

Newsletter December 2021

Greetings all, and best wishes for a very “*Merry Christmas*” and a “*Happy New Year!*” We have certainly had a couple of very challenging years in the last little while, here’s hoping it will all get better in 2022.

To help you celebrate Christmas and get into the mood, here is some information about local Christmas events:

- Beaconsfield Christmas Night Market and Outdoor Cinema! **Friday 3 December** 7:00pm (Movie 9:00pm) Miner’s Park. Tickets free but bookings essential. See Trybooking.
- **Sunday 12 December** Christmas Carols at Exeter Showground, from 5:00pm till 8:00pm, event is free but you need to book tickets. Contact Exeter Show Society, see their FB page.
- Also **Sunday 12 December**, Carols on the Lawn, 5:00pm, Riverbank Christian Church, Riverbank Pl, Riverside.
- Beaconsfield Volunteer Fire Brigade Christmas Lolly Run, **Sunday 19 December**, 1:15 pm at Beaconsfield RSL Park, and 2:30pm at Beauty Point Foreshore (Subject to covid restrictions).

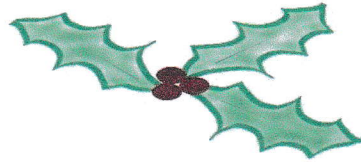
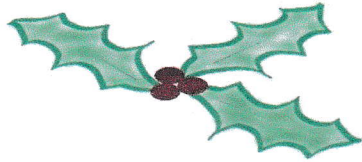
OUR U3A Christmas Lunch

And most importantly, make sure you are booked in to attend our very own **U3A Christmas Lunch at the Legana Tavern on Wednesday 8 December at Noon.**

Martin was taking names for booking, and it is URGENT if you have not done it yet, as we need to give numbers to the Tavern in advance. ***All U3A members invited!***

(Contact Martin1952@gmail.com or Jo at the Office on 63831113 to book in).

Please note each person pays for his or her own lunch.



U3A News

Our U3A office will shut down for a few weeks over Christmas, closing on 6 December. Courses start again on **14 February 2022**, but we will be in contact with members before that, to announce the new Semester program. We will have some great new programs to offer then, including, hopefully, a program on photography and one on Australian Literature. Also in the planning stages now are a Games session each week (cards, Scrabble, board games etc) and a Bookclub to run in Beaconsfield. Next year will be fun!

Don't forget - TUTORS WANTED!

To keep U3A interesting and thriving, we need to have a good range of tutors on a variety of subjects. Perhaps you have a special skill or interest which you could share with others? Contact Anne Brelsford on email at annebrelsford@hotmail.com or by phone on 0402 582 402 to have an initial chat about your ideas.

Memberships and Fees

Fees were drastically reduced to \$10 for the year, for the major Covid period, given that many courses could not be run at all. Now, as we are gradually returning to a "normal" of some kind, we are looking at a fee of **\$20 for the full calendar year** of 2022.

Generally speaking, **we would encourage members to make an early payment for the full year in February**. As always, however, we are flexible about payments, knowing that some people will only have joined up (or rejoined) quite late in 2021. If you are already paid up until the middle of 2022, or nearly so, you have the option to only pay \$10 to cover the final six months till December 2022. The same deal would apply if you want to do some courses, which are only available in Semester Two.

If you are a new member, you will need to complete the application for membership form, which can be found on our website, tamarvalleyu3a.com.au and this form explains options for how you can make your payment.

In case of doubt, contact Jo or Frances in the office, on a Monday between 12:30pm and 4:00pm, on 6383 1113, and they will advise you. You can also email your query on: tamarvalleyu3a@gmail.com

The History of Christmas Trees

Evergreen trees (and other evergreen plants) have traditionally been used to celebrate winter festivals (pagan and Christian) for thousands of years. Pagans used branches of evergreen trees to decorate their homes during the winter solstice, as it made them think of the spring to come. The Romans used Fir Trees to decorate their temples at the festival of Saturnalia. However, they were quite different to what we think of as Christmas Trees now.

Christmas Trees might well have started out as 'Paradise Trees' (branches or wooden frames decorated with apples). These were used in medieval German Mystery or Miracle Plays that were acted out in front of Churches during Advent and on Christmas Eve, to tell Bible stories for those who could not read.

Christmas Trees as they came to be now probably started around the late 1400s into the 1500s, in Germany, where the Paradise Tree had more decorations on it (cherries, pastry decorations of stars, bells, angels, etc) and it even got a new nickname, the 'Christbaum' or 'Christ Tree'. So, our modern Christmas tree has a long and mysterious background!

Meet our Committee and Tutors

Jill Brasch Reaney Current Vice-President, and Tutor for Mahjong



I became interested in Mahjong in my 60s when I lived on the North West Coast. Moving to Beaconsfield, I was delighted to find another group nearby. We average 4 or 5 players now, but the group membership varies as people come and go. I enjoy the challenge of concentration, mental flexibility and coping with minor frustration when the pattern of tiles you had aimed for becomes unavailable. Our group doesn't score hands, which is fairer to beginners and keeps the group less competitive. My favourite hand is Crazy Chows!!