

***A snapshot of U3A Nunawading member numbers and venues from October 1990 to August 2023.***

***Drawn from newsletters, local knowledge, and AGM reports. EM. KB. AL August 2023***

***Commenced October 1990*** with 80 members and 4 classes. 2 venues Mitcham Senior Citizens and Mountview Uniting church, No office. Membership fee \$20.

***1991.*** 11 classes that included 2 computer classes held on computers that were donated. 110 members. Extra Venue Nunawading Senior Citizens room used as an office. The office was open 10 to 12 Tuesday to Friday.

***1992.*** 16 classes 140 members. Mitcham Senior Citizens and Mountview Uniting church.

***1993.*** Extra Venue Nunawading Community Centre. Forest Hill Chase and Blackburn Secondary College.

***1994. Moved to 73 Central Rd. Blackburn*** and most classes were able to be held in this house that was owned by the Catholic Church. A classroom became vacant at the Primary school located next to the house and was hired at a very small weekly cost. Classes were also held at Eley Park and Blackburn High school. The membership fee was raised to \$30.00. During this time membership and attendance was mostly done by hand printing or on typewriter.

***Between 1994 and 2000*** several places were used as needed. Retirement Villages, Public Halls, Scout, and Guide Halls.

***By the end of the 1990s*** the membership was around 300 members. To grow required additional venue capacity. The issue of growth was contentious. Some Committee members wanted to remain around the 300 member level because they felt this was an effective social group. It was decided whilst having a social section was important to members the sharing of knowledge, was equally important to make sure we adhered to our Mission and Vision statement. A member of the CoM David Gannon developed an Access database where we could record membership details and class attendance lists. A great improvement on previous years.

***2000. Moved to the Nunawading Recreation Centre,*** Silver Grove Nunawading. The Centre was under-utilised during the day and U3A Nunawading was able to get use of 2 rooms (one holding about 12, the other holding up to 40) which could be used as classrooms plus a reception/office area. This opened us up to several outlying buildings and we were able to negotiate access to other buildings nearby which were owned by various clubs. JC's Hall, Nunawading Senior Citizens Hall with a stage, the hall could hold up to 80 people, the EACH building and The Fishermen's club main room to hold classes. By 2005/2006 membership had grown to about 700 members.

Building on the relationship with Council officials and Councillors U3A Nunawading was able to get access to more rooms in the Centre.

The Senior Citizens Nunawading Committee were at first resentful of U3A being established close by. However, key U3A Nunawading Committee members built relationships with key Senior's Hall Committee Members. As their numbers decreased, they were happy for U3A to rent some space when not in use. Eventually the Seniors group folded, and U3A Nunawading had use of the complex Hall, Classroom and Kitchen 3 days a week.

The Recreation Centre at Silver Grove was built in the 1960s. By 2015 it was very tired but with a few coats of paint, lots of posters, a quilt on the wall celebrating our first 10 years, it became our home. Unfortunately, it did not have easy access for anyone who had a disability.

A key factor was continuing a relationship with key Nunawading Council officials and Councillors. The Committee of Management put together a 'future plan' document for U3A Nunawading which was updated each year and presented to **Whitehorse Council when attending a** yearly meeting with Senior Members of Council in the Community Development area. Having a good relationship with Council Officers and Councillors is still very relevant today.

**In 2010** the government of the day decided to close the Nunawading Primary school located 20 minutes' walk north along Springvale Road. The site remained untouched with no news of what its future might hold. A member of the committee made an appointment with the person in charge of unregistered school sites in the Education Ministry. The information gathered was that no decision had been made but it most probably would go to housing. It was advised that we talk to the City of Whitehorse (COW) and ask them to purchase it. A meeting was held with the CEO of CoW asking if they were thinking of purchasing the site. We were advised the Education Ministry had put a very high a price on the site. Approximately 2 years later the CoW advised they had managed to renegotiate the price and had purchased the land to build a Community Centre. U3A Nunawading was advised when the time came for planning, they would be involved in discussion as they would be the major tenant of the Centre. It was pleasing to hear the main school brick building, at the Springvale Road entrance would be included in the build.

*In 2012 U3A Network*, working on the request from many Member U3As did a feasibility study on finding a Membership Management System that would be available to all Victorian U3As at a low cost per annum. In 2015 it was introduced to 4 U3As and U3A Nunawading was chosen to be involved. Over the years we have seen a number of changes to the system (now called UMAS) We thank the forward thinkers at U3A Network Victoria for making our lives so much easier in handling membership and enrolments.

***In the second half of 2020*** U3A Nunawading moved into this \$56M centre and it is the prime tenant during the day.

We have a licence to use 95% of the spaces under a 3-year contract with a 4% rise each year. We also have a lease of 9 years for the Course Administration office at a rent of \$1,000 annually. There are 9 Studios, 2 large , 3 small, 4 medium, plus 5 meeting rooms, 2 small, 3 large and a large stadium (which U3A Nunawading shares with others during the day). Any rooms not within our licence mostly after 4pm and on weekends can be booked at a very reasonable rate. However, there are some challenges such as a high rate of Council staff turnover, a challenging audio-visual set-up, and difficulties with parking as the carpark is inadequate for the numbers attending each day.

The Community Hub is close to 2 Freeways: the Eastern Freeway and East Link. Around 40% is from outside of the CoW. Within twenty minutes' drive there are 4 U3As: Knox, Deepdene, Manningham, Box Hill.

Growth in Member Numbers 2016 to 2023

Year	Paid Members	Leaders
2016	1772	183
2017	1763	175
2018	1800	186

2019	1903	199
2020	1854	200
2021	1735	200
2022	1988	213
2023	2205	209

Whilst the above table shows a modest increase in Leaders from 2019 to 2023, in fact the number is higher as more classes now have co-leaders or assistants. This helps share the load and allows classes to continue when leaders take holidays or are ill. We do not have Class Monitors in each class.

Numbers are shown for October each year apart from 2023 which is the July figure. Note that the 2015 membership was about 200 larger than the 2016 membership. U3A Nunawading experienced a fall in membership after Nunawading station was removed from the far side of Springvale Rd from the Recreation Centre to being adjacent to the Recreation Centre. This impacted parking and some older members finding it difficult to park dropped out.

In 2023 we run 18 ESL classes which are popular with those members for whom English is not their first language. Like many of our general classes, most ESL classes have Wait Lists and it is a challenge finding qualified leaders to take additional classes to satisfy the demand.

Our Computer and Digital Technology classes have changed in character over the years. Prior to moving to the Hub, these courses were offered in a dedicated computer room equipped with desktop PC's. This type of facility is not available at the Hub. However, demand has also changed significantly, away from desktop PC's using Word or Excel, to Laptops, Tablets, and Mobile Phones with associated Apps and Security classes becoming more in demand.

We do lose between 15% and 20% of members each year and there has never been a formal survey to determine why. Anecdotally, it tends to be a mix of health issues, grandparent duties, or choosing to do something different elsewhere.

### **Key Committee Members**

Obviously a U3A needs a President, Secretary and Treasurer. At U3A Nunawading we have been fortunate in having able people fill these roles.

Operationally the key role is the Course Administration (CA) function. At U3A Nunawading there is a team consisting of the Course Administrator (team leader) and two assistants, with two more just starting and in training. The Course Administrator reports to the Committee of Management.

The Course Administrator needs to have the ability to manage Class Leaders, the Class Timetable including room allocation, and to manage the Member enrolment process. The CA also needs to negotiate with the CoW Coordinator for additional outside of licence rooms when necessary. With the introduction of UMAS/UMAS for Members it has greatly helped with enrolments. Around 80% of members enrol on-line. However, this still leaves 20% (about 500 members) to be assisted.

Supporting the Course Administration Team are about 80 reception desk volunteers who handle queries from members, take EFTPOS payments, and undertake administration activities. The Reception Desk Co-Ordinator manages this activity.

U3A Nunawading also has a Member Liaison function which is largely focussed around making new members welcome, but also includes the Member Welfare role.

***If you look at U3A Nunawading since its inception, the following are key to having a successful productive U3A.***

- Outstanding contributions from key Committee members over a long period.
- Good relations with the Council staff and Councillors.
- An excellent Course Administrator. This is the CA role at a U3A and having someone with energy and commitment and good personal skills makes a huge difference.
- Making administration as straightforward as possible. This reduces workload and improves the member experience. Complex rules can stifle growth!

All Committee members who are not in the roles described above have a specific role which they undertake. This is important because when a new person joins a committee, they need to know what they are being asked to do.