



U3A Granite Belt Inc.



DECEMBER 2023 NEWSLETTER



Website
www.u3agranitebelt.org.au

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Thank

YOU

To the group facilitators, the management committee and the social committee who donate their time willingly to provide activities for members. U3A could not function without you.

In November, the social committee organised a walk and picnic at Girraween. One of the five members who attended saw Girraween for the first time. It was a magical experience for me to watch the expressions on her face as we observed the beauty and majesty of the granite rocks on the walk to the Arch. While Joy was observing the rock formations, the other four walkers were observing beetles and other insects.

There will not be a newsletter in January as most groups have a break for the month.

Closing date for articles and other information for the February newsletter will be 25th January.

Merry Christmas and a safe and relaxing festive season.

*You're braver than you believe,
stronger than you seem and smarter than you think.*

AA Milne

Reminder:

The last day for contributions for the newsletter is **25th** of the month. Please keep your contributions to a maximum of **300 words**

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*LET'S SOCIALISE**LES KIRMSSE*

Thank you to all those who have supported our social activities this year. We've had some good times together ... frequently involving food! Our end-of-year lunch on 7th December is bound to be another enjoyable experience.

The social committee is working on next year's activities and we plan to have some interesting speakers at our general meetings with outings and lunches in the alternate months. If you have an idea for something different, let us know. Stay tuned!

Les, Ria, Kathy and Daphne

*TAI CHI**KAYE MCCULLOCH*

The beginners Tai Chi group will begin on Monday 22nd January. If you have booked into this group, mark the date on your 2024 calendar. Times will be decided prior to the day.

The "graduating" group of Tai Chi for Beginners Course will also resume their journey on this date. One member of the group said he can notice the improvement in the muscle strength in his legs!

*Dinosaurs**Fran Tobin*

This month we finished our study of the dinosaurs. They ruled the earth for about 150 million years, from the Triassic to the Jurassic, and then became extinct in the Cretaceous.

For decades it was thought climate change alone was responsible for the dinosaur extinction. It wasn't until the 2020s, and after 30 + years of research by geologists and palaeontologists around the world, that the hypothesis of the asteroid cause of extinction was accepted.

This is now known as *The Alvarez Hypothesis* after the scientists who suggested it.

65 million years ago a huge asteroid crashed into the earth in the Gulf of Mexico, leaving the Chicxulub Crater. The force of the collision was equivalent to millions of nuclear weapons being detonated simultaneously. The following catastrophic events resulted in the dinosaurs, and 75% of all other species, both plant and animal, being wiped out completely. We heard a wonderful description of the calamitous day from Steve Brusatte's book "The Rise and Fall of the Dinosaurs". The author's way with words certainly brought home to us the horrors of the asteroid strike.

When the dinosaurs, which had been the dominant species for 150 million years, became extinct, mammals evolved to fill that niche. Without that extinction we may never have evolved!

We had a lively discussion, interrupted by a house removal. A rather large dwelling was being moved down McGlew Street, and a few of us had to move our cars. This interruption was followed with interest by the dinosaur group!

GARDEN GROUP

LEON MCCOSKER

U3A Garden Group visited the lovely home and garden of **Bert and Tracey Steginga** set on 1.27 acres in College Rd.

The house was built in 1903 for the mayor TJ Ballinger. In the 1920s, the house was used as a girls' boarding house for the Methodist College.

Bert and Tracey have lived here for 7 years. The big cottage garden at the front of the house was already there as were the garden beds, olive trees, and standard roses at the back of the house. All the hedges were fully established also.

Since moving in, they have built "Bert's Old Shed" in which Bert has an amazing collection of old memorabilia, the tractor shed and the orchid house. They've had a bore drilled and planted a native garden 2 years ago with a new extension just being planted now. The fishpond is 2 years old, and the frog pond is a recent addition.

Bert is a vintage car enthusiast, and owns a 1925 Studebaker Ute, and a beautiful red 1928 Ford Model A in which he took John, Chiyoko, and Les for a spin downtown.

We thanked Bert and Tracey for showing us around their large house and garden.

Next U3A Garden Group activity will be our end of year get together at 10.00am on Wednesday 20th at the Haselgrove's, 27 Shatte Lane, Storm King. After morning tea, we plan a garden walk.



Bring along plants to swap and morning tea to share.



John, Chiyoko and Les off for a spin in the A model Ford



A PHILOSOPHICAL QUOTE

"Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player
That struts and frets his hour upon the stage
And then is heard no more."

Macbeth, William Shakespeare.

COURSES AND ACTIVITIES

Please contact Mary 0427 142 331 if you have ideas for new courses or activities.

*TUESDAY BOOK GROUP**FRAN TOBIN**Sunflower Sisters by Martha Hall Kelly*

This is a novel about the American Civil War, and the characters are based on actual people. The author thoroughly researched the background of the individuals, which is evident in the details given. Sunflowers were a code used by slaves to signify danger.

There are 3 main characters in the novel, and they are all women. The story progresses as each person's point of view is told.

The women are:-

Georgy...(Georgeanna)—a well-educated young woman who fights to be allowed to become a nurse, and to contribute to the war effort. She is from New York and is a supporter of the anti-slavery Union Army. We learnt, when Georgy and a few other nurses attended a ball, that women held their fans in their right hands to signal that they were single women!

Jemma is a slave, who is sold to Anne-May, the third woman in the trio we follow. Jemma is a noble person, in contrast to Anne-May, who is a cruel slave owner and land owner. Anne-May becomes a supporter of the pro-slavery Confederates.

The treatment of the slaves is abhorrent, and none of us found that easy reading. It was also difficult to understand Anne-May's cruelty.

Georgy was a leader. She became a nurse, and instructed others in the tasks to be done, while caring for the wounded. It was also interesting to read about some of the treatments for wounded soldiers, and brought back memories of treatments discussed in Medieval Medicine. For example, we learnt that doctors treating the war injured always had a jar of leeches on hand, as well as a supply of spider webs. The former was for removing coagulated blood, and the latter to help stop bleeding wounds.

There is no set book for December but we will use the time to finalise the reading list for 2024.

The Tuesday Book group are mourning the death of one of its members, June Horn. June will be remembered for her positive contributions to the book group and her warm and bubbly personality. Our thoughts are with her family.

*WEDNESDAY BOOK GROUP**IRENE GREVIS-JAMES*

The book and movie for discussion was *Romulus My Father* by Raimond Gaita. Members of the group reflected on the huge influence of the "good men" in Raimond's life, i.e. Romulus and his friends Hora & Mitru; they gave him unconditional love and guidance, which probably gave him the strength to cope with his mother's neglect and erratic behaviour caused by a mental illness.

The book explored the difficulties European immigrants experienced on their arrival in Australia and the challenges for men, women and children. The impossible life for a woman from European culture and city life to a sparse and isolated life in Central Victoria. Throughout the book, Raimond's respect for his father shines through the harshness of the surroundings and life. "I know what an honest man is; I know what a good man is; I know what love & friendship are, because I remember these things in my father..."

Some members of the group found the book confronting as the family life depicted was that of a very dysfunctional family.

The book's blurb says: "This is the much-loved story of how a compassionate, honest man taught his son the meaning of living a decent life".

We recommend you read the book and watch the movie of "Romulus my Father", 2007.

A comment by Julie Rigg, (ABC Radio National): "powerful and unforgettable cinema..."

Filmed in Victoria; Director, Richard Roxburgh; main actors, Eric Bana, Franka Potente and Kodi Smit-McPhee.

AIMS of U3A Granite Belt Inc.

To provide members with affordable education and learning activities covering a wide range of different subjects.
 To provide members with the opportunity to study and learn in a relaxed environment.
 To nurture the minds, bodies, and souls of members.

President:	Julie Barnes	0417 074 520
Vice-President:		
Secretary:	Margaret Porter u3agbinc@gmail.com	0491 093 157
Treasurer:	Lyn Haselgrove	0409 006 063
Minutes Sec:	Morwenna Arcidiacono	0490 241 356
Activities Coordinator:	Mary Courtney	0427 142 331
Publicity Officer:	Les Kirmsse	0488 787 905
Webmaster:	Lynda Blackstock	0421 327 377
Facebook Admin:	Lynda Blackstock	0421 327 377
	Julie Barnes	0417 074 520
	Marg Porter	0491 093 157
Grievances	Contact the Secretary for more information.	
Newsletter	Send articles to u3agbnews@gmail.com by 25th of the month.	

Postal Address

PO BOX 250
 Stanthorpe Qld 4380

Phone

0491 093 157

Email

u3agbinc@gmail.com

Website

www.u3agranitebelt.org.au

Bank Account

Heritage Bank
 BSB 638070

Account Number: 13712268
 (Heritage Members add S21 to the account number.)

GERMAN

IRENE GREVIS-JAMES

Liebe Klassenkameraden- unsere letzte Klasse für 2023 ist am Dienstag, 5/12/23.

The year's work has included many discussions re current affairs and the culture of the German-speaking areas in Europe. Our participants' varied facts and opinions were always interesting and memorable.

Perhaps the most enjoyable aspect is the regular end-of-class song/music, and the recent Schubert and Mozart songs were a happy opportunity to sing-along. Our rendition of the Austrian folk-song, "Das Orchester", sung in a 5-part "Kanon" (Round) was most successful, with compliments coming from nearby patrons at RSL.

CLASSES WILL RESUME in FEB. 2024.

Auf Wiedersehen, Frohe Weihnachten und ein Gutes, Gesundes 2024, mit der Hoffnung für „FRIEDE AUF ERDEN“!

Rotary Club Aging Well Morning Teas are held on third Friday of the month (15th December) at 10.00am at 15 Hilton Street. All welcome.

****Please bring your morning tea. Other information is included in articles or group reports.**

Day/s	Activity	Venue	Contact
Every Monday, Wednesday & Friday	Walking Group 6.30am	Outside The Reject Shop	Ria 0427 349 977
Every Monday	Tai Chi will resume on 22nd January	International Club	Kaye k.mcc3@hotmail.com
Every Monday	Beginner Ukulele		Heather 0448 800 491
Every Monday	Mahjong from 1.00pm	International Club	Robyn 0423 153 514
Every Tuesday	Dam Pluckers 2.00pm	International Club	Heather 0448 800 49 Irene 0437 373 929
Occasional Tuesdays	German	RSL	

Date	Activity	Venue	Contact
Tuesday 5th	Book Group 10.00am	International Club	Mary 0427 142 331
	German 10.00am	RSL	Irene 0437 373 929
Wednesday 6th	Book Group 10.00am	Jersey Girls Amiens Road	Julie 0417 074 520
Thursday 7th	End of Year Lunch Noon	St Jude's Ballandean	Ria 0427 349 977
Tuesday 12th	**Mosaics From 9.00am	Pete's Shed	Margy 0459 513 852
Wednesday 20th	**Garden Group 10.00am	Peter and Lyn Haselgrove's 27 Shatte Lane Storm King	Kerrie 0488 732 638 Denise 0428 833 168

Chimney Pot

Using the letters in the words CHIMNEY POT name these. Use each letter only once per answer.

1.	A description of frequency		7.	Two pairs of homophones	
2.	A currency		8.	Three Greek letters	
3.	An incline		9.	Something you play on	
4.	Something sweet		10.	A unit of measurement	
5.	An attempt at persuasion		11.	Something you would usually do from a mound	