



# u3a Endeavour (Southern) Region Newsletter

*Updates and news from Committee Members, Course Leaders and Members*



## THAT'S A WRAP FOR 2024

And just like that, and in the blink of an eye, the end of year is upon us.

The committee hopes that the year has been good for our members. Both personally, as well as all things u3a related.

Some highlights from the year are: we gained a President after a number of years, with Cherie Clover putting her hand up and taking on the role.

Peter Day joined the team as the new Website Co-ordinator and is working hard with the SUMMIT team creating the new website. A much friendlier site for everyone.

Clare Cagney also recently joined the committee and will share the role of Publicity Co-ordinator with Carol Cook (*further details at the back*).

We celebrated our 35th Anniversary in October and all who attended will agree that it was a great morning and well deserving for our region.

*Continued over page . . .*

### WHAT'S INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

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**Endeavour (Southern) Region Facebook Group**

[www.facebook.com/groups/U3AEndeavourSouthernRegion/](http://www.facebook.com/groups/U3AEndeavourSouthernRegion/)

**SYDNEY u3a Facebook Page**

<https://www.facebook.com/SydneyU3A>

**SYDNEY u3a Website**

<https://sydneyu3a.org>

### *That's A Wrap for 2024 continued . . .*

We shared with Terry Campbell in celebrating his 34 years as Endeavour's longest-standing member.

We gained a couple of new courses for our members this year, which have proven to be successful. There are also new courses on the way for 2025.

The Monthly Talks have gone from strength to strength with amazing feedback from members attending these. These will continue in 2025.

A process has been implemented this year of calling our new members and checking in with them. The comments received have been mostly positive and any issues arising at the time are dealt with immediately. All new members appreciated the time taken to call them.

After such a successful and productive year, the u3a Endeavour (Southern) Region committee wishes you a Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays and look forward to seeing you in 2025.

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## Keep An Eye Out For New Courses In Semester 1

The first course is *Appreciation of Classical Music*, which starts on January 8, **prior to the Course Book being available**.

Below are the details of the course **if you would like to register now with Cherie Clover**.

### Music

#### APPRECIATION OF CLASSICAL MUSIC

(max 30)

Second Wednesday from January 8, 10am to 1pm at the Cronulla School of Arts (Arts Theatre), Surf Road, Cronulla.

An invitation to join not only to classical music lovers, but for anyone who enjoys listening to beautiful music. Each month the program will feature a variety of classical music for symphonies, concertos and choirs.

**Leader:** Margaret Durie

**Bookings:** Cherie Clover [cherie167@hotmail.com](mailto:cherie167@hotmail.com)

### Photography

#### IT'S BACK! - PHOTOBOOKS FOR ABSOLUTE BEGINNERS

Always wanted to make a photobook but just needed a nudge to get started? Using a freely available computer program, we'll discuss choosing book type, theme layouts, text and embellishments. Very suitable for true "photobook beginners"! Basic computer skills assumed.

This will be a small class, so the numbers are limited.

Make sure you keep a look out for the full details in the Course Book available in mid-January.

### History Local

#### FROM MAPS TO MEMORIES

Tracing Sutherland Shire's Property Evolution. Explore the history of properties and the surrounding area in Sutherland Shire using various historical and contemporary resources available online. We combine local history with practical research techniques that can be applied to any area.

Make sure you keep a look out for the full details in the Course Book available in mid-January.



## Let's see what classes have been up to

### Flavour of the Month

It's been amazing how many wonderful restaurants showcase the food of different cultures in Australia. *Flavour of the Month* members have tried at cuisines such as, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Chinese Seafood, Vietnamese, Malaysian, Lebanese and other Middle Eastern foods. We have travelled from Cronulla to Hurstville to Sutherland to Kogarah, as well as to many other areas within Endeavour. All in the search of good international cuisines.

We are looking forward to 2025 and to seeing where we will be off to next. Our December lunch will be taking us to *32 Miles Indian* at Sans Souci, which has an outstanding reputation.

~ Carol and Cherie



### Brain Games

This course, based on a U3A Professor's idea of how to delay or defeat dementia, has been running in the Endeavour Region now for six years. We try to challenge the brain with all sorts of material such as trivia, crosswords (both straight and cryptic), word puzzles, some number puzzles, and other varied puzzles from available material.

You don't have to be super smart. Just participate. We do have some very bright people in some disciplines which is beneficial to the whole group.

Most importantly, we have a lot of laughs and therefore enjoyment.

~ Denis

### Discussion Group

My group meets each Monday morning at Oatley Hotel, and we discuss subjects of choice mostly on topical themes of interest.

Nothing is off the list as we include politics, religion and issues of common interest at the present time. As an example, we had a lively discussion recently on the US Election - *The Circus*. Views were divided within the group in line with the world opinion. Dissecting the result was informative and there was no animosity among the group.

The Oatley Hotel is a great venue, with parking adjacent and Oatley Railway Station 150m away. We try to stay for lunch once each month.

~ Denis

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### Art History

Our *Art History* Class of 2024 was most enjoyable. Our members gave very interesting talks on artists from all over the world, such as Johannes Vermeer, Georges Surat, Paul Cezanne, Pierre Bonnard. Also Australian artists Wendy Sharpe, Fred Williams and Sam Fullbrook. We went to Manly Art Gallery in May for an Exhibition Ceramics.

Our morning tea breaks are very social and we enjoy each other's company. Come along and visit our class at Cronulla School of Arts and we welcome all members.

~ Margaret

## Reading and Discussing

### Shakespeare

The group finished *The Merchant of Venice* on November 19 by watching a BBC film starring Warren Mitchell. We start reading *Othello* on December 3 and will continue when we resume on February 4, 2025.

If you wish to explore the delights of Shakespeare, places are still available.

~ Robert

### At The Cinema

We finish our season of Anthony Hopkins' films on December 5 with his Oscar winning role in *The Father*. Next year our season begins on February 6 and features the films of the nine times Oscar nominated Spencer Tracy. I hope you can join us.

~ Robert

### Shire Sketchers

It's been a year of extremes. We had terrible weather for outdoor sketching many times, but we had some wonderful opportunities as well. We were invited to sketch the magnificent Heathcote Hall and Council asked us to join in the Bush Care Expo at Menai.

We sketched rejuvenating burnt bush at Como and several beautiful and historic homes in the Shire. We enjoyed our weekly lessons as well as lots of sketching outings.

~ Carol



## Armchair Travellers

Our vibrant group is made up of like minded men and women who enjoy each other's company as we reminisce or relive past travel adventures, or venture to new destinations within our own country or worldwide. For those looking for travel destinations it gives you much inspiration and many ideas. Instead of physically travelling by the many varied modes of transport, you transport yourself some place else without leaving the comfort of our chairs at the Cronulla Arts Theatre. It's a virtual vacation as we enjoy wonderful and amazing photos, videos and stories from our travelling friends.

This year we have travelled to Canada, Uruguay, National Parks in the USA, Africa, Borneo, Cyclades in Greece, the United Kingdom, Croatia, Bhutan, Scandinavia and the Flinders Ranges, and visited the High Arctic as well as looking at aspects of Classical Greece and Rome.

We have been on a road trip from Perth to Sydney and a road trip around Australia and down through the middle. We have cruised Norway and Iceland and been diving in Indonesia and we've been swimming with Whales in Tonga and French Polynesia.

Thank you to all members of Endeavour *Armchair Travellers* for another great year of enjoying absolutely everything u3a promotes, learning, laughing and living.

~ Gwyn and Kate



## Open Minds Discussion Group

My thoughts were summed up by a freshly minted retiree last year. She said that when she retired she had no idea where she'd go for thoughtful conversation. It was her lucky day when she discovered the room full of thinkers in our *Open Minds Discussion Group*. We owe ourselves a collective 'pat on the back' thinkers!

## What Makes Great Movies, Great

Despite the difficulties posed by a small screen in a large room, the film viewings have been extremely successful. Voted the best, *Wicked Little Letters* provided ample food for thought and a laugh to boot (mostly).

Being able to share my appreciation of film is a labour of love. I hope I've been able to transform some 'film likers' into 'film lovers' during the process.

~ Anita

## Australian History

If you want to join an easy-going group, then this is it. We are a small group of 8-10 members with plenty of room for more members to join us. During the year our subjects have included explorers such as: Hume and Hovell, Edward Eyre and John Baxter, Peter Warburton, Allan Cunningham and Alfred Canning. Convicts discussed have been the Irish rebels of Tasmaia and Mary Reibey.

We have also discussed development, outstanding achievers and much more. People like Edith Cowan, Vida Goldstein Dame Edith Lyons, Dame Quentin Bryce, Roma Flinders and, of course, Dame Nellie Melba.

Come join us at Miranda Community Hall.

~ Janice

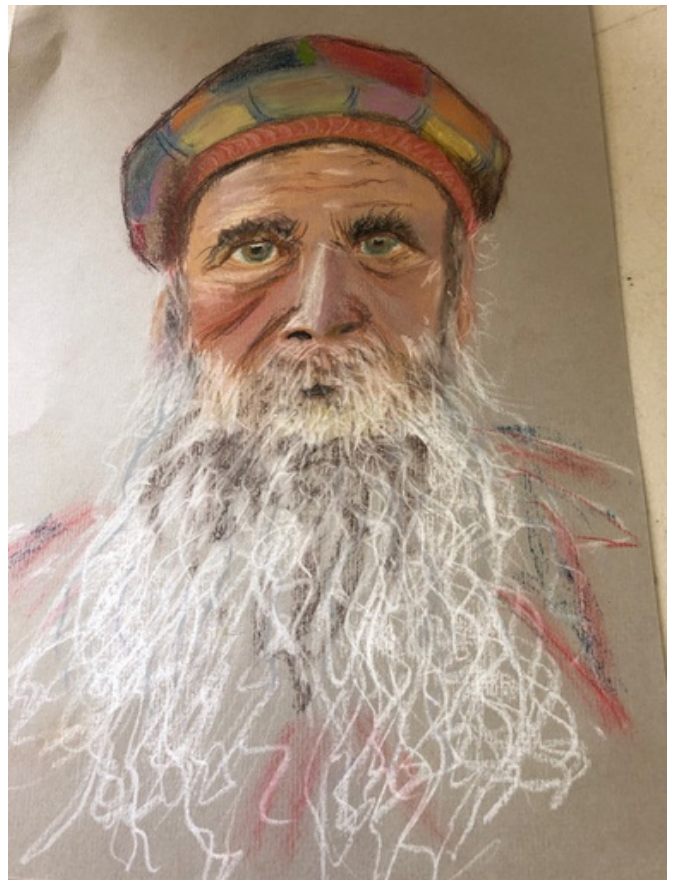
## Drawing with Colour

Over the two semesters, our members have conducted lessons over a two-week period which has been a lot of fun and rewarding because we have learnt some techniques but best of all, we learn and help one another.

Our lessons over the year have been using watercolours, pastels, pen and ink, charcoal and pencil. Some have been landscapes, flowers and animals, portrait, buildings and applying Kandinsky's shape and colour and drawing upside down. The group display their artwork at the last lesson on December 3 in the Gynea Community Hall from 1-3pm.

Come along and view our members best artworks from the year.

~ Chris



## Walking in Sydney and Surrounds

21 walks and four lunches made up our walking year. We have been north, south, east and west covering too many kilometres to count, while seeing some old and new scenes. Lots of talking and laughter along the way.

~ Teresa and John

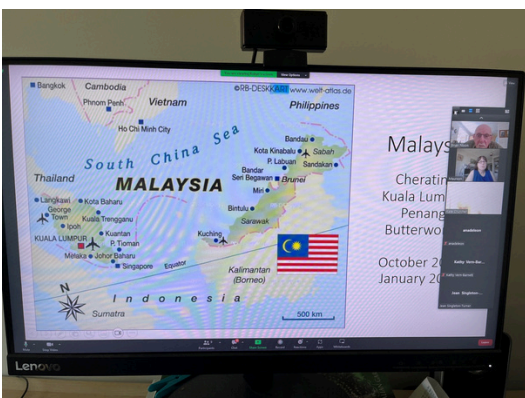


## Travellers on Zoom

The group is enjoyed by people who love to travel. Members talk of their travel experiences by sharing their stories and photos. As it is all via Zoom, members can participate from the comfort of their own homes.

This year we travelled the world – Asia (Japan and China), Europe (Spain, England, France and the Baltic), South America (Brazil), Africa and around Australia. Next year's program will be just as varied and exciting.

~ Greg



## The History of Rock Music

The *History of Rock Music* course at Cronulla School of Arts has had a terrific year. It's been a thoroughly enjoyable catch-up every month as we explore and celebrate bands, musicians and albums mainly from the '60s and '70s.

For our last meeting of the year in December, we decided to sit back, relax and watch a great movie, *The Last Waltz*, directed by Martin Scorsese. It features The Band and a host of incredible musicians including: Bob Dylan, Joni Mitchell, Muddy Waters and Van Morrison. We look forward to next year and learning about a new selection of great moments in rock.

~ Robin

## Italian Language and Culture

Earlier this year, our long-term leader (over 30 years) John Della Torre stepped down due to ill health.

Fortunately, with some arm-twisting, one of our members, Aurelia, has taken on the leadership role and is well supported by our booker and grammar whiz, Judy.

This small but enthusiastic group now focuses on listening, reading, grammar and especially conversation. Even the most reluctant speakers among us have gained confidence when telling our news each week and, although we make mistakes, we are encouraged and supported. We all are proud of how well our Italian learning has progressed.

And of course, no Italian lesson should finish without song. We look forward to continuing our Italian journey next year.

La classe d'italiano di giovedì

~ Nilva

## Book Banter

*Book Banter* has been going many years, but I was lucky enough to be able to join at the end of 2023. We are enthusiastic about literature, and we have lively (dare I say robust?) discussions about the set works once a month. We read ten books a year and each month the book discussion is led by a volunteer.

Among my favourite books this year were: *Seamstress of Sardinia* (Bianca Pitzomo), *Lessons in Chemistry* (Bonnie Garmus), *Convenience Store Woman* (Sayaka Murata), *The Rose Code* (Kate Quinn), and *Question 7* (Richard Flanagan).

The following is a review of *Flanagan's Question 7*.

This is the most intellectually difficult of the texts of 2024. It is written at arm's length. It is not a page-turner, but that is not a criticism. The book discusses philosophy and morals and ethics. It doesn't put them into the mouths of its characters, where I may be persuaded to agree with a proposition because I feel an affinity with the character. It deals with the dropping of the atomic bombs on Japan which ended World War 2 - how and why these weapons of mass destruction came to be and how they are related to the fictional works of H.G. Wells.

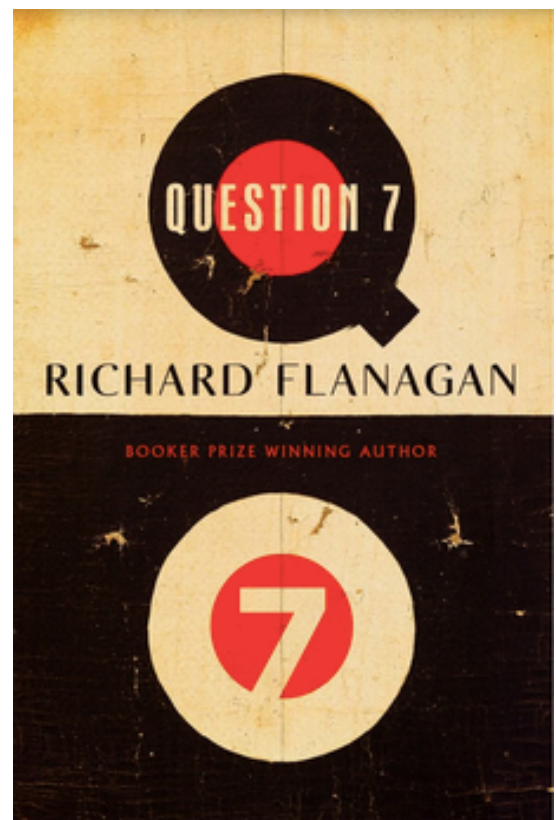


I'm not close to any of the characters relevant to the history of the atomic bombs because they appear as historical personages - not alive - at one remove from me. The narrator tells me about them. They don't speak for themselves. The narrator never lets me close enough to them to wonder about more than the philosophy they espouse or the action they comment on. The historical-documentary aspect of the work doesn't make me cry - it doesn't approach sentimentality in any way. It's about the big questions, not just *Question 7*.

More interesting for me, though, is how the end of World War II brought the narrator's father home alive from the Death Railway. How his mother died after three days, bathed in the love of her family and friends.

*Question 7* is not an easy read, nor a comfortable one, but it's worth the effort. Weapons of mass destruction came out of Pandora's Box in 1945 and we can't put them back.

~ Maria



## Monthly Talks

### AI ~ Past, Present and Future

On Monday, November 4 we had another fabulous talk.

The talk was on all things AI, which in today's world, affects us all.

The presenter, Jeff Burgess, did a fabulous job with an easy-to-follow introduction on AI. We heard about AI in popular culture and in the real world. This included showing arguments about the potential benefits, as well as the risks and what the future may hold for us.

77 attendees were amazed and scared all at the same time.

The Monthly Talks continue to be interesting with members engaged in the subjects.



## Semester 1, 2025

All talks and presenters are locked in and we can promise that you won't be disappointed with the range of topics for the semester.

- Pearls and Pearlring in Australia
- How Musicals are Made
- Identity Misuse
- Tales from the Cemeteries
- The Royal Flying Doctor Service
- An Introduction to Forensic Science

There is something for everyone.

Dates and full details will be available in the upcoming Course Book in mid-January.

## So Much To Look Forward To

Why not encourage your friends to have a look at the current Course Book and see some of the possibilities available. They can then join in the New Year in time to enroll in a course for Semester 1 once the new Course Book comes out in mid-January.

Don't forget, they can also try courses before joining, with two free visits (in total) to a class. Please contact the Leader or Booker before the lesson to organise this.

You might want to even give yourself a New Year treat by choosing something different from the Course Book. And don't forget you can attend Zoom courses and presentations from any other region in Sydney. Sounds good doesn't it!

Have a lovely time over the Christmas break and have a busy and happy u3a New Year.

~ Carol



# What's Happening

~ Committee News

## NEW MEMBERS

There are no new members for this month, which is standard for year end. We hope to see several new members appear in the New Year report, based on the steady flow of enquiries that are received through email and Facebook.

## u3a Endeavour (Southern) Region AGM

Date: Thursday, March 20, 2025

Time: 10am

Where: Cronulla School of Arts (Arts Theatre), Surf Road.

## Welcome Clare Cagney to the Committee

Some members may already know Clare, as she is an active member in Anita Spinks *Discussion Group* and a member of *Flavour of the Month*.

The Committee welcomes Clare to the team and greatly appreciates her offer of assistance.

In 2025 Endeavour's publicity will be split between Carol Cook looking after the Shire, and Clare looking after the St. George and Bayside areas.

Carol and Clare will manage the ongoing Probus presentations and expos etc. along with other potential PR opportunities in each of their areas.

**Endeavour made it into *The Leader* ~ both on-line and in hard copy. We have 500 members and 96 people attended the morning tea.**

**Note: there is an error in the print.**

# Sydney u3a Head Office News

Head Office will be closed from Thursday, December 19 at 1pm and will reopen on Monday, January 6, 2025.

The AGM will be held on Wednesday, March 26, 2025 at 10am at the Mechanics School of Arts, Pitt Street, Sydney. A number of Executive Officers are coming to the end of their term, so we will be looking for nominations from members to take on their roles and oversee the running of our organisation.

Head Office are pleased to advise that a new VPED has been appointed. Gavin Crawford previously filled this role and has returned to fill the gap that has been open.

If you have selected to receive a hard copy of the Course Book, these will be mailed out on January 11 and will be available on our website from Monday, January 14 when courses will be open for booking.

From the Executive Team in Head Office, we wish everyone a Merry Christmas and look forward to your continued support in 2025.

## Social hub marks 35th anniversary

**VOLUNTEERS** for a non-profit organisation, Sydney u3a (Endeavour - Southern Region), have celebrated their 35th anniversary.

The group for retired and semi-retired people (96 members) hosted its celebration at Cronulla RSL. Terry Campbell, 99, is the region's longest-serving member.

It offers activities, intellectually stimulating talks, and courses and draws on interests in art, science, history, leisure, language, computing and fitness.

It was founded in France in 1973 to provide continued learning experiences for adults older than 55. The first branch was established in Australia in 1988 and the Endeavour region shortly after in 1989.

Resources are drawn from members who share knowledge and learn from others. The aim is to contribute to the fostering and melding of life-long learning, creativity, exercise and community interaction. There are many courses in languages, film appreciation, brain games,



Cherie Glover and Mark Speakman at the 35th anniversary of Sydneyu3a (Endeavour region). Picture supplied

history, arts, drawing, sketching, discussion and book groups, travel and walking groups and dining out.

President of Sydney u3a, Jennifer Waldron, spoke of the importance of social interactions to seniors' mental health and continued good brain function.

"It doesn't matter if you are attending a French class, an art appreciation lecture or going for a walk somewhere in Sydney," she said. "The benefits of interacting with others has been shown as a protective factor against dementia."

- EVA KOLJMAR