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**Office Managers** Mary Paul and Office Volunteers

## **NEWSLETTER: Final Edition for 2020.**

**Editor: Graeme Allen**



### **FROM THE EDITOR**

Well, friends, here we are at the end of what has been a unique experience in the history of U3A Geelong – “2020 – the Covid-19 year”. It’s produced a time of great uncertainty, of inability to have face-to-face contact, of the lack of the wonderful things that have made us such a great seniors’ educational institution – the sharing of life’s experiences and the special insights, interests and skills that our tutors are able to provide for us, as well as the provision of the opportunities

for social interaction that all of us need in whatever our time of life.

But through it all, not everything has been lost. There have been special virtual classes conducted by some tutors, virtual lectures conducted by specially arranged outside lecturers and special contacts maintained by some tutors to entertain/challenge us or just to give us some virtual social interaction. And our Committee of Management has continued to operate, and through its work, to keep the flame of learning flickering giving us the hope that a future of “normality” *will* come back again.

As we move into 2021, the continuing hope is that we can fan this flickering flame into the conflagration that has been U3A Geelong over so many years.

I look forward to meeting up physically with you in 2021 in a much “warmer clime” and wish all our members the very best for the coming festive season.

**Graeme Allen**

**AND NOW, A COUPLE OF COINTACTS WE’VE HAVE FROM CLASSES/MEMBERS ....**

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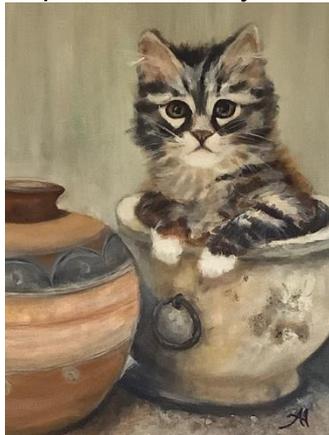
## FROM OUR PORTARLINGTON PAINTERS

**Antoinette Inguanti** writes

Being restricted from attending the inspiring art classes has forced me to try and remember all the teachings which my lovely mentor, Pat Norton, has repeatedly given us all in our Portarlington art sessions. Let me tell you that this has been another scope and exercise for my brain in general..... I do so miss the gatherings of the other likeminded people from my classes. They are such a friendly lot who offer free advice and inspirations and I don't think I'm alone with all these sentiments. We are grateful and consider to be lucky that we are a healthy and resilient lot and I'm sure that we are all taking advantage of the time in "social restrictions" and are churning out some fabulous work. Can't wait to have our own group's "Covid 19 Art Exhibition". I guess it is what it is and we haven't been as badly off as our Melbourne cousins.

We have been able to have a very small and recommended group from time to time at a large studio (all in accordance to Covid's social rulings.) Needless to say, this has certainly kept us inspired and creative to produce art, wonderful cooking and other indoor activities whilst keeping warm and dry during those cold wet winter days (which I think have been a bonus whilst in "lockdown").

During these winter days, I was able to come up with these little cuties.....much to the displeasure of my "real" puppies. [In their eyes, they believed that they were real and



reacted a little threatened and somewhat jealous. .... I couldn't believe that they felt so threatened when inspecting their little mates with such contempt. I've named them "Raining cats & dogs". Hope you enjoy the look of them and perhaps they put a smile

on your dials! They certainly had that reaction to me whilst I was painting!

Hopefully, we can all still be enjoying good health and pulling together to get over this extremely unusual time whilst waiting for the experts to continue to do their thing and come up with a "real" vaccine. Stay healthy folks! Cheers.



**From tutor Patricia Norton**

Some of our happy COVID painters at work

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### RECEIVED FROM PAM GAYLARD

Hi Graeme,

Many thanks for your recent very informative newsletter.

I recently realised that the bookends which I have had for ages are of a 'particular' brand. (see photo) This may be a little bit of humour to include in your next newsletter?

Looking forward to coming back to Cobbin Farm in 2021.

Best regards, Pam Gaylard Member No. 2381.

[And thanks for your feedback, Pam. Editors don't often get feedback of a positive kind!]



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## PRESIDENT'S COLUMN



This is our ***last Newsletter for 2020***, and my ***last report to members for the year***. What a year it has been! The Committee has struggled bravely to keep the U3A Geelong flame alive during the long period of lockdown, meeting monthly via the Zoom facility, and a number of tutors and members, including myself, have been keeping going by the same means. Cobbin Farm has been shut down, the office operating only on a virtual basis, and generally we have all been in a kind of hibernation, trying to keep ourselves safe through a long and dismal winter.

But, I'm happy to say that ***things are looking up!*** Just as Victoria has heroically overcome the alarming spread of Covid-19 that began back in March, and is starting to open its doors and venues, and a new normality is in sight for business, schools, restaurants and clubs, so too is ***U3A ready to resume classes in 2021***. Of course our resumption will take us into a 'new normal', not the one we had before. At least until an effective vaccine is available we will have to observe certain safe practices in our classrooms, specifically social distancing, personal sanitising and proper cleaning of surfaces such as tables, chairs, equipment, etc., and, apart from tutors (while teaching) we all still have to wear masks inside.

### ***U3A Geelong enrolments will begin on Friday February 5th at 9.30am.***

- There are ***no preferential enrolments*** - everybody starts with an equal chance of a place, so make sure you get in early.
- You can ***enrol Online , or by telephone, or in person at Cobbin Farm***. We strongly urge you to enrol Online as certain inconveniences, such as social distancing, masking and cleansing will slow proceedings at Cobbin Farm. Also, renovations over the break will mean very reduced toilet facilities will be available, and the kitchen unavailable.
- ***Many of our classes that were at Cobbin Farm will have to move*** to new, external venues, and on different days and times.
- Also, ***we are losing some tutors***, some who have decided to retire, and others who might come back when the outlook appears safer.

We will all have to put up with these new developments, and may I ask you to please be patient with us, and cooperate as best you can even if it means you have to accommodate yourself to something less than you would like, and be assured that the Committee is doing everything it can to satisfy all the needs of tutors and members in these new and difficult circumstances. Once we adjust and the 'new normal' becomes a routine practice I'm sure we will find that the positives of resuming face-to-face classes - the re-awakening of our interest in learning, and the renewal of friendships among members - will outweigh any inconvenience that we might initially suffer.

So let's look at the positives, stay on the bright side, and when you are expressing your Christmas cheer, don't forget to drink to a new and happy year of learning and friendships at U3A Geelong as it resumes its 'near' normal activities.

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to all members!

**Garry Kinnane (President)**

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### ADMINISTRATION DETAILS AHEAD.....

More details will be sent out directly to members as they become available in the weeks/months ahead, so keep your eye on your in-tray and your powder dry so you can fire into action when the opportunities arise.

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### THOUGHTS FOR THE DAY/MONTH/TERM/YEAR (??)

**From Francis Bacon** (1561-1626 but very relevant to what we've been going through this year. *Essays 4: Of Adversity*.

“Prosperity is not without many fears and distastes, and Adversity is not without comforts and hopes”. and.....

“Prosperity doth best discover Vice, and Adversity doth best discover Virtue,”

**So friends, till 2021** and may it bring comforts and hopes to you whatever the outcome!!

**Graeme Allen (Editor)**

