



the BULLETIN

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Next Bulletin Deadline

February 23 2026

CLASS INFORMATION

Our two week Summer School program has concluded: a report and images will be included in the February Bulletin. It certainly looks like our participating members had fun.

Booklets for our 2026 classes are located in the U3A Office and classes are also listed on our website. Our Class Coordinator, Miriam Peck, has shared class information with you on page three of this Bulletin.



Key Dates for January and early February 2026

Tuesday January 27

U3A Office Reopens, BNCC 10am-12pm
Ballarat North Community Centre (BNCC) 702 Walker Street, Ballarat North.

Wednesday January 28

U3A Office Open, BNCC 10am-2pm

Thursday January 29

U3A Office Open, BNCC 10am-2pm

Monday February 2

Term One classes commence

Monday February 2 - Saturday April 4

Moments in Time Photography Exhibition, BNCC Hall

Wednesday February 4

Moments in Time Opening, BNCC Hall, 4-6pm

Saturday February 7

Swap Tables, BNCC 10-11am

Wednesday February 18

New Members Morning Tea, BNCC 10.30am

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Welcome Back

Well, its 2026 already. I hope the break over 'what one can sort of call Summer' was a chance for you to catch up with family and/or friends in a relaxed and convivial setting.

The Summer School has, once again, been a great success. Our thanks go to the Tutors who offered classes over the two week period, to Robert Hammond for taking photos, and a massive vote of thanks to Nina Netherway who co-ordinated the program once again. Office Manager Bec Black and her team of Office Volunteers were on deck during the Summer School, and Vice-President and Class Co-ordinator, Miriam Peck, has also been busy with class and venue logistics.



Don Collins

Thanks also to the Wizard Team who have assisted members over the break with access to the U3A Ballarat Member Portal. There are many elements that need to work in unison to allow us to function so efficiently and effectively as an organisation.

I had the pleasure of visiting some of the Summer School classes and snapping a few photos for our Facebook page and the U3A Ballarat Bulletin. The joy of re-connecting with U3A members and learning something new was very evident. How lucky are we to have such opportunities available through the generosity of our Tutors.

New members will soon receive an invitation to the New Members Morning Tea, which will be held on Wednesday February 18 at 10.30am at the Ballarat North Community Centre.

Don



U3A Office Hours Term 1 2026

Tuesday 10am-12pm
Wednesday 10am-2pm
Thursday 10am-2pm

Ballarat North Community Centre
702 Walker St Ballarat North
Ph: 0415 407 163

Class Information

Welcome back to our 2026 classes. Those who attended Summer School will already be in the swing of things but for others, it might be reminiscent of the excitement and anticipation you felt when starting a new year back in school days.

Did you get into at least one of the classes that you were hoping to join? If you are still looking, consult the list that I emailed you last week or come into the office for our volunteer staff to help you.

Thank you to all of our new Tutors and Convenors - and, of course, our long-stayers as well. I hope your role brings nothing but pleasure and satisfaction. We have several new courses in 2026. Most of them have filled very quickly, indicating how necessary they are.

We have four new venues in 2026: BPAC (formerly Neil St Uniting Church), Wendouree Community Hub, Sebastapol Community Hub and Sebastapol Library. We look forward to a happy association with the management of each of these venues.

Finally, I would like to welcome Leonie Benson to the Class/Venue Coordination as my assistant. Leonie has already been very active behind the scenes, with her input greatly lightening my workload.

As always, I look forward to a great year with U3A.

Miriam Peck, Class Coordinator

VALE

John van de Laar

John tutored a course in Early Christian Church History for several years at U3A Ballarat. In these classes, he presented profiles of very early lesser known female saints, some described as *The Desert Mothers*, and also profiles of several male saints. During COVID, when much lapsed, he kept the class connected by sending monthly email notes. John's enthusiasm and efficiency was maintained over the many years he ran his classes.

John had been an active member of the Philosophy class for many years until recently.

John was involved in Catholic education in The Solomon Islands for part of his career. He wrote a book titled 'Christian Monastic Development in the Fourth Century', with an introduction by Ballarat Bishop Paul Bird.

He was very much a scholar, having attained not only his B.A. but also his M.A. since retirement: was also preparing to study for his Doctorate until his health meant this was not possible.

Rest in peace.





Swap Tables
Saturday February 7
BNCC Blue Room
10-11am

If undeliverable return to:

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