

December 2020

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President's Page

Is it cliché to start with, “Wow, is it December already?”? But it is; December already! It was only a couple of months ago in October when we had our 5th AGM. Over the past two months, as the newly formed committee took over the reins, coming to grips with the complexities of how it all fits in together, we have seen so much enthusiasm and the true meaning of the U3A mission; the sharing and giving of volunteers to provide an environment of continuing learning and togetherness, building lasting friendships.

Now, with all that distasteful lockdown for the most part of this year, restrictions slowly easing, activities are returning to some normality and with Christmas just in a couple of weeks, there is plenty to look forward to.

Year 2020 was quite disrupted, to the point that all our in-person classes had to be shut down in March. This, however, did not dampen the spirit; it in fact, fueled much innovation in our U3A community. Many of our groups moved online to continue keeping in touch. Our book review, patchwork and chat groups didn't stop; we held Yoga sessions on SKYPE. Who would have thought art enthusiasts and novices could learn to draw and paint online or even learn to play classical guitar through Zoom classes? Our Karaoke group continued to entertain themselves and each other from their own lounge rooms! All these activities have helped make the isolation a lot more bearable. We have included photos and reports from these groups to share with you.

November/December are typically the Committee's busiest months, with membership renewals and the enrolment rush for next year's classes. Some classes will be smaller to ensure social distancing are observed and there will be stricter attendance monitoring for contact tracing reasons.

A couple of this year's courses will no longer be offered in the new year, including meditation class and mobile phone classes. We acknowledge and thank John Larsen and Tony Danino for their contributions to our U3A. We hope to see them back tutoring again sometime.

On the upside, we have already added two new classes, Watercolour Painting for Beginners and Exercise for Seniors, thanks to our tutors, Tim Tsui and Lan Tiet. We are in the process of finalizing two other new courses. We are in discussion as to whether another Chinese language class or a class on Chinese history or culture would be more appealing to our members. We are also finalising a course offering of a series of 4 weekly sessions on Health & Wellness offered by a medical practitioner. If these classes come to fruition, they will be available for enrolment in the next week or so. Please stay tuned so you don't miss out on the opportunity to be part of this learning.

But for now, it is tools down as we focus on the very important people in our lives and to enjoy time with our families and loved ones over the Christmas season! The office will remain closed until 28th January 2021. If you do have any queries or issues requiring assistance before that date, then the email option is best.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year! Stay Safe, Be Well!

Ann Findlay
President



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Report of “Drawing and Water Colour Painting for The Novice” 4 February to 1 December 2020



Term 1 (4/2/2020 – 24/3/2020)

“Drawing & Water Colour Painting for The Novice” was a new class in 2020. It was designed for those members who were interested in art but did not know how to start. The course would run through drawing with pencil, charcoal, ink, and other medium, and finally finished in water colour. The class was limited to 10 positions. They were quickly filled at the beginning of the class. In the first 5 lessons, we had gone through mainly the theory of drawing, including the basic materials, their property and usage, the elements of proportion, perspective, light & shadows, and textures applicable to drawing. For each element the tutor did a quick and simple drawing to illustrate how it was done with a pencil. Then every member student did a drawing on the same object. They showed great interest and full attention in the topics and some produced good drawings too.

Term 2 (14/4/2020 – 23/6/2020)

Because of the COVID-19 crisis, the in-class tuition for "Drawing & Water Colour Painting for The Novice" was suspended from 8/3/2020. However, the tutorial was continued through communication using WhatsApp platform and email if WhatsApp is not installed. Initially tutor uploaded the reference photo and drawings at different stages, and comments on critical points as a demonstration would be done in the class. Later on, pre-recorded video clips of the drawing procedures were uploaded in addition to the drawing photos. Students were encouraged to repeat the drawing at home and upload their work on WhatsApp for others to appreciate. Tutor commented on their work and made suggestions on how to improve. Sometimes repeat demonstration was done on the same subject for comparison and to highlight their mistake. Unfortunately, we were unable to do life demonstration online because of the nature of interaction and the demand in the equipment set up.

Term 3 (14/7/2020 – 15/9/2020)

In 3rd term we proceeded to charcoal and pen drawing. Instead of only utilising WhatsApp for the demonstration, we changed to use YouTube. The demonstration was recorded in several video clips and uploaded to YouTube before the date of class. YouTube links to the episodes were sent to the participants, together with photos of the object and finished artwork. Participants did their work at home and uploaded to WhatsApp or Email for comment and correction. This practice was quite successful for demonstrations on charcoal and pen, but not for water colour. To prepare for term 4 which was water colour painting, we conducted the last class by Zoom to introduce the basic principle and supplies in this painting medium. An additional meeting by Zoom was agreed by all in which demonstration on basic techniques was performed. Because of the lack of face-to-face tuition, only 7 members remained in the class.

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Term 4 (6/10/2020 – 1/12/2020)

In term 4, we proceeded to water colour painting with “line and wash” in the first 2 classes. All classes were conducted by Zoom. Video clips of the painting procedure were pre-recorded and uploaded to YouTube. A reference photo of the painting subject and YouTube links were sent to the members on the day before the class. In the Zoom conference class, half of the time was spent on tutor demonstration, so that members had the remaining time to practise the techniques in class. Regularly they were asked to show their progress on screen for comment and correction. They would finish their work or redo another one at home with referral to the demonstration in YouTube. Their finished works were displayed on WhatsApp for members viewing and tutor’s comment. Close to end of term 4, the video recording was done on the spot when demonstration was proceeding in the class.

Timothy Tsui
Tutor

Rattan Chair - Pencil drawing



A country cottage - Pen and Ink drawing



Pears, persimmon and grapes on a glass plate - water colour painting.



U3A Patchwork Group Show & Tell – 7 December 2020

As we have been meeting on a regular Zoom meeting it was nice to get back together and see what everyone had been achieving during Lockdown.

Quilts were finished that had been sitting in the cupboard for quite a while and new projects were finished. Some of the finished projects are here for you to see.

If you are interested in learning patchwork or just improving your skills there are vacancies in the Patchwork class that meets on the 1st and 3rd Mondays of the month at the Baptist Church in Lum Road from 10:00am to 1:00pm

Rhonda Kerle, Tutor



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Pocket Picture - Tutor Lan Tiet – Line Dancing

“Because you don’t need men!”

The old saying “If you want something done, ask a busy person” definitely applies to Lan Tiet. When we spoke to her a few weeks ago (during lockdown), she was flat out busy with her various sewing projects. She’s one of our popular Line Dancing teachers and as well as running classes for U3A Wheelers Hill, she also does it for another U3A group. It is no exaggeration to say that Line Dancing is her passion, although she admits, that ballroom dancing comes a close second.

Lan is one of our early members of Wheelers Hill U3A and when she began with us there were no Line Dancing classes – so of course she started one. And why does she say Line Dancing is her first choice – the answer made us laugh – “**Because you don’t need men to Line Dance**”. Don’t misunderstand her though - she welcomes men into her classes * It’s just that from her observations over time, many men (especially as they get older) would rather play golf, or even just sit on the couch at home. Girls on the other hand just wanna have fun ... and dance!

All you need is some music, as big a room as you can find and wear any outfit you fancy yourself in. Just make sure you have the right shoes to dance in – she’s a stickler for that. And line dancing isn’t just cowboy boots, fringed skirts and ten-gallon hats – there’s Freestyle, Rhumba, Cha Cha and even Tango. And best of all, while you’re dancing up a storm, you are actually getting fit. Lan says that she has seen many of her pupils gain confidence, fitness and form wonderful friendships out of her classes. One of the highlights for Lan and some of her keen students was in participating the Whitehorse Spring Festival (Pre-Covid of course). Our photo shows them kicking up their heels.

Lan’s Line Dancing Class B for experienced dancers. Classes run Wednesdays, 10am-11.45am at the Nottinghill Community Hall – but be quick enrolling because they are very popular.

Also recommended:

- **Line Dancing for Beginners** Classes held Mondays 10-11.30am with Chan Phoumsavanh at Nottinghall Community Hall
- **Line Dancing Class A** for experienced dancers. Classes held Mondays 10-11.15am with Cassiely Chuah at Southern Community Centre Hall

* Blokes **are** very welcome too – ‘cos we’d really like to be proven wrong!



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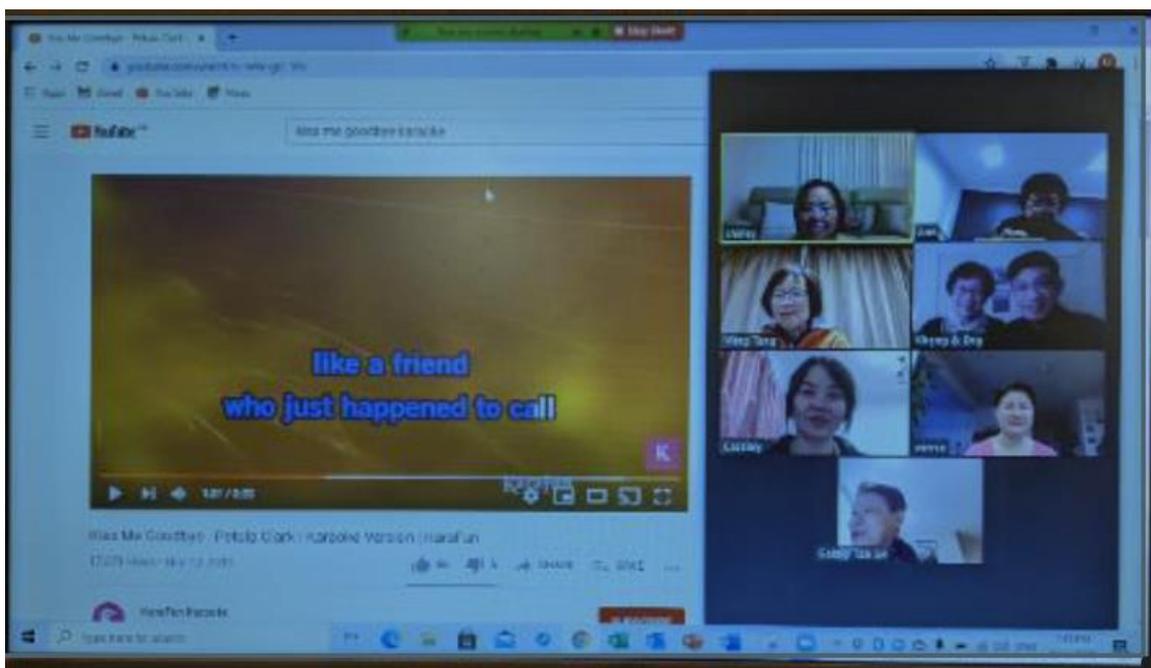
CLASSICAL GUITAR - BEGINNERS' GROUP 2020

This very popular guitar group started off with members waitlisted at the beginning of Term 1 but due to the COVID-19 lockdown, only a handful continued with a very dedicated tutor willing to continue classes via Zoom. The group welcomed the opportunity to meet in person when restrictions were lifted



From our Karaoke 2020 Group

The lockdown did not stop this group continuing to get together to enjoy singing.... We launched our Karaoke sessions on Zoom! Here we are, with Pearl Goh entertaining the group with "Kiss me Goodbye"!



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Karaoke End of Year Event 10th December 2020

When we started planning our end of year event, there were strict restrictions on the number of the group allowed to meet in person and limitations around the facilities both for lunch and for activities.

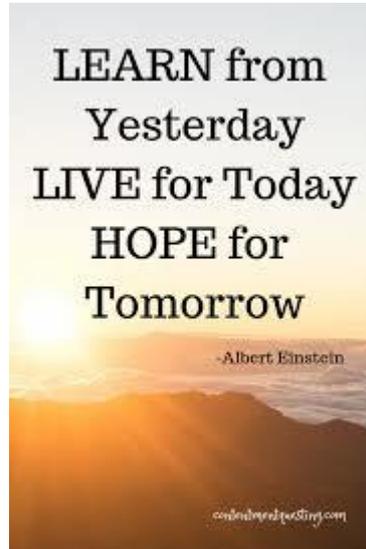
Unfortunately, we had to limit the number of attendees. Below are some pictures from the day, which started off with lunch before adjourning to Southern Community Centre to sing and share Kris Kringle. The fact that the wi-fi was not working didn't dampen the spirit! Luckily the microphones were working and with an iPad, we all had fun.



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Quote for the month



Merry Christmas from U3A Wheelers Hill Committee!!!