



## CITY & INNER WEST REGION NEWSLETTER AUGUST 2020

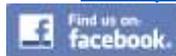
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### **PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE:**

What challenging times we are living in. Many of us are missing our U3A courses terribly. As soon as we think we have a calendar of classes ready to resume, the situations changes and alterations have to be made. Even as I write this, I know the situation may be different by the time you read it.

We have been working to get more classes operating but unfortunately, the situation in Victoria and now NSW has caused us to be more cautious. The item in this edition by Anne Hall, our Regional Course Coordinator, throws more light on where we are at with our classes. Also we have a timely item by our Venue Coordinator for the Canterbury-Bankstown Region, Joy Pegler, about the new evidence on droplets.

Many organisations are suffering financially and this affects us too. Our income this year is greatly reduced owing to the fact that we suspended fees for three months, also because we are not getting the influx of new members. Some of you will have received a renewal notice for fees for this year which may seem strange given that we cannot offer the full range of classes, but it is essential for the future of Sydney U3A that we still have an income. Although we do not have staff wages to pay, we do have substantial, fixed costs which have to be met such as the rental of the Sydney Office and its operating costs, insurances, license fees etc.

As a group we are very skilled at making a small annual fee go a very long way and the Board of Management is closely examining wherever we can cut these costs. However, since we operate on the proverbial 'shoestring', during normal times, there isn't too much available to be cut.

One innovation we have identified is to use the city office for classes every afternoon. This requires a little work, but mainly in the heavy lifting area so we are hopeful to have some classes running in the city in a few weeks - obviously in the short term it will depend on leaders willing to travel to the city and members willing to attend, but this will definitely operate as a new class venue for us in the future. So I finish this month with a request that wherever possible, please keep the annual fee coming in.

Jennifer Waldron  
President City & Inner West Region

## ARE WE OPEN YET?

As we were receiving lots of enquiries as to when classes would open again, contact was made with all our leaders asking when they would like the return of face to face classes. As you can imagine there was a wide variety of responses, which was not unexpected.



Those leaders who were keen to return then asked their registered class participants how they felt about returning to face to face classes. Once again, the responses varied. However, there were some leaders who had quite a few people eager to return.

So, some classes have commenced back at Burwood RSL. Burwood RSL does not charge for venue hire and has always been supportive of the leaders and their classes which is very much appreciated. The RSL takes care of all the cleaning and safety requirements under NSW Covid-19 Safe Plan and the U3A Covid-19 Safe Plan.

The Councils and Community Centres in our area have also advised that they are open for bookings. However, they are charging for venue hire and require that the leaders and those attending classes take care of all the cleaning and safety requirements under their Covid-19 Safe Plans. There is also lots of complicated paperwork that has to be completed to satisfy their Covid-19 Safe Plans. It is of interest that because of social distancing requirements, the largest room at Woodstock can hold only 14, the next 7, then 6 and 4.

It has therefore been decided not to return to venues that require payment until the number of people that can attend a class makes the payment of the hire financially sustainable.

**It must be stressed that it is up to each individual to decide, given all the information available, when they return to face to face classes.** If you are interested in attending a class at Burwood RSL they are continuing as advised in the Semester 1 Course Book. They will also be advised on the U3A website under the City and Inner West Region. Please call to book as numbers are strictly limited to abide by the social distancing requirements.

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Cartoon submitted by Anne Hall

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## SOME THOUGHTS on PERSONAL RISK and COVID-19 by Joy Pegler

Of course over the past few weeks there has been a depressing sequence of news about COVID-19. However in early July an article in the online journal 'The New Daily' really grabbed my attention. It reported that 200 scientists from around the world had criticised the WHO for not warning that the virus can readily be transmitted through aerosols as well as by direct contamination. As a result I began recalling what I learnt of airborne particulates during my employment as a safety officer in a government research facility. The following paragraphs briefly condense my thoughts about this issue.

Firstly, respirable dusts and aerosols (i.e. those that can reach the lungs) have particle sizes less than 10 microns (a micron is a millionth of a metre). Those less than 0.3 microns can "float", that is they remain airborne without settling. We all experienced this during the recent summer bushfires when smoke haze enveloped the city for many weeks. The average size of COVID-19 particles is 0.12 microns. Hence the concerns that separation distances between persons may be insufficient to lower the inhalation risk as contaminated aerosol can obviously move much further than 1.5 metres between individuals.

Secondly, large indoor venues are air-conditioned so most of the air is just recirculating within the premises. Any COVID-19 in the air can gently waft around before being extracted, eventually leak from the building, settle on a surface or die. Or alternatively be inhaled.

So what is my conclusion from all of the above? Risk is very difficult to quantify. But I have decided to be very conservative about entering any large air-conditioned venue. Going to some may be essential but maybe not to others. Wearing a face mask seems sensible. As SU3A members we follow the recommendations of the NSW Department of Health when it comes to running and attending our courses. But over and above this, it is still worthwhile to also do our own personal risk assessment - we are after all a vulnerable section of the population.



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## LEICHHARDT ZOOM GROUP by Barbara Burton - Zoom Talks (Leichhardt Group)

This month it has been a delight to have welcomed back Himanshu Jhala with his extensive knowledge of the history of the Arab World, in its many spaces. From the ancient countries in the Middle East and North Africa, via the Ottoman Empire and then the advent of Europeans in Africa, Himanshu has brought all of this to life with his enthusiasm for the subject.

While zooming may not be quite as interactive as a class situation, our group has, nevertheless, found ways to interact with the speaker which do not interfere with the talk itself. This gives everyone an opportunity to ask their questions at the end of each session and have them answered by the presenter. These sessions will continue for the foreseeable future and during the month of August we will welcome the following Speakers with their unique presentations:

- **7 August: Janine Kitson - LITHGOW'S STONE GARDENS\_ Part 2:** Following a 30-year environmental campaign, discover how Lithgow's Gardens of Stone remains a microcosm of today's environmental challenges - biodiversity loss and climate change.

*Part 1 of this talk takes place on 31 July as previously announced.*

Some of you will remember Janine from her talks last year on Rachel Carson. An active volunteer for many of NSW's environment groups, Janine has earned many awards, been active in her local government area of Ku-ring-gai, as well as teaching K-12 with NSW Dept. Ed and tutoring at WEA. Among her many awards is Life Membership of NSW Teachers Federation

- **14 August: Laurie Wilson - SYMMETRY:** Symmetry underlies many aspects of human creativity, ranging from mathematics through art and architecture, crystallography, biology, and the latest developments in particle physics.

Laurie has a PhD in Cosmic Ray Physics (Syd) with post-doctoral positions at Oxford and Sydney; was part of Ultrasonics Institute (Radio Physics, CSIRO); adjunct professor (UTS and WSU) Subsequent research roles within CSIRO. Now, in retirement, a keen photographer.

- **21 August: Rosalind Strong - KEEPING WOMEN OUT OF PRISON:** Over the last 10 years the number of women imprisoned in NSW has increased dramatically with no commensurate increase in crime. We will also cover issues behind this increase and outline the urgent actions needed to reverse this trend...and more...

- Rosalind Strong AM is the Convenor of the Keeping Women out of Prison Coalition (KWOOP). Ros has held several not for profit and government Board roles over the past 40 years and retired as Director of the NSW Heritage Office in 2002. Prior to this appointment her career was in public education, particularly in migrant and multicultural education, with her last role in education being Assistant Director General, Further Education, Employment and Training.

- **28 August: Cathy Perkins - 'THE SHELF LIFE OF ZORA CROSS':** In his critique, Mark McKenna says, 'A rare gem. This is biography at its best: boldly conceived and brilliantly written.... Cathy Perkins rescues Zora Cross from oblivion, re-establishing her as one of Australia's most remarkable literary figures...'

- Cathy Perkins edits the award-winning SL magazine and other publications at the State Library of NSW. Her essays on Zora Cross have been published in Meanjin.

*More to come in October...*



The following email was passed on to Jenny to share with our Committee and is printed here with permission:

*Just a note to thank you for all your efforts in arranging the Zoom sessions for the inner west region. We religiously sign in every Friday, forgetting that someone (or persons) has had to do the hard work of investigating the how and why of the technical side and then writing a description for members to enable them to participate in the meeting. And of course someone must be there to chair the meeting on the day.*

*So- thank you very much for all that, it seems that we are in for a long wait before we can go back to how it was before the pandemic.'*

from Len Clarke and Janet Clarke

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*Thank you len and Janet, you have given me a jolt! I have purchased a tablet, so I am not only 'stimulating the economy' but, I am ready to **zoom** !* The Editor

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Please send articles or "snippets" for the Newsletter to [u3a.innerwest@gmail.com](mailto:u3a.innerwest@gmail.com)  
Thank you everyone for your contributions this month.

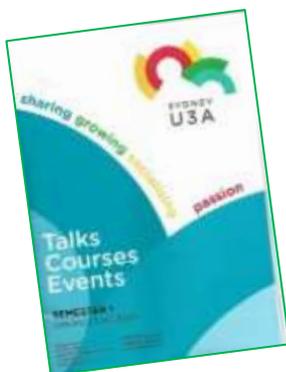
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**STOP PRESS ! FOLLOW US ON**



I am sure you have read about our entry into social media by now having our own facebook page. It is certainly the easiest and most cost effective way of spreading the word about U3A - so please click on the link - <https://www.facebook.com/sydneyu3a>  
Oh...and don't forget to like us and share!  
Jenny Waldron

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**WE ARE ZOOMING ALONG**  
**IN SHARING - GROWING - SOCIALISING**  
**& WITH RENEWED PASSION!**

