



TVU3A NEWSLETTER FEBRUARY 2026

Are you 50 + and [retired](#) or [semi retired](#)?

Join TVU3A [LEARN!](#) [LAUGH!](#) [LIVE!](#)

What a challenging start to summer.



A white Christmas was experienced in many parts of the Tasmanian Highlands as well as on Kunanyi / Mount Wellington at Hobart. Had there been too many people 'Dreaming of a White Christmas'? They should have been playing the old Cliff Richard hit 'Summer Holiday'.

There were wild winds and cool temperatures, until the start of the Launceston to Hobart Yacht Race starting from Beauty Point on the West Tamar on December 27, and as a result of light winds, the start had to be moved to Lagoon Bay on the East Tamar within sight of the editor's 'office'.

For those of you who make New Year's Resolutions (I no longer do), it would be so good if you could think of any skills you could share with TVU3A.

New activities are always welcome, and it would be great to get some of our younger members onboard to share their energy and knowledge.

It was interesting to note that the UK u3a (lower case) has predominantly outdoor activities. I feel for us, this is a light-on area as such activities are covered by very active groups such as the Council Healthy George Town program on the East Tamar. Our Tamar Valley is such a diverse and interesting community. Hardly a day goes past without feeling a sense of gratitude for the joy of living here. Although I am a dual Kiwi/Aus national, it is more than 200 years since my paternal family settled here. This really is my home.



The Launceston to Hobart yacht race start with the Low Head lighthouse in the background.



Our next semester starts 9 February. It will be an interesting year coming up with amazing courses such as Monte Mumford's very popular **Musical Appreciation** at the Windsor Precinct on a Friday afternoon, which will start again in April. Members will be advised of the details later.

We are very privileged to have a course in **Art and Technology** with Dr Bill Hart being offered at Beaconsfield House on a Monday from 10 – 12 am. Of course, being an artist, I have already signed up for this! **Prerequisites are curiosity and an open mind.** The descriptor states that **All art, from rock art to AI uses technology. In this course we will take a journey exploring the relationship between the two.We will explore what art is for..... Art is life, life is art.** **Class exercises will require pen and paper.**



A further 6 week course in **Botanical Art** is being offered again by Lynda Young for students with drawing experience. Lynda's previous courses have been really popular with some incredible results.



NEEDLE FELTING:

A new craft course at Tresca in **needle felting** on **Mondays from 12.30 to 2.30** is being offered by **Birgitt Oxnard.**

Birgitt will have some beginners' kits available for around \$5 to get a feel of the craft before making a financial commitment to buy other needles and equipment.



Birgitt, originally from Germany, has made her way around the world, one hemisphere at a time – six years in sunny California, twenty six in the vast beauty of Western Australia. About two and a half years ago, she finally made a long-held dream come true and moved to beautiful Tasmania where she is now happily retired. Not long after arriving she discovered needle felting and it quickly became one of her favourite creative joys, and finds this a relaxing and quirky recreation that she loves sharing. She says that **needle felting is pure creative magic with wool.**



A small relaxed group will meet at Tresca to chat, create, and learn together. Beginners are warmly encouraged to come along and try something new. She warns that this is surprisingly relaxing endless fun and a 'little bit addictive'. You are invited to discover how satisfying it is to turn soft wool into something charming you

can hold in your hands using only a barbed needle and colourful wool to "poke" loose fibres into shape. All that is needed is curiosity and a willingness to stab fluffy wool repeatedly in the 'friendliest way possible'.



It was with sadness that we heard of the sudden death of one of our founding members Caroline Richards. Our sympathy goes out to her friends and family. Vale Caroline.



During the summer
keep safe and alert
when driving
distances by playing
games such as
challenging others to
talk in a pretend
foreign language



COMMITTEE REPORT:

Our last committee meeting was such fun – yes! Fun! A lot of laughter with some really good outcomes. One comment made was that it would be a good stage show. Sell tickets and just have our committee meeting as normal. Albeit small, but a great group of people.

Committee Poem

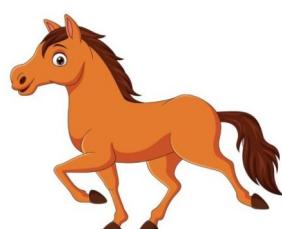
Oh, have some pity, I'm on a committee
Which means that from morning till night,
We attend and amend and contend and defend
Without a conclusion in sight.

We confer and concur, we defer and demur,
And re-iterate all of our thoughts,
We revise the agenda with frequent addenda,
And consider a load of reports.

We compose and propose, we suppose and oppose,
And the points of procedure are fun,
But though various notions are brought up as motions,
There's terribly little gets done.

We resolve and absolve, but we never dissolve,
Since it's out of the question for us.
What a shattering pity to end our committee
Where else could we make such a fuss!

Author: Leslie Lipson (1912-2006) was an American political scientist and author known for his witty observations on politics and bureaucracy



My other favourite is that a camel is a horse designed by a committee

TALKS



Our next talk to be held in March is by the very popular Susan Ackroyd who will be talking to several Tasmanian U3a's about the history behind nursery rhymes that she covers in her book *Rhyme and Reason*. Members will be advised of the details for this talk nearer the date. The last talk at the Windsor Precinct was really successful and I am sure this will be too. I am so looking forward to it.

In a personal letter Susan wrote: There's an interview you can listen to here. *Rhyme and Reason – the real reasons for 'nursery' rhymes*. What can 'nursery' rhymes tell us about the politics, economy, society, religion of England from the 1200s to the 1700s? Who was the frog courting the mouse? What was mother Hubbard looking for? It wasn't a bone. Why were the blind mice being persecuted? And why was a baby on a treetop?

More information at www.susanackroyd.com <https://www.susanackroyd.com/>

This has been such an interesting time for me, as I made contact with other U3A's during the semester break. Not only does this create networking opportunities, there is inspiration to be found in discovering how each organisation sets their programs. I am fortunate to have a long term friend, who is involved in NSW U3A and with whom I share our newsletter. She shared the latest one with the NSW U3A Network. This resulted in correspondence with Laurene Mulcahy who is the President of this network.

Thanks so much for thinking of me and sending me your fabulous Newsletter. I loved it so much I had to print it out to share with other U3As. I note you will be listening to Susan Ackroyd in March. She presented her talk to my U3A here in Ulladulla last year and it is most interesting and fun. I really enjoyed it and I feel sure your members will as well.

I am preparing a short film about U3A and I ask you, if you want to and are able to, to send me the original jpg of some of the course photos you have so I can use them in the film. I liked the Table Tennis group and the Scrabble groups. If you have others not included in the newsletter I may find them a great addition to my film. Please let me know if this is acceptable to your U3A.

And later: I received your photos. They are just right for my needs. Thanks so much for your mighty effort. Thanks again and Merry Christmas

Laurene Mulcahy President U3A Network NSW

Also from The U3A NSW Writers Collective is their wonderful publication:

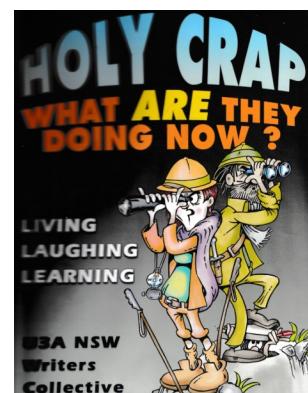
As we are experiencing amazing phosphorescence on the beaches bordering the Tamar, I felt it timely to share a delicious clip from the NSW Writers Collective "Holy Crap" written by Marion Newell, and illustrated by their professional illustrator Roy Bisson. I thank my dear friend, editor Beth Elliott, and Laurene Mulcahy and Roy for their permission to share work from this wonderful publication in our newsletters.



KEEPING IN TOUCH



The following is some of the correspondence with Laurene.



".. the other worldly stuff caused phosphorescence is usually caused by algae, although the glow can be precipitated by fish, tides, or the movement of boats. That's the scientific explanation anyway folks, but anyone who believes that doesn't have a smidgen of enchantment in their body. I dived into the water expecting a refreshing dip and instantly became a fairy glowworm. I was luminous, brilliant, glow-in-the-dark. How beautiful I felt.

This was not my most exciting aquatic experience, but was by far the most magical."

Marion Newell

Another really interesting connection I have made, is with the editor of the English Tavy u3a. Antipodean. Diametrically opposite? Head to Toe. Sister organisations?

Tamar Valley U3A

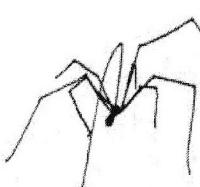
As newsletter editor I was recently contacted by the newsletter editor of Tamar Valley U3A. Tamar Valley U3A? I hear you ask. You didn't know there was a Tamar Valley U3A? Well, there is. But it's in Tasmania.

The differences and the similarities between our u3as made for an interesting exchange. The first, visually obvious one, is that the Australian movement still has the old upper case U3A rather than the lower case u3a that the UK adopted a few years ago. Old-fashioned or sensible? I'll leave you to decide.

Looking at place names is curious. The main town in the Tamar Valley is Launceston which makes good sense. Nearby are Exeter, Sidmouth and Winkleigh. Well, they are local to us as well but just a few miles down the road are Windermere, Beaconsfield and even Grindelwald. Very confusing.

They have "courses" rather than "groups" and many would be familiar such as Art Appreciation, Creative Writing, French Conversation, History, Mahjong, Music Appreciation, Poetry, Scrabble etc.

adAd ad vice
ad age ad hoc
ad vise ad venture
ad verb ad diction
ad vocate ad apt
ad here ad join
ad judicate ad just
ad ministrate ad mire
ad mission ad opt
ad ore ad rift
ad vantage ad verse
ad infinitum ad nauseam



BRUCE PENN

John Noblet

I couldn't possibly comment!

And finally, reproduced with their permission, is a poem by Tamar Valley U3A member Bruce Penn.

Happy New Year!

John Noblet

Male reindeer lose their antlers in winter and females don't.

So Santa's sleigh was actually pulled by a team of women apart from Rudolph.

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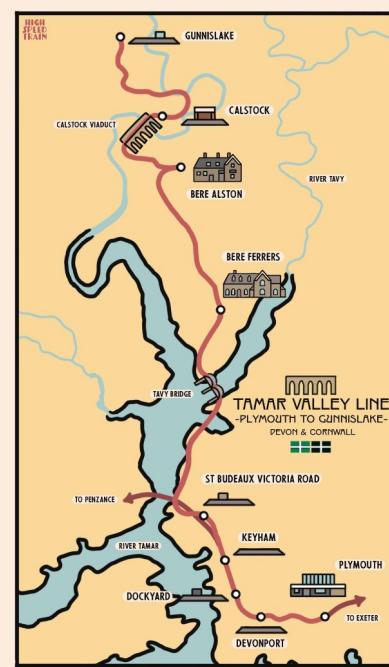
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John Noblet



In December 1804, Colonel William Paterson, who served as Lieutenant-Governor in Van Diemen's Land, explored the area now known as *The Tamar Valley* and established the first settlement in the valley. He named the Tamar River, the Tamar Valley and Launceston after his home territory where the tavyu3a is situated.

Snippets



A young mountaineer from Sorell
Was climbing Mt Anne when he fell.

But he landed oh so gently
On Miss Tasmania's Bentley

And so he was saved by the belle.

Bill Greer and Maggie Fletcher

When Caroline Richards was with us she often talked about the Port Sorel U3A, so I feel it is timely to share a limerick written by

A former TVU3A member, Bill Greer, for the book 'Around Tasmania in 22 Limericks' that I illustrated several years ago.

*Around Tasmania in
Twenty Two Limericks*



written by Bill Greer
illustrated by Maggie Fletcher

A genuine advertisement for the aged care independent living units in Low Head where several TVU3A members live on the East Tamar.



Nestled in the picturesque Low Head area, the units are just moments away from stunning beaches, scenic walking trails, and local attractions. With sandy beaches and pristine waters close by you can swim, surf, sail, windsurf or just stroll along the seemingly endless stretches of beach.

Aged? Swim, surf, sail, windsurf or stroll!





A thought for the day
Submitted by Jennie Timmins



I love these Launceston and George Town signs



A sign at George Town

WORD OF THE DAY:

Bumfuzzled

A state of being utterly puzzled or astonished. As if your brain is muddled.

POETRY

It was such a delight last semester to share in Marilyn Arnold's **POETRY APPRECIATION** at Tresca. Unfortunately I cannot continue as it clashes with something else I am involved in, but Marilyn has reawakened a love for this genre as I discovered so many different types of poetry that were new to me. I will share a **CENTO poem** that I wrote in class.

CENTO poetry, also called **Patchwork poetry** as it is created by taking lines from other people's poems. It is based on a 5th Century CE. Genre, with no more than 2 lines taken from one poem. The poets used must be identified.

THE STILLNESS BETWEEN SECONDS

by Maggie Matson-Fletcher

There it is again,
The world is turning over in bed.
Does an angel look from her eyes?
Will she suddenly spring away?
Like a light ghostly shroud, the morning fog
Stretched out before evaporating.

At the beach, by the ocean's edge, by the river's mouth,

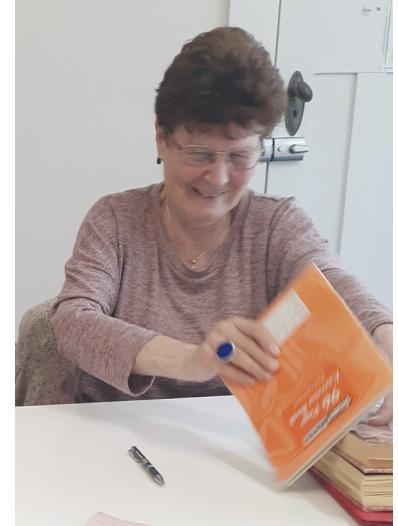
I whisper my name to the sand, to the water.

The sun dipped in the sky

A light wind ruffled the water

While my dog lay beside me

Looking up at the shapeless drift of clouds.



Marilyn Arnold

Kelly Boesch (Title)
Anthony Lynch (Light),
Lewis Carroll (Beatrice),
Jocelyn Deane
(Uncertain Dawn Kaya
Ortiz (Notes on Water),
Elizabeth Elliott (The
Busker), Graham Nunn
(Mulberry Season

MEMBERS' PHOTOGRAPHS

When I saw this photograph of one of our TVU3A member's son **Garry** on his mountain bike downhill run, I immediately thought of that famous horse and rider photograph from

The Man From Snowy River.

Note the rear wheel off the ground!

This is an actual photograph, NOT AI generated.

I thank our member for giving me permission to use this. It IS a CRACKER!

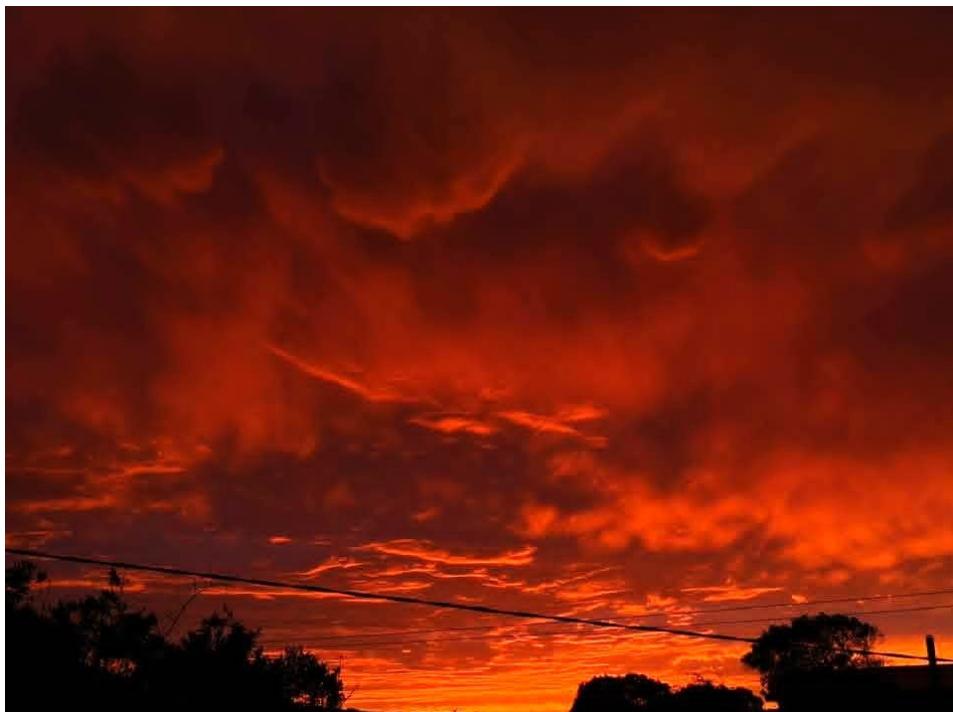


Whilst I was working on this newsletter the internet kept dropping out on my WiFi as it always does at this time of the year when the Tourist Park just down the road is full of visitors on their Smart appliances; so I took my laptop and 'dongle' and drove to Pilot Bay to create a 'mobile office' in my car where I was watched over by a committee of galahs!



A Maggie Matson-Fletcher photo

Tim's photo is of [Mammatus clouds](#). Pouch-like, bumpy formations hanging from the underside of clouds (usually thunderstorm anvils), named from the Latin "mamma" (breast/udder) for their udder-like appearance formed by sinking cold air, often indicating severe weather like thunderstorms but sometimes appearing after storms have passed.



A Tim Hughes photo

‘No Frets’ Ukuleles and The Tamar Valley Folk Festival

Once again our “No Frets” ukulele group, battled the wind to perform at the Tamar Valley Folk Festival with their popular collection of sing-along songs.



Other members of TVU3A were seen at The Folk Festival. Can you pick them?



Semaphore Singers at B&F Museum at the Tamar Valley Folk Festival



Music, story telling and poetry

On the verandah at The Pier Hotel
‘jamming’ Irish Melodies

CHRISTMAS LUNCH 2025



As always there was a really good turn out at our Christmas lunch that was held at The Alpenrose Restaurant in the Lakeside Room, Grindelwald.



Grindelwald Village

How lovely to be able to pretend that we were near the North, not the South Pole

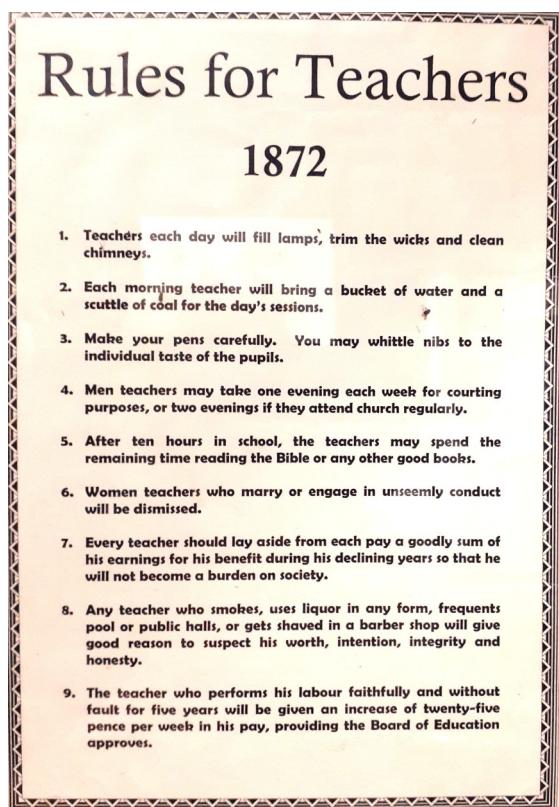


I wonder if, at the next committee meeting we should institute the 1872 RULES FOR TEACHERS?

A genuine news clip

Reuters:

Nine British seamen were saved when their bathtub popped up and they climbed aboard.



REMINDER!

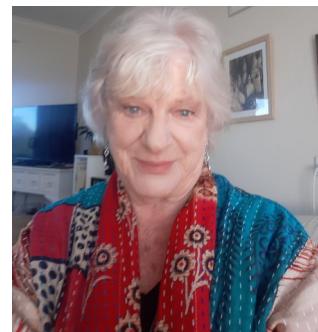
Remember to put a gold coin in The Piggy as not all venues are free, and the donation helps offset these costs as well as insurance, heating, photocopying etc.



Membership:

It is time to renew memberships for 2026 if you haven't already done so. Annual membership will still be \$20. New enrolments after June 30th will be \$10.

Payments can be made by: Electronic Funds Transfer: BSB 067-022. Account No. 1008 8174. Please identify this payment with your name. Payment may be made via Member Wizard on our website.



Members and tutors are invited to submit photos and articles about their classes and happenings to the editor of the TVU3A Newsletter by 15th March for the April edition.

Tamar Valley U3A Website: tamarvalleyu3a.com.au

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Maggie Fletcher. ruthieduck@gmail.com