

Become A Course Leader with U3A: The Nuts and Bolts of Managing a Course

Date & Time: Tuesday 29 September, 11.00-13.00

Place: Hughes Community Centre Room 3

Cost: Free

What we will cover:

- How to submit your course online and the benefits of online enrolments.
- How to find a U3A venue, and what to do if you want to use an external venue.
- Appointing a treasurer for your course, managing room fees, and more.
- Managing enrolment and attendance.

How to Enrol:

This information session is listed on the U3A website under the Courses section, or you can use this direct link below. Enrol online by clicking on the enrolment button.

<https://www.u3acanberra.org.au/members/courseinfo/CS050.01.html>

For any questions or further information, please reach out to us at: courseleaderassistance@u3acanberra.org.au

Course Leader Assistance Team (CLAT)

Just Writing

On the third Monday of each month, the *Just Writing Group* meet at Cook Community Hub, to share their stories. The group has a non-judgemental & supportive atmosphere, with everyone sharing a love of writing. The group is facilitated by Christine Hobbs. One of the members has submitted the following story. Check out the request below after reading the story.

Moving On.

1924. London College of Music. This Diploma is hereby conferred on Daphne Mitchell for Pianoforte Playing, by Which is Granted the Distinctive Title of Associate of this College, with the Right to Append the Letters A.L.C.M.

A scarlet wax seal adorns the yellowed scroll, which curls in my hands. I hesitate. What shall I do with it? Should it join the cemetery of old papers in the bulging paper bin? Would that be sacrilege? Every hour I agonise over similar decisions. I put it back in the desk.

Guilt overwhelms me. Why didn't I value my mother's talent more? I was too dismissive of it, unappreciative. I probably wished I was playing tennis. Yet I recall the joy of gatherings with my parents' friends. Everyone brought 'a plate' (not empty, of course!) We feasted on gem scones with jam and cream, asparagus rolls, cucumber, curried egg or corned beef sandwiches, home-made sausage rolls & cold slices of bacon and egg pie. Also trifle, or sponge cake, layered thickly with cream. Beer or Scotch for the men, shandies or Brandy and Dry for the women, raspberry cordial for myself. Then we all stood around the piano while my mother tinkled out requests. Everyone sang, regardless of talent. No opting out. Everyone smiled as they boomed out their favourites. I could see my mother's foot working overtime on the loud pedal, the only sound system then.

Then a call: 'Play us some classical, Daphne, while we eat! Give us some Rac!' Soon Rachmaninoff's 2nd Symphony washed over us. Life was okay. The war years had gone. Next, Rimsky-Korsakov's frantic Flight of the Bumblebee, when our guests marvelled at my mother's fingers as they rushed over the keys at impossible speed. A quieter Dream of Olwen or Norwegian Cradle Song might follow, allowing chat time.

Now, in my pre-move clean-out, I find other surprises, including Scenes from an Imaginary Ballet by Samuel Coleridge Taylor. Could this be music written by one of my favourite poets, who reversed his name when a composer? I return to the present and use Google Home to research this man. No, for his genius, he became known as The African Mahler in New York, where he fought against racial prejudice. My mind spins off at a tangent. How did he get this famous name, simply reversed? Did his parents have some inkling of his prodigious talent? Each piece of music teaches me more about my mother's personality. She was a romantic, adored Mario Lanza and Caruso and would play The Loveliest Night of the Year with great tenderness. At these times, I noticed my father would rest his hand on her shoulder as if to say, 'She's mine and I'm proud of her.' In deference to him, she'd lead us in song to 'Kiss Me Good Night, Sergeant-Major.'

My father should have ended up in Changi. As was the custom, his private school education at Newington College meant he was selected for Officer Training School at Duntroon. While there, he contracted 'Yellow Jaundice', now known as hepatitis, and was ill for weeks. So, he missed the rank of officer and deployment to the north, where his platoon was sent. Instead, he became a non-commissioned officer, of lower status, a Sergeant-Major, so survived the war. The tricks of fate.

I return to my task. More decisions. A pale blue ribbon holds a bundle of letters, each in its original envelope, addressed in perfect copperplate. I open the top one and start to read. Too personal, too special. How dare I intrude. These are love letters my father wrote when courting my mother. I read no further. I retie the ribbon with great care and return them to the desk. One day my own children will have a similar task - what to do with my belongings after my death. Perhaps they might come across love letters, too, and certainly Christmas and birthday cards with beautiful messages. If they do find my writing, I wonder whether they too will see a side of me that surprises them.

I decide to follow Julia Baird's example, where in *Phosphorescence*, she writes a letter to her children now, expressing both her appreciation of their lives and her suggestions on what is really important in life.

The reverse is also possible. My husband had patients who told me their son had decided to write their eulogy now, so they could hear it.

I wish I'd thought of that. My mother would have loved it.

Jenny Burgess, Author

Writing about Healing

Following on from their 2025 publication of short stories and poems, the Just Writing Group is planning another anthology, this one focusing on the topic of 'healing'. Contributors are encouraged to write about healing – fictional or non-fictional - in line with their interests, beliefs, and values. The purpose of this anthology is to present diverse perspectives that inspire, uplift, and provide hope.

The Just Writing group would like to include contributions from other U3A writers' groups. Indeed, we would like to include items from **ALL** U3A members. Our goal is to work together collaboratively and publish an anthology that is representative of the U3A membership more widely.

For more information, please contact Doris Kordes at dkordes21@gmail.com or Christine Hobbs at christineahobbs@hotmail.com

Christine Hobbs, Contributor



Discover the Joy of Argentine Tango!



Always wanted to try tango? Now's your chance!

Join our **Argentine Tango Flare** class and discover how a simple walk becomes a beautiful dance. Learn the fundamentals of Argentine Tango, including balance, connection, musicality, and partner movement, then progress to more exciting combinations at your own pace.



- ❖ No partner required
- ❖ Start any week
- ❖ Relaxed and welcoming atmosphere
- ❖ No experience necessary

Whether you're looking for a new challenge, some gentle exercise, or simply a fun way to meet new people, Argentine Tango is a wonderful way to get moving and enjoy the music.

Classes held at the Woden Southern Cross Club on Saturday mornings.



Come along and give it a try – no stress, just great fun!

Contact the convenor, Masako by email: merirara@hotmail.com

Expanding Our Activities

Courses, Interest Groups and Events

U3A Canberra's strategic priorities include growing membership—particularly among people aged 55–75—expanding our range of activities, using technology effectively and strengthening governance.

A critical element of our future success is recruiting new members in the 50–65 age group. These people will form the next wave of leaders, convenors, volunteers, and other essential contributors.

The Program Development Team (PDT) was tasked by the Committee to increase participation and broaden the range of activities and leaders. The 2024 Member and other more recent surveys, showed unmet demand for

- existing activities: languages, music, photography, art, book & writer groups, mahjong & exercise
- additional activities in society, culture and philosophy
- new activities e.g. Life Skills, AI and Cybersecurity

Additionally, the website gave a sense of the activities but not the informality and social nature of many offerings.

Therefore, our activities have been reclassified into three types: Courses, Interest Groups and Events. Over the past month, leaders and convenors have helped reclassify our existing activities into these types.

COURSES	INTEREST GROUPS	EVENTS
Begin and end	Ongoing	One-off or part of a series
Have a knowledgeable leader	Have a convenor	Have a convenor
Members sign up for whole course	Members sign up for terms or the calendar year	Members sign up for all or one/two of the series
Members come to learn and maybe to socialise	Members come to socialise and to learn/ pursue an interest/ be entertained.	Members come to take advantage of the opportunity/ learn/ pursue an interest/ be entertained and socialise without commitment
Leaders need to be knowledgeable in the topic and accomplished its presentation/teaching.	Convenors need to have an interest/some expertise in the topic and some expertise/networks/basic meeting and admin skills to organise the sessions and facilitate the people within them.	
<i>e.g. Basic Japanese for Travellers, Turning Points in Australian Political History, French for Beginners, French 1, French 2, etc, Tai Chi for Health, Learn to play Go, Scottish Country Dancing, Jan Morgan's Trees of the Arboretum, U3A Recorder Orchestra, etc</i>	<i>e.g. Book Clubs, Current Affairs groups, Advanced French Conversation, Art at Flynn, Scrabble, Australian Sporting History, Modern Folk Singalong, Monday Films, Historical Dance, etc</i>	U3A Canberra originated: <i>e.g. Tuesday Forums, Walks and Tours</i> ; others are run with Community Partners: <i>e.g. Tours of Cezanne to Giacometti with NGA, Musical Reflections with ANU School of Music, Getting to know your Botanic Gardens, etc</i>

The changes will soon appear on the U3A Canberra website. Activity descriptions and subject groupings will remain, while online enrolment and other improvements will make the website even more user-friendly.

Help Us Expand Our Activities

We need more Leaders and Convenors to broaden the range of activities available. The Course Leaders Assistance Team (CLAT) will be delighted to hear from you if you have an idea and they will help you to set up your Course, Interest Group or Event.

CLAT

courseleaderassistance@u3acanberra.org.au

Carol Flynn

development@u3acanberra.org.au

Like-Minded and Joint Programs

Echoes of Humanity: An Afternoon of Wonderful Music

U3A members who enjoy classical music can hear two orchestral masterpieces at Echoes of Humanity, a benefit concert presented by the National Capital Orchestra in partnership with the St Vincent de Paul Society Canberra/Goulburn.

The concert features internationally acclaimed Polish pianist Lucas Krupiński, winner of the prestigious Arthur Rubinstein International Piano Master Competition. Admired for his musical insight and expressive performances, Krupiński will perform Rachmaninov's Piano Concerto No. 2, one of the most cherished works for piano and orchestra.

The second half presents Mahler's Symphony No. 1 ("Titan"), a magnificent work taking listeners from birdsong and pastoral serenity to dramatic climaxes and a triumphant conclusion. Conducted by National Capital Orchestra Artistic Director Louis Sharpe, this promises to be an inspiring afternoon of wonderful music.

The National Capital Orchestra's musicians volunteer their talent, and proceeds will assist the St Vincent de Paul Society's work with individuals and families who experience hardship throughout Canberra and Goulburn.

There is nothing quite like hearing a full symphony orchestra in the superb acoustics of Llewellyn Hall. Whether a regular concertgoer or a newcomer to classical music, Echoes of Humanity will deliver musical excellence in support of a worthy cause.

Saturday 12 September 2026

3.00 pm

Llewellyn Hall, Australian National University

Booking Link: <https://premier.ticketek.com.au/shows/show.aspx?sh=NCORACMA26>

Anne-Mari Siiteri, French Horn

Film archaeology continues at the NFSA

A young Gough Whitlam, in his student days, appears as an uncredited extra in Cinesound's prestigious 1938 film *The Broken Melody*. For modern audiences it's an incidental highlight in this ambitious production, built around an operetta specially composed by Alfred Hill. Based on the novel by F. J. Thwaites, it's the rags-to-riches story of a penniless vagrant during the Great Depression who gradually rediscovers his talent as a violinist. Hollywood star Lloyd Hughes heads the cast, which includes Diana Du Cane and Rosalind Kennerdale. The long operetta sequence attracted international plaudits, and the film stands alone as a musical work in a Cinesound canon which majored on comedies and more conventional dramas.

The Broken Melody opens the Spring series of 'films with back stories' at the NFSA's Arc cinema, now on **Sunday** afternoons at 2 pm:

The Broken Melody (1938) - 20 September

His Royal Highness (1932) – 18 October

They're a Weird Mob (1966) – 22 November

Each screening opens with a historical and critical introduction, and then the back story of the film's survival is revealed and discussed during the Q&A afterwards.

His Royal Highness (1932) was produced in Melbourne by Efftee Studios during the early years of the 'talkies'. It's a Ruritanian fantasy which marked the feature film debut of beloved comedian George Wallace and was Australia's first commercially successful screen musical. Its survival journey to the NFSA, via the back room of a suburban clockmaker's shop, is a remarkable story.

Even today *They're a Weird Mob* (1966) perhaps needs no introduction. Based on the wildly successful novel by John O'Grady (aka Nino Culotta) it depicts the experience of an Italian migrant coming to terms with Australia's incomprehensible slang and working-class culture. The cast was led by Walter Chiari as Nino, supported by Chips Rafferty, Clare Dunne, Ed Devereaux, John Meillon, Graham Kennedy and other iconic names of the 1960s.

Tickets are available at the door, but you can book ahead through the NFSA's screening calendar [here](#).

Ray Edmondson, President, Friends of the NFSANational Film and Sound Archive Arc Cinema, McCoy St, Acton.

If at First



A call went out for actors for an ACT film to be made by a new filmmaker and three first-year film students. Community organisations, including U3A, responded and a cast of fourteen actors aged 65 and over was assembled. Were you one of those actors?

They were in their 70s and some in their 80s, with many having done no acting since their school days. Behind the camera the crew, three first-year film students, used equipment and benefitted from production support generously provided by the University of Canberra.

Despite its tiny budget and inexperienced cast and crew, the film is brought to life by the warmth and talent of its actors. Their performances give the story an authenticity, humour and sheer pleasure that perhaps proves one of the film's central ideas: talent, romance and the joy of trying something new do not come with an age limit.

Julie McCarron-Benson, Filmmaker
0404096403
<http://julie.mccarronbenson.com>

Hawker Repair Café

Hawker Men's Shed hosted its recent winter repair cafe on a typical Canberra winter's cold day, however that did not stop a record number of attendees.

Our repair café, volunteer fixers will seek to repair or show you how to repair items in the following categories: small electrical appliances, bicycles, jewellery, furniture items, small gadgets, toys and dolls, lawnmowers and gardening equipment, tool sharpening, sewing, fabrics and clothes and more.

In addition, the Made Local Market with over 25 stalls has eco-friendly handmade gifts, toys, jewellery, garden ornaments and home grown produce.

Over 2,000 items have now been saved from going to landfill.

Our next repair cafe and markets is on Sunday 20th September 2026.

Jon Wells, Coordinator, Hawker Community Repair Cafe

ACT Seniors and Better Ageing Expo

The ACT Seniors and Better Ageing Expo is on again in 2026 and its location will be the Old Bus Depot Building in Kingston. This year the Expo will be held over two days:

- Wednesday 23 September, 10am to 3pm, and
- Thursday 24 September, 9am to 1pm.

U3A Canberra will have a stand at this year's Expo, so come by and say hello.

Last year we had a very enthusiastic crop of volunteers to help.

If you'd like to volunteer on either day by spending an hour of your time at our stand speaking positively about your U3A Canberra experiences, send an email to Mary Bermingham at membership@u3acanberra.org.au
Please include your preferred day and time.



U3A Canberra Committee Matters

Committee Nominations

Help Shape the Future of U3A Canberra

As members will be aware, U3A Canberra is implementing a new Strategic Plan for the period 2026–2030.

U3A Canberra is in a strong position. Membership continues to grow, our range of courses and activities is expanding, and the organisation is financially sound. However, to ensure our long-term sustainability, we need to attract younger members who will become the volunteers and leaders of the next decade. This is essential if we are to remain a vibrant, inclusive and sustainable organisation

A major focus of the Strategic Plan (2026-2030) is making it easier to be a U3A Canberra member and volunteer. We are also implementing administrative and governance changes to simplify our operating model and better support future growth.

Over the past two years we have been fortunate to have a highly committed Committee with members bringing expertise in strategic planning, information technology, communications, administration and finance. Their contribution has been instrumental in progressing many of the Strategic Plan's key initiatives.

Committee nominations

However, several current Committee members will not be standing for re-election at the Annual General Meeting in November. We are therefore seeking nominations from members interested in joining the Committee and helping guide U3A Canberra through its next phase of development.

We would particularly welcome members with experience or expertise in areas such as:

- Secretariat and governance
- Finance and financial management
- Digital technology and artificial intelligence
- Marketing and communications
- Stakeholder and community engagement

These skills will help ensure U3A Canberra continues to grow and evolve while meeting the needs of current and future members.

What does the role involve

Committee members provide leadership and governance, help set the strategic direction of the organisation, oversee performance and contribute to informed decision-making.

The role includes:

- Attending regular Committee meetings.
- Participating in one or more Committee sub-groups where appropriate.
- Applying your knowledge and experience to Committee discussions and decisions.
- Supporting the implementation of the Strategic Plan.

Most importantly, it is an opportunity to make a meaningful contribution to lifelong learning and community connection across Canberra and the surrounding region.

Previous Committee experience is helpful but certainly not essential. What matters most is a willingness to contribute strategically, work collaboratively and support the implementation of Committee decisions. We are also conscious that members have a life to live, including travel, family etc and that we do not over burden our volunteers.

If you believe your skills and experience could benefit U3A Canberra, I encourage you to contact me for an informal discussion about the role.

U3A Canberra has always been fortunate to have volunteers of exceptional calibre and commitment. As we enter the next stage of our development, we are looking to refresh our leadership team and bring in new ideas and perspectives to help shape the organisation's future.

I hope you will consider becoming part of that future.

Alex Gosman

Help Desk Appeal

We are looking for new volunteer members to join our Help Desk for supporting Course Leaders using IT and AV equipment at Hughes.

The team supports course leaders and other volunteers in using our IT and AV equipment effectively, help course leaders to understand the equipment before they use it on site, and help solve problems as they arise when course leaders ring for help by phone. We also keep the desktop and laptop software up to date.

Our volunteers work in small teams through an on-call roster for each site. This means that there is back up, and we can cover when team members go on leave or need to be absent. The role involves on average about two hours a week across the year.

Our systems are well documented and new team members receive training in our equipment to add to their existing basic knowledge of either IT or AV equipment (including sound systems and microphones).

To find out more please contact the help desk team leader at Hughes:

Brian Kensey on helpdesk@u3acanberra.org.au

Chris Farrelley, IT Equipment Manager

SPRING IS COMING!



Foggy Morning – David R



Tulip Tops – Barrie Ridgway

U3A Canberra Members' Calendar 2026

UC = University of Canberra, Bruce Updated August 2026

JANUARY		FEBRUARY		MARCH	
Monday 12	Offices reopen 2026	Monday 2	Registration opens for semester 1 at UC	Monday 9	Canberra Day Offices closed
		Monday 9	Committee meeting		Autumn Newsletter published online
Monday 26	Australia Day. Offices closed	Monday 16	UC Semester 1 begins	Tuesday 10	Committee Meeting
Saturday 31	eBulletin and p'word access ceases for unfinancial members	Tuesday 17	Tuesday Forums begin for Semester 1		
APRIL		MAY		JUNE	
Monday 13	Committee Meeting	Monday 11	Committee meeting	Monday 1	Reconciliation Day Offices closed
Fri to Mon 3 – 6 April inclusive	Easter Offices closed	Monday 18	Deadline for June Newsletter	Monday 8	Tuesday Forums end for Semester 1
Saturday 25	Anzac Day	Monday 25	Registration opens for Winter Term at UC	Monday 8	King's Birthday Offices closed
				Monday 8	UC Winter Term begins
				Tuesday 9	Committee meeting
					Winter Newsletter online
				Monday 29	Tuesday Forums begin for Semester 2
JULY		AUGUST		SEPTEMBER	
Monday 13	Committee meeting	Monday 10	Committee meeting	Monday 7	Spring Newsletter online
Monday 13	Call for nominations for annual U3A awards	Monday 10	UC Semester 2 begins	Monday 14	Committee meeting
		Monday 17 to Monday 31	U3A Canberra Survey of Members open 17- 31 August 2026		
		Friday 15	Deadline for Spring Newsletter		
Monday 27	Registration Opens for Semester 2 at University of Canberra	Monday 24	Nominations for Committee positions open		
		Friday 28	Nominations for annual U3A awards close		
OCTOBER		NOVEMBER		DECEMBER	
Thursday 1	Membership renewals for 2027 open	Wed 4	Nominations for Committee positions close	Monday 7	Newsletter published online
Monday 5	Labour Day Offices closed	Monday 9	Committee meeting	Friday 11	Offices close for Christmas-New Year break
Monday 12	Committee meeting	Tuesday 17	AGM (Hughes)	Monday 14	Committee meeting
		Tuesday 17	Tuesday Forums end for Semester 2		
			Deadline for December Newsletter	Monday 11 Jan 2027	Offices reopen

U3A Key contacts

COMMITTEE MEMBERS AND KEY CONTACTS August 2026			
Committee Members	Name	Email	Phone
President	Alex Gosman	president@u3acanberra.org.au	
Vice President	Kristine Riethmiller	kristiner@u3acanberra.org.au	
Vice President	Vacant		
Treasurer	Graeme Swift	treasurer@u3acanberra.org.au	
Secretary	Vacant	secretary@u3acanberra.org.au	
Ordinary member	Mary Bermingham	membership@u3acanberra.org.au	
Ordinary member	Gary Davis	gary.davis@u3acanberra.org.au	
Ordinary Member	<u>Christine King</u>	christine.king@u3acanberra.org.au	
Ordinary member	<u>Paul Minoque</u>	pminoque@u3acanberra.org.au	
Ordinary member	Brian Weir		
Ordinary member	John Angley	john.angley@u3acanberra.org.au	
Ordinary member	David Needham		
Ordinary member	Louise Oldman	surveys@u3acanberra.org.au	
Ex officio member	Keith Huggan	chaircsc@u3acanberra.org.au	
OUR SERVICES FOR MEMBERS			
Enquiries: Cook	Office volunteer	cookmanager@u3acanberra.org.au	62518005
Enquiries: Hughes	Office volunteer	hughesmanager@u3acanberra.org.au	62816998
eBulletin	eBulletin team	ebulletin@u3acanberra.org.au	
Facebook	Julie Polson	facebook@u3acanberra.org.au	
Newsletter	Newsletter team	newsletter@u3acanberra.org.au	
Member Liaison Person	Christine King	memberliaison@u3acanberra.org.au	
Membership enquiries	Mary Bermingham	membership@u3acanberra.org.au	
Program Development Manager	David Needham	development@u3acanberra.org.au	
Suggestions		suggestions@u3acanberra.org.au	
Tuesday Forums	Alex Gosman	forums@u3acanberra.org.au	0414 258 745
University of Canberra enquiries	Karin Hosking	ucanberra@u3acanberra.org.au	
New volunteers	Julie Polson	volunteerliaison@u3acanberra.org.au	
OUR SERVICES FOR COURSE LEADERS			
Chair Courses Sub-Committee	Keith Huggan	chaircsc@u3acanberra.org.au	
Proposals for new courses	Jacqui Pinkava Vanessa Goss	courses@u3acanberra.org.au	
Course changes or cancellations		coursesdata@u3acanberra.org.au	
Room bookings: Cook, Hughes, Flynn		roombookings@u3acanberra.org.au	
Equipment bookings		equipmentbookings@u3acanberra.org.au about:blank	
Assistance		courseleaderassistance@u3acanberra.org.au	
IT/AV problems: Cook	Matthew Robertson	helpdeskcook@u3acanberra.org.au	
IT /AV problems: Hughes	Brian Kensey	helpdeskughes@u3acanberra.org.au	
IT/AV problems: Flynn	Boyd Wymer	helpdeskflynn@u3acanberra.org.au	0429 952 812
Facilities Team		facilities@u3acanberra.org.au	0452 602 009