

President's Welcome

It goes without saying that 2020 was a challenging year for us all. Notwithstanding that, many of our courses continued by one means or another and for that I am grateful to the many course leaders who showed great creativity and energy in finding ways to keep in touch with their members. While the Court House has stood empty for most of the year, our activities have continued and our membership has remained stable - and that is a tribute to all. I am delighted that nearly every course run in 2020 will continue in 2021 as well as a couple of new courses. We are a resilient lot and our future looks strong!

Your committee has worked hard to ensure that we commence 2021 on 8 February and I want to thank Barbara Woods (Vice President and Membership Officer), Rebecca Doig (Secretary), Bill Woods (Treasurer), George Doig (Course Coordinator), Bob Willis (Website and Data Base Manager), Gianna Esposito (Marketing and Promotions), Ian Evenden (Safety Officer until March) and Wendy Veitch (Safety Officer since March, Newsletter and Court House Hire) for all that they have done to get us to this point and ensure a smooth and Covid-Safe commencement to the year.

While much remains the same as in previous years, there are clearly a number of changes that have to be followed to ensure safety in how we manage our courses. New procedures need to be followed. The health and well-being of each member is paramount, hence social distancing during courses, sanitising as we enter buildings, maintaining a Covid-safe register of attendance and deep cleaning after classes will be a necessary part of 2021.

I am excited about the prospect of 2021 and I am looking forward to meeting as many of you as possible over the course of the year. George Doig has collaborated with Course Leaders to put together an interesting and rewarding program for you. We also plan to offer a number of opportunities for socialising beyond the courses.

Finally, I also encourage you to use our website (www.healesvilleu3a.org.au) for the most up to date information about courses and activities. Bob Willis has done a great deal of work in maintaining the website as well as setting up 'UMAS for Members' which allows the website to be readily accessed on a smart phone. It allows portability and also uses large icons on the homepage for accessing information.

Bill Woods said last year when thanking Bev Gilbert for her tireless work as Secretary over the last three years that she 'embodied the sense of community' that is central to U3A Healesville. We live in a wonderful part of Victoria; we are a fortunate community. Enjoy each other's company in 2021 and may we grow together through our learning.