President – Mike Loftus

Dear Members

Term 1 ,2026 is well underway and many of you are enjoying participating in some of the myriad of courses that U3A Sunshine Coast has to offer. For all our new members, welcome to the oldest U3A in Queensland. Term 1 has also seen an increase of 100 members in comparison to February 2025.

2026 is a momentous year for U3A Sunshine Coast as we celebrate our 40th Anniversary. For some us 1986 still feels like yesterday but I'm sure those of you who were around in those foundation years, will have noticed momentous changes.

The year has started of in spectacular fashion for one of our members who was awarded an OAM in the Australia Day Awards. Our heartfelt congratulations to Patricia Barry on this extremely well deserved honour.

We are also incredibly proud to celebrate Patricia and Tony Barry, who have been honoured with a National Award for Long Service with the Ithaca–Caloundra Surf Life Saving Club.

NEW NAME BADGE

As part of our 40th Anniversary , all members will be receiving a new name badge which we hope to receive in March and distribute by the start of Term 2.

Other opportunities to participate in our 40th Anniversary celebrations can be seen further on in this newsletter.

MORNING TEA

All members are cordially invited to the Semester One Morning Tea. This event was very successful last year with over 90 members attending. This year's event will be on TUESDAY 31ST MARCH at KAWANA SURF CLUB, 10.00 AM TO 11.30 AM.

The event is **free** for all members and morning tea will be provided. **However, it is important that all members register for the event and provide any dietary requirements. We need to provide exact numbers to the venue for catering purposes and we cannot accept non registered arrivals on the day.**

You can register for this event by via the U3A Sunshine Coast website here

The closing date for registrations is 5PM TUESDAY 24TH MARCH.

NETWORK CONFERENCE

As part of our 40th Anniversary celebration, U3A Sunshine Coast are hosting the Annual U3A Network Conference. This will take place at the University of the Sunshine Coast and the Bower Tree on Tuesday 12th May through to Thursday 14th May.

There are a wide variety of speakers and some interesting topics, including Rob Brough, the former Channel 7 media personality and a Sunshine Coast resident.

U3A Sunshine Coast are offering 10 free Conference Registrations (these are for the day time sessions at the University only. But they include free parking, a conference bag, and all meals and refreshments) to the first 10 members who send an email to secretary@u3asunshine.org.au Please provide your name, membership number and dietary requirements.

Other members who wish to attend will need to pay the Conference Registration Fee of $110 and this will be for the for the day time sessions at the University only. But they include free parking, a conference bag, and all meals and refreshments.

Members will need to register via the **U3A Network Queensland Website link here** Conference 2026.

All members are also invited to the two Evening events that are part of the Conference. These will both be held at The Bower Tree, Sippy Downs Drive (Level 1 Conference Rooms)

It will be great to see as many members attending these events and providing a show of force of the support for your own organisation.

The first event is on TUESDAY 12TH MAY, 6pm to 8 pm. This will be a cocktail style event with canapes served from 6.30-7.30pm, a cash bar and entertainment provided by Sunshine Coast duo, Sam and Gemm.

The cost for this event is $25 per person.

The second event may well be considered to be the highlight of the Conference, the Annual Dinner. This will be on WEDNESDAY 13TH MAY (6.30 for a 7pm start). The guest speaker will be Spencer Howson, the very popular former ABC Radio Breakfast host.

The cost for this event will be $70 per person which includes a 3 course meal and a drink on arrival. Great value!!

You can register and pay for both of these events via the **U3A Network Queensland website.**

SOCIAL MEDIA

Term 1 2026 has also seen a remarkable rise in our Social Media viewing figures. Last year we averaged around just over 3,000 views on the majority of our posts. This year we have already two posts with over 4,000 views and recently one with over 6,000! This is entirely due to the great work

done by our Social Media Manager, Judy Wells. Judy ensures that we get almost daily posts on Facebook and it is a credit to her efforts that we are attracting these remarkable numbers.

MOOLOOLABA ROTARY PRESENTATION

Finally, I had the pleasure of speaking to the Mooloolaba Rotary Club last Monday and it was interesting to see how both organisations share many common values. What was even more heartening was that all of the members present indicated that they were aware of U3A and a few of them were all ready members. The hospitality I received from the Rotary Club was excellent and well appreciated

Treasurer – Karen Martin

2025 year overview
Our revenue from enrolments has almost equalled our venue expenditure for the year 2025, taking into account not just venue hire but purchase of equipment that has a short life, as well as the expenditure of refunds which equalled $4,029 for 2025.

Another expense is tutor travel expenditure, especially when the tutor lives quite a distance from where the course is held.

The total amount of GST that was paid to the government was $11,814.50

2026

It was encouraging to see people using our online payment system of Paypal, which requires no intervention to update our database, our busiest time February went smoothly and the office staff did a great job as usual assisting those who wished to pay over the phone. It is good to remember the volunteers are only there 3 hours a day and process a large volume of payments.

Secretary – Brian Wells

The year has got off to a flying start. Enrolments and the commencement of courses for Term One have gone very smoothly, particularly with the assistance of our office volunteers in handling enquiries.

We have a busy year ahead and look forward to celebrating our fortieth anniversary—an important milestone, as we are the oldest U3A in Queensland. A number of key dates for the year have now been set and can be found on our website here. Please check from time to time as dates can change and other dates may be added.

To keep up to date with other news and activities that continually occurring please check our Facebook page. A great way to see what everybody is up to.

I look forward to seeing you at these events throughout the year.

Tutor & Course Coordinator – Bonnie Schultz

Hello all tutors, I am your new Tutor and Course Coordinator. I have taken over from Helen Sava who has recently retired from the role. My main job is to liaise with current and new tutors, to provide appropriate courses for members.

Some numbers for 2026 – there are 142 tutors currently offering 131 Courses or activities this year, so far, with 17 new courses or activities starting for Term 1 this year. Seven course or activities have waitlists so I am looking for volunteers to add new courses to absorb these members. You can contact me at courses@u3asunshine.org.au

Committee Member – Helen Sava

I commenced in June 2024 as Courses Coordinator 2, then took over as well Courses Coordinator 1 when it became vacant. Later on I moved up to Course Coordinator and remained in that position until my resignation on the 31st January 2026.
As a member of the Management Committee I continue to attend Monthly meetings and Conference Planning meetings.

Systems Officer – Grant Matthews

The rollover of courses from 2025 to 2026 was achieved with a minimum of fuss. It was pleasing to see a number of new courses being offered this year and the take up by members was excellent with 131 courses on offer. Enrolments of most courses has been excellent which means we are offering courses that appeal to our members.

Tutors Advisory Group (TAG) – Anne Lyons

New Tutor Morning Tea – Hosted by the Tutor Advisory Group

The theme for the recent Morning Tea for new tutors was "Welcome to the Tutor Community of U3A Sunshine Coast" eld at U3A Facilities at UniSc. In all, twelve new Tutors attended, meeting with the Management Committee members who support Tutors.

A new online Tutor Handbook
A new online version of the Tutors Handbook was distributed to all Tutors on Monday 2 February, along with an updated U-MAS User Guide for Tutors. Tutors can find these new support tools on the U3A SC web page here.

Member Bio - Elena Patten

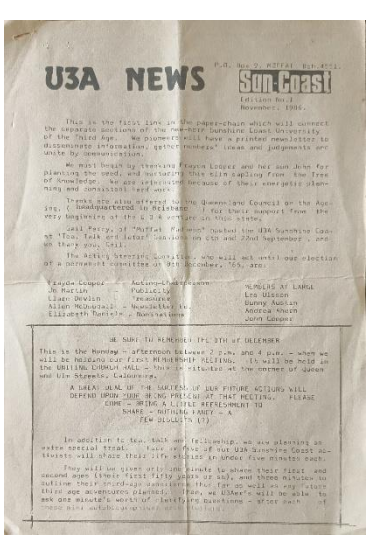
Elena Patten has been part of U3A Sunshine Coast since its beginnings, listed as a Spanish tutor in our first 1986 newsletter and involved in early planning in 1984. Now 85, she continues teaching Spanish and piano with inspiring dedication.
Read her full story on our Facebook page

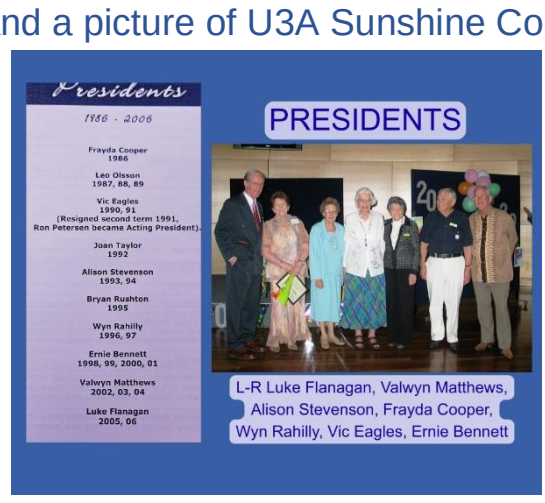
A FEW PHOTOS FROM THINGS THAT OCCURRED IN THE TERM

(go to our Facebook page to read more on these stories and so much more!!!)

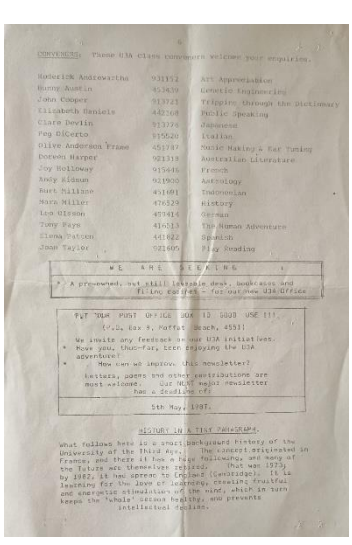
DOWN MEMORY LANE

Here are some excerpts from the first newsletter from 40 years ago and a picture of U3A Sunshine Coast


U3A NEWS
Sun Coast



Presidents 1986-2006



Social Media

If you have any photos, articles about your classes, book reviews, or restaurant recommendations you would like featured on our Facebook page, please send them to social@u3asunshine.org.au
We would love to share them, these posts are always popular and receive plenty of views!

Facebook Link

Instagram Link

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