

# MALA MESSENGER

**Newsletter of the Mature Adults Learning Association Inc. Rockingham Branch**

**March 2022**

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## **FROM THE CHAIR**

Welcome everyone to the 2022 MALA year. COVID has once again thrown us into uncertainty.

We are waiting on the City of Rockingham to let us know the new rules that will apply this year. I would think that masks, distancing and of course the normal signing in procedure will be expected. Everyone attending, members and presenters need to be ready to show proof of vaccination, as although it is not mandated yet, it is likely that it will be by the time we are set to begin. Once this is sighted at either enrolment or on the first day it will be noted and there will be no need to produce it after that.

This year we begin a trial of a 3 Session semester system.

Each session will offer three choices for you. This session our three choices are :

- 09:30 Conversational Italian with Natalia Achino
- 11:30 What is wrong with Contemporary Art? With Jan Altmann
- 13:30 The History of the Swan River Colony. With Anthony Alborn

Let us not be overcome by COVID, let's all stick together and keep MALA strong.

**Esther Grogan Chair**



*I felt uncomfortable when I drove to the cemetery recently  
and the GPS blurted out ... "you have reached your final destination"*



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## ENROLMENT DAY

### ENROLMENT DAY

23<sup>rd</sup> of February 10:00 – 11.30

the first classes are due to begin on the 9<sup>th</sup> of March



#### Who knows what lies ahead?

COVID considerations are with us again so our current advice is - expect the unexpected. Flexibility will be our byword this year.

Maybe there is disquiet and apprehension about the year ahead, but let's grab every bit of optimism going and give the year a good shake.



*On my last visit the Dr asked me do I ever run.  
Of course I run.  
I run out of time, patience and money all the time.*



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## SESSION ONE CLASSES

09:30 – 11:00 *Conversational Italian with Natalia Achino*

*This course is designed for those with some previous knowledge of the Italian language who need to refresh their communication skills. You will learn the basics of the Italian language, some common expressions and vocabulary for travelling. You will enjoy the friendly atmosphere and learn Italian in a fun way.*

11:30 – 13:00 *What's wrong with Contemporary Art? with Dr Jan Altmann*

*In What's wrong with Contemporary Art? Jan poses such questions as "Why is a dead shark, or a dead sheep, considered to be an art object? Why did a room with the lights going on and off win the 2001 Turner prize? Is a diamond encrusted skull a work of art, or just a conspicuous display of wealth? And why did a live Asian elephant painted pink with gold patterning and standing in a make-believe living room, create a stir in Los Angeles in 2006? Why did Banksy shred an artwork moments after it sold for \$1.8 million, and why was the purchaser still happy to pay that price for it. There are no simple answers, but the questions themselves are worth asking. Art reflects its own time as well as its own history, and there are ways to place such works and events in the broader context of Western Art and Culture so that at least some response is possible.*

*Jan Altmann has a Ph.D. in Comparative Literature from Murdoch University. She spent many years teaching English, Literature, Art History, Art Theory, Women's Studies and Cultural Studies. She has written many art reviews and catalogue essays, and has co-authored a book on Western Australian women's art of the colonial era. A fun session, with a great learning curve attached.*

13:30 – 15:00 *The History of the Swan River Colony with Anthony Alborn*

*Anthony give us a fascinating insight on how Western Australia started with just three ships and 174 people. When Captain James Stirling first set foot in Western Australia in 1827 (two years before the founding of the Swan River Colony in 1829) he would have little realised that the State would grow to become home to over two and a half million people some 180 years later and become a centre for minerals, farming and business. This series take us through the first 100 years of the Colony in an exciting recapturing of those early years of the founding Colony*

*Anthony ran his own advertising business and conducted the advertising and sales training and business development strategy for clients. He worked at TAFE teaching the Advertising Diploma course. Anthony has worked extensively with the newspaper industry throughout Australia. He is a well-known speaker on the history of WA and he is a regular presenter for U3A.*



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## BOOKSHELF

Many thanks to Margaret Steele for her reviews this month.

### **“When the Apricots Bloom” by Gina Wilkinson**

This is a story of three young women living in Baghdad under the rule of a dictator.

They all feel threatened for themselves and their children and eventually they come together to escape from their ordeals. A deeply involving and important novel where the author highlights the inhumanity at the centre of a brutal country. She brings her lived experiences to every page of this dramatic and ultimately hopeful book.



### **“Wildwood” by Posie Graeme Evans**

A brilliant mixture of history and intrigue between Norman times and Modern present times in England. I love the history parts and the connection of the young girl to those times. Jesse carries ancient knowledge that Hundredfield unlocks. She is confused after an accident and then terrified, she will become the key to the mystery that haunts the wild district of the ruined castle and its history. The dark and light of battles and sorrow and love eventually show Jesse her true lineage. Fascinating reading.



Both books are available through Rockingham libraries

### **Bookshelf Feedback :**

The Thursday Murder Club by Richard Osman proved popular, it seems it was a great Christmas present as three of our four respondents received their copy for Christmas. The conniving of the old folks was really enjoyed. The quiriness, the good plotting and the touch of humour were also much enjoyed.

### **From further back in October :**

Honey Bee by Craig Silvey drew a mixed response with Robyn finding it a little out of her usual comfort zone in the world of gender fluidity, but nevertheless though it worth reading, and Frank who loved it, the story, the writing and the ‘aliveness’ of it all.



Thanks to all of you who having taken a minute to comment on the reading recommendations.



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## WRITERS CORNER

Now to raise our spirits and get the year off to a cracking start and our writers once again come to the party. Writers Corner this month brings us couple of short stories

First a story comes to us from Nada Lubay.

### An Anniversary Gift

Sandy and I, long-time friends, were relaxing together at a local foreshore restaurant. A glass of wine at hand, watched boats idly wallowing in a tranquil bay, and a sparkling ocean blending into a blue sky in the distant horizon. I found myself at peace and like all good friends we were absorbed in relaxed conversation.

After lunch, comfortable and silent in each other's company, we watched the children playing on the beach, building castles, running after beach balls and splashing in the water. Nearby, people were leisurely strolling, some with their dogs—big dogs, little dogs, cute dogs—some at nearby cafes.

"Donna, don't you have a fortieth wedding anniversary coming up soon?"

"Yes, this weekend." I replied

"What do you think you will get from Tom? I bet you will get something special, like a diamond ring or a pearl necklace."

"Tom wants to buy me another **ruby ring** to commemorate our fortieth wedding anniversary. Sandy, do you remember the ring that Tom gave me as an eternity ring? Beautiful oval cut **Burmese Ruby** encrusted with 18 carat diamonds all around it? I loved that ring, but I lost it on the beach a few years ago. We searched for it but no luck. Tom even hired a metal detector to try to find it . . . but it was gone, gone for good, swallowed by the sea. I'm not sure if I want another **ruby ring** just yet."

"Why not?"

"I want to wait until the 'end of year' sale. The ring is outrageously expensive."

"So what's the big deal? If Tom wants to buy you a new **ruby ring**, you should be happy. Besides, he can afford it. So . . . why such a sad face?" Sandy demanded, a tinge of surprise in her voice.

"What I really want is something much more special. Something that would be worth much more than a **ruby ring**."

Sandy, intrigued, gave me one of her cheeky looks. "What can be worth more than a nice big fat **ruby ring** encrusted with precious diamonds?" she asked with a smirk. "Please enlighten me."

Slightly embarrassed, I warily replied, "Sandy, I know you are not going to believe me, but I wish I could have a little dog, a small puppy."

"A dog, a little dog..." Sandy started to laugh with increasing gusto. "What's wrong with you? Are you saying you've never had a dog? Most people I know have a dog. There is nothing special about having a dog."

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Frowning, Sandy continued, "I wish someone would give *me* a **ruby ring**. I would settle for a very small **ruby ring** without diamonds; as a matter of fact, I would settle for any ring . . . just give me a ring. And you . . . you only want a dog." Sandy started to laugh.

Sandy could not stop teasing me. She kept on giggling but I could see now that her eyes were not smiling. Sandy has never had luck with her choice of men in her life. Her last partner promised her a big diamond ring and a rose garden. She was in love and totally smitten, waiting patiently, but in the end never got what he promised her. When she found out that he was already married she was heartbroken. In tears, she booted him out of her house and out of her life.

Her next relationship was even worse. After that, Sandy virtually gave up hope of finding the right man . . . her soul mate that she could share her life with.

Somewhat clumsily, I quickly tried to change this upsetting subject of a **ruby ring**.

"So, what do you think Sandy, should I get a puppy?"

"A little puppy, that's easy." Sandy responded with a smile.

"Yes, a nice little puppy with a face so adorable no one can resist, not even my husband Tom." For so long I have wanted a puppy but my husband kept dithering with the idea. To him, dogs make a lot of mess in and around the house. A mess he doesn't want to clean up! I could see Sandy was deep in thought. "Donna, at the veterinary clinic where I work, there's a client, an old lady, Betty, who has a little Shih Tzu-Poodle cross and I know she is looking for a good home for her. She says she is too old to look after the puppy."

"Oh, really..."

"Yes, poor woman recently had a hip operation and can hardly walk. She said her children bought her this little dog to keep her company because she lives alone."

Suddenly Sandy seemed lost for words. I kept quiet, not sure what to say.

Then, as if stirred with some newfound purpose, Sandy became animated again.

"You know, Donna, life is a *bitch*, but I am not complaining. Well, at least I have two dogs to keep me company. My two dogs are loyal, love me completely and unconditionally. Finding a right dog is easy but finding a right man is another story altogether. I gave up on my search to find a perfect man. Not everybody can get what they want or even deserve to," Sandy said with a melancholy sound in her voice.

I nodded in agreement and let her go on.

"Donna, you and Tom are so good for each other. You've been married for forty years and still love each other and that is so rare to find these days. The only thing to make your life perfect, I can now see, is that you get a dog. I'll fix that right now. This will be my present to you for your wedding anniversary. Would you like that?"

"Of course," I responded hastily. "I'd be very grateful, but I'm not sure Tom would agree," my words trailed off to a whisper.

Sandy looked at me with a quizzical stare yet with gentle, kind and rather sad eyes. In a calm voice she asked, "How come you never had a dog? Every home needs a dog."

"Well, I did have a dog once," I said defensively, "but it was a long time ago. When I was a little girl we had a dog on our farm. He was a guard dog, protecting our chickens from prowling foxes. I loved that dog so much and we were inseparable."

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My memories started flashing back. Sandy appeared intrigued so I continued.

“One moonless night two foxes came and tried to break into the hen coop. There was such a commotion, and the night was filled with screams and growls. Our brave dog stood the ground as a hero and saved all our chickens. But he died fighting those horrible foxes. I was heartbroken.”

Sandy's posture and facial expression slowly changed from sympathetic to decisiveness she made a final decision.

“Donna,” Sandy said firmly, “we are going to get you a dog. And we won't ask your husband for permission. As soon as I get home I'll call Betty.”

“Oh no Sandy, I need to check with Tom first. There is no point as my Tom would never agree to have a dog in the house.”

Sandy gave me a disapproving look. I could sense she kind of felt sorry for me. She probably saw me as a victim of my mistaken inner beliefs and attitudes.

Slightly embarrassed I hurriedly went on, attempting to be more convincing. This time I tried to be more logical and less emotional.

“Sandy, over the years I've made an effort to persuade him otherwise. You know us, and you of all people should know that my dear husband can be stubborn and he doesn't like dogs. Tom was always deadset against owning a dog.”

Sandy looked at me, disappointed, and said firmly, “Well it's about time that you get what you want. You have to stand up for yourself Donna.”

She went on and on about rights and obligations of spouses, how each spouse has the right to decide for themselves whether they want a pet or not.

“Tough luck for Tom!” Smiling she said, “He'll probably be pleased because a dog is much cheaper than a **ruby ring**.”

“But Sandy . . . Tom believes that having a dog would interfere with our lifestyle. We have no grandchildren. We travel as often as we please, holidays in Europe and Asia at least twice a year. Who will look after the dog?”

“Donna, stop this nonsense! I will look after your puppy, so don't worry. I will find you a perfect puppy and you will get your wish. I know Tom well enough, he will just have to get used to it. How silly this all sounds. Gosh, you only want a dog!”

After listening a bit more I relented and agreed to get a dog without checking with my husband first. Shortly after, we parted ways, Sandy promising she would be in touch soon.

True to her word, Sandy called later that evening to tell me that Betty was happy to meet me the next day. I tried to call off our arrangement one more time but Sandy was determined and would not take no for an answer.

I reluctantly drove to Sandy's house and soon we were on our way to the old lady's house. It was love at first sight! As Betty opened her front door, the puppy, a little snow-white fur ball, slipped between Betty's legs and her walker. With a wagging tail, she snugly embraced my leg as if she would never let me go. I was suddenly excited too. *I want this little fluffy lambsy*, I thought.

The old lady spoke first. “You may not want her as she is too feisty and can never sit still. Now you can see why she is far too much for me to handle.”

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The little pup could not stop licking my face and my hands, and I could see that this little bundle of joy was full of effervescence and abundant energy.

Betty somewhat uneasily added, "I have to say, I'm afraid that Bon-Bon also doesn't like men."

I looked at Betty and she whispered in a soft voice, "My daughter gave me this puppy as a Christmas present so I named her Bon-Bon – French for candy because this pup is so sweet. My daughter is very busy with her new job and has no time to come for a visit. She gave me Bon-Bon as she thought that if I had a puppy to keep me company, she wouldn't have to come and visit me as often."

Betty continued talking in a soft but sad voice. "When you get to my age nobody has enough time for you. This is what old age is all about, my dear. I hope that you'll never have to find out how lonely it gets when you get old. But, such is life. No point complaining about it, nobody is listening," Betty ended her plight in a sad and resigned voice.

I felt so sorry for this poor old lady, who was struggling with her walking frame and could hardly walk. Betty was all alone, and it was quite obvious that she wasn't able to manage such a lively little puppy.

Sandy looked at me and said, "Donna, this puppy will be perfect for you. And Tom shouldn't complain because a Shih-Tzu Poodle mix is a low-maintenance dog. They are easier to manage, groom and clean up after because poodles don't shed."

Sandy waited for my response and when none came, she said in her cheeky voice, "You want her, don't you?"

I was just about to say something when Sandy picked up Bon-Bon, put her in her basket and carried the little fur-ball outside to my car. I looked at Betty's sad face and politely asked, "How much do you want for Bon-Bon?"

Betty sternly replied, "Bon-Bon is not for sale! I do not want any money for her. My Bon-Bon is worth much more than money. All I ask is that you give her love, a lot of love...because Bon-Bon's love for you will be pure and true."

Then, in her soft trembling voice, Betty said, "Sandy told me your story. I feel much better now knowing that my Bon-Bon will go to a good home where she will be loved and cared for. That is all I want for my beloved Bon-Bon."

Pausing briefly to catch a breath, Betty said, "Wait, I'll get you something you will need for Bon-Bon." She turned around and, using her walker, slowly walked away to another room. She returned with all Bon-Bon's documentation, her registration and completed vaccinations.

As we parted and said our goodbyes, I gave Betty a huge hug and promised her that her dearly loved Bon-Bon would be much loved and cared for.

As we were leaving, I insisted on paying for the vaccinations and other costs and left the money on Betty's kitchen table.

At the door, I asked Betty if she would like me to keep in touch and send her some photos of Bon-Bon, but she felt that a clean break would be much easier to handle.

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In my heart, I felt sadness for poor Betty. I was suddenly struck by the plight of the aged, the forgotten people. I got into my car and looked at Bon-Bon curled up in her basket on Sandy's lap. Poor puppy; she was visibly frightened, worried and anxious, a look which said, *where are you taking me?* I gently patted Bon-Bon to reassure her.

On our way home, I thanked Sandy for such a valuable gift. I asked her if she could get some flowers for Betty on my behalf to which Sandy replied with a huge smile on her face.

"Of course I will my dear friend. I am so pleased that I was able to help. Good karma goes around. In the past you helped me when I needed a good friend. You are always there for me. You deserve this gift and I wish you and Tom a very happy wedding anniversary. Just be careful not to lose Bon-Bon like you did your **ruby ring**. Believe me, the loss of a puppy will hurt much more than the loss of a **ruby ring**. I suggest that you rename your puppy **Ruby**. That would be most appropriate. Tom wanted to buy you a new **ruby**, so now you have one." Sandy giggled.

I was overjoyed with her response and considered myself lucky to have such a loyal and good friend. After taking Sandy back to her house, I headed home with my new precious puppy. But the closer I got to home the more I became apprehensive. How would Tom react? Would he be pleased? What would he say? When I eventually arrived home, Tom greeted me with a worried look. Usually he got this look when I got home a bit late.

"Tom, please help me bring in our anniversary surprise gift," I asked him. "It's in my car on the front seat." Tom, still without a word, just nodded and went to the car. I watched him open the door and kept my fingers crossed. Visibly surprised, Tom just stood there looking at little **Ruby**. Stillness . . . no movement, no sound.

Then I saw a gradual transformation on Tom's face, a smile of joy, of pleasure. The moment Tom saw **Ruby**, her fluffy head sticking out of the basket, curiously looking up at him with puppy-dog eyes, he was transported into another world. It was love at first sight. **Ruby** had won him over at 'hello'. Tom gently lifted the basket and carried her into our home.

"What is her name?" Tom asked.

"**Ruby**," I said with a smile. "Do you like her?"

"Do I like her? I love her! I will now have two girls in my life to share my love with. She is such a precious little puppy. '**Ruby**', a perfect anniversary gift for both of us."

The three of us settled down for the evening, celebrating our anniversary and sipping a glass of champagne. Every so often we would glance at our precious new gift. **Ruby** was sleeping peacefully in a basket next to us. Both of us realised that we now had a new family member to love and to take care of.

We cuddled up on the couch, thinking what a perfect world we live in. And yes, **Ruby** was the best anniversary gift we could ever wish for. I instantly forgot that I had owned and lost a valuable **ruby** and diamond ring. Instead, I had found a new **Ruby**, much more valuable than the **ruby ring** I'd lost. No precious stones would ever come as close to my heart as my precious little **Ruby**.

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Over the years I often thought of Betty and wished that I could have shared some of our joys and happiness that we had with **Ruby**. It saddens me even now when I think of how lonely Betty was. Betty needed such a friend, a perfect companion – loyal, happy and non-judgmental. She also needed her family to care for her, but this was not to be. For some people, such as Betty, old age could be a sad and lonely existence. What a beautiful world it would be if all people had the ability to love as unconditionally as our dogs.

No wonder someone came up with this wonderful quote: ‘Whoever said that diamonds are a girl’s best friend ... never owned a dog.’ And certainly, nobody ever owned a **ruby** as beautiful as my **Ruby**.



This story was written to celebrate the ruby anniversary of the writers club.

And now, as Monty Python would say, for something completely different . . .

from Marie-Claire Morgana.

*“Write about something new,” Our MALA writing teacher said. But what? By the end of the weekend, I made up my mind to write a funny tongue-in-cheek fiction story, Something I’ve never done before, and very new to me. So here goes*



### **THE NIGHT, SONIA PLANNED HER FUNERAL**

Waiting patiently for her turn to see a GP, Sonia Smith, a petite redhead with grey hazel eyes was looking for something to read to pass the time, as the doctor surgery was busy on that late afternoon. Looking among a pile of old magazines her eyes caught a little brochure. It was the unusual title that first grabbed her attention. It read; HOW TO PLAN YOUR FUNERAL...

Was the brochure left in purpose by an ex-grumpy patient? Or was it a forewarning about the inefficiency of the surgery doctors? Sonia was intrigued but not worried, she wasn’t sick. She only needed a certificate from her GP, to explain last Friday absence at work when she had called sick, and went, instead with her best friend for a day out in town for a bit of Christmas shopping.

“MRS SMITH!” Her name was loudly called.

Sonia stood up, surprised she didn’t have to wait that long, and discretely the young woman dropped the brochure into her handbag as her curiosity to find out how to plan her funeral, took the best out of her impeccable upbringing. ‘I will bring it back next year... for my annual visit’ she thought, with a slight touch of guilt

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Later on, at home, in bed, Sonia was turning and tossing, annoyed by her husband Peter, constant snoring which kept her awake. She got up, walked to the dining room and switched on the TV. Unfortunately that night nothing on the small screen was worth losing sleep over it.

Comfortably seated in her brand new Ikea sofa, a mug of coffee within her reach and a packet of Tim Tam biscuits next to her, Sonia took the brochure from her handbag and started to read...

**We hope we will be of assistance to you, the brochure said, to convey your last wishes in a non-threatening approach, by asking you to fill this form and answer all the questions...**

Munching on Tim-Tams, Sonia was intrigued, and wondered about what her last wishes would be? And how her send-off should be? So she kept on reading, wanting to know more about the subject.

Wide awake, pen in hand, the twenty-four years old young woman was ready to plan her funeral, by answering the brochure's questionnaire. The first question was an easy one Sonia thought.

#### **Coffin.**

She wrote down *" I want a good comfortable coffin! But not so good to incite my best friend jealousy!*

#### **Viewing before funeral services.**

*Definitively not! She shuddered horrified. You had your chance to see me when I was alive. If you didn't, tough luck you're too late now!*

#### **Transport.**

Any kind of transport will do! She thought, *as long as I will arrive late for my last appointment... Because Sonia wasn't in hurry to drop dead from her perch!*

#### **Flowers.**

*If you have never given me flowers before, don't bother now, it's too late!* Sonia comment was intended to aim at Peter, her handsome blond blue eyes, young husband. Who owned a fat wallet, that he rarely opened for such frivolous gesture!

#### **Music.**

For a while, Sonia had to think long and hard about this question. Then she came out with, *Send out the clowns* for a good ambience's opening service, and *Conquer Paradise* for the right closure's send-off.

#### **Eulogy.**

*I leave it to you to say what you want about me, and my life.* Was Sonia honest answer, but she couldn't help to jolt down words of warning... *But be careful what you say, Who knows I might still hear you!*

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### **Headstone wording.**

Sonia realised she had never put any thoughts into it before. 'Rest in Peace' engraved on her headstone? No way! On the other side she hoped she would be partying with the ones who had left before her. On her headstone, she would prefer something different, something like this..... *I told you I wasn't feeling well'...* to make her GP, feeling sorry with guilt, because he always had said she was a picture of good health, but still charged her full consultation fees!

It was past midnight. Sonia had drunk her second cup of coffee when she got to the brochure's last page. More pieces of information were needed about wills and finances, more questions to answer, and more Tim-Tams to munch on!

### **Banking information.**

Sonia wrote down, without hesitation. *Well, don't count on it! I will never give you my code or passwords, not even from my grave!*

### **Personal debts, or owning money.**

*That yes! You can have it all!* In writing, she gave her permission.

### **Estate information about the spouse.**

Sonia had to Google the word 'estate' to understand the meaning of it. Then she decided her spouse could have everything that was hers. She knew Peter would not be the first one to go. *My husband is a very gallant man, she wrote down, he always lets the ladies go first!*

### **Children;**

*Ah... this was a problem... We don't have any, she thought.*

With sleeping eyes, Sonia took a yellow notepad from her desk and scribbled a memo... *Remember, to make a child... or two, for good measure!* And then, she went to bed.

Cuddling, next to her husband, who was in deep sleep and still snoring, Sonia smiled at the thought that, there is always a tomorrow! Then, she closed her eyes and went to sleep.

And that's how, many years ago, Mr and Mrs Smith started a family.!

All because one night... Sonia Smith decided to plan her funeral!

*PS: I had fun coming up with this story, I hope you will have fun reading it!!*



Many thanks to our writers for sharing their great stories with us all.

Do keep them coming. All contributions welcome, be they fact, or fiction, prose or poetry.

Send them to the editor at [malarockingham@gmail.com](mailto:malarockingham@gmail.com) or [bronwen.usher@gmail.com](mailto:bronwen.usher@gmail.com)



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## FEEDBACK

Thanks too to all of you who took a minute or two to let the writers know that you do appreciate their work.

The December issue brought feedback on the Christmas stories, it seems both were enjoyed. The story of the Starry Night evoking happy memories for Yvonne.

Peter's article on Matters Health was excellent. Two members contacted me to say they could not click the links and access the whole thing, but having sent them a link in Word not PDF all was well. Both Jan and Robert very much appreciated the information.

I can personally vouch for each of the articles, I have read them all and found very useful.

*Here are the missing links from that article :*

❖ **Bedtime linked to heart health**

[Bedtime linked with heart health -- ScienceDaily](#)  
[Accelerometer-derived sleep onset timing and cardiovascular disease incidence: a UK Biobank cohort study | European Heart Journal - Digital Health | Oxford Academic \(oup.com\)](#)

❖ **The effect of food groups and nutrients on thyroid hormone levels in healthy individuals' "The aim of the study was to analyse the association of dietary groups (groups of food items) with thyroid hormone levels in healthy individuals."**

[The effect of food groups and nutrients on thyroid hormone levels in healthy individuals - ScienceDirect](#)

❖ **'Study of 18000+ US and Australian older people reveals moderate drinking protective against heart disease, more than for tea totalers'**

[Study of 18000+ US and Australian older people reveals moderate drinking protective against heart disease, more than for tea totalers: Moderate drinking of alcohol associated with reduced risk of heart disease and death from all causes, landmark study of older people reveals -- ScienceDaily](#)

❖ **And finally something that really caught my eye: ' A diet of essential amino acids could keep dementia at bay':**

[A diet of essential amino acids could keep dementia at bay: Consuming Amino LP7, a specific combination of essential amino acids, could inhibit the development of dementia, shows a study from Japan -- ScienceDaily](#)



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## **XMAS QUIZ ANSWERS**

### *Christmas seems ages ago but as promised - the answers*

1. *What colour are the berries of the mistletoe?*  
*WHITE*
2. *Which journalist, writer and poet wrote the speech for the first King's speech for King George in 1932?*  
*RUDYARD KIPLING*
3. *If you are born on Christmas day what is your star sign?*  
*CAPRICORN*
4. *What do the American's call reindeer?*  
*CARIBOU*
5. *On Christmas day in 1989 a record TV audience in UK watched the premier of which Australian film?*  
*CROCODILE DUNDEE*
6. *How many wise men does the bible say visited the baby Jesus?*  
*THE BIBLE DOES NOT MENTION A NUMBER OF WISE MEN, IT MENTIONS THREE GIFTS, BUT NO-ONE NOW KNOWS IF THEY WERE GIVEN BY A SINGLE PERSON OR NOT*
7. *The word 'coordinates' is anagram for a popular Christmas item. What is it?*  
*DECORATIONS*
8. *The birth of Jesus is recorded in two books of the bible. Luke and which other?*  
*MATTHEW*
9. *Which famous British scientist was born on Christmas Day in 1642?*  
*ISAAC NEWTON*
10. *Which Aussie Christmas tradition began in Melbourne in 1938?*  
*CAROLS BY CANDLELIGHT*
11. *Which common Christmas item was invented with by Tom Smith in London in 1847?*  
*THE CHRISTMAS CRACKER*
12. *Alphabetically which is the first of Santa's reindeer?*  
*BLITZEN*



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## THE LAST PAGE

### PEEL SUMMER SCHOOL

It was good to see Rockingham members represented at the summer school at Mandurah again this year. Despite the hot weather the desire to keep the grey cells ticking over was there and led you to enjoy the variety of sessions that made up the summer school. Congrats and thanks to the Mandurah (Peel) group for another great week this year.



Until next month when we should have a clearer picture of the year ahead let's power through the year no matter what hurdles there are to overcome. As the poet Robert Frost said "The best way out is always straight through."

But I'm with HG Wells when he says "while there is a chance of the world getting through its troubles, I hold that a reasonable man has to behave as though he were sure of it and if in the end your cheerfulness is not justified at any rate you will have been cheerful."

Stay safe, stay cheerful and keep your grey cells ticking over. If we can keep doing that we doing well.

**Bronwen Usher**  
**Editor**



*A thought for those of us suffering from Covid inflation...*

*A person who weights 90kgs on Earth weights only 34kgs on Mars.  
The good news is that we're not overweight we're just on the wrong Planet!*

