

# THE CONVEYOR

February 2024 | Issue 1



Image by Max Banfield

## Welcome

Welcome back to another new year at U3A Tea Tree Gully. We hope you've had a refreshing break over the holiday period and are ready to take on new challenges, meet new people and enjoy your retirement. We have over 80 courses ready for you to choose from, so join in and discover the benefits of staying active, social and learning new skills.

**Barbara Schumacher**  
Office Manager



## Term Dates for 2024

### Term 1

Monday 5 Feb to Friday 12 April

### Term 2

Monday 29 April to Friday 5 July

### Term 3

Monday 22 July to Friday 27 Sept

### Term 4

Monday 14 Oct to Friday 6 Dec

## Registrations

The Office is open during school terms from 12 noon to 1:15pm on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday.

The cost is only \$60 per year for as many classes as you wish to join.

Being in your Third Age is the only criterion needed to become a member. No formal educational qualifications are required. There are no examinations to be taken or

certificates to be obtained. You just need to be over 50, and at least semi-retired, not working more than 20 hours a week.

Our aim is to provide active retirees with the opportunity to improve their wellbeing, increase physical activity, the satisfaction of making a contribution to society, discovering new interests and sharing skills and interests for the benefit of others.

# THE KEVIN AND LINDA STORY



## Mental Health Focus

The health benefits of staying active and social as you age are hard to ignore. From lowering your risk of depression and enhancing your social wellbeing to improving strength and stamina – there are a lot of good reasons to keep moving and stay well connected with friends.

But as we go through the different stages of life, maintaining a healthy and social lifestyle can get more difficult and very challenging. As circumstances change it can become harder to meet new people, stay in touch with old friends or do the activities you once did.

While ageing may bring its challenges, the truth is your retirement years are the ideal time to focus on you. It's the time to picture the life you want, enjoy freedom and time, stay connected with others, enhance your mental health, take part in physical activity and continue learning.



## Who we are

Founded in 1987, U3A Tea Tree Gully is a not-for-profit organisation run entirely by volunteers sharing their knowledge and life experience with retired seniors over 50 years.

We first heard about U3A from our friend Barbara Miskelly. Barbara ran the Medical Library at Modbury Hospital and was frequently visited by Betty White, the President of U3ATTG, who had previously been a Nurse Educator at Modbury Hospital. Betty was borrowing referencebooks to help run her exercise classes at U3A. Linda was working in administration at the School of Nursing in the Education Centre where the library was situated.

Ten years ago when Kevin retired, we both joined the Friday afternoon Canasta Hand and Foot group and he eventually became the group leader. He also joined the Thursday afternoon Geology group run by Cynthia Pyle. When Linda stopped work she joined Scrabble and after a time took on the Scrabble group leadership.

Having always exercised from DVDs at home Linda felt ready to share this with others and in October 2018 ran her first Muscles in Motion during the October school holidays as rooms 8 and 9 were unavailable at that stage. Realising, like exercising, singing would also be good for older people she then started Singing with the Stars in early 2020 which unfortunately was overtaken by the Covid pandemic.

Kevin has been a member of;  
Muscles in Motion; Singing with the

Stars, Jack Boog's Photography, Climate Change, Astronomy (discontinued), History of Today, Geology, Technology Today and the Friday Walking Group. Linda has been a member of Women Artists and More, Scrabble, Tai Chi, Meditation, Cooking is Fun (discontinued), Friday Walking Group and Canasta Hand and Foot. As you can see we have well utilised U3A.

Kevin took over producing The Conveyor in 2016 joining the Management Committee at that stage and became President in March 2019. He has had the great fortune of having a very good and supportive U3A TTG Management Committee (especially during the Covid lockdowns) and an excellent Office Manger and team over the last five years. Linda, with the help of Barbara Schumacher and Margaret Thomas was able to implement and navigate the complexities of our new MyU3A computer database system together.

My greatest pleasure in being President is being able to assist people and encourage them to use their retirement years in a productive and enjoyable way, making the most out of the many wonderful activities available at our U3A Tea Tree Gully.

Kevin & Linda Neale

# PAT HARRIS RETIRES



I am a Chinese Malaysian married to an Australian husband, Brian. After volunteering for 8 & half years I've decided to retire from running Tai Chi and Meditation classes.

After I retired from teaching at the end of 2012 and a year and half later, I volunteered to run those classes. At that time Linda Wright was the Group Leader. She took over from Doug Smith. (To those who remembered Doug Smith, he was an inspiration).

When Linda couldn't run those classes Deidre stepped in and kept asking who would like to volunteer as the enrollments were substantial. I put my hand up!

I have been doing Tai Chi for over 35 years in Australia on and off. So I had the confidence and it was relatively easy for me to step up.

However, running a Meditation class was a challenge for me. I remembered in my first year Kate Bristow kindly gave me a meditation CD that she bought from a shop. I thank her for it! Another good friend Elaine Mitchell supported me and I learned a lot from her. At this time I was also embarking on a self discovery journey so I decided to attend Meditation Retreats/Workshops.

These workshops gave me the tools to present creative and innovative ways to run my classes.

I love when at the end of each session there is an absolute silence! Stillness! It is heartwarming when I feel appreciated because I dedicate my time and effort into making those sessions fulfilling and meaningful. To make it more interesting I invited guest meditators as well.

For the program to be successful I also organized social lunches twice a year. I love when the members have the opportunity to connect with each other in a social environment. That deepens the connection during class times.

In my third year I decided to set up a second Tai Chi class due to long waiting lists.

Keith Fitzgerald ran my classes when Brian and I were travelling. He also took over part of my morning sessions when I moved my classes to the afternoon.

It has been an honor and privilege for me to serve U3A in my volunteering capacity. I would like to acknowledge Deidre Rae who mentored me in the first two years of volunteering. I would also like to thank the following who have guided, helped and supported me... Brian, Keith Fitzgerald, Mike and Jutta Prus and Sharon Robertson.

I thank Mike and Jutta Prus and Annette Latham for stepping up to continue my classes. I wish them all the best.

Pat Harris



**Pat & Brian Harris**  
**Tai Chi & Meditation Tutors**

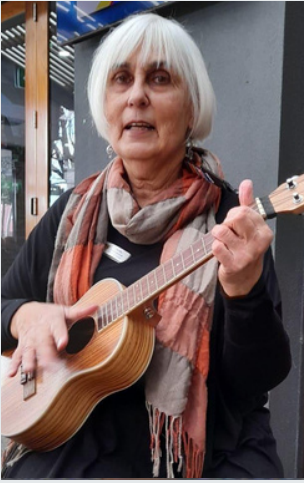
## VOLUNTEERING

If you have experience or knowledge or a particular passion or skill, and would like to share this with others, either in a one off presentation or a weekly group, please let the U3A office know. Leading a group can be very rewarding and life giving for you and others and such a worthwhile way to spend your time in retirement. Alternatively, if there is a particular course you would be interested in doing, please share your suggestion with a U3A Leader.

# OUR VALUED VOLUNTEERS

## Celebrating and honouring our wonderful volunteers!

### **Cecilia Littlewood - Tutor for 'Ukulele for Beginners'**



My name is Cecilia Littlewood, and I'm a retired teacher. My last role in teaching (2015) was as Music Teacher. I really didn't know such a thing called U3A existed, until some friends enlightened me!

I joined U3A firstly at Campbelltown U3A in 2016, doing French, then moved to TTG U3A to join the French class there, and attended a fitness class there for a while. I started teaching Ukulele to Beginners in 2019, and in 2022, I started teaching 2 groups, Beginners and Progressive.

I love teaching ukulele to my classes, as we have a lot of fun. Their musical ability is very mixed at the beginning - from no instrument playing, to playing/ singing for many years.

I encourage the class members to practice daily, as using your fingers - even if only for a short time each day, increases their flexibility - so important as we travel the road of arthritis! I just love seeing their confidence grow, as they take their playing back to their families. We have done some gigs at nursing homes, which always go down well and will continue to do in 2024.

Coming to ukulele brings joy (like other U3A classes), and friendships form. U3A is often the thread that keeps people connected - and I LOVE that! We always welcome new people, and if you wanted to try ukulele in Term 2, 2024 (I will be away most of term 1) - come along. I have some spare ukuleles that you could try.

### **Marie Jackson - Tutor for 'Fitness & Flexibility'**

My current volunteer role at U3A TTG is Group Leader for 'Fitness and Flexibility' and this is my 14th year. I first enrolled with U3A TTG in 2002.

The 1st class I attended was 'Words Alive' quickly followed by 'Folk Dancing' and 'Line Dancing'. I attended 'French' for many years and also attended a stockbroking course, 'Cooking around the World' and 'Tai Chi'. I took over as Group Leader of the 'Folk Dancing' class in 2011 and did that for 7 years. I still attend this class and help out organising the music.

I really enjoy the camaraderie in my class, and have seen lots of friendships formed over the years.

There are still many members of the original class going back to around 2007 when Beth Denny first started this class, and this says a lot about U3A and what we do.

What I love most is the people. Everyone is so friendly and helpful, and we are extremely lucky to have a great bunch of Group Leaders who offer such a diverse choice of classes.

I am so grateful to my friend who suggested I join U3A all those years ago. It was one of the best decisions I have ever made.



### **Michael Prus - Committee Member, Tutor for 'Tai Chi/Meditation' & 'German Language For Beginners'**



My current roles are group leader for 'German for Beginners' and 'Tai Chi' & 'Meditation'. I am also on the Management Committee as the maintenance & repair person around the U3A building, helping Tony & Tom Mittiga.

As you know, time flies when you're having fun, so I have forgotten exactly when I first went to U3A. I think it was around 2014. Jutta and I started with a computer class which helped Jutta more than it did me. I'm a bit of a neo-luddite!

I also joined Ingrid Eadon's 'German Conversation' class. Jutta is German and I am half German half Polish. We speak German at home. I also joined Burt May's bird group.

I conducted a one off course in home maintenance, tap washers, fly screens and a men's haircutting class. I also initiated a very successful recycling campaign, recycling old x-rays, spectacles and hearing aids.

Being a committee member enables me to put forward practical solutions to problems. I am flexible and will often volunteer when no-one else does. Mostly it has been fun! I am also a fan of Monty Python. 'Always look on the bright side of life!'

U3A offers a big variety of courses to keep the brain challenged and an opportunity to offer to do something for others. Can't beat that feeling that someone has benefitted from my input. Priceless!