

Newsletter - September 2026

Are you aged 50-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: Di Goeman	Committee Members:
Vice President: Marg Boyer	Geoff Guilfoyle
Treasurer: Glenda Bent	Janet Cobden
Secretary: David Laing	Jenny Fernando
	Magella King

News

AGM and Spit Roast Lunch

We recently held our annual lunch and AGM with over 20 members and friends. As well as enjoying delicious food and company we attended to the business of our AGM. This involved passing 2 special resolutions concerning new membership categories and an official name modification for compliance with Consumer Affairs. All the committee positions were vacated as is customary at the AGM and we elected Di Goeman as our new President, as well as Jenny Fernando and Magella King as ordinary committee members.



President elect Di chatting with Vice-President Marg

We also unanimously voted for Marg Boyer to be made an Honorary Committee member in recognition of her service, commitment and passion for U3A Bass Valley. Departing President Pam Richmond congratulated the new committee and wished them all the best in future endeavours. Our organisation is in good shape and running smoothly, with the committee members sharing the load. Pam will continue as editor and publisher of the newsletter.



Members catching up at the Spit Roast Lunch

Learning with Locals - Mark Fernando

Sunday 16 August 1.30-3pm

Mark Fernando, a retired Master Mariner, gave a fascinating talk about life on board a cargo ship. He explained how the pathway to becoming a Captain of a cargo vessel included long sessions at sea interspersed with formal coursework, over many many years.

His cargo was mostly LNG which stands for liquefied natural gas. It is natural gas (mostly methane) cooled to about -161°C until it turns into a liquid. This cooling process shrinks the volume of the gas by 600 times, making it safe and easy to move across oceans on large ships.



Mark displaying his ship

This gas needs to be transported by ships where there are no pipelines. Although there is a smoking room, strictly no alcohol is permitted on board!



Accessories included charts, instruments and models

Mark explained that the Master Mariner has complete authority when at sea, and takes responsibility for all decisions. The usual crew size was around 20, including engineers and deck crew and a cook.

Mark also described how the Polynesians used different methods for navigating long distances across the Pacific Ocean. These methods included using their knowledge of currents, the night sky, the stars appearing at different times of the year, and primitive stick maps with shells indicating currents and land masses.

Mark touched upon the history of European navigation and how Henry

VIII created the first permanent Royal Navy with royal dockyards in 1546. Trinity House in London was founded by Henry VIII by Royal Charter in 1514. It is the historic Georgian headquarters of the General Lighthouse Authority for England, Wales, and the Channel Islands and maintains lighthouses, buoys, and deep-sea pilotage. A great place to visit in London. We hope to get Mark back soon to continue the voyage of exploration!



Chair Yoga @ Waterline Library Grantville 11.30-12.30

Just a reminder that everyone is welcome to join the group which meets 2nd & 4th Wednesday at the Myli Library in Grantville. Come and have fun with others while doing gentle exercise.

“The five pillars of brain health are fitness, sleep, nutrition, stress reduction and brain training”

Games Club @ Waterline Library Grantville 2nd Wed of month 2-3.30pm

Come along and join in the fun at our monthly games club. Bring along your favourite game, play some cards or learn a new game like Pass the Pigs or UNO No Mercy. Most of all have a laugh! Phone inquiries to David Laing, email admin@u3abassvalley.com or just turn up! We'd love to see you.

U3A Games Club for the Young at Heart



2.00-3.30pm every 2nd Wed
Waterline Library,



Book Club B - @ Waterline Library Grantville 3rd Wed of month 2-3.30pm

There are still some places available at our Book Club B. We read one book a month and then come together to discuss the book, the meaning of life and lots of other stuff. Phone inquiries to David Laing or email admin@u3abassvalley.com.

How confident are you around technology in general?

Answer yes or no as to whether you could confidently perform the following tasks...

Technical Skills	No	Yes
Download files or photos from the internet		
Change my passwords and privacy settings		
Use shortcut keys on my computer and mobile devices (e.g., CTRL-C for copy, CTRL-S for save)		
Bookmark a website on my computer and mobile devices		

Information and search skills	No	Yes
Find the best keywords for online searches		
Navigate websites to find what I am looking for		
Tell the difference between real and fake information online		
Find a website I visited before		

Mobile device use skills	No	Yes
Download apps to my mobile devices (e.g., phone, tablet)		
Set up apps on a mobile device so that they work well for me		
Synchronising the use of mobile devices and other ICT		
Keep track of the costs of mobile app use		

Social and sharing skills	No	Yes
Change who I share content with online (e.g., friends, friends of friends, public)		
Add or remove people from the contact lists		
Block people from seeing what I post online		
Purposely deciding when and which information I should and shouldn't share online		

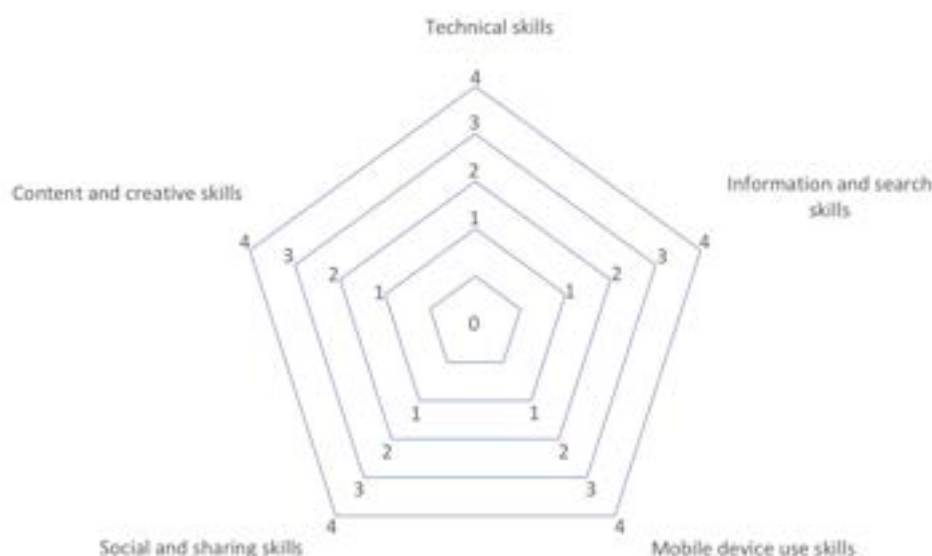
Content and creative skills	No	Yes
Design a website (e.g., setting up a personal blog on WordPress)		
Create and post video content online (e.g., on YouTube or Tik-Tok)		
Create something new from existing online images, music, or videos		
Make basic changes to the content that others have produced		

The questions in our assessment tool were based on: Alexander J.A.M. van Deursen, Ellen J. Helsper & Rebecca Eynon (2016) Development and validation of the Internet Skills Scale (ISS), *Information, Communication & Society*, 19:6, 804-823, DOI: [10.1080/1369118X.2015.1078834](https://doi.org/10.1080/1369118X.2015.1078834)

How confident are you around technology in general?

The questions are a way for you to self-assess your confidence in internet skills. Use the pentagonal chart below to plot your skill level for each category. For each 'yes' answer, put a mark in the corresponding cycle away from the centre in each category. Then, draw a straight line between each mark for each category to complete the illustration of your level of internet skills confidence. You can also do this activity online using our interactive tool at www.shapingconnections.org.

Compare your chart with your peers and use the descriptions on the following pages to discuss where you may grow your confidence level.



Our own YouTube channel: U3A Bass Valley

We now have our own YouTube channel which means we can share our videos with members and friends. As well as some Tai Chi demonstrations provided by our Tai Chi class, and highlights from our AGM/Lunch, we also have videos of some of our *Learning with Locals* presentations, including Clare Leserve and Meryl Brown Tobin. This means that you can still experience the talks even if you missed them. We are hoping in the future to build on our collection. Filming and production credits go to Barry McCulloch. Many thanks to Barry also for creating many flyers for us.

To access our channel simply go to YouTube and do a search for "U3A Bass Valley"

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.