

There's a university in Bathurst which has no exams, no homework, no awards and no degrees. It's the University of the Third Age, run by the community for the community, and it offers 40 informal classes per week for people aged over fifty. There are courses for the mind, body and spirit, everything from philosophy and current affairs to yoga and table tennis. For an annual fee of just thirty dollars, members can participate in as many courses as they wish, limited only by class sizes.

### **Craftiness and Much More**

The courses offered include four craft classes, held at different times and venues around town and offering a full range of craft activities and social support. The total enrolment in these groups is 68, so there is a lot of expertise and friendship to share. While a lot of the finished items are for family or decorative use, some of the output of these classes is donated to charities, from Bathurst Women's Refuge to Operation Christmas Child and many in between.

One craft class, Quilting and Craft is held at Bathurst Baptist Church on Friday mornings, and the tutor, Sue Cowdroy has provided a wonderful insight into the group's work:

“We meet from 9 to midday every Friday from February to late October. This is a wonderful group of twenty ladies who have a great knowledge of all things to do with quilting, knitting, embroidery, crochet and more. The group often rekindles old crafts and teach them to one another. One of the ladies will start something new or different and soon several in the group will have a go at it too. When one member needs help there is always someone who can assist, giving time and skill with much care. Hence, the Tutor is sometimes able to do some craft for herself!”

“Show and Tell is always happening, accompanied by oohs and aahs over the beautiful work presented. We have a swap table, or if one member needs a particular item to include in her work someone in the group is bound to have it at home in her stash to bring next week.”

“They also help each other at difficult times in life or in ill health, making the class something of a Women's Shed. Help and advice is available on almost any topic.”

“Laughter and chatter are constant and the group is noisy, except when something is being demonstrated, then there is all focus and quiet.. Then there are birthday luncheons and other outings arranged from time to time, making this a happy support group with long term friendships being formed.”

“Any suggestions of taking a term break have met with quick resistance.

All in all this Tutor feels privileged to have such a happy group to work with.”

### **Terrific Tutors, Fabulous Facilitators and Valued Venues**

The term University means Community of Learning, and Bathurst U3A is definitely a community-driven and community-supported collegiate. Each week forty classes are conducted in various venues around Bathurst by volunteer tutors and facilitators.

These wonderful people give up their time week in week out to prepare and to lead classes for fellow members of the Bathurst community.

The tutors and facilitators have generously put their hands up to share their knowledge and expertise with others in the community. Many have been leading classes for several years, in rain hail or shine. Bathurst U3A and indeed Bathurstians generally owe them a big Thank You. Hats off to these wonderful volunteers!

U3A would not function without facilities for classes. A number of organisations around town provide premises for U3A at low cost or in many instances free of charge. They include Bathurst Panthers, Bathurst Neighbourhood Centre, Bathurst Library, Church of Hope, Bathurst Baptist Church, Charles Sturt University, Crago Mill, Bathurst Seymour Centre, Macquarie Care, DTF, Harmonikos, Bathurst Guide Hall and Bathurst Bridge Club. Some of the tutors conduct classes in their own homes. Bathurst U3A acknowledges the contribution of all venue providers in delivering our wide range of programs.

For more information, including this term's newsletter and course program, visit [bathurstu3a.com](http://bathurstu3a.com) or call the Secretary, Sue Lasky on 6331 6968. Suggestions for new courses or offers to lead new courses are welcomed.