

Amazing success for U3A Centre opening



Photos from left, clockwise: Des Davis, Anthony Roberts, Peter Besseling, Rob Oakeshott.

A plethora of public identities entertained and mingled among throngs of octogenarians. Speeches were brief, enjoyable and very enlightening. It was a day of joining, celebration and frivolity and a very suitable way to celebrate Seniors Week.

It was a team effort. Robyn organised replies and catering numbers. Del arranged press and publicity. Frank and Del welcomed guests. Gordon guided people to the right room and manned the phone. Sue took publicity photos. Warren set up and monitored the audio.

Des Davis opened official proceedings at 4pm on Tuesday March 23rd and acted as master of ceremonies. Eric graced us with a history of the U3A movement out of France in 1968.

Unexpected guest Anthony Roberts, Shadow Minister for many portfolios including volunteering and special assistant to the Opposition Leader, regaled us with a promise of useful and welcome announcements in the Volunteers Week in May. National Party state candidate Leslie Williams accompanied Anthony and mixed amiably with everyone before leaving early for a 5pm flight.

Bessie Jennings presented a special performance poem for the occasion.

Peter Besseling stood tall and was the only speaker not requiring a podium. He shared his vision for improved volunteer facilities in the area and for an educational precinct for various bodies to share. We will look forward to details.

Our patron, Rob Oakeshott, showed he has lost none of his zest or charisma with an entertaining vision that supported that of Peter but also noted the well-financed alternatives competing for suitable sites. Rob performed a ceremonial opening and closed the proceedings.

The post-event gathering was the highlight. Marie and her team laid out refreshments and Eric indicated his approval. There were too many people involved to thank everybody.

It was a grand way to complete a hectic couple of months. Happy U3A-ing everyone. — *Brian Tolagson* ■

U3A Centre Improvements

The church will complete carpeting in Room 3. Chairs outstanding from our original plans and budget have been ordered for Rooms 2 and 3. Urns will be provided in each room.

Because the move from the log cabin was put on us quickly, many of our groups have operated under some constraints for Term 1. I will be contacting all groups to set up a list of items (tables, equipment etc) that the sub-committee will consider.

Air conditioning and partitioning of the kitchen are both expensive improvements that have been deferred until we sign a lease.

We have received a number of suggestions concerning toilet and tea room facilities. Although we haven't yet seen the DA for the site I believe it is likely to include improved communal facilities and ask that everyone be patient until we receive more details. — *Brian Tolagson* ■

Office a real success

Robyn Morgan has done a superb job to set up the new office facility. Traffic is far busier than expected and "word of mouth" publicity has seen more than four new members signed per week. — *Brian Tolagson* ■

Office will re-open Monday 12th April

Payments of joining fees for new members and Enrolments for continuing courses will be taken from April 12th up until Enrolment Day on April 20th.

A big thank you to the office volunteers who so generously gave of their time: Robyn Morgan, Gordon Maxwell, Jenny Tucker and Joan Lane. In Term 2 Caroline Begbie will be joining the group.

If you would like to be a casual office volunteer, please phone 6584 3676 to register.

U3A office information

9.30am – 12 noon

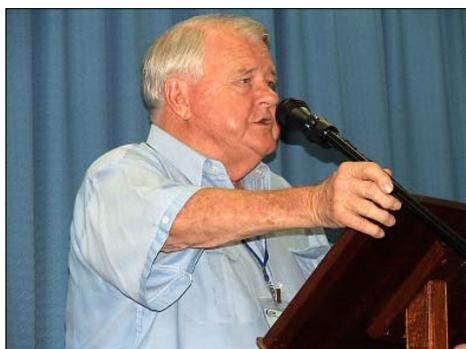
Monday – Friday

Phone: 6584 3676

Web site: www.pmhu3a.org.au

History of U3A

— Condensed version of address by
Eric Graham at the launch of new U3A
premises on 23 March 2010



Since the 1950s the historically unprecedented phenomenon has been emergence of “The Third Age”. Before then adults spent most of their lives in “The Second Age” working and caring for families. The “Fourth Age” was a period of dependency & decrepitude prior to death.

After the 1950s, due to compulsory retirement, pensions and longevity, people began spending healthy, active and fulfilling years in the “Third Age”.

U3A started in France in 1968 when new legislation made universities provide more community education. In 1973, Toulouse University ran a gerontology course for retired people which was the embryo for the U3A movement – no qualifications or examinations required and minimal fees.

By 1975 similar courses were in universities throughout France, Belgium, Switzerland, Poland, Italy, Spain, Quebec & San Diego.

In 1981 U3A reached Cambridge. They did not rely on the university and there was no distinction between teachers and taught. A “self help” model arose and they decided to rely on retired experts – no pay.

By 1984 U3A was in Victoria. Australia adopted the “self help” approach. Minimal fees, flexible timetables, wide range of courses, no academic restraints and mix with like minded, alert people who enjoy doing new things.

Each U3A is independent, run by an elected management committee. The Victorians developed a “Starters Kit”

which was available to all groups in Australia & New Zealand. In NSW the first U3A was the Forbes College for Seniors in 1987 with no funding from governments, relying on their own initiatives.

By 2007 there were over 200 U3As in Australia with more than 63,000 members.

Joining U3A requires self discipline & personal commitment. By being proactive members maximize their chances for prolonged independence.

Research tells us that successful ageing is achieved when we:

- Maintain a high cognitive function
- Maintain a high physical function
- Maintain close personal relationships
- Undertake productive activities
- Retain basic functional independence

Today’s most popular courses are related to new technology. We must attract new younger retirees and inevitably this means embracing the internet far more widely, which we’re doing in our new premises.

Today in NSW many U3As are networked. The NSW Network offers an insurance scheme and a library of U3A courses.

In 1997 Griffith University started “U3A Talk” for U3As to exchange ideas.

In 1998 the Australian government funded “U3A Online” for people cut off by distance or disability and is hosted by Griffith University. What a web site!! Check it out! Ask a university student who is studying by distance education how it works.

In 1999 U3A Online published the first online annual directory.

Today, the focus is to improve national communications between U3As. We may even host an Australia/NZ U3A conference in the Glasshouse one day!

What of the Future? In NSW we must lobby the NSW government for support just like the Victorians have done so successfully.

Although the Feds set up the U3A Online they believe that all requests should come through **Adult Learning Australia**, the peak body for adult education nationally. ■



Bessie Jennings (our Bush Poet extraordinaire) reciting “Join the Club” a poem she wrote especially for the launch of our new U3A premises.

JOIN THE CLUB

Running and jumping no longer a breeze?
Stiff in the back and the hips and the
knees?
Join the club!

Arms a bit short when you’re trying to
read?
Body now built more for comfort than
speed?
Join the club!

Hair not as thick as you’d like it to be?
Getting a wee bit forgetful, like me?
Join the club.

Don’t be afraid to let go of your youth;
Seventy’s good! Yes, I’m telling the
truth.
Join the club.

Wouldn’t swap places with modern-day
kids;
No, and I wouldn’t be dead now for
quids.
Join the club.

Each day’s a gift we can waste or can
use.
Just how we use our time, each one can
choose.
Join the U3A; join the club.

Everyone’s able to learn something new.
Everyone’s able to teach something, too.
Freed from the pressure of homework
compulsion,
Scary exams and the threat of
expulsion,
Free of those steep University fees,
Learning is fun - an adventure - a
breeze!
Growing old’s great if we do it together,
Sharing our interests, whatever the
weather.
Join the U3A; join the club!

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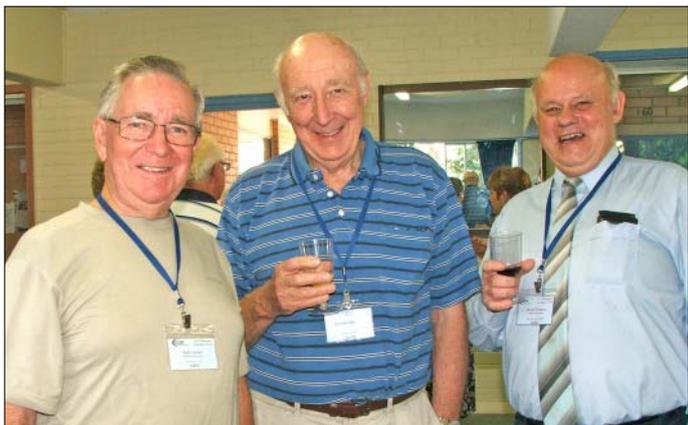
**Pix from Launch
of new premises**



Robyn Morgan & Marie Thompson take a well-earned break.



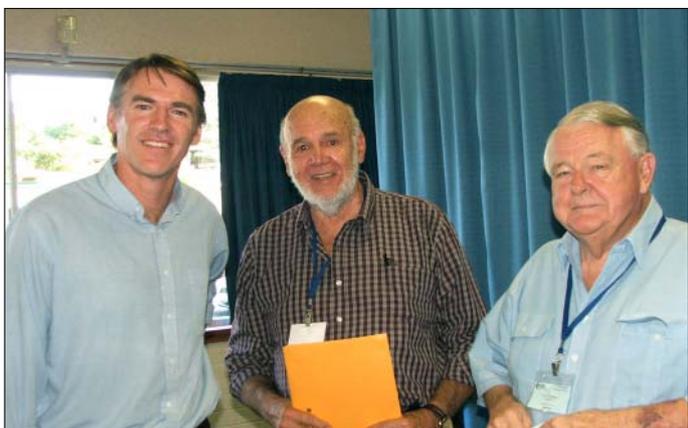
Delwyn Hatton, Judith Wallis & Anita Delhunty.



Bob Gerdes, Charles Harbon & Brian Tolagson enjoying the afternoon.



Des Davis, Eric Graham, Peter Besseling MP & Frank Jennings.



Rob Oakeshott MP, Des Davis & Eric Graham.



Helen Crossley, Glenda & Laurie Barber & Fred O'Toole.



Joan Loerch, Margaret Lennon, Doreen & Len Clark & Bryon Lennon.



Anthony Roberts MP & Leslie Williams joined U3A members at the official launch of the new U3A premises.

Messages of Congratulations to the PMH U3A on the official launch of the new U3A premises at Warlters Street, Port Macquarie

Behind the Headlines

I've seen some great headlines in my time
an elderly person recalled
In 2005 one such announced a meeting for those of us with some recall
A Port Macquarie U3A was formed and in that year
Behind The Headlines began to appear.
Now in 2010 the best headline to come the opening of this, our very own home.
Congratulations everyone.

— Frank Jennings & Behind the Headlines class

From The French Class

Bienvenue à tous, pour
l'inauguration de notre quartier
général !

Merci de votre présence et de votre
aide.

Vive notre fraternité !

Translation:

Welcome all for the inauguration of our
headquarters.

Thanks for your presence and your help/
support. Long live our fraternity/
< brotherhood > !

Quotes from famous people — from the Investing in Shares class

"Hell, there are no rules here—we're trying to accomplish something." — **Thomas Alva Edison**

"Spectacular achievements are always preceded by unspectacular preparation." — **Roger Staubach**

"Good leadership involves responsibility to the welfare of the group, which means that some people will get angry at your actions and decisions. It's inevitable, if you're honorable.

"Trying to get everyone to like you is a sign of mediocrity; you'll avoid the tough decisions, you'll avoid confronting the people who need to be confronted, and you'll avoid offering differential rewards based on differential performance because some people might get upset." — **Colin Powell**

Look at a day when you are supremely satisfied at the end. It's not a day when you lounge around doing nothing. It's when you've had everything to do, and you've done it." — **Margaret Thatcher**

You must give some time to your fellow men. Even if it's a little thing, do something for others – something for which you get no pay but the privilege of doing it.
— **Albert Schweitzer**

A very short Ode to Opening Day from Monday History Group

What a day

For U 3 A

No need to roam

We have a home

And the feeling is great

As the groups relate

The mystery

Of History

Not concealed

But all revealed

As we learn and find

We nourish the mind

In no small way

At U 3 A.

— **KEVIN BAKER 23/3/2010**

More Congratulatory Messages from our members.

Congratulations from the U3A Folk Dancers

Russia and Holland and many many more
Are countries we visit on Monday's morn;
Feet and brains mostly ready for the fray
With a heel and toe and maybe a sway.
Dancers twirling, smiling and chatting;
Come on now ladies let's keep tapping.
Worries and woes fly out of the door;
We will be dancing forever more.
U3A, U3A, we are the best;
Join in the fun and never rest.

Congratulations, U3A, on attaining a
permanent home.

From Christine Battison
and the U3A Folk Dancers

Telegram from the DESTINATIONS Class

Telegram to: U3A PORT
MACQUARIE-HASTINGS
WARLTERS ST, PORT
MACQUARIE NSW 2444
CONGRATULATIONS STOP
LEARNING AND TRAVEL
GO HAND IN HAND STOP
CONVENOR OF DESTINATIONS
STOP WARREN SCOTT STOP
Date 23rd March 2010
Time 10 h. 20 m.

THE U3A WRITING GROUP

I sometimes picture our small writing group as a
panel of 'medical experts'.
Each week we bring along our written creations,
be they poems, articles, essays or memoirs. There
our 'babies' are examined by the other members of
the group.

The panel, after listening intently to the description
of 'our babies' offer their advice on their health.

One of the group, who I shall refer to as 'the Scalpel',
cuts right to the heart of the matter, with little
blood loss. Next on the panel, is the 'Psychiatrist',
who with steepled fingers declares everything
mentally sound. Following around the table we
come to the 'Head Nurse', whose soothing tone is
like a cool compress on the author's worried brow.
Sometimes words that act like a comforting pat on
the arm, are added.

Next is the 'Radiologist', who comments on the
'bones' of the article. The structure and strength
are his or her forte. The panel also consists of a
'Neurologist', and a 'Cardiologist'. All this field of
expertise rotates around the table, each member
playing a different role every week.

Our 'babies' always end being declared fit and
healthy and of course everyone is a beautiful child.
(Now everyone say 'ah'.)

David Curry

Human Geography Group

Congratulations to U3A
On the opening of our long-awaited premises
March 23rd 2010

It's a most just outcome after the striving of so
many talented people over 5 years.

I am reminded that justice can be difficult to
find.

If justice prevailed, Elvis would live but the
impersonators would be dead.

If justice prevailed, John would live but Yoko
have been shot.

If justice prevailed, Lara Bingle would have met
Sam Clark who played for Campsie C-Grade
and we'd never have heard of her.

Justice is rare but it has prevailed here.

Congratulations again from the long-serving
battlers of the Human Geography group

Keith Windschuttle – A History Lesson

Keith Windschuttle, a well-known historian and journalist addressed 98 members and friends of PMH U3A at our “new” home in Warlters Street on Thursday 25th of March. His topic was “Historical Truth, Postmodern Theory and the Fabrication of Aboriginal History,” which, I’m sure you will agree, is a rather challenging topic.



Keith Windschuttle

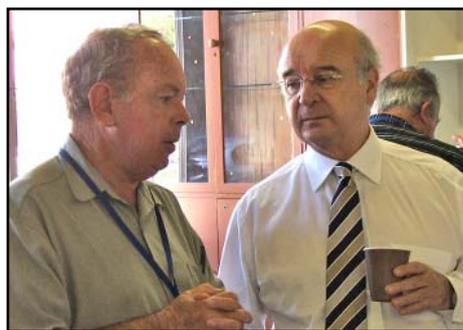
He began by giving us his opinion of truth and he cleverly aligned himself with Thucydides, the Greek historian who is widely regarded as the father of scientific history. I’m not sure that we were entirely convinced however it was a clever ploy.

His explanation of the Postmodern Theory was interesting. This is something relatively new (about 40 years old) and whereas previously the recording of history was mainly the history of grand people and grand events, the postmodernists started to record what they called social history which is basically the effects that these grand people and grand events have on average people like you and me. He went on to explain how the postmodernists believe that the history of fringe groups such as gay & lesbians, the disabled, the underprivileged and of course the aborigines along with many other fringe groups must be told. It is particularly with regard to the recording and interpreting of aboriginal history that he draws swords with the postmodernists. Windschuttle believes that their research has been sloppy, superficial and in many

cases downright dishonest just to fit in with their political agenda. He backed up his argument by citing that most academic historians in Australia had a background of socialist politics and he particularly mentioned Professor Ann Curthoys whose family, he stated, has been aligned with the Communist party for over fifty years. He also stated that it was impossible to get a job in an Australian university today unless you were aligned to the views of professor Stuart Mc Intyre.

So, where to from here? Whilst I can accept many of Windschuttle’s arguments I feel that he is perceived as being aligned with the right and perhaps even the far right. What we need is a group of young academic students to painstakingly research Windschuttle’s arguments together with Professor Reynolds’ arguments in an endeavour to seek the truth. This could only happen if they were guaranteed immunity from ridicule and academic persecution. Unfortunately this is a pipe dream.

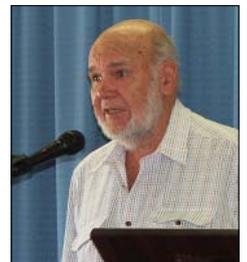
I feel that it was very kind of Windschuttle to visit us and perhaps one day we may be able to encourage his nemesis, Henry Reynolds to visit us and give us his side of the story. — *Eric Graham* ■



Laurie Barber with Keith Windschuttle.

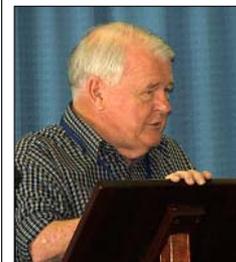
U3A marked Seniors Week with a special guest speaker

Thursday, 25th March, President Des Davis welcomed members and guests to our recently launched premises to mark Seniors Week with special



Des Davis

guest lecturer Keith Windschuttle. Eric Graham, our resident history enthusiast, introduced well-known historian



Eric Graham

Mr. Windschuttle who spoke for approximately an hour telling us of his research and insight into Aboriginal history in Australia. At the end of his lecture Mr. Windschuttle

accepted questions and comments from the audience. Neil Buxton, another of our popular historians, then thanked our guest and presented him with a small gift of appreciation.



Neil Buxton

Following the interesting history session, members & guests adjourned for sandwiches, sweets, coffee and tea beautifully organised by the History group ladies. A big

thank you to all who were involved with organising the day; well done! ■



History buffs gathered to hear noted historian Keith Windschuttle.

Next Open Day

Our first Open Day for 2010 will be on Thursday April 22nd. We have had two very successful open events during Seniors Week but this Open Day will follow the pattern of last year's with an open forum giving members a chance to hear about developments, to ask questions of the committee and to voice their own views and concerns.

I hear the occasional complaint that members are not consulted. They are of course, on an informal, often one-on-one basis with committee members but with 400 members, anything beyond that is difficult. Newsletters now come out twice each term, the web site carries news, and the office is open every morning in term.

Open Days, however, are specifically designed for a more complete level of communication within the membership. And to give the day spice, we have some special presentations in the second half. We are still planning this so it will be a surprise. Watch the web site or the

noticeboard for details. In the past the day has been enriched by a morning tea of scones. Once again we will try for a free morning tea beyond the usual bickies.

Put the date in your calendar **April 22nd at 10.00am, RSVP by April 19th** to the office. Remember our hall will only hold 120 so first in first served. — *Des Davis* ■

What's In a Name?

So far we have been content to call it Warlters Street or the Premises or our new home. Can we do better? Do we want a simple description such as U3A Learning Centre or just U3A Centre, do we want mythology e.g. Minerva Centre after the Roman God of Learning, do we want to commemorate a great scholar such as Erasmus or an Historic figure such as Macquarie, or a modern icon such as Bart Simpson? Maybe we should have a debate and a vote on all suggestions at the next Open Day. — *Des Davis* ■

Thank you David De Giustino

One of our Conveners, David De Giustino, is off overseas for the next few months. He has been invited to be the guest lecturer at the University of Ontario in Canada for the next semester.

We certainly are grateful to David for the generous contribution of his time in conducting the U3A courses in art history. The courses that he has run have both been popular. This is not surprising considering not only his depth of knowledge but also his dry sense of humor. (Mind you, anybody that loves Tim Tams the way that David does must be a very discerning person.) The people attending his 19th Century Art class can attest to this.

When David returns he has indicated his willingness to continue giving classes in one of the areas of interest to him, and us. We are certainly looking forward to that. Thank you, David! — *Ken Johns* ■

More Pix from Keith Windschuttle History Day – U3A Seniors Week Celebrations



Bob Morgan & Eric Graham.



Delicious sandwiches & sweets after.



Lin & Prue Van Copenhagen & Del Hatton at "History Day".



Janet Cruikshank, Judy & Kevin Baker in deep conversation.

BYRNES & COX LAWYERS

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A Reputation Built on Results

Adult Instrumental Learning Program

The Port Macquarie Hastings Municipal Band offers an "Adult Instrumental Learning Program" for those who wish to play an instrument such as flute, clarinet, saxophone, trumpet, trombone, french horn, tuba, baritone/euphonium, percussion/drums. The Program is conducted over two terms on Tuesdays from 5.05pm to 6.05pm and the first Term is now open. It is held at the Band's headquarters in the

Mac Adams Music Centre, off Gordon Street.

Term fees are payable and instruments can be hired for use by the attendees. The aim is to graduate people at a standard to play in the Band's "New Notes" beginner Unit. Graduates can enjoy playing in this supportive group of enthusiastic players, with the prospect of other progression.

The Program offers adults

an exciting opportunity to learn a Band instrument and to enter the rich life experience of a community band. Enquiries to enrol can be made to the Band's Tutor, Anne Geoghegan on 0413 622 466 or 6584 8502. ■

her English Master from her high school days at Kempsey High, the venerable and respected Gordon Gibson. "He got me an 'A' in English grammar," she said. "What a thrill to meet him again."

Robyn went on to be a teacher herself. "I taught 600 kids to read," she proudly recalls. Gordon transferred to a senior role at Newcastle High and headmaster at Bathurst and Melville (Kempsey) High Schools. He retired to Port Macquarie with wife Peg and was a foundation member of U3A. — *Brian Tolagson* ■

From the past!

When Robyn Gale joined the Geography group in February, little did she realise she would renew an acquaintance from her high school days in 1964. Sitting a few seats away was

If undelivered return to:

Port Macquarie Hastings U3A Inc
PO Box 1210
Port Macquarie
NSW 2444

**SURFACE
 MAIL**

Patron	
Robert Oakeshott MP	
President	
Dr Des Davis OAM	6583 9105
Vice President	
Brian Tolagson	6583 4384
Secretary	
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Treasurer	
Kevin Pike	6583 7720
Membership Secretary	
Bob Gerdes	6584 0377
Course Coordinator	
Ursula Bruce	6583 8030
Publicity Officer	
Delwyn Hatton	6582 1885
Committee Members	
Eric Graham	6582 7491
Frank Jennings	6584 5425
Marie Thompson	6582 7550
Newsletter Publisher	
Sue Clifford	6582 0424
Webmaster	
Nick Ogbourne	6586 1627
www.pmhu3a.org.au	

ENROLMENT DAY – 20 April 2010 1.30 – 2.30pm at the U3A premises on Warlters Street (site of the old St Josephs High School) Port Macquarie.

ENROLMENT will not be accepted for **NEW** courses prior to the official enrolment day.

NOTE: We are unable to process postal enrolments; however, someone else may enrol for you.

LATE ENROLMENT up to 3 weeks after the start of a course are welcome in many courses. You **MUST** contact the Course Convenor first to ascertain if additional members are being accepted.

For late enrolment, you pay only for the rest of the term. Pay at the office or post your remittance to the Treasurer with a covering note

and initial the attendance form to show you have paid. If less than \$5 is owed, postage stamps will be accepted as payment. Names cannot be entered on the Attendance Sheet unless accommodation fees have been paid. Money **CANNOT** be paid to the Course Convenor during the term.

NAME BADGES – ALWAYS wear your name badge when attending classes and U3A activities. Write your emergency contact details on the back of your badge.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS OR EMAIL – Please inform the Office on 6584 3676 if you move house or change your email address.

NEWSLETTER contributions are welcome – We reserve the right to edit material submitted for

publication. Copyright of original material remains with the author.

PHOTOGRAPHS AND PRIVACY – If you have an objection to having your photograph in the on-line gallery (or in our Newsletter), please write to the Secretary and make this fact known. We will always respect your privacy but must first be aware of your need.

DISCLAIMER – Opinions expressed here or in PMHU3A activities are not necessarily those of PMHU3A or its officers. PMHU3A accepts no responsibility for statements or opinions expressed. PMHU3A offers courses that provide general information for its members. PMHU3A does not warrant that such information is true and correct.