

U3A
Third Thoughts
Castlemaine Inc (Est. 1988)

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Reg. A0017409G



Graeme hard at work judging the limerick.



Morning tea in the crater of Mount Franklin.



BYO lunch at the Quarry Street gardens at Trentham.



Morning Tea.

Pictures show some of the lucky few who set out on Graeme and Jane Quinn's Annual Mystery Tour. If you didn't join us you missed a treat. Excellent weather, beautiful country and a first class social event. Thanks G and J, you put in a big effort each year and always come up with a tour of local interest, fun and beauty.

AT THE APRIL COFFEE MORNING ... Our guest speaker was Peter Perry, Director of Castlemaine's prestigious Art Gallery, who told us about the exhibition of 'Scottish Painters in Australia' which was to open the following day, running in conjunction with the Castlemaine State Festival and until the 8th of May.

Peter was very enthusiastic and justifiably proud of this coming together of over 100 beautiful artworks of the finest Scottish artists to work in Australia, borrowed from other regional and interstate galleries as well as from private collections, and in combination with those already belonging to our own Art Gallery. This is the first time ever for this number of Scottish pictures of major artists to come together and probably will never do so again after the pictures return to their respective home bases, at the end of this exhibition. Three of Castlemaine's galleries had to be denuded of resident pictures in order to fit this number of paintings in, a time-consuming and meticulous task for Peter and his Curator Kirsten McKay.

To source and gather in all these pictures took over 2 years in organising and included delicate negotiations with the Queensland Art Gallery for three of their pictures. Naturally an exhibition of this importance has been indemnified by the Victorian State Government. The pictures are a combination of Impressionists, contemporary and modern.

Artists in this exhibition include such names as Edwin Atkinson Cornell, born in Bacchus Marsh of Scottish parents, and who went on to become one of the "Glasgow Boys". Some others represented are John Maiden, Robert Campbell, Max Meldrum, Rupert Bunney, John Mather, John Ford Patterson, Hugh Ramsay, Ian Fairweather, Euen Heng, Yvonne Boag, and Robert MacLaurin whose "Leaving Cairn Curran, Evening 2009" oil on linen, is borrowed from a private collection. You will also see a nice portrait of David Mitchell, given to Castlemaine Art Gallery by his daughter, Nellie Melba.

Also included is William Frater (the Stormy Petrel), born in Scotland 1890 who became apprenticed in stained glass studios in Glasgow before emigrating to Australia, then returned to Glasgow. After returning once again to Australia he met and was influenced by Max Meldrum. After marrying, in 1923 he had a change in style becoming influenced by Cezanne. Eventually he taught painting at RMIT Art School and had numerous trips to Central Australia. His works can be seen in many galleries round Australia as well as the Glasgow National Gallery. He died in 1974.

The Scottish artists of Australia at the time 'The Golden Age of Plein Aire', seemed to have a natural affinity with artists from France and the Netherlands. One such (Hugh ?) Ramsay came back to Australia from Paris, and died aged 28 after contracting TB while working there.

When you are reading this, time will be quickly running out for you to see this exhibition if you haven't already done so, and only 500 catalogues were printed. Castlemaine can be very boastful of its important place among regional art galleries. While you are there, check out the raffle being run by the gallery. 1st prize is a beautiful ceramic bowl and 2nd prize, a very good malt whiskey.

In conjunction with this is, an exhibition of paintings by a Contemporary Scottish artist born in 1961, is now showing for a short time, at the Penny School in Maldon.

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At the *other* University

Come and hear internationally renowned scientist Dr Brian Boyle talk about the world's next mega-science project.

The \$2.5bn Square Kilometre Array (SKA) radio telescope will be 50 times more sensitive and will survey the sky 10,000 times faster than any existing telescope. As part of a new generation of great astronomical observatories, it will significantly advance our understanding of the evolution of the universe. Australia and New Zealand have been shortlisted as one of two potential locations for the SKA.

Wednesday 11th May 2011 – 6.30 pm – The Circular Theatre, La Trobe University, Bendigo Campus, Edwards Road, Flora Hill (enter via gate 4) – RSVP by Monday 9th May, T 03 5444 7374 or e-mail via bendigo-events@latrobe.edu.au

Refreshments will be served following this lecture.

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Tuesdays, 1.30 pm – 3.30 pm

Wednesdays, 10 am – 12 noon

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Current 2011 Subscription Fee

\$40.00 + \$10.00 for mailing of newsletter if required.

Members joining after June 30 pay 50% of the
subscription fee.

**PLEASE INFORM THE OFFICE
OF ANY CHANGE IN YOUR
CONTACT DETAILS**

Friday Coffee Morning Roster

6th May: Table Tennis & Tai Chi

3rd June: Australian History & Ballet

Coffee Mornings are held on the first
Friday in the month at 10.00 am
in the Uniting Church Hall

Committee Meetings

are held on the third
Tuesday in the month at 1.00 pm
in the Kindergarten Room,
at the Uniting Church Complex.

ON SECOND THOUGHTS

The Scottish themed "Happy Hour" in the refurbished Band Practice room at the Botanical Gardens was well attended, but will be the **last** one now until October when the weather starts to warm up again.

New U3A Member's Day at Jane and Graeme Quinn's home was very well attended by over 20 of this years new members. After a few short welcome talks from Peter, Win and Barbara, it was over to each new member to give a brief introductory chat about themselves and their interests, and what they'd like to gain from their involvement with U3A. Barbara asked if new members would send in a short profile of themselves, preferably with a small photo, for inclusion in forthcoming newsletters. So far there has been a pleasing response from Jo Orgill and we thank her for that. Now we look forward to others coming in soon. The e-mail address is in the front of the newsletter. With only two or three exceptions it seems you are all new-comers to Castlemaine so we hope you have settled in well and that you find new friends and much to interest you in our U3A. There certainly seems to be an abundance of talent amongst you. One thing that came out of these introductory chats was the request that perhaps a U3A Golf Group could be formed. Then it was time to share a sumptuous afternoon tea with lots of friendly chat. Thanks Jane and Graeme for offering your home once again for this annual event.

The request for an historian to write up our U3A history has been answered by Betty Henschman and Val Anderson. Thanks ladies, we look forward to the results of your toils.

Lyn Bird from Castlemaine Health will be the guest speaker at our next coffee morning on Friday 6th May.

The U3A Network Conference is coming round again; 9th – 11th May, in the Melbourne Town Hall. Peter Stephens has said he will go on the Monday and Tuesday and Betty Johnson will go on the Wednesday.

For those of you who are looking for something different to do in the coming weeks our own U3A's Tony Morton will be strutting his stuff on the stage of the Bluestone Theatre, Hutton Street, Kyneton, when the Kyneton Theatre Company present Gilbert and Sullivan's "HMS Pinafore". Get in quick for your tickets now that his secret is out. They'll sell like hot cakes. April 29th – May 21st. Tickets are \$15 concession or \$20 adult and \$12 for a group of 10 or more. Phone to book on 5422 0831

Or you might like to pop down to Melbourne for 75 minutes of a Magical Musical Morning with Johnathon Welch @ St Michaels Uniting Church. May 17th – June 21st, \$15 pp includes morning tea.

From Sally there is the news that distinguished Australian art historian and Director of the Ian Potter Museum of Art at the University of Melbourne Dr Chris McAuliffe has been appointed to the chair of Australian Studies at Harvard University for the 2011/2012 academic year. Sally will be able to tell us more about his visit on June 3rd at the coffee morning.

And lastly but not least, **Say hello to new U3A member** Sandy Dunne. Welcome Sandy. Perhaps we'll see you at the next coffee morning.

~ BarB

Deadline for the June Newsletter is 3 pm Monday 23rd May

Aboriginal history – Our shared history

Felicity say 5472 1841

Please note: *This class is full at the present time. Members of U3A interested in joining should ring Felicity who will create a waiting list. Should a space in the class become available, they will be notified.*

3rd MAY

The removal of Aboriginal people from the desert in the 1960s will be the subject of our last session. We'll journey back to the Percival Lakes in the Great Sandy Desert with a group of former desert dwellers, who also left many decades earlier.

17th MAY

Today's session will focus on the remarkable and controversial murder case from the 1950s – the Rupert Max Stuart trial.

ART DRAWING

paula paas 0438 657 588

The Art Drawing Group have been busy for the last month exploring print making using monoprint techniques and making linocut prints which have been printed in both black and white, and coloured inks. It has been a lot of fun with everyone mastering the cutting of lino blocks and rolling inks to obtain a good print. We looked at design aspects of using these methods and were very pleased with our results. These photos of some of our prints show what we have achieved. Some people also tried wood cuts, and while cutting a woodblock is more difficult than cutting lino blocks, attractive prints were obtained.

Currently we are doing drawing/paintings with soft pastels on velour pastel paper and finding it is so much nicer than the traditional pastel papers as less dust is created. This makes it easier to keep work clean and fresh looking. Our subjects for these exercises are autumn themed still life with assorted vegetables, fruits and leaves.

Sorry Paula I couldn't use your photos. Will have them on the notice board at the coffee morning. Ed

Australian history

Geoff Walker 5470 6652

During April and May, because of the ANZAC commemorations, we have been hearing about involvements from local Castlemaine residents in military service. In April we only had one session (the 4th Monday was Easter Monday / Anzac Day holiday). At this session we heard from our guest, Dr John Kenley, who, during WW11 served in the radar group, and spent most of his time at Exmouth Gulf – a most informative story. John was the Castlemaine Anzac Day Service guest speaker.

At the first session in May, **Monday 9th** at 2.00 pm, Lin Macdonald will let us know what life was like in the WRAAF. Did you see her story in the April 21st issue of *The Castlemaine Mail*? At the second May session, **Monday 23rd** at 2.00 pm, our guest speaker will be Keith Falconer, a Castlemaine RSL member, who during WW11 worked with a group de-cyphering the Japanese codes that enabled the Australian and American forces to be ready for the Coral Sea battle. Both of these sessions will be in the Presbyterian Church Hall, Lyttleton Street. You will be most welcome.

COMPUTER GROUPS

LYN HALL 5472 2316

Is your computer sitting idle? If so, wipe off the dust and come to the Octopus where we'll show you how to crank it up again. Wednesdays, 1.30 pm – 3.30 pm with Shane Doyle (by appointment) or Friday mornings with Lyn and Betty, to learn new things such as Basic Skills in Word, Internet, e-bay, Picasa, or anything else you want to know about. We have U3A computers or you can bring your own laptop. Shane can be contacted on 5472 4017. Contact Lyn on 5472 2316 or Betty on 5472 3834.

FAMILY HISTORY

VERONICA HURLEY 5472 1383

Starting on Monday 2nd May, 1.30pm at Veronica's home, and thereafter each Monday at the Octopus. Numbers are encouraging which means that occasionally we may need to divide. In the meantime give some thought as to which branch of the subject most interests you. E.g. Recording your family Tree on one of the programs we have. Researching on the Web. Using public resources. Preserving artifacts. Searching Vic. S.A. & Tas. Births, Marriages and Deaths. Nothing will be set in concrete but we will discuss all possibilities at our first meeting. Give Veronica a ring for directions to her home.

Friday morning garden group

Shirley Curnow 5472 1729

For the April gathering we made our way to Gary's *Butterflies, Orchids and Natives* place at Harcourt. Gary's talk was so interesting, and the group had so many questions, that we didn't get beyond the orchids and their propagation, feeding, care and support in our strange weather conditions. We came away with a number of specimens in our cars, and folk who are keen to start in a new field of interest.

In May, **Friday 20th**, we shall meet in the UCA car park, at 10.00 am, before heading to the *Central and Northern Victorian Indigenous Nursery and Wildflower Farm*, at 230 Tannery Lane, Mandurang, when Ashley Elliott will look after us in explaining how to be involved in goldfields re-vegetation in our gardens. After this, we will probably join together for some lunch in Spring Gully. You will be most welcome to join us.

GEOLOGY OF CASTLEMAINE

Julian Hollis

Julian Hollis's course "Before Castlemaine" was an exciting and astonishing revelation to the large group who attended his weekly sessions. For those of you who were unable to attend, the notes from this course are available online. Go to our website <http://www.u3acastlemaine.com/> and click "Courses 2011", click on the heading "Before Castlemaine" and you will get an overview.

Click each item at the left and the notes and diagrams for each session will download. It is possible this course will be repeated later in the year and on a different day.

~ Win Jodell

Sorry Sue, I couldn't use your photos. Will put them on the notice board at the next coffee morning. Ed.

ISSUES OF CONCERN

CAROL DORMAN 5472 4429

Why we were asking, is thorium not used in nuclear fuelled power stations, instead of uranium? A thorium reactor can be designed to burn plutonium thus reducing the amount of plutonium waste needing long term storage and security. Plutonium has a half life of 24,000 years. Thorium is more common than uranium and more of the mined thorium can be used instead of the 0.7% of mined uranium that is used now. An issues member voiced the thought that thorium is not used because it does not produce a waste that can be used in weapons. Subsequent research found that the World Nuclear Association's website has a great deal of information on the subject – some of it technical but a lot is quite understandable to the layman. The conclusion the WNA comes to is that a lot of development work is still necessary before the thorium fuel cycle can be commercialised. It seems unlikely that the effort required to research and overcome cost and technical problems will not be made while uranium is so plentiful.

Some inspiring news – the Youth Streets Program is run by the Salvation Army and Melbourne City Council. 100 volunteers, mostly in their early to mid 20s patrol the streets of Melbourne on Friday and Saturday nights diffusing potentially dangerous situations and helping young people reach home safely. Since December 2010 3,000 young people have been helped. The Police are supportive and often refer young people to the “chill-out zone”. The program runs in Bourke Street.

The Federal Court is to rule on whether mining licences were invalidly granted to Fortescue Metals (“Twiggy” Forrest) by the Western Australian Government before agreement on compensation was reached between the company and the aboriginal owners of the land. Fortescue Metals has offered \$10m/year to the Yindjibarndi people, but Elder, Michael Woodley wants four times as much; as his people, their land and religious sites will be devastated by the mining activities. Michael Woodley has rejected offers of jobs and training as “just another attempt at white assimilation”. There is a break-away group who want to accept Fortescue's original offer.

John Menadue, who was involved in developing Medicare, recently spoke at the 11th National Rural Health Conference. He advocates that urgent health reform is needed and should involve the following: concentration of primary care, a National Broadband Network to speed up information transfer, informed and open discussion on where the health dollar is spent – priorities are rural, Indigenous and mental health and finally, upgrading and re-skilling of allied health practitioners e.g. nurse practitioners, pharmacists, ambulance officers – he claims these sort of people are needed more than extra doctors.

All those who are interested in the Great Aquatic Centre are encouraged to read the information on the subject on the Castlemaine Independent website.

Vic Say has agreed to attend the Issues session on **Friday 13th May** to discuss issues concerning Sudan. Issues to be discussed include separation and oil, media, history, geography, women's health, education and the place of women and children. Interested U3A members are welcome to attend. Please ring to let me know if you will be coming. I can be contacted on 5472 4429 or by mobile number 0427 831 426.

~ oOo ~

From the President

On a gorgeous autumn day Graeme Quinn sent us out on roads less travelled through central Victoria to a delightful picnic spot. What a shame no more than seven vehicles participated in the car rally. Next year I hope to see many more members join in with this Mystery Tour. Thanks to Jane and Graeme for all the time and effort that goes into organising such an event for our pleasure!

Our success in offering over 60 classes (thank you volunteers), means that suitable accommodation is very difficult to find. We rely on members opening their homes to run many of our classes. Your committee recognises that accommodation will not get any easier to find and its scarcity will limit the number and type of classes that can be held. With this in mind we have formed a working group to look at all our accommodation needs. I hope to report again on this initiative in a few months time. Don't forget if you want to know in detail what your committee is doing the minutes of our meetings are on our website.

~ Peter Stephens

MEMOIR WRITING

The Memoir Writing group is now in its second year and has just finished first term. It seems that there are always memories – of people, dreams, desires, and happenings that call out to be told. Those memories can be sad, poignant, funny, informative, and sometimes exotic – as in Monique’s intriguing ‘The General’s Stove’. Suffice it to say that it revolves around a particular way of warming rice. Are you intrigued?

On **9th June** we are to join with the Writing My Life class for a one-day workshop of writing, reading and discussing each other’s work. There’ll be lots of ideas buzzing in the air, and we look forward to meeting and sharing these with our fellow writers.

~ Jenny Craig

~ oOo ~

Something Special

A short story from the Memoir Writing Group

“What did you do during the recent bi-annual Castlemaine State Festival?” “There was so much on offer it was impossible to see all the items that took your fancy wasn’t it?” “What with plays and concerts, and all the free art shows and the like. The weather was mostly perfect throughout too wasn’t it?”

My only two forays out were firstly, to see the Victorian Welsh Choir sing for an hour in St. Mary’s Catholic Church, on the first Sunday afternoon. Because we enjoy their talent, repertoire and rich blending of male voices we try to take in their concerts as often as we can, be it locally, or in bigger venues down in Melbourne, which usually include big names as guest artists. Names such as opera singers David Hobson, or maybe Roy Best or Emily Burke. Remember them in the six part ABC TV series “Operatunity Oz?”

Secondly, the last Saturday of the Festival, for me was *something special*. A most memorable, exciting happening. Along with 50 or so others I joined the afternoon rehearsals for that evening’s performance of “Sing Your Own Opera” by the Victorian Opera under the guidance of that vibrant, exciting and enthusiastic conductor Richard Gill and his very talented accompanist “Bushie”.

As the appointed time of 3.30 pm for rehearsals drew near I waited for my two friends in the Town Hall foyer while outside the rain began, and a steady stream of would-be choristers filed self-consciously past. When eventually we three joined those already inside, it was to find that the seating had been arranged in sections. Sopranos, mezzos, tenors, bases and “Don’t Knows!” I usually sing Alto but didn’t want to sit with people I didn’t know and who could very likely put me to shame, so I joined the soprano section with Jenni and Beryl. There were others there I knew of course. Those that could, and some like me who just wanted to.

Promptly at 3.30 pm Richard Gill had us warming up with vocal exercises, and before we knew it, singing choruses from opera! Mozart, Bizet, Verdi, as well as Gilbert & Sullivan, and others. Interspersed with fun, prizes, praise and encouragement he had us rehearsing for three hours before sending us home for a quick meal and change of clothes if we wanted to “frock up”, or to partake of some Dutch courage in a glass of wine or three.

The real recital began at 8 pm and by now the excitement couldn’t possibly be dampened by the torrential rain that had set in. For over an hour Richard had us singing every piece from the pre purchased vocal score that went with the cost of admission, to an audience that had paid to hear proper opera sung by the advertised Victorian Opera. But for an hour, we WERE the Victorian Opera, along with the four young soloists on stage who charmed and delighted with their beautiful, soaring deliveries.

What a triumph! A marvellous opportunity that will never come my way again. But for a too short and so sweet sixty minutes, *I could sing!*

~ Barbara Bunton © - 2011

WRITING WORKSHOP

Elizabeth rider 5470 5681

Members of the two U3A Writing Classes will get together in June. The Memoir Writing class and the Writing My Life class will combine for a writing workshop from 10 am – 4 pm on **9th June**.

Dr Sally Berridge, who is the class leader of the Writing My Life, which started this year, will be the presenter at this workshop. Sally was awarded a practice-led PhD in Creative Communication by the University of Canberra in 2006. Her thesis examined the link between autobiography, memory and identity. She used creative non-fiction to write her autobiography and the accompanying exegesis. She is a trained teacher and adult educator, and has spent many years teaching and tutoring both adults and children and is an experienced presenter of workshops.

Our workshop will focus on Creative Non-fiction in general and there will also be a session on Creative Non-fiction in Autobiography/Memoir. Sally and Elizabeth will devise an interesting, interactive program for the day. We'll be doing some writing as well as listening to what others have written.

There will be a maximum of 15 participants. Members of the two groups will have first option to attend this workshop, so please give your name to your class leader to book your place. Second preference will be given to U3A members who had put their names down for a Writing Class this year, but have found the classes to be full.

Memory is a complicated thing, a relative to truth, but not its twin. ~ Barbara Kingsolver, *Animal Dreams*

~ oOo ~

New Member Profile

Jo Orgill

Jo was born on a farm in Scotland in a small village east of Edinburgh and attended nearby schools before moving to Edinburgh and London to do nursing training.

She met her "Sir Galahad" in the form of a bulk-carrier Captain at an early age and left the nursing career to become a wife and mother; subsequently producing three children, a girl followed by two boys.

While the children were still young Jo opted to join her husband for two years travelling the world. She became teacher to the three children as well as ship's nurse and Captain's secretary.



In 1974 the family decided to leave Scotland and migrate to Australia, taking up residence in Mount Waverley, Melbourne. After another spell of nursing and the end of a shore job for her husband the family moved up to Fryerstown in 1983, followed by another move to Yapeen to a small property farming cashmere goats and then cattle. As her husband was still sailing the seven seas, Jo was the farmer. When her husband passed away, Jo sold the farm and moved to Maldon to a miner's cottage where she lived for 8 years.

Jo has always involved herself in community activities. While farming she was President of the region of the Cashmere Growers Association, and secretary of the committee of management at Buda, as well as being on the Agricultural Society committee for a short time.

In Maldon she volunteered at both the Library and the Information Centre.

Jo has a wide variety of interests, is a keen reader of both fiction and non-fiction and loves to test her grey matter with crosswords. Learning Italian at U3A is currently her biggest challenge. Jo currently resides in Castlemaine with her

partner, Barrie.

Welcome Jo. Thanks for your profile. With your interesting background I'm sure there will be many other U3A members already known to you. So now that Jo has set the ball rolling so-to-speak, let's hear from some of you other new members. You can send a brief outline and a small photo to the editor via e-mail for inclusion in the next newsletter, as we talked about at the recent "New Member's Day". What better way to get to know you?

MUSIC APPRECIATION

Bruce Baud 5472 4574

April 6th – This morning was a bit unusual as Bruce had two Schubert instrumental works, and some old vocal stuff he had found in a cupboard. Schubert's *Trout Quintet* was a good starting point, written for piano, violin, viola, cello and double bass. A work of five movements and unusual in its symphonic length of thirty five plus minutes. A well known and wonderful piece of music.

The next recording was made in the very early days of the industry. Singer, Luisa Tetrazzini (1871-1940), whose spectacular International career began with debuts at Covent Garden in 1907, and the Met the following year. Her incredible voice shines through this old recording. This lady would be one of the most remarkable sopranos of all time. The show piece was *Carnival of Venice* by Benedict.

The next singer was Enrico Caruso (1873-1921), also from Italy and considered the best ever tenor. Once again it was a very old scratchy recording. We heard an aria from *The Pearl Fishers* and *Mattinata* by Leon Cavallo. Caruso did sound ordinary after the first singer.

Staying in Italy, the next singer was Beniamino Gigli (1890-1957). This was when recording techniques were much improved. We heard *La Donna e Mobile* (Verdi), and *The Stars are Brightly Shining* from Puccini's *Tosca*. Jussi Bjorling (1911-1980), born in Sweden came across as the best of the tenors. He sang *Quests o Quella* from Verdi's *Rigoletto*, then *Strange Harmonies*, a contrast from Puccini's *Tosca*.

After coffee break we went back to Schubert with the string quartet *Death and the Maiden*. Like the Trout, based on a song with four movements. The morning wound up with two Schubert songs, *Heidenroslein* sung by Janet Baker, and *Hark, Hark the Lark* sung by Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau. A morning of music full of interest.

~ Brian Willis

OPERA – AN OCCASIONAL EVENING SERIES

Vic SAY 5472 1841

Our opera for **6th May**, from this year's **Opera Australia** series will be *The Pearl Fishers*.

June 3rd, July 8th and August 5th we plan to explore what three composers have done with the story of *Faust*, Gounod's *Faust* was premiered in 1859 and performed over 300 times between 1859 and 1868. It is a work many will know and love parts of well. Berlioz' fascination began in 1828 when he read a translation of Goethe's drama the same year he first encountered the music of Beethoven. The opera sprang to life after he visited Germany and Goethe's *Weimer* in the early 1840s. Boito's *Mephistofele* was premiered in 1868. The performance started at 7.30 pm and ended at 1.30 am. Our version will not last nearly that long.

requiem and then...?

Vic Say 5472 1841

In April we listened to the *Requiem of 1997* by George Lloyd, performed by the Exon Singers. It is a work for counter tenor and organ and the twelve members attending were thrilled to share a new work by a composer new to most, if not all of us. The work was universally enjoyed and the composer, someone members were very pleased to have been introduced to.

For our second April session we returned to the earliest polyphonic Requiem still existing – the *Ockeghem* of the mid 1400s. As he was in Paris from the early 1450s, was chaplain to three kings, Charles VII, Louis XI and Charles VIII, and was from 1463 to 70 a canon at Notre-Dame de Paris, it is probable we listened to music which was heard by those kings of that time. We heard two versions of the work; one by the Hilliard Ensemble with six male voices including two beautiful counter tenors, and one by The Clerks' Group of ten voices including two women. Each performance was preferred by some of the nine members attending.

Signposts in English: History of English language

DIANA COLLIER 5443 0137

We meet in the U3A office each 4th Tuesday every month at 12 noon – 1.30 pm prompt. Next, 24th May.

The Great Vowel Shift of the 1400s transforming many English vowels into other vowels affected the language later than Chaucer's writings but spelling conventions had already jelled. For example our "made" spelt as we spell it, but pronounced 'MAH-deh' that is as spelt/sounded. Chaucer's language and his grammar will be touched upon, and specifically his pronunciation. His Versification and rhythm, metre/stress: the iambic pentameter, the same as Shakespeares' blank verse or Pope's heroic couplets. And we will continue (from last year's) reading in Chaucer's English with Chanticleer in the Nun's Priest's Tale.

SINGING TOGETHER

Rae Hawkins 5472 3446

The Scottish themed "Happy Hour" was well attended. A big *thank you* to those choir members who brought along their voices and items for the display, to John for his accompaniment, to our singers, and to Sue-Ann Williams for providing those tartan scarves with their lovely feathery ends.

Thanks also to Kevin and Veronica Hurley for welcoming us to their home during the Festival, and also to Jenni Rutherford who brought along surplus copies of music from "Sing Your Own Opera". We shall certainly be making good use of these in the future. Some of the music looks quite challenging, but I'm sure the choir will be up to it.



Solo group

Betty henchman 5472 2139

Our next get-together will be at the home of Dot Henshall on **Saturday 21st May at 1.00 pm.** Please ring Betty Henschman for directions to Dot's home.

WAGNER'S RING CYCLE – A SHORT COURSE OVER THREE YEARS

Vic say 5472 1841

Friday May 13th at 7pm – Das Rheingold – CD at Vic & Felicity's home.

Ring for directions and bring a torch.

Peter Morris will introduce the Ring and Rheingold and we will listen to a 20 minute introduction by Anna Russell. We will listen to Solti's two CD set with a brief break as we change CDs. We expect to finish about 10.30 pm then share some BYO nibbles and a cuppa.

Friday June 17th at 5pm – Die Walkure – CD at Vic & Felicity's home.

Note: Light meal approx 7.30 pm to share, everyone contributing. Ring for directions and bring a torch.

We expect to finish about 10.30 pm then share some BYO nibbles and a cuppa.

June – last week – Die Walkure at the Theatre Royal. Confirm the program at the Theatre Royal.

July – date and address to be confirmed: Das Rheingold DVD at Peter & Barry's home. 7pm start.

Sept – date to be confirmed: Die Walkure at Peter & Barry's home. 5pm start. Bring a plate to share and also BYO light meal break mid opera.

Oct – date to be confirmed: an evening exploring the musical themes and leitmotifs of the Ring – a three record set – 7pm at Vic & Felicity's home.

Nov – date to be confirmed: an evening exploring the Ring and the Solti recording of the Ring – video and DVD - 7pm at Peter & Barry's home.

A SPECIAL POEM FOR OLDER FOLKS

A row of bottles on my shelf
Caused me to analyse myself.

The capsules tell me not to wheeze
Or cough or choke or even sneeze

One yellow pill I have to pop
Goes to my heart so it won't stop.

The red ones, smallest of them all
Go to my blood so I won't fall.

A little white one that I take
Goes to my hands so they don't shake.

The orange ones, so big and bright
Prevent my leg cramps in the night.

The blue ones that I use a lot
Tell me I'm happy when I'm not.

Such an array of brilliant pills
Helping to cure all kinds of ills.

The purple pill is for my brain
And tells me that I have no pain.

But what I'd really like to know

Is what tells each one, where to go!!!