

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

The year has turned out very different from what we had imagined.

Covid-19 meant that we had to make the decision to close Glen Eira U3A from 17th March in order to safeguard our members, and abide by the government decisions about how to manage the virus. We still don't know how long it will be before we can reopen.

Our tutors and members have responded well to the situation, moving a lot of courses and activities online. We are now offering many courses using Zoom, Skype and email.

We have acquired two Zoom pro licenses that can be shared by many of our tutors. One license has been reimbursed by the U3A Network Victoria to encourage online delivery.

We have tried to keep members informed about online options during the lockdown and have started using Mailchimp to provide updates, as required, in addition to this our quarterly newsletter.

We are pleased that the NBN has now been installed at our main premises, which involved digging up our back laneway and moving us to a new telecommunications pit which isn't full of mud and water. I am now waiting for Telstra to finish the job so that we have better wifi coverage when we return.

Work is underway to apply for Council funding for our Art Show at the end of the year.

The virus has led to a change in how the Seniors Festival will happen this year. We will keep you informed about developments.

Keep well.

**Del Stitz, President**

May the Lord love us but not call us too soon.  
There's many a good tune played on an old fiddle.  
Youth without fire is like old age without experience.  
May you live to be a hundred and have an extra year to repent.



Beryl Childs, 100th birthday, with her letter from the Queen.

You should have received an email from the U3A administration officer, Peter Froment, a while ago on the day before Beryl's birthday with notes about Beryl by Marilyn Harvey and Garry Fabian.

On page 4, there is an article about another of our members, **Henry Bertram**, who will also be 100 in July.



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Please address all mail to;  
PO Box 286,  
Glen Huntly, 3163

**Office:** 1151 Glenhuntly Road,  
Glen Huntly, 3163

**Phone:** (03) 9572 0571

**E-mail Admin.:** smmsadmin@gleneirau3a.org.au

**Secretary:** secretary@gleneirau3a.org.au

**Website:** www.gleneirau3a.org.au

**Office Hours:** Monday to Thursday, 9.30 am to 3.00 pm:  
Friday, 9.30 am to 2.30 pm

### COMMITTEE, 2020

**President:** Del Stitz

**Vice President:**

**Secretary:** David Collier

**Treasurer:** Jo Brown

### Committee Members:

Phillip Coleman  
Garry Fabian  
Jack Edelman  
Hilary Friedland  
Peter Froment  
Ditta Libson  
Russell Stern  
Chris Perera

**Systems Administrator:** Peter Froment

**Course Co-ordinator:** Chris Perera

**Garden Co-ordinator:** Stan Hill

**Events Co-ordinator:** Hilary Friedland

**Open and Close Schedule:** Russell Stern

**Newsletter Co-ordinator:** Heather Hudson

Email address: heathflo@iinet.net.au

### Dates to Remember

**Queen's Birthday:** Monday, 8th June

**Mid Year Break:** 27th June to 12th July

**Please Note:** You will be notified at a later date when U3A will be reopening.

### ONLINE LEARNING IN FRENCH TOO

Successful resumption of Advanced French Conversation for Fluent Speakers- OLANFo5- using Skype Group U3AGEFS

Before the lockdown, we were ten participants (two tutors and eight members ).

Thanks to Peter's and Shirley's encouragement, we have resumed the sessions online using Skype.

We are eight participants in the online Skype sessions.

We meet fortnightly using Skype. Members are free to connect via video and audio, or audio only. Our class is unique. The tutors act as facilitators. We are all fluent in French, thus we speak only French. Each one of us, including the tutors, participate equally in the French conversations. Participants volunteer to prepare topics of their choice before the session.

In the first 50 minutes, each member talks about her/his news. Then, each volunteer presents the topic that s/he has prepared, and we all discuss it in an enjoyable ambiance. Also, during the session, we listen to French songs.

For any enquiries, please contact Charles Farah on [cmfarah@gmail.com](mailto:cmfarah@gmail.com) a few days before the following session.

### Charles Farah, Tutor

You may be sick of it, but here goes.....

**I am Australian**

**By Bruce Woodley of The Seekers and Dobe Newton of The Bushwackers**

I come from the dreamtime from the dusty red soil plains  
I am the ancient heart, the keeper of the flame  
I stood upon the rocky shore, I watched the tall ships come,  
For forty thousand years I've been the first Australian.  
I came aboard the prison ships bound down by iron chains  
I cleared the land, endured the lash and waited for the rains  
I'm a settler, I'm a farmer's wife on a dry and barren run  
A convict then a freeman, I became Australian.  
We are one, but we are many and from all the lands on earth we come  
We share a dream and sing with one voice  
I am, you are, we are Australian.

I'm a teller of stories, I'm a singer of songs, I am Albert Namatjira, I paint the ghostly gums  
I'm Clancy on his horse, I'm Ned Kelly on the run,  
I'm the one who waltzes Matilda, I am Australian.  
I'm the hot wind from the desert, I'm the black soil from the plain  
I'm the mountain and the valleys, I'm the drought and flooding rains  
I am the rock, I am the sky, rivers when they run  
I'm the spirit of this great land, I am Australian.  
We are one, but we are many and from all the lands on earth we come  
We share a dream and sing with one voice  
I am, you are, we are Australian

*School students are not the only ones having to get used to online learning in these 'unprecedented' times. Some of our tutors and classes have been experimenting with online learning too—a very novel experience for some of our older citizens. Here are a few reports of how these online sessions have been going.*

### **ZOOM !!**

Woosh!! Change can happen so quickly and with the “Stay-at-Home” directive as a result of the Covid-19 virus, we found our Italian lessons somewhat “swinging in the breeze”.

*Niente!* With the support of one courageous “guinea-pig” class we made a tentative start and immediately moved the classes to Skype, then within the week we had evolved our “inner-nerd” and the next week we were all using the platform Zoom. Now each week we have three Italian classes using Zoom and one using Skype. Not only has this proved to be a great way for everyone to catch up with their class-mates they’re also continuing to learn Italian.

Zoom of course comes with a few challenges; working out how to “get-on” was everyone’s first hurdle but once the Zoom App was downloaded it became reasonably easy for everyone to hook into the class each week.

I was advised very early on to make sure I had an agenda, so, each week at the end of the class I send the students the lesson notes, the homework and the agenda for the following week. In this way the students know how to prepare themselves prior to the class.

Of course, this style of learning is not suited to everyone and some students have opted-out of the online classes but keep in touch through the weekly email, so they can continue to study by themselves. Zoom and Skype have proved to be invaluable online platforms during these stay-at-home days but at the same time has given us the opportunity to continue learning and enjoying our U3A Italian classes.

Here’s a little feedback from the students on how they’re finding their online Italian classes (translated from Italian, of course!):

*“It’s such a joy to see everyone and to continue with our Italian lessons.”*

*“Thank you for all your efforts in making the Zoom class enjoyable.”*

*“I am really pleased to have these online lessons.”*

*“Thanks so much for the wonderful Zoom lesson - again.”*

### **Charmaine Hart, Tutor**

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### **U3A in a time of ZOOM**

These past weeks have transformed the genial pleasure of presenting history to my colleagues at Glen Eira, where once I would amble into the building, collect the class roll, a coffee and settle down with the class as we journeyed through parts of the preceding 1400 years. When the novel coronavirus was let loose amongst us, an alternate mode of teaching was needed.

I had never heard of ZOOM before and so started to use it, with a few false starts and quite a bit of apprehension on my part. I knew about video-conferencing of course, but not with this level of simplicity. Quite simply ZOOM is remarkably easy to set up and use; and over the first few episodes I gradually explored the opportunities to speak, to have conversations, to share my PowerPoint presentation and lastly to show videos effectively. My two classes have been so understanding and supportive; tolerating my customary Dad jokes (though they were used to those), forgiving my moments of operational chaos, and giving me the benefit of the doubt as we all came to terms with our strange new world.

For a 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century historian with a solid knowledge of the influenza pandemic of 1919, and the global ramifications of that event, to be living through this pandemic has been an extraordinary experience. It was shipping, specifically the returning troop ships following the end of World War One, which spread the 1919 pandemic so effectively and brought the virus to countries which should not normally have expected to be infected. In 2020 cruise ships and air travel performed the same service. In 1919 slow reactions and opening up cities too early dramatically increased the mortality rate – we are yet to see how this is to play out this time round.

What I most appreciate is the fact that technology allows us to share communication so readily. We can, with a bit of effort, bring people together; even those who are isolating alone are able to see others and sense that they are still part of the community. How wonderful is that. I am very mindful of allowing periods of general conversation before my classes, at periods during the presentation and then again at the end. We are all in this together and so, it seems to me, that I must be responsible for cheerful human interaction.

The use of ZOOM is about the well-being of our Glen Eira U3A members, as much as 19<sup>th</sup> century or English Monarchy history. I did not anticipate the challenges of delivering the ZOOM lectures. It is very much more demanding in that the normal interactions between the class members do not take place. When presenting we have found it best to mute all but the presenter as otherwise there are many incidental sounds which make it difficult for class members to hear. It is important to share the screen effectively so that the class can easily see what is being presented. My great failing is forgetting to keep an eye on those wishing to join the call and not leave them waiting helplessly outside the ZOOM class.

In spite of these challenges, this has allowed for a new medium to work to keep us in touch, to keep us sharing and exploring ideas and to continue to subscribe to the intent of the U3A.

### **David Collier, Tutor**

*There are two notable birthdays happening this year! Two people achieving their 100th birthdays!*

My association with **Henry Bertram** began when he joined our weekly U3A mahjong session in January, 2006. Since that time Henry has rarely missed a class turning up every Thursday with a smile on his face and carrying along with him years of wisdom with his extensive experience playing mahjong. His objective each time he plays is not to win but to challenge his brain trying the most complex combinations which he does successfully in most instances.

Henry still lives independently in Glen Eira with his wife Marion (who was recently admitted into respite care because of ill health). He is a doting father to his daughter Zoe and proud grandfather of his grandson Harvey.

Here is Henry's story.....

Born in Sydney **July 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1920**, and educated at Earlwood Public and Canterbury High Schools, he trained at Sydney Technical College as a Mechanical Fitter (with theory and mechanical drawing) and was apprenticed to an engineering firm. He studied Mouth Organ and Bass Mouth Organ at Horrie Dargie's Harmonica School in Sydney from late 1938. He also studied Double Bass.

During the late 1940's Henry played in dance bands, nightclubs, The Billy Weston Big Band etc., and joined Horrie Dargie and two others for a Tivoli tour of New Zealand. During the tour a vocal instrumental Novelty Quartet was formed. By December 1951 (and back in Australia) a pianist was added to the act and this became the famous Horrie Dargie Quintet.

The Quintet worked extensively and by November 1952 they left for the United Kingdom. They played their farewell concert at the Sydney Town Hall. A recording was made of this performance and the 10 inch record became Australia's first GOLD record selling 75,000 copies.

Upon arrival in the UK the group played at the Empire in London and they were recognised as unique because of their distinctive sound, humour and individual style: the group never copied or made renditions of numbers by overseas performers.

They continued working in variety theatres, on television including In Melbourne Tonight, radio etc and in the UK which is where Henry was married and started a family. Doc returned to Australia in March 1958 for two Tivoli tours and joined GTV9 Melbourne in 1959. By the early 1960's he joined the Music Arrangers Guild of Australia (MAGA) and began copying music and playing bass in a band at the Silver Spade Room at the Sydney Chevron Hotel.

From 1972-86 Henry played in several bands and groups throughout Australia and, after retiring in 1986, he returned to Sydney where he continued copying music until the mid-1990's. During the late 90's Henry joined the Sydney Tattersall's Club and played canasta and mahjong both once a week until he moved to Melbourne at the end of 2005.

The Tattersalls Club wasn't Henry's first introduction to mahjong - that was in 1935 with a family in Dulwich Hill where he learnt to play "the quick Chinese game". In 2006 Henry started playing weekly at U3A Glen Eira, where he happily still plays every Thursday to this day. He enjoys the company of his fellow players and he also enjoys working on getting a difficult hand - "that's winning for me" he says!

In conclusion, it has been a privilege and honour to know Henry all these years. He has been a stalwart member of both the U3A and also the Glen Eira community and I would like to wholeheartedly congratulate him on becoming a centenarian!

HAPPY 100th. BIRTHDAY HENRY!!!!

**Irene Murrihy**

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*Here a few more notes regarding Beryl Childs supplied by her daughter, Felicity, and by Margaret Blight.*

Beryl was a very active member of the ALP for many years, acted as secretary of the Bentleigh/McKinnon branch, for a time, received a lifetime membership of the ALP, and was photographed a number of times with ALP notables. Beryl as recently as last year had a trip overseas with her daughter and son-in-law. They had a 15 day tour of Sri Lanka during which time Beryl entertained the other tour members by singing French songs on the coach. Felicity reported that Beryl used to sing during the war on radio and at concerts and that music was a big part of her life. She has also earned a diploma in elocution,

Felicity says that Beryl was a keen baker of sourdough bread and of Easter buns which she distributed to neighbours. If you are unaware, making sourdough bread needs the preparation of a starter of flour and warm water, which needs to be fed with fresh flour and water every day for a week to ten days before using it in baking the bread. So quite a lengthy process.



Golfing days

*A NUMBER OF OUR MEMBERS HAVE HAD CAREERS IN VARIOUS BRANCHES OF ENGINEERING. WHAT INTERESTING WORKING LIVES THEY HAVE HAD!*

### **A PRECIS OF MY TELECOMMUNICATIONS WORK**

I commenced as a Telecommunications Engineer in January 1956 and retired in December 1992.

Started with construction of the Olympic Games studio and transmitter broadcasting facilities for the ABV2 television service. Next, expanded the long-distance cable and radio relay television and telephone trunk networks. Established and maintained specialised lines for telegraph systems for government departments, commercial and defence services.

In 1966 appointed to the Venezuelan Telephone Company (CANTV) for six months as a Radio Telephone Relay Consultant.

In 1969 supervised the Melbourne Control Centre for the moon landing communication facilities provided in Australia from Tidbinbilla in the east to Carnarvon in the west.

After the moon landing work, commenced at the Headquarters Engineering Planning Branch.

Activities included plans and strategies for satellite telecommunications, internet, and subscriber networks. In 1980 visited the USA and Canada to report on advances in optical fibre and coaxial cable TV technology.

In my final years, developed competitive strategies to prepare Telecom for its transition from a monopoly into a competitor in the new telecommunications market environment in Australia.

Some examples of work are the construction of the first ABCTV studios in Ripponlea, the Television Transmitting Station on Mt Dandenong and the radio relay link between the two; the monster Melbourne Radio Relay Tower and Station in Canterbury Road, Box Hill; standards for the cable networks for Foxtel.

Since graduating as a Telecommunications Engineer, I have witnessed enormous changes in technology from radio valves, telephone copper wire networks and mechanical switching equipment technology into microchips for highly sophisticated and miniaturised computer switching systems; coaxial, satellite and optical fibre cable systems; advanced digital coding software, etc. The ongoing exponential developments in this field are well beyond anything envisaged in 1956.

**Alex Feder**

*Optimism:*

*Cheer up, things are getting worse at a slower rate.*

### **IT ENGINEER**

My career spans 50 years in the IT industry. With the technology evolving so rapidly, I have had to continuously update my knowledge to keep abreast with changes. This little article is intended to give you an insight of what it was like to write software code in the 60's. In contrast, today, the coding is of a very high level, takes less effort to write but more effort to debug.

Before I started my computer course in Paris, my school teacher was asking every student what their plans for the future were after graduating from the Baccalaureat. I put my hand up and said "computer programming". My fellow students were intrigued as no one had heard of computers. Yes, it was a big step into an area that was very new and had no guarantee of becoming so vital in so many industries.

After graduating, I started my career on mainframe computers. They were the size of a large room and kept in constant cold temperature. They were referred to as third generation computers relying on microchip technology. These rooms were locked and only permitted operators were allowed to enter. As a programmer, I was privileged to enter the room when there was a need for me to debug and rectify an issue (by changing the internal binary code manually on the console) with the program I had written.

After the analysis of the objectives was completed and the specs written, the design phase consisted of determining a program logic aided by a flowchart. This was done to ensure that every combination and condition was accounted for. The coding, in assembler ("high level" statements), was then written manually on programming sheets with each command on a separate line. The set of sheets was then given to a punch card operator who would replicate each line on a numbered punched card. Depending on the complexity of the program, a deck of cards could consist of a few thousand cards. It was important to keep the right order. Dropping the cards or mixing them would cause havoc! The deck of cards was compiled initially to eliminate syntax or logic errors. Once clean, it was compiled in an interpreted language and translated into the binary language of the machine ready to be executed. A printed listing of all the commands, sometimes the size of a book, was produced for ease of reading and debugging. The term "Spaghetti code" was used to describe a program's source code that was difficult to read or follow, by another programmer, because of how the code was written.

I have worked for several companies in Paris and in Australia and since then moved on from software engineering to higher levels of responsibility within the IT industry. I have experienced the incredible changes that took place in the technology. I am very fortunate to have been able to keep up with the state of the art technology till my retirement.

**Nicole Wurzel**

**See also next page 6**

## ELECTRICAL ENGINEER

I was born in South Africa and studied electrical engineering at the University of Cape Town. Engineering was not my first choice of study; I wanted to become a scientist, but because the “White” apartheid government in South Africa placed limitations on the advancement of “non-Whites”, I had to study engineering so that I could attend a university that had international recognition. After graduation, I joined a small consulting company. I was fortunate in that my employer did not discriminate against me. Working for consultants, I was responsible for the design and supervision of electrical installations for large buildings and sites. In terms of my professional development, I learnt a large amount about ethical conduct, about my duties towards clients, about taking responsibility for my work and exercising engineering judgement. I was fortunate also that my duties took me to many work locations outside Cape Town, and I have fond memories of visits to the many lovely surrounding towns.

By the late 1970's it appeared that the apartheid government in South Africa was firmly entrenched. As even peaceful protest was dealt with violently, I decided to leave in 1980. Australia was in the middle of a resources boom, and prospects for experienced engineers looked good. I joined a consulting firm in Sydney initially, and moved to the State Electricity Commission of Victoria in Melbourne soon after that. The SECV was responsible for the generation, transmission and distribution of electrical energy in Victoria. Most of my work was in the area of high voltage substations, and the equipment for these substations. There is a very high degree of technical knowledge associated with this work and I was able to interact with many of the experts in countries overseas. At the highest voltages (up to 500000V) there are also many safety and operations issues as well. I was fortunate in that my role took me to many overseas countries where equipment was being manufactured for projects that I was responsible for.

I stayed on with a part of what was SECV after disaggregation and privatisation. In the latter years of my career, I again worked for consultants, and also spent some time working on contract.

The role of professional engineers is often not well recognised. In the media, the term “engineer” is sometimes used to describe train drivers and the like. While I have a large amount of respect for these roles, there is a substantial difference in the skills and responsibilities that professional engineers have. In Australia unfortunately, the recognition of the status of professional engineers is rather “patchy”.

The profession also has a responsibility towards society. From this point of view, I find it disappointing that engineers have largely not been consulted in relation to dealing with climate change. Engineers have invariably been able to provide practical, cost-effective solutions to new problems, and all the issues associated with the transition to a low emission economy are well within their capabilities to resolve.

**Patrick Naidoo**

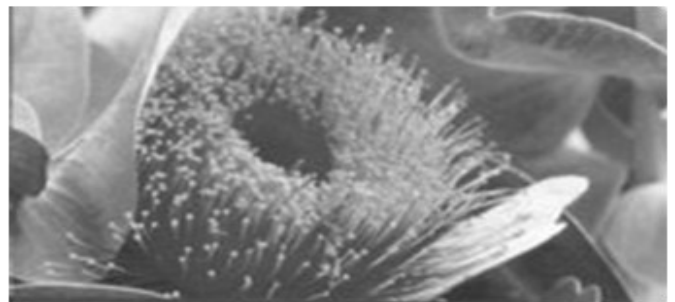
## Morning Australia

This is not your golden glow of sunrise  
nor your promise, bright, of a new day  
nor, as we have come to expect, is there a zephyr -  
breeze to warm us into summer  
to caress our limbs  
and draw us to your hills and seas to play.

No, this promise brings an orange blaze  
that shadows all our days  
and turns them old  
Its wind brings withering, and haze  
to mask the sun  
cloud the clouds  
and choke the emptied land  
with more than emptiness.

For you and I, my country, have lost  
that which is countless  
and in our mourning,  
we cannot see the sun  
which the world once thought so golden  
or how it will ever shine  
the same again.

**Alexandra Phelan, © 2020**



I heard a Dr. on TV say to get through  
the boredom of self isolation we should  
finish things we start and thus have  
more calm in our lives. So I looked  
through the house to find all the things  
I've started but hadn't finished...so I  
finished off a bottle of Merlot, a bottle of  
Chardonnay, a bottle of Baileys, a bottle  
of wum, the remainder of Valiumun  
scriptuns, an a box a chocletz. Yu haf no  
idr how feckin fablus I feel rite now.  
Sned this to all who need inner piss. An  
telum u luvum x



## Let's Talk About Waste- in Glen Eira

*Do you know what goes in which bin? And what to do with items that don't go in any of the bins?*

In the fortnightly Current Affairs sessions we look at issues which are making the news. What to do with our waste has been a constant on TV, in newspapers and online for a long time, so looking at the situation in Glen Eira was topical.

Our speaker, Merav Goldberg, from the City of Glen Eira Waste Management and Sustainability Department outlined the issues confronting us. She defined waste as anything that can't be **reused, recycled or put safely back into the natural environment**, and urged us to see it as a **human problem**. We need to focus on creating a cycle of use rather than a linear one so that what goes into landfill is drastically reduced.

Did you know that the rotting food waste which goes to landfill creates methane, a greenhouse gas 25 times stronger than carbon dioxide, and has a terrible environmental impact? Unused food also wastes the energy, water, and resources used to produce, process, store and transport it. And the cost – 20% of the average grocery budget is wasted: it's like throwing out 1 in 5 bags of food!

### *What does the Council do?*

Collects and transports recycling and waste materials  
Provides bins to households and businesses  
We have general waste, mixed recycling and green/food recycling, hard rubbish/E-waste, bulk cardboard and bundled branches collections.  
Hard Rubbish/E-waste – 3 free /financial year  
Bundled branches - 3 free /financial year  
Bulk cardboard - 3 free /financial year

### *Where does the waste go?*

Glen Eira Council sends the various waste streams to be processed at the following facilities:

General Waste: Landfill (Hampton Park)  
Mixed Recycling: Polytrade  
Garden waste: Cleanaway Transfer Station, including bulk branches  
Food Organic Recycling: Veolia in Dandenong South  
E-waste E-waste refers to any item with a plug, battery or cord that is no longer working or wanted. It covers a whole range of items from work, home and even the garden. E-waste items can be taken to a recycling station. You can google to find the one closest to you.

During the session, there were many questions about the items for the red, yellow and green bins. Disposable coffee cups and nappies, and plastic bags were the subject of long discussion, as well as the State Government's announcement to introduce glass recycling in the future (new purple bin).

Strategies for sharing bins, educating neighbours, using the Council-provided check lists of what goes where, and the on-line A-Z of recycling, and **taking personal responsibility for the waste we each produce** were the key to a sustainable future.

Finally

**Refuse, Reduce, Reuse, Repurpose, Recycle**  
**Refuse all single-use plastics**

**Swap to reusable containers (e.g. coffee cups)**

**Reduce food waste**

**Take electrical and electronic items to your nearest drop-off point**

So what about here at the U3A - the session rooms and the kitchen? Are we doing the best we can to reduce, reuse and recycle or are there improvements we can make? Suggestions welcome.

**Barb Luebbers, Tutor.**



Speaker at Perspectives: Merav Goldberg, City of Glen Eira

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## For Meloney

I heard tinkling bells  
A young girl loving life.  
I drove you home in the strike  
We went to the music bowl  
And that was that.

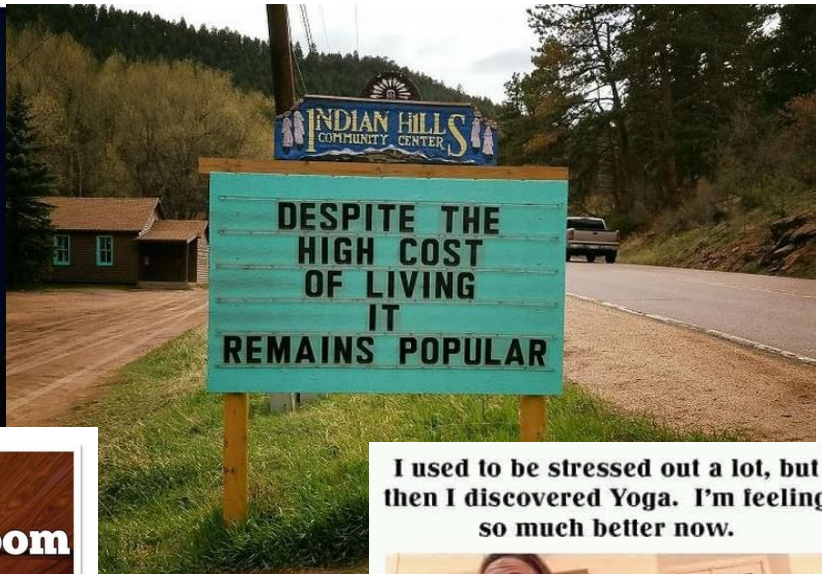
Art appreciation lessons followed  
You began sewing lessons.  
Your friendly family capped it off.  
We sold the block and bought the flat.  
I loved you then as I love you now.

I am sorry I was sick  
But I think I did my best.  
You were the best mother in the world  
And you let go when they needed to go.  
You had as much common sense as my mother  
And it helped you through life.

But the tinkling bells stopped at last  
After two years of pain.  
And I have missed your sturdy presence.

We were not perfect but we did our best.

**Mac 15-03-2012(who was honoured to be Mel's husband for 41 years)**



I used to be stressed out a lot, but then I discovered Yoga. I'm feeling so much better now.



You never appreciate what you have till it's gone.  
Toilet paper is a good example.

**Might sleep on the couch tonight to cut down on my morning commute**

