



# Jacaranda Journal

NEWSLETTER 4 2019

UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE (U3A) PRETORIA

Email Address:  
u3apretoria@gmail.com

Website:  
[http://www.u3a.org.za/U3A\\_PTA/PTA.htm](http://www.u3a.org.za/U3A_PTA/PTA.htm)

General meetings take place four times a year, 09:00 for 10:00, at NG Kerk Skuilkrans, cnr Cussonia Ave and Jan Alberts St, Val de Grace. GPS S25°44.580 E028°17.494.

Please adhere to the one-way flow of traffic around the church, absolutely essential for our safety!

The dates of the quarterly meetings for **2020** are 27 February (AGM), 28 May, 30 July and 29 October.

The **2020** annual subscription is still R100. Guests are welcome at a cost of R30 per event.

Payments can be made at quarterly meetings, or online (there is an application form on the website).

Banking Details:  
Bank: NEDBANK  
Branch: HATFIELD  
Code: 160245  
Acc. Name: U3A PRETORIA  
Acc. No: 1602376972

A full list of courses and interest groups will be issued in February with an update in July.

One-day outings take place on a regular basis and longer excursions are also arranged.

You are encouraged to wear a name tag at every U3A event.

Contributions to the letter are most welcome. Please email U3A, subject: Editorial Team.

A short English synopsis is requested if another (official SA) language is used.

## MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

I am sure that everyone who joined our happy celebration of Madiba's birthday on 18 July felt it was a very special celebration of hope for the future: for the joyful performance by our brilliant young Dixie Band musicians; for the generosity of our members who donated R2,980 to Cotlands and R3,170 to Jumping Kids to ensure a better life for these precious children; and for the friendships which have been formed through membership of U3A Pretoria.

Many of you might not know that there is an umbrella body called U3A South Africa which shares useful information between U3As. You can reach this at [www.u3a.org.za](http://www.u3a.org.za). I have just received the 2019 contact details of the other 30 South African U3As that can be accessed via our website. Reciprocal membership is available anywhere in the world, and if you wish to make use of this offer as a paid-up member, please let us know and we will give you a letter of confirmation of membership headed with our beautiful new U3A logo. Some U3As have also toured internationally in small groups and stayed with their overseas counterparts. Perhaps this is a reciprocity venture worth investigating? Please let us have your views. We certainly have much to offer to compatible visitors from abroad who would no doubt be equally happy to host South African U3A-ers.

I look forward to seeing you all at our last general meeting of 2019.

Gill Udal

## OUR SPEAKER: 31 OCTOBER 2019

### Professor Gérard Labuschagne PhD

*Director: L&S Threat Management  
Professor: Division of Forensic Medicine & Pathology (WITS University)  
Founder President: African Association of Threat Assessment Professionals  
Clinical Psychologist (HPCSA & British Psychological Society)  
Certified Threat Manager (ATAP)  
Advocate of the High Court (SA)  
Ex-Brigadier (SAPS)  
Association of European Threat Assessment Professionals*

will highlight some of the most memorable aspects of his career as a Forensic Psychologist. Professor Labuschagne led the Investigative Psychology Section of SAPS from 2001 until 2016. During this time, he worked on over 300 cases and was involved in both the Reeva Steenkamp (Oscar Pistorius) and Leigh Matthews murder trials.

Gill Udal

## FROM THE COURSE & INTEREST GROUP CO-ORDINATOR

Attention all course leaders and interest group co-ordinators! This is a reminder that you have a date for breakfast on Tuesday 12 November. This year we will meet at the Blue Crane Restaurant at 9:00 for 9:30 as the African Pride Café has closed. You will all be invited personally, but this is to make sure you put the date and time into your diaries.

Our members are enjoying the wide range of courses and the variety of interest groups that are on offer for their enjoyment and education – it's never too late to learn new things. That's what keeps our minds active. We are aware that there is a long wait in the New Year (until the end of February) to see the new course list which means that there is lots of space for courses to be run in January and February. Course leaders who have waiting lists can make good use of this time. If anyone else wants to offer a course then, please let me know so that we can advertise it to our members.

You can contact me at [davenjen@mweb.co.za](mailto:davenjen@mweb.co.za), 082 923 7982 or 012 460 8270.

Jenny Janisch

## MUSICAL EVENT 18 JULY 2019 – JACKETS AND JAZZ

In July U3A Pretoria had the joy of hearing the **Dixie Band** of the Pretoria Boys' High School. The event was also a celebration of Nelson Mandela's 101st birthday. How appropriate then, that the programme presented by the ever-energetic Dr Niel van der Watt and his talented troupe of trumpeters, saxophonists, clarinetists, trombonists, double bass and percussion players, should span the Mandela era.



From the opening piece, *Skokiaan* (composed by Zimbabwean August Mazarurwa in 1947), the Dixie Band poured their sounds into the large auditorium with conviction and control, a tricky combination for solo performers who have to gel as a unit. In true Dixie and Jazz style though, there were several opportunities for solo breaks in subsequent pieces. *Tin Roof Blues* (1923) offered **Brendon de Beer** (clarinet) and **Atlegang Modibela** (trombone) stretches of stardom. *Punini's Kwela* (the penny-whistle part transcribed by Niel van der Watt for saxophone, to suit this band) provided **Rory Finbow** a chance to soar. **Christian Holm** (trumpet) triumphed in *Breakfast in America*. Numerous other numbers showcased the teenaged musicians having a blast! The performers mentioned above are matriculants and will leave the band soon – they are surely entitled to this exposure.



Niel van der Watt formed this Dixie band in 1986 and has kept a winning formula in place whenever possible: a duo of players comprising an experienced and a novice player for each instrument. This has ensured a high standard of performance throughout decades, when any player can join for at most about four years. **Robert Pickup** (clarinet) and **Abraham Mennen** (saxophone), now both enjoying international careers, began as players in the PBHS Dixie Band.



Van der Watt, a dedicated leader, music teacher and composer, instils in this band the will to let the music speak to all its listeners, to deliver a polished product and to have fun.

I think Mandela would have approved.

**Mia Rich**

**Pictures by Helga Nordhoff and Gill Udal**

# AN INTEREST GROUP IN ACTION

## THE ECONOMIC MATTERS INTEREST GROUP

In June this year the members of the group were captivated by Michael Adams, a Lead Economist from the South African Reserve Bank, who addressed them on the **History and Functions of the South African Reserve Bank**, a highly topical subject right now.

The photograph shows Michael with group leader Mia Rich.

**Ray Spencer** attended and, apart from the information (and picture) here, has a summary covering the bulk of the talk, to be found on the **Jottings** page at the end of the journal. Some interesting items from Michael's historical overview:



Prior to 1921 commercial banks printed and issued their own banknotes, backed by gold, for instance the Standard Bank, Durban Branch, ten-shilling note (below left).

Difficulties with the gold standard required a restructuring of South African banking after the First World War. The South Africa Reserve Bank (the Bank) opened for business on 30 June 1921, the oldest central bank in Africa, housed in this building in Pretoria, just off Church Square. Banknotes were now issued by the Reserve Bank (below right).



## The Nelson Mandela series



- 1 Raised printing
- 2 Feature for the visually impaired
- 3 Animal
- 4 Security thread
- 5 Micro-printing
- 6 Hidden image
- 7 Colour-changing ink



- 8 Unique numbering
- 9 Raised printing
- 10 Watermark
- 11 Animal

## A RECENT EXCURSION

One of the principles of U3A outings is that we choose venues that our members might find difficult to access individually. So it was a great pleasure to travel in a bus to visit three **Randlord Heritage Houses** with our own expert guide, U3A member Janet Hughes. All three houses are lovely architectural buildings, and the story of their owners is fascinating and sometimes scandalous!

The morning started at **Glenshiel**, with a walk around the garden and a talk on the history of the house given in the spacious dining room. The house, designed by Sir Herbert Baker, was built for mining magnate Sir William Dalrymple and is the present home of the Order of St John.

We then drove to the magnificent **Northwards** house, also set in gardens filled with spring flowers, where Janet entertained us with spicy stories of the early owners. This is another Baker building, originally home to John and Josie Dale Lace. There's a lovely story to this – Margaret Rudolph lived for two years in Northwards as a Johannesburg College of Education student but wasn't ever allowed upstairs to the board room. Now (right) she's sitting in the Dean's chair!

The morning finished with a splendid tea at **The View**, previous home of Sir Thomas Cullinan and now a heritage site recently renovated to its original state thanks to lottery funds. The View is currently the headquarters of the Transvaal Scottish Regiment and serves as a museum with WWI and WWII artifacts.

Thank you, Janet, for entertaining and educating us all.



Gill Udal, with details from Janet Hughes



Photographs: top left to right: interiors of Glenshiel and Northwards; bottom left to right: exterior and interior of The View.

Gill Udal

## UPCOMING EXCURSIONS

### Joburg Ballet Tuesday 8 October

Following the very enthusiastic response to our earlier outing this year to the Joburg Ballet, we have filled a bus to watch their upcoming performance of *Giselle*, with live orchestra and a French ballerina. Thank you, Jenny, for arranging these discounted tickets for us all.

### Heritage Houses 13 November

This excursion will be repeated as we were unable to accommodate everyone on our enjoyable and informative August visit. Thanks to Janet Hughes for offering to guide the group yet again.

### Black eagle project, Walter Sisulu gardens – 2020

A record number of members asked to be included in this excursion, which had to be postponed due to the death of the chick.

For decades a pair of black eagles have built a nest each year near the Witpoortjie falls and two eggs are laid in April. The hatching in June is followed by a Cain and Abel struggle, and the surviving chick is carefully monitored by a team of volunteers until it leaves the nest and is taught to fly by the parents between September and December. The male, **Tulane**, abandoned the female this year and she had to take care of her chick alone. There were great hopes for its survival when a new mate seemed to accept the fledgling, but he killed it on the 53rd day. This is normal eagle behaviour.

Should the new pair (the female is called **Makatsa – Unexpected Surprise**, and the male has been named **Mahlori – Miracle**) successfully raise a chick in 2020 we will certainly arrange an excursion to the Walter Sisulu gardens for a talk on the project and an opportunity to see the eagle on the nest.

Gill Udai

## TRAVEL CLUB TOUR: 2020

### WINTER 2020 VREDEFORT DOME LONG WEEKEND

**Thursday:** Pick-up at home. Savannah Game Reserve near Parys for picnic lunch and game drive. Tour base: the farm Deelfontein <http://www.deelfontein.co.za/> near Vredefort for a gentle walk to see the sheep and goats come in.

**Friday:** Full-day tour of the Dome area (about a 100-km drive to about 12 sites) with Jan Fourie of Dome Impact Tours <http://www.domeimpacttours.co.za/> taking in the fascinating geological features of the area. Lunch (own account) at the historical Old Imperial Inn, Venterskroon.

**Saturday:** Otters Haunt <http://www.otters.co.za/index.php/vredefort-dome/>, home base of Prof Graeme Addison for full-day historical tour, visiting various Battlefields sites. Lunch (own account) possibly at the Dog and Fig Brewery nearby. Early supper at Deelfontein before a presentation by an expert astronomer, followed by stargazing from the special telescope enclosure on the farm.

**Sunday:** Parys for a morning of personal sightseeing (on foot), antique shopping etc. Map and ideas provided. Lunch at O's restaurant on the banks of the Vaal <http://www.osrestaurant.co.za/> – the river is very beautiful there. Drive back to Pretoria where hopefully all will be dropped off before 5 pm.

The TOUR DATES will be chosen to minimise light from the moon, but a cloudless sky cannot be guaranteed!

#### ACCOMMODATION AND CATERING:

- Please take special note of the information on <https://www.deelfontein.co.za/akkommodasie%20e.htm>. On the left click on *Oom Kosie's Farm House*, the house where the main kitchen, lounge and diningroom are situated, etc. There is no singles supplement at Deelfontein.
- Gerhard Benade, owner of Deelfontein and man of many talents, will provide us with simple but delicious breakfasts and dinners.

PRICING will depend on numbers and the size of the vehicle required. We travel together in one vehicle with room for the local guide. There is the potential for individual cars to get lost along the country roads and there is mostly no phone reception.

Several members have already indicated their serious interest. If you would like to JOIN THE TOUR please email me at [hilarie0001@gmail.com](mailto:hilarie0001@gmail.com). A meeting of participants will be held soon to answer any of your questions – bookings will have to be made as soon as possible as the various stake-holders are popular and have strict deadlines (as we learnt last year!).

Hilarie Riphagen

## PROPOSED SAKABULA TOURS: 2020

Please contact Anne Lawrance at 082 568 7610 or [anne@sakabula.com](mailto:anne@sakabula.com) for more details and full itineraries. The tours are conducted in smaller vehicles, not large coaches, and the actual cost depends on the number of participants. Once Anne has an expression of interest, she will work out the cost.

### VAAL & DOME (21–24 APRIL)

Spend three nights in rustic accommodation right on the bank of the Vaal River. We visit Potchefstroom, Parys and the Vredefort Dome during our stay.



### MUSIC & MOUNTAINS (04–08 MAY)

This five-day tour is timed to be able to enjoy the autumn leaves on our journey. The highlights are the 4x4 drive up the Sani Pass, a concert by the Drakensberg Boys Choir, Golden Gate scenery and the Pierneef murals and the church windows in Ficksburg.



### GREAT KAROO (09–15 JUNE)

Discover some of the delights of the Great Karoo including the charmingly restored Karoo houses in Cradock, the Walter Battiss Museum in Somerset East, Graaff Reinet (pictures) with its historic houses and the Valley of Desolation. A visit to Nieu Bethesda is included as is Philippolis before returning to Pretoria.



### NORTHERN DELIGHTS (06–14 JULY)

Discover the far North of our country. Highlights are the visit to Mapungubwe, a two-night stay in Punda Maria, then Shingwedzi and the magnificent Blyde River Canyon.

### DIAMONDS, DUNES AND DAISIES (17-26 AUGUST)

Namaqualand, hopefully at the best time for the wild flowers. Other highlights are the Robert Moffat Museum in Kuruman, the mission station of Pella not far from Pofadder, the Augrabies Falls and the visit to Kimberley on the way home.



### AZALEAS (21-24 SEPTEMBER)

We spend three nights in Haenertsburg with time to see the best displays of Azaleas and explore the surrounding areas.

Anne Lawrance

## WHEELCHAIRS FOR BOTTLETOPS – AN UPDATE

You will remember the article by Elizabeth Bojé on this topic in [Newsletter 3 of 2018](#), featuring the first two pictures below left. Elizabeth indicated then that she would be willing to receive any bottle tops or bread tags at U3A general meetings. Difficulties arose earlier this year, but she is still collecting vast quantities, see her article below.

Betty Urry is also a collection agent and quite a large quantity was brought along to our July meeting to be delivered to her. The photograph below right ([anonymous](#)) shows hard, plastic bottle tops collected by a couple of U3A members and their friends, from parks etc, over about three years, which were delivered to Skuilkrans at the July meeting, to contribute to a larger batch to be exchanged for a wheelchair for a needy person. Jan Meyer kindly offered to deliver them to Betty.



Elizabeth writes: When, in 2015, I was asked by Tumelong Anglican Mission to coordinate the collection of plastic tops and bread tags, we worked through a recycling company in Germiston called *InterWaste*. It was a small operation and I was able to meet the requirements for each wheelchair (150 kg tops or 15 kg tags). But in 2016 they increased these figures to 450 kg tops or 50 kg tags! Nevertheless, by 2018, we were able to have helped over 50 disabled people: children, women and men, ranging in age from five to 85 years. Unfortunately, *InterWaste* let us down in 2019, and I decided to pass on the materials I collect to the *Sweethearts Foundation*, a national organization that provides wheelchairs.

Although the decision to change to *Sweethearts* was forced upon me, it was a right and necessary change as the project has grown so prodigiously that it is impossible for me to collect bags of tops and tags, sort, pack into boxes like Simba Chip boxes, arrange for delivery to the recycler and also handle the administrative aspects of obtaining and distributing wheelchairs – as well as finding enough boxes!

I collect tops and tags from nine churches, seven schools, three retirement centres, a public library that collects from two others, and several social groups. Hatfield Christian School is the only group that delivers to me: a massive 60-80 kg at a time in their kombi, on a regular basis. Bottle tops come in at the rate of about 100 kg a week, which necessitates my spending more than an hour every day removing the wrong kind of plastic tops, metal tops, clothes pegs, pens, marbles, pill bottles, the toys Checkers gives out for tiny tots and other foreign bodies. The right kind are the tops that can be screwed off, usually from the bottles that you can drink from, marked 2,5 or 7 P.P. I also have to ensure the bread tags are separated from the tops.

*Sweethearts* have twice emptied our garage: on 18 June they took 136 boxes (about 8.5 kg each), 16 big bags (about 10 kg each) and nine Typex boxes – a total of about 1500 kg. On 2 August they collected 70 boxes – about 900 kg. By the end of August, I will probably have another 40 boxes – so you can see what I mean by overwhelming! A disadvantage of the present arrangement is that I no longer know how many wheelchairs are distributed, but as I have indicated above, this is one aspect of the administrative load that I cannot manage any longer.

Once I was asked to speak about this project to children at a nursery school and afterwards they were invited to ask questions. One little boy, his eyes wide with wonder, asked, “Do they make wheelchairs out of bottle tops?” Well, not exactly. The bottle tops are first washed, then ground into flakes. Next they are melted at immensely high temperatures. The molten plastic comes out of the machinery in the form of long tubular strands – rather like spaghetti. This is then cooled and hardened in water before being chopped up in pellets resembling split peas. In this form it goes to factories, to be made into industrial flooring and decks, outdoor furniture, cutting boards, car battery covers, storage bins and a variety of other products – but not wheelchairs!

I am extremely grateful to all those who diligently collect their plastic tops and bread tags to help disabled people regain some independence, movement and dignity. We can also keep tons of plastic out of landfills.

Elizabeth Bojé

## CARING FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

A depot, **Tshwane Electronics Waste Management** in Pierneef Street, accepts all electric / electronic appliances (including batteries). They are open Monday to Friday and on Saturday mornings up to 12:00.

Address: Corner of Pierneef Street and 24th Avenue, Pretoria. The entrance is immediately next to the (petrol) filling station in 24th Avenue. There is safe parking in front of the depot. Additionally, there is a lovely, intimate coffee-house / restaurant, *Grounded*, (already open at 07:00) for a good kick-off to celebrate having done a good deed for the environment.

Gus de Villiers

## DVD LIBRARY

We lend out DVDs to members at every general meeting for a deposit of R50 per series, which is refundable only if the DVDs are returned no later than the next such meeting. You are welcome to make suggestions for new DVD series, or to donate / lend any of your own DVDs to our library.

There are two new purchases: *Winged Migration* is a most fascinating and beautiful documentary following a variety of bird migrations throughout the world; *The Nile* is presented by Bettany Hughes, the acclaimed BBC presenter of historical documentaries. Travelling the length of the Nile she discusses the history and cultures of Egypt.

I would also like to correct information in the previous *Jacaranda Journal* which states that *The Choir* is based on a novel by Joanna Trollope. This is not so; it is a moving account of the way in which choral music is being encouraged in underprivileged schools in England.

John Lambert

## BOOK & AUDIO CD EXCHANGE



Do you have a good book that you've really enjoyed reading and would like to share with other U3A members? Bring it along to the next meeting and put it onto the table provided for this purpose. Write your name and contact number inside if you would like it returned to you. You are welcome to take home any other book contributed by members to our new U3A Book Exchange. Please note that this is a reading group and not a venue to dispose of your unwanted book collection!

Similarly, a new idea: you could bring along a CD (music or audio book) you have enjoyed, to share with other members. And you would be free to take home any of these to keep or return later. Please put your telephone number on the CD case if you would like a disc you contribute to be returned to you.

Gill Udal

## COMMUNITY NOTICE BOARD

We are considering adding a **Community Notice Board** to each edition of the *Jacaranda Journal*.

Many of us have a little spare time and some skills, for example changing a light bulb or pruning a rose at another member's home, that we can share in return for a friendly chat and cup of tea.

Sometimes people are physically incapacitated following an operation or illness and need a kind U3A friend to pop to the supermarket on their behalf.

Others may require a short-term dog walker, or help with a new phone (presuming there aren't any nearby five-year-old grandchildren to set it up!).

All of this would be on a voluntary basis, with the possibility at a later date of also advertising paid services, such as maths coaching or cake baking, for a small publication fee.

Please give this new venture some thought and send your suggestions for possible services within the U3A community to [u3apretoria@gmail.com](mailto:u3apretoria@gmail.com) with 'Notice Board' in the subject line.

Gill Udal

# Jacaranda Jottings...

A brief summary of the talk

## The History and Functions of the South African Reserve Bank

by

Michael Adams

Michael spoke of the various legislative changes that have influenced the Bank, since its inception in 1921, which have been necessary to keep abreast of the changing local and international fiscal, monetary and economic environments. These have ranged from the authorisation to issue banknotes and coin, through to the fact that the Bank's independence and autonomy are enshrined in the South African Constitution, an extremely topical issue!

The functions of the South African Reserve Bank are twofold:

As **banker, agent and advisor to the Government**, the SARB administers the accounts of the Government and other public and semi-public institutions, and renders advice on monetary and financial issues.

As **manager of the South African monetary and banking system**, the SARB formulates and implements monetary policy; provides liquidity to banks; produces, issues and destroys banknotes and coins; serves as banker of other banks; settles interbank claims, and conducts bank regulation and supervision.

**In terms of section 224 of the Constitution, 1996, 'the South African Reserve Bank, in pursuit of its primary object, must perform its functions independently and without fear, favour or prejudice, but there must be regular consultation between the Bank and the Cabinet member responsible for national financial matters.'**

An issue that elicited a great deal of discussion, when talking of the Bank's functions, was that of *Banks' Banker / Lender of Last Resort*, especially given the recent failure of VBS Bank. The differences in the circumstances between VBS Bank, African Bank and Saambou were explored, as well as some of the criteria that are applied when considering whether a bail-out is in order or not. These criteria include how many members of the public are likely to be (adversely) affected, how wide-spread the economic fall-out is expected to be, and to what extent the management of the bank may have been negligent (or dishonest!) in the execution of their duties.

The **shareholding structure** of the bank – one of only eight central banks in the world to have private shareholders – led to some interesting comments on the actual level of understanding of the issue by those calling for nationalisation.

Share capital	Two million ordinary shares were issued in 1921 at 10 shillings each. (Most of us silver-haired wrinklies will remember Decimal Dan telling us in 1960/61 how much 10 bob was worth!).
Current value	R1 per share: 100 shares were traded on 2019-05-23 at R10 per share.
Maximum holding	10,000 shares per person / family / association (prior to 1949 there was no limit).
Number of shareholders	790 (2019-06-26) comprising 84,5 percent individuals, 1,7 percent banks and 13,5 percent other, with 87,4 percent held by residents and 12,6 percent held by non-residents (non-residents may no longer purchase shares).
Dividend	Fixed, at 10c per share.
Profit distribution	10 percent of net (after tax) profits to the Bank's reserve fund for operational expenses, and the remaining 90 percent to government.
Shareholders' duties	The shareholders elect seven of the Bank's 15 directors, of whom two need to have knowledge and skill in the field of commerce or finance, two in the field of industry, and one each in the fields of agriculture, labour and mining.

Given (1) that the return on investment is only about one percent, (2) that shareholders can have virtually no influence on the Board's decisions, and (3) that 90 percent of the Bank's profits is, in any event, paid to the government, one wonders what can be achieved from the nationalisation calls ...

The Bank's shares were delisted from the JSE in May 2002 due to the introduction of STRATE (**S**hare **TR**ADING **T**otally **E**lectronic) and the **C**entral **S**ecurities **D**epository (CSD), and the corresponding changes to the JSE's listing requirements. Shares have been traded "over the counter" since 2002.

See also: <https://www.resbank.co.za/AboutUs/History/Background/Pages/Background-Home.aspx>

Ray Spencer