



University of the Third Age Townsville

February 2026

NEWSLETTER



President's Report.

Pauline Woodbridge OAM.

Hello to our members who have recently renewed your membership and welcome to our new members. The four newsletter editions for each year are a great way to pass on U3A information. Our editor Anne Thomson does a good job of keeping the content relevant and interesting.

So, welcome all to 2026. The members of the committee hope you had a good Xmas and holiday season and have managed to stay well and active during the various weather challenges of living in the tropics.

After surviving Covid, the years of 2024 and 2025 bought some changes and challenges for our branch and this year brings a new issue with the news that the premises we lease has been sold and our current lease concludes mid this year.

In March we will hold our Annual General Meeting. The documents and an invitation will come to you by bulk email. We encourage members to attend this official requirement of our Incorporated Association and this year we need enthusiastic members to consider roles on the committee as we will have some current members vacating their current tenure.

I am looking forward to continuing my connections with my colleagues in the classes I attend throughout the year – and it is thanks to the Tutors, Committee and the Admin volunteers that our branch offers so much to us as members. The more volunteers we have the more opportunities for learning and socialising is possible, supporting a dynamic local branch of U3A. Wishing you all a satisfying and interesting year,

And on the 8th day, God created seniors.

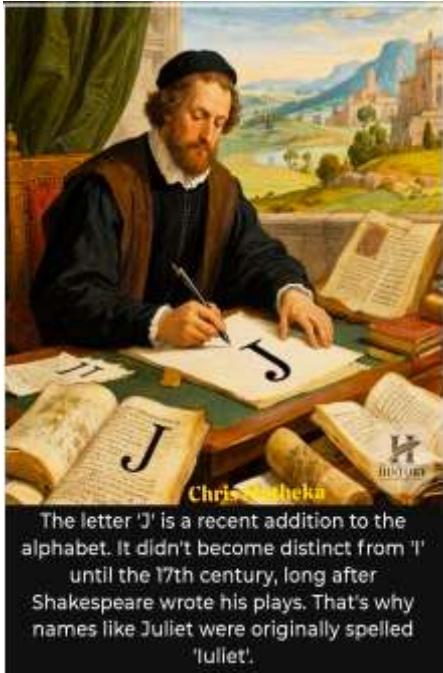
Most seniors never get enough exercise. In Her wisdom, God decreed that seniors become forgetful so they would have to search for their eyeglasses, keys, and other things, thus doing more walking. And God looked down and saw that it was good. Then God saw there was another need.

In Her wisdom, She made seniors lose coordination so they would drop things, requiring them to bend, reach, and stretch more. And God looked down and saw that it was good.

Then God considered the function of bladders and decided seniors would have additional calls of nature, requiring more trips to the bathroom, thus providing more exercise. God looked down and saw that it was good.

So, if you find, as you age, you are getting up and down a lot more times, remember it's God's will. It is all in your best interest, even though you mutter under your breath.





Have you ever wondered why old texts sometimes use the letter 'I' where we would use a 'J'? It's because for most of history, the letter 'J' as we know it simply did not exist.

The story of this change goes back to the Middle Ages, when 'I' and 'J' were used as the same letter. The sound was the same, and the shape was nearly identical, causing some confusion in writing.

It wasn't until 1524 AD that an Italian Renaissance scholar named Gian Giorgio Trissino formally proposed making a distinction. He suggested using 'J' for the consonant sound, like in 'jam', and 'I' for the vowel sound, like in 'igloo'.

This idea didn't catch on overnight. In fact, the process of separating the two letters took centuries. It only became common practice in the English language in the 17th century.

This means that famous figures like William Shakespeare (1564-1616) lived and wrote during a time when the distinction was still new and not widely accepted. Early editions of his plays famously spelled Juliet's name as 'Iuliet'.

FOR OUR WRITERS

The Australian **Pen Museum** is Bruce Wicks' life work – part obsession, part tribute and entirely a labour of love. The museum overflows with not just pens but centuries of history:

Roman bronze styluses from 2000 years ago used to write into clay tablets. That's real permanence. A Victorian desk set, writing desks, hand-cut nibs and even a 400-year-old parchment document.

There's the 1905 handcrafted dip pen crafted from Tasmanian tiger myrtle, which was fashioned by a bushman for an American couple who'd come to Tasmania to photograph insects. Embedded in its shaft is a tiny lead map of Tasmania. Each artifact is authenticated either through museum contacts or historical publications. Ancient items are bought only from museums with duplicates, while more modern pieces are assessed using Bruce's growing expertise – honed over 66 years of collecting.

Bruce lives on-site and opens the doors seven days a week, from 8 am to 8 pm – and later in the warmer months. He hasn't just collected pens. He's built a reputation.

To call it a pen museum is, in some ways, misleading. Wicks' collection charts not just writing tools but the evolution of how we express, document and define ourselves.

From school desks to government seals, from copperplate calligraphy to wartime correspondence, and from ornate inkwells to ink-stained blotters and hand-drawn maps, every shelf and drawer carries a trace of someone's thoughts once laid down in ink.

"They don't realise how central writing instruments have been to daily life. Until they see it."

His dedication has turned Gundagai into an unlikely pilgrimage site for handwriting enthusiasts, antique lovers, historians and curious travellers – some of whom simply stumble in while stretching their legs after detouring off the nearby Hume Highway.



After many years existence, The U3A Writers' Group continues to prosper with its friendly meetings offering opportunities for members to present, in an interested and non-assessed environment, a short piece of writing addressing a chosen topic in either prose or poetry. The period of individual presentations is always followed by an informal morning tea which ensures enjoyable social interaction within the group while additional aspects, such as the often hilarious challenge of a "Five Minute Write", the welcoming of new ideas and the production of an anthology of our work by one of our own members, keep the meetings varied and interesting.

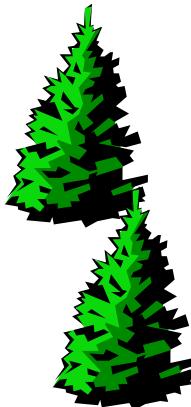
Members Ruth Hughes and Margaret Pepper have accepted leadership roles within the Group in 2026 as Judy Knox and Anne Atkinson step down, after several years, for personal reasons. The members are confident that Ruth and Margaret will do a great job and all are looking forward to the group's activities in the year

CHRISTMAS FUNCTIONS

mahjong



Mahjong elected to celebrate the end of year function at the beautiful venue where they play twice a week at Thuringowa library over looking the pool and the ovals. The tables were laden with food, some contributed by the players for delicious desserts. The "lady in red" organised games between the two courses with an abundance of prizes to choose from. Thank you to all for your contributions.



CRAFT



Hello everyone. Happy New Year!
We held our Christmas break-up at a private property last year.
Beautiful waterfront venue, company and food. Many thanks to Lise and her husband, who originally designed their home.

We're looking forward to the resumption of activities on January 12,



GAMES MORNING AT RIVERWAY

A small contingent of the Mahjong group started their brains working at the Games Day on 5 January. There were 14 keen amateurs taking to the tables for a range of challenges with Canasta, Five Crowns, Uno, and a host of other games to choose from. In most cases players were stretching their brains to understand new games and then playing the various games with at least one player being competent helping the others. In Canasta, a couple of open hands got us working. Five Crowns started with jokes with 3 cards developing to a serious concentration when having 13 cards. The Uno players enjoyed their games and the group with Ruymmikins were clearly engaged with their game.

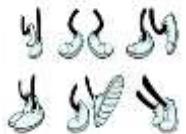
Those who didn't attend missed an excellent regrouping and brain challenging start to 2026 with the brains sharpened to tackle Mahjong on Friday 9 January, 2026.

Maurice Joyce

U3A WALKING GROUP - MAR TO MAY DATES.

Meets Friday 6.45am for 7am start – 8.15.

Coordinator: Angela Ward. Phone U3A office **4724-3530** for details
Please bring your: hat, sunscreen, water bottle, & wear comfortable shoes.



Date		Meet	Walk
Mar	13	Aplins Weir Rotary Park Cnr of O'Reilly St & Burt St	Annandale upstream
	20	Rockpool, North Ward	The Strand
	27	Balls Lane Mundingburra	Anderson Gardens
Apr	3	Good Friday	Public Holiday
	10	Dirty Boots Café, The Oasis - Staging Camp Ave - Idalia 20 Darter Street.	Idalia River park loop
	17	Carpark at roundabout, Pallarenda	Rainforest & lake walk
	24	24 Tyack St, Rosslea	Golf Club boundary
May	1	Aplins Weir Rotary Park Cnr of O'Reilly St & Burt St	Mundingburra side downstream
	8	Reana Park, Greenwood Dr, Kirwan	Catchment area & park
	15	56 Yolanda Drive (small shopping Centre Carpark)	Annandale Circuit
	22	Otto's carpark at the precinct (Nando's side)	Upstream River Walk
	29	Rossiter Parks Kimball St Aitkenvale	Ross River Upstream

Why I Joined U3A.

Noreen Letizia



When I retired from working in a primary school in various roles such as classroom teacher, Learning Support Teacher, Mobility Support Teacher & Deputy Principal in 2023, I wanted to contribute to the community by volunteering. The Office Manager & other office volunteers trained me in the requirements of volunteering at University of the Third Age. They are all extremely friendly and welcoming. Classes in which I have participated are Guitar, Book Club, Italian for Fun and Travel, & Yoga. I enjoy working in the office each Friday morning with Monika. It is always fun and delightful meeting class tutors and class participants.

Kathy Joyce

"I initially joined U3A perhaps some 20 years ago, with an interest in some of the classes available at the time. I then prepared the U3A Newsletter for a year or two after which I pursued other outside interests. In recent years, I've been attracted back to this great organisation and now volunteer in the office for three hours each fortnight. I've met some wonderful interesting people thru U3A and have also enjoyed the variety of Friday talks. I encourage you to check out the list of classes available - something for everyone."



Please send your stories on Why you joined U3A to Anne at: admin@u3atownsville.com

U3A Townsville Class Timetable

Monday:

Be Connected: Basic Computer (Aitkenvale)

Time: Session 1: 9.00am – 10.00am

Session 2: 10.00am – 11.00am

Tutor: Malcolm Hall

Location: Aitkenvale Library

BOOKINGS ARE ESSENTIAL

Mahjong

Time: 9.30am – 12.30pm

Tutor: Anne Thomson

Location: Riverway Library

Craft Group

Time: 9.30am – 11.00am

Tutor: Genevieve Caldwell

Location: U3A Vincent

Book Club Aitkenvale 3rd Monday of the Month

Time: 10.00am – 11.00am

Tutor: Antonia Gerrard

Location: Aitkenvale Library

Book Club Flinders St 2nd Monday of the Month

Time: 12.00pm – 1.00pm

Tutor: Christine Stewart

Location: Flinders St Library

Family History & Ancestry DNA

Time: 10.30am - 3.30pm

Tutor: Angela Cundy

Location: Aitkenvale Library

Amateur Astronomy

Time: 1.00pm – 2.00pm

Tutor: Bill Simpkins

Location: U3A Vincent

Mens Singing Group

Time: 5.30pm – 7.30pm

Tutor: Russell Savage

Location: Centenary Hotel, 37 French St, Pimlico

Tuesday:

Spanish Conversation

Time: 9.00am – 11.00am

Tutor: Jane Miguel

Location: U3A Vincent

Creative Writing

BOOKINGS ARE ESSENTIAL

Time: 9.45am - 12.00pm

Tutor: Ruth Hughes| Margret Pepper

Location: Brooklea Lifestyle Village, 1 Linderman Ave, Cranbrook

Computer Programming

Time: 12.00pm - 1.00pm

Tutor: David Browning

Location: Private Residence North Ward

Guitar Lessons

Time: 12.00pm – 3.30pm

Tutor: Phil Young

Location: U3A Vincent

History

Time: 2.00pm – 4.00pm

Tutor: Andy Cole, Michele Cloonan

Location: Oonoonba Community Centre, 2 Shannon Street, Oonoonba

Wednesday:

Tai Chi

Time: 8.00am – 9.00am Beginners

Tutor: Johannes Boyke

Location: PCYC 126 Wellington St Aitkenvale

Creative Art

Time: 9.30am – 12.30pm

Tutor: Kate Eagling

Location: U3A Vincent

Yoga

Time: 9.30am – 10.30am

Tutor: Jan Harvey

Location: Ba Hai Community Hall, 65 Morey St, South Townsville

Wednesday:	
Philosophy	
Time: 10.00am – 11.30am	Neil Renison, Madonna Drew
Location: Aitkenvale Library	
Indonesian Language and Culture	
Time: 12.00pm – 1.30pm	Tutor: Anni Hurst, Val Colquhoun—Coordinator
Location: Aitkenvale Library	
5 Crowns Card Group	
Time: 1.30pm - 3.30pm	Tutor: Kaye Martin
Location: Aitkenvale Library	
Thursday:	
Digital Photography	
Time: 9.00am - 11.00am	Tutor: John Webster
Location: U3A Vincent	
French, Conversation	
Time: 11.30am – 1.00pm	Tutor: Georgina Valdeter
Location: 382B Charles St, Kirwan	
Science	
Time: 1.00pm – 2.00pm	Tutor: John Webster, Ian Cormack
Location: U3A Vincent	
Friday:	
Walking	SEE WEBSITE FOR PROGRAM
Time: 6.45am – 8.00am	Tutor: Angela Ward
Location: Various Walking Paths	
Harmonica	Every 2nd week
Time: 9.00am – 10.00am	Tutor: Scott McInnes
Location: U3A Vincent	
Basic Computer & Technology (Riverway)	
Time: Session 1: 9.00am - 10.00am	Session 2: 10.00am – 11.00am
Tutor: Gaye Higgins Malcolm Hall	Ivor Preston
Location: Riverway Library	BOOKING ESSENTIAL
Mahjong	
Time: 9.30am – 12.30pm	Tutor: Anne Thomson
Location: Riverway Library	
Scrabble	
Time: 10.00am – 12.30pm	Tutor: Kate Eagling
Location: U3A Vincent	
Chinese	
Time: 12.00pm - 1.00pm	Tutor: Phoebe Chan
Location: Private Residence Hyde Park	
Stories of the Journey to Australia	
Time: 2.00pm - 3.00pm	Tutor: Mary Collins
Location: U3A Vincent	

[All enquiries to admin@u3atownsville.com](mailto:admin@u3atownsville.com) Phone; 4724 3530

Magnetic Island ONLY - See Below

Monday		
Monday Talks, Magnetic Island 10:00am-12:00pm	Brian Furby	RSL, Arcadia
Tuesday		
Wednesday		
French 08:15am-10:30am	Una Glavin	Private Residence
U3A Singers, Magnetic Island 06:00pm-07:30pm	Una Glavin	St Margaret's Anglican Church Endeavour St, Arcadia 4819
Thursday		
Recorder Ensemble, Magnetic Island 01:30pm-04:00pm	Una Glavin	Private Residence
Friday		
Italian Elementary 10:00am-12:00pm	Lucia Parigi Dian Strand Facilitator	Private Residence

Please report any errors or omissions to the U3A Office.



Out and About with the
Book Club
for Christmas lunch.

U3A Membership Renewal is now due.

The U3A Townsville Membership Renewal process for the 2026 calendar year is now ready to commence. Your Membership Renewal will be processed each Monday morning once your details have been received from you by the U3A Townsville Treasury team. The annual membership fee remains at **\$40** for the calendar year of 2026 as agreed to by the U3A Townsville members at the March 2025 AGM.

You will receive an email from the U3A Townsville Administration team addressing the 2026 Membership Renewals, which will also contain your current U3A Townsville database member ID number. You can pay your renewal subscription by either Cash or cheque at the U3A Townsville office or by mail by forwarding a cheque payment to the U3A Office at **Church of Christ Complex, Vincent Corner of Ronan, Fulham Roads & Palmerston St.**

Please include your **full name and your U3A membership ID number (Not your receipt number)** with your payment to enable your payment to be correctly allocated and matched to your name. If any of your contact details have changed, such as address, email address or contact number, please advise the U3A Townsville Administration team to update your details.

The third option is to pay by bank transfer to the U3A Townsville bank account. The details are CBA bank account
Account Name: U3A Townsville Inc BSB Code: 064-823 Account Number: 10553473.

In the reference field for your deposit please state **your surname and U3A membership ID number (Not your receipt number)** to enable your payment to be correctly allocated and matched to your name.

Please contact the U3A Townsville Administration office if you have any questions on **4724 3530**.

First Name	Surname	Committee Role	Email
Pauline	Woodbridge	President Publicity and Promotions	president@u3atownsville.com
Antonia	Gerrard	Vice President, Class Coordinator	classcoord@u3atownsville.com
Christine	Titmus	Office coordinator, Web, Member Communication	officemanager@u3atownsville.com
Lorraine	Ryrie	Secretary	admin@u3atownsville.com
Larry	Frazer	Treasurer	
John	Titmus	Unit Building Maintenance	
		Magnetic Island Coordinator	



QUOTE:

“Everything that irritates us about others can lead to an understanding of ourselves.” Carl Jung

QUOTE:

“One word frees us of all the weight and pain of life. That word is **love**”. Sophocles. Greek tragedian



CONTACT US



Office location: Church of Christ Complex, Vincent Corner of Ronan, Fulham Roads & Palmerston St.



Open: Monday 9:00am—10.30am
Tuesday—Friday 9:00am – 12:00pm



Telephone: (07) 4724 3530



Email: admin@u3atownsville.com



Website: u3atownsville.com

Important Dates for 2026

QLD School Terms:

Term 1: Tue 27 Jan— Thur 2 Apr

Term 2: Mon 20 Ap — Fri 26 June

Term 3: Mon 13 July — Fri 18 Sept

Term 4: Tue 6 Oct — Fri 11 Dec

Next Newsletter deadline for articles & photos is **Tues Apr. 21**. Preferably before.