

## President's Report 2024

*Presented at the September AGM*

Welcome everyone to the Annual General Meeting for 2024 - we have a few items to get through so I will try to keep this fairly short and sweet. Just a special mention to Larry Frazer, Treasurer of U3A Townsville. We appreciate that Larry has travelled to attend our meeting today to represent U3A Qld Network in his role as Treasurer.

Thank you all for coming and showing your interest in the happenings of U3A Mackay. In the last few years, we have been dealing with the restrictions and effects of Covid-19. This disease is unlikely to disappear, and we should remain vigilant and self-protect as much as possible. I am very pleased to report, however, that U3A Mackay membership has now reached 560 – numbers similar to pre-Covid days.

Last September when I took on the President's role, I was a little nervous, but keen and pretty naïve. Let me share some of the highlights with you now:

U3A Mackay has come a long way this year – we are now fully on board with the digital operating system, Member Wizard, which offers a wide range of options to assist with member management, covering such things as online payments, renewals, financial reports, new members, document storage, auditing and course enrolments. More than half of the U3As and the Network Management Committee now use this system. The data is hosted and stored in Australia and all support comes from Australia.

In November 2023, we applied to the Gambling Community Benefit Fund for a grant to enable us to upgrade our laptops and revamp the office space. This application was successful, and our committee members are making good use of their laptops in the office or working from home, and our volunteers enjoy a pleasant office space when rostered. Our members can simply drop in to discuss any issues or sit and have a chat in comfort.

Our Open Day in February was a huge success, resulting in the signing-on of more than 100 new members and the introduction of several new activities in the ensuing months. The U3A Mackay website has had a facelift and is looking good – as is our Facebook page – with any updates, news and changes being made quickly – keeping information on track and current.

In May this year, our Secretary, Bobbie Barker and I travelled to Beaudesert in the Brisbane Hinterland (Scenic Rim) to attend the U3A Network Queensland State Conference. The Beaudesert Conference organising team hosted the conference which was attended by more than 80 delegates from across the state and beyond. We spent three days listening to guest speakers, networking with attendees from other U3As, and learning and engaging in interactive and lively discussions. In short, our motto of 'Learn, Laugh, Live' was all covered.

U3A Mackay will be attending the Senior's Expo at the Showgrounds on Tuesday, 15 October. If you are able to help at our table and promote U3A Mackay, please let us know. We have recently run some interviews on local radio stations and plan to repeat these in the future. We are trying to spread the message – **'Retired from work – not from life!'**

Each year, we report to the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC) to meet our obligations as a charity and not for profit organisation. To meet compliance, our Grievance Procedure was published in March this year and the Constitution has been reviewed. This has resulted in a plain English version, modelled on the U3A Queensland Network and the ACNC templates. We will be voting on the amendments to the Constitution shortly.

Some acknowledgements are appropriate at this time:

- Mackay and District Senior Citizens Association for the use of this Centre and its excellent amenities. Our relationship with Senior Citizens continues to evolve to the mutual benefit of both organisations and members.
- The office of the Federal Member for Mackay, Andrew Willcox for the printing of our monthly newsletter.
- Trantech for their advice and support with our digital technology – keeping our systems running smoothly.
- During the last year we have noted the passing of some of our members and offer our condolences and deepest sympathy to their families and friends.
- To the members of the executive, the committee, the group convenors and volunteers I extend my gratitude and appreciation for your efforts over the past year, your support and assistance has been invaluable.
- Last, but not least – to all the Members of U3A -I remind you, **It's your U3A!** – There's no **U3A** without **U!** Thank you.

Muriel Kilcullen  
*President*  
U3A Mackay