

# THE CONVEYOR

February 2026 | Term 1



# 2026

## Message from our President

Welcome to all our members, and a warm welcome to those who have recently joined us.

We hope you all enjoyed a wonderful Christmas spent with family and friends, and we wish everyone a safe, healthy and very happy New Year.

While 2025 was a year of considerable activity and change—particularly toward the end of the year—it also demonstrated the strength, resilience and dedication of our organisation. Thanks to the support of our skilled and committed Management Committee, many essential tasks and unexpected challenges were managed effectively and with great teamwork.

As we move into 2026, we do so with optimism and confidence. Although there is still important work ahead, including implementing our new security system, we are well positioned for a smooth and productive year.

We are very grateful to all our Tutors and especially wish those who are retiring the very best in their next ventures. We are also pleased to be commencing new courses, welcoming new Tutors and Group Leaders, as we continue to enhance our courses and interest groups.

We look forward to another rewarding year, and we thank all members for their continued support and involvement.



Tony Mittiga - U3A TTG President

## U3A Term Dates

### Term 1, 2026

Monday 2 February - Friday 10 April

### Term 2, 2026

Monday 27 April - Friday 3 July

### Term 3, 2026

Monday 20 July - Friday 25 Sept

### Term 4, 2026

Monday 12 October - Friday 4 Dec

## Save the Dates

### Group Leader Meeting

Friday 27 February, 1pm in Rooms 8 & 9

### Annual General Meeting

Friday 27 March, 1pm in Rooms 8 & 9

## WE ARE SEEKING ENTHUSIASTIC INDIVIDUALS TO JOIN OUR U3A TTG 'MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE'

Our Management Committee convenes monthly to address the overall operations and effective management of our U3A at Tea Tree Gully. If you're interested in participating, please feel free to reach out via email at [u3attgoffice@gmail.com](mailto:u3attgoffice@gmail.com).





# SINGING WITH THE STARS

## What's that all about? – Exactly what it sounds like!

The stars are singing on the big screen with the printed lyrics. You sing with them and you sound fantastic.

Come and take a trip down memory lane with hopefully some of your favourites. Singalong with Frank Sinatra with views of New York. Have you ever been to New York? Take a Ferry across the Mersey with Gerry and the Pacemakers. Have a dance with John Travolta and the Bee Gees in the movie Saturday Night Fever. Listen to Diana Ross and see her amazing hair. Laugh at the fashions of the day – whatever were we thinking. Finish the class with something to make you smile – Monty Pythons Always Look on the Bright Side of

Life or John Farnham singing Sadie the Cleaning Lady and my particular favourite I'm Too Sexy with Right Said Fred.

Who were you with when that song came out? Where were you and what were you up to???

We have some beautiful singers in the group who help keep the rest of us in tune and it warms our hearts when they sing out loud to a particular favourite that is just perfect for their voice.

At our Christmas themed Singing with the Stars we not only sing Noel Noel and Silent Night there's also Mariah Carey, Slade,

Wham and of course that Christmas favourite Bill Nighy from Love Actually singing Christmas is All Around with scenes from the movie. Everyone's welcome, all voices matter! Our voices aren't particularly great but we love singing.

If you'd like to be reminded of the songs of the 60s, 70s, 80s and a few on either side of that come along and give it a try. Don't worry about what you sound like remember everyone else is worried about what they sound like! Just come and sing or just listen – it's so good for you as well.

Linda and Kevin Neale



# ALF COOLEN RETIRES

## Alf Coolen – Tutor for Art Water Colour Painting

I always had a great desire to do water colour painting and the opportunity arose when I enrolled in Maude Brown's class at TTG U3A over twenty years ago. Maude was a talented artist and teacher who encouraged me to follow this passion. Unfortunately after about twelve months, Maude decided to leave in order to follow new directions. Rather than see the class fold up, I stepped in and took over in a different style to Maude, running the class on a self help basis with the support of the other class members.

There are still two original class members from way back then – Tina and Annette who have supported me on the journey. I am now handing on the baton into the capable hands of Jadwiga and Sue and I know that the class will be welcoming and enjoyable under their guidance.

I thank all those who have made the past twenty or more years so enjoyable and satisfying. I will always treasure the friendships and memories we created together.





# SUE GREEN RETIRES

## My Acrylic Art Class Experience

Here's a photo taken during my time as the leader of the acrylic art class. I had the privilege of leading this class for many years, thoroughly enjoying the process of teaching this medium while cherishing the friendships and warmth from my students. The experience was incredibly rewarding, allowing me to share my passion and knowledge with others who were eager to learn and express themselves creatively.

However, as time went on, I realized I wasn't meeting some of my personal goals, which led me to make the difficult decision to retire from acrylic painting. With a desire to challenge myself and explore new artistic avenues, I delved into the world of watercolors by joining a watercolor class. I liken this transition to switching from tennis to badminton—a completely different medium that I'm exploring with great enthusiasm. This new journey has reignited my passion for art, offering fresh challenges and opportunities to grow as an artist.

U3A is an incredible networking hub for learning and meeting new people. It's a vibrant community where knowledge is shared freely, and friendships blossom. I wholeheartedly encourage anyone to join!



# JOHN ELDRIDGE RETIRES

## My Extended Volunteer Journey

I retired in 1994 after spending 45 years in the insurance and finance sectors. I then began to enjoy a more relaxed lifestyle, traveling around Australia and abroad, while also helping with my four grandchildren.

By 1998, I found myself yearning for music again. My passion for classical music and opera had always been strong; my wife even called it an obsession. I had previously run a recorded music program in Tottenham, London, and served as a volunteer music presenter on Radio 5 UV during the 1970s.

It was then that my dear friend, Bryan Young, introduced me to U3A, excitedly informing me that its music group operated similarly to my club in London. Intrigued, I attended a session and was captivated by the vibrant U3A community. I joined Betty White's Music for Enjoyment class and began to actively participate, delivering my first presentation in May 1998.

In 1999, Wagner's monumental Music Drama cycle, \*The Ring of the Nibelungs\*, was performed in Australia for the first time, specifically in Adelaide. I volunteered to conduct a series of four classes aimed at introducing this masterpiece to newcomers.

The response was positive, leading to my launch of the Opera of the Month series in

2000 and I began my journey, which has continued to this day. I also revisited my Ring sessions in early 2024 and announced that 2025 will mark my final year.

In 2003, I joined the Committee as Course Coordinator, a position I held until 2009, during which I helped establish our new building. After Dorothy and I relocated to Gawler, I found it increasingly inconvenient to attend meetings, and I believed being present was crucial in my role as Course Coordinator. I truly enjoyed that period, as it provided me with a great perspective on the wonderful array of Group Leaders we are fortunate to have.

I have represented U3A TTG by offering Opera Courses to U3As at Salisbury, Port Adelaide, Stirling, and Grange.

In the mid-2010s, I re-joined the committee for about a year to support David Steel and Margaret King, who had unexpectedly taken on their responsibilities.

When we reopened after Covid in mid-2020, Betty White chose not to return to U3A at that time, so I stepped in as the Group Leader for the Music for Enjoyment class. I renamed it to Music Appreciation, reflecting the direction I envisioned for the group.

As to my future plans, I will now find time to

listen to music purely for enjoyment, not having to worry about whether it would fit into a future programme. I can also catch up with those tidying up/clearing out chores that I have neglected over the past few years.

Being a part of U3A has been a rewarding experience. I have forged wonderful friendships while enjoying myself along the way. What more could one possibly wish for?



# OUR UNSEEN VOLUNTEERS

## Celebrating and honouring our wonderful volunteers!

### Jack Boog – Tutor for Photographic Classes



Photography has always been a hobby of mine. Back in 1980s I attend night classes in photography at the Millicent High School and gained many skills in portrait photography, developing negatives and the composition and presentation of photos.

When I came to Tea Tree Gully to live, I joined the U3A photography class led by Lawrie Hampton in 2011 and got some good grounding in "getting your eye in". I took over the Beginners Photography class in 2014 and the Advanced Photography class in 2017.

I began to appreciate what U3A stood for creating a life for seniors outside the TV set at home. (I believe Tea Tree Gully U3A had 960

members a few years ago). It was an opportunity to contribute to those who live alone and isolated. Many still come as a respite time from home issues and to make friends here. U3A's great motto to be educational, social, and enhancing physical well-being is a wonderful contribution to the community.

In class, the coffee break in the mid-morning creates a wonderful atmosphere of friendship, catching up with what I call senior happenings.

We decided to have a half-day outing once per term to go to some unique place to use our photography skills and to compete with each other. Part of photography is appreciating others as they experience more about this form of art.

To see others on the same journey and to appreciate the creative quality of other people and occasionally win a prize voted by our peers.

We cap our outing day with having lunch together in a hotel nearby and include spouses, partners and friends, using the occasion to mix.

The last Tuesday of each term we judge the winners of the competition by voting for the without knowing whose they are. This is to sharpen our understanding of colour and balance which we try to work into our own photos.

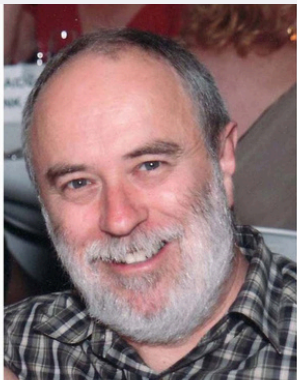
Quite a few people help with the class and that is appreciated. There is a lot of good will and that makes it easy to keep going.

In the Advanced class called Intermediate, I tend to emphasise the beauty in this world and the graciousness of nature: to "see" a photo scene before you get your camera out. It is a little easier to appreciate the beauty and balance of nature and the category of Landscapes and Seascapes.

Members tell me that it is fun and they learn a lot, but I find that the person who learns the most is the teacher. I have found this great avenue of deepening my appreciation of nature. Both this understanding and the responses from the class, that keeps on giving, makes it easy to keep going.

I am pleased to have had this opportunity and thank U3A for making it possible.

### Michael Smith – Tutor for the Family Tree Maker Course



My first experience with U3A was about twenty-five years ago when the Adelaide Hills group contacted me for help using the family history database, Family Tree Maker. Since then, I have been involved with the Adelaide and Tea Tree Gully U3A groups, helping people to understand Family Tree Maker and associated software.

Back in 1982 when my grandfather died, I inherited the family bible. I discovered a family tree from Joseph Earle (b. 1775) through to my grandparents on the blank pages between the old and new testaments. I had no idea who most of the people in the tree were, they were certainly not mentioned in family conversations. I was determined to find out who they were and as much about them as I was able.

Over the last twenty years researching and recording family history has become very popular. Previous generations had to record all their research on paper, today technology and the internet provide time saving alternatives. These include computer databases and the ability to research on the internet. It is also now possible to generate a book using the data from a database. More recently DNA is providing useful information and occasionally makes discoveries that were not spoken about by previous generations.

My employment provided me with computer skills, and I immediately saw the advantage of using a computer and the internet to research and record my family history. Using these expedited my research and enabled easy recording and editing of discoveries.

Researchers also saw the advantages of using information technology, but to take full advantage of it they needed to know how it all worked. The cooperative learning provided by U3A allowed an opportunity for me to help people in the community wanting to use the technology but struggling with its perceived complexities.

Family Tree Maker is a software tool to record facts about family history, and to link pictures and source citations to facts. It provides many informative reports and using a companion program can create a family history book. It also links to Ancestry and FamilySearch who provide research hints.

In 2022 I approached Tea Tree Gully U3A with an offer to help members with the technology.

The help includes: -

- an explanation of the functionality within Family Tree Maker,
- practical exercises in entering data into Family Tree Maker,
- how to modify media (pictures, scanned documents, etc.),
- adding and linking media to fact related to people in the database.
- how to research web-based information,
- Members considering undertaking their family history could greatly increase their understanding by completing the Tea Tree Gully U3A Family Tree Maker course.