

U3A STONNINGTON Inc.

ABN 23 378 204 740

REG No. A0020583

REPORT TO THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING – TUESDAY 14 JULY 2020

As President, and on behalf of the Committee of Management, I am required to present to the Annual General Meeting an overview of U3A Stonnington Incorporated and its activities, for the period from May 2019 to July 2020. This presentation complies with the provisions of the Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012 (VIC).

OUR ORGANISATION: then and now!

U3A Stonnington Incorporated continues to function, but in a manner absolutely unanticipated in early 2020.

Covid-19 The Victorian State of Emergency declared on 14 March 2020 due to the Covid-19 pandemic resulted in immediate closure of our Valetta Street building. U3A Stonnington operations have been completely transformed as a result. Tireless efforts have been made not only to maintain contact with as many of our membership as possible, but to provide programs of interest, and opportunities for social interaction, but remotely via various IT options. This work by a relatively small number of volunteers continues, to provide a program for Semester 2. Please encourage your friends, particularly members of U3A Stonnington, to participate. We welcome participation of guests and friends in any sessions of interest.

Current risks and restrictions for our membership demographic are likely to continue for the foreseeable future – until either there are effective vaccines or other treatments, or no new cases.

Membership Enrolments in 2020 were equivalent to those in 2019 at the time of closure. Closure curtailed the expected continuing enrolments. The average age continues to be in the 80s, however.

OUR BUILDING

We miss congregating at our comfortable and attractive premises very much indeed! We have been well supplied with Covid-19 posters and hygiene stations by the City of Stonnington, in addition to offers of assistance when the time comes to reopen the building to members.

FINANCE

Our financial position remains strong. Refer to the Treasurer's report that has been provided.

Access to all financial statements will be available once Valetta St reopens. Our annual fees for 2020 remain unchanged since 2017: \$50 per person, \$90 per couple and \$35 for associate membership.

We are fortunate to be able to survive Covid-19 currently. We are striving now to maintain current and future membership.

CURRICULUM

To reiterate: our program continues, but is offered remotely. We are grateful to the increasing number of lecturers who are able to deliver their presentations by video conferencing (Zoom).

Many of our regular session leaders have thought of innovative ways of keeping in touch with their groups and continued their stimulating activities. Unfortunately, not all sessions lend themselves to this type of communication.

The program is a significant part of the core of any U3A, making each U3A unique. Prior to Valetta St closure we were offering the games of Mahjong, chess, bridge and scrabble; discussions about: books, films, poetry, science and current affairs; workshops for writing, drawing and painting; music appreciation; and French, German and Italian languages. Lectures are presented on a wide variety of topics, some as a series, and some as single presentations. Many of these offerings continue, thanks to the efforts of leaders, presenters and U3A Stonnington teams.

ADMINISTRATION

Closure of Valetta St has meant significant increases in the work of our administrative volunteers.

As you will realise, a program with many sessions and leaders requires expert organisation for it to run smoothly, so that members – and presenters - are not disappointed or frustrated. Denise Nadebaum and Margaret Hay are to be thanked and congratulated once again for their efficiency and tireless efforts. We are all aware of at least some of the administrative work such as creating Newsletters, membership records, class lists, notifications of timetable changes, tutor records, phone calls, . . . these and so much more are all part of the daily work in the Office. Much of this, and more, continues.

Tricia Baitz arranged for postage of the Newsletters three times a year. Ian Singleton and his team enrolled our members. U3A would not function without this comprehensive support in the background. To just say thank you does not convey adequately the immeasurable gratitude that we have for the work and support that these administrators do.

AUDIOVISUAL (AV) MATTERS

Peter Ward is now in charge of matters audiovisual. Following his extensive investigation, equipment used for lectures at Valetta St was upgraded in 2019 to achieve excellence for image presentation. How frustrating that we have scarcely had the opportunity to use this! Peter has subsequently immersed himself in video conferencing by Zoom, and has become a Zoom mentor not only for us but also for U3A Network Victoria. We are very grateful for the effort and expertise that he offers. Others who have contributed to this work are Margaret Hay, Denise Nadebaum, Gordon Baker, Knut Mandeltort, Michael Bauer (unfortunately unable to continue his membership) and myself.

WEBSITE

Netta Heine continues to develop and manage our excellent Website. This provides information about current operations at U3A Stonnington and is user-friendly and interesting not only to our members, but to others who might be thinking about joining a U3A. The Website offers ready communication with members – important during this time of isolation. Links to interesting Diversions, online libraries and other resources are provided. Thank you Netta.

KEY MONITORS and RECEPTION

When our building is in operation, we rely on teams of member volunteers who work as Key Monitors and Reception staff to ensure that daily running of U3A is smooth, and to provide a welcome to presenters and newcomers. We are grateful to Peter Ward and Mary Heinemann who coordinate the Key Monitors and Reception staff respectively – and look forward to the time when these activities can resume!

CATERING

The catering team comprises Fairlie Nassau, Sue Gray, Jo Mc Grath, Dee James, Peter Ward and myself. This team has delighted us with delicious food, culminating in our end of year celebrations. How we miss our social occasions now.

Fairlie Nassau has undertaken to supply fare for morning and afternoon tea, and other kitchen supplies – we are most grateful.

Ron Higgins provides the wine for our special occasions, and to give to presenters as a mark of our appreciation for their efforts. Thank you Ron for your efforts regarding this. We trust this wine is ageing well!

LIBRARY

Ros Winspear is now our librarian. She has continued the work of organising the library – now for our future enjoyment. Thank you Ros.

HOURS OF VOLUNTARY WORK

We will be calculating the number of hours of voluntary work done to run our U3A as part of our annual report to the Australian Charities and Not-for-profit Commission (ACNC) and U3A Network Victoria. Despite some decrease due to closedown much of the volunteer work continues, and is

likely to exceed 5,000 hours.

In particular, I wish to acknowledge with gratitude, the support and guidance I receive from members of the Committee of Management, and in particular, our Treasurer and former President Doug Thomas, and Secretary, Ian Singleton.

There are many things that many members do that I have not mentioned – time does not allow it. However, I appreciate all the work that has been done by others to keep U3A running as we want it. Thank you all!

CITY of STONNINGTON COUNCIL

U3A Stonnington Inc. is very grateful for the continued, generous support we receive from Stonnington City Council. Julie Fry is our main contact with Council and continues to be especially helpful managing our many and varied day-to-day problems, current and past. We appreciate the support associated with Covid-19.

We are very conscious of the problems of social isolation, especially for those in our age demographic, and continue to work to minimise this for our members, in addition to providing activities to join for interest and enjoyment, even if remotely.

We believe that U3A Stonnington Inc. contributes to attainment of goals that the City Stonnington has for positive ageing.

I commend this report to the meeting, for consideration, including confirmation of the fees for the 2020 year.

Elizabeth Brown
President