



Newsletter October 2018

Hello!

I write this incredulous that this is our last newsletter for 2018. Where has the time gone? On reflection this has been somewhat of a sad year as we said good bye to both Rosalie and just last month to Margie but they will rest well knowing that our U3A Athlone continues to grow month by month. But enough sadness as we approach November's activity packed month and our trip to Babylonstorren.

I am choosing not to comment on macro issues this time but all I will say is "the great bank robbery" No script writer could have dreamt up that story line and we don't know all of it. Let's listen to Blum Khan and examine our personal investments as it pained me to see older people, who are VBS shareholders, decry the fact that the legacy they wanted to leave their families is gone!!

Personally, I have gone through the purge that many of us have to do when we downscale our living accommodation. It's painful and emotional yet somewhat refreshing to lighten one's load and to realize that we can get by with far less in terms of possessions. It made me realize that these words of wisdom are so true "Challenges are gifts that force us to search for a new center of gravity. Don't fight them. Just find a new way to stand"

Until next time.

Public Meetings and Monthly talks.

Dianne Case was refreshing and fun. Her tales of pub crawling with her dad were as delightful as the stories of the women in Pollsmoor who attended her Creative writing classes. I generated much laughter telling the stories to friends and family. Dianne has a big heart and if it were not for women like her, those women would not have experienced any caring in prison. Her booksellers did a roaring trade with her books. Thanks Ruan for all your efforts in organizing her.

Our Final Talk for 2018 by the fascinating Mr. **Blum Khan**, who apparently attended school close to where we meet, is so well timed given the VBS scandal. Mr Khan is a world renowned entrepreneur and was involved in setting up Momentum and is a financial guru. I suggest you all take notes!!.

November is going to be amazing. We will have no less than nine performers to entertain us. Top class they all are as they were finalists in the Artscape Suid Ooster Fees. Shirley Levendal is the mover and shaker who pulled this one off for us. Don't miss itso please mark NOVEMBER 15th as a red letter day in your diary! Dress up and arrive early, there are bound to be many guests and we also invite you to bring along a friend.

Outings and opportunities

The Geeky Grans got more than just IT lessons at RLabs - they really got to know each other and bond. Margie Caines Weir will give us feedback at the meeting as we are hoping to get another group trained next year. I have received amazing feedback on the team work, enthusiasm shown and the team work that took place. Our thanks to all the Geeky Grans for flying our flag so high.

We have decided to spread our allocation of the 80 complimentary tickets for the Table Mountain Cable car over 3 days in November and are finalizing the dates for the 3 groups. As you know it will be impacted by the weather so even though we set up dates they may change.

We have the opportunity to visit the Holocaust Centre for a guided Tour on Tuesday November 13th. Please can we have an indication of interest through sign ups at the meeting? It is located in Cape Town and will start at 10:00. If you have not visited yet you are missing out on a truly memorable experience.

Our Bus trip to Babylonstorren on October 23rd is fully subscribed and in fairness we will scrutinize the list to ensure that fully paid up members get first option to attend. The entrance fee is R10.00 and Dawn Fester is the organizer.



Newsletter September 2018

Hello!

Rain. Glorious rain. Falling down on this spring morning! And latest reports say the dams are creeping up to 75% full. That is incredible. On the political front the Zondo commission heard staggering evidence from Standard Bank yesterday, the leader of the DA throws his hat into the ring for Premier of the Western Cape, and Cyril goes into full cry at the COSATU conference. As they say "hope springs eternal"

Organizationally we have had to say farewell to Margie Smith, who is going through a spell of ill health and we ask that you all keep her in your thoughts and prayers. We also welcome on board Shirley Levendal as committee member. Our Geeky Grans have already had three sessions of training at RLabs and we invite them to "each one teach one" as they use their newly acquired skills.

Public Meetings and Monthly talks.

Our August meeting had us running around as many people called us to enquire about, and in fact turned up for, what they believed to be a meeting to apply for and raise issues around Social Housing. Whilst we rely on Community Newspapers to advertise our talks, we have no control on reporting or in the case of last month's publicity "misreporting" as the report suggested that it was a government talk and a free one to boot!

Anthea Houston, CEO of Communicare, was really excellent in getting us to understand the challenges faced by Communicare, its illustrious history and their future plans. What an amazing asset they are to our country and it came as no surprise that our own Allan Hardie has played such a significant role in that organization. The talk was well attended with many interesting questions posed by members and visitors.

This month we are thrilled to welcome Dianne Case, prominent prize winning author and creative writing facilitator. We know August is Woman's Month but we are extending it to September as we invite Dianne to talk to us about her publication entitled "Journey to myself" featuring stories of women in prison, a truly unique publication. She will also share with us some insights from her book on life in Manenberg entitled "The Rules". This promises to be a special conversation with a phenomenal woman.

Our Final Talk for 2018 **in October** (can you believe that the year is finished) will be **Mr. Blum Khan**, who apparently attended school close to where we meet. Mr Khan is a world renowned entrepreneur and was involved in setting up Momentum and is a financial guru. Details of the talk are still to be finalized but we promise you that you will leave the meeting empowered and inspired.

November promises to an exciting year end function as Shirley Levendal has arranged for artists from Artscape to perform for us....so please mark that as a red letter day in your diary!!

Outings and opportunities

The RLabs Geeky Grans got off to a great start on September 4th and was fully subscribed. By all accounts it is enjoyable and people have been attending regularly. We will try to organize a further training course for those who missed out this time. We are proud of those attending as you guys embody the true spirit of U3A Athlone!!

We have decided to spread our allocation of the 80 complimentary tickets for the Table Mountain Cable car over 3 days in November and are finalizing the dates for the 3 groups. As you know it will be impacted by the weather so even though we set up dates, they may change.

We have the opportunity to visit the Holocaust Centre for a guided Tour on Tuesday November 13th. Please can we have an indication of interest through sign ups at the meeting? It is located in Cape Town and will start at 10:00. If you have not visited yet you are missing out on a truly memorable experience.

Looks Like November is going to be a bumper month!!



Newsletter July 2018

Hello!

Winter chills it seems is a price we are all willing to pay as our dams creep above the 50% mark. Double the capacity of last year this time. Clanwilliam Dam rose from 10 to 90% in a week. The little town of Witsand gets a solar powered desalination plan which will take care of all its water needs. Great news all round and a solemn reminder of how bad things can be in this world of climate change and unpredictable weather. Lesson learnt I say as a Capetonian still using 50 liters a day.

As I write this there is much anticipation for the Mandela Lecture to be delivered by Barrack Obama today. The lecture will focus on igniting "active citizenship" in his memory. It reminds me of the stern message we received from Trevor Manuel in February "organize don't agonise" which was amplified by Cheryl Carolus last month when she said that Senior Citizens and the youth are the most important people in any society. She called on us to give the youth a "sense of hope", to reset the moral compass in this country by calling out things like racism and corruption, getting involved in mentorship, playing a role in CPF's and SGB's and by voting! Quite a challenge and I left the meeting not just inspired by her but with many questions about the role I should be playing? What can I do? Where can I put up my hand and say "Tuma Mina"

Let's reflect this Mandela Month!

Public Meetings and Monthly talks.

June is Youth Month and we changed gear from having a young person to providing a platform to a "youthful" Cheryl Carolus who flew from Johannesburg to present her talk on the challenges young people face. She took us back to the days of the struggle and the role young people played and left us with quite a few issues and challenges to ponder as we travel the road to pulling back our country from the brink. The view that this will take 10 years was a sombre one and somewhat of a wake-up call. It was great to see so many people from other U3A's attending and her colleagues and comrades of old turn up for her talk.

July is Mandela Month and, in keeping with our tradition we will invite three of our members to share their life journeys with us. Three people, three very different life journeys, and we get to meet with them at Athlone U3A. We are not saying who they are other than they have been activists in medicine, music and wine and the diva amongst them will delight us with some music at the end. We will also be handing over goodies for newborns to the Zoe Project, who do sterling work at the Grassy Park and Manenberg Maternity units. I want to acknowledge outsiders i.e. Patti Lange, Charmaine and Una Mc Cleod and Sandra Abrahams for their amazing donations. Each of them has donated in excess of 30 teddies, beanies, blankets etc. Thank you in advance of your donations too!!

August will see us hosting Anthea Houston who will deal with the Social Housing issue, September is the turn of Dianne Case award winning local author who will talk to us on a Project she did with woman Prisoners in writing their stories (we are extending woman's month) and then Blum Khan, financial guru and local boy, will end the year for us. And then we will party at our year end function!

Outings and opportunities

The unexpected invite to the Zeitz Museum led to a group of almost 30 of us spending a delightful morning at the Museum with an amazing guide. The building is up for an international award, not surprising once you have visited. It is open for free visits on a Wednesday from 10:00 to 13:30. Believe me you cannot take in all the exhibits in one visit! This is a world class museum and we will try to organize another group visit.

We also have been allocated 80 complimentary tickets for the Table Mountain Cable car. We will be splitting the visit into 2 or 3 groups and save it for September.

RLABS have unfortunately informed us that Computer training will have to be delayed to September 4th and the application forms, curriculum information etc. will be available at the workshop on the 7th August. Please sign up with Denise. In line with the "Cheryl challenge" and the Mandela Legacy of Active Citizenship I am sure that MOST of you will sign up for the Intergenerational Workshop we are participating in with RLabs on AUGUST 7TH from 11:00 to 14:00.