

**U3A PINE RIVERS CENTRE
KALLANGUR
10 YEARS - OCTOBER 2025**

By John Tendero

The year 2014 marked the 21st birthday of U3A Pine Rivers. A celebratory lunch was held at Club Pine Rivers. Some Federal and State members of Parliament as well as Council representatives attended as guests.

Due to the high number of classes and activities, the costs of renting external venues had become a real financial burden. The President at that time, Andy Doogan, had been in frequent discussions with Local Councillors as well as State and Federal members trying to secure our own premises.

The then Moreton Bay Regional Council allowed us the use of a room in what had been the Community Development Unit. This was a great help.

But the turning point in the history of U3A Pine Rivers was in 2015.

Thanks to the efforts of Andy Doogan and with excellent cooperation of Councillors, in September we were given a lease on this premises at **1480 Anzac Avenue, Kallangur**. It had previously been occupied by the Kallangur Library but had been vacant for some time.

This allowed us to relocate many classes and activities from King's Cottage and hired premises in a range of different localities, and to finally establish a proper office, common area and reception.

The venue was named the **U3A Pine Rivers Centre**.

The Official Opening of the premises by the MBRC Mayor Alan Sutherland in October 2015 was a great success and a true indication of what having our own "home" meant to our members.

The next few months saw a huge amount of activity at the Centre to clean and refurbish many areas and to locate furniture, room dividers and many features.

A significant amount of furniture and many other items were donated to U3A by various commercial organisations, primarily, again thanks to the efforts of Andy and Val Doogan.

Mrs Mary Snell donated many plants so that a garden could be established at the back adjacent to what was then a deck.

In 2016, emphasis was placed on setting up the U3A Centre to suit the various activities. Although having such premises was very good, it caused some difficulties in arrangements since it had largely been open space.

Prior to having this premises, classes and activities were held at various venues. Each class or activity had its own dedicated date, time and venue.

This new premises saw many of these activities sharing a big area with consequent noise and usage problems.

Room dividers were used to create a degree of separation. Various layouts and partitioning were tried out with a lot of trial and error and success.

Credit has to be given to the many volunteers who helped, but it was the planning and efforts by **John Wright**, the Centre Manager that was paramount.

The U3A Pine Rivers Committee approved expenditure to allow a wall to be erected at the far end of the venue creating what is now called Room 1.

The Committee was successful in obtaining a grant from the Community Benefits Fund to acquire and install a ceiling mounted digital projector with built-in speakers thus allowing the running of audio-visual presentations.

As a result of having the premises, which allowed for an increase in the number of classes and activities, 2016, was a year of growth and consolidation.

The Moreton Bay Regional Council developed 24 much-needed extra car spaces beside the U3A Centre.

A larger Reception desk and 125 fabric chairs were purchased. A grant enabled the installation of a TV for the Recreation Area.

The kitchenette was relocated to enable use of another room.
An administrative office was constructed.

Membership at the end of the year had reached the very significant milestone of **1,000 members**. There is little doubt that having this premises encouraged many to join and participate in classes and activities.

In 2019, the U3A Centre at Kallangur was closed for a few weeks so that work could be carried out on the three internal walls needed to enclose some of the areas used for classes and activities.

This project was funded through a Federal Government Stronger Communities Grant of \$20,000, which U3A Pine Rivers matched. Upgrades were necessary to the fire alarm system and air-conditioning ducts.

Credit is extended to the President **Lyn Browne** during these years of development. With the Management Committee supporting Lyn, many grant applications were successful in obtaining funds to improve the facilities for members.

Special thanks were once again extended to our Centre Manager, **John Wright**, who organized approvals with the Council, had plans drawn up, arranged for a variety of contractors and obtained certification.

Two Honour Boards, one listing the Presidents of U3A Pine Rivers and the other, Life Members were installed.

A grant from the State Gaming Community Benefit Fund enabled the installation of LED lighting throughout this Centre, King's Cottage and Calala Drive Hall. Thirty vinyl exercise chairs were purchased.

After obtaining a \$25,000 interest-free loan from the Council, to be repaid over five years, one hundred solar panels were installed to reduce the electricity costs considerably. **For that we will always be grateful.**

While COVID-19 caused great disruption, it did have some benefits. Moreton Bay Regional Council gained Federal Government funding to allow groups to employ local tradespeople for projects. The Committee applied for \$50,000, which was used to enclose the Deck Area and provide a much needed fifth classroom.

U3A Pine Rivers had, for many years, conducted Open Days using the Strathpine Community Centre. Having the Centre and booking the Community Hall next door, allowed us to have very successful Open Days. These events allowed members to see the improvements that had been made.

The efforts of past President Andy Doogan and Val Doogan, who were instrumental in obtaining, after much work and with great determination, a permanent venue for U3A Pine Rivers, were acknowledged.

Centre Manager John Wright was thanked for his working tirelessly submitting IWAs to the Council, obtaining quotes and supervising the various works during the previous years.

They were awarded Life Membership.

Since then, new equipment and furniture have been purchased to enhance the Centre.

Over a period of time, nearly 7,000 local residents have enjoyed U3A Pine Rivers classes and activities.

I am sure you will all agree with me that we are extremely fortunate that we have this Centre.

We now have a very vibrant, welcoming and community place that has become a feature of U3A Pine Rivers.

THANK YOU
John Tendero