



U3A Werribee Region Inc.

Tri – Cycle Newsletter



P.O. Box 1264, Werribee Plaza, 3030

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WEBSITE: <http://www.u3awbee.net.au>

PLEASE NOTE: We have no office. For all inquiries refer to our website.

AUTUMN EDITION: No. 144 MARCH - MAY 2025

FOUNDED 1992



U3A WERRIBEE OFFICE BEARERS AND CONTACTS

Life Members: Mrs Barbara Knowles Mrs Libby Pearson

Committee:

President: Sue Taylor Email: president.u3awbee@gmail.com

Vice President: Tim Hunt Email: vpres.u3awbee@gmail.com

Treasurer: Christina Dennis Email: treas.u3awbee@hotmail.com

Secretary: Rick Conn Email: sec.u3awbee@hotmail.com

Membership Coordinator: Carole Popham Tel: 0423 319 844 Email: membership.u3awbee@gmail.com

Courses Co-ordinator: Rick Conn Email: courses.u3awbee@hotmail.com

Committee Members: Alan White, Heather Cook, Janette McEwan, Jan De Witte and Don Lee.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Term Dates for 2025

[Term 1 2025](#) 3 February - 4 April 2025

[Term 2 2025](#) 22 April - 4 July 2025

[Term 3 2025](#) 28 July - 19 September 2025

[Term 4 2025](#) 6 October - 5 December 2025

Social Activities

Various social activities and outings are organised for members and details are made available through email messages, notices given during classes and also included on our website which you can find on the internet at www.u3awbee.net.au

Contact details for social activities are: social.u3awbee@gmail.com

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

A belated Happy New U3A Year to all of us. We all live such diverse lives and yet must surely share much that is common to all at our ages. Some of us as grandparents or even as great grandparents and even as (great) aunts and uncles, we find we are still sometimes cuddling babies on our knees and chanting all the comical little rhymes to bring the chuckles. Can you still remember some of them?

'This little piggy went to market ...'

'Round and round the garden like a teddy bear ...'

'Leg over leg, a dog went to Dover and when he came to a stile,
Oops he went over!'

'Nelly the Elephant packed her trunk and said goodbye to the circus;



FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK (Cont.)

off she went with a Trumpety Trump; Trump; Trump; Trump!!' I wonder whether the President of the USA once sang this song to his children!

Anyway the grown-ups probably share a smile over that one but the babies giggle like anything.

Please don't forget that if have any contributions for our newsletter, please send then to newsletter.u3awbee@hotmail.com Take care!

From Don and Cecilia.

FROM OUR U3A WERRIBEE PRESIDENT

Hello and welcome to this edition of our 2025 Tri-Cycle Newsletter.

On Monday 3 February 2025 we successfully commenced Term 1 following our Christmas/New year break with scheduled activities and classes running at all venues. Group Leaders/Coordinators also confirmed their availability.

On 27 February 2025 we held our 33rd Annual General Meeting (AGM) at Wyndham Park Community Centre. I would like to take this opportunity to thank those members who attended this meeting. Your attendance and involvement help inform and influence your Committee of Management in the direction our U3A takes.

All reports were tabled and accepted at the meeting. Of note was the Treasurers report which identified that we continue to be in sound financial position.

A motion was accepted by members at the AGM that there would be no increase in all annual membership subscription fees for 2026.

I would like to congratulate Sue Taylor on her successful nomination as our new President for 2025 (see photo) Other new members to our Committee include Tim Hunt (Vice-President), Heather Cook and Janette McEwan.

This will be my last post as your President having completed the maximum three consecutive years in this position. It has been an honour and privilege to have been your President. I would personally like to thank all those members who have supported me over my tenure. I will, however, continue to remain on your Committee being successful with my nomination as Secretary and returning as your Courses Coordinator.



FROM OUR U3A WERRIBEE PRESIDENT (Cont.)

Vale: Helma Balodis and George Leake

Helma Balodis.

Helma (see photo) passed away peacefully on Wednesday 8 January 2025 at the Latvian Aged Care Facility, Wantirna South.

Helma turned 101 on 22 June 2024 and joined our U3A in 1997.

For those of you that knew Helma, both she and Wally (see photo), who passed away on 1 October last year, were together for almost 77 years and only left our U3A due to declining health.

Helma enjoyed our U3A enormously and was very proud to be a long-term member. Helma was particularly proud of the photo taken of her and Wally with their certificates of appreciation at our 30th Anniversary function on 13 April 2023.

To Helma and Wally's family we do want to express our condolences.



George Leake.

George passed away on 16 January 2025. He was a former active member and keen bridge player in our U3A Werribee group.

George was 87 and had lived at Bapcare for several years but was still with it and kept in touch with friends on his computer with his many jokes, sometimes too many.

George previously worked as a pharmacist, had 2 children and 2 grandchildren that he often talked about.

We do want to express to George's family our condolences.

Special thanks Ceri Parry for informing us about George's passing.



Rick Conn

U3A NETWORK INFORMATION

U3A Network Victoria puts out a Monthly Newsletter. This is sent via email to those members who have requested it. Feedback has been very positive about the content being very informative. If you would like to be put on the distribution list, please email our U3A Werribee Secretary at sec.u3awbee@hotmail.com

Rick Conn.



MEMBERSHIP NEWS

At the close of 2024 we had 202 members. As at 12 February our financial membership is 197 of whom 2 are Associates and 2 Honorary Life Members. We are blessed to have 19 of our members who are Group Leaders. As well we have a very competent and enthusiastic external professional group leader in Samantha Sepulveda.

A big thank you to all who renewed early because it made the process much more manageable. Of our 197 financial members 29 were early birds and new members which gives us a renewal rate of 81.68% which is not too bad considering there are some we know are in the pipeline but not yet finalised. Quite a few other persons are attending as “try before you buy” and indications are that most will join us.

A big welcome to our new and returning members

Rita Antonuccio **Tom Brennan**

Lisa Bruens **Loyda Buenaventura**

Romeo Buenaventura **Peter Davis** **Clive Dutton**

Julia Fhebey **Chris Healy** **Christine Hill** **Kristina Love**

Suzanne Love **Lissa Lhuede** **Susan Ma** **Graciela Marinaro**

Judith Marsh **Lissa Ngo** **Josephine Pasupathi** **Marilyn Proud**

Angela Rencher **Mary Sindoni** **Edy Suparman** **Gavin Thomson**

Marion Wilkinson **Yan Wu.**



We hope you will enjoy your time of with us and the welcome from your new friends.

A notably enthusiastic member of U3A Werribee, Tom Wisinger, moved to a retirement village in Maldon because of some health issues. Tom wrote saying that over the past 6 years U3A has given him a lot of support, with a regular structure, social activities and interest outside himself. He attended Current Affairs, YOGA, Tai Chi and Music Appreciation. Tom adds that “All these groups were great fun with the tutors giving a lot of their free time to organize these groups. My particular favourite is Current Affairs which discusses difficult issues like Trump and Dutton. The meeting is followed with a fantastic morning tea with cakes made by Tim.”

Tom continued “I would particularly like to congratulate Rick Conn who in his time as President has invigorated the functioning of U3A in many ways with his enthusiasm and attention to detail.” He concluded “Thanks to you all at U3A and keep up the good work.”

On a sadder note, age and infirmity has caught up with long standing member Anna Mitchell. Anna joined U3A in 1999 when she was asked by founding member Val Sloss whether she might consider becoming a member and contributing to the “Music You Like To Hear” class which had already been running for 13 years under the leadership of Marion Blood. Anna says that she took over from Marion and enjoyed 20



MEMBERSHIP NEWS (Cont.)

years of tutoring a class of about 30 people in classical music, its composers, orchestrations, instruments, famous singers and what to listen for. Over the years she met in many different venues with different acoustics, mingled with old friends and made new ones, had lively chats over coffee and she was proud to say everyone went home on a happy note.

She recalled that Val Sloss often said; "We are not only here to enjoy what we hear, we also have to learn something". That is the essence of U3A.

Remember to wear your Membership badge to classes and phone me on 0423 319 844 or email me at membership.u3awbee@gmail.com if you need a replacement.

Keep up the recruiting of new members. Word of mouth is still our best way of growing. Just tell them how much fun you have and how friendly we are, and the good times they will have.

Until next time.

Carole.

COURSES COORDINATOR CORNER - COURSE INFO

Hello and welcome to our first Courses Coordinators Corner for 2025.

Since we commenced our Term 1 on Monday 3 February 2025, we have experienced increases in the number of new members joining and attending our activities and classes. Whilst this is very good for the growth of our U3A it has meant a review of room sizes at venues to accommodate these additional members. We have achieved this by providing Group Leaders/Coordinators with the resources and venues they need to run their activities and classes with minimum to no disruption.



Instead of having to find another venue(s) at a different location we have been able to accommodate increases in attendee numbers. These have been the Community Room at Hoppers Crossing Sports Club (HCSC) as shown in the photo. This is due to its size and capacity.

Monday mornings: Two Tai Chi classes. Basic and Beginners.

Monday afternoons: Two Italian classes. Beginners and advanced.

Tuesdays mornings: A French class.

Wednesdays: A Bolivia class.

Thursdays: A Mahjong class.

Friday mornings: Mindful Drawing.

Friday afternoon: Music you Like to Hear.

COURSES COORDINATOR CORNER - COURSE INFO (Cont.)

Note that the timings in mornings and afternoon sessions allow an individual activity or class to be conducted without being interrupted before they have finished. This used to be a major issue.

Attending these activities and classes require members to join HCSC. Note membership is included in your U3A Werribee membership. This allows you to take advantage of HCSC discounted meals and drinks. At the time of publication of this edition all attendees should have received their 2025 membership card. Refer photo below.

In addition, we have:

Heathglen Retirement Village Community Room with Current Affairs, Exploring History and Digital Devices classes.

Tarneit Learning and Community Centre where we have two rooms for our Tai Chi for the more experienced.

Unfortunately, even with the additional space some of our activities and classes have reached the capacity to the point where currently they are full and therefore unable to take any more attendees. These consist of:

Mondays: Tai Chi for both Basic and Beginners at HCSC.

Tuesdays: French at HCSC and Needlecraft at a private home.

Wednesdays: Mosaics at Wyndham Park Community Centre, and

Fridays: Ballet Matinee at a private home.

Please be advised that this information is correct at the time of publication. Please refer to our U3A Website at <https://www.u3awbee.net.au> courses for any changes to their status.

You can also contact me, your Courses Coordinator, at courses.u3awbee@hotmail.com

If you do not have internet access, phone Rick on 0402 299 202 or Carole on 0123 319 844.. This will also allow us to confirm whether there are vacancies at the particular class(es).

Please note that the Book Club has been discontinued due to limited numbers attending. If this status changes you will be advised.

Rick Conn.

AROUND THE COURSES

Ballet Matinee

We start our seventh year of this lovely group. Showing The Taming of the Shrew, after William Shakespeare it is a comedy ballet...or rather a grim comedy since the bridegroom has to 'tame' his shrewish wife, as depicted in the excellent Birmingham Royal Ballet poster on the right.

His methods would not pass a court in this day and age, even though it makes very comical viewing.

Looking forward to putting on the ballet Anastasia later in the year, I generally follow it with a DVD on the crown jewels of Russia to show the great wealth of old Russia.

Cecilia Conwayne-Wright.



AROUND THE COURSES

Beginners French

Bonjour et bienvenue. Commencing Term 1 we started our class with the basics by revising our knowledge of the French language. This has included commencing each class by conversing in French. A simple Bonjour or hello is considered good manners in France, particularly if you want to get someone's attention before asking for assistance. The aim of this year's class is to progress from basic grammar including pronunciation, to interactive conversations and role playing such as asking directions and ordering a meal in a restaurant.

Au revoir and a bientôt.

Rick Conn.

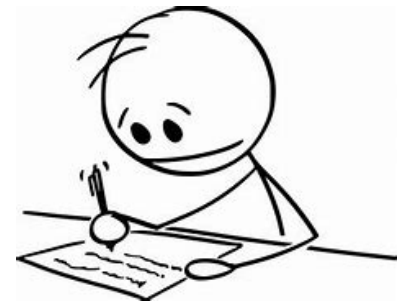


Let's Write a Short Story

A lively start has been made. It is our aim to see the short story as an art form in its own right ... a jewel in the crown of literature. It is half way between a poem and a longer narrative. We are looking at poetry for inspiration plus Cecilia's many and varied suggestions.

We share our stories and learn from each other. It amazes us how boxed-in people are in the need to live-and-let-live. But when given the permission to 'let it out' how exhilarating that can be and even more so when we can express it in story form. Tricky but wonderful!

Cecilia Conway-Wright



Exploring History

Term 1 has commenced with exploring the history of China, mainly concentrating on those events that have shaped China today. So far, we have covered the origins of the first Chinese peoples, Ancient China, the Dynastic period that lasted for over 2000 years and ended in 1912 following the abdication of the last emperor of China (Puyi). Of note are some of the inventions and innovations of the ancient Chinese such as silk, ceramics, paper, gunpowder and tea. Did you know they invented the compass (see photo right, above) in about 200 BC. and the seismograph in 132 AD (see photo right, below).

Rick Conn.

Question: What is a seismograph and how did the ancient Chinese seismograph, shown here, work?

Answer on page 10.



AROUND THE COURSES (Cont.)

Health and Well-Being

Here are some facts about trees and parks you may not know.

- Trees provide oxygen and absorb carbon dioxide. A mature tree can absorb 28 kilos of carbon in the air and a 2011 study by the Wageningen Uni in the Netherlands found that a mature tree replaces 10 air conditioners.
- Trees stabilise the soil, prevent erosion and regulate the water cycle by reducing evaporation.
- Trees provide shelter for people and wildlife, and provide a renewable resource for buildings, furniture and paper.
- Green spaces are linked to less depression and anxiety. They reduce the release of the stress hormone Cortisol. Studies show that 5 minutes in green spaces reduces anger, reduce pain and assist recovery from illness.
- Green areas in cities reduce behavioural issues & crime by creating a calming atmosphere, improving blood pressure & immunity.
- Professor Peter James of Harvard School of Public Health reports that trees can have long term affects on depression, anxiety and cognitive decline (eg. dementia) as well as cardiovascular (heart and circulation) issues and various forms of cancer. This research was published in Sept 2020 in "Outside" magazine where it was recommended that people should spend more time among trees and green spaces and it is important for policy makers to develop these. Apartment living and city dwelling are most affected.



Lynn Alder.

Current Affairs

How the world has changed in three short months!!!

There should be no shortage of things to discuss this year. The whirlwind that is the new President of the USA and his radical agenda will no doubt be front of world issues. We decided at our first meeting to look at the effects of changes around the world rather than focus too much on the USA.

The massive swing against Labor in the local by-election should lead to some interesting moves on the state and federal level. Being a Federal election year will no doubt lead to some lively exchanges and we will be watching developments to see how much pork will fit in the barrel.

Add the routine issues facing us every day and there is plenty to exercise your little grey cells. Why not join us - remember, the Morning Tea is fabulous!!!!

Carole Popham.

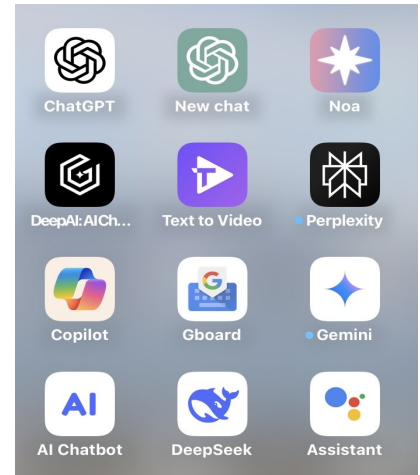


AROUND THE COURSES (Cont.)

Digital Devices

Using a computer (eg. PC, laptop, iPad, tablet or smart phone), can be useful to get hold of particular information. Often we use a search engine, such as Google or Bing, but there are now many other handy resources that go by the name of AI (Artificial Intelligence). They include Apps (Applications or programs) such as ChatGPT, Copilot, Perplexity, Llama, Gemini and more recently a new Chinese App called DeepSeek, that has taken the world by storm.

The beauty of these Apps is that they can provide useful information, such as from encyclopaedias, books, reports and publications. Most are easy to download although you may need to sign-up (ie create an account) using your email address and a password. Some are free while others may require payment. I prefer to avoid those.



Using AI on your computer, is a bit like having a friend with a perfect memory and wide range of knowledge and who in effect 'knows everything'. Of course this assumes that what you read in any of these resources is necessarily accurate and up-to-date. This may be open to question, however having all this information at your fingertips is certainly a fascinating game changer!

Don Lee.

Music You Like To Hear

Many of our programmes follow a theme and this term's included one on "Royalty" beginning with Handel's "Arrival of the Queen of Sheba", the piece that accompanied Queen Elizabeth II and James Bond on the way to the 2012 Olympics.

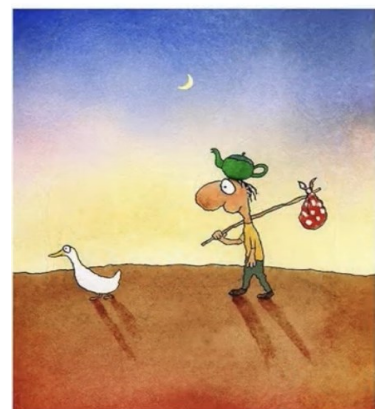
We watched the YouTube clip that climaxed with the Queen apparently parachuting into the Olympic Stadium from a helicopter. We also heard a song written by Henry VIII and music from Laurence Olivier's film of Henry V.

"Birds" supplied another theme and as well as Rossini's lively overture for "The Thieving Magpie" and Vaughan Williams' beautiful evocation of "The Lark Ascending", we listened to Ella Fitzgerald singing "Skylark" and watched Julie Andrews as she sang "Feed the Birds" from Mary Poppins.

The programme ended with a version of the curious song "A Little Duck", with images and text by Michael Leunig, performed by Gondwana Voices.

Other programmes included the music of Spain and of composers Bizet and Verdi.

John Funnell.



OH BLOW!

“Give me a call on the blower”, is an expression we take to mean “ring me on the phone”.

But why the blower?

Well, I go back (in my Time Machine) eighty years to a visit I needed to make to my vicar at his vicarage, a large roomy house.

Before I left he needed to ask his wife something and she was in another part of the house. I watched as he went to a contraption on the wall, took down a tube with a nozzle into which he blew and then put the nozzle to his ear. He did this a couple of times. I might add that this WAS the age of the telephone! The vicar listened and then spoke into the nozzle something like 'Oh my dear, this young lady is just leaving. Would you give her the book that I set aside? Thank you my dear.'

An old internal communication arrangement that still held good in that old house where they might have had a maid or two.

My vicar saw my glance and just indicated the 'blower' and said something like 'Very useful'.

How did it work? Was there a whistle at the ends of these domestic blowers? For all I know they could have been a coming-space-age improvement on the old domestic servants' array of bells. Anyway, that 'blower' answered its purpose for me on that day long ago.

So of course, now we know where the phrase “Give me a call on the blower “, or something similar, comes from!

Cecilia Conway-Wright.



Answer to the question on page 7.

A seismograph is an instrument used to detect and record vibrations caused by earthquakes. It was first invented in 132 AD by the Chinese astronomer Zhang Heng. It comprised a large bronze urn and around the base of the vessel sat eight corresponding toads with their mouths open, looking upwards. When an earthquake occurred, a delicate internal pendulum would swing, causing a ball to drop from the mouth of one of six dragon fixed to the urn and facing the tremor's direction, into the open mouth of a toad positioned below. The sign for an earthquake was the falling of a ball from the dragon into the mouth of a toad. The direction of the earthquake is indicated by the position of the toad which swallowed the ball.



PROGRAM OF U3A WERRIBEE COURSES FOR TERM 1 of 2025

Monday 3 February - Friday 4 April 2025

| Day/Time | Activity | Group Leader/Tutor | | Venue |
|------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------|--------------|-------|
| MONDAY | | | | |
| 10.00 - 11.30 | Exploring History | Rick Conn | 0402 299 220 | HRV |
| 10.00 - 01.00 | Movies and Lunch ⁽¹⁾ | Judy Conn | 0431 677 657 | SY |
| 10.15 - 10.45 | Tai Chi (Basic) | Christina Dennis | 0431 151 885 | HCSC |
| 10.45 - 11.45 | Tai Chi (Beginner) | Christina Dennis | 0431 151 885 | HCSC |
| 10.30 - 12.00 | Tai Chi for the Experienced | Bonnie Holmes | 0408 360 537 | TCC |
| 01.00 - 02.00 | Beginners Italian | Grazia Gismondi | 0413 715 756 | HCSC |
| 02.00 - 03.00 | Advanced Italian | Grazia Gismondi | 0413 715 756 | HCSC |
| TUESDAY | | | | |
| 09.30 - 10.30 | Senior Men in Light Exercises | Tony Bradford | 0447 139 202 | HCSC |
| 09.45 - 11.45 | Needlecraft | Faye Weston | 8754 1003 | PH |
| 10.00 - 12.00 | Digital Device Applications | Don Lee | 0402 330 314 | HRV |
| 11.00 - 12.00 | Beginners French | Rick Conn | 0402 299 220 | HCSC |
| 04.00 - 05.30 | Line Dancing | Vittoria Lucietto | 0438 741 745 | HRV |
| WEDNESDAY | | | | |
| 09.45 - 12.00 | Mosaics | Eil Harrop | 0419 546 796 | WPCC |
| 10.00 - 02.00 | Bolivia | Betty Seah | 0410 634 236 | HCSC |
| 12.45 - 02.30 | Health and Wellbeing | Lyn Alder | 0459 449 916 | WPCC |
| 01.15 - 04.00 | Cards — 500 | Barb Kenny | 0428 623 371 | PH |
| 05.30 - 06.30 | Ukelele | Alan White | 0417 151 613 | SCCC |
| THURSDAY | | | | |
| 10.00 - 12.00 | Current Affairs | Carole Popham | 0423 319 844 | HRV |
| 10.30 - 03.00 | Mahjong | Betty Seah | 0410 634 236 | HCSC |
| 01.15 - 02.30 | Yoga For Seniors | Samantha Sepulveda | 0419 893 944 | WPCC |
| 02.00 - 04.00 | Singing | Angela Murnane | 0481 571 091 | PH |
| FRIDAY | | | | |
| 09.45 - 11.45 | Ballet Matinee | Cecilia Conwaye-Wright | 0407 558 825 | PH |
| 10.30 - 11.30 | Mindful Drawing | Samantha Sepulveda | 0419 893 944 | HCSC |
| 12.00 - 01.30 | Let's write a Short Story | Cecilia Conwaye-Wright | 0407 558 825 | PH |
| 12.30 - 02.00 | Let's do Lunch ⁽²⁾ | Suzanne Luder | 0404 131 052 | TBA |
| 01.00 - 03.00 | Music You Like to Hear | John Funnell | 0411 112 184 | HCSC |

Notes: (1) The Movies & Lunch Group meet on the second Monday of the month at the Sun Theatre, Yarraville.
 (2) The Lunch Group will run on the third Friday of the month.

FOR ALL COURSE INQUIRIES: EMAIL: courses.u3awbee@hotmail.com

COURSE VENUES

| | |
|------|--|
| HRV | Heathglen Retirement Village, 2 Glendale Crt (just off Heaths Road), Werribee. |
| HCSC | Hoppers Crossing Sports Club, 56-84 Hogans Road, Hoppers Crossing. |
| PH | Private Home: For details please contact the Group Leader. |
| SCCC | St Peter's Church Community Centre, 38 Guinane Ave, Hoppers Crossing. |
| SY | Sun Theatre, Yarraville. |
| TBA | To Be Advised. For details please contact the Group Leader or Courses Coordinator. |
| TCC | Tarneit Community Centre, c/r Leakes Road and Sunset Views Boulevard, Tarneit. |
| WPCC | Wyndham Park Community Centre, 55/57 Kookaburra Ave, Werribee. |

WORDS OF WISDOM AS WE FACE NEW OPPORTUNITIES

"There is no security on this earth; there is only opportunity. Douglas MacArthur 1880 -1964)
American general who served as a top commander during World War II.

"A pessimist sees the difficulty in every opportunity; an optimist sees the opportunity in every difficulty."
Winston S. Churchill (1874-1965) British statesman, former Prime Minister and writer.

Our lives are defined by opportunities. Even the ones we miss." F. Scott Fitzgerald (1896-1940),
American novelist.

"Every moment wasted looking back, keeps us from moving forward." Hillary Clinton (b. 1947),
American politician and diplomat.

"Aging is not lost youth but a new stage of opportunity and strength." Betty Friedan (1921-2006),
American feminist, writer and activist.

"Be very careful, then, how you live - not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil". Bible, Ephesians 5:15-20.

"Opportunity is like sunrises; if you wait too long, you miss them".

William Arthur Ward (1921-1994) American motivational writer.

"Commit your work to the Lord, and your plans will be established".

Proverbs 16:3.



"Every challenge, every adversity, contains within it the seeds of opportunity and growth.

Roy Bennett (1957-2018) Zimbabwean politician and member of Zimbabwean Parliament.

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