

Grey Matters

U3A
SEYMOUR & DISTRICT
♦
MARCH 2026



**In this newsletter
you can expect:**



Census

Art Jessica's Corral

Book Buffet Just Ukes

Bobbin Lace/Craft Luncheon Club

Creative Writing Matinee

Garden Matters Meditation

Bridge (short course) Marjong & Rummikub (short course)

Genealogy Our Literature

German Walk & Wonder

Presidents Message

As a result of our AGM we do have a committee! I am grateful for that, however I do want to add that at 1.28pm I was worried that we would not have a quorum, which is 10% of our membership of 108. Our guest speakers were there, representatives from U3a Network Victoria were there, afternoon tea was ready to go and but sadly we were lacking in members. Is it that we fear being railroaded into doing something we don't want to do (we already had all the executive positions filled so that should not have been a problem) or is it that we don't realise that organisations like ours rely on support from the general members in all sorts of ways? I am so glad to the last couple came and we did not need to have a re run of the AGM. The committee would love to have feedback how we could have made the AGM more enticing. Enough said!

The speakers, John Smith and Tony Gooden were fabulous and shared so much about their CFA experiences. John has over 50 years of involvement with fire fighting, particularly with the aerial side and Tony joined the CFA when he retired 5 years ago. Presentations well worth listening to and a real acknowledgement of this voluntary organisation. Hats off to the CFA.

Our introductory classes of Mahjong (10 participants) and Bridge (5) are proving to be fun as well as testing our grey matter. New languages are being learnt. What's a Pong, Chow, Kong, Double raise, or a Loser or even a Major or a Minor? Still time to give it a go if you would like. Thanks Anne, Irene & Dayle for being willing to share your skills and tutor us. Barry Dunn our Art tutor wins the popularity stakes. He has increased his class numbers to

25. We have created a 2 nd art class on Wednesdays 10am-12pm so if you can help Barry balance out the numbers between the two classes that would be helpful.

Reminders:

- ☐ A new member and haven't received a U3A badge yet, or need yours replaced? Email Jo at seymu3a@gmail.com and she will organise that. Please put your emergency contacts on the back and wear it when attending a class.
 - ☐ Pay your fees if you haven't already done that
 - ☐ Check out the updated online timetable for any new or changes to classes
 - ☐ Rave about the classes to friends to increase our membership and attendance!
- Have a great month

"Things and people not actively in use age twice as fast" Hugo L. Blake





Left to Right

John Taubman, Irene Teleford,
Jo Gooden and Kylie Gerber.

Kylie and John are from U3A Network and
were present for our recent AGM
Irene was re-elected as President
Jo was re-elected as Secretary.



Left to Right

Irene Teleford, John Smith and
Tony Gooden

Guest Speakers at the AGM were two
CFA volunteers, Tony Gooden gave a
power point presentation on the
workings and history of our local
Seymour CFA.

John Smith gave a power point
presentation outlining the aircraft
operations in Hume Region.





Art

Learn at your own pace in a friendly environment- no previous experience necessary.

All mediums welcome. Plein Air painting starting the first Tuesday of the month if its not your thing you can stay in the studio.

Contact: Barry Dunn

Phone: 0401 359 918

Email: clearpropdude@gmail.com

Tuesdays & Wednesdays 10:00-12 noon

Venue: Chittick Place



Book Buffet

Some of us didn't finish The Covenant of Water by Abraham Verghese, but those who persevered really enjoyed this story. Some members read on their devices and Bob gave it a 5star review.

Next month on 16 March we'll discuss the Heaven & Earth Grocery Store by James McBride

Contact: Jo Gooden

Phone: 0448 700 967

Email: jogooden@gmail.com

3rd Monday 1:30-2:30

Venue: Seymour Library



Bobbin Lace Craft

Intrigued at the idea of lace making?

This weekly group is your chance to try the ancient skill and learn about its history and uses. Maree Langley will be "showing you the ropes" so to speak. Gender is no barrier. For \$60.00 class members hire 1 cushion and 10 bobbins. For those of you who don't have the patience, bring your knitting, crochet, needlework or other craft and Maree will help.

Contact: Maree Langley

Phone: 0409 350 064

Email: mjlangley13@gmail.com

Mondays 10:00 - 12:00



Garden Matters

Our first meeting for 2026 was held on Thursday 18th February at Little Stones Café in Seymour. With new members we have scheduled the next 3 months garden group events and look forward to an exciting year ahead.

Details for our next meeting will be emailed directly to members prior to the event.

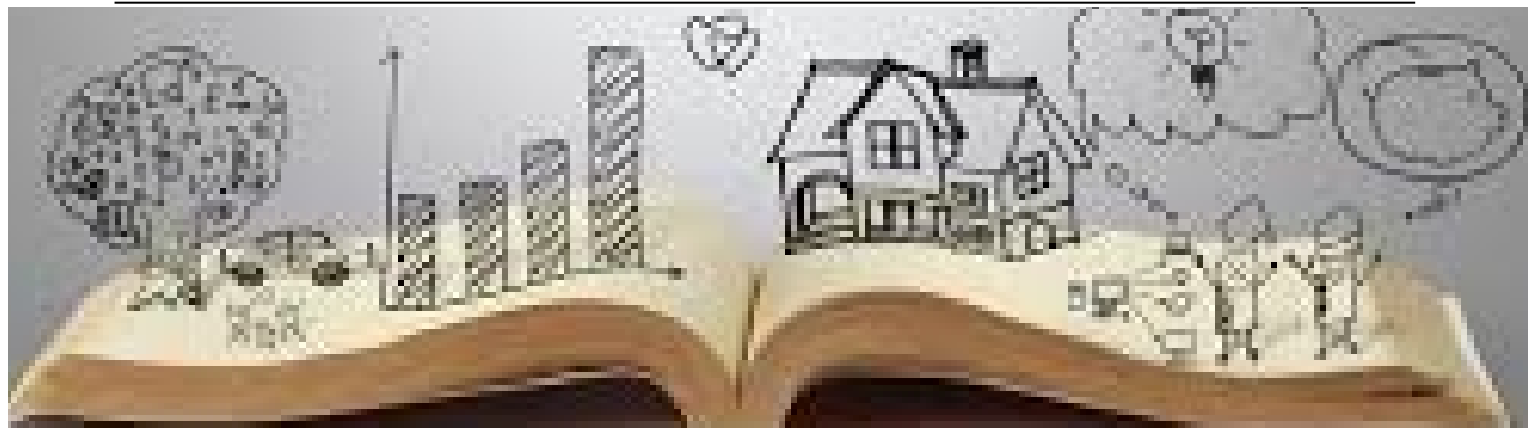
Contact: Pam Lawler

Phone: 0437 377 479

Email: lawler_p@yahoo.com

3rd Wednesday 10:30-12 noon

Venue: Chittick place to begin



Creative Writing

We met at the usual comfortable Seymour Library venue excited to start 2026. Conversation ensued with each person contributing their written topics of interest and experiences over the holiday season.

At present, one current topic is the local close bush fire encounters, which led to the inspiration to create a piece about weather extremes for our next meeting on **March 17th 1:30 -3:00** Our little group invite you to take the opportunity to join in, jot down thoughts with pen and paper and bring these written expressions for a pleasant chat

We are there to welcome and support your efforts.

Contact: Lola Puddy

Phone: 0428 769 612

Venue: Seymour Library



**German
Beginners,
Intermediate &
Advanced**

Trudi is a native German speaker and an experienced language teacher.

After beginners, comes the next stage, reading German books, this helps to teach the construction of sentences and the importance of gender in this language.

A continuing course for existing participants and for German speakers wanting to brush up their language in a relaxed way.

Contact: Trudi Lavoipierre

Phone: 57992425

Email: jt13@bigpond.com

Beginners

Mondays 10.30-12 noon

Venue: Seymour Library

Intermediate

Mondays 12 noon-1:30

Venue: Seymour Library

Advanced

Mondays 9:00-10:30

Venue: Seymour Library



Your Fascinating Brain

Our last class was a presentation by Bill Rudd Schmidt on conflict and the brain. Bill is now retired after 50 plus years in the police force, much of that time as a prosecutor, so he has probably dealt with more conflicts than most of us. At least hopefully! Bill was able to bring together what the class learnt previously about the physical structure of the brain and human behaviour. We looked at what happens when we feel threatened, real or imagined, and the amygdala takes over. We could see how easy it is for us to react rather than respond, rationality going out the window! We explored confirmation bias, the importance of preparation in a court situation and much more. How valuable is all of this in understanding and negotiating relationships?



Luncheon Club

We held our first Luncheon at Brewers Table in Seymour. The food was great. A few specials were on offer as well as the normal menu and everyone enjoyed their food.

A bit of nostalgia for me:

I chose this venue as it was the first event I attended last year, and was warmly welcomed as a new comer.

10 members attended and we had a great discussion about possible locations for future luncheons. There was even talk about bringing back Travellers events that were a hit in the past.

We will be going to the Donnybrook Hotel Thursday 12th March @ Midday. We will catch the

train there and back. I will let everyone know the timetable via email and text.

Barb Meredith

Phone: 0417 384 712 Email: barb@marengofarm.com.au



- A Brief History

Jessica's Corral

After retiring from teaching, I began working with Brian in our little market garden in Avenel. It was hard yakka and I was ready for a bit of cultural intervention.

Imagine my surprise when I saw an ad in the Seymour Telegraph looking for singers!

A singing group Jessica's Corral - A Brief History

After retiring from teaching, I began working with Brian in our little market garden in Avenel. It was hard yakka and I was ready for a bit of cultural intervention.

Imagine my surprise when I saw an ad in the Seymour Telegraph looking for singers!

A singing group in Seymour! I got really excited!! I've always loved singing in choirs and was involved in all kinds of musical experiences since Primary school.

So I dragged Brian along to the little hall behind the Uniting Church and met Anne Thompson who had placed the ad. Anne was keen to expand the list of courses for the Seymour branch of U3A! I can't remember how many people showed up, but we sat in a circle and introduced ourselves. Most people expressed their love of singing but it became very clear that there was no one with any real musical knowledge or teaching skills.....except for me.

I got in touch with Community Music Victoria - an organisation that was promoting community singing and music making - and met some talented singers and musicians who provided resources and inspiration.

And that's how it started.

I found my first lesson plan - 26 February, 2007!!!

Jessica B

Contact: Jo Gooden

Phone: 0448 700 967

Email jogooden@gmail.com

2nd & 4th Mondays

Venue: Uniting Church Foyer



Bridge

We are making good progress in getting comfortable with the basics of Bridge. Our two sessions so far have seen us learning the language, communicating with partner through the bidding process, assessing the value of hands and playing them out.

Lots of laughs and a very companionable group.

Contact: Irene Davey

Phone: 0400185424

Wednesdays 1:30-3:00

Venue: Chittick Place



Meditation

It doesn't matter if you are a beginner or someone who meditates regularly, all are welcome.

Contact: John Stares

Phone :0433 324 607

Email: johnstares9@gmail.com

Thursdays 9.30-10.30

Venue: Chittick Place

Matinee

Our Second movie will be Rebecca.' a 1940 American romantic thriller directed by Alfred Hitchcock.

The film stars Laurence Olivier as the brooding aristocratic widower Maxim and Joan Fontaine as the woman who becomes his second wife. The film is a gothic tale shot in black and white. Rebecca, who died before the events of the film, is never seen, her reputation and recollections of her, however, are a constant presence in the lives of Maxim, his new wife and the housekeeper.

Contact: Trish Archer

Phone: 0409 945 807

Email: trisharch@gmail.com

3rd Thursday 1:30- 4:00

Venue: Chittick Place



Just Ukes

Would you like to learn basic Ukulele? Bring your own Uke or sit in on a session or two before you decide to join us. We can also help you choose which Uke suits. Feel free to ring Moira anytime.

Contact: Moira Maher

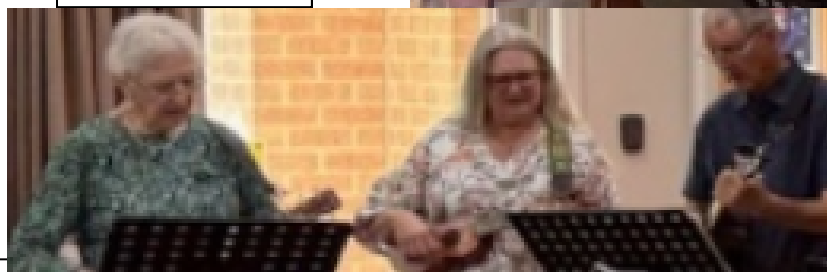
Phone: 0427 991 623

Thursdays 11:00-1.00

Venue: Chittick Place



Our group
performing
at Karingal





A PUZZLEMENT FOR U3A MEMBERS!

Since when is "chow" not a food?
Since when is a "pong" not a smell?
Since when is a "Kong" not a gorilla?
Since when it is MAHJONG!

An enthusiastic band of at least 10 players have spent the last three Mondays at Chittick

Park either brushing up on their old skills or taking on board a whole new game – Mahjong. Embracing a game from another culture, in this case the Chinese, seems daunting with new rules, certainly a new vocabulary and different tools to play the game with. But, on closer examination, the class could see that there were many similarities

with card games that used runs or three of a kind so that Mahjong became push over!

Before long we had first time players Gabrielle claiming the first "pong" and Libby making history by being the first of the group to go Mahjong!

Do come along, 10.00 – 11.30am Mondays at Chittick Park and share the fun!

Anne Thompson

Chief Dragon!

PS We do play Rummikub too!



Contact: Anne Thompson
Phone: 0403 103 795
Email practique@gmail.com
Mondays 10:00-12:00
Venue: Chittick Place

Rippon Lea Estate Is Abuzz This February



Garden Season at Its Peak: Discover the Dahlias

A vibrant burst of seasonal colour awaits as the celebrated dahlia collection comes into bloom. Bold shapes, rich tones and layered textures transform the gardens into a living canvas — a must-see moment in the gardening calendar and well worth the visit.

There is plenty to keep you a busy bee! Pack a picnic, find a quiet spot for inspiration or reading, or enjoy lawn games including croquet and bowls. You can even book the tennis court for a relaxed hit surrounded by history.

Open daily
10am–5pm (last entry 4.30pm)
Rippon Lea Estate, Elsternwick

<https://mailchi.mp/nattrust/advocacy-conservation-newsletter-september-8338275?e=ff592c01a2>

The ABS is hiring in your area for the 2026 Census



Census

Hello Seymour & District U3A,

The next Census is on Tuesday 11 August 2026.

The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) is hiring more than 30,000 people across Australia to support the 2026 Census.

A successful Census leads to better decisions, policies, and outcomes for our communities. It's important we have the right people in the right jobs to make sure everyone is counted.

We're now hiring Field Managers in locations all over Australia, including in your area.

Field Managers have an important job leading Census work in their local area. They recruit, train and manage a team of Field Officers to ensure high quality data collection

How you can help

1. Encourage your community to visit census.abs.gov.au/jobs for more information and to apply.
 2. Use the resources in your stakeholder toolkit to share a social media post, put up a poster, and
 3. Answer questions from your community using the key messages provided.
- spread the word through your newsletter or website.

We appreciate your support in sharing the promotional resources provided to help us find the right people.

Many Census field jobs are now open for applications, and more will be advertised this year. We'll continue to send you resources to share these jobs with your community. You can find more 2026 Census jobs resources on our website.

For more information, visit census.abs.gov.au/jobs.



GCR Financial Triples Bowls Tournament

Enjoy a relaxed week of competition at the GCR Financial Triples Bowls Tournament, open to bowlers of all levels. Played at the Norfolk Island Bowling Club, the event blends social matches with island hospitality and plenty of free time to explore. A balanced program that brings together sport, camaraderie, and an easy-going island pace.

Includes: Flights, airport transfers, 7 nights accommodation, car hire, 6 DIY Self Drive Tours, World of Norfolk Exhibit entry and more.

14 - 23 August 2026
From \$2,199 per person, twin share*



Norfolk Island Garden Week

Experience Norfolk Island in spring during Garden Week, with exclusive access to private gardens, guided visits, and behind-the-scenes insights. Discover how the island's climate, history, and community shape its landscapes, with time built in to explore at leisure. Ideal for travellers who enjoy gardens, learning, and unhurried days.

Includes: Flights, airport transfers, 7 nights accommodation, car hire, Green Fingers & Norfolk's Hidden Flora Tour, entry to the Norfolk Island Royal A&H Show and more.

06 - 14 October 2026
From \$3,245 per person, twin share*



Norfolk Island Bird Week

Spend a week exploring Norfolk Island's remarkable birdlife with local experts and National Parks staff. Guided walks, night birding, and visits to key habitats reveal endemic and migratory species found nowhere else. Designed for keen birders and curious travellers alike, this week combines guided experiences with plenty of leisure time to explore the island independently.

Includes: Flights, airport transfers, 7 nights accommodation, car hire, exclusive bird experience guided by Margaret Christian and more.

10 - 18 November 2026

From \$3,399 per person, twin share*



Food Lovers Week & Thanksgiving Celebration

Celebrate Norfolk Island's food culture through shared meals, local produce, and hosted experiences across the island. Food Lovers Week includes tastings, paddock-to-plate moments, and relaxed dining, culminating in a Thanksgiving celebration that reflects the island's strong sense of community. A flavour-led program with hosted events balanced by free time to explore between experiences.

Includes: Flights, airport transfers, 7 nights accommodation, car hire, high tea, champagne breakfast by the Bay, Norfolk Island Thanksgiving celebration and more.

21 - 29 November 2026

From \$3,599 per person, twin share*



Do you worry that your memory is not functioning as well as it should for your age? Have you seen a GP or other clinician in the last 6 months due to concerns about your memory?

If so, you might be interested to take part in an exciting research study on whether a new smartphone application could be used to assesses how memory works in daily life for those who are concerned about increasing forgetfulness with age.

What would you need to do?

- Complete a short cognitive test over the phone and some surveys online
- Meet the researcher individually or in a group to set your phone up
- Play a memory game (MEMO) over three normal days in your daily life
- Share your experience of using the app by talking to a researcher

Compensation for your time

- A \$50 voucher will be provided after the three days of playing the MEMO to thank you for taking part!

For further information or to ask to take part, please contact:

Lead Chief Investigator: **Dr Simon Haines**

Phone: 0403 185 989

Email: s.haines@latrobe.edu.au



Inclusion Criteria for study

- Older adult (60+) with concern or worry about their memory functioning
- proficient in English (able to read instructions in English)
- own a smartphone (Android 6.0 or above; iOS 11.0 or above)*

*If you feel comfortable you can have a go checking the version of the operating system on your phone (otherwise this can be done with assistance from researcher)

iOS / Apple:	Android
1. Select 'search' at bottom of screen	1. Open phone's settings app.
2. Type in search menu 'About'	2. Near the bottom, tap About phone
3. iOS version will be displayed on second row under Name	3. Tap Software Information or Version

This study has been approved by the La Trobe University Human Research Ethics Committee (HEC23458)

Interested in learning the bagpipes

Hi, my name is Vivienne and I'm looking for anyone interested in learning the Bagpipes 😊 or Pipe Band (it's a specific style) Drumming maybe help at the local services, weddings/funerals etc, Bagpipes are a fun LOUD instrument but is learnt on something like a recorder.

Initial equipment (practice chanter or drum pads/sticks) can be used as a try and see thing to start.

Bagpipes aren't an instrument that you can learn in a few weeks, there are levels of learning - and this is what makes it so much fun to progress!

Do you think you might be interested??? Send a message

The initial cost would be \$20hire fee for a chanter/pad & sticks. I am based locally and play with 2 Pipe Bands, so the possibility of joining in is always there.

If you are interested please contact Libby Smith

Email :libsam.smith@gmail.com

Phone: 0408369890



Zoos Victoria Caring for Animals Webinar – Thursday 19 Feb, 11:00am to 11:30am – online - free

U3A Network Victoria has partnered with Zoos Victoria to present an exciting online event, exclusive to U3A members!

Join Zoos Victoria staff for a relaxed and informative webinar that explores the history of animal welfare science and recent stories from the zoo. No camera or microphone is required – you're welcome to submit questions using the Q&A text box. This short webinar is a way for us to learn together from the comfort of home. You'll also get a sneak peek at what to expect at U3A's Caring for Animals Day at Melbourne Zoo. Whether you're attending the Day or just want to learn something new, this webinar is a great place to start.

Register here:
<https://bit.ly/u3awebinar>



U3A Network Victoria Mahjong Meet up – Thursday 26 Feb, 7pm to 8pm – online via Zoom registration

Are you a Mahjong tutor / facilitator or love to play Mahjong at your U3A? Would you like to discuss the game with other like-minded players? Come along to this Zoom session to meet other Victorian U3A Mahjong players.

Please register your interest by clicking the link below:
<https://u3anetworkvictoria.zoom.us/meeting/register/8flxF-GtSiedcYdQPKJRzg>

Course Coordinators Meeting – Accessing more resources – Friday 20 March, 1:00pm – 3:00pm – online via Zoom registration

This online session aims to get Victorian U3A Course Coordinators together to discuss resources, accessing resources as well as peer support.

To register for this session, please click on the link below:
<https://u3anetworkvictoria.zoom.us/meeting/register/B2DWav7URzeMVs1-bbK6kw>



NETWORK VICTORIA
UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE

Create a Course Workshop: learn how to write a course guide

This new U3A Network Victoria Program 'Create a Course' is for U3A members throughout Victoria to work in a collaborative environment to create a course based on their lived experience, knowledge, and/or passion in a topic of interest to share with members of their local U3A.

The 3-day course includes two days held in person in the Melbourne CBD, and one day online via Zoom:

Session 1:

Monday 16 March – 10.30am to 3.00pm

Greek Centre, 168 Lonsdale St, Melbourne

Session 2:

Monday 27 April – 10.30am to 3.00pm

Greek Centre, 168 Lonsdale St, Melbourne

Session 3:

Monday 25 May – 11am to 3.00pm

Via Zoom (with breaks)

Course includes clarifying and shaping ideas, scoping a course; designing engaging sessions; exploring principles of facilitating learning, sharing, refining, and getting ready to implement as part of a community of practice.

Places are limited. Please register via the link below:

[Create a Course Plan Registration Form - open to Victorian U3A members.](#)

Online Activities

New online courses have been added to our website for 2026. There are some great offerings from other U3As there:

[Online Courses - U3A Network Victoria](#)

Australian Federal Police – Cyber Security program

Australian Federal Police are currently running a program for Cyber Security from the 9 to 13 February 2026 which has been extended. The program has been extended due to its popularity and may interest the U3A community. I have attached a copy of the flyer "Click – Date" which I would like to send to you which can be disseminated amongst the U3A community.

If the flyers are received in a positive way by the U3A community, we may explore the possibility of doing a presentation or introduce you to other relevant programs.



Caring for Animals Day at Melbourne Zoo:

U3A Network Victoria has partnered with [Zoos Victoria](#) to present an exciting event, exclusive to U3A Members!

Date: Thursday 26 March, zoo is open 9:00am-5:00pm

Location: Melbourne Zoo

Cost: \$60 for Zoos Victoria members, \$68 for non-members

(Includes all day zoo entry, a 3 hour workshop and either morning or afternoon tea)

U3A members are invited to a special day at Melbourne Zoo, with all-day zoo entry included and a choice of either a morning or afternoon workshop. The workshop explores how zoos support animal welfare through science, behaviour and enrichment.

You'll hear real stories from zoo staff, take part in guided animal observations, enjoy hands-on activities and spend time connecting with fellow U3A members.

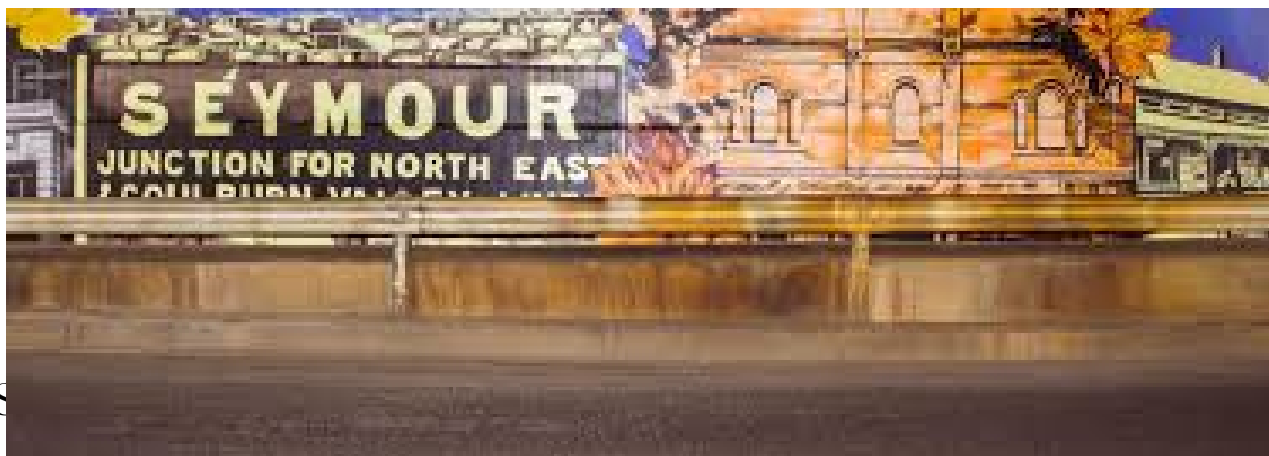
Places are limited.

You have two workshop times to choose from (10am – 1pm or 2pm – 5pm) and will be provided either morning or afternoon tea.

Bring your curiosity and join other U3A members to explore the interesting world of animal welfare and care.

Register here: <https://www.zoo.org.au/.../whats-on/events/private-workshop/>





All Notices for the next newsletter need to be emailed to U3A (seymu3a@gmail.com) and Libby (libsam.smith@gmail.com) on or before the: **24th March 2026**

If you have any photographs of any activities/groups/classes and wish for them to be included in the newsletter please email them through also.

See you for the next newsletter!



Seymour U3A Contact Details:

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Thank you for reading!