



Wesley School for Seniors Newsbites

TERM 4

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Issue 4

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School for Seniors Update

Jeannie Mathews, Program Co-ordinator

Christmas is just around the corner and as we approach the holiday season, I would like to thank you all for your contributions towards the school.

In small and big ways you have contributed as volunteers and students by cooperating towards all the events and activities planned through the year.

As a result we have an exciting calendar of events now at School for Seniors and we are looking for every opportunity to grow the service. After two years of SFS at Carlingford, we plan to now venture into the next retirement village at Sylvania called Frank Vickery.

Last month I completed 5 years of service at Wesley Mission and as School for Seniors turns 50 years next year, I feel very honoured to have been able to contribute my time to this service.

Message



Carol Garner

It seems as though everyone is dashing headlong towards Christmas, many feeling very stressed about the gift-giving issue. What shall I buy for my friend who appears to have everything? Will they like what I select? If I give a gift to this person and not another, will the other be offended? What can I afford to spend?

All this anxiety takes the joy out of giving. Some of our more precious treasures are very simple. We have a small glazed pottery hippo made by our youngest son when he was about ten years old; recently our little granddaughter presented us with a "helicopter" constructed with a couple of pieces of wood and a few buttons and plastic lids. These gifts are priceless.

However, many gifts don't cost anything at all. A friendly smile, an encouraging word or a kind gesture can mean so much, especially in this world of computers and mobile phones when people can become disconnected and lonely. We are very fortunate in having School for Seniors offering very many opportunities for learning new skills, expanding our knowledge, keeping fit, making new friends, sharing together and having fun. I often meet members in the lift, carrying their ukuleles or guitars, or dressed ready for country dancing or exercise class. Their enthusiasm and anticipation is wonderful to see.

As Christmas approaches, I am sure many of you will want to share that joy with others who are less fortunate and don't have the opportunity of the friendship we enjoy at School for Seniors.

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Perhaps you may have a neighbour who doesn't appear to receive any visitors. An invitation to a simple meal or even a cup of tea and a mince pie would lift their mood enormously and would make a tremendous difference to their Christmas. If you are alone yourself at Christmas time, we have two opportunities on Christmas Day for joining together with others in the Wesley Mission family for food and fellowship, either in the Upper Room restaurant or in the Lyceum.

After a lovely meal, we all share together in singing carols and distributing gifts to everyone. "In the bleak mid-winter" is a strange carol to sing in our Australian summer. However, the final verse speaks of what we can give in response to God's greatest gift to us in Jesus Christ:

What can I give him, poor as I am?
If I were a shepherd I would bring a lamb
If I were a wise man I would do my part;
Yet what I can I give him – Give my heart.

Tutor Column

Paul Hurst, Tutor for Great Journeys of History

INTERESTING FACTS ABOUT MARCO POLO

Born in the Republic of Venice in 1254, Marco Polo was a trader, traveller, and adventurer, who it is claimed, journeyed to Central Asia and China. He did his travelling in an era when vast areas of the world were still uncharted and just traveling to a neighbouring town could take you days.

HE WASN'T THE FIRST EUROPEAN TO EXPLORE CHINA

While his book, *The Travels of Marco Polo*, brought knowledge of the Far East to the European world, Marco Polo wasn't actually the first European to visit China. In fact, he wasn't even the first Polo to visit China. Niccolo and Maffeo Polo had already travelled to China and met with Kublai Khan.

HIS LIFE STORY WAS WRITTEN BY A CELLMATE IN JAIL

When Marco Polo returned to Europe in 1295, his adventures were far from over. Polo was once a prisoner of war. In jail he befriended another prisoner, Rustichello of Pisa, who just happened to be a writer of popular romances. Something like a

modern paperback writer. He began dictating his story to Rustichello, who produced the manuscript that would become

HE BROUGHT PAPER MONEY INTO EUROPE

Long before Europe began printing its own bills, the Mongol empire was circulating paper money. Marco Polo described the strange currency in his book, flippantly describing Kublai Khan as an alchemist who could transform mulberry trees into money. On his return to Venice he was almost imprisoned for fraud for stating the Chinese use paper for money instead of silver and gold.

HE DISCOVERED THE POWER SHAKE

The Mongols made their own power shakes, similar to what many people today drink after a workout in a gym. The Mongols dried milk, put it in a flask, added water and mixed it up while riding. The mixture would churn and become a thick, high energy syrup.

Based on an article on www.mentalfloss.com



Student Column

Yvonne Hennessy, Student from French Intermediate class on Thursdays

The French Class on Thursday with Madame Georgette is fun, and light hearted.

We learn about notable French characters, singers and news items through listening and reading in French.

We also sing in French which is another way to become familiar with the French language and accent.

« *La classe française est intéressante, éducative, amusante et j'ai hâte de revenir en classe l'année prochaine.* »

"The French class is interesting, educational, fun and I look forward to coming back to class next year."



Sharon Dean, Student from Memoir Writing on Fridays

My journey

My desire to put pen to paper led me
to Wesley seniors: a new chapter beginning.
My journey into writing with enthusiasm was thrilling.
Walking into the room the first time was daunting,
From the beginning encouragement
from my tutor Edita was rewarding.

I had entered a class
on memoir and narrative writing,
Introductions, smiles, altogether uniting.
Poetry is a genre that for me is flowing,
Wondering why and where this is going.
Expression on paper dancing a chorus of rhyme,
Celebrations and sometimes sadness
through time.

Dreams and people move in and out
life's experiences enriched throughout,
reflection is deep, powerful messages left behind,
empathy in contemplation - unique I find.

Visualizing experiences alive in memory
Where should I begin, it all seems so raw

My internal directory.
Highlights of a journey just beginning,
tiny steps frightening,
yet strangely comforting,
thoughts are forming
imagination soaring
themes, desires, secrets, exploring.

Exploring the past thrills the senses,
going slowly, not jumping fences,
my desire to write is such a pleasure,
create with honesty, abandonment,
a measure.

Motivation to connect
each piece has become a mission
guided by Edita with each lesson.
This is a story like many others
who take the step forward and flourish?

To leave a legacy of memories past,
for children to read,
re live secrets at last.
This is my story just beginning
to soar above
and continue creating.

Events at SFS

Guest Speakers

We were glad to have Yvonne Cheong from the Central and Eastern Sydney Public Health Network to speak about My Health record and understand the various options available.





Upcoming Events

Activity	Date
School for Seniors End of Year Concert	Friday, 14 December (10 to 1pm)
School for Seniors Carols and Christmas Service	Thursday, 20 December (10.30 to 12 pm)
Guest Speaker Term 1	TBD
Tutor skills workshop	TBD
WHS/Antibullying training for tutors	TBD
Older Persons Mental Health First Aid Course participants learn how to recognise the signs and symptoms of the common mental health problems in older people and how to respond appropriately as early as possible, rather than wait for a mental health crisis before taking action. Participants who complete this training are eligible to complete an online Accreditation Assessment in order to receive a Mental Health First Aider Certificate of Accreditation valid for 3 years.	When: 21st and 22nd January, 9:30am – 5pm. This is a 12 hour course delivered over two days (6 hours+ breaks / day). Cost: FREE + lunch is provided! What should I bring? Please bring a pen and notepad Where: Dudley Room – School for Seniors 220 Pitt Street. To book: Register at the school for seniors office, OR contact the instructor, Jasmin Cox directly on 0436 421 397 for more information.

Wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a safe holiday season!



Enrolment and Course Facts

Wesley School for Seniors has a brochure and a new student handbook . These are available at the office. The student handbook can be downloaded from the website too. Please hand out to friends and family interested in courses for seniors! The school is run by invaluable volunteer support. Current figures are as below.	
Enrolment numbers	436
Volunteer Tutors	82
SFS Classes	93
Volunteer admin including op shop	8
<i>Term 1 enrolment for 2019 starts on Monday, 10 December 2018</i> <i>The school office will be closed during the holiday period and will be open during limited hours from Monday 21 January 2019 to Friday 25 January 2019.</i> <i>Term 1 will start on Tuesday 29 January 2019.</i>	

SFS council

School council, which includes students and tutors representatives, meets twice each term.

If you would like to join the council as a student or tutor representative please contact the office. The council is currently looking to replace a student representative.

Isabel Graham has decided to give up her spot as student representative on the council. We would like to thank Isabel for her time and contributions to the council this year.