

Newsletter - July 2026

Are you aged 55-plus and retired or semi-retired? Live in the Bass Valley or surrounds? Want to keep your brain and body active and make new friends? Want to share your skills and experience with others? Then join in the University of the Third Age Bass Valley (U3A Bass Valley). For a modest annual membership fee you can participate in a wide range of courses, social activities, excursions and events. Learn, Laugh & Live

U3A Bass Valley Committee

President: Pam Richmond	Committee Members:
Vice President: Marg Boyer	Geoff Guilfoyle
Treasurer: Glenda Bent	Janet Cobden
Secretary: David Laing	Marcia Comber
Minutes Secretary: Di Goeman	

“There’s life to be lived right to the end of life if you look after yourself and if you are engaged mentally and physically, and if you have purpose and feel connected and have delight in life ... I know I’m going to enjoy the rest of my life.” Maggie Beer

News

Learning with Locals - Mark Fernando

Sunday 16 August 1.30-3pm @ CDCC Function Room

Mark Fernando is a retired Master Mariner who has nearly 45 years of seagoing experience. He was a Captain on Australian merchant vessels for nearly 20 years.

Mark will provide a glimpse into the life on board a cargo ship - very relevant now given that over 20,000 crew members were recently stranded in the Strait of Hormuz.

“ I would like to provide a glimpse into the life on board a ship and to raise awareness of what seafarers contribute to your life considering that more than 80% of global goods are transported by Oceangoing ships.

I will also bring along various props like a model of my last ship, some Navigation charts and will teach you some basics of navigation.”

This is an opportunity not to be missed! Gold coin entry.



AGM and Lunch Friday 21 August 12 noon @ CDCC

Function Room

We are having our annual spit roast lunch and Annual General Meeting (AGM) on 21 August. It is very important that you attend if you can, not only for delicious food, drink and company, but because we will be voting for our committee members. All positions are declared vacant at the AGM and there are several places to fill. Over the last 2 years we have grown to over 60 members, introduced new programs and classes and things are running smoothly. It is very important that we continue to offer classes and events for our community. We work as a team which provides the flexibility needed for travel, babysitting and work. So it is very important for you to consider joining the team, both for you and our group. You don't need any special skills, just a bit of enthusiasm and a positive attitude. You can't go wrong!



Why volunteering is good for you

Research consistently shows that volunteering is linked to better mental health, stronger social connections, and a greater sense of purpose.

Victoria's State of Volunteering research found that volunteers report higher levels of wellbeing and quality of life than people who don't volunteer. Many volunteers say that giving their time helps them feel more connected, more confident, and more positive about their lives.



Volunteering can support wellbeing in several ways. It can:

- reduce feelings of loneliness by helping you connect with others
- provide a sense of purpose and achievement
- build confidence and self-esteem
- keep your mind and body active
- create routine and structure, which can be especially helpful during life transitions

Source: Volunteering Victoria

“Cognitive Reserve can be increased by learning a new language in a group or taking part in community volunteering, both of which require social interaction and problem-solving.”

Learning with Locals- Meryl Brown Tobin presentation and book launch



Meryl's talk and book launch was enjoyed by everyone who attended. If you couldn't make it to the presentation you can see the video we made on our new YouTube channel "U3A Bass Valley". You can also view several other videos there covering some of our other events. Meryl's video

Meryl was able to sell signed copies of her book of poems "Unbreakable Bond". It was certainly exciting to have her grandson Matt and great grandson Bailey in the audience. They both appear on the book cover in a picture taken 16 years ago when Bailey was 1 day old! We were also treated to some poetry readings of selected poems from the book conducted beautifully by Christie Michaels, a Wonthaggi writer.

Meryl's book contains over 250 poems covering her observations of nature, people, life challenges and reflections. She has drawn from her diverse life experiences, many of which strike a chord with all of us: visiting a friend in aged care, confronting a hostile dog whilst walking, witnessing discrimination, and celebrating achievements.

Her book is available at the Corinella General Store for \$25. It is a great read!



Christie Michaels launched the book

Community Sisters?

At our recent U3A 'Learning with Locals' presentation Di Goeman caught up with Barb Oates. Di mentioned to her how frequently people mistake her as being Barb. Barb laughed and said she is also often mistaken as being Di. Di joked that she is going to get a T-Shirt printed which says, 'I am not Barb'.

Barb is the owner of the Corinella General Store, and a member of several community groups and Di is the Secretary of the Grantville Recreation Reserve, and a member of the U3A Bass Valley Committee.

Laughingly they suggested that they should be known as 'Community Sisters'.



Healthy Eating In Our Third Age: Dr Mitra Zarrati Online Sessions

By now you should have received links to the first three online sessions created by Accredited Practising Dietitian Dr Mitra Zarrati. Designed especially for U3A members, the course provides clear, practical guidance on healthy eating, gut health, mood, mobility, heart health and sleep — all using simple, evidence-based strategies and everyday foods.

The online course can be viewed at home at any time.



Fuel Your Future with the Right Nutrition Today! Bone Health!

Dr Mitra Zarrati
Accredited Practising Dietitian | Community Health Advocate | Wellness Educator

Website: www.healthdash.com.au
Email: zarratim1359@gmail.com
Contact: 0416 549 291

Session 1: Healthy Eating – Understanding Food Groups and Daily Servings

Session 2: Gut Health – Supporting Digestion and a Healthy Microbiome

Session 3: Food and Mood – The Connection Between Nutrition, Gut Health, and Mental Wellbeing

Session 4: Strong Bones and Muscles – Nutrition for Strength, Mobility, and Independence

Session 5: Heart-Healthy Eating – Protecting Your Heart Through Everyday Food Choices

Session 6: Nutrition and Quality of Sleep – Foods and Habits for Better Rest

You can view session 4 here: <https://vimeo.com/1198240272/d26670fbd3?fl=pl&fe=sh>

President's Message

One of the main agenda items at our August AGM is the election of our committee. I would encourage you to think about joining our team - there are a few vacancies and this is an excellent way to get to know people, develop some new skills and bring along your ideas in a safe environment. These are fixed term spots - for one year or more if you choose.

- We are reaching the pointy end of the year for us with our **AGM and lunch on Friday 21 August** and elections for committee positions. Pencil it in your diary.
- Mark Fernando will present for our *Learning with Locals* program on **Sunday 16 August 1.30-3pm @ CDCC Function Room**. Gold coin entry. There will be audience participation as he demonstrates the basics of navigation. Mark will talk about his experiences as Captain of a cargo ship operating from the Middle East - very relevant in the current climate! This should be a unique and fascinating talk.
- Meryl Brown Tobin gave an excellent presentation & book launch on Sunday 21 June which was well received and attended.
- Neil Ocampo from Myli Grantville is organising viewing of the Nutrition Sessions in the library as suggested by Marg Boyer. We will let you know the times.
- We now have our own YouTube channel "U3A Bass Valley" which contains several videos of our activities.
- Under the licence of U3A Network Victoria (now U3A Victoria) we now have access to the CANVA account - this should make creating courses/promotional materials easier.

And finally thanks to everyone who has made my job as President such an enjoyable experience. I've worked with a wonderful committee, had lots of fun, met lots of interesting people, and learnt heaps. I hope to continue as the newsletter editor.

I wish our new President all the best and I know they are in for a jolly time!

Memberships

Once again I urge all members to log in to the [U3A Victoria Network website](#) . On the bottom left hand side of the page you will find a link to the [U3A Network Victoria News](#). All you need is to provide your email address and create a password. You can also use the computer at Myli Grantville library.

Brain Games

Trivia Games are available on this link: <https://www.seniorsonline.vic.gov.au/services-information/trivia>