

# Newsletter



**YARRA CITY**  
UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE

July 2026

T: 0459 779 872

E: [info@u3ayarracity.org.au](mailto:info@u3ayarracity.org.au)

W: [www.u3ayarracity.org.au](http://www.u3ayarracity.org.au)

F: <http://www.facebook.com/u3ayarracityinc>

17 Stanton Street

Abbotsford 3067

**Office Hours:** Mon 1– 3pm, Fri 10 – 12 noon  
(Closed public holidays and school holidays)

## Contents

President's Report .....	1
Program Report .....	2
.....	3
U3A tutor honoured .....	4
Art for All - reflections on fourteen years .....	5
Tai Chi Together.....	6
Delivering Bowls with Bias..	7
500 Card Game.....	8
Get 20% Off Your Rego via Service Victoria.....	8
Melbourne General Cemetery walk - May 2026 .....	9
Ever thought of donating blood? .....	10
On the Hoist ... Poem .....	11
Volunteering with City of Yarra.....	12
Gallery .....	13
Dates and Committee .....	14
Connect with U3A Yarra City .....	14



**President Peter Moore**

## President's Report

As we settle into the depths of winter, it's remarkable how mild the season has been so far. The pleasant weather makes it ideal for getting out and about, and many of our outdoor activities are thriving.

U3A offers a wide range of outdoor physical activities, all of which are very popular. Some still have vacancies, so I encourage you to take advantage of the fine weather while it lasts. If you prefer indoor options, places are available in table tennis and world dancing.

For those with a creative flair, we are delighted to introduce a new class, *Explore the World of Yarns and Threads*, led by Gina De Francesco. This demonstrates what can happen when someone with enthusiasm and expertise steps forward to share their passion. Thank you, Gina! There is always room for new classes and activities, so if you have an interest or skill to share, please consider getting involved.

I was very pleased to learn that Barry Giddings has been selected for a U3A Network Tutor Recognition Award. Barry's nomination was driven by his outstanding efforts in establishing and running our hugely successful pickleball program. The nomination was initiated by the class, which makes the recognition particularly meaningful. For more information see page 4.

Our Annual General Meeting (AGM) will be held on 18 August at the Jack Dyer Community Room in Richmond, the same venue we used last year. Before the formal meeting, we are fortunate to have Professor Mike South speaking on *Artificial Intelligence in Medicine* - a fascinating and highly topical subject.

In addition to the usual AGM business, members will be asked to vote on proposed updates to our Rules of Association. The committee has reviewed our Rules to ensure they remain relevant and effective. As a legal document, the Rules are important because they govern how we operate and deliver services to our members.

All members have received links to the proposed Rules and a summary of the changes. I encourage you to read these

documents carefully and share any feedback. An information session where members can raise questions, discuss concerns, and suggest improvements will be held on 7 July. Your input is important, so please consider the proposed changes before the AGM.

Another key item on the AGM agenda is the election of the committee for the coming year. While much of the committee's work happens behind the scenes, it plays a vital role in ensuring that the activities and services our members value continue to run smoothly.

Several committee members will be retiring this year, and we are looking for new volunteers to join the team. Serving on the committee is both rewarding and enjoyable, offering the opportunity to contribute to the success of our U3A while working with a dedicated group of people. If you are interested, please speak with me or any current committee member.

Several other volunteer roles will be advertised in the coming months. I encourage you to consider contributing. Volunteering is a great way to support our organisation, develop new friendships, and become more involved in our community.

We were pleased to welcome Cr Meca Ho (Yarra City, Melba Ward) to our recent Forum on the Melbourne to Osaka Yacht Race, presented by Dylan Oosterweghel. The presentation was excellent, and Cr Ho was impressed by the quality of activities we offer.

The committee continues to engage with Yarra Council regarding funding support. Council provides most of our venues, and venue hire remains by far our largest expense. We strongly believe that U3A delivers significant value to older residents of Yarra and that this contribution warrants ongoing financial support. We will continue to advocate our case with Council.

I wish you all a warm and enjoyable winter break and enjoy U3A's activities in the second half of the year.

**Peter Moore**

## Program Report

As we head into the winter semester some classes are finding that the attendance is dropping off. If you are unable to attend, please let your tutor know.

Tai Chi, led by Max Thompson at the Djerring Centre, quickly filled. Thanks to Sarah Mathers from the Community Development Office – Active Ageing, they have use of the Djerring Centre until September 30, after which a new venue will be arranged.

Another new class, Exploring the World of Yarns and Threads, led by Gina De Francesco at Bargoonga Nganjin Library, commences mid-July.

Peter and Richard successfully negotiated with Yarra City to remove the minimum booking of three hours for some of the venues. This means considerable savings; however, Friday bookings will be charged at weekend rates.

Jan Lawson's second Lunch Around the World has been a success, once again with a waiting list.

One-off social activities have been popular, so Gina and I will be organising more of these events during the year. Thanks to Gina, we have already had a successful group travel via Yarra City's minibus to Heidi to see the John Percival exhibition where the group were given a bonus in-depth insight into Percival's early years and the history of Heide.

If any members have an excursion/event they would like to lead, please contact us via [events@u3ayarracity.org.au](mailto:events@u3ayarracity.org.au). One of our team will contact you and help set up the advertising and any costs involved. We are aiming for one event per month as not everyone can commit to ongoing classes.

Thank you to all the tutors who have made our programs happen.

**Maria Hudson, Program Coordinator**



**LEGENDS OF BRASS**

# LAST NIGHT OF THE PROMS

Sunday 2 August 2026 2:00 PM

The Centre Ivanhoe,  
275 Upper Heidelberg Road, Ivanhoe

The 15th Annual Last Night of the PROMS

Legends of Brass with

- Victoria Welsh Choir
- PLC Pipe Band

Tickets: \$35.00  
[www.legendsofbrass.com.au](http://www.legendsofbrass.com.au)  
[trybooking.com/DIPCC](http://trybooking.com/DIPCC)  
Phone: 0490 091 064

*Our most popular show of the year. Come along and have a ball as you sing, wave flags and stomp your way through a fabulous afternoon concert.*

Proudly sponsored by the Banyule City Council



## U3A tutor honoured

The U3A Pickleball class were delighted with the recent news that their tutor Barry Giddings is to receive a Tutor Recognition award from U3A Network Victoria.

These annual awards celebrate exceptional community tutors who demonstrate innovation in course delivery, participant engagement, and peer mentoring.

Network awards will be presented on 30 July and Barry's achievement recognised at the U3A Yarra City AGM in August. A detailed report will appear in our December newsletter.

### THANKYOU BARRY!

We still love Barry, our pickleball king.  
 Lots of reasons his praises to sing...  
 Forty cats he can herd,  
 With ne'er a harsh word.  
 Helps with scores, the rules and the swing.

His tournaments challenge our skill.  
 Will we be friendly or go for the kill?  
 If you lose there's no shame.  
 You have a partner to blame...  
 Or the wind, or the sun caused you ill!

With U3A and new extras each week,  
 Updating lists takes much more than a tweak.  
 But our lovely boss,  
 He never gets cross.  
 Supports us all, both the strong and the weak.

Inclusion and kindness abound.  
 Friendly laughter can always be found.  
 Being pickled is our greatest fear!  
 Thankyou Barry we've had a great year.



*Pickleball class members' tribute*

## Art for All – reflections on fourteen years

This class has been meeting on Monday mornings at Baroonga Nganjin in Fitzroy North for three years and before that at the U3A office in Abbotsford. Both venues have given easy access to parkland for outdoor work when the weather permits. During the COVID lockdown we continued to meet online via zoom. The class started as six weeks of landscape painting in the Edinburgh Gardens with half a dozen students. This year we have been given the use of the library's community room which can accommodate 21 students. We have also transitioned to meeting weekly rather than fortnightly. The class now functions as an artists' collective. After ten years I needed some long service leave to paint in Italy and Annie stepped up to keep the class going. Gina and Di have stepped up recently as co-ordinators which allows me to spend more time with new students as well as allowing me some time off when life gets in the way. The class functions very well in my absence.



Students are encouraged to try various media, and we look at the work of many different artists while discovering new approaches and techniques. The library is an excellent source of art books and magazines when we need new sources of inspiration. The downstairs foyer area has hosted some very interesting exhibitions in the past year. My approach to art is informed by John Berger's *Ways of Seeing*. His philosophy maintains that our visual attention is drawn to different aspects of a subject depending on our individual perceptions and experiences. This is often reflected in the diverse responses to even a simple still life set up. Each class member has a journal in which they do exercises and experiment with new techniques and materials. We often

**Claudia Denyse John Michelle**

start our class with a short drawing exercise to connect to our art brain and to banish the cares of the outside world

from the space. A drawing book and a pen or pencil is all that is needed to start. I have fond memories of many U3A members who have belonged to this class over the years but can no longer attend because of disability or distance. Every student has enriched my appreciation of art and contributed to my learning. When I am being overcritical of my own work, I try to remember some of my own mantras, frequently heard in class: it is not a photograph, you are not painting the bathroom and art is 80% observation and 20% mark making. The research and experiments that I have done for this class have contributed to my own art education and I have been greatly inspired by the courage and generosity of those who have accompanied me on this journey. Many of us are caregivers and very involved with social justice. Art for All is an opportunity to recharge our own batteries and to focus on beauty and creativity in a supportive atmosphere.

**Jenny John**



**Jenny in her studio**

## Tai Chi Together

The Tai Chi Together course commenced on 29 April in the Djerring Centre adjacent to Collingwood Town Hall. This large function hall is equipped with good lighting, reverse air conditioning and, most usefully, audio-visual equipment which includes three large monitors. The space can comfortably fit fifteen people. Around thirteen turned up on the first day, mostly beginners but some who have done Tai Chi before.

The Tai Chi taught is the Sun style that focuses on general health through the cultivation of chi or 'inner' energy. It is a style suitable for seniors as the movements are slow and gentle, contained and compact, with higher rather than lower stances. The benefits include improvement in flexibility, balance, and relaxation of the body and mind. Very importantly, leg strength is maintained and improved - they say the legs are the first to go when you get old!

We began with the form sometimes known as Tai Chi for Arthritis 1. This form involves movements, some with intriguing names such as Opening, Three Breaths, Single Whip, Cloud Hands, Brush Knee, Play the Lute, Receive the Tiger and Push the Mountain. We have been doing this for nine weeks and have just embarked on the next phase, Tai Chi for Arthritis 2. Naturally the majority of students find it difficult to remember the movements but with constant repetition, the intuitive aspect comes into play. Some call it 'muscle memory'. It is like learning a new culture, Chinese specifically, learning movements and attitudes based on ancient Chinese martial arts. The movements are done in silence apart from the tutor calling out the name of the move. Silence is instrumental in cultivating a calmer mind and repetition in cultivating patience. It does take time to learn Tai Chi.

Some Qigong (Energy Work/Exercise) are also being introduced as a supplementary aspect - developing awareness of what's happening inside the body in contrast to the outward movements in Tai Chi.

### Max Thomson



*Tai Chi class with tutor Max, centre front*

## Delivering Bowls with Bias



*Low slow and elegant*

The U3A Yarra Bowls Squad celebrated the end of term 2 with a sumptuous, shared meal and drinks on Tuesday June 3 @ the Fitzroy Bowls Club in the Edinburgh Gardens.

The program runs for the whole year with a break for school holidays and a celebratory meal @ the end of each term. Some members resume after short or longer vacations.

### Get a Grip!

The program includes basic instructions on how to hold a bowl, aim a bowl and release a bowl. Several Bowls Coaches (qualified via Bowls Victoria) provide individual and group tuition and support with key ingredients being humour, encouragement and positivity.

### Low and Slow and Elegant!

This is the formula for success: **low** means the bowl rolls smoothly; **slow** means greater control on release; **elegant** means you finish your release of the bowl with style!

### A Balanced View

A **balanced** delivery is important – simple techniques to achieve balance are provided plus a range of exercises to enhance personal **balance** are demonstrated.

A **balanced** weekly program includes coaching tips, bowls drills, competitive games, information provision (scoring systems, bowls rules and the etiquette of bowls).

A **balance** is provided between on-the-spot coaching, video feedback for individuals and encouragement to research bowls techniques and strategies on YouTube.

### Making Fun!

All sport needs to be fun and enjoyable regardless of performance!

The on-green banter and encouragement is infectious; the off green post session drinks in the clubhouse brings the squad together, builds friendships and provides opportunities to engage with a range of experiences and interests



*Tutor Peter Hille*

across the squad. Plus, the squad members get to know club management, club leaders and other club members.

### **Join the Club!**

Every member of the U3A squad has **joined** the bowls club as a Social Member - \$60 for 12 months.

Benefits of Social Membership include: free access to bowls throughout the year; discounts on products; membership points program; monthly club newsletter; invites to club social events. The squad has a Whats App Group for updates and event notifications; several members tee up to meet for a regular bowling session apart from the scheduled Tuesday program.

**Peter Hille**

**Bowls Development Co-ordinator Fitzroy Bowls Club**

M 0407 177 457, E [phille@iprimus.com.au](mailto:p_hille@iprimus.com.au)

## **500 Card Game**

We are a group playing the classic card game of 500. We do this on a Tuesday afternoon from 2pm to 4pm at the Collingwood Library meeting room. Traditionally, it is played by four people, but here you will also learn how to play with three, five or six, depending how many players arrive.

500 is an engaging game encouraging players to think critically about their bids and card plays. It is most often played in partnerships, fostering collaboration. It is suitable for various skill levels, making it accessible to everyone. Social interaction between players is an essential element as is evident from the often-raised noise level.

Players enjoy the challenge of outsmarting their opponents, but the randomness of card distribution adds that element of chance!

There are places available in this group. Feel free to join us.

**John Meagher**



## **Get 20% Off Your Rego via Service Victoria**

Apply for a registration rebate from Monday 1 June to Friday 31 July and get back up to \$186 per personal vehicle.

Anyone can claim, but you only have until 31st July 2026 to apply. Check eligibility and apply. Read the details carefully - you can claim for up to two vehicles per person. You need a Service Victoria account, your driver's license number, car registration number. It's easy.

**Shelley Brockbank**

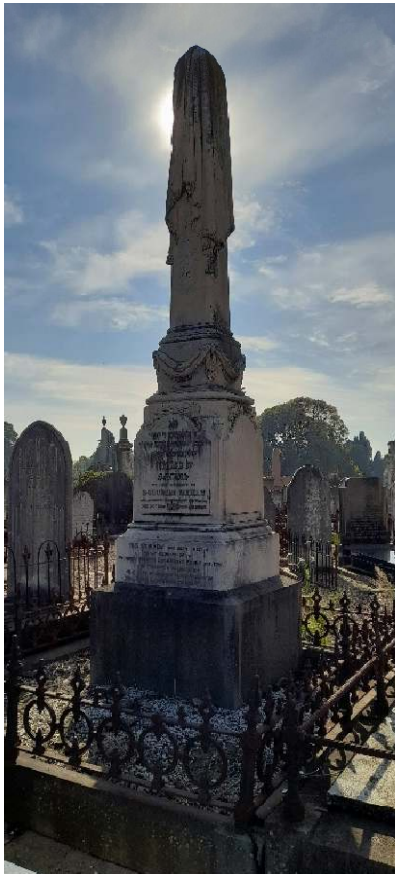
## Melbourne General Cemetery walk – May 2026

The May Historic Walk through the Melbourne General Cemetery revealed many layers of Melbourne's history ranging from sporting achievement, transport, colonial settlement, the Chinese community, first nations, migration, political struggles, and Victorian funerary art and symbolism.

The **Lindrum family** grave commemorates one of Australia's greatest sporting figures, Walter Lindrum, who dominated the world of English billiards during the first half of the 20th century and remains a legendary figure in cue sports.



*Lindrum family grave*



*Solomon Miris*

**Solomon Miris** was locomotive superintendent of the Victorian Railways for many years. A plaque erected by the Locomotive Engine Drivers and Firemen's

Association commemorates his achievements and reflects the important role of railway workers and their unions in Victoria's industrial history.

**Derrimut**, a respected Bunurong (Boonwurrung) leader, warned colonial settlers of impending attacks and maintained important relationships during a period of rapid colonial expansion. His memorial prompts reflection on the complex and often tragic impact of colonisation on First Nations people.



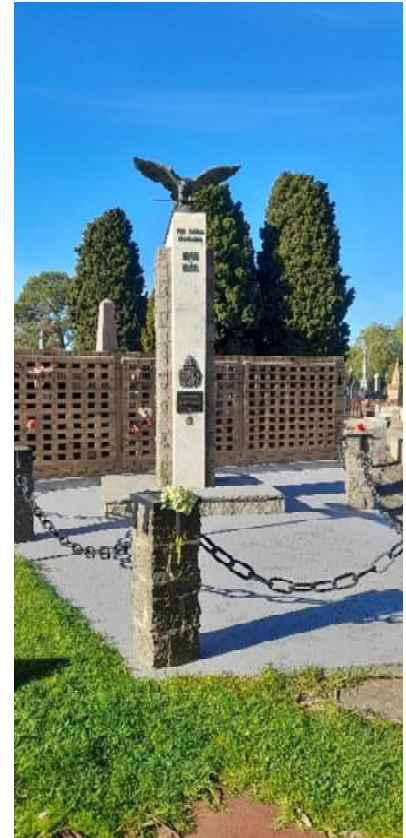
*Derrimut*



*Clarke/Biggs family grave*

The **Clarke and Biggs family** grave provides a glimpse into 19th century family histories and the lives of early settlers in colonial Victoria.

**Hungarian patriots 1848 - 1856** associated with the struggles for freedom and national independence, are honoured with a memorial linking the cemetery to international histories of revolution and migration. The Hungarian revolutions of 1848 and 1956 recall two major uprisings in Hungarian history.



*Hungarian Patriots*

These stories illustrate how the cemetery serves not only as a burial ground but also as a record of Melbourne's social, cultural, and political history.

**Mary Walker**

## Ever thought of donating blood?

My uncle (a father of five young children) died from leukaemia a number of years ago. He was able to live an additional two years due to blood donations from the community. I've donated blood ever since.

The team at *Lifeblood* are fantastic. Efficient, and very personable. In the US people expect to be paid to give blood. It's a mark of a generous and community minded society that in Australia, people give blood for free. There's no pain, and you meet a team of efficient and kind staff, as well as other donors. You can also donate plasma (which is in high demand) at the Red Cross centre in Collins St.

Check their website: <https://www.lifeblood.com.au> for details and the location of the closest centre to you.

**Jen Martin**



## On the Hoist

On the hoist

It was a young body

Not exactly beautiful

But OK

And it was mine, too.

Now, like an old car,

It's up on the hoist

Time and time again,

Beyond scratches on the duco.

More parts than the car?

Feet, torn ligaments,

Fixed eventually,

Knees, no meniscus parts available,

Eyes? Yes, have lenses in stock,

Over at the specialist mechanics workshop.

Shoulder suspension worn,

Rebore not a good idea,

Needs different work,

Not just a lube, either,

Try the physio this time.

Do old cars on the hoist too often

Get tired? Sometimes.

Old bodies do, old heads too,

Mine can.

## On the Hoist ... Poem

*Stephen Alomes reflects on when he started writing poetry for the first time ever in Liz Gallois' U3A Yarra City creative writing group in 2015:*

I found that when I was bringing an A4 page of prose to the group, other people were bringing poems.

So I joined them.

While my background is as an historian, the writers group encouraged me to go beyond my habitual staples of narrative and analysis.

I have learned a little more about writing character and dialogue as well as discovering the brevity of prose poetry. In particular, I have become interested in prose poems about everyday life. That began with two collections, *Selective Ironies* and *Our Pandemic Zeitgeist* in 2020.

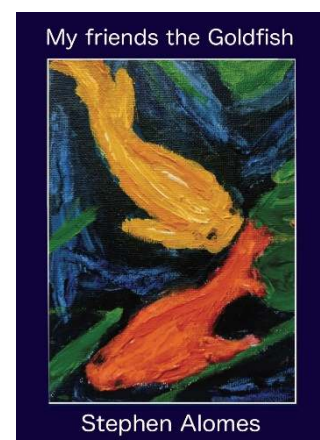
*On the Hoist* was stimulated by an ophthalmologist visit - the five minute clean-up of a 'dirty' cataract lens, over six years after the new lens was installed.

A bit like a windscreen clean.

### Stephen Alomes

*Stephen Alomes' 'My Friends the Goldfish' was published by Ginninderra Press in 2025. He got to say hello to the neighbours' goldfish during the pandemic and later painted them in all their colourful beauty.*

*Stephen is a member of the U3A 'Memoir, Memories and Writing' class.*



## Volunteering with City of Yarra

If you are interested in contributing to our community by volunteering, Yarra City Council has many opportunities for volunteers to help successfully deliver several programs, services and events.

Volunteer involvement is a critical part of our society. It enhances civic life and helps build strong, inclusive, and resilient communities. Volunteer contributions are crucial to the success of many community projects, programs and events while providing benefits to the volunteers themselves.

Yarra is committed to ensuring volunteers' skills and interests are a good fit for each role to achieve the best outcomes for both the volunteer and Council's objectives. Applicants from diverse backgrounds are encouraged to apply, however you must be 18 years or older. Training and support are provided.

Volunteering opportunities in Yarra include:

### Thread Together Store Volunteer - Learning Bank

Thread Together is a not-for-profit organisation that partners with fashion brands and retailers to redirect brand-new, end-of-line clothing and footwear that would otherwise go to landfill. In partnership with the Victorian Government, City of Yarra operates the community space, Learning Bank, located in the former Commonwealth Bank on Victoria Street, offering programs, workshops and activities that support the North Richmond community and local economy. Thread Together Clothing Hub operates from within the Learning Bank. Volunteer benefits include meeting new people, learning new skills in a retail environment, while having fun and receiving training and support throughout your volunteering experience. For more information contact the Learning Bank at [learningbank@yarracity.viclearningbank.gov.au](mailto:learningbank@yarracity.viclearningbank.gov.au).

### Chatty Café Volunteer -Fitzroy Library

The Chatty Café Scheme is a registered charity that encourages community-focused hospitality and social venues across Australia to provide shared 'Chatty' tables. The Scheme has been rolled out in cafés, pubs, restaurants, community centres, libraries, and hospitals – anywhere people can sit and chat over a coffee. Yarra Libraries incorporated this program in 2022, and it has been successfully run at the Fitzroy branch. The Chatty Café Program aims to kickstart conversations, get people talking to increase safe and respectful social connections within a community and possibly reduce loneliness along the way. The Chatty Café staff are **not** professional therapists and will be provided with cards listing crisis hotlines for patrons requiring additional support. Volunteers work alongside Yarra Libraries staff to add capacity to the delivery of our library-based Chatty Cafe program.

### Companion Animal Support Program Volunteer

For dog lovers, volunteering with Yarra City Council's Companion Animal Program is a great way to combine these passions to make a positive impact on our community. The Companion Animal Support Program (CASP) aims to help eligible residents in the City of Yarra, aged over 65 or people who have a disability, improve their quality of life by addressing social isolation and health and wellbeing. Volunteers benefit by making a new friendship with the pet and its owner, get exercise and have lots of fun, whilst receiving training and support throughout your volunteering experience. For details, contact the Positive Ageing Program Officer, on: [sarah.mathers@yarracity.vic.gov.au](mailto:sarah.mathers@yarracity.vic.gov.au) or phone 0456 360 047. Further information on Volunteering in Yarra can be found at [www.yarracity.vic.gov.au](http://www.yarracity.vic.gov.au).

Christine Gibbs



## Gallery



Lawn bowls



Lawn bowls



Chinese section Melbourne cemetery



Elvis memorial Melbourne cemetery



Hawthorn TH gallery



Hawthorn TH gallery

## Dates and Committee 2026

27 Jun – 12 Jul: Term 2 holidays  
 18 Aug: AGM, Jack Dyer Community Room  
 19 Sep – 4 Oct: Term 3 holidays  
 18 Dec: end of term 4

### Committee 2026

**President:** Peter Moore  
**Deputy President:** Barry Giddings  
**Secretary:** Mary Whelan  
**Treasurer:** Richard Laing  
**Program Coordinator:** Maria Hudson  
**Membership Support:** Barry Giddings  
**Database Team:** Frank Moore  
**Tutor Support:** Barry Giddings  
**Health and Safety Officer:** Cathy Hutton  
**Convenor, Publicity and Communications:**  
 Peter Moore

## Semester dates 2026

Term 1: 27 Jan - 2 Apr  
 Term 2: 20 Apr - 26 Jun  
 Term 3: 13 Jul - 18 Sep  
 Term 4: 5 Oct - 18 Dec

### Committee 2026 cont...

**Event Coordinators:** Maria Hudson and Gina De Francesco  
**Office Manager and Bulletin editor:** Elizabeth Way

### Ex Officio

**Active Ageing Advisory:** Jonno Morris

### Other Office Bearers

**Newsletter Coordinators:** Tina Hocking and Helen Hargreaves  
**Forums Coordinator:** Lynell McCluggage

## Connect with U3A Yarra City

**FaceBook:** Send photos and articles to our email address [u3ayarracity@gmail.com](mailto:u3ayarracity@gmail.com) with FaceBook in the Subject line or go directly via FaceBook.



**Web:** [www.u3ayarracity.org.au](http://www.u3ayarracity.org.au)

**On yer bike:** <https://onyerbike-u3a.org.au>

**News and Events Bulletin:** Latest news communication via email

**Newsletter:** Published April, July and November.  
 Email: [info@u3ayarracity.org.au](mailto:info@u3ayarracity.org.au) with Newsletter in the Subject line, or post to:  
 Newsletter Coordinator, U3A Yarra City, 17 Stanton St, Abbotsford 3067

**U3A Yarra City Reg: AC047182K**

***Proudly printed by Sarah Witty MP, Federal Labor Member for Melbourne***

*We acknowledge the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung people as the Traditional Owners and true sovereigns of the land now known as Yarra. We pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging. We also pay our respects to Elders from all nations.*