

U3A News

Helderberg

August 2010

In this Issue:

- Annual General Meeting
- Almost 7!
- An unconventional look at age(ing)
- Teenager the third time round
- Senility Prayer
- Woman becomes grand old graduate at 94!
- Retarded Grandparents
- Real men don't eat quiche
- U3A Movie Club
- Tuesday mornings at Lwandle Community Centre
- Arthritis Support Group
- Geomagnetic Course 2010
- When two worlds collide
- CAM Forum scores a victory
- Computer Literacy Programme
- Planet Earth
- Membership Matters
- Upcoming General Meetings

Annual General Meeting

Preliminary Notice

The Annual General Meeting of the Helderberg U3A will take place on **Wednesday, 3 November at 10:00** at the Strand Town Hall.

Agenda items include:

- Chairman's Report
- Treasurer's Report
- Appointment of Auditors
- Election of Committee members for 2011

Immediately after the business, which will be kept to a minimum, Dr Branch will address us. For more information on his topic see page 6.



Jabulani!
Let us celebrate
and sing!

On 2 September, 2003, a star was born! On that day, 7 years ago, U3A Helderberg opened its doors to the public for the very first time. Around 200 people attended the inaugural meeting. With membership numbers now exceeding 1 100, it is safe to say, "It was a good idea."

Almost 7!

Happy Birthday

U3A in the Helderberg

We send a vote of thanks to those who brought the good idea to life, as well as later committees and members, who worked towards its successful future.

May our club and its members continue to contribute to and enjoy the opportunities for continued learning, new friendships and fresh challenges.

An unConventional look at Age(ing)

Whilst U3A members definitely do not subscribe to the old concept of retirement and rocking chairs, most of us will have difficulty trying to remember what it felt like to be 7 years old. Having long ago moved to double digits, that magical 7 is preceded by any number from 4 to 9.

As Nanette Newman says in her delightful book, *My Granny was a frightful bore (but isn't anymore)*:

She's never liked the counting game
They make old people play,
Adding years is just insane:
Why count your life away?
If being old becomes a chore,
Don't dwell upon it anymore,
The young at heart have lots in store.

Because we agree that age is more a state of mind than a state of being, we are going to show you some different perspectives on age(ing).





A teenager the third time around

Some thoughts on age, taken from an internet site on what it means to be a teen

I'm 62 years old, so I figure I've been a 17 year-old three and a half times over.

As a first-time teenager, I worried about geometry tests, boys and whether my fingernail polish matched my skirt. Now, I ponder important stuff like petrol prices, fat grams and whether I turned off the iron.

I used to measure success by the number of my friends but now I know that one close friend is better than money and fame. For teenagers, hurting means being jilted or broken-hearted by an unkind remark. Today, if you ask me what hurts, the answer is usually "everything", but now I know that hearts heal and unkind words are usually regretted.

Like most teens, I had a lean, strong and supple body, which isn't true today, but at the same time, I am more comfortable in my own skin, and, although I once had a teenager's perfect eyesight instead of bifocals, my third turn at being a teenager has given me a clearer vision of the world.

It was great fun to be a teenager during the 1950s, when the term "teenager" was first coined. But I like being an experienced teen even better.

— Barbara Pilcher

The Senility Prayer

Grant me the senility to forget the people I never liked anyway. The good fortune to run into the ones I do, And the eyesight to tell the difference.

Woman becomes grand old graduate at 94!

A Californian woman has proved that education is a lifelong pursuit by graduating from college at the grand old age of 94.

Hazel Soares, who has six children and more than 40 grandchildren and great-grandchildren, has become the world's second oldest person to earn a degree. She admitted that in collecting her art history honours, she had fulfilled a 78 year ambition.

Born in Richmond, California in 1915, the Great Depression had stripped her of her first opportunity to attend college after graduating from school in 1932.

"Unless you had some help, it would have been impossible to go," Ms Soares said. "However I never lost the desire. It's taken me quite a long time because I've had a busy life. I'm finally achieving it and it makes me feel really good."

The veteran was congratulated by US House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, who delivered the keynote speech at Mills College, an all-women's school in Oakland. She was cheered on by classmates and family members during the ceremony.

"The biggest thing that we can all learn is that we're never too old," said

Regina Hungerford, Ms Soares' youngest child.

But her mother does not plan to relax. after finally achieving her goal. She will forgo the common post-graduation gap year to work as a museum guide in the San Francisco Bay area.

"There's no reason why you could not go back," Ms Soares added. "Some people do give up the idea or postpone the idea. It's too late. It's too much work. They may not realise that, once you try it, it's exciting to go to school."

She has still got a little bit of learning left to do to be able to claim the world record though. In 2007, Nola Ochs of Kansas became the world's oldest graduate when she received her honours from Fort Hays State University, aged 95.

Now 98, last week she proved she is in a class of her own and pushed the academic age bar higher by collecting a master's degree in liberal studies.

— From Sky News 2010, with acknowledgements



Retarded Grandparents

After Christmas, a teacher asked her young pupils how they spent their holiday. One child wrote ...

We always used to spend the holidays with Grandma and Grandpa. They used to live in a big brick house but Grandpa got retarded and they moved to Bateman's Bay, where everyone lives in nice little houses and so they don't have to mow the grass anymore!

They ride around on their bicycles and scooters and wear name tags because they don't know who they are anymore. They go to a building called the wreck centre but they must have got it fixed because it is all okay now. They do exercises there, but they don't do them very well.

There is a swimming pool too but they all jump up and down in it with hats on.

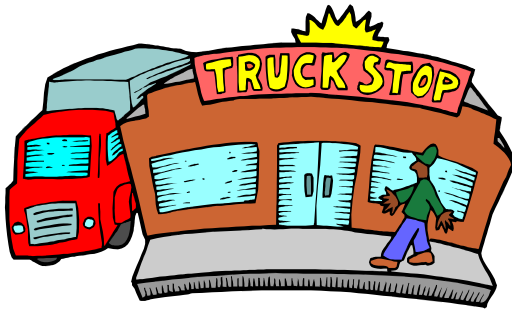
At their gate there is a doll house with a little old man sitting in it. He watches all day so nobody can escape. Sometimes they sneak out and go cruising in their golf carts!

My Grandma says that Grandpa worked all his life to earn his retardment and says I should work hard so I can be retarded too some day.

When I earn my retardment, I want to be the man in the doll house. Then I will let people out so they can visit their grandchildren.

Thanks to Muriel Connell for sharing this email with us.





Extract from . . .

Real Men Don't Eat Quiche

A guidebook to all that is truly masculine
by Bruce Feirstein

“Real men don't eat quiche,” said Flex Crush, ordering a breakfast of steak, prime rib, six eggs and a loaf of toast.

We were sitting in the professional drivers' section of an all-night truckers' pit stop discussing the plight of men in today's society. Flex, a 225 pound nuclear waste driver, who claims to be one of the last *Real Men* in existence, was pensive.

“Men are all mixed up today,” he began, idly cleaning the 12 gauge shotgun that was sitting across his knees. “There was a time when this was a nation of Ernest Hemingways – *Real Men*. They were the kind of guys who could defoliate an entire forest to make a breakfast fire – and then go on to wipe out an endangered species hunting for lunch. But not anymore. We've become a nation of wimps. Pansies. Quiche eaters. Alan Alda types, who cook and clean and *relate* to their wives. Phil Donahue clones, who are *warm* and *sensitive* and *vulnerable*. It's not enough anymore that we earn a living and protect women and children from plagues, famine and encyclopedia salesmen. Now we're also supposed to be *supportive*. And *understanding*. And *sincere* ...

“And where has it gotten us? I'll tell you where. Just look around the world today. The Japanese make better cars, the Israelis better soldiers, the Irish better violence and everybody else is using our embassies for target practice. We can't do a simple job without going to an encounter session about it first.”

The entire restaurant was mesmerised. It was so quiet you could hear the day's fresh-caught fish thawing in the freezer. Flex continued:

“Now I ask you. Back when America was king, did John Wayne ever have 'relationships'? Was Clark Gable ever worried about giving his women 'enough space'? Was Bogart ever lonely because he couldn't have

a 'meaningful dialogue' with some dame? Do you seriously think we would have ever won World War 2, if Ike thought Hitler was just going through a bad mid-life crisis – and should be allowed to 'work it out'? Of course not.

“I'm convinced things were better off in the past. Men were men. Women were sex objects. The rest of the world understood – one false move and we'd nuke 'em.”

Flex excused himself from the table to dispense his own brand of justice to several loutish dress designers who were making a ruckus at the far end of the room.

For more on Real Men – you have to get the book! And now to business – Ed

U3A Movie Club

We have a great line-up of movies to enjoy during the winter and spring months so mark those diaries now! Members will be pleased to learn that heating/air conditioning has been installed at Golden Eye, supplying comfort whatever the weather!

Screening time is 14:00 but come early if the sun is shining and picnic outside or avoid the winter chill and snuggle up inside.

The cost per person remains R20 and we would love to finish the year with record turnouts. So collect your friends and head up the R44 for a friendly and relaxing afternoon. We look forward to seeing you there.

➤ Tuesday 31 August: **Waking Ned Devine**

Starring: Ian Bannen; David Kelly; Fiannula Flanagan; Susan Lynch and James Nesbitt.

This is a heart-warming and very satisfying comedy, set in a small Irish village, involving an ingenious scheme to share the proceeds of a

lottery. Very funny, with wonderful acting and charming dialogue. It will leave you feeling like a million bucks.

➤ Tuesday, 28 September: **Enid**

Starring Helena Bonham Carter, Matthew MacFadyen, Dennis Lawson and Claire Rushbrook

Enid Blyton's charming characters and classic tales have enchanted generations of children for almost 80 years. This film follows the woman behind the enduring and compelling stories, such as the beloved *Famous Five* and *Noddy* series.

The film explores how the orderly, reassuringly clear worlds Enid Blyton created within her stories, contrasted with the complexity of her own personal life.

➤ Tuesday, 26 October: **All the Queen's Men**

Starring: Eddie Izzard, James Cosmo, Edward Fox, Nicolette Krebitz.

While serving his sentence in a British Military prison, O'Rourke receives orders to cross enemy lines and steal an Enigma machine by infiltrating the factory in Berlin. There's one small catch, the factory is staffed exclusively by women. O'Rourke and his motley squad will have to carry out their mission dressed entirely in drag.

After an hilarious crash course in cross-dressing the team is off to Germany, where the mission goes completely awry until they are taken in by Romy, a beautiful and courageous friend of the Resistance. Their comic, suspenseful journey proves that war makes all men equal... Even women!

➤ Tuesday, 30 November: **A rather English Marriage**

Starring: Albert Finney, Tom Courtney, Joanna Lumley

When their wives die on the same day in the same hospital, ex RAF fighter pilot Reginald Conyngham Jarvis and former milkman Roy Southgate suddenly become two lonely widowers who are left to rebuild their lives.

Reggie and Roy seem the most unlikely pair to form any sort of friendship. Reggie's mind is taken off his loss when he meets Liz, the glamorous widow and owner of a boutique that is losing money. He is soon under her spell.

To book or for more information, contact Genevieve Faure on ☎ 021 852 3685 or email gfaure@mweb.co.za



Some members at the Lwandle Community Centre (l to r) Angelina, Sophie and Dolf

Tuesday mornings at Lwandle Community Centre

For several years volunteers, all members of U3A, have been working with the community interaction group at the Lwandle Community Centre every Tuesday morning. The group we visit is made up of about twenty elderly some of whom are stroke victims. We work to a programme devised by one of our members, consisting of activities aimed at stimulating mental functioning, improving literacy and lifting spirits among people whose daily lives aren't generally full of fun or excitement.

It is so rewarding to see someone like Joyce for instance, a stroke victim, who a year ago couldn't smile, walk or hold a pencil, but today can do word puzzles, paint beautifully and join in the all the fun and laughter that make up the morning's activities.

Those featured above joined us some months ago. Angelina had had a stroke and could only hold a crayon and scribble across a page when we first met her. Now she can colour in carefully, write simple words and take part in group activities. Sophie is naturally intelligent, well co-ordinated and enthusiastic. She writes well these days. Dolf is another stroke victim, whose left hand is immobile. His second language after Xhosa is Afrikaans, so his English comprehension is poor but he has a great imagination and tells wonderful stories, some of which we have written down.

Before her untimely death in July, Gloria Mabeka, the social worker in

charge of the project, sent an email expressing appreciation to our team in which she wrote: "The time at the centre is the only time where group members let down their hair and breathe and stop being the law enforcers in their homes. Look around and you will see that they look better than the rest of the community..."

We have funding from the National Lottery so there is no need to dip into your own pocket to join this group. We are able to provide excellent materials for our projects.

We need more volunteers though to add to our roster. With more of us, we could each have more free Tuesdays for other activities. Interested?

Contact me, Aletta van der Watt, on ☎021 852 5530 or 083 270 4842, or email aletta@boma.co.za



Arthritis Support Group

from another of our proactive members

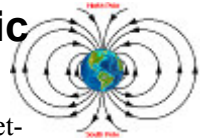
After being diagnosed with rheumatoid arthritis at the beginning of 2007, Annemarie Meyer, discussed with her rheumatologist the possibility of starting an Arthritis Support Group in the Helderberg. During October 2007, the Professor, his wife and Annemarie organised the inaugural meeting of the Arthritis Support Group.

As there are over 20 million arthritis sufferers worldwide and over 200 different kinds of this chronic disease, it is very important to have the right diagnosis made, followed by the right treatment and medication. Self-medication serves no purpose unless the correct diagnosis has been made.

The focus of the Arthritis Support Group is to provide information and support to people in need. The annual programme consists of a talk by a specialist in the field of arthritis on the last Monday of each month at 19:00 at the Vergelegen Medi Clinic restaurant. Thus arthritis sufferers are educated about their chronic disease enabling them to make informed decisions regarding their health care.

For more information, email Anne-Marie at rudimeyer@telkomsa.net

Geomagnetic Course



The inaugural meeting of this year's Geomagnetism course, presented again by Dr Deon Kuhn, will take place in the Allenwood Hall at Helderberg Village on Tuesday, 21 September at 17:30.

Many members have already booked their place but Adrienne Wedepohl, course co-ordinator, will display a notice at our general meeting should you wish to add your name or obtain directions to the venue.

If you are interested in more details about the course, have a look at the excellent report written by Adrienne for the February 2010 edition of the U3A newsletter.

Adrienne can be contacted on ☎ 021 855 0224 or email awed@pixie.co.za

When two worlds collide

To take a language or go hiking, art or music? Difficult decisions for most U3Aers to make but the plan came together for the computer group.

Following Tony's instructions, CO (=click on) downloads, then CO the file named Daisy de Melker, (what had that to do with computers?) but, like good students, we did it anyway.

While someone was asking a question, others began to read the document on screen. Daisy was quite a girl! She murdered a couple of husbands and some children – but hold on – this came from the Makers of History annals – why did we not attend that course? This was interesting!

Tony's voice, "Highlight the first couple of lines." Being so much into Daisy's story it was difficult to remember a simple highlight – OK back on track. So we continued, learning many tricks which could have saved hours, if not weeks of our lives, had we known them previously.

The lesson drew to an end. Still no closer to knowing Daisy's fate. I inserted my flash drive to do a quick copy (having now learned how to), so that I could finally satisfy my curiosity and read the final chapters of the life of Daisy de Melker.

Mmm, maybe next year we might join the Makers of History and discover many more colourful, larger-than-life characters from the past.

CAM Forum scores



Soccer World Cup is no longer a Current Affair...

After a protracted and bitter contest, Referee Peter Ford has finally Red Carded FIFA. The organization has been banned from further appearances and we are again free to appreciate the beautiful game, aka Paris Hilton. Regrettably, she, too, is not a current affair.

FIFA has disrupted schools, all levels of government, hospitals, transport and ACSA – and this is as nothing compared to the inconvenience suffered by CAM (Communication and Media) Forum and its members.

☹ In *April*, when our scheduled speaker was unavailable, without notice. Subsequently, numerous arrangements could not be concluded because of the SWC.

☹ In *May*, we heard a very interesting talk on the relationship between the SA Constitution, the National Prosecuting Authority and the Judiciary, given by Professor Pierre de Vos,

expert in public law at UCT. His balanced and positive view was reassuring to most of us.

☺ In *June*, Meredith Thornton, of the Mammal Research Institute of Pretoria University (sowaar!), told us about results of the latest cetacean research on the Cape West Coast, including Table Bay. We weren't fazed by the news that cetaceans are whales and dolphins and that they live in families, whose members are individually identifiable. However, some of our members were distinctly displeased (and unconvinced) to learn that dolphins are not super intelligent. When Meredith explained that sometimes they actually bite people, several of us had had enough. However, we all agreed that we like Meredith and admire her work.

☺ In *July* we heard Ross Rayners on the SA film industry. Ross is Manager of Studio Projects for Cape Town Studios, whose large new studio complex we see on our way to Cape Town. The prospects for the local industry are bright, as overseas film makers increasingly realise.

☺ In *August*, on Friday 20th, we look forward to meeting Patricia de Lille, unless war breaks out, which is always a possibility when Patricia is on the political scene.

– Peter Ford ☎ 021 852 3678



Tony Searle assisting a member during the Comprehensive Course.

Computer Literacy Programme 2010

One hundred members completed computer courses at the end of July at one of these three levels – foundation, basic or comprehensive. They celebrated their achievement with an end-of-course function at the Somerset West Library Hall where many signed up for their next course!

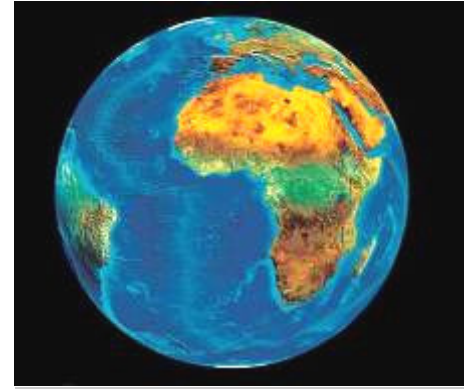
Peggy Smith had this to say:

“Never having done a computer course before – I had only had a couple of lessons when I got my first ‘puter – I thought it would be a good idea to do one.

“So I decided to put my name down for the Basic Course and duly went for my assessment only to be told, “You know too much for the Basic course, you must do the Comprehensive course”!! Ooops, was I nervous and apprehensive. Would I be able to keep up with all the others?

“I was as nervous as anything during the first lesson, but soon got the hang of things and from then on I learnt a lot – many small things no one had ever told me about.

“14 lessons (3 months) later I was very pleased to receive my Certificate and congratulated myself on surviving my *very* first computer course.”



Planet Earth

This course is a journey of discovery. Andreas Groenewald has an amazing range of knowledge and his energy and enthusiasm for his topic is infectious!

His well presented talks cover the 4,5 billion year history of the earth and, like an onion, he is peeling away each Aeon or age of Earth's history.

His lectures start with a factual presentation and explanation of each section in which he includes the latest evidence of on-going research by the world's scientists. This fascinating account of how the earth was formed and how the shape and position of the continents move around over time, is illustrated by how the researchers have gathered factual evidence to support their theories. It has opened up a whole new vista to his audience.

To be able to trace the development of life forms through fossil remains and to really understand those rock formations we once took for granted as just part of the scenery, gives one new eyes through which to look at the world!

The second part of the lecture is devoted to excellent DVD presentations by David Attenborough and other outstanding productions depicting the course of Earth's journey through time. The closely interlinked relationship between the molten core of the planet and its effect on the shaping of Earth's crust, makes one realise what an enormously complex planet we live on and how vulnerable it is to human degradation.

Biodiversity and global warming are topics which should be on everyone's mind. No matter how small each person's effort is to conserve our planet, the combined effect makes a difference!

– Jean Travers-Dade

Please read carefully

Membership Matters

from our Chairman, Brian Thorne

U3A Helderberg continues to mirror the growth of U3As around the world but our success necessitates constant re-evaluation of the ways in which we handle an ever increasing membership.

Membership renewal

We have reviewed the time-frame for renewals to align with our financial and club year end. 2010 membership will therefore expire on the 30 September, our financial year end, and members will need to renew their membership by 30 November.

To facilitate the workload required to process the paperwork, renewal forms for 2011 will be...

- available at our 1 September meeting and subsequent monthly meetings;
- emailed to registered members of the U3A Yahoo group;
- available on the u3a.org.za website and from David Speedie in Somerset West. Contact ☎ 021 852 3779.

Please ensure that you complete the new form dated 2011 – and, to avoid confusion, destroy all old forms.

Yahoo email group

Should you have email, it is highly recommended that you join the U3AYahoo email group. Procedures for joining the group can be obtained from Les Wilson les@wilson.st or David Speedie ☎ 021 8523779) or from the above website. u3a.org.za

Membership Co-ordinators

Although our erstwhile Membership Co-ordinators, Judy and Edgar Hutchings, have decided not to stand for re-election at our Annual General Meeting on 3 November, they have

agreed to get the ball rolling for 2011 and then hand over to their successors when they have been elected.

This now leads us to the position where we need two computer literate volunteers to take on the responsibilities of Membership Co-ordinators. They will join a dedicated and committed group of members serving as the Committee. Should you be interested, please contact me, Brian Thorne, on ☎ 021 852 6863 or email thornebp@telkomsa.net or any committee member at a monthly general meeting.

Year-end function

In past years we have shut-down U3A after the November meeting but this year we intend to hold a Year-end Members only Function on Wednesday, 1 December.

The primary objective of the morning is to afford members the opportunity to talk to course leaders about next years' courses and to enjoy snacks and refreshments whilst chatting to friends before the holiday shut-down. There will be no guest speaker. However, SAARP (SA Association for Retired Persons) have been given a 10-minute slot to give members an overview of the cost savings and benefits available to members of their organization.

Re-opening 2011

We close for the year after the December meeting and re-open in February 2011.

Please remember, that if you have not renewed by this date, you will *not* be eligible to attend courses, nor receive newsletters, and will be required to pay the requisite visitor fee to attend monthly meetings.



Perks of belonging to U3A – good wine, good food, good friends!

Upcoming General Meetings

Below are details of the General Meetings for the remainder of the year. For more information, please check the notice board, the *District Mail* or Yahoo Email.

- ◆ **Wednesday, 1 September**
Brigadier General Richard Lord
Topic: *Reminiscences Royal Airforce/Falkland War & SAAF*
- ◆ **Wednesday, 6 October**
Peter Hodson, President of Jungian Society
Topic: *Dreaming and the Meaning of Dreams*
- **Wednesday, 3 November**
Dr George Branch
Topic: *2 be or not 2 OBE: Teaching the teachers*
- **Wednesday, 1 December**
Year-end members' function
Read more about this event in "Membership Matters", the article on this page written by our Chairman, Brian Thorne. Snacks and refreshments will be served.

All General Meetings are held at the Strand Town Hall and start promptly at 10:00..



Our speaker seeker asks...

- Would those members who, at the meeting, suggested possible speakers for 2011, please check that your recommendation has not slipped through the cracks either by phoning Lyn on ☎ 021 851 5672 with details, or emailing her at gerob@netactive.co.za
- Any members who would like to volunteer to thank speakers, please let Lyn know. Contact details above.

– Thank you

Contributions to the November issue of U3A News Theme: My U3A Year

To round off 2010, we would like you, the members, to tell us your U3A stories or give us your comments, suggestions and feedback.

These contributions should be *emailed* to: judy@henry.org.za or *posted* to: Judy Henry, P O Box 79, Gordon's Bay 7151

Copy deadline: 10 October 2010