



Editor's Notes: from Jean Smith

Back in February, before our lives were turned upside down on the way to the 'new normal', I took possession of a shiny new red car. I have never owned a red car before, and the salesman assured me that the colour alone would make it go faster. 'There now – you can zoom all the way home'. I drove home at a sedate pace, chuckling at the idea of this older driver zooming anywhere!

It seemed to be only a matter of days before I started hearing about school children attending Zoom lessons, board meetings being held via Zoom, Pilates, yoga classes – the list got longer and longer. I admit I am a reluctant adopter of new technology – Zoom didn't need to be part of my world – I could live without it.

How wrong I was. U3A has more than proved its worth with its enthusiastic adoption of Zoom classes, and I am Zooming with the best of them. If you are still unsure about Zoom, the experiences of this issue's contributors on using this new platform should give you the confidence to get started.

Sorry – must stop – and Zoom!



President's Message: from Des Taylor

Hello all

We have now moved into the third month of physical distancing and isolation. I have been grateful for my U3A classes. They have given me something to think about, an opportunity to talk to and see classmates and to share ideas .

As the government eases restrictions the Management Committee are carefully monitoring possibilities, always keeping the health of our members at the forefront of our minds. We are now planning how U3A might move forward into the future.



Although our financial position coming into the Covid-19 crisis was strong, careful planning is needed to maintain both Creek and Adelaide St with no income. We have fortunately been able to take advantage of the government Covid-19 rent assistance policies to date but the government has stated that this will finish in September. To stay in a reasonable position after September and into 2021 we need income to shore up our resources and meet our financial commitments.

We now look to our members to support us through this time so that we can return when the danger is past. With this goal in view, we ask that members voluntarily commence paying class fees again if their class is still running. The normal rate is \$5 per class for classes at city venues, but in our current situation any contribution will be appreciated. This can be paid through the U3A website using the link below. To simplify the process a single payment per Term is suggested:

[Payment Page](#)

If you do not normally pay class fees or your class is currently suspended, then we would appreciate any donation you are able to contribute.

I will keep you informed on our progress as we move forward. If you have any questions or comments please send to: feedback@u3abrisbane.org.au

Thank You: from Anne Douglass



As a member of that wonderful organisation known as U3A Brisbane I would like to pass on my thanks to the Management Committee, the IT people and the tutors who have done such an incredible job of keeping U3A going under extraordinarily difficult circumstances.

U3A Brisbane is not only one of the biggest in the country, it is in my opinion, and I know I'm probably biased, the most professionally run. My admiration for our people knows no bounds. Considering we have over one hundred classes still running electronically, it is a monumental effort when so many others are floundering.

I'm sure an incredible amount of work has been going on behind the scenes to keep us financially afloat and to keep us informed and entertained, so in keeping with our new format I offer this 'virtual bouquet' as a big thank you from a grateful member.

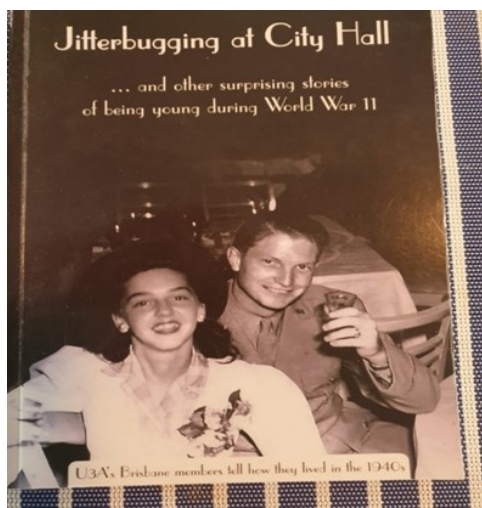
City Campus News: from Gail Hawkins, Tutor Liaison tutors@u3abrisbane.org.au

What a challenging couple of months we have had! When the Creek St and Adelaide St offices were closed due to the Coronavirus it was conceivable that classes would come to a halt. Thanks to our progressive Management Committee and IT Guru, wheels were put into motion to find ways for U3A Brisbane to give tutors the assistance to continue external classes. Zoom was introduced and has been a great success for many classes, even for those whose tutors had limited IT experience, but were prepared to give it a go. Other classes have continued by communicating with members via email and the internet. Members have been very appreciative that we have been able to proceed with around 57% of our scheduled classes in these trying times. Some classes do not fit into the external program and have been marked inactive. Rest assured – their tutors are looking forward to

when classes can resume face to face.

To all our tutors, the hard work and effort you put into your classes is appreciated – not only by me, but also by all our members who learn, make friends and have fun along the way. Keep up the good work, and I hope that these difficult times will soon be in the past.

Remembering Lola Taylor: from Miriam Taylor



Lola Taylor was a long-time member, tutor and contributing author of U3A Brisbane, and featured as the cover girl on the U3A publication, *Jitterbugging at the City Hall*.

She passed away on 4 February 2020 in her 93rd year. She had been in good health until mid-2019, but was still living at home until January 2020 when her respiratory issues took her to Greenslopes Hospital. Lola lived and passed with purpose and generosity of spirit, a strong supporter and defender of the performing arts and of education.

Lola tutored U3A's *Greek Theatre* class, amongst other topics, and was always diligent in her preparation. Her students no doubt remember her passion for not only theatre but for teaching itself.

City Precinct News: from Robyn Bunting

Mary Denver, who tutors *J136 English for Speakers of Other Languages*, is introducing a new class, the *Griffith Review Zoom Book Club*, and writes:

“Hello fellow U3A Brisbane tutors with an interest in sharing reading, writing, reportage and other literary pursuits on Zoom! The first Zoom meeting of U3A's new *Griffith Review Zoom Book Club* is kicking off from 10-11:30 am, Thursday 4 June.

Currently there are only 5 of us including myself, so I'm hoping that a few of you or your group U3A members might be interested in joining us, as we discuss the latest and very topical Edition #68 "Getting On". We'd benefit I'm sure from your interest and expertise. People will need to buy a print or digital copy of the current edition, available at <https://www.griffithreview.com/product-category/editions> and at newsagents, the Avid Reader bookshop etc, and then sign up in the usual way on the U3A Brisbane website (City Precinct).

The quarterly *Griffith Review* has been described as ‘an outstanding collection of essays, reportage, memoir, poetry and fiction’. I hope to touch on all these genres in the (now) weekly sessions to the end of Term 2. In Term 3 the plan is to meet fortnightly.

Well-known writers such as Helen Garner, Charlotte Wood, Vicki Laveau-Harvie and Anna McGahan, all feature in this edition. The writing is very accessible. I've been in touch with Dr Ashley Hay, the GR Editor and she is very supportive of our new Book Club - she recently convened an *Avid Reader* Zoom launch of this edition with over 100 participants! It was great!”

Using Zoom: from Rod McLary, Northside District Coordinator

For tutors and members who still would like to participate in their classes at U3A, using Zoom is an effective method of achieving that. We all attend classes not only for the intellectual input but also for the social interaction. To miss out on that now when so many normal activities are not available is not beneficial. Zoom is a very accessible option.

I have participated in meetings and classes through Zoom and, while it can't replace the face-to-face contact, it does allow for interaction between the tutor and class members. Using Zoom allows for PowerPoint presentations, discussions, interactions between members and visual contact with other members.

Using Zoom – either as a tutor or as a class member – may seem daunting at first. However, U3A has developed comprehensive instructions for both tutors and members on how to get the best from Zoom. Consequently, it is an easy tool to use. There is also first-hand support from Des and Greg Taylor – and others – if the first steps to using Zoom are perhaps a little challenging. It is also possible for one person to be the 'host' of the Zoom class while the tutor focusses on the presentation.

I would encourage tutors to seriously consider Zoom and re-engage with your students. Please don't feel discouraged if it seems difficult at first. Remember that all new technology feels like that at first. Always check back to the instructions and you can readily contact Greg and Des. They will always be very willing to assist.

Logan District News: from Anita Pope

This month in Logan, the spotlight is on words, where they came from and what they mean. Carolyn Williams has provided the following description of their class – *Etymology for Fun*.

The class started in 2019 and had a great year researching the origins and current use of words. Anyone who is intrigued by words and loves a chat or listening is welcome. No educational or qualification levels are required as this group comprises ordinary people with a love of words.

Margie, who devised and lead the course at the outset, is taking a break in 2020, but the class has continued in her absence throughout the shutdown via email. Members suggest a topic and everyone is allocated 3 words to investigate via the internet. Results of their investigations are shared at the next session. An example of our 'investigations' follows:

Where did the word gentleman come from?

In its original and strict sense, the term denoted a man of good family, deriving from the Latin word *gentilis* and invariably translated in English-Latin documents as *generous*.

For most of the Middle Ages, when the basic social distinction was between the *nobiles* (the tenants in chivalry, such as earls, barons, knights, esquires, or freemen) and *ignobiles* (serfs, citizens, and burgesses) the word *gentleman* was roughly equivalent to *nobilis*.

The profound economic changes of the 14th and 15th centuries, caused partly by the Black Death, made it increasingly difficult and unattractive for the younger sons of the nobility to settle on the land. They tended to seek their fortunes abroad in Continental wars or to become dependents of the court or of some great noble house. Such men often chose to describe themselves as gentlemen. By 1900, under the influence of the political, economic, and social changes of the Victorian Era, the word had acquired a variety of usages and meanings which fully reflected the complexity of English society. On the one hand, *gentlemen* could be a mere synonym of *men* – used at public places and occasions to distinguish male persons from females,

and, on the other hand, acceptance by “society” as a gentleman still required an income derived from sources other than manual labour and retail trade

In England this view, though much weakened by the social upheavals produced by two World Wars, to some extent prevailed—preserved, cherished, and typified in the rigid distinction on the cricket field between “gentlemen” and “players.” In general, however the modern “gentleman” is well mannered rather than necessarily well-bred or well off.

The group (like everyone else) is looking forward to when they can meet face to face again and enjoy a lively discussion around the table. If this appeals to you, we would be very happy to have you join us.

Some Interesting Zoom Features: from Greg Taylor, ICT Coordinator

Zoom has some interesting hidden features that you may be interested in exploring. These include:

Spotlighting

The Spotlight feature enables the Zoom host to spotlight one of the participants, e.g. the tutor, to be fixed as the main large image, instead of jumping to the current speaker. There is a similar feature called *Pin Video* that an individual participant can use. However, it only applies to what they see, not everybody else.

Breakout Rooms

The Breakout Rooms feature enables you to segment your class temporarily into different rooms, e.g. to discuss a particular issue and report back.

Polls

Polls allow you to ask class members to vote on particular questions. As host you will be presented with the results of the poll in summary form.

More information about these features and how to enable them is provided under the new *Tips and Tricks* section at the end of our Zoom Help page:

[Running Classes Online](#)

Contact our IT help team if you need assistance: help@u3abrisbane.org.au

Talking to Empty Chairs: from Jim Henry, Tutor N14 *The Silver Screen*

I have had a lifetime in the Film and TV business; some of it was employing and teaching TV presenters to do their thing on camera. Never did I imagine that one day I might be doing it myself. I think my efforts shame me to the bottom of the class!

As many of you know *The Silver Screen* has been going at U3A for over three years and over seventy, three-hour sessions later we are still doing it, all of them fresh and new, but in the Covid-19 environment it must be from home. Our format of a tutorial on a particular movie followed by a showing of the film is not suited to Zoom. So this term I have been recording a 15 -20 minute talk/introduction and placing it on *YouTube* in a unlisted location known only to my 33 enrolled students, and then directing my students to *Kanopy*, the Brisbane City Council Library’s free movie streaming service. All the movies we feature are from there.

I sit in my empty media room trying to make friends with the cold camera lens of my iPhone. I get the job done, but there is no substitute for a room full of warm bodies; their laughter, their comments; that spontaneous feel. You do get some of that on Zoom, but I can't show a movie on Zoom, nor create the atmosphere of friendly people and my interaction with them. One day we'll be doing it again in Room 16.

