



University of the Third Age
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No A0053715K

U3A Ararat, Newsletter No 60, December 2020

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Well..... here we are in the last month of 2020!!

With the trials and tribulations resulting from Covid-19, let's hope that we can continue on this positive path going forward.



Many people have chosen to return to U3A with whatever activity they have done before. It is great to see their smiling faces again.

At our Committee meeting next week, we will be planning activities for Term 1 2021. If anyone has any suggestions of where or what they would like to be considered, the Committee would love to hear from you. It might be somewhere you have been to or done and think it might be appreciated by others. Perhaps you could put your thinking caps on!!!! Pam Brennan does a magnificent job putting together our programs and ideas from others would be very helpful.

Gosh, I drove to Melbourne yesterday and there are so many changes to the road system. On my return, it was just so lovely to feast my eyes on our lovely town of Ararat. We are blessed to be able to live here.

If I don't see you beforehand, I wish everyone a safe and happy Christmas and New Year festivities. Take care. Lynne

Today is a new day. You will get out of it just what you put into it.

MEMBER OF THE MONTH - LINDA HEARD



I was born in the seaside town of Bournemouth in the UK in 1954.

My parents, sister and I (five years old) immigrated to Australia in 1959 on the passenger ship *Fairsea* as "10 Pound Poms." For those who don't know, this refers to the amount my parents paid for their

tickets to Australia. Crazy to think you could travel so far for so little, although 10 pounds went a long way in those days!

We arrived in Alexandra (Vic) where we were billeted to stay until my father's job was arranged in Great Western, where he was employed by Seppelts as a Mechanic. I attended school in Great Western until we moved to Ararat and completed my school years there.

Mum was a professional Tailoress trained in the UK, she had various clients in Ararat and taught me how to sew from a young age. I'd help her sew hems for her clients. From then on, I developed a love of sewing - anything from family clothing to curtains, wedding dresses to quilts. I have been lucky enough to win prizes for my Quilts.

On leaving school I started work at Deneys in Barkly St, in the basement grocery store (now Lyall Eales).

I used to model for the clothing store upstairs as did some of the other staff. I remember the day hotpants came into the store, we were having a fashion parade and I got to wear them. I think some of the people there were a bit shocked when they first came out!



It's funny looking back on this, considering what people wear now.

My father used to make wooden toys, which I would sell for him at the Sunday markets for years. I'm sure there are still some of those toys around today, they were made to last. I met and made many friends at the markets.

During the 70's, I was part of the Ararat Drama Group, led by Bertie Bates and Co. I was also a founding member of the Ararat Rotaract Club, we started with 12 members, which sadly lasted only a few years.

In 1971 the Y's men's Club (this was a service club attached to the YMCA and raised funds to support the various parts of the YMCA and other community projects) sponsored me in the Golden Gateway festival that was great fun!

In the late 1970's I moved to Adelaide and had various jobs and interests there. Returning to Ararat in 1980, where I started work at Aradale. From there I had a 40 year vocation working in disability with various positions, and meeting many wonderful people.

I have been lucky enough to indulge my passion for travel, having been to 27 countries travelling with my daughter, husband, and friends.

My latest adventure was due to take place this year to Vietnam but due to Covid 19 was cancelled along with many other traveller's trips.



I have had many great experiences abroad including a memorable visit to the Bulldog Café in Amsterdam with my daughter!



Water ferry in Denmark with Heather

In 2016 during a trip to New Zealand, I had the experience of visiting Whakaari/White Island, a small volcanic isle in New Zealand's Bay of Plenty, it was a very eerie and desolate place. Tragically 21 lives were lost there last December when the volcano erupted.

I wear many hats, including part time seamstress, farm manager with my husband, Nanna to three in Ballarat, and Grandma to a new granddaughter in Geelong. I also volunteer for Red Cross Emergency Management and am a TOWN Club Australia Board member. I joined U3A when I retired in 2018 and have enjoyed the many activities, outings, and opportunities to meet new friends. As a teenager I loved to paint but had let this slip, it has been wonderful to attend the U3A Art group and catch up on a lost love after so many years.

A few U3A members were keen to join a sewing class, which we started in Term 4 last year. I enjoyed the classes and I'm sure the ladies who attended did also. A couple of the projects were shopping bags and Christmas decorations.

We all look forward to getting back to more classes next year. If you are interested, please come along and join our group. **LH**

**Member Rhoda Handyside's story.
Background and interview questions by
Pat McAloon.**

Rhoda Handyside is from a horse racing family. She was born Rhoda Barr Smith. Her father, Bob Barr Smith, was the treasurer of the Moonee Valley Racing Club. He bred a horse called Thackeray. The horse was named after the great English novelist William Makepeace Thackeray, rather than the mountain not far from Barr Smith's Willaura property where Rhoda taught Thackeray to jump over fallen logs and ditches. Thackeray, pictured below, went on to win two Grand Annual Steeplechases at the famous May Three Day Racing Carnival at Warrnambool. He won the Grand Annual in 1979 and 1980. In 1981 he ran second – on all occasions trained by Rhoda, who was the first woman to train the winner of the Grand Annual. Thackeray now has a race named after him. Rhoda said they wanted to name the race after her, but she said the horse won the race!



Racing at about the same time, Rhoda trained **Danish** pictured here, who 'was a good horse, he won 12 country races for me, he was a real trier'. He was locally bred by the Rogers family, she said.



Goodbuy -



pictured here, with Rhoda (in her colours) is owned by Rhoda and

Stewart Handyside, and trained by Rhoda. He won the last race on the card at the Ararat meet recently.

Goodbuy was ridden by Christine Puls, wearing Rhoda's colours yellow with black seams and cap (very Richmond).

The official starting price was \$81!

So Rhoda, what was life like growing up at Willaura?

My grandparents owned the Mt William property and divided it when my father and mother married. They were sheep farmers and they agisted horses; some were draught horses - when the Mallee was in a dry season.

Have you continued with your training activities in the past 50 years?

Yes. I started off going to race meetings when I was quite small. We would go all dressed up, on the back of a truck! I was about 21 when I first started training. Not long after we were married in 1969, Stewart and I were in Esperance W A where I trained two horses.

Why are you still interested in the industry?

Because I love it! You meet a lots of characters - it gets you away from the farm and it's more interesting than the one day eventing that I used to do when I was younger. I concentrated on racing which had a social aspect for Stewart and we could enjoy it together. Stewart is not horsey, but he doesn't mind a winner!

What changes have you seen in racing over the past 40 years?

Horses are much better fed, much better trained, the upkeep of tracks is so much better, prize money is better. Travelling is much easier; both roads and vehicles. It took me a day to get to Portsea in the early days!

What do you think of the use of whips on horses?

It's part of the way to ride a horse. They have changed the makeup of the whips, that are padded and quite different now. You don't belt the horse, it's an aid to help riding the horse when they hang in or hang out, and sometimes they are lazy.

What do you think of the future of country races?

I think it's pretty bright. There are good facilities now. Tracks have improved, they are generally well maintained.

For fifty odd years it's been a wonderful part of Stewart's and my life. I've made some really great friends. **RH**

When I say there are 165 members in USA Ararat, people are surprised. Here are a few of our members - chosen at random - and asked if they could share a photo of MY FIRST CAR, including a sentimental tale or two. Enjoy.

JOAN PITARO

Yes I think I can do that. My first car was a black Morris Oxford. I will surely have a photo of it somewhere.



Here it is, parked outside my family home in Digby. It always had three of us to and from Geelong teachers college, and then five of us squeezed in on trips around town. And the name of the dog? She was Fanny, named after an Enid Blyton character.

WENDY LEWIS

I've attached a photo of my first car. It was taken after someone had run into the back of it.

It always had bits falling off it after that. I didn't have it for very long. I really couldn't think of anything nice to say about this car. Cheers, Wendy.



GWEN RHOOK



When I was asked to contribute a photo of my first car I imagined what (others) would be there, vintage, veteran, all shapes and sizes. Not me. **My first car was a Honda Civic**

2018 with all the bells and whistles. It's always said all good things come to those who wait.

PAM ORR

My first car was not technically my car it was my mother's but, I had unrestricted use of it providing I dropped her at and picked her up from work. I loved driving and was constantly pestering my parents for driving lessons. Access to Mum's car was a trade-off for them not being able to afford to send me to the tertiary institute I had chosen post Matriculation. It was a white, Mini with blue upholstery which required double-de-clutching to go from second gear

to first. My Mum (a recycler before it became fashionable) made the car seat covers from her old fur coats. My sister and I had the warmest bottoms in Gippsland.



At eighteen my little Mini represented a new found sense of freedom and popularity as a provider of transport for all my friends.

Photo 1970 – The Mini, my sister Fiona, our car cat Ringo and myself.

MARGARET BURBIDGE

I was 26 when I bought my first car in Benalla in 1972, a little blue Austin A35, two-door 'fully imported'. It was already 20 years old and called affectionately *The*



Noddy Car. A former owner had upgraded it with a new and sporty engine, so *Noddy* kept up with traffic. Two child seats were fitted with *Noddy* groaning loudly – a family car now. Sadly the story ends with Eltham unmade roads and deep potholes. *Noddy Car's* gearbox died a certain death. Bought for \$300 sold to a collector for \$3000 10 years later. Tidy profit.

PHIL DAWES

The year was 1968 I was a 20 year old RAF policeman stationed in Wildenrath near Munchen, Gladbach, West Germany as it was then. I sold a professional



quality racing bike to buy my first car, a 1951 Volkswagen beetle. A tiny back window, split windscreen, grey colour, no petrol gauge when the

engine started to splutter the driver had to bend down under the dash and flick a lever over to the reserve fuel tank. The VW took me plus 3 other Airmen all over Europe including trips to Berlin via the Russian controlled East Germany to southern Italy twice. Norway twice. Several camping trips to the

South of France wheels splayed out with the weight carried of jerry cans of fuel courtesy of the RAF.. ON THE ROOF! The car was serviced.....by me only for almost 3 years and never missed a beat. I sold the car to a US airman before my being posted to Raf Khormaksar the Yemen. Apparently my old beetle ended up wrecked in an accident at Templehof airport (Berlin) the car occupied by 5 very very refreshed US non-coms celebrating postings to Vietnam. Regretfully I never took a photo of the car being more concerned with other cultural pursuits during those years. (Ed. But I found 'the exact one' said Phil. Online). PD

GRAEME WARD.

When Margaret requested a story on my first car I could not accede to her request for a couple of reasons . Firstly I could not find any photos of my first vehicles, and secondly I never had a car in my early twenties . Never much money in my pocket, I had to make do with a ute . So unable to find a photo (Ed. *I did, here's one just like it*) I thought I might relate a story about this ute.

My first ute was a EK Holden second hand ex SEC vehicle. It was a sort of colour that probably could be described as " poo brown"! Not very attractive, and definitely not chick magnet material. However, it got me around, was handy for farm work, and it never really attracted the attention of the law enforcers. Too mundane!

So when I received an invitation from a friend from



Tallangatta to partner her at a Prince Henrys Hospital graduation dinner at the Troika in Hampton I got to work, cleaned it up a bit and added the air

freshener to get rid of all the farm type odours and went off to Melbourne. It was a great evening, and the Cossack dancers put on a fantastic floorshow which made it a memorable night out. This occurred in the times where nurses lived in Nurses homes, and so when the night wound up off we went in EK ute sans seatbelts of course along the curving Beach Road towards the City. It so happened that a person who still lives at Pomonal was also invited to partner a girl from Swifts Creek who later on became his wife. No utes for Michael, he drove a magnificent TF British racing green MG. No use being jealous were the thoughts which went through my mind as we plodded on in the EK ute. As the MG flew past it tooted at us in a high pitched tone and I think I pretended not to see it. So we went around a few more bends and lo and behold , there was the MG pulled alongside the

kerb, with the driver being ticketed for speeding. The EK ute sounded a couple of deep gruff noises from the horn as we went past and I felt a bit happier after that.

So another partner decided his Graduate nurse needed to drive as he described himself at that stage of the proceedings as " vision impaired". Having plenty of time on his hands he decided to have some fun. He stuck a magnetic blue flashing light on the roof and as they passed a car on the road stuck a megaphone out the window and called out " Police, pull over driver".

Everything was fine until the car did pull over. This seemed to be a great result until the plain clothes Policeman pulled out his ID and wanted an explanation. More trouble .

Finally , there was a tunnel connecting the Hospital under the road connecting to the Nurses home . All the Graduates had to be in by a certain time , and so there was a congregation of people milling around and the some of the country guys spotted a supply of beds . So it was decided that the girls would be the patients and that bed races would be run to find out who could do the length of the tunnel in the fastest time. It was very noisy for many reasons, but a result was never achieved because a very stern and severe faced Matron brought everything to an abrupt halt and sent the newly fledged nurses off to bed and the blokes packing asap.

So maybe after all I should have thanked my second hand EK for being a bit boring and keeping me out of trouble .

The festive season is almost here. Merle Brain shares her favourite Christmas Pudding recipe. If it's like Merle's sponges, it will be something very special.



Ingredients

- | | |
|--|--------------------|
| 275g raisins | 1tbsp honey |
| 250g sultanas | |
| 125g currants | 5 eggs |
| 1 grated apple | 1 cup plain flour |
| 1 grated carrot | ½tsp bicarb soda |
| grated rind of 2 large lemons and 1 orange | pinch salt |
| ½ cup brandy | 1 tsp ea. nutmeg |
| 250g butter | mixed spice |
| 250g brown sugar | cinnamon |
| 60 g whole blanched almonds | 2 tbsp brandy |
| 60g chopped hazelnuts | 2 cups breadcrumbs |

cont.

Method

Place in a large bowl the first seven ingredients. Stir and cover for 24 hours. Next day, in another large bowl, beat



the butter, sugar and honey to a cream texture. Beat the eggs in a third bowl and add to the butter mix very slowly so the mix doesn't curdle. Now sift the flour, soda, salt and spices into a fourth bowl. Add a few spoonfuls of the flour and also of the fruit to the butter mix and stir. Then gently add some of the breadcrumbs and continue until all the flour, fruit and breadcrumbs have been added. Finally add the nuts and brandy. Stir gently to combine. Steam in a large, greased, tin foil covered pudding basin in a large pot of boiling water for 5 to 5 ½ hours, top up water level with boiling water occasionally. Store in a cool place until Xmas. The mixture can be divided into two. Serves 16 to 20, so plenty of leftovers for microwaving in the coming days.



USA Bookgroup choice for November ...



*The Shepherd's Hut, by
Tim Winton.*

*Extract of a review
from the Sydney
Morning Herald written by Michael McGirr.*

"There is music in this brilliant and uncomfortable book. Much of the time, it is drowned out by other sounds, not least the pained narrative voice of Jackson Clackton.

Jaxie is a teenager at risk. He has grown up in a world of knives and guns, hunters and drinkers. His father, Sid, whom he calls Captain Wankbag, is a violent alcoholic, the butcher in a small town in Western Australia, Monkton, where the local IGA has closed down, leaving little more than the roadhouse, pub and silo. Sid listens to the radio "with some angry old prick barking stuff". The town tiptoes around Sid, not

least because it needs meat. There is a lot of meat in this book; the fruit mostly comes in cans. Sid was appalling to his wife, Shirley, who has recently died of cancer. Jaxie knows she stuck it out for his sake and this leaves him feeling confused and responsible for what his mother endured. He wonders how "something that good and pure can feel so filthy". This is one of a number of gritty moral conundrums that Winton explores in adult depth through the eyes of a teenager.....

...The Shepherd's Hut, like much of Winton's work, is exasperated by cheap, packaged spirituality. But it knows the bloody, earthy taste of the real thing. It is what will feed and nourish a character such as Jaxie who has taught himself to survive on emotional junk food. His well-being depends on his developing an appreciation of his contemplative nature. Winton's spirituality will always frustrate those with packaged answers, whether they are religious or the opposite. He drills into the human soul down past labels. Jaxie may be "an instrument of God" but Winton makes the reader work to figure out what this might mean. The Shepherd's Hut is a landmark book in Winton's career: austere, beautiful and compelling. It has a subtle moral clarity that stands out even in a career that has relentlessly searched for the gold hidden in human rubble. The book is wise in areas, such as anger and masculinity, where most of us just have theories. In the anger of Jaxie, Winton has heard the confusion and need that lie behind the struggle for an authentic, tender and honest masculinity that is one of our major cultural challenges.

After three readings, The Shepherd's Hut was still yielding the riches of its unblinking vision of hope, a vision that will renew readers for generations to come".

Available at Central Highlands Library ARARAT.

"Education is an admirable thing, but it is well to remember from time to time that nothing that is worth knowing can be taught."

- Oscar Wilde

**Seasons
greetings to
everyone.**

