

## President's Annual Report for AGM 18 March 2019

It's hard to believe that I have served as President of our U3A for three years. The time has flown by, and I have very much enjoyed being part of the engine which powers our organisation along its progressive path. At this time, three years ago, we had 408 members. We are now running at about 500, 80% women, I might add.

I can report that we have had yet another successful year with an efficient and cooperative Committee. Four new members joined us at our last Annual General Meeting and we thank them for their contribution. **David Stubbins** initiated a procedure for assessing new Groups, and **Helen McLean** backed-up our Treasurer before health problems forced her resignation. **Jude Vernon** became an extremely efficient Group Coordinator and **Jeni Harvie** has been a very active and enthusiastic Publicity Officer. Jeni is leaving the Committee, diverting her energies to lead a Yoga Group at Tumbulgum Hall.

The returning eight Committee members continued to carry out their roles, **Pam Lamont** and **Julia Shortus** being interchangeable as Secretary and Membership Officer, covering for each other during their holidays.

**Val Sparrow**, in addition to editing the Newsletter and managing our Website, arranged for our Singalong and Tai Chi Groups to be the entertainment at the *2018 Seniors' Festival* at Pottsville. Unfortunately, this year's *Festival* was brought forward to February because of the Election, too close to our busy Information/Enrolment Day. However, Jeni and Jude represented us with a stall at the Mountain View Retirement Village Open Day.

Thanks to **Lorraine Bagge** and **Dianne Johnston**, our *First Friday Forums* were well attended, particularly the *Singalong Concert* when we spread into the Uniting Church itself, and the popular *Fashion Parade*. As always, we must thank **Pat Salmon** and her helpers for the famous afternoon-teas. Thanks to Pat, too, for the amazing job she did, organising a most enjoyable Christmas Party. The entertainment was hilarious.

We are grateful to **David Robinson** for printing our forms and to **Jim Cameron-Dow** for his wisdom and support as our **Vice-President**. And, as always, we must express our appreciation to *Cudgen Leagues Club* for the free use of their facilities.

I want to say a special thank you to our Treasurer, **Brian Mussared**, who is our indispensable, go-to person for matters of governance. Brian and I attended the Tweed Council *Volunteer Management Workshop* on 23 May to keep up to date with rules and regulations. Brian will be attending the U3A NSW Network Conference in Tamworth in April, where he will share knowledge and ideas with other U3As.

And, we wouldn't exist without our wonderful **Group Leaders**. We thank them for their commitment and reliability, regularly turning up for each session and giving their utmost. We love our group leaders and we very much enjoyed getting them together at their Afternoon-Tea and the lunch at Phoebe's Restaurant.

About outreach – the stalls organised by Jeni and Val at Tweed City and Kingscliff Shopping Village attracted interest, the latter being particularly convenient for members renewing their subscriptions on the spot. I have continued to maintain contact with U3A Twin Towns and I usually attend their monthly *Tea & Talk* as we have common interests and we share some of our Group Leaders and members. In September, Val Sparrow and I gave a presentation about our U3A at a *View Club* lunch which was well received.

As I see it, the challenge for the future will be coping with the growth of our U3A. New venues, additional activities and more Group Leaders will be required, and a few more Committee members. I can hardly believe that out of 500 members, we have only eight nominees for this year's Committee, and no new people coming on board. Why is this? I have been a member of U3A Tweed Coast since 2002, I have served twice as a Committee member and I was a Group Leader for 15 years. I did not do it for altruistic reasons but for selfish ones. I was looking for fun, friendship and fulfilment, and in U3A, I found all three. What's not to like about it? If I wasn't getting older, I would do it again in a heartbeat. Come on people!

So, although I am leaving the Committee, I will still be taking a great interest in our U3A. I can't imagine my life without it. This time next year, there will be plans afoot for a big event. On 17 April 2020 we will celebrate our Twentieth Anniversary. What a great achievement.

*Rachel Hawken* 18<sup>th</sup> March 2019