



University of the Third Age
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No A0053715K

JUNE NEWSLETTER, NO.55... Theme this month – *our younger selvesand, QUIZ*



President Lynne's words

I do hope mothers in our club enjoyed Mother's Day. It certainly was different this year!!! With Skype and Zoom at our disposal, people have had the opportunity to catch up with their family.

Haven't we had a great stretch of wonderful weather? Like myself, having finished doing up my small backyard, many people would have taken the opportunity to spruce up their garden before winter sets in. I think the local nurseries have been doing quite a bit of extra trade.

The deciduous trees are showing their glory as evidenced by my walks around Alexandra Lake. Quite a few U3A members have been taking the same opportunity to enjoy the sights of the varied bird wildlife and perhaps, enjoying a nice cuppa afterwards. (Social distancing, of course)

With the first stage of restrictions now in place, it gives us the opportunity to catch up personally with family and friends. Let's hope not too many people in Australia do not go overboard too soon and spoil what a good job the Australians have been doing to prevent the spread of the virus.

I would like to wish David Mitchell a speedy recovery from his recent illness. Lynne.

Pam Brennan was thrilled to tell committee that U3A Ararat was successful in securing a Federal Government grant, and will soon be the owner of 5 ipads including SIM cards for members wanting to learn more of wonderful features these very nifty electro gadgets can offer! Pam will be contacting members she thinks might be interested in this 3-6 month loan including one to one lessons. I wouldn't be without my ipad!



Val Spalding. Member of the month.



I was born in the Great Depression year of 1930 and have called Ararat 'home' for 90 years. My Story is linked to its history which began with the gold rushes of the 1850's, but family history really begins in 1823 when one of my great grandfathers was transported from England to Hobart in Van Diemen's land. He was convicted of being a pick pocket but made good, married a free settler and had a family of eight, the youngest being my grandmother. In the 1850's he brought them all to the Ararat diggings, one son later becoming Mayor of the young township and laid the foundation stone of the Town Hall in the 1890's.

Another great grandfather, also from England, sought his fortune on the goldfields, his son, who was my grandfather, being born on the Mt. Ararat goldfields. Luck was not with them, so one became Secretary of the Mechanics Institute and his son became head gardener at the Mental Asylum (Aradale). That son married my grandmother and they settled in a miners cottage east of Ararat (Pump town) and had a family of about seven, the youngest being my mother. She was the second telephonist in the Ararat Telephone Exchange at the Post Office, and there met a young postman from Maryborough whom she married at the end of WW1 in 1918. They had a family of four spread over 12 years. I was lucky to just make it as the 4th child.

At the age of 3, I moved with my family to live in the miners cottage with my grandparents for about 6 years. Great Depression conditions lingered, electricity, sewerage and reticulated water arrived in a couple of years, so life was frugal. However my brother and I, with the neighbours children, enjoyed the free life of bush kids, and I began my daily treks to PS 800 at the age of 4 1/2. In 1937 Polio closed schools just like today.

I began High School in 1942, my three siblings having left by then. My brother joined the RAAF and my sisters married soldiers. At home and school we knitted khaki woollens. The best result was the abandonment of the black woollen stockings and tunics for summer uniform.

We watched American convoys roaring through to Darwin and occasionally entertained the Yanks with home cooking and sing songs round our piano. A Junior Scholarship kept me at school and the school leaving age increased to 15. My sister and brother were able to leave at 14.

Matriculation in 1947 brought the decision of a career. Teaching seemed natural for me, especially as teachers were paid to train. So back to PS 800 for a year; observation of teachers for half the year preceded a half year of teaching my own class of 24 preps at the age of 17! Then a year at Ballarat Primary Teachers' College preceded some of us

getting offered the chance of going to Melbourne Uni with accommodation and an allowance.

1948 also saw the Deb Balls return. My reluctant partner was a bank teller back from New Guinea (RAAF radar mechanic) and then the long wait he insisted on while I finished my BA. University was a wonderful experience, especially extra-curricular activities. After a year's teaching in Ballarat, we married in 1954 and Kingsley joined his father's real estate agency (started in 1953). He was occupied with service clubs (YMCA his favourite) and earned several life memberships.

In 1956 I resigned from AHS, had 4 children in 5 years, then recovered for another 5. In 1966 AHS, desperate for an Eng/History teacher replacement for year 10, I returned to school for 6 months and stayed for 24 years as a part time SH/T teacher which fitted in well with one day for golf, tennis, old time dancing and mothering.

In 1990, we both retired. These last 30 years have been great. Finally able to travel abroad several times, watching and helping 6 grandchildren and 3 great grandchildren grow, as 2 sons still live here. U3A has provided wonderful entertainment and sincere thanks are due to organisers and instructors.



Sixty-six years married, life seems to be rounding off as it started, the Depression and a polio epidemic in the early days, and now a pandemic and an unknown economic outcome. Oh well, one day at a time!

Val and Kingsley Spalding, Anzac Day 2020.

The Narrow Road to the Deep North,
by Man Booker Prize winner
Australian Richard Flanagan.
U3A book of the month reviewed
by Peter Brennan.



The May book club met via Zoom to discuss Richard Flanagan's award-winning book 'Narrow Road to the Deep North'.



Flanagan's book was the recipient of the prestigious Man Booker prize as well as a host of other national and international literacy prizes.

The book tells the story of Dorrigo Evans, an army doctor and the Australian prisoners of war who were put to work by the Japanese Army to build the infamous Burma-Thailand railway. The building of the railway cost 2000 Australian lives as well as other Allied and Asian prisoners.

These victims and heroes lie at the centre of the novel and its central section is a sustained and searing account of the brutality that the POW's were forced to endure during its construction. The accounts of the camp and working conditions are closely based on Flanagan's father, Archie,

who was one of these prisoners, but it is not a biographical account.

But it is also a love story and Flanagan's central character, Dorrigo Evans, who has a relationship with his uncle's wife, Amy and she becomes the great love of his life. However, things don't end happily for the couple and Evans spends the rest of his life as a sexual and emotional cheat. His status as a war hero seems very hollow compared to his personal life.

Flanagan goes to great lengths to illuminate the behaviour of the Japanese officers and guards and to explore what lies behind it. The 'enemy' is not represented in racist terms and the officers and guards are presented as individual characters with varying motivations. In fact, the book title comes from one of the most famous books of all Japanese literature!

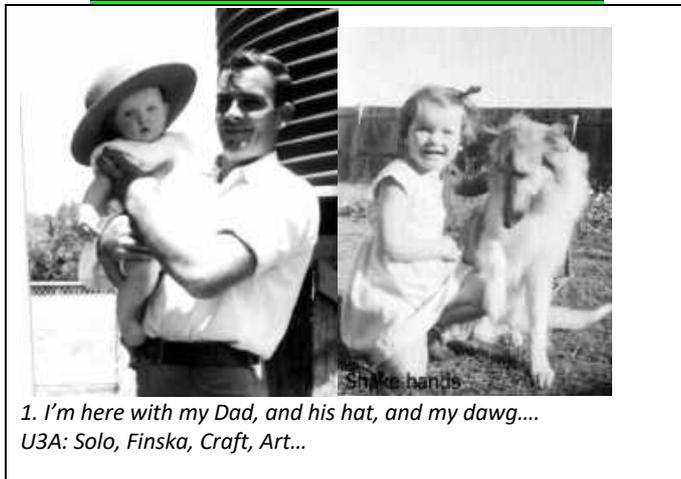
Narrow Road to the Deep North is a great Australian novel and all members of the book club enjoyed the read and discussion that followed.

WHO AM I? QUIZ..

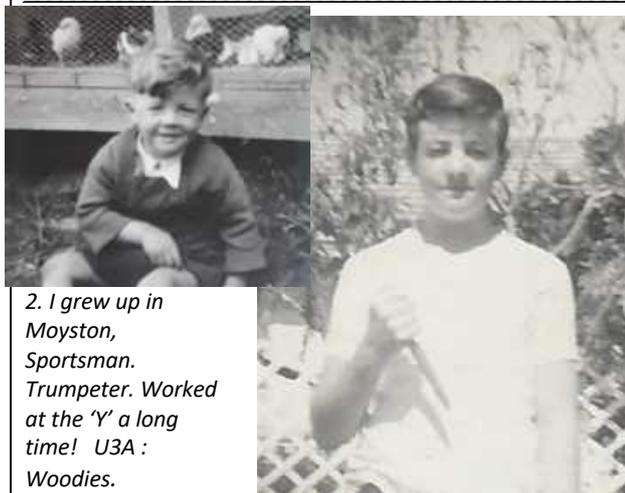
TRY TO GUESS

Entry form page 6. Return by Friday 19 June to
u3aararat1@gmail.com *or P O Box 531 Ararat.*

\$25 voucher for maybe pizza or takeaway
@ Sicillians - Highest score wins!



1. I'm here with my Dad, and his hat, and my dawg...
U3A: Solo, Finska, Craft, Art...



2. I grew up in Moyston, Sportsman. Trumpeter. Worked at the 'Y' a long time! U3A: Woodies.



3. I love my Bows!.... U3A: Solo... 'my long hair was cut soon after this... 😊'



6. I was a very fast runner! Golfer... U3A: Solo. Big Screen.



4. I was in Ararat Ladies Pipe Band. U3A: Craft . Excursions ...



7. I have a medical background ... U3A : Bridge. Book group.



5. I've been ...Nurseryman. Sculpter. Monk. U3A: Committee and much more...



8. I'm a new Dad here. A Musician. U3A: Singing. Talks.



10. I'm on the left holding the fox's back leg. A farmer once U3A: Finksa. Bigscreen.



11. I was born and grew up in Ararat.



U3A: Solo, book group.



9. I've been a Rabbiter! Golfer. U3A:Committee. Board games.



12. I farmed, and much more. Still live on the property. Hobby vintage cars.... U3A : Solo.



14. In Minyip briefly, then Moyston many years. Happy wedding snap for more clues. I'm a motorcyclist, bush art welder. U3A: Woodies.



13. We live out of town. Still have this little car that was the first of a long love affair with stylish vehicles....U3A: Excursion organisers. Past committee. Art. Enough clues....



15. Second generation 'Araratian'.... U3A: Bookclub. Technology class. Craft.

U3A Ararat Committee will meet Monday June 8 to decide when and how groups and classes will return. The hope is for term 3 which is July 13 for the school term. They will keep you informed in good time.

Thank you Val Spalding, Such a great story. Thank you to all of the generous quiz entrants, I've loved doing this month's newsletter with THE QUIZ. It's been a fair bit of work to gather and put together, so make it worthwhile and have a go, like the carnival caller said... everyone has a chance to win! Some will be easy enough, some will be hard enough. Highest number correct wins. Entry form is on a separate sheet, page 6 and it's a word doc. so you can type in your answers, save, and email to

u3aararat1@gmail.com OR write your answers and post to Box 531 OR drop in 32 Coad Street mail box on your walk, and save a stamp! Judges decision final.....

