



Wesley School for Seniors

Newsbites

Term 2 – Issue 1
19 April 2021 to 25 June 2021

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Wesley School for Seniors update

By Jeannie Mathews
Program Coordinator

As we see life returning slowly to the old normal, it's great to see so many of you return to our in-person classes this term. Our online classes, put in place during the height of the pandemic, have been running successfully alongside in-person classes for those who wish to avoid travel or prefer learning in the comfort of their own home. As we continue to bring back classes cautiously, we rely on all centre visitors to maintain COVID-19 protocols to help keep us all safe.

During the second half of the year, we'd love you to invite your friends to participate in classes. Contact our office to learn how you can get your friends involved. Additionally, if you or someone you know would like to volunteer as a tutor at our Sydney, Carlingford or Sylvania locations, or online via Zoom, contact us on (02) 9263 5416.

I look forward to seeing you all after a restful break for another exciting term of learning new skills and socialising.

Message

By Andy Moore

General Manager – Health, Conferences and Education

My wife and I are lucky to have three teenage boys, Toby (17), Josiah (15) and Gideon (13).

Each of them has different personalities and tastes, but they've all recently developed a passion for music and the creative arts.

During COVID-19, many of their school activities were cancelled and we were conscious about how much time they spent using the PlayStation. So, we bought some secondhand guitars and encouraged them to invite their friends over each weekend for a barbeque and jam session. The first few weeks were challenging. Teenagers would turn up on Saturday afternoons, eat all the food in the house and compete to see who could play the loudest. It was so loud our dog chose the quiet of outside over potential leftover sausages inside.

Then, Toby was gifted a secondhand record of *Johnny Cash, Live at Folsom Prison*, and it set something in motion. Firstly, I was able to teach teenagers about how records worked, and how the artist could tell a story through many songs – presenting them in the order they wanted you to listen. And, that you had to physically turn the record over to listen to the B-side.

Secondly, the usually unruly, loud teenagers decided they should choose an album each week and spend the first half hour of every jam session just listening. My world changed – and the dog came back inside.

Over the next year, the PlayStation was willingly packed away. Old guitars and ukuleles found their way into our home and often I couldn't tell the difference between teenagers jamming and the original artists (picked from the growing pile of secondhand records my kids found at garage sales and secondhand shops).

During this time, I realised that my kids have demonstrated a valuable lesson. They've taught me, and others, that it's important to listen to people who inspire and encourage you, including each other. They've reminded me of the power of stories and storytellers.

In the current climate, there are a lot of voices sharing their opinions online and in the media about COVID-19 and the future.

It all sounds a bit like the teenagers' band practice at the start of the pandemic – a lot of noise with no clear story or tune.

I'd like to encourage each of us to choose carefully who we're listening to, and to test what we're hearing against what our General Practitioners and experts are telling us.

If someone's tune is different to what our health experts recommend, it's probably time to tune out.

If you're feeling concerned or worried about the impact COVID-19 is having on you or your family, you can talk to your tutor or our staff. We have amazing students and tutors in our community, and you're never alone.

I'd also like to acknowledge and thank Jeannie, our amazing tutors and the Wesley School for Seniors Council for their hard work behind the scenes to keep our programs operating this year.

It takes a lot of work to meet our NSW Government requirements to operate, and I never take their wisdom and leadership for granted.

We don't know how long this will last, but we do know we'll get through it together.

Stay well and be kind to yourselves and each other.

Andy

Wesley School for Seniors Online

You can now take many of our popular courses at home using your computer, tablet or phone with Wesley School for Seniors

Online! Learning online is fun and easy, and you can access a wide variety of classes, including music, languages and so much more. Volunteer tutors and students who have expressed interest in the classes are supported with training to use the technology required for the course.

Wesley School for Seniors Online Term 3 courses:

Guitar (Beginner)
Spanish (Beginner/ Advanced Beginner)
Chinese Proverbs and Poetry
Mandarin (Beginner)
Shakespeare
Money Matters
History comes alive
ESL English Conversation (from Intermediate to Advanced)
Ukulele (Beginner) (starts in week 3)
Tablets and Smartphones
Art and Photography basics
Guitar (Intermediate)
Introduction to meditation
Faith Chat
Piano (Intermediate)
Latin (Beginner 4)
Mysteries of the universe

Wesley School for Seniors Online student testimonials

"The online course is great, convenient, saves time and as good as face-to-face class[es]," says student, aged 69.

"Always interesting and well presented," says student, aged 72.

Wesley School for Seniors Online tutor testimonials

"It's great to teach/learn from home. There is better control over student participation. It's easy to distribute course materials via the internet (no photocopying). It's easy to record each week's class via Zoom and the online process itself."

"It's most appropriate during the current [COVID-19] crisis."

"It's convenient for students and tutors. It's the new normal."

Tutor column

By Julie Bishop

Tutor, Playford Old English dance

From 1650 onwards, John Playford and his heirs published books of dances, often supplied by dance masters of the day. People back then knew what his abbreviations meant. They have since been interpreted by dance experts in England and have become the dances we do in class.

They can vary from two-couple dances to three-couple dances (which usually have three standard parts). Four-couple dances can be quite complex, but we have mastered a few.

There's also 'longways for as many as will' – where partners line up in a long line, follow instructions to 'take hands, four from the front' and form a subset of four. The next four people do the same, and so on down the line. Many of these dances are fun and easy; Geud, Man of Ballangigh, Lilli Burlero, Indian Queen and Mr Beveridge's Maggot (which was danced by Mr Darcy and Elizabeth Bennet in the BBC production of *Pride and Prejudice*). These are known as duple minor dances. Many of the more complex, longways dances were found in 'the Apted collection' – an old book of late 18th century dances belonging to a Mrs Apted in England.

The first, and most dominant longways dances of that time, were triple minor dances. So, the first instruction would have been 'take hands six'. Triple minors can be a bit more challenging – and two couples have to wait out at either end for a third couple to move along the set to join them. Many of these dances have been adapted to be duple minor dances or just a three-couple dance. We have sometimes danced them with four couples, the way Scottish dances work; the first three couples dance then a couple is left at the top and two couples join the fourth couple to dance it through with them.

It's a friendly, happy class – and the dances are simpler than they sound!

By Patricia Zouvelekis

Tutor, Dancercise

Dancercise class at 10am on Tuesdays is a combination of gentle exercise and dancing.

The aim of our class is to keep you mobile, enjoying exercise and having fun.

The exercises are mostly stretches using a chair for balance (if required). We then take a seat for more stretching and finish with sit-ups. We dance to fun songs like *Viva España*, *In the Navy*, *That'll Be the Day*, *Beautiful Greece* (sung in German) and *Under the Boardwalk*. Dances include cha-cha, barn dance and tarantella, to name a few.



By Keri Haiyes

Tutor, Emotional wellness and art therapy

Making meaning through various creative activities, such as collage, writing, painting drawing and colouring improves focus and motor skills, and helps to relieve stress and anxiety.



During the last term, there was lots of chit chat and laughter. We used collage as a way to express our feelings, making unique visual pieces while connecting with others in a safe space. As part of this class, together we take a creative journey to emotional wellness, sharing our wisdom and deepening our self-awareness. Through playful creative practices, we support the journey in service to emotional health and a brighter outlook on life in general.

By Tanya Clark

Tutor, Mat yoga for everybody

Quick yoga facts:

- practised for over 5,000 years, yoga is one of the oldest physical disciplines in the world
- the word yoga comes from Sanskrit and means 'union' or 'yoke'
- there are more than 100 styles of yoga, including Hatha, Iyenga, Aerial and hot yoga
- yoga can work every muscle in your body
- yoga has 84 basic postures
- yoga increases flexibility, tones the body, improves posture and builds strength
- the world's oldest yoga teacher, Tao Porchon-Lynch taught and practised yoga until she was 101 years old
- practising yoga can delay ageing, according to a peer-reviewed study published in *Oxidative Medicine and Cellular Longevity*.

Join us for yoga at 9:30am on Fridays and feel the difference in your energy and mindset.

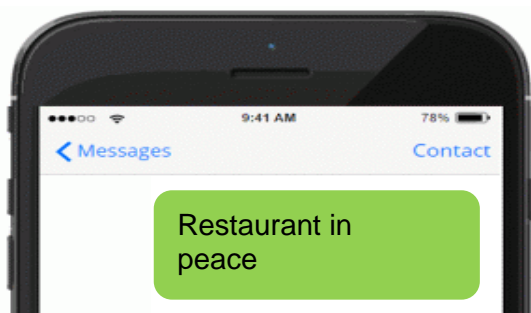
Student column

By Paul Hurst

FUNNY JOKES! 🤔

CHECK BEFORE YOU SEND MESSAGES

The guy who invented auto-correct for smart phones passed away today.



STRANGE QUESTIONS LIBRARIANS HEAR...

Before Google, there were librarians. Here are some queries posed to the poor, suffering staff of public libraries:

- a woman wanted "inspirational material on grass and lawns"

- "who built the English Channel?"
- "is there a full moon every night in Acapulco?"
- "music suitable for a doll wedding to take place between a Shirley Temple doll and a teddy bear"
- "can the New York Public Library recommend a good forger?"

Wesley School for Seniors Patchwork class quilt donations

Message from program manager, Wesley Mission's Mums and Kids Matter



Thank you for the lovely quilts you gifted to the awesome children and parents we support. When these were delivered to us, we were able to include some in the Mother's Day packs prepared for women in our residential program. May God bless the hands that made these beautiful gifts.

Look to the Stars concert

The 'Look to the Stars' concert on 21 June 2021 was a unique and fun opportunity for Wesley School for Seniors to host a mid-year concert for clients from Wesley Disability Services.

Over 40 Wesley Disability Services participants were trained in dance, music, art and singing over a 10-week period with an aim to perform on stage at the Wesley Theatre. A total of six classes were put together at four locations – Dundas, Lewisham, Smithfield and Pitt Street – and each location performed a piece at the concert.

We were fortunate to have Annabelle Williams, Paralympic gold medallist, as our guest speaker for the event. Wesley School for Seniors was represented on stage by Eric Fong and the Happy Singers team and our tutor, Paul Hurst, who ran the guitar lessons. Thanks to all our volunteers, students and Wesley Mission senior management for supporting the event with their presence and overall guidance.