

## NEWSLETTER

January/February 2026



### **IMPORTANT DATES**

#### ❖ **Tuesday 27 January**

Office Reopens at 9am

#### ❖ **Thursday 29 January**

**Mandatory Tutors' Meeting** at  
Southport Community Centre 10am-11am

#### ❖ **Monday 2 February**

**Semester 1 Commences** – you must  
be a financial member to attend classes.

#### ❖ **Thursday 19 March**

##### **AGM**

10am at Southport Community Centre

Notice of AGM and Nomination Forms have been emailed to members (and posted to those without email). Copies are also available from Reception. Current committee members must stand down and be nominated for re-election.

*Additional Committee Members are required to support our growing member numbers, please consider volunteering for a role.*



**New premises  
update soon!**

**Acknowledgement:** The U3A Southport Newsletter is  
kindly printed by the office of ROB MOLHOEK M.P.  
Member for Southport.



## PRESIDENT'S/VICE-PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

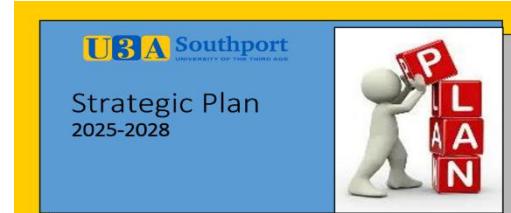


### Wendy Barker & Trish Dernedde

Dear Members,

As we welcome in a new year, we are pleased to share with you an overview of **U3A's Strategic Plan for 2025–2028**, which is now available on the U3A website <https://www.u3asouthport.au/>

This plan provides a clear and positive direction for our organisation, ensuring U3A continues to grow, adapt, and deliver high-quality learning and social opportunities for our members. The Strategic Plan focuses on strengthening our courses, supporting our tutors and volunteers, enhancing member engagement, and ensuring the long-term sustainability of U3A.



We encourage all members to take some time to read the plan on the website and see how it reflects our shared values of lifelong learning, connection, and community.

We would also like to reflect on how wonderful it was to see so many tutors and volunteers attend our recent **"Thank You Lunch"**. It was a very special occasion and a great opportunity for everyone to come together, meet and greet, and enjoy each other's company in a relaxed setting. Lou, thank you for organising the event.

Most importantly, the lunch gave us the chance to say a big and heartfelt thank you to our tutors and volunteers. Your dedication, time, and enthusiasm are the backbone of U3A, and without your ongoing commitment, our organisation simply could not function as it does. Seeing so many of you together was a reminder of the strength and spirit of our U3A community.





## PRESIDENT'S/VICE-PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

### Wendy Barker & Trish Dernedde



What a great event the **Jingle Bells Seniors Expo** was in December! It gave U3A Southport the opportunity to showcase our involvement in the Southport community. We had many enquiries about membership and volunteering. A big thank you to those who helped out at the Expo: *Lou Stevens, Kim Carter, Robyn Todd and Karin Weier*.

We would also like to advise members that *Lou Stevens* and *Kim Carter* have recently resigned from their committee positions. We are very pleased that both Lou and Kim will continue in their current roles, with Lou remaining as Class Coordinator and Kim continuing as Class Administrator and Newsletter Editor. We are grateful for their ongoing involvement and valued contribution to U3A Southport.



Our **Annual General Meeting** will be held on **19 March**, where our current committee members must stand down and be nominated for re-election. *If you have any experience, qualifications or knowledge that may be of assistance, especially during our upcoming relocation phase, please consider nominating for the Committee.*



As we move into 2026, we look forward to working together to bring our Strategic Plan to life and to another rewarding year of learning and connection.

Warm regards,  
*Wendy Barker & Trish Dernedde*  
**President & Vice-President**



### Mandatory Tutors' Meeting

All Tutors must attend the Tutors' Meeting:



**10am-11am Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> January  
Southport Community Centre**

### Check your Classes

Members are reminded to *check what classes you are enrolled in* before the Semester starts. If you no longer wish to attend a class, please cancel so that someone else has the opportunity to attend.

### New Classes in 2026

◆ *Spanish for Beginners  
Level 2*

**Mondays 9.00-10.30am  
at the Southport  
Community Centre.**



The aim of this course is for the students to become more familiar with the language and to communicate in a more proficient way. It is necessary that you already have some background in Spanish.

The main topics are grammar, reading, listening and comprehension, short presentations, and the understanding of the Latin America and Spanish cultures with the aid of documentaries, short movies, and music.

We welcome your tutor, *Luis Alban*.

◆ *Card-making*



Allow your creativity to run wild as you learn an inexpensive and economical way to produce original, unique greeting

cards for every occasion. **Classes commence Monday 23 February, 1.30pm-3.00pm in the Australia Fair Study Room.** We welcome your tutor - *Patricia Sandry*.

◆ *Drawing & Watercolour B*

This class has been very popular with our members and *Melodye* has kindly offered to take an additional class on **Thursdays 2.45pm - 4.45pm upstairs at the Margaret St Hall.**



◆ *IT Trouble Shooting; and*

◆ *Master Your Smartphone & Laptop*

Both of these classes are **one-on-one** giving you personalised help for the particular problems you may be experiencing with navigating your phone, laptop or tablet. **Individual appointments of 45 minutes or 60 minutes (depending on class chosen) must be made at Reception.**



◆ *Tai Chi for Health B*

Due to popular demand, *Kathleen* has kindly agreed to take a second **Tai Chi for Health class commencing on Friday 13 February, 10.30am-11.30am at the Southport Community Centre.**

### Venue or Schedule Changes

**PLEASE ENSURE YOU CHECK LOCATION AND CLASS TIMES FOR 2026.**

As the demand for some classes has exceeded space available at Australia Fair, we have hired larger rooms at the Community Centre so *please check the location and times prior to attending*.

### Collect Your Membership Badge

If you have joined or renewed online it is imperative that you *collect your 2026 membership badge* from Reception at Australia Fair prior to commencement of your classes as you will be required to show your 2026 membership badge on entry. **This is essential for classes being held at the Community Centre as access protocols have changed and entry will not be allowed without a 2026 U3A Southport membership badge.**

### Margaret St Parking

Just a reminder to be mindful of the neighbours and to park legally in Margaret St and outside the hall. Parking Officers regularly patrol the area.



## SOCIAL TRIPS

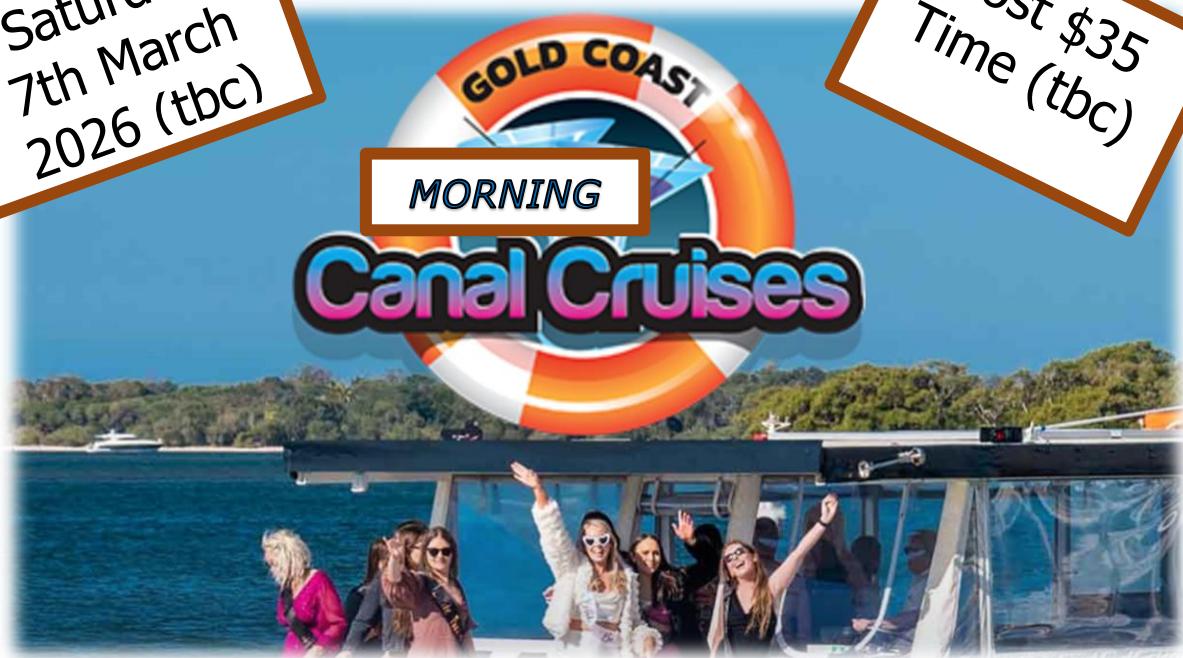
### Jude Bowie & Wendy Barker

#### GET EXCITED!

U3A is taking a break from the everyday  
with a short jaunt on the waterways.

Saturday  
7th March  
2026 (tbc)

Cost \$35  
Time (tbc)



- Sit back and enjoy the views as we let Gold Coast Canal Cruises take us on an escape from the summer heat.
- Indulge in morning tea (provided) with friends aboard the "Summer Salt", and make some new happy memories.
- Then, if all that fresh air isn't enough for you, join us for lunch at Runaway Bay (at your own expense).
- Extra Costs to consider: Public or your own transport to and from Runaway Bay Shopping Village Pontoon. Lunch at Runaway Bay Tavern or the Food Court at your own expense.



**More details to come...**



## A NEW KIND OF NEW YEAR PLAN

### Less Pressure, More Purpose

The start of a new year has long been a moment when many of us pause, take stock, and think about what comes next. We've lived enough years to know that big resolutions often fade fast, yet we also appreciate the quiet power of intention.



**How can the new year support the life you already enjoy — with less stress, more confidence, and a clearer sense of purpose?**

Let's explore a balanced approach that honours experience, encourages meaningful progress, and keeps things achievable.

#### **The Problem with Big Resolutions — and Why Small Goals Work Better**

Most people abandon New Year's resolutions within weeks — not because they lack willpower, but because goals are too general, too big or too vague. Research shows that resolutions framed in specific, approach-oriented terms (e.g. "walk 30 minutes three times a week") are far more likely to be maintained than broad, avoidance goals (e.g. "get fit").

For many older adults, this holds especially true. What feels manageable and meaningful today isn't necessarily dramatic or headline-worthy, but it *matters*. This is why a gentle reset — not a pressure-packed resolution — can be more powerful.

#### **A Better Framework for Your New Year Plan**

##### **1. Clarify What Already Works**

Before thinking about change, take a moment to recognise what currently supports your wellbeing. Ask yourself:

- *What routines make my day better?*
- *What relationships enrich my life?*
- *What activity makes me feel good afterwards?*

This isn't reflection for its own sake — it's data about your life.

##### **Action Step:**

Write down three things that *consistently* improved your mood or energy in the past month.

##### **2. Choose One Purpose-Driven Focus (Not a Long List)**

Instead of big resolutions like "exercise more" or "eat healthier," pick *one* area that feels genuine and specific. Examples that work well for many older adults include:

- **Movement you enjoy:** "Go for a 20-minute walk every Monday, Wednesday, Friday."
- **Connection goals:** "Catch up with a friend or family member once a week."
- **Brain stimulation:** "Read one book and discuss it with someone each month."





## A NEW KIND OF NEW YEAR PLAN

### Less Pressure, More Purpose

#### Habit Pairing

Pair a new intention with something you already do.

*Example:* Take your vitamins right after breakfast, or walk after your morning tea.

#### Gentle Logging

Not a diary — just a simple note:

*Date / What I did / How I felt afterward*

This helps you see patterns and keeps motivation up.



#### Social Accountability

Share your *one focus* with a friend or neighbour. Checking in weekly — even by phone — increases follow-through. These aren't big commitments. They're *nudges* that build momentum without stress.

#### Rethinking Motivation — It's Not About Perfection

Motivation isn't constant, and that's okay. Some days you'll do your focus activity easily, other days it might be a longer stretch. Here's the key difference:

*Intentions that feel supportive help you adjust without giving up.*

If on Thursday you miss your walk, try a 10-minute stretch instead. Goal flexibility — adapting your actions to how you're feeling — predicts greater satisfaction and wellbeing over time than strict, uncompromising habits.

#### A Reader Story — Small Steps, Meaningful Impact

Consider Bruce, 67, from Adelaide. Last New Year, he struggled with motivation and had tried typical resolutions like "join a gym" or "eat less sugar" — both of which fizzled by February. This year, he took a different approach:



- He chose *one focus* — daily 20-minute post-lunch walks around his neighbourhood.
- Invited a neighbour to join him twice a week.
- Noted how many days he walked on a simple chart on his fridge.

By May, Bruce wasn't faster or fitter by dramatic measures, but he felt stronger, slept better, and had rekindled an easy friendship — all because the goal was *specific, social, and doable*.

#### The Most Important Intention You Can Set

It's not the size of the goal — it's the *relationship you build with the process*.

This year, think of your New Year intention not as a list of resolutions, but as:

- **A supportive plan**
- **A statement of why you care**
- **A way to grow into your experience**

You don't need big changes to feel renewed. Small, consistent steps, rooted in your values, are more likely to make your next year feel genuinely lighter, healthier and more connected — the kind of progress that matters.



Article courtesy of 60+ Club



## JUST FOR FUN



### Chinatown Lunar New Year | Southport

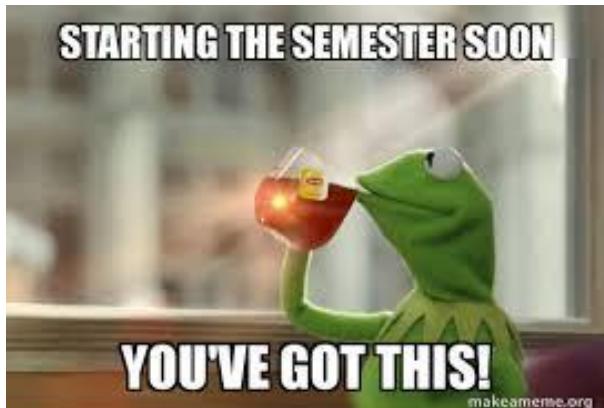
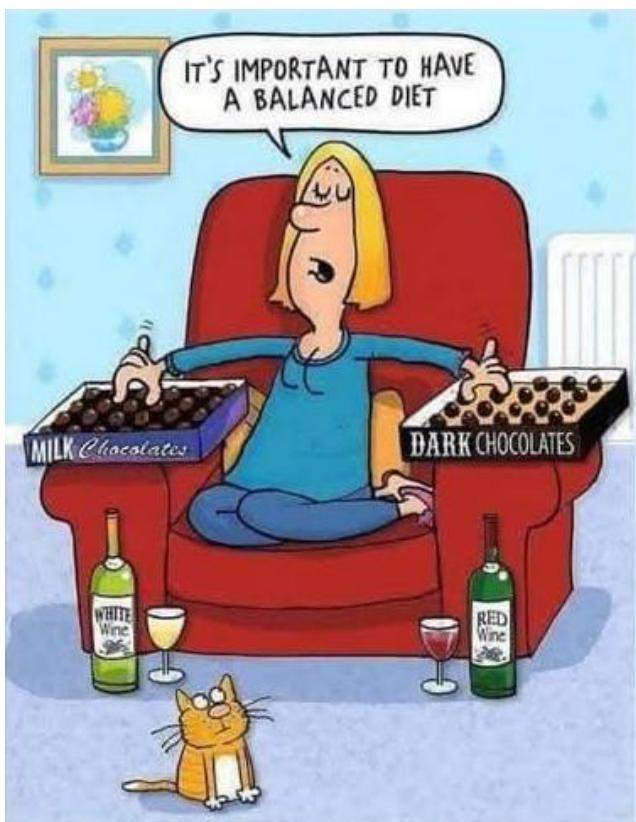
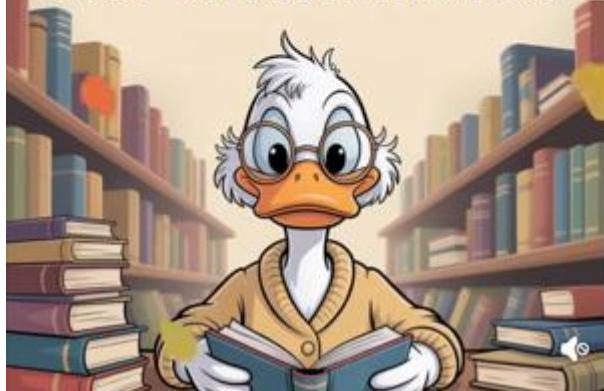
When: 21 February 2026

Head to Chinatown to celebrate Lunar New Year. Check out market stalls, food trucks, kid-friendly origami, an interactive wishing tree, Chinese calligraphy workshops, Kizuna drummers, fan dancing and an iconic dragon dance.

The festivities begin at 3pm along Davenport and Young Streets, with the fireworks show at 7.30pm.



**An older brain isn't slower—it's just busy sorting through a lifetime of carefully stored information**



Articles for upcoming newsletters or feedback addressed to the Editor are most welcome.