

# PERTH MALA MATTERS 2025



Mature Adults  
Learning Association

(Website: [www.mala.au](http://www.mala.au))  
**NEWSLETTER**



*A MALA member is one who  
enjoys a diet of intellectual  
stimulation, flavoured with  
fun and spiced with humour!*

**February 2025 ~ Semester 1 - Part A**

## **Musings From the Chair**



Welcome to MALA 2025 everyone and thank you for your loyalty and support of our activities. Also a special welcome is extended to new members joining us for the first time. I hope you enjoy the opportunity to gain new and interesting information and experiences, while meeting people who share similar interests.

Our Course Coordinator, Elizabeth, searches far and wide to find presenters with the knowledge and understanding of topics that she knows will appeal to MALA people. However, we are always grateful to have our members pass on suggestions for presenters that they may have heard about or where they have attended their talks elsewhere. The feedback forms collected at the end of each course also provide excellent guidance to the Committee about lecturers and the topics they covered, so we urge you to complete those.

During the five weeks of lectures, at any time you have a query or a comment please approach the members of the Committee who are there to help. We have a large Committee, with each person having responsibility for different aspects of what is involved with MALA.

They are easily found as they wear yellow badges and their names are:

Chair: Jeanette McQueen

Deputy Chair: Julie Gibney

Secretary:

Database/Enrolments: Neil Raine

Publicity: Helen Formentin

Front Desk: Catherine Hall

General Committee: Steven Digwood

Newsletter: Kate Boland

Social/Excursions: Wendy Morris

Lizzie Albert

Treasurer; Rowena Lambert

Website: David Thorne

Equipment: Iris Lavell

While on the subject of the Committee, I am sad to say we will be looking for a new Secretary to take the place of the very efficient and organised Lizzie, who will be stepping down at the end of the first Semester. She has been a wonderful asset to our Committee, but has plans to expand her horizons. So if you are interested or know of someone who would be a possible replacement please let us know – it is a crucial role to fill. Committee meetings are once a month with the AGM held in November.

However, at any time during the year you are interested in helping please approach us – we are always grateful for offers of assistance. As you are aware, we are totally a volunteer run organisation without any funding coming from outside sources, so the challenge is always there to cover our overheads. Getting Enrolment numbers at a sufficient level to cover lecturers' fees and room hire etc is crucial to our ongoing success, so please spread the word.

If we manage to have any surplus funds, we use this to purchase essential items such as equipment. We were delighted to recently be able to purchase a new projector from funds raised during 2024 and this will allow for better projection in the largest of the three rooms which is Room 1.

So as we look forward to another wonderful series of presentations on some very diverse and unusual topics, I wish you a safe and happy 2025.

Jeanette McQueen, Chair



## January 2025 Peel MALA Summer School

This year's week-long Peel Summer School was held in the Mandurah Performing Arts Centre, and was well attended by both Peel and Perth MALA members, with a wide variety of speakers. Congratulations again to Peel MALA for another successful event! We look forward to your 2026 Summer School.

## 2025 Semester 1 Courses

### PART A: 28 February - 28 March (5-week courses)

10.15-11.14am: choose 1

#### TALES FROM THE BRITISH GEORGIAN ERA

10:15am to 11:15am

\*With Elton Brown

*Lifetime student and tutor of European history; regularly lectures at South Perth and Kalamunda Learning Centres and U3A.*

This course examines key events and conditions of Georgian Britain through engaging visuals and multimedia presentations. Topics include:

1. Social conditions depicted in William Hogarth's artwork.
2. Empire building and the evils of slavery.
3. The rebellion of Bonnie Prince Charlie.
4. The American War of Independence.
5. Coping with the French Revolution and Napoleon's defeat.

#### UNDERSTANDING MODERN WARFARE AND HOW IT SHAPES GEOPOLITICS

10:15am to 11:15am

\*With Michael Hilliard

*Former war correspondent and Defence and Security Analyst specialising in Russian and Central Asian military affairs.*

This intensive five session series explores the evolution of modern warfare and its profound influence on geopolitics. Using case studies from conflicts in Ukraine, Georgia, Chechnya, Afghanistan, and Iraq, members will gain tools to identify conflict warning signs, assess battlefield development, and distinguish reliable information from propaganda. Led by an experienced analyst and NATO advisor, this series provides expert level insights into the complex world of contemporary conflict and strategy.

#### BAROQUE ART AND ARCHITECTURE IN SOUTHERN AND NORTHERN EUROPE

10:15am to 11:15am

\*With Richard Read

*Emeritus Professor Richard Read is Senior Honorary Research Fellow in Art History at UWA.*

Explore how Baroque art and architecture thrived in Europe's distinct cultural and political contexts. This series highlights:

1. The Invention of Baroque Rome and the Modern Circulating City.
2. Gian Lorenzo Bernini: sculptor, architect, and creator of Baroque Spectacle.
3. Emotional intensity and Catholic dogma in Caravaggio's paintings.
4. Tranquillity and violence in the paintings of Rembrandt, Vermeer and other Dutch Golden Era Artists.
5. Diego Velázquez and the Spanish Court.

**START WRITING YOUR LIFE STORY**

10:15am to 11:15am

**\*With Rhuwina Griffiths**

*Rhuwina is an accredited trainer, lecturer, ghost-writer, life story mentor and guided autobiography facilitator with 20 years experience.*

If you've always wanted to write a life story, this course will help you kickstart your journey with techniques for research, structure, dialogue, and narrative voice. Week-by-week, explore how to craft compelling stories that resonate with readers. The sessions are as follows:

1. Before you begin: different types of life writing; difficult topics; understanding audience
2. Introduction to research: generating ideas
3. Structuring your story: chronological vs. thematic; story arc
4. Writing techniques: show, don't tell; dialogue; reflection
5. Finding your voice: narrative voice; tone and style

11.45am-12.45pm. Choose 1

**WEST AUSTRALIAN STORIES OF RIVERS AND SEAS**

11:45am to 12:45pm

**\*With Mike Lefroy**

*Mike is an educator and author with a passion for stories of WA, particularly his hometown Fremantle.*

Discover WA's rich maritime and river history through Mike's personal connections as a great grandson of WA Engineer in Chief CY O'Connor and his career as Education Officer of the HM Bark Endeavour Replica project and Head of Education at the Western Australian Maritime Museum.

1. From the Battle of Agincourt to the Swan River Colony – the Lefroy family in WA
2. The building of a replica of HM Bark Endeavour
3. Shipwreck at Madman's Corner – solving a maritime mystery
4. Memory Banks – the story of the Derbarl Yerrigan/Swan River
5. A Scheme of Madness – C Y O'Connor and the Goldfields Pipeline.

**LANGUAGE IN THE WORLD**

11:45am to 12:45pm

**\*With Daniel Midgley**

*Daniel teaches linguistics at UWA. He co-hosts the "Because Language" podcast and is the voice of the Speakeasy on ABC Radio Perth 720.*

Why do we ride ON a bus, but IN a car? How did TEA come to mean the drink, but also the meal? And why is the alphabet in that order? Language gives us lots of questions, and linguist Daniel Midgley has answers, presented in a fun and entertaining style. Along the way, we'll look at some of the biggest ideas in culture, mind, and the world, and see what makes language work.

**PART B: 2 May - 30 May (5-week courses)**

10.15am-11.15am Choose 1

**EMPOWERING SENIORS: LEGAL INSIGHTS AND PROTECTIONS**

10:15am to 11:15am

**\*With Amber (Northern Suburbs Community Legal Centre)**

*Amber is a seasoned legal and education expert with a passion for empowering vulnerable individuals to navigate the legal system effectively.*

Northern Suburbs CLC is a community legal centre dedicated to assisting older persons with legal and non-legal issues through the Older People's Rights Service. This 5-week course equips seniors with knowledge to tackle legal issues like scams, family agreements, co-ownerships, and grandparents' rights. Expert-led sessions provide practical advice tailored to WA's aging population, ensuring older adults are empowered and confident in safeguarding their rights and navigating legal challenges effectively.

**MUSIC AND KABBALA**

10:15am to 11:15am

**\*With Tzvi Friedl**

*Tzvi is a Mozarteum graduate with an MA in viola performance, and held leading positions in the Bruckner Orchestra of Linz, Austria and the Israel Symphony Orchestra.*

Music is the one art form that has always been an integral part of physical existence. Whereas the performing arts, poetry and the fine arts are a depiction of reality, music is reality down to its transitional nature. When Pythagoras recognised cosmic vibrations in the planets, he touches on something that Kabbala, the spiritual system of Jewish mysticism, elaborates in a much broader form.

This lecture series will endeavour to explore the correlation between the emotional qualities of the human soul and our Western tonal system. Additionally, we will touch on topics of styles and traditions, and iconic figures like Nikolaus Harnoncourt and Lionel Tertis, both pioneers in their field of musical interpretation.

## JOURNEYS IN HISTORICAL FICTION

11:45am to 12:45pm

### \*With Dawn Farnham

*Dawn has a creative writing PhD and is an award-winning author of seven novels and numerous short stories.*

The course covers the art of historical fiction, featuring Dawn's own journey to publication as a mature woman, while living in Singapore. It offers examples of famous late-life authors like Bram Stoker (Dracula) and Laura Ingels Wilder (Little House on the Prairie). Topics include:

- Genres and reader expectations.
- Research techniques and world-building.
- Character development and plotting.
- Editing, publishing.
- Creating compelling covers and blurbs.

### 11.45am-12.45pm Choose 1

## AGE OF WONDERS, AGE OF TRAGEDY: THE EXTRAORDINARY RISE, UNPARALLELED ACHIEVEMENTS, AND TRAGIC FALL OF CLASSICAL GREECE

11:45am to 12:45pm

### \*With Dr. Alan Fenna

*Alan is Professor of Politics at Curtin University, elected member of local government and President of the Australian Political Studies Association.*

Ancient Greece in the 5<sup>th</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> centuries BCE was an extraordinary moment in human history, producing an explosion of scientific, literary, artistic, philosophical and political innovation unparalleled in its time and indeed for centuries to come. It was also a fratricidal culture of endless warfare that led almost inexorably to decline and fall. That warfare produced the world's first genuine work of history, but brought an end to Athenian democracy and exhausted Greek civilisation. This course examines innovations in science, art, and politics while addressing the warfare that shaped its history and legacy.

## JEONG AND HAN: CULTURAL IDENTITY OF KOREAN SOCIETY

11:45am to 12:45pm

### \*With Sunyoung Oh

*Sunyoung Oh is a linguist and UWA Korean Studies lecturer, researching bilingualism, intercultural communication, and language education. She has lived and taught in eight cities on three continents.*

This course delves into contemporary Korean society, emotions, and identity to better understand its culture, language, and people. The series begins with an overview of Korean history and the foundation of its identity, followed by an exploration of key emotions like jeong, han, and hyo. Members will learn about the Korean alphabet's invention and practice writing simple words, including their names. Later lectures examine North and South Korea's identities through language, education, and economics, concluding with discussions on ageing, family, gender roles, and societal shifts. Each session features a short film clip for deeper insight.

## INTRODUCTION TO ETHICS

11:45am to 12:45pm

### \*With Meera Finnigan M.A. (Phil)

*Meera taught philosophy and ethics at University of Notre Dame and focuses on bringing the richness of philosophy into community settings.*

Ethics is a central, deeply thought-provoking branch of philosophy; its theories and practice span millennia of the Western tradition. On this introductory course we will address such questions as: how do we make ethical decisions? Are there objective moral truths or are all truths relative? Should all non-human animals and the environment have moral status and rights? What is virtue? What is the good life? We will address these and other questions by considering the main ethical theories of prominent philosophical thinkers down the ages and apply them to current ethical dilemmas and considerations

## Your Social calender!

The MALA Xmas lunch was a great success, 35 members attended, the food was great according to all reports, and the service excellent!

Semester 1 first activity coming up in early April will be a guided [tour of the National Trust's Peninsula Farm](#) in Maylands, with lunch at the café afterwards: standby for the date!

We are also working on a tour and lunch at Parlaiment House at a future date.



## Life Member: Yvonne Keegan

Yvonne was very involved in the initial establishment of the organisation which became MALA, and until last October, was still attending MALA Lectures at GBLC.

At 92 years of age, living independently in Floreat, Yvonne's daughter, who lived in Melbourne, made arrangements for Yvonne to be cared for closer to where her family could be, and as close as possible.

This has been a huge adjustment for Yvonne, moving away from where she lived, for so many years. We can forward her contact details so that those members who knew Yvonne can keep in touch

## Certificates of Appreciation: Lynne Barton



Lynn joined Perth MALA as a member in 2013, when the branch met at the Constitution Centre in West Perth. She was elected to the position of Secretary at the 2015 AGM by which time Perth MALA had relocated to GBLC in Manning.

The following year 2016, Lynn took over the position of Treasurer for Perth Branch.

In 2017 the State Government required all Incorporated organisations to comply with updated Constitutional rules and our 3 MALA Branches needed to consult regularly to rewrite the MALA Constitution to meet these

revised model rules, which necessitated our 3 branches to have an overriding MALA ASSOCIATION, rather than just receiving monthly reports from the other 2 branches.

Lynn took on the position of MALA Association Treasurer, requiring many hours in committee as well as correspondence with various State Government Departments, the Tax Office and Charities Commission to understand what was required and negotiate with the Branches.

Ensuring the viability and management of our various MALA Branches, Lynn continued to hold both these roles as Perth Branch Treasurer and Association Treasurer until November 2023

### Special Note to all MALA members:

Please note that MALA also welcomes any and all members who are *under age 55*: our remit is for 'adults', ie, there is *no age restriction* on anyone enrolling for any MALA courses, provided they are 'adults'. Spread the word!

## The story of our MALA logo

After decades of being uncertain about our use of the word MALA, in April 2024 we finally received confirmation of successful registration of MALA (without any dots or quotation marks) as a trademark licensed to Mature Adults Learning Association (Inc.)

Your Association Committee, with representatives from both Perth and Peel branches, then turned their attention to our visual logo.



Although the blue dot with squiggles either side had long been alleged to have resulted from a TAFE competition amongst Graphic Design students, we could not uncover any confirmation of the story.

The book "The MALA Story" by Peter Reynolds (which is available on loan from your local committee) asserts the logo represented, "*the eye of learning, surrounded by the flames*"

*of knowledge,”* however few current members saw any connection between the enigmatic logo and the purpose and activities of MALA in our present day.

Life member, Yvonne Keegan - now a resident of Victoria, forwarded some 1995 typed documents which bore an even earlier hand-drawn logo, but further explanation about its design was not known.

The MALA committee agreed on the following criteria: a new logo should be unique, eye-catching, a distinctive colour, clearly depicting our prime activity as learning together in a social group, acknowledge we prefer expert lecturers and encourage interaction from within the audience. A circular shape was modified to include a link to outside the circle.



Tim Hall, the son of one of our long-term Perth MALA members, very generously gave advice and worked with us in a pro-bono capacity to arrive at a distinctive, eye-catching, and clearly interpretable design.



We believe our new logo meets all our agreed criteria! It clearly represents learning and interacting in a group setting with an expert lecturer, and the little “shirt-tail” is a reminder of our links from and to the wider WA community. We hope that as time goes by the MALA Logo will become instantly recognisable and synonymous with our unique learning organisation.

David Thorne  
MALA President

Position vacancy: **Perth MALA secretary** from May this year: please consider nominating for this role. Our current secretary Lizzie can orientate you and mentor you in advance. Your role would be principally to take and type up the committee meeting, email them out, and some allied duties.



**Remember: You can change your preference of course by asking at our Front Desk – provided there are enough spaces in each one...**

**Perth MALA extends our thanks to Mr Geoff Baker, MLA, and his office staff for their ongoing support for all our photocopying.**

# DON'T FORGET



**Notice board:** Have a look at our MALA notice board. It has information on classes, room numbers, the end-of-semester luncheon and Social activities, plus the AGM information.



**Name tags:** It is so much easier to chat with someone when you know their name. So please remember to wear yours. If you are new to MALA your name tag will be available at the front desk. If you lost yours, please ask at the desk for a replacement. Also, please remember to put the name of a contact on the back of your tag in case of emergency.



**Mobiles:** Please be considerate to the lecturer and your fellow participants and remember to **put yours to silent/vibrate, or better still – TURN IT OFF!**



**Morning Tea:** A hot water urn is on in room 2 for your tea/coffee etc. and tea, coffee and milk will be provided but you need to bring your own mug & food, etc.



Do you require a 'Companion Card' to allow your carer to attend your MALA course with you free of charge? Please email our enrolment officer [enrol.perth@mala.org.au](mailto:enrol.perth@mala.org.au) to discuss your requirements.



**Our website:** Have a look at **our website** [www.mala.au](http://www.mala.au) and *tell people about it*. Please tell us if you can suggest any changes or additions?



**Our email:** you can easily get in touch with us, preferably via the 'CONTACT US' page on our website or email to [info@mala.org.au](mailto:info@mala.org.au). Your comments, suggestions, contributions to the newsletter etc. are always welcome. To enrol please use: [enrol.perth@mala.org.au](mailto:enrol.perth@mala.org.au)