



Volume 25 No 3

April 2011

Reg. A0017409G

Julian Burnside in Castlemaine

Promptly at 2 pm Sally opened the microphones of the Castlemaine Town Hall, welcoming Julian Burnside and his artist wife Kate Durham to Castlemaine and to our meeting, before handing over to Mayor Janet Cropley, who, after acknowledging the original indigenous owners of this country, gave an extensive and glowing introduction to Julian.

Mr Burnside acted for the Ok Tedi natives against BHP, for the Maritime Union of Australia in the 1998 waterfront dispute against Patrick Stevedores. He was senior Counsel assisting the Australian Broadcasting Authority in the "Cash for Comment" inquiry and was senior counsel for Liberty Victoria in the Tampa litigation. And of course, much, much more.

He is a barrister and author widely known for his staunch opposition to the mandatory detention of asylum seekers and his campaigning work on other Human Rights issues. He was elected as Living National Treasure in 2004, and in 2009 was awarded an Officer of the Order of Australia (AO) for his work as a human rights advocate, and for his services to the arts and the law.

Julian began his talk with the harrowing story of Bruce Trevorrow, a part-aboriginal man born in 1956 to Thora and Joseph Trevorrow of South Australia's Njarrindjeri community; taken away from his parents and siblings when he was 13 months old and placed with a white family. Until he was 10 years old Bruce believed he was white, then learned that he was not. He was returned then to his natural family though never met his father who had passed away before this. These traumatic events led to depression and disruptive behaviour and social problems.

A decade after the "Bringing them Home" report elevated the issue of "Stolen" Aboriginal children to national prominence, S.A.'s Supreme Court has become the first jurisdiction in the country to recognise it as a basis for legal compensation. Bruce fought long and hard for his recognition, eventually being awarded compensation in Australia's first successful stolen generation court claim. Bruce died aged 51 shortly after Kevin Rudd offered his "Sorry" speech.

Mr Burnside then went on to discuss Human Rights, touching on the detention of David Hicks, and the fact that over 1000 children are still held in detention camps, including 463 unaccompanied minors, and the sad plight of Ahmed al-Kateb who made legal history as the man who couldn't get away after realising he could be held in detention in Australia *indefinitely* even though he was innocent of any wrong doing.

Before answering random questions from the attentive crowd his talk moved into the murky realms of secrecy and the rights (or lack of them) of Asylum Seekers. To quote Mr Burnside "Honesty Matters."

President Peter Stephens then closed the session with thanks for his talk and presented Mr Burnside with some mementoes of our U3A and of Castlemaine. This was a very stimulating and thought provoking talk that had the attentive audience hanging on his every word for more than an hour and a half and we are pleased to say that Julian's charity of choice – Asylum Seekers Resource Centre of West Melbourne – benefited from the gold coin donation entry by over \$500.



AT OUR MARCH COFFEE MORNING... Just one month after his return to hearth and home, Vic Say spoke of his time spent visiting South Sudan.

He was five weeks there, in remote villages, sometimes having to trek for hours through the African bush, occasionally wading across swamps and streams, to reach his appointed destination.

Vic also stayed for one week in the capital of the state where those villages are located, in the home of the Minister of Finance for that state. He had met the Minister while attending a Sudanese wedding in Sydney two years ago.

When Vic tried to thank the Minister for his generosity and fantastic hospitality he replied "Vic, I spent two years in your country, mostly in Adelaide and my family are still there. In all that time I never felt other than welcome, and I only once felt insecure and that was because of some drunks. So you are very welcome to stay here with me and to stay longer if it suits you." I think we can all feel some pleasure in those words of the Minister.

Due to extenuating circumstance with the remodelling of the kitchen at our usual venue our meeting was held in the church itself. Seemingly an appropriate place to be listening to Vic's enthralling and at times disturbing retelling of his exploits.

Vic also spoke of the topic of **cultural diversity** – the full text of which you will find on our U3A website (or call into the office and we will print off a copy for you) outlining what is different between multiculturalism in the U.K., Germany and Australia.

On **May 13th** the "Issues of Concern" Group will meet with Vic for further discussion on Sudan. If you are interested in joining the group on the afternoon of **May 13th in the office at 1.30 pm** you will be very welcome. He will raise issues of race, democracy, media, tribalism, corruption, health and education, the referendum, separation v continuity of unity, development, the war, the history, gender and the place of girls and women, the geography and climate, the use of cows as currency and how it links to gender issues, children and their place in the community, integration and problems among Sudanese refugees, and their migration to Australia. He will endeavour to answer any and all questions you may have.

If anyone wants to check a good web address for the up to date critical and fairly open news and exchanges of views, Vic suggests you check Sudan Times on the web.

Lower Left: Vic sits 2 rows behind the lady Governor, front row black & white dress at an SPLM rally in Warrap, in the state of Sudan.



Below: Makuach, who was held as a slave from the age of 7, for 20 years.



U3A CASTLEMAINE'S INFORMATION WEB PAGE: www.u3acastlemaine.com

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Office Hours are:

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Tuesdays, 1.30 pm – 3.30 pm

Wednesdays, 10 am – 12 noon

Phone: 5472 2249

Web Page: www.u3acastlemaine.com

Current 2011 Subscription Fee

\$40.00 + \$10.00 for mailing of newsletter if required.

Members joining after June 30 pay 50% of the
subscription fee.

**PLEASE INFORM THE OFFICE
OF ANY CHANGE IN YOUR
CONTACT DETAILS**

Friday Coffee Morning Roster

1st April: Short Walks and Solo Whist

6th May: Table Tennis & Tai Chi

Coffee Mornings are held on the first
Friday in the month at 10.00 am
in the Uniting Church Hall

Committee Meetings

are held on the third
Tuesday in the month at 1.00 pm
in the Kindergarten Room,
at the Uniting Church Complex.

Deadline for the May Newsletter is Tuesday 26th April at 3 pm

From the President

Life constantly changes, and so does your U3A Committee. Since the March coffee morning a new member, Joan Orgill, has joined the Committee (a warm welcome Jo) and Elizabeth Rider has agreed to step into the role of Vice President. With Elizabeth's characteristic modesty she wants to be known as the *acting* Vice President.

One thing that doesn't change in Castlemaine is the delightful autumn weather. Crisp mornings, sunny warm and still days followed by cool nights.....a magical combination. Such weather was enjoyed by twenty one discerning members who shared nibbles and drinks at the March "Happy Hour" in the Tea House at the Botanic Gardens. You will have the chance to enjoy the last of our beautiful autumn in April on our car rally and at the next "Happy Hour". Put them in your calendar. Enjoy life while you can.....winter is on its way!
~ *Peter Stephens*

From the Course Co-ordinator

There are several courses about to begin in April and I will draw your attention to these:

COOKING FOR MEN with Sue Turner and Sally Kaptein (three sessions) commences on 29th March and continues on April 12th and 26th.

CROQUET for BEGINNERS with Nigel Harland (six sessions) commences on 12th April at the Bowling Club. This course can take more enrolments so if you did not attend last year do consider joining Nigel and learning to play this strategic game.

MINDFULNESS with Karina de Wolf (four sessions) commences in April. I am not able to contact Karina before this newsletter goes to print. However I think she has been in touch with all those enrolled in her course. It is a series that has been heavily subscribed and consequently is closed.

CATASTROPHES with John Neil is a single session on 28th April. This class is closed.

PETANQUE with Sally Kaptein and Jenni Rutherford (six sessions) commences on 29th April. This is a large group and I trust you will all remember to attend! eMail reminders will be sent.

Do check the details for all of the above in your Prospectus.

Two new courses will commence in May: **ETHICS** with Karen Mather on 5th May and

THE RING OF NIEBELUNG with Peter Morris and Vic Say on 13th May.

During this first term I have been able to attend some to the short courses myself and I must say I was continually surprised and delighted. The standards are high and U3A members have been attentive, consistent attendees and ask their Course Leaders challenging questions. It is wonderful to see our members so engaged. I would like some feedback from others about short courses they have attended. I would consider asking some Course Leaders to repeat their sessions on a different day later in the year. What do you think?
~ *Win Jodell*

- oOo -

Do you love History? Do you enjoy writing? Could you turn your hand to research?

Castlemaine U3A is *still* looking for a Historian to write up our history.

Talk to our President if this project meets with your secret ambitions – he's waiting to hear from you.

Say 'Hello' to these new U3A Members

Helen Edwards		Anne Fenn
Eileen Fitzpatrick (Beth)		Anne Hamilton
Christine Hooper		Heather McNeill
Janet Muschamp	Brian Richardson	Julie Trimble

Many apologies to you Liz Stayner, new member, for misspelling your name last issue.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

ANNUAL MOTOR TOUR DESTINATION UNKNOWN

Our annual motoring event is scheduled to take place again this year on the 29th April, with the start taking place from the Uniting Church car-park at 9 am.

For those members who have participated in the past you will find that the format of the event remains the same. For those who have not joined us in the past the Tour is a gentle drive through our local scenic and historic areas with a finish at a pleasant spot not too far from Castlemaine. There is no serious navigation involved.

This year we suggest that you bring a picnic lunch, or if you prefer, the ingredients for a BBQ as there will be facilities available for burning the odd chop or two. In addition there will be a chance to have morning tea at about the halfway point, so a thermos and the makings for coffee or tea would be a good idea to have packed with you.

At the conclusion of the event it is a direct run back to Castlemaine and as it happens you will pass three establishments that may interest you where you can purchase some goodies to take home. They are: Passing Clouds New Winery at Musk. Istra Smallgoods, also at Musk and who can resist, The Chocolate Mill at Hepburn Springs on the way back to Castlemaine.

To assist with the smooth running of the event I will provide an entry form at the start, to complete and return at the Final Destination, together with a fee of \$5.00 per car to defray expenses for prizes. Any further information you may need, please ask. We look forward to seeing you on the day for what in the past has been a popular fun event.

~ Graeme Quinn - 5474 2320 or eMail gandjquinn@bigpond.com

ABORIGINAL HISTORY – OUR SHARED HISTORY

FELICITY SAY 5472 1841

Please note: *This class is full at the present time. Members of U3A interested in joining should ring Felicity who will create a waiting list. Should a space in the class become available, they will be notified.*

5th APRIL

Today's session will explore the life of Bruce Chatwin, author of "The Songlines". It was Bruce's quest to understand what it is to be human, that led him to the desert heart of Australia and to acknowledge, in his view, a book published in the 1970's by an Australian writer, to be one of the greatest books of the 20th century. We will explore the identity of that book in the programme.

19th APRIL

Using archival film from the 1960's, "Contact" tells the remarkable story of first contact between a group of Aboriginal women and children, experiencing the terror of their lives as they are pursued by white men intent on removing them from the "dump zone" of the anticipated Blue Streak rocket disintegration over the Western Desert.

AUSTRALIAN HISTORY

GEOFF WALKER 5470 6652

During March, we first of all, studied a series of documents relating to the free settler and convict population of NSW in the time of Governor Lachlan Macquarie. In the second session we watched a film/video on the growth of the building infrastructure of the architect Francis Greenway. This completed our research into the Macquarie age.

In April and May we shall focus our attention on to Australia's involvement in war. At our first April session at 2 pm on Monday 11th, John Kenley will outline to us something of his work with a radar team when Australia was confronting a possible Japanese invasion. John is a member of the Castlemaine Sub-branch of the RSL. We shall meet in the Presbyterian Church Hall in Lyttleton Street. You will be welcome to join us for the session. Car parking entrance is from Templeton Street. The second session (4th Monday, 25th April) is a "double" public holiday – Anzac Day and Easter Monday. The session will not be held because many folk will want to be at the Anzac Service.

BONSAI – A SHORT COURSE

TREVOR WHEELER 5476 2286

I would like to thank Robert Airton of Goldfield Bonsai Club, who ran the workshop 'Bonsai with Australian Natives'. Also Tim and Martin at Forest Creek Nursery for discounting nursery stock suitable for Bonsai starters. And Diederik Haneveld who explained some of his techniques while giving us a tour of his nursery. All participants enjoyed establishing their own Bonsai.

Re a Spring Short Course – "Art of Bonsai" at U3A. We are looking for someone to help us with one session, "**Japanese Ink Painting/Calligraphy**". If you are willing and able or know someone who is, please contact me by eMail on trevorpots@gmail.com

COLD WAR

TOM COMERFORD 5470 6230

To date we have examined the origins of the Cold War, the Marshall Plan and the Berlin Airlift. The April session will concentrate on the Korean War – its causes and effects – with some diversion to the McCarthy era in America. In this session we shall allot tasks associated with the study in May which will encompass the crisis of 1956 and the building of the Berlin Wall in 1960. The June session will focus on the Cuban Missile crisis and include an examination of Kennedy's U.S.A. and Khrushchev's U.S.S.R.

DABBLING IN HISTORY

PETER STEPHENS 5472 3904

A Change of topic for our next meeting (10 am on Wednesday 6th April). Tom Comerford will be telling us the story of Australian nurses during World War 2. Due to the Castlemaine Festival our usual venue will not be available so a change of venue as well. Kevin Hurley is making his home available for the morning. We will be down on numbers as several regulars are overseas (where do they get the money?) so it's a golden opportunity to see what we get up to. If you would like to try us out, give me a ring for directions to Kevin's home.

FRIDAY MORNING GARDEN GROUP

SHIRLEY CURNOW 5472 1729

Our outing for March was to the Malmsbury Plant Sales. Our group became very enthusiastic as Peter and Louise spoke about the plants that are most suitable for gardens in our part of the world. Our folk had lots of questions and there was much discussion on many issues relating to autumn and winter gardens. The success of the visit could be seen in the number of full bags of plants that were carried out to the car park.

On **April 15th, the third Friday** morning, we shall meet at 10am in the UCA car park, before setting off to Gary Sobey's "Butterflies and Native Plants" when Gary will answer all of our questions and problems about orchids and natives. You will be most welcome to join us. Transport is available. ~ *Geoff Walker*

GARDENING IN CASTLEMAINE

HARVEY JACKA 5470 5079

We have a large group of able and committed gardeners which will ensure some lively discussion over the year. At our first meeting everyone brought something from their garden, a book or other item which had been an important influence on them in their gardening. It was a great chance for us all to get to know each other and our gardens better.

Amongst other things we had a caterpillar which had been found on a lemon tree. None of us could identify it which led to the suggestion that we should invite butterfly expert Tony Morton to our next meeting which we did.

Tony shared his knowledge of butterflies, showed us some specimens of local butterflies and offered some information on the type of garden plants which might attract them. It was very interesting and enjoyable.

For our next meeting on **Tuesday 5th April**, we will gather at Peter and Barry's garden at "Rosebank". The house is being sold so it might be one of the last opportunities to stroll around and enjoy one of the town's most beautiful and interesting gardens. We are looking forward to the visit.

GEOLOGY OF CASTLEMAINE

JULIAN HOLLIS

Julian Hollis's course "Before Castlemaine" has been an exciting and astonishing revelation to the large group attending his weekly sessions. For those of you who were unable to attend, the notes from this course are available online. Go to our website <http://www.u3acastlemaine.com/> and click "Courses 2011", click on the heading "Before Castlemaine" and you will get an overview. Click each item at the left and the notes and

diagrams for each session will download. It is possible this course will be repeated later in the year and on a different day. ~ *Win Jodell*

ISSUES OF CONCERN

CAROL DORMAN 5472 4429

A wide range of subjects were discussed during the month as usual. The introduction of a carbon tax is welcome and is considered better than a trading scheme which is felt to be open to abuse. Rising electricity prices cannot be blamed on a carbon tax when \$100 billion is to be spent on repairing/replacing ageing electricity infrastructure.

The 2010/11 financial reports of the Mount Alexander Shire came in for comment. Salaries amounted to \$786,000. Does the Shire get value for money in services provided? Would we do better if we amalgamated with Bendigo?

Gunns were granted a permit for their pulp mill in the Tamar Valley, Tasmania. Now they have to raise the finance. ANZ Bank refused funding approximately 2 years ago because of pressure from environmental groups. Gunns are hoping they will reconsider.

The Productivity Commission has recently released a report on the state of Australia's disability services. They are described as inadequate, inefficient and mostly ineffective. Recommendations include a disability insurance scheme to move away from the welfare model. An insurance scheme would be immune from inflation and government cost cutting. Federal funding is advised and a separate National Injury Insurance Scheme for extensive injuries sustained in accidents, e.g. loss of a limb or spinal cord damage.

Vic Say has agreed to attend the Issues session on **Friday 13th May** to discuss issues concerning Sudan. Issues to be discussed include separation and oil, media, history, geography, women's health, education and the place of women and children. Interested U3A members are welcome to attend. Please ring to let me know if you will be coming. I can be contacted on 5472 4429 or by mobile number 0427 831 426.

At the other University

I'm talking about La Trobe University at Flora Hill, Bendigo, where every year a handful of our U3A members sit in on the lectures for degree course units. It's a wonderful bonus of U3A membership, thanks to the generosity of La Trobe, and this semester five of us are going to four different courses.

U3A members can join the university library and have access to all its books and resources, but each lecturer prepares a course book of readings, available at the university bookshop. Having a compilation of articles and book extracts all in one place means you can go home and immerse yourself in the subject. But being in a lecture knowing that the other students have to write essays and take exams – while all you have to do is hear, absorb, think – is wonderful.

I took a course last year that fitted into professional degrees like planning and social work, and met plenty of friendly older students, many studying part time, but the younger ones don't bat an eyelid when they find a grey-haired oldie sitting beside them. We aren't allowed to attend tutorials, but I've found most lecturers include some discussion in their lectures. There's no barrier to joining in, and though the 'real' students' voices must predominate, I sometimes contribute things the younger ones couldn't know or haven't thought of.

In a few weeks I expect my participation to be appreciated when my history course delves into the State Archives in North Melbourne. We went last year, to look at letters, reports, receipts etc. from the Aboriginal Protectorate era, and I was the only one able to decipher the 'old handwriting'!

~ *Bridget Leach*

MUSIC APPRECIATION

BRUCE BAUD 5472 4574

The first composer we heard was Hector Berlioz, born France (1803-1869). His music was not really appreciated until after his death. The son of a doctor, his parents had him destined to follow his father. Instead the rebellious young Berlioz turned to music. The work we listened to was his 'Grande Symphonie Funebre et Triomphale' scored in three movements, Funeral March, Funeral Oration and Apotheosis (choral movement). This music was composed for a single occasion, which was the reburial of citizens killed in The Revolution of 1830, being formally buried as patriots at the De La Bastille. The long funeral march movement was played as the cortege moved through the streets with the following two short movements at the burial site. Bruce commented it could be the longest funeral march in existence. The final two movements were a joy to listen to.

After that unusual piece of music we listened to Bryn Terfel singing Mozart, "Now Your Days of Philandering Are Over" (Marriage of Figaro), a Don Giovanni duet, and "The Bird Catcher" from the Magic Flute.

Prior to morning tea we heard music composed by Gustav Holst (1874-1934), the English born son of Adolph and Clara Von Holst. The Von was dropped from their name in 1918. His best known composition is "The Planet Suite". He also wrote plenty of other music including the following works in this mornings programme. Firstly "Air and Variations for Oboe and Strings", and three pieces for Oboe and String Quartet. All delightful music. Our concluding composer was Mozart (1756-1791) with his Piano Concerto No 26 in D Major K537, known as "The Coronation". A wonderful conclusion to the mornings music.

~ Brian Willis

OPERA – AN OCCASIONAL EVENING SERIES

VIC SAY 5472 1841

Our next two operas from this year's **Opera Australia** series will be Macbeth, **** 15th April **** and The Pearl Fishers, **6th May**

**** Remember the change of date for April. This is to avoid clashing with the Castlemaine Festival.**

PAPIER MACHE

DIANA COLLIER 5443 0137

The last Papier Mache session on Tuesday 22nd March was devoted to finishing the articles, painting, sanding and varnishing, making these ready for displaying them at the Coffee Morning 1st April. A glimpse of the process in preparation will be shown also.

On the last Tuesday in March the group will have visited the WATERMARK PAPER MILL in Bendigo to see how papier mache is prepared and how various textures of paper are made. The differences will be seen between the short fibred pulp and the inclusion of long fibres (e.g. cotton, linen) for good quality and enduring (e.g. archival papers.)

Diana Collier, Convenor – e-mail collierd@vic.chariot.net.au

Kindergarten Room or small hall in the Uniting Church Complex. Tuesdays 2-3.30 pm. Final session 22nd March.

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Just a gentle reminder – have you paid for your bus trip down to see the Tutankhamun Exhibition yet? **Time is running out my friends, just**

like grains of sand in the desert from whence he came. Your cash or cheque would be greatly appreciated as soon as you can please. Otherwise regrettably your place on the list will be given to non-U3A friends and family of those who have already paid. This is a very popular exhibition and we in U3A are so lucky to have this opportunity to see something very special and to also have visionaries in our midst who are will to arrange these outings for us. Please let us know if you cannot go. You'll be so disappointed to miss out. See our Treasurer Sue or Sally **A.S.A.P.** They will be very glad to take your cheque.

RENAISSANCE FAMILIES: D'ESTE FAMILY

Our study of this remarkable Renaissance family has encompassed the way in which its members achieved prominence in Italian politics, those who were "renaissance men" and the powerful women in the family.

In April we shall examine the role of the members of the family who were church leaders, and the achievements of those who were under the patronage of the d'Este's.

In Term 2 the family under study will be that of the Medici of Florence. Those who wish to enrol in this class should contact me by phone or e-mail me on tomchris@mmnet.com.au before **April 14th** to register an interest as special arrangements (including the viewing of video tapes) are being made to cover my absence in May and early June.

TOM COMERFORD 5470 6230

REQUIEM AND THEN ...?

VIC SAY 5472 1841

The first March session was devoted to the Spanish Requiem of 1603 by Victoria, composed for the liturgy used following the death of the Empress Maria of the court of King Phillip III. We played two different versions: one with the Westminster Cathedral Choir and the other with the Gabrieli Consort, each with quite different inclusions from the rest of the liturgy.

Our second work for the month was the Verdi Requiem which Verdi, possibly a non-believer, wrote to commemorate a great Italian poet: Alessandro Manzoni, to be played on the first anniversary of his death in 1874. Verdi conducted the work himself in the church of St Mark in Milan.

And our first April session will be on **April 1st** following the U3A coffee morning and before the opening of the festival that same evening.

SIGNPOSTS IN ENGLISH: HISTORY OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE

DIANA COLLIER 5443 0137

Language always changes. The 6,000 or so languages in the world have grown from a first language. Some millennia after found records of the earliest languages and symbols for language writing, the old or Early English in BEOWULF or (the later) BATTLE OF MALDON is now a foreign tongue to us.

The changes are always gradual, affected by sounds, assimilation (of one sound into a closer one) – in early Latin 'inpossibilas' became in late Latin 'impossibilas', the *n* changing to an *m* being close to a *p*.

Vowels also change, are fragile, e.g. O.E. 'nama' (pron. 'nahmeh') where the 'eh' weakens to 'uh' and is finally dropped off entirely. Meanings also change as usage, culture, technologies, new contacts, discoveries occur.

We meet in the U3A office each 4th Tuesday every month at 12 noon – 1.30 pm.

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Here as promised is the up-dated list of Castlemaine U3A *Volunteer Support Group* should you need to contact any of these people.

Dorothy Bessant - 5472 5050

Janet Fitzwater - 5472 3412

Eva Haarbunger - 5472 3391

Dot Henshall - 5472 5108

Carole Ingersoll - 5474 2372

Harvey Jacka - 5470 5079

Sally Kaptein - 5470 6340

Beryl Levesley - 5472 3182

John Levesley - 5472 3182

Susan Mayfair - 5470 5872

Peggy Munro - 5472 2086

Grace McCaughey - 5472 1128

Elizabeth Rider - 5470 5681

Mike Smith - 5470 6638

Marion Taubman - 5470 5079

SHORT WALKS

DOT HENSHALL 5472 5108

We meet at 10 am on Wednesdays in the car park at the Lyttleton Street Uniting Church complex. This group has been on four short walks so far this year and we are not put off by wet weather.

After a short drive to our starting point, we set off to enjoy our outdoor environment. Each walk has been interesting and enjoyable. The first two walks took us along short sections of the Great Dividing Trail. One, to the south of Castlemaine beginning in McKendry Street and along the Poverty Gully Reservoir track. Walking amongst the rocks and bush plants we could see the old water channels.

The second short walk began in Farran Street, out Wesley Hill direction, which took us along Forest Creek. And for our third walk we began at the Red, White and Blue mine at Muckleford, to the west of Castlemaine. Here we enjoyed the Box Ironbark forest, with all its rich plant, insect, animal and bird life.

Our most recent walk began at the footbridge in Elizabeth Street, following the walking track beside Campbells Creek, where we saw the result of recent floods. At the end of our morning walk the Goldfields Maldon/Castlemaine 'J' class steam engine was just arriving and made a lovely scene while blowing its whistle as it progressed slowly over the old timber bridge. An enthusiast was observed waiting patiently for the steam train in order to capture that special photograph it as it crossed the old wooden trestle bridge.

As a new resident of Castlemaine and also a new member of U3A, I am thoroughly enjoying learning about my surroundings while enjoying the company of this friendly group. The conversations as well as the walks.

~ Liz Stayner



SINGING TOGETHER

RAE HAWKINS 5472 3446

I am now happily settled into my new unit in Castlemaine thanks to the help I received from my family and friends. I never would have made it without you all.

The choir is busy preparing for the "Happy Hour" being held from **5 pm to 6 pm on Friday April 15th** in the Tea Room (Pipe Band Practise Room) at the Castlemaine Botanic Gardens. We would love you all to come along and see what we have planned for this Scottish themed get-together.

We seem to be welcoming a new singer at almost every session. This is wonderful, but it does mean that we have to do a bit of music sharing. I am grateful that our singers are being very patient.

If your group is planning a special event, you may like to consider whether an item or two from the choir could help your day along.

SOLO GROUP

BETTY HENCHMAN 5472 2139

Our next get-together will be at the home of Margaret Hynam-Smith on **Saturday 16th April**. If you are new to the group please ring Betty Henchman for directions to Margaret's home.

ON SECOND THOUGHTS

Thank you for all your contributions to this month's newsletter. And to Bruce, to David and my grandson Matthew, thank you for all your help and calming know-how. That's much appreciated fellas.

Here's hoping you have a relaxing and an especially "Happy Easter". It's very late this year isn't it, Easter Sunday being on the 24th. Did you know that the 25th is the very latest it can possibly be. According to my "Book of Days" it happened last in 1943 and will not occur again until the year 2038. So mark it on your calendars now.

For inclusion this month I have received a very telling Poem from our own resident poet Rae Hawkins, about her recent house move. I'm sure you'll enjoy it, as I did, after my own recent 'flit'. Here it is:

It's My Move, I Think

I've just had a moving experience

I've moved from there to here.

"Oh! It's perfect" I said when I first saw the place.

Now I'm changing it all, never fear.

The carpet has gone, floating floor took its place.

The freezer and fridge bit the dust.

The gas-stove's replaced. Now what else can I do?

Ah, new lighting is really a must.

The curtains are going, I've ordered some blinds,

And I really must get new screen doors.

The vinyl is worn in the kitchen and laundry

So I'll have to see to those floors.

The laundry is dark, so a skylight I'll have

And the bathroom's too awful for words.

It'll soon look all right if I get what I've planned

I don't do things by quarters and thirds.

So now comes the job of unpacking

And trying to find things a home,

But the number of boxes just standing around

Make me swear that I'll never more roam.

Oh I've just had a moving experience,

And the thought of it fills me with pain.

So believe me when I say sincerely,

I'm not going to do it again.

Rae Hawkins c 2011

Thanks Rae, we can all relate to that I'm sure. We used to have a "Poetry" course here in U3A but that's no longer running. A pity. However I have received an e-Mail from Lisa D'Onofrio advising about a free poetry workshop for beginners, or experienced poets who'd like a little inspiration or experience a variety of ways to spark writing in a relaxed and friendly atmosphere. All you have to do is turn up with a pen and paper and then come away with a poem or two.

This workshop is run by Write As Rain and funded by MASC Community Grants Scheme under the auspice of CCH. It's on **Monday 4th April, at 10 am – 12 noon** (actually the e-Mail says 12 pm, but I'm sure that can't be right), and its to be in the Tea Room at the Castlemaine Botanic Gardens, but you must book in person at the Castlemaine Community House or ring on 5472 4842. The cost is: **Free**.

Volunteer Opportunity – Ray Ollerton is a schools chaplain who is looking for a man who is willing to work approximately 2 hours per week during school time assisting a year 8 male student in a woodworking class in Castlemaine. The student has a learning difficulty and often gets into mischief, however he is very keen to make things. A teacher will always be in attendance and supervising during the class. This is a great opportunity to volunteer time working alongside a young person to really make a difference. Some basic understanding of tools would be preferred, however a keen and caring personality is more important. If you think you can help please ring Ray Ollerton on **5474 2422** for more information.

.....and can you tell me, "who has the boxes of U3A wine glasses in their keeping?" Sally needs them back please and can't remember who is looking after them. She'll be pleased to hear from you at the coffee A.M.

~ BarB