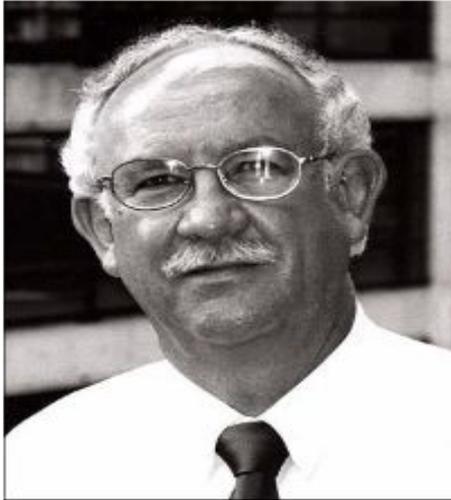


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*...from the president...*

Since our last newsletter we have experienced roller-coaster times. A COVID-19 outbreak, singly, here and there and one or two too close for comfort, a cluster targeting nurses at Ipswich Hospital. Devastating lockdown in Victoria but now light at the end of the tunnel – it seems.

We have had classes resume and then some close again until clearer signs of health safety emerge. But also some classes, strictly abiding by our COVID Safeplans, continue to be well attended and some even experiencing growing attendances.

And one of our classes, photography, under the leadership of Wayne McDonnell, has been enjoying refreshing excursions, such as the cemetery by night and Swanbank for photographic shoots around the lake.

We also have suggestions and ideas for new classes next year so read down further in this newsletter for more on that. And don't forget Lorraine Pitcairn hopes to start her Local History class next year and Steve Marriott hopes to offer History Revisited.

This newsletter also introduces a new regular feature – profile of a tutor. Our tutors all have rich backgrounds and life stories and it's worth sharing them with our membership.

This newsletter also gives more detail on the membership management system we are working on. Part of that process will be that we change our membership year to run from January 1 to December 31 as a more logical period and to better align with the software.

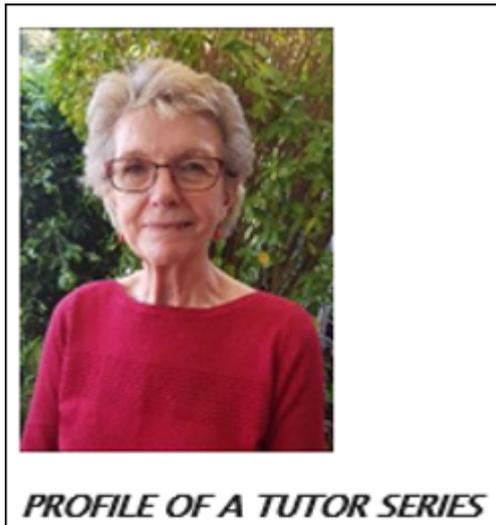
On behalf of all our members we sent a get-well card to David Weston, tutor co-ordinator of U3A Toowoomba with best wishes also to his wife, Rhonda who is president of U3A Toowoomba. David is recuperating at home following open heart surgery after a 'bolt from the blue' heart attack.

*.....stay well.....*

**Ian Muil**

**0414 969 648**

**September 2020**



### **Drawing a profile – Yvonne James**

Yvonne Griffiths was born in Swansea, South Wales. Her mother was a factory worker, her father a train driver. Born in 1951 she remembers the rubble of Swansea which was heavily bombed by the Luftwaffe in 1941 when 230 people were killed and 397 injured. Yvonne's great grandmother was killed when her house received a direct hit. Swansea was a strategic target due to its importance as a port, the docks and an oil refinery.

During the war her father, then a young boy, was evacuated to Slough, outside London. Her mother stayed in Swansea because her mother refused to let her be evacuated. If the worst happened, mother and daughter would die together. Her father was away in the army.

After the war hundreds of prefabricated houses were erected in bombed-out suburbs. Yvonne grew up in one of these.

Her mother suffered some serious illnesses, including diphtheria, and was warned to never have children. But she wanted a child, took the chance but nearly died during childbirth – hence Yvonne's only child status.

Yvonne went to a local primary school and, performing well in the 11-plus exams gained admission to a grammar school. The eleven-plus exam in the last year of primary school governed admission to grammar schools.

Yvonne attended the Llwyn-Y-Bryn Grammar School for Girls, making her parents very proud as she was the first in the family to attend a grammar school.

After school she chose the teachers training college in Carmarthen, 44 kms from Swansea. Her preference was art college but friends and family advised that teaching was a more stable choice.

Carmarthen is small – the population was 14,185 in 2011. Carmarthen, meaning 'Merlin's Fort', is the oldest town in Wales and a Roman fort there dates from AD 75.

She graduated after three years during which time she had met her future husband Colin James, also a student at Carmarthen Teachers Training College. Yvonne specialised in infant education, Colin became a manual arts high school teacher.

In 1973 Yvonne's first posting was Shears Green Infant School in Gravesend, Kent, on the east coast of England.

She saw an advertisement for teachers in Queensland, travel and removal expenses paid, the only commitment to stay for one year. They applied and were accepted – but decided to marry before leaving for the other side of the world.

Sadly, three months before the wedding her mother died. Yvonne was devastated and felt she could not leave her father at this time but he insisted, saying he was still young and able to look after himself.

So they married in December 1974 and within a month had left for Queensland with another couple who were good friends.

"What an adventure – our first experience at flying and then all that way in a Jumbo Jet."

They spent the first two weeks in the Canberra Hotel in Brisbane and after a three-day induction course in the Treasury Building Yvonne was posted to Richlands East State School in Inala and Colin to Richlands High School. They rented in Moorooka and within a year had the deposit to buy a house in Woodridge.

After three years, however, they were undecided about whether to commit to Australia so took unpaid leave, rented out their Woodridge house, and returned to Wales, moving in with Colin's parents. He was taken on at a Swansea school and Yvonne found office work. Nine months of grey skies convinced them to return to Australia.

Back in Brisbane and Education Queensland posted Colin to Ipswich State High and based Yvonne at Woodridge State School as a supply teacher. In 1980 their first child, Nathan, was born and Yvonne took 10 months maternity leave then returned to teaching, with a friend caring for her baby. A year later she resigned, unhappy at leaving her baby. And she wanted to add to her family. In 1982 Andrew was born.

They wanted more space so bought a two-acre block in Karalee and first built a garage which became their home while they built the house as finances allowed – Colin did much of the work, helped at times by friends. A few weeks after they had moved into their new home, still no carpets or kitchen cupboard doors, Colin received a transfer to Ingham.

“We almost bankrupted ourselves finishing off the house so we could rent it while we were away.” Off they went on The Sunlander with a four-year-old and an 18-month-old baby.

Ingham was initially hard for Yvonne – two babies, country town, no friends, not much money. She was offered a teaching position but found it difficult to get suitable childcare. Then a friend, director of a local kindy, told Yvonne she was leaving and suggested she apply. She got the three-days-a- position, relieving her child care stress.

In 1986, after three years in Ingham, Colin requested a transfer back to Ipswich, which was granted, and the family returned to their Karalee home. And Matthew was born in the Ipswich Hospital in 1987.

In 1989 Yvonne was offered a full time position at a school in the greater Ipswich region. “Many of the children were from disadvantaged families and exhibited difficult behaviours at school. At times it was hell on earth. I had to psyche myself up on the drive to school then force myself to shrug off what happened during the day on my way home so my family would find a happy and welcoming mum.”

She stayed for just over seven years before requesting a transfer – and hit the jackpot with a transfer to Karalee State School where she stayed until retirement in December 2010.

Their plans for retirement were put on hold when the 2011 floods forced a retreat back into the garage. Yvonne signed up for the Jamie Oliver cooking classes in Ipswich – so once a week she cooked the family meal in comfort, not in the garage. She then volunteered for the next three years, helping prepare what was needed for the cooking classes.

Yvonne had always been interested in art and joined Fay Steel's art classes at U3A Ipswich. After a few years with Fay she decided to explore other art media and searching online discovered 'The Five Pencil Method' with Darrel Tank. She joined his online Art Studio and learned how to produce realistic and accurate portraits. The rest is history, as they say. She started drawing portraits of friends and relatives, giving them to the subjects as gifts.

After doing some commissions she decided to share her skills and started the U3A Ipswich drawing classes in 2013. She began with one class a week which became two, then three and even four each week. Today she runs three classes and is investigating the possibility next year of offering a 'drawing from life' class.

“I teach drawing so that I can provide enjoyment to others, but I also benefit. It makes me feel so pleased to see my students develop their skills and to share in the pride and knowledge they have acquired in order to produce beautiful artwork.”

Her 'boys' are all grown up. Nathan is a qualified carpenter working as a building contractor and living in Sunnybank Hills. Andrew, who has a Masters in Biotechnology, is living in Taiwan where he teaches English. Matthew is the musician in the family playing piano as a child in many Silkstone Eisteddfods, held in the very church hall U3A now holds classes in. He graduated from the Queensland Conservatorium with a degree in Music Technology.

He spent three years in Moscow teaching English, completed a Masters in Information Technology degree when he returned to Brisbane and now lives in England.

Since 2015 Yvonne has been a member of the U3A Management Committee - secretary for three years and committee member for the last two, looking after membership, office volunteers and Facebook.



## **State-of-the-Art membership management system**

As a result of the work of our Marketing & Communications Sub-Committee a membership management system is being installed. Under the leadership of U3A Ipswich member and tutor Laurie Zaat the implementation team consists of: Management Committee Vice President Karen Doolan, Committee member and membership officer Yvonne James, Committee member and tutor co-ordinator Amanda Schloss and Committee member Norah Blunden.

This team is working to integrate a business management system specific to U3A Ipswich & West Moreton processes. The software, called MyU3A, is professionally produced enabling all the capabilities of modern computer and internet technologies to be utilised. This results in a range of flexibilities in the processes required to run a U3A.

Our aim is to allow members to self-manage their participation in U3A activities, if they so choose, while providing course leaders and tutors simple, online management of classes, attendance and resources, and giving U3A's management a more holistic view of operations to better inform decision-making.

Importantly, as we depend entirely on volunteers to operate day-to-day, the system will enhance coordination and integration of functions, reducing, if not eliminating, the deficiencies inherent in manual management practices.

The system will streamline and improve our management of: courses and classes; online and offline enrolments; venues and venue keys issued; cost/performance analysis; scheduling; timetabling; attendance and class performance; online and offline membership joining and renewals; volunteers; committees and sub-committees.

The software evolved from the collaboration several years ago between several U3As who formed a network to manage and administer their associations using an existing commercial administration system, tailored over time to meet the specific needs of U3As. The software today benefits U3As from start-ups to U3As with 8,000 members or more, providing the most cost-effective platform on offer.

The scope and depth of the system is enormous, but in the words of team leader Laurie Zaat: "The approach to implementation will be cautious and methodical and not driven by a deadline. We can achieve a 'go live' date of January 2021 without it being our objective."

## **Showcasing our U3A**

Thanks to the work of our Marketing & Communications Sub-Committee you will soon see a range of posters appearing on the walls of the venues we use. With humour and insight these will explore the wide range of activities and classes offered by U3A Ipswich, encouraging members to reach out into classes other than the ones they already attend. They will also be used, together with pamphlets which we intend distributing across appropriate venues in Ipswich, to raise awareness of U3A and what we have to offer.

## **Function-specific emails**

Visit our website, click on Committee under Governance and you will see we have created function-specific email addresses. The dedicated email addresses are for president, treasurer, secretary, membership, and tutor coordinator. The emails still drop into the U3A email in-box but a copy is automatically diverted to the person holding that position. Function-based email addresses survive changes at the Management Committee level.



## **New class offerings**

Would you be interested in attending short classes on *social media*, such as how to use Facebook safely and effectively? Please visit our U3A Facebook site which is benefitting greatly from the development work of Yvonne James. It is up to us now to use the site to its best advantage. Our Facebook page is a closed group meaning only those who join the group can post items on our Facebook pages. Please join the group and post items of interest which you want to share with other U3A members. You'll see quite a few members are already doing so.

*Powerpoint and slide presentations* – this one may be of particular interest to tutors and those who present. How to conduct a good slide presentation using Powerpoint or similar software. Interested?

*Mindfulness* – U3A member and former Management Committee member Dianne Mead has offered a 'Mindfulness' class for early next year for up to 10 people. In the words of Di Mead: Mindfulness is about being in the present moment as much as possible in every day life. Focus of the class will be: what is mindfulness?, acceptance, self-compassion, kindness to others. It will be a discussion framework with guidance and insight from me." Di Mead holds a Diploma of Counselling and a Bachelor of Science (Psychology).

*Chair Yoga & Pilates* with Sandra Kovac. This is a low-impact way to improve core strength and balance. Do you have: chronic pain due to injury or illness; joint inflammation; limited mobility; difficulty standing for long periods; loss of balance; trouble picking up things or reaching high shelves; trouble kneeling, sitting on low chairs or trying to get up? Then Chair Yoga & Pilates may help you develop balance and stability while improving strength and flexibility. The class is at 9am on Tuesdays at Booval campus.

Contact Amanda to register your interest in any of these new opportunities: [tutors@u3aipswich.org.au](mailto:tutors@u3aipswich.org.au).

### **A thought for the day**

'It is not true that people stop pursuing dreams because they grow old. They grow old because they stop pursuing dreams.' *Gabriel Garcia Marquez*

### **Family history – an open invitation**

An open invitation is extended by Rob McGeehan, tutor of the weekly 'History – Behind the Scenes' class. Irma Deas, President of the Ipswich Genealogical Society, has accepted an invitation to address our members on the work of the Society which is based at the Cooneana Heritage Centre in New Chum.

Irma's presentation is scheduled for Tuesday, October 20. If you want to attend contact Amanda on [tutors@u3aipswich.org.au](mailto:tutors@u3aipswich.org.au). This presentation may prove very popular so let us know as soon as possible if you want to attend as we will need to make venue arrangements depending on the numbers.

A long-standing and dynamic president of the Society, Irma has researched her own family history and assisted many others in their quest to find out about their ancestors. Irma will also discuss ways we can provide a glimpse into our own lives for future generations of our own families.

The Ipswich Genealogical Society was the first genealogical society in Queensland when it formed in 1977 to assist and support people researching their family history.

### **Update on cryptic crosswords**

Cryptic crosswords tutor Bruce Duckett has decided to cancel classes for a few weeks because of the COVID-19 situation. However, he continues to send cryptic crosswords by email to class members.

### **A snippet of information**

Ipswich U3A was established in 1993. By contrast, these are the longest-established U3As in Queensland:

1986 – Brisbane and Sunshine Coast established

1987 – Townsville, Gympie and Redcliffe established

1988 – Bundaberg, Gold Coast and Rockhampton established

1989 – Capricorn Coast established.

### **Old wives tales**

A short selection taken from 'Old Wives' Tales – The science behind the Advice' by Susanna Geoghegan, Michael Powell and Peter Wilkinson. Contributed to our newsletter by Healthy Eating Class Tutor Lynette Duffy.

*Eating spicy food causes ulcers* – verdict: spicy food cannot cause ulcers and may even prevent them, but it can make existing ulcer pain worse.

*Sugar makes children hyperactive* – verdict: sugar does not affect behaviour, but it does influence the way parents who believe the myth interact with their children.

*Shine windows with vinegar and crunched up newspaper* – verdict: despite advances in ink technology, newspaper and vinegar is still an effective method of cleaning windows and leaving them dry and smear free.

*Going outside with wet hair causes a cold* – verdict: even going outside with soaking wet clothes won't increase your risk of catching a cold, let alone wet hair.

*Knuckle cracking leads to arthritis* – verdict: there is no proven link between knuckle cracking and arthritis, but it can cause other injuries such as dislocation of damaged ligaments.

*Putting butter on a burn eases the pain* – verdict: butter spread on a burn does not ease the pain, it increases it because it helps trap the heat in the skin. It also increases the risk of infection.

*Buttered toast always lands butter side down* – verdict: human evolution and the physical laws which govern the universe mean that toast always has and always will mostly land butter side down.



### **Some tips and tricks when you Zoom**

To look your best use head-on natural lighting. Harsh lighting from behind darkens your face, you are harder to see and it can irritate others. To avoid triple chins and nostril shots, make sure your webcam is eye level or higher. Be punctual and check settings ahead of time.

To test your settings go to [zoom.us/test](https://zoom.us/test).

To rename yourself or to include your State or U3A name, hover over your name on participants list, click More, and choose Rename to change the name others can see.

Unless you are speaking, stay on mute. Even if you move away from the computer others can still hear you. Press and hold the spacebar to quickly mute and unmute your mic, right from your keyboard.

Untidy or busy backgrounds are distracting as is behaviour like doing other tasks, checking emails, or looking at your phone. Make sure you say goodbye or at least wave when leaving the Zoom meeting. The host should leave last, just like a real-life party.

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## 2019/20 Management Committee

<b>President</b>	Ian Muil
<b>Vice President</b>	Karen Doolan
<b>Secretary</b>	Robyn Hargreaves
<b>Treasurer (Acting)</b>	Karen Doolan
<b>Committee Members</b>	
Membership Officer	Yvonne James
Tutor Coordinator	Amanda Schloss
Special Projects	Norah Blunden



## U3A Ipswich & West Moreton Inc.

**Office and Postal address:** U3A House, 25 Eileen Street, Booval, QLD 4304

Phone: **3282 7484** ~ Email: [contact@u3aipswich.org.au](mailto:contact@u3aipswich.org.au) ~

Website: [www.u3aipswich.org.au](http://www.u3aipswich.org.au)

Normal Office Hours: 10:00 am to 12:00 noon. ***The office is now open between those hours.***

Staffed by volunteers. Always call ahead.

Free on-site parking on grounds of Glebe Road Uniting Church, Corner Glebe Rd & Green St, Booval.

Make sure to bring the exact amount if you are coming in to pay your membership. The office does not keep a float.

ABN: 23 186 788 461 U3A Ipswich & West Moreton Inc is a charity registered with the ACNC.

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Our mailing address is:

25 Eileen Street Booval, Queensland 4304