

## SECRETARY'S REPORT

The period of time from 1 July 2017 until 31 December 2017 was quite a busy period for U3A members.

Along with our usual classes, we also enjoyed the International lunch, mainly for language students, followed two weeks later by the Italian lunch. This year the food was purchased from local sources, who managed to provide the various types of food to coincide with our language classes. Both of these luncheons were very successful and much enjoyed by all those attending. The only complaint: too much food.

U3A members also enjoyed a bus trip to Berowra Waters for a "Christmas in July" lunch, where they were served a traditional Christmas lunch, and really enjoyed the entertainment during the day. Later in the year we travelled down to Jervis Bay for a dolphin cruise. This proved to be a great day as well, and we did manage to see some dolphins.

The end of October U3A was busy period too. Our Art Exhibition was held over three days, with many of our art students participating, and there was some really great art on show. The event was opened by Emma Husar MP Member for Lindsay.

Earlier in October our usual annual function, lunch for Tutors and Volunteers, was held at the Penrith RSL. This of course is the only reward these people get for all the hours they put into the running of our U3A. Without their generosity, we would not have the organisation we have today.

Wednesday 15 November, 2017 saw two important meetings for U3A. The first meeting was a Special Meeting, regarding proposed changes to our constitution, and proved to be a very fiery meeting, with quite a lot of input from those members attending. The new proposed constitution was finally accepted by those present. This meeting was followed by our Annual General Meeting, which saw a change in the position of President again this year. These meetings were very well attended with 150 members present. The meeting was held at the Penrith RSL Club due to the expected high number of attendees.

The last day of term 4 was our Christmas party here in the hall. A most enjoyable time was had by all attending. A big thanks must go to Chris Price and her band of helpers who supplied delicious food for all that day. A thankyou too for those people who very kindly provided the entertainment.

Finally I would like to thank all the volunteers who help in the running of our office here in Penrith throughout the year. They do a really great job, always eager to help with a smile, and friendly advice. I would also like to thank the other members of our committee, who have been there throughout all the ups and downs in the running of an organisation such as this. Finally a very big thankyou to our President Denise Challis, always there, ready to help, big jobs or small jobs, with a smile on her face.

Thankyou everyone.

Brenda Emerson

Secretary

## **Membership Secretary's Report**

This year the database was redesigned to create a more accurate picture of our membership, improve its usability, and to introduce the data privacy options. This meant that some members had their membership number changed and new cards issued. Thank you for your patience while we made these improvements.

The following changes were made:

- The data privacy option was offered as a choice on the enrolment form and protocols have been introduced to ensure it is maintained.
- Members who had not been enrolled for 2 or more years have had their details moved to a separate file. This removed 424 records from the database. These records have not been deleted and can be restored if necessary.

Currently this year we have 311 new members and as of 01/06/2018 our membership stands at 1427.

Members can check the accuracy of their details or request changes by contacting the office.

Patricia McKeon

## **HALL MANAGER'S REPORT**

As most members know, the School of Arts building is owned by the Penrith City Council, and we, the u3a are tenants. The facility is hired out to various organisations and the public at various costs. The revenue raised from the hire of these facilities is used to replenish or replace any furnishings etc.. E.G.- recently 10 Tables & 30 Chairs were purchased, over the years the facility has had various upgrades, carpets, floor, air cons. etc.. This year has seen an increase in hiring by various groups. I as Hall Manager liaise with Penrith City Council, if any problems arise with the building, and have any issues rectified.

I look forward to continuing on with this roll and making any further improvements as needed.

Harry May/Hall Manager.



**U3A Nepean Blue Mountains Inc.**

**ABN 35 956 305 595**

## *Presidents Report*

Honored Guests, fellow members, ladies and gentlemen. Its has been 7 short months since our last Annual General Meeting. And what a lot we have squeezed into that time.

Firstly, let me start off by thanking you all, as so many members have taken the time to share their knowledge and ideas which has given me a great grounding on U3A. To my Vice Presidents, Jim Tiberi and Reg Grace, my thanks for their wise counsel and support.

To Patricia McKeon, for her database skills and even a long stay in hospital has not kept her away from the job. Patricia yesterday had surgery on her shoulder and whilst we do not expect her back teaching this year, she is already working on an improved database to include classes, their details and the class leaders. All of which will be of great help when we start putting the new 2019 Course Handbook together.

To Ric Todd, Harry May, Lee Day and Chris Bolton, who stepped up to form our Curriculum Committee and, when faced with adversity, they simply got on with the job, confirming room bookings, meeting with Class Leaders and moving class numbers around to accommodate a few very large classes into more smaller classes. We can now accurately say where the classes and rooms are and what they cost. Also, how much we need to budget for over the year for Room Hire, which is currently around \$27,000.00 for the calendar year.

I would also like to thank some non- Committee members for their support. With Ric Todd we also got Ruth, and with Harry May, we also got Nola. Thank you to both wonderful ladies for the incredible work you do behind the scenes.

When I came into the role last November, there was over 2500 emails not actioned. My thanks to Silva McKeon who came in and went through and actioned all of them and then continues to monitor emails once a week. She lightens our work load.

I also acknowledge and thank, Andrew Simm, Sari Erasmus-Hickey, Jim Tiberi and Patricia McKeon, who joined with me to form the 2018 Constitutional Sub Committee. We accomplished a lot in a short time and were able to take the final version to the Committee in April. Soon you will be given the opportunity to consider what we have delivered.

In March we regretfully accepted the resignation of our Treasurer due to ill health. We confirmed Linda Sinclair, who had been acting as Treasurer since February as our new Treasurer.

In April, Volunteer, Suzanne Forwood stepped up to join the Committee and immediately took on the role as Volunteer Co-Ordinator at Jordan Springs. My thanks to her for her patience in a difficult role as U3A and Penrith Council worked to implement our Hosting Role.

Unfortunately for all involved we came to the realization that many things that were being asked of us were outside our core business. This along with the small number of members willing to volunteer there led us to advise Penrith Council we could no longer continue with this agreement. We have given notice and will formally finish in our contract tomorrow. We will, however, continue to run classes there and hope that we can deliver more activities in Jordan Springs.

There has been no one qualified to update our Web Page for quite some time. Any changes made recent years have been made by Understandable IT at a cost of \$75.00 per hour or part thereof. We simply do not have the funds to continue paying for this. Fortunately, a new Volunteer in the office made it known, that she does web page design and has used our software some time ago. The Committee arranged for her to have some retraining with Understandable IT and we are confidently working towards be able to do most of this work in office. So, a huge thank you to for Helen Baddrick. I look forward to working with her as we develop our Web Page to reflect all the good that is U3A with up to date information that will hopefully reduce future printing costs.

Recently we welcomed Stuart and Rosemary McPherson who have volunteered to take on the role of Newsletter Editors. I thank them and look forward to working with them.

Since our last AGM, we have updated our office and the office computers, installed a public Wi-Fi system throughout the School of Arts. It is just a small step in bringing the administration of U3A in line with current administrative systems.

In December, at our Committee meeting, the committee was unable to accept the Treasurers report as the information available did not reflect our income and expenditure nor our current financial position. The committee approved the change of finance software from QuickBooks to MYOB but as I started to set this up, we encountered more issues. Eventually the Committee asked Linda Sinclair to take over as Bookkeeper and she has done a marvelous job in recreating the 2017 July to December financials in a manual form. We owe a huge thanks to Linda for the high-quality work she has done this year.

We also have MYOB running beside this and all transactions from July 2016 to the present are now available in MYOB. Our General Ledger now reflects our plant, equipment and depreciation.

Much was made of deficiencies in our Banking at our last AGM, and I can report now, that we have had no issues with the Commonwealth Bank and I am at a loss to see where this information came from. I can only reassure all member that we are fully compliant with all banking regulations.

It has been difficult to sit here today and watch as we explained how we started the year almost \$30,000.00 worse off than we were at the beginning of July. Heart breaking for the large number of you that have worked so hard over the past few years to raise funds, to be prudent in their spending and wise in the purchase of assets for U3A.

We cannot undo what has occurred, so it is important now to look forward and ensure the appropriate financial policy and procedures are in place and that we have a financial reporting system that allows the Committee to receive accurate and up to date reports each month, and one that also gives us the monthly and annual reports we need to make decisions on where we spend our monies.

For now, though, we will tighten our belts and look at the ways we can increase our bank account and work our way back to the healthy balances we enjoyed some 18 months ago.

One way we will start is to look at a small increase in fees for the 2019 year and we will announce this later in the year just before we start to accept the 2019 enrolments. At \$35.00 for the year, our U3A has one of the lowest fees around Australia.

Fund Raising is another way to restore funds. At present, from a member who wishes to remain anonymous we have been donated the art that is displayed in the entrance and today I have placed the remaining canvases on the tables. They are for sale at \$2 each and all funds go to U3A. They are good quality and artists can use them to paint their own art on and at \$2.00, you can't buy canvas that cheap anywhere. Please take one home today.

Of course, if a member has a fundraising idea, please let me know. And Members, please support these activities. For now, U3A is the best charity we know.

As I finish, I would like to pay special thanks to the Committee Members who will be leaving the Committee at this election. Margaret Lewis, our past Treasurer – may you return to better health and come back to classes when you are able. Lee Day – please remember us as you enjoy more special time with your grandson. And Reg Grace, thank you so much for being part of this Committee. Cancer sucks! Personally, I wish I had known you before this awful disease took hold. We will keep you in our hearts and minds. And of course, visit you when you finally return to the mountains.

In closing, let me say what a wonderful experience it has been to lead this organisation. I probably didn't realise exactly how much was required of me, at first. But I have learned so much, met so many wonderful people, and thoroughly enjoyed every minute of it. For that, I thank you all.

Denise Challis

President