



DANDENONG
UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE

U3A Dandenong Inc. ABN: 86 401 693 866



ANNUAL REPORT 2022

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Contents

Introduction / President's Report	3
U3A Dandenong – Profile	3
Vision & Key Mission	4
Our Vision	4
Our Key Mission	4
Our Community Role	4
Our Committee	5
Committee Structure - 2022/2023	6
Operating Highlights	6
Strategic Highlights	7
Financial Highlights	8
Financial Statements	8
Committee Reports	12
Secretary	12
The Office	12
Newsletter	13
UMAS Administration and Communications	13
Risk Management	13
Webmaster Annual Report:	14
Marketing/Publicity Report	18
Social media	18
Social	18
Fundraising	19
Grants and Sponsorship	19
Program and Tutor Update	19
Course Reports	20
Looking Ahead	28

Introduction / President's Report

I am pleased to report to you the achievements and activities of 2021-2022. It has been another year of challenges and opportunities for our U3A.

We had hoped that we would be back to face to face classes at the start of the financial year but was not to be and had to revert to zoom for classes and last year's AGM. With the lockdowns preventing face to face classes the opportunity was taken to change the membership year to calendar year to bring us in line with the majority of Victorian U3A's. Looking forward we can have our AGM face to face this year, but we are doing it a bit different with a meal not an EXPO. Instead of the EXPO we are trialling the Dandenong show in November as the Dandenong Show will allow us to display our activities to a wider audience.

At the start of 2022 we were finally able to get back to face to face activities although it was challenging to keep up to date with changing requirements, we managed to keep going with only a few cancellations and absences due to covid, so a special thank you to the Tutors/course coordinators and the Covid Marshals for all their help in keeping courses running in a safe manner.

Again, we have some Tutors, who have been leading classes for many years, for various reasons have stepped away from the role, so we have new Tutors/Coordinators for Australian History, Computers and Current Affairs, so thank you to those Tutors for stepping in so we can continue offering those classes.

I want to thank all our members, volunteers and Committee for their continued support and positive feedback.

Jeanette Keane
President U3A Dandenong Inc

U3A Dandenong – Profile

Purpose U3As are voluntary groups that provide educational, recreational and social programs. Each U3A is organised by and for people who can best be described as being active in retirement or semi-retirement, the third age of our lives. U3A Dandenong was established approximately 27 years ago for people in their third age who are in their senior years and are retired or semi-retired. We aim to provide opportunities to learn, teach, share and to give mutual support to each other in a friendly and warm environment, regardless of ethnicity, religion, ability or disability.

U3A Dandenong / Annual Report 2022

U3A Activities Our courses cover a wide range of interest areas, from academic to physical and artistic activities. Our members enjoy both the intellectual engagement and the social aspect of our courses. Please see our latest newsletter for further information.

U3A Dandenong Membership /course attendance U3A Dandenong has approximately 200 members and runs 35 classes per week with an average attendance rate of 64% of those enrolled in each course.

Vision & Key Mission

Our Vision

Live, Learn, Enjoy

Our Key Mission

To promote fitness in mind & body through participation in educational and health activities.

Our Community Role

U3A's contribution to the Greater City of Dandenong's "Positive Ageing Strategy" We successfully deliver on many of the objectives outlined in Greater City of Dandenong's (CGD) document "Positive Ageing Strategy."

These objectives are:

- Increase in access to community facilities and resources by older people
- Increase participation and inclusion of older people in our local community
- Reduce ageism in our community
- Reduce loneliness and isolation in older people
- Support the social needs of older people
- Improve access to information for older people
- Raise digital knowledge, literacy and skills of our older residents
- Improve access to preventative health programs focused on older people
- Improve fitness in older people

Our Committee

Our committee is led by the President, working closely with other Committee members. Each has their allocated role(s) and it is primarily their responsibility to fulfil the functions of the role, reporting back via the U3A Management Committee to:

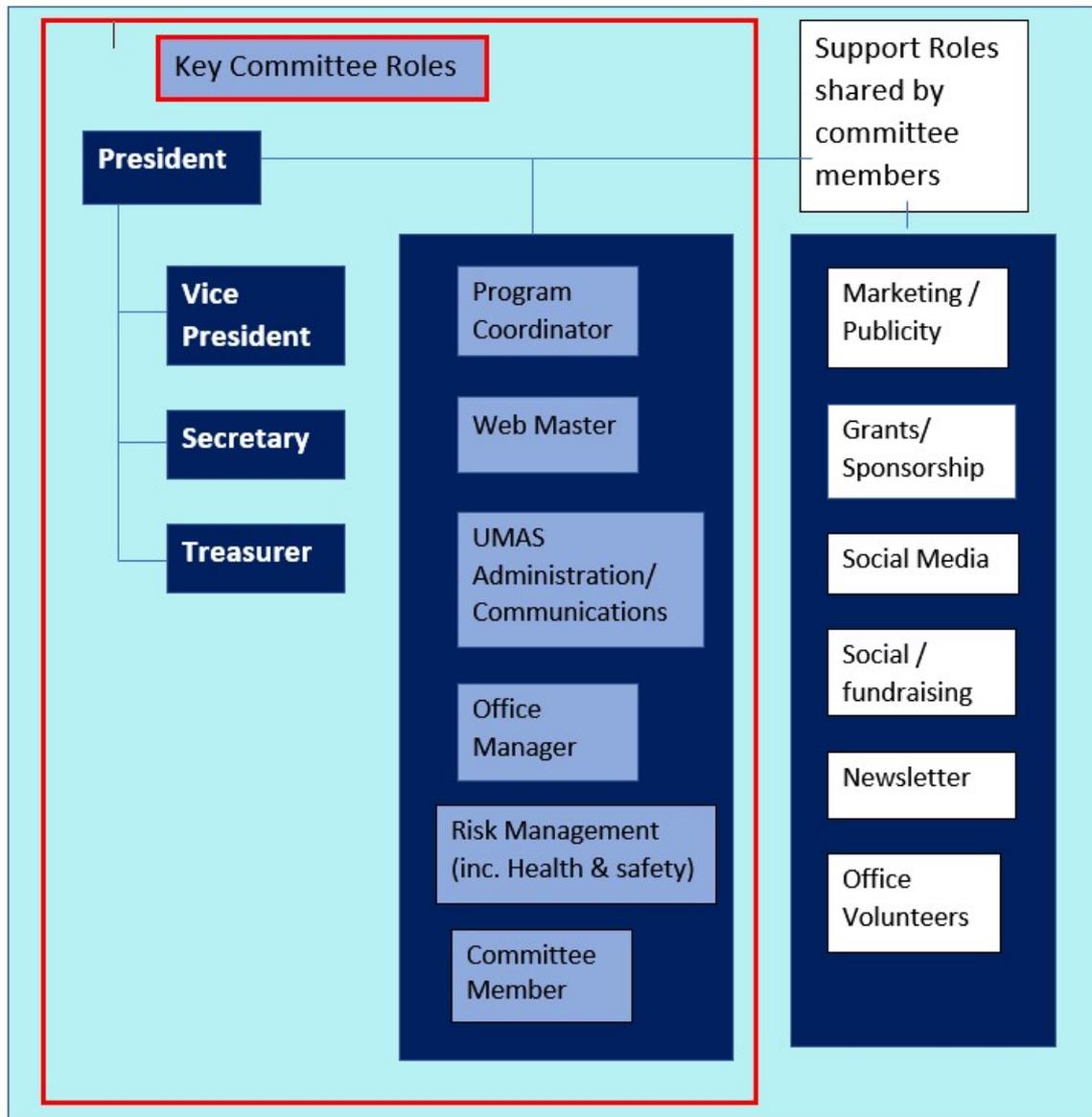
- Agree the annual scope and objectives of their role
- Provide status updates
- Request funding as appropriate to support annual objectives
- Request endorsement of activities that fall outside the previously agreed scope
- Inform of any matters that may pose a risk to U3A Dandenong and/or any matters that have already become an issue

Each member of the Committee of Management (CoM) is expected to:

- actively participate in committee meetings
- support other committee members to manage Portfolios
- ensure that the needs of the members are being met
- be aware of and develop Policies, Procedures and Processes to provide Governance and support the work of U3A Dandenong and its members
- be an active participant in CoM activities
- Those members who are filling support roles need only attend meetings as required, additional participation welcome. This is to be agreed with the support member and the Key committee

Role	Contact emails
President	president@dandenongu3a.org.au
Vice-President	vicepresident@dandenongu3a.org.au
Secretary	secretary@dandenongu3a.org.au
Treasurer	treasurer@dandenongu3a.org.au
Program Coordinator	program@dandenongu3a.org.au
Web master	webmaster@dandenongu3a.org.au
Office Manager	admin@dandenongu3a.org.au
UMAS Administration and Communications	umas@dandenongu3a.org.au
Risk Manager	healthandsafety@dandenongu3a.org.au
Publicity/Marketing	publicity@dandenongu3a.org.au
Social	social@dandenongu3a.org.au
Grants and Sponsorship	funding@dandenongu3a.org.au

Committee Structure - 2022/2023



Operating Highlights

Commencement of classes last financial year finally occurred in February with new conditions. UMAS, (the system we use to join and enrol) was updated to insist that members needed to be covid vaccinated before they could enrol in face-to-face courses. Then we had to show our vaccination certificates to our Covid Marshals. A very big Thank you to the Covid Marshals for helping out during this trying time as without their help we would not have had face to face courses, and thank you to all members for complying with the changing requirements that were put in place as we all did our best to minimise our chances of becoming seriously ill requiring hospitalisation from covid.

As a result of the lockdowns arising from the COVID-19 health crisis, many of us learnt how to use zoom and we have some courses continuing to run on zoom. We also have one hybrid course which has members regularly attending and participating face to face and others using zoom. We are currently working on extending the hybrid option to other suitable courses. Having the hybrid option provides the opportunity for members with mobility issues or who are unwell to still attend and be involved. To enable us to do this we were successful in securing a government grant to provide funds to purchase equipment for this purpose.



Jeanette Keane
President U3A Dandenong Inc

Strategic Highlights

At the start of the 2019 - 20 financial year, a workshop was held and this has been reviewed annually

The objectives being:

1. To determine/confirm the vision and strategy for Dandenong U3A
2. To review our purpose
3. Examine U3A Dandenong's strengths and weaknesses and identify opportunities to become more effective and efficient as an organisation
4. What do we want to do to make U3ADandenong more successful?

To address the objectives, the following activities occurred during the 2021 – 22 year:

1. We have modified the committee structure and updated position descriptions to more accurately reflect the committee structure.
2. We reviewed that we are running the committee with several significant positions vacant so the current committee members are performing multiple roles and no effective solution to this issue has been identified. Feasibility of possible merger with a neighbouring U3A will be investigated as a possible solution to insufficient committee members.
3. Proven hybrid course model to provide opportunities from those who are unable to physically attend have the potential to still be involved. This model is planned to be extended to other courses dependent on suitability of the course and finances to purchase equipment required and willingness of Tutors/course coordinators and course members to learn how to use zoom.

Jeanette Keane
President U3A Dandenong Inc

Financial Highlights



The financial position is now good as we have managed to have a small surplus for the 21-22 financial year and the previous year. This is largely due to the efforts of our Program Coordinator in optimising the venue hire, raising extra funds by organising a couple of Bunnings sausage sizzles and securing a government grant so we have the funds to purchase some equipment so that we could improve and expand our offering of hybrid courses. The spending of this grant money is ongoing as we evaluate equipment needed and will be completed before December 2022.

Due to the lockdowns, we were unable to hold an EXPO on the same day as the AGM as we have in the past and so the committee decided to return the council grant money received pre pandemic for holding an EXPO as to comply with the grant requirements, we needed to have had the EXPO before 30 June 2022. Instead of an EXPO, we will participate in other opportunities to display our activities such as the Seniors Festival and Dandenong Show.

Our annual budget for FY21 - 22 is based on maintaining the membership fee of \$70 and the membership year now being the same as the calendar year.

Claudia Cespedes

Treasurer U3A Dandenong Inc

Financial Statements

The financial statements in this report have been approved by the Committee of Management at their July 2022 meeting and signed by the President, Jeanette Keane and the Treasurer, Claudia Cespedes:

- Profit & Loss Statement
- Cash & Bank Balance
- Annual Budget – Financial Year 2022/3



AGM, Financial Report: 1st July 2021 to 30 June 2022

Profit and Loss Statement

Financial Years ended	Jun-21	Jun-22
Opening Balance	\$ 28,710.14	\$ 32,500.82
Members Fee	\$ 12,518.10	\$ 7,636.09
GST Refund	\$ 751.00	\$ 687.00
Donation	\$ 136.00	\$ 370.80
Fund Raising Activities	\$ 895.40	\$ 1,404.60
Grants	\$ 2,200.00	\$ 1,800.00
Interest received		\$ 3.01
Other	\$ 50.00	
Refunded Venue Hire/other	\$ 409.90	
Sub total	\$ 16,960.40	\$ 11,901.50
Expenses		
Venue Hire	\$ 4,756.00	\$ 4,262.50
Communication	\$ 849.60	\$ 824.97
Advertising		
Capitation fee U3A Network	\$ 1,012.00	\$ 328.00
Class Materials / Training	\$ 2,835.29	\$ 309.85
Consumer Affairs		
Insurance	\$ 1,540.00	
One Music Australia (Apra)	\$ 233.64	
Tea Coffee	\$ 246.05	\$ 310.89
Miscellaneous	\$ 99.20	\$ 261.78
Photocopier and other equipment	\$ 1,121.94	\$ 2,385.72
Post Office Box Renewal	\$ 205.00	\$ 216.00
Annual Lunch tutors / committee	\$ 271.00	
AGM and Art show		
Sub total	\$ 13,169.72	\$ 8,899.71
Deficit for the year	\$ 3,790.68	\$ 3,001.79



Cash and Bank Balance as of 30 June 2022

Financial Year ended	Jun-21	Jun-22
TOTAL EQUITY (Less Liabilities Represented By:	\$ 70,107.57	\$ 73,426.45
CURRENT ASSETS		
CUA Account 10428610	\$ 7.07	
CUA Account10783609 (Term Deposit)	\$ 38,475.93	
Bendigo Bank, Cheque Account	\$ 32,500.62	\$ 34,112.59
Bendigo Bank, Term Deposit		\$ 40,000.00
Bendigo Bank, Debit Card		\$ 473.61
Bendigo Bank, Term Deposit Interest		\$ 69.76
PayPal	\$ 848.35	\$ 304.10
Petty Cash	\$ 474.60	\$ 126.39
TOTAL ASSETS	\$ 72,306.57	\$ 75,086.45
CURRENT LIABILITIES (Carried Forward)		
Grants	\$ 2,200.00	\$ 1,660.00

Claudia Cespedes
Treasurer



Committee Reports

Secretary

Since there were no volunteers for the role of secretary, the role secretary has been performed by Jeanette Keane. The Secretary role is vital to the operation of U3A Dandenong and is supported by the UMAS Administration and Communications role. It would be great to have a Secretary to support the President.

The main duties of the secretary include

Organising the committee meetings – agenda, taking minutes and issuing AGM/governance - Preparing the Annual Report, At AGM -taking minutes and issuing, Reporting to ACNC and being the CAV contact.

Working with UMAS Administration and Communication to maintain membership database and communication to members.

Jeanette Keane

Secretary U3A Dandenong Inc

The Office

The office resumed normal operation for Semester 1 in 2022. We were able to observe our standard operating hours on Mondays, Thursdays and Fridays. (Refer to the website for details).

We assisted members to join, login, view available courses, enroll in their courses, and make payments using the UMAS software on the website. Often this was possible to do this over the phone. Where that option was not feasible, members were once again to visit the office in person to conduct U3A business.

Other office functions included : generation of name tags, reporting absence from class, class withdrawals, photocopying of course material, processing of class attendance sheets and handling general enquires.

Following the migration to the UMAS system we have been able to retire previous paper-based records system and take steps to further de-clutter the office.

Once again, I would like acknowledge the invaluable assistance of our hard-working office volunteers:

- Claudia Cespedes
- Evelyn Beaucasin

Both are very conscientious, reliable, efficient and effective.

Alan Beale

Office Manager U3A Dandenong Inc

Newsletter

The newsletter continues to be published twice yearly, towards the conclusion of each term in order to provide an update on class activity

Our newsletter is published as a pdf document and emailed to all members who have an email address. Some printed copies are also produced (courtesy of Gabrielle Williams, State MP for Dandenong)



David Purdon

Newsletter U3A Dandenong Inc

UMAS Administration and Communications

The role of the Membership officer has now been renamed to UMAS Administration and Communications officer as the title more accurately reflects the role. UMAS is the system embedded in the web site, that U3A Dandenong uses to manage joining, membership details, enrolling in courses and sending emails to members. UMAS is continually being updated and improved by the team at U3A Network. As a UMAS administration this involves installing and understanding the impact of updates and communicating to members any changes that will impact them. UMAS also provides an easy way to communicate with members by email. This has been extremely important over the past few years as there has been many changes that need to be communicated to all, or to a particular group of course members such as for class cancellation. I have tried to strike the balance between drowning you in emails and keeping you informed of things you need to know and other information you might like to know. Hopefully I have been successful.

Jeanette Keane

UMAS Administration and communications Officer U3A Dandenong Inc

Risk Management

The Risk Management role is to review all the risks associated with the operation of U3A Dandenong and encompasses the old role of Health and Safety. Members Health and safety is a significant part of the role as we want to reduce the risk of members being hurt or becoming ill as much as reasonably practicable. There are other risks that need to be considered and the Risk Manager provides assistance to the committee to evaluate, prioritise and plan how the risks to be managed. Other risks include being unable to secure a suitable venue for a course, Insufficient funds so that improvement projects cannot progress. Insufficient members volunteering to be committee members to enable U3A Dandenong to continue operation prompting the need to consider the feasibility of a merger with a neighbouring U3A.

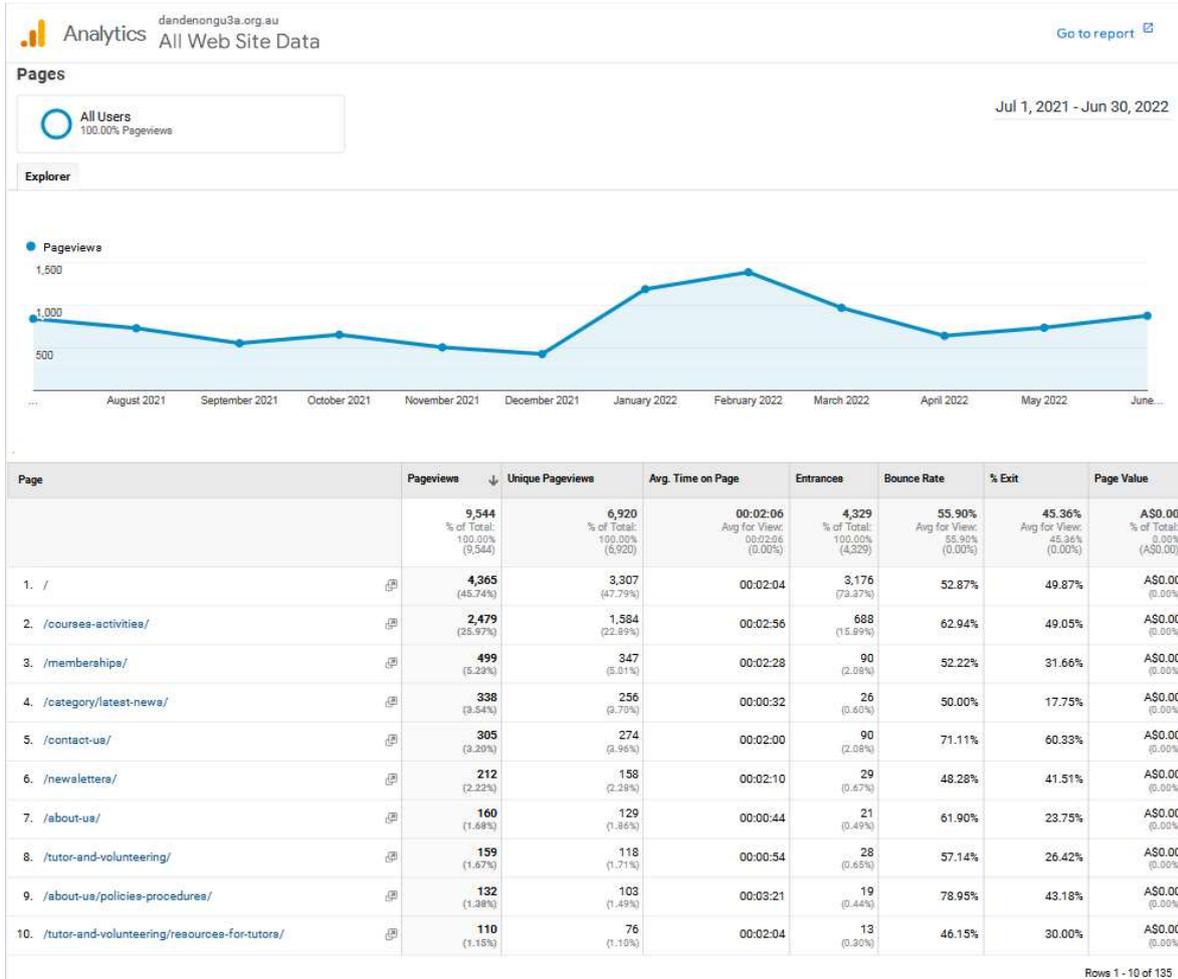
Jeanette Keane

Risk Manager U3A Dandenong Inc

Webmaster Annual Report:

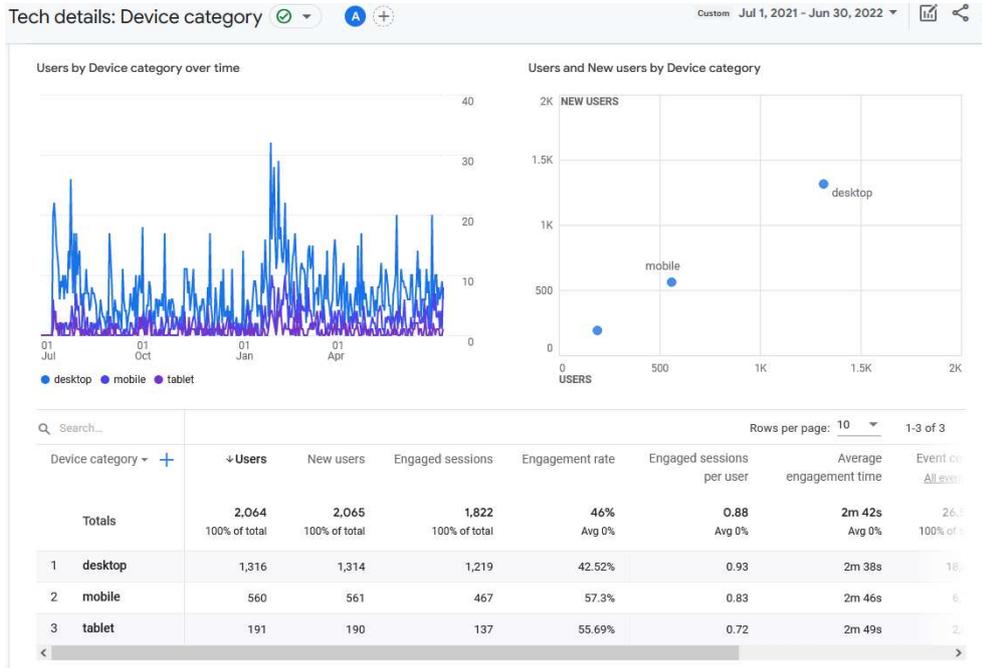
Google Analytics site kit which now enables us to monitor, at a high level, activity on our new web site. See following examples.

Overall activity on our web site such as what pages are most often viewed

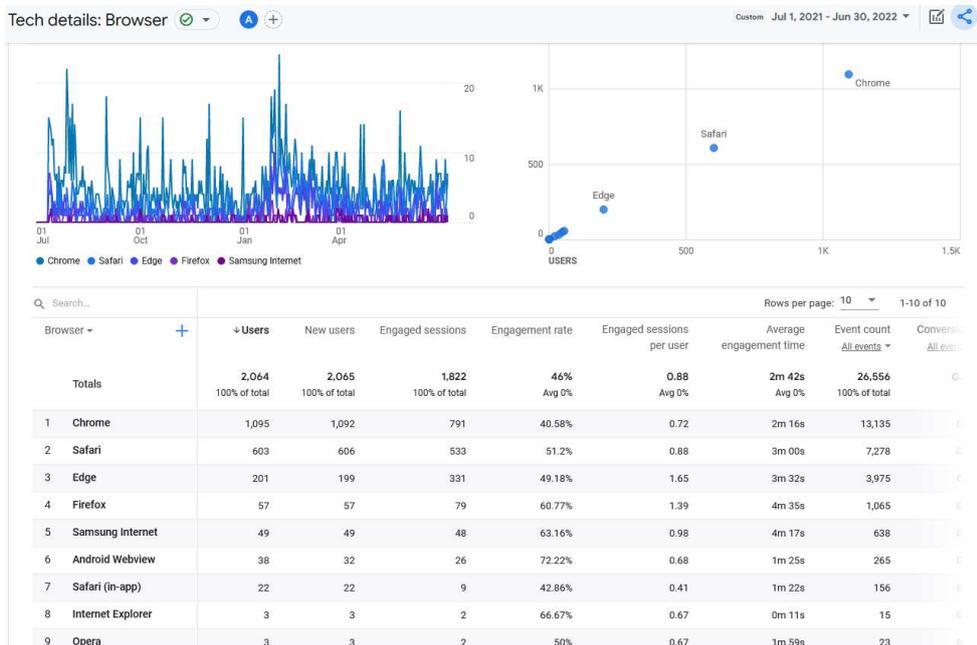


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What type of devices are used to view our web site:

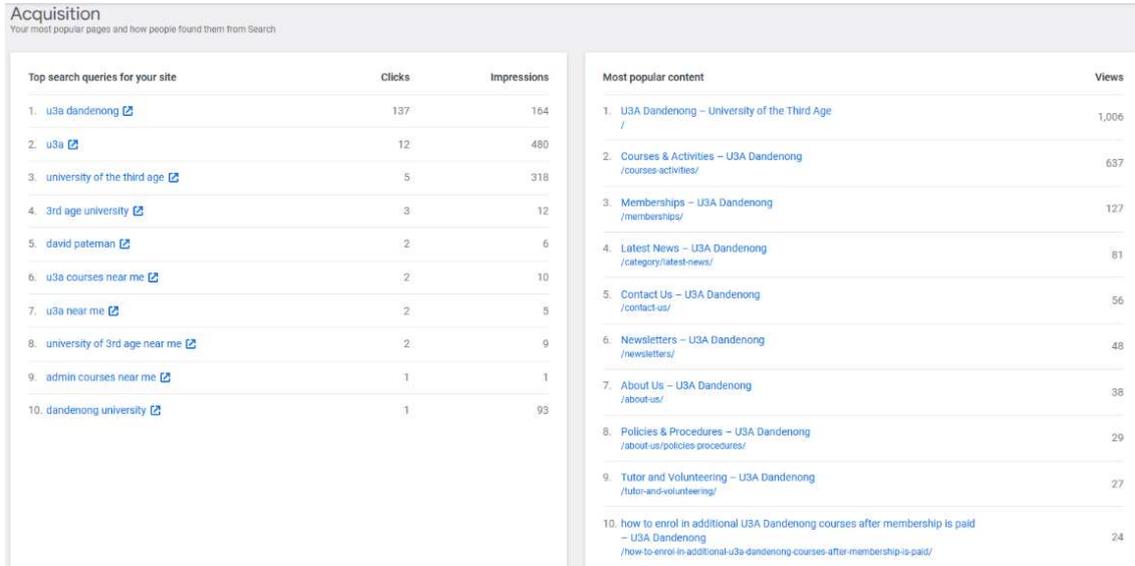


The kind of browsers that our viewers are using:

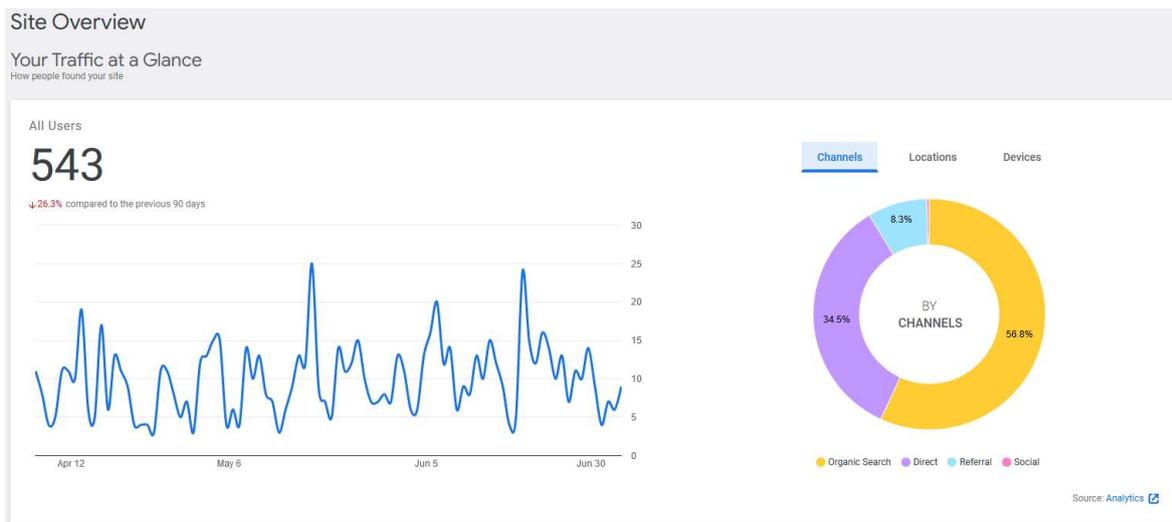


How our viewers are getting to our site, what queries are they employing:

U3A Dandenong / Annual Report 2022



And summary data concerning the search types, Locations that the search originates from (country), Devices used by browsers.



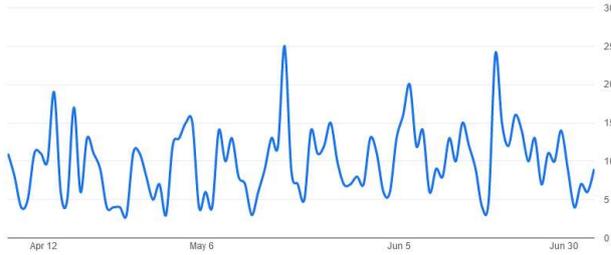
Site Overview

Your Traffic at a Glance
How people found your site

All Users

543

↓ 26.3% compared to the previous 90 days



Channels Locations Devices



Australia United States Ireland India Others

Source: Analytics

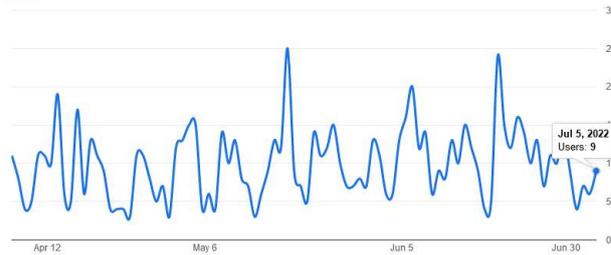
Site Overview

Your Traffic at a Glance
How people found your site

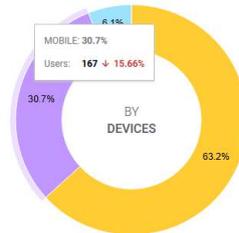
All Users

543

↓ 26.3% compared to the previous 90 days



Channels Locations Devices



Desktop Mobile Tablet

Source: Analytics

Any suggestions of any additional content that you would like to be displayed, please contact me at webmaster@dandenongu3a.org.au

David Nassau
Webmaster U3A Dandenong Inc

Marketing/Publicity Report

No significant marketing activities have been conducted over the past year as there is no one on the committee performing this role. Incidental opportunities for marketing have been the Bunnings sausage sizzle where we had our flyers available and there have been other opportunities to give out flyers to the general public.

This year we updated our flyers and got extra printed.

Next year we are hoping see some benefits from participating in the Seniors festival in October (Thanks to Raelene for coordinating that effort.) In November we are planning to have a display at the Dandenong show. The Dandenong show is being trialled instead of the EXPO usually held with the AGM as the Dandenong Show will allow us to display our activities to a wider audience.

Please can we have a volunteer to fill this role.

Marketing /Publicity U3A Dandenong Inc

Social media

Our last year has been an encouraging one as groups such as our U3A Dandenong start to get back to normal again.

We try to get our members to go on our Facebook site see some of the activities we do. Hopefully if people see us doing fun things it will encourage them come along to our U3A group and join some of our classes. I wish the committee all the best for the new year.

Judy Allen.
Social Media

Social

We have had two social activities this year so far:

On Wednesday June 8th we had a speaker from Monash Health talking about Aged Care related issues. About 25 people attended this information session at Latham Crescents followed by a BBQ organised by Kerry Hicks.

I believe it went well and the food was good. I was on a family holiday, so unable to attend.

For the next financial year - 2022/23

On Thursday 7th July - Christmas in July lunch at the Sandown Park Hotel.

The AGM and then our attendance at the Dandenong show are in planning.

Lots to look forward to, hope to see many of you at these events.

Dorothea Kassell
Committee support - Social

Fundraising

Bunnings sausage sizzle have been held twice in the past year the first on in December on Friday 10, this was not a very successful Sausage Sizzle as it was a Friday and one of the first the Bunnings were offering post CoVID thus only raising around \$300. The next one on Saturday March 12 saw a much-improved result with approx. \$1000 raised. Thank you to everyone who volunteered to help out by either working on the stall, purchasing goods, chopping up onions. It all helps make for a smooth-running Sausage Sizzle, thank you.

I look forward to people pitching in again during the next year, as it is a great fundraiser.

[Committee support - fundraising](#)

Raelene

Grants and Sponsorship

We secured a grant from the Federal Government via Julian Hills office to provide us with some funds for equipment to provide some hybrid classes (face to face and zoom.) Our first Hybrid class – The Current affairs group had been using equipment they had supplied themselves to test the feasibility of conducting current affairs as a hybrid class and the grant was used to replace this equipment with equipment purchased using the grant money. The next classes to transition to Hybrid are the Historical Battles and Australian History and to start this transition a new data projector. We are currently evaluating some more equipment needed to complete the transition so that we can start offering these courses with a zoom option. The objective of running Hybrid classes is to enable members who are ill or who have mobility issues to be able to still attend using zoom and in future we are hoping to be able to offer these courses to U3A members who live remotely.

Raelene and Margot

[Committee Support - Grants and Sponsorship](#)

Program and Tutor Update

We have 32 weekly and 2 monthly classes on our program with tutors or co-ordinators to host each of these. They spend a great deal of time in preparation for each class and must be recognised for their dedication.

Most classes are well attended with a few still with waiting list, but many with small numbers.

We are reliant on the support provided by tutors. Some have been fulfilling their roles over a long period and in the past year we have seen Shirley and Clive finish up as Tutors and welcome Jeff and Vasant to fill their places. The ongoing commitment by our tutors is fantastic but we do need others to step up and provide their support, offering new classes will keep interest going.

Whilst we do have a wide range of classes, it is interesting to check out other U3A websites. Not all courses require special knowledge to organize. Some games (eg. Chess) and sports (eg. Pickball) added would be an easy option and easy to organize. Special knowledge-based classes are also welcome. Give some thought to what you can offer.

We encourage our tutors to celebrate their success with others via the newsletter and the Annual Report.

Keep the ideas coming.

Raelene

Program Co-Ordinator

Course Reports

Tutors and Course coordinators were asked to submit a short report under the headings "Class Achievements", "Class wish list" and "Looking ahead". These reports have been summarised below.

Australian History

The class delivery was divided into 3 phases –

- a) Power Pt presentation of the subject matter interspersed with classroom discussion,
- b) each Chapter ending with a General - Closing discussion of the subject matter, and also
- c) DVD Movies.

- Topics
 1. Eureka Stockade: 1852 - 1854.
 2. Federation: 1878 - 1901
 3. Gallipoli: April 1915
 4. WWI – 1915 - 1918 The historical reports of Australian Journalist Charles Bean (To be continued next Term)
- The Movies presented in the 1st Term were:
 - 1) Eureka Stockade (2 different versions)
 - 2) The Floating Brothel – the convict ship: Lady Julianna
 - 3) Snowy Mountain 2 Hydraulic Power Scheme
 - 4) Early Colonial days of Melbourne – 1880's
 - 5) Gallipoli (2 different versions)
- There are possibly about 40 different major historical events in Australia's colonial and post-Federation history. There is a lot to be explored for the keen history buff and there is certainly something for every Australian citizen and new migrant to be enthused in and educated about.
- A rapid end-of-term student questionnaire suggests that the subject matter and class format is well received and appreciated for its content and delivery.
- There were some hiccups with the Projector hardware which has been rectified with a change-over to a more updated Projector model.
- As a new migrant myself, I cannot emphasise enough the importance of a nations' history – from a perspective of heritage, cultural evolution, political and economic changes, geo-political intrigue, wars, famine, industrial revolutions/advancements, modern technology, etc. There is something for everyone, no matter your taste or distaste for historical events. The quest and/or thirst to understand and appreciate history has no bounds.

Behavioural Science

Behavioural Science has met weekly on Tuesdays at Latham Crescent . In the first semester this year we have discussed topics that were suggested by a previous class, including Self Esteem, Prejudice, Education Today and Eating Patterns. We averaged around ten people attending, but would love a few more regular attenders to add to the discussion. This semester we are travelling through Lifespan Development from Infancy to Late Adulthood – areas that all our members will know lots about. So we are expecting lots of discussion and sharing of observations and experiences. Come along and add to the knowledge!!!!

Book Club

We have read and discussed the following books so far in 2022:

- A simpler time by Peter Fitzsimons,
- The children act by Ian McEwan,
- The Uncommon Reader by Alan Bennet,
- The book of colours by Robyn Cadwallader,
- Anxious people by Fredrik Backman,
- No friends but the mountains Behrouz Bookchani.

We have enjoyed some entertaining and thought-provoking discussions.

Class Wish List:

New members are very welcome. At the time of writing there are spare spots available. If you wish to join the group, please call Alan Beale me on 0407 097 347

Looking Ahead:

We have some appealing and intriguing sounding books to read over the coming months. In November/December we will have the opportunity to make our selections for next year from the comprehensive list of “book club” titles available.

Current Affairs (from a zoom and face to face perspective)

The key wishes from last year have been met. Equipment has been supplied and there is good attendance via zoom. This is a superb addition to the offerings from U3A Dandenong as it enables participation in classes by those who cannot attend the physical class. The success of this *hybrid* class sets an example that will hopefully be adopted by other classes in the future.

The class achievements for current affairs have been a bit rocky with the introduction of the zoom technology but as is the case on all new events time will eventually iron out the bugs. The class has combined speakers, by zoom which is an achievement

Wish List

Class (non-zoom) attendees (including the chair) are gradually paying increased attention to the zoom screen to ensure that zoom attendees' requests to speak are recognised and taken in order. This is largely due to the vigilance of Rikki and Ujjal who deserve thanks for their special efforts. With continued effort by all participants, the smooth link between physical and virtual class attendees will continue.

It would be good if all class attendees take time to learn the computer setup as this is falling on Ujjal and Rikki. Backup is needed to cover absences.

Also, it would be an advantage if those attending could bring in interesting topics even if they create disagreements but it would be meat on the bone and certainly put a punch into a topic

Looking Ahead

The use of zoom makes it easier for outside speakers to attend as was evidenced this year when we had speakers from Monash University discussing the effects of ageing on our brains. Recognising this, we should invite more speakers to use the zoom platform. It would be good if the class tutor could be supported by others to arrange speakers.

Looking ahead would be an end to the virus and a class where current affairs had a bite to it that would encourage an increase in numbers

Cycling - Wednesday

Our group is very happy to be cycling again without restrictions.

We have two new members but always room for more as not everyone is able to cycle every Wednesday. Advice and assistance is freely available to any person needing it. Most of the Wednesday rides commence from Dandenong Park at the Blue Bridge. We have a great variety of rides we can do without the added stress of hills. We occasionally start from Lynbrook Railway Station or Beaconsfield Station which surprises cyclists with the number of new homes and the great cycling paths incorporated into the design of the new housing estates.

Cycling - Friday

Friday rides have usually started at Tirhatuan Park in North Dandenong and have reverted to normal following the lifting of Covid restrictions. Most rides follow the extensive bike path network, although rides often explore quiet residential streets to add variety to rides or provide an alternative linking of bike paths.

Several rides have involved a car trip of an hour or less to the ride starting point. These have included the popular Warburton rail trail ride starting from Seville and an all-day expedition starting at Sorrento, catching the ferry to Queenscliff and then riding to Drysdale for lunch, returning to Queenscliff via Point Lonsdale.

Cycling Wednesday and Friday - Class Wish list

more members. Less roadworks.

More members are always welcome. Although the Friday rides are meant to be more challenging in terms of distance and include a few moderate hills, the increasing popularity of electric bikes makes the rides accessible to virtually anyone.

Cycling Wednesday and Friday - Class Looking ahead:

We need to utilise the trains during school holidays to take us outside our area.

Consideration is being given to a ride involving an overnight stay, probably in March 2023.

The group needs to encourage members to take turns at leading a ride to provide backup in the absence of the ride leader. Alternative leaders may also uncover some new ride routes

Drawing

We are a friendly group, whose artistic endeavors vary from pencil drawing, pastel, watercolour, oil/acrylic painting, and even very therapeutic colouring in!

Our weekly numbers vary between 8 and 12. Some of our members have been coming for many years, and some are recent starters. New members are always welcome, and that includes beginners. Although we don't have a tutor, other class members are always very willing and able to give help and advice to get you started, so don't be shy, give it a try!

Effective Communication

This class is filled with the most amazing people. Sometimes I issue homework and ask for a paragraph or two to be written based on a common topic. Invariably everyone, in response, returns with 2-3 pages of the most fascinating writings. None of them remotely the same, despite that they all started with the same challenge.

Exercise and Tai Chi

Exercise and Tai chi classes on Mondays have achieved the objectives we are aiming for that is doing activities that will maintain our Physical and mental well-being as senior citizens of our community. We were able to deal with the challenges along the way. U3A Dandenong has provided the adequate place and space for us. We have enough tools and equipment to use.

Wish list

We are just hoping that more members will join us for the coming year.

Exercise – Thursdays

Thursday exercise class is going stronger than ever. Enthusiasm is high and everyone works really hard. The focus is on gaining strength to overcome the vagaries of age. Because we are doing so well we could use about 12 steppers which would help stair climbing and strengthen cardio fitness. I can but dream.

French courses via zoom

French beginner, French intermediate and French advanced

Through the many covid lockdowns, class members and myself have achieved to get to know one another thru our common interest - French language and culture - and become friends.

Wish list:

So far, I have not received any reimbursements for the resources I utilized because I have not claimed for them. I may do it in future

Looking ahead:

Socializing is my aim. happy with the current members in my 3 classes. not greedy. hope that I can continue my offer to the happy lots.

Gardening

A very friendly group where everyone participates

We are all busily tending our plants and cuttings for our plant sale later this year.

Genealogy

This year we have had audio-visual equipment which has allowed us to view Webcasts on different topics such as Ancestry DNA, immigration, and some occupations such as teaching. We have also looked at certain excursions that we could go on in the future: such as the Springvale Cemetery, the PROV office and the La Trobe library. We are a small group and would like to see more interested people joining us.

Hike Group

Managed to complete a hike each month, except one that was very cold, wet and windy.

Averaged 7 members on each hike.

Gained skills for some, like how to use hike poles, gained fitness.

See some beautiful scenery, bush and wildlife. In places you can't drive to reach.

Class wish list

Some more participants would be great, especially male.

Maybe once or twice a year or semester, another day as well as the hike day to learn skills, like map reading and compass use, first aid in the bush, choosing gear.

In the next 12 months

To get into the bush more than the urban areas, especially the Dandenong Ranges.

Maybe travel further afield.

Historical Battles

Learning achievements during our lectures on The American Civil War include detail study of 18 battles full details were included in the Newsletter.

Looking Ahead

The second half of the year will be split between my continuance of battles of the American Civil War and Richard Ryan who will look at other civilizations and their challenges.

Italian on Zoom

Since the beginning of lessons in April 2022, students have continued to tackle Italian pronunciation, and have been reading role play conversation based on lifestyle in Italy, which include customs and culture, and have learned many Italian words. Students have covered a good number of exercises related to each lesson. The major part of the learning has been based on Grammar, where we have reached Median School Level.

Class wish list:

None, although sometimes Zoom doesn't work at 100% optimal, e.g. sound and vision, so we wish it would work better.

Looking ahead:

We are about to finish the first book of the two. The second book is all about Italian advanced conversation, which will include Grammar that students have already studied, as well as more advanced grammar. The conversations will be longer and will include travel, business and everyday situations. Students will be asked to do some translation both in Italian and English, as well as exercises related to each lesson. Student of Italian on Zoom are very motivated and diligent in doing their homework, and it is a pleasure to tutor them.

Karaoke

Why participate in the karaoke class

Helps strengthen & exercise vocal cords, which like any other muscle in the body needs this, as every health expert proclaims, "IF YOU DON'T USE IT YOU LOSE IT"

Music & singing has long been recognised as therapy to help relieve depression, anxiety, stress, tension and a good way "to sing your cares & blues away"

Participation in a small knit group in such a "fun" activity helps social interactions & builds many long-lasting friendships and relationships that last through the years.

Class wish list

The karaoke group urgently needs a quicker, faster laptop than the present old, slow Compaq given to us for our use.

We need a quicker, faster laptop to be able to connect to the wifi system at the POD Centre to enable us to connect to YOUTUBE to have good song selection. We do not believe that we are asking too much of the U3A in asking us to provide us with a suitable faster laptop that meets our needs.

Looking Ahead

To provide members with the means to be able to pick freely the songs they wish to sing on Fridays without all the disappointments & frustrations we now experience every Friday and to stem the loss of any more members in this regard

To provide a welcoming, happy environment for such a FUN activity, that is Karaoke, and to encourage more members, new & present, to "give it a go"

To encourage group to practice song choices daily, to enable us to grow our abilities as a group & to be able to have the confidence to sing in front of an audience

Knitting & Crochet (Class prefers to be named *Knitting Natters and Happy Hookers!*)

This last year we have had only seven in attendance but enthusiasm and encouragement have not waned. We meet in air conditioned /heated Dream room at the Gloria Pyke Netball Complex each Thursday afternoon at 12.30pm for 2 hours

We've made many projects some have taken many years to complete such as a crocheted blanket (very difficult stitches), individually designed ponchos, numerous striped beanies (using up small balls of yarn), scarves, knee rugs, 30 jumpers and many knitted squares to Audrey Goldberg for blankets for the homeless.

Skills such as casting on to give a firm edge rather than loopy finishing off techniques and darning ends (no knots allowed) have given a very professional finish – definitely not 'home-made' mitred corners, joining squares, making fringes and joining beanies using the grafting method give an invisible join.

Class Wish List

To have more members to pass on these skills with patient Tutors – Beginners welcome

Looking ahead

This semester we will be making Christmas decorations which we hope will encourage Knitting Natters and Happy Hookers to join our group

Line Dancing

Our numbers have dropped significantly over the last two and a half years to an average of 15 people. We are now meeting in the stadium of the Gloria Pyke Netball Complex every Wednesday 10am – 12 noon

This semester we are trying a new approach to accommodate beginners and those who enjoy dancing for exercise, For the first half hour will be for beginners and those needing to refine their choreography. Everyone can come at 10am and join in and I do appreciate that as I can no longer dance continually. I enjoy teaching beginners as it is a lot slower and I don't mind the repeating process until we've all got it

Hoping for more members to join us and those who've lost interest or had a break for a while to return.

Rummy Kub

Great game for memory training

Helpful members who taught absolute beginners the rules of the game.

Helpful in processing complex thought processes.

Class wish list:

More members. We have 7 members of which two have other commitments on some Thursday afternoons.

Give the game a go if you are free on some Thursday afternoons.

Photography

Topics covered so far this year:

- How cameras basically work.
- Storing images
- Basic composition
- Basic editing (any software, but mainly Photoshop Elements)
- Outings to take Photos: Braeside Park, around POD, Bunjil Place

Upcoming topics:

- Lots more editing, mainly in Photoshop Elements
- Composition
- Photography genres
- "Trick" photography
- Outings to take photos

Scrabble

Some of the benefits of playing Scrabble.

1. The use of your brain in trying to make words.
2. Companionship.
3. Competition in a fun, informal way.
4. Meeting people face to face after last year's extensive lockdown.

What we hope to achieve in the future.

1. We would like to see new participants.
2. For the people who currently play Scrabble to continue to enjoy it.
3. For people, who previously played Scrabble to re-join us.

Singing

We now have a regular group of keen singers that attend every Friday morning.

We are getting quite good at singing with the Karaoke program.

If in the future someone can join us who plays an instrument well, that would be a bonus.

Keyboard or guitar for example would work well.

We hope to build the group up to 20 members in the next 12 months or so to make it even better.

All members are welcome to come and give it a try. There is nothing like singing in a group to lift one's spirit on a winter's day.

Spanish

For five years this class has been very successful, students are always enthusiastic and engaged. Language skills gained in this class enables the students the confidence and ability to travel to Spanish speaking countries, just like we were able to in 2018.

Our class continued to run online during Covid lockdowns, enabling all students to further develop their language skills as well as continuing to remain socially active with each other.

Once restrictions lifted, we resumed outings and gatherings.

Wish list

A larger whiteboard in the classroom to allow all students a clearer view of the material being presented. The current one is not suitable.

Improved ventilation in the classroom as we are not allowed to open windows.

Looking Ahead

I look forward to future classes, further developing student's language skills, including grammar, comprehension and conversation.

Looking Ahead

It is now time to look ahead and focus on:

- Engaging the membership to encourage them to either become
 - back up Tutors/Course Coordinators for existing courses or
 - to introduce new courses or
 - to fill the vacant committee roles

- to assist in being able to achieve Dandenong U3A objectives
 - Increasing the number of members
 - Obtaining grants and sponsorship
 - Welcoming visitors during the Seniors Festival to encourage new membership
 - Volunteering and/or providing displays for our stand at the Dandenong Show in November.
 - Supporting our members to increase their computer literacy and to learn how to use zoom if they are not already using it.



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Gabrielle Williams is the Member of Parliament for the Dandenong electorate in the Victorian Parliament.

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U3A DANDENONG Inc.

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