



## Newsletter December 2022-

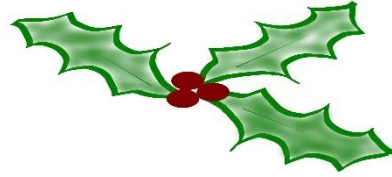
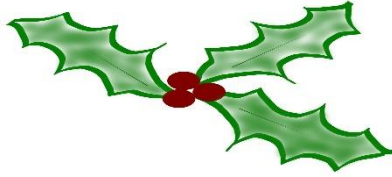
Greetings all, and best wishes for a very “*Merry Christmas*” and a “*Happy New Year!*” We are gradually moving on from 2022 and hoping 2023 will be a happier year, especially for those who have suffered floods and fires in this year. Also hoping the Covid sickness will continue to diminish and leave us in peace!

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

- **Saturday 3 December** Launceston Lions Club Xmas **Parade** in the city, starts 11:00am. Check <http://cityprom.com.au> for more details.
- **Sunday 11 December** Exeter Community **Carols** at Exeter Showgrounds, 2 Winkleigh Rd. Family friendly, no alcohol, bring own rugs and chairs. Food and drink available. Gold coin donation, but need to book tickets (Google event to find details of on-line ticketing).
- **Launceston Carols by Candlelight** Country Club (Prospect Vale) **Sunday 18 December** 5:30pm till 9:30pm. Food available. Not sure if tickets required, check website. Gold coin donation requested.

Also, for those who may be without friends or family to celebrate with, there are several community lunches! Please pass the information on to anyone you think may enjoy such an event.

- Free Christmas Lunch at **Beaconsfield House** on Wed 7 December starting at 12 noon. Essential to book by 5 December. Phone 63831110.
- Christmas with Friends **Exeter Community Hub** 25 December. 12:00 for 12:30 start until 3:00pm. Phone Sarah 0498 652 127.



## **U3A News**

Our U3A office will shut down for a few weeks over Christmas, closing on **12 December**, and opening again on **30 January**, from 10.00am till 12 noon. We will be in contact with members early in the New Year to announce the new Semester program, and we will have some great new programs to offer then, including, hopefully, a program on Square Dancing. 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](mailto:annebrelsford@hotmail.com) or by phone on 0402 582 402 to have an initial chat about your ideas. Remember, you don't have to offer a LONG course if that does not suit you, you could do a "Short Course" or just a "Talk" on your area of interest.

## **A bit of a giggle**

*How much did Santa pay for his sleigh?* Nothing. It was on the house!

*What do you get when you cross a snowman and a vampire?* Frostbite.

*What do reindeers say before they tell you a joke?* This one's gonna sleigh you!

## **Fire permits over summer**

Holiday goers are being urged to be aware of fire permit requirements before they head off camping over the Christmas break. Permit periods are usually in force during the dry summer period from November to March. Keep an eye on the **Tasmania Fire Service** website for details.

## Christmas customs around the world

Some yuletide rituals remain the same no matter where you live, like singing carols, decorating a Christmas tree, making advent calendars, and feasting on a lot of food, but we think some Christmas traditions around the world may surprise you. You may even want to start adding some of these traditions into your own home. And others, you might want to skip! How about waking to find rotten potatoes left in your shoes by a mischievous Father Christmas? Or eating porridge for Christmas breakfast? Believe it or not, those are actual Christmas traditions somewhere in the world.

### Philippines

If you thought Europe or America went all out with Christmas decorations, you should see what the people in the Philippines do. Every year, the city of San Fernando holds the **Giant Lantern Festival**, featuring dazzling lanterns that symbolize the Star of Bethlehem. Each lantern consists of thousands of spinning lights that illuminate the night sky. The festival has made San Fernando the "Christmas Capital of the Philippines."

### Iceland

While some places celebrate the 12 days of Christmas, Iceland celebrates 13! Each night before Christmas, Icelandic children are visited by the 13 Yule Lads. After placing their shoes by the window, the little ones will head upstairs to bed. In the morning, they will find either sweets, if they have been good, or shoes full of **rotten potatoes**, if they have been bad.

### Finland

On Christmas morning, Finish families traditionally eat a **porridge** made of rice and milk topped with cinnamon, milk, or butter. Whoever finds the almond placed inside one of the puddings "wins"—but some families cheat and hide a few almonds so the kids don't get upset. At the end of the day, it is customary to warm up in a sauna together.

### Ireland

The Irish leave a **tall red candle** in a front window overnight, a welcoming symbol of warmth and shelter for the holiday season. Traditional Christmas fare in Ireland often includes homemade roast goose, vegetables, cranberries, and potatoes.

## **The Netherlands**

*Sinterklaas* is the Dutch name for **Saint Nicholas**, the man recognized by children by his long white beard, red cape, and red miter. Kids put a shoe by the chimney or back door and wake up on Christmas morning to find treats like gingerbread men, marzipan, and chocolate letters inside.

## **Mexico**

All across Mexico members of the Church put on **Pastorelas (Shepherd's Plays)** to retell the Christmas story. The Mexican Christmas season begins early in December with Las Posadas, a religious march that re-enacts the journey of Mary and Joseph. The vibrant red poinsettia flowers are also used in holiday arrangements for decoration throughout the country.

My thanks to our hard-working committee and many dedicated volunteers for all the good work of 2022!!

*"May this season find you among those you love, sharing in the twin glories of generosity and gratitude." -Oprah Winfrey*