Newsletter – July 2026

30jun-final

Greetings, U3A members!

During May and June, we began to use the YouTube streaming service available to us at FGV. We have a broad selection of videos to look forward to, and these are described in more detail below; refer also to the Calendar on the next page.

On Wednesday 8 July, Dr de Kooker will discuss the key factors in healthy ageing from the perspective of brain health. This topic will interest many of us, and a brief outline of her talk is given below.

There was an outing on the George Power van recently, and a brief report is provided below.

We recently sent members a notice about a weekend in Steytlerville, leaving on Friday 2 October and returning on the Sunday. We will stay at the renowned Karroo Theatrical Hotel. Some members have already booked and paid and as accommodation is obviously limited, we suggest that people who are interested should book as soon as possible. First come, first served!! Booking details are in the notice sent to members but to re-iterate: payments are to be made directly to the hotel, who provide payment details

1 Membership Plett U3A

Plett U3A welcomed one new member in June: Gabi Guerin. The U3A Committee wishes her many happy years of membership.

Members are reminded to collect their updated 2026 name tags. These have a 2026 sticker on them with a member number …. And can conveniently be collected on Mondays just before the video starts at 10h00. So, members with a 2025 tag need to contact Peter Grube.

2 **Calendar**

On the next page is the calendar showing, *inter alia,* the planned events for July and August 2026.

DATE			EVENT	TIME	LOCATION
Mon	**6**	**JUL**	**The Whales of San Diego | Domenic Biagini** [YT]	**10 – 11am**	**Formosa Garden Village**
Wed	**8**	**JUL**	**Neurological Health | Talk by Dr. Margo de Kooker**	**10 – 11am**	**Formosa Garden Village**
Mon	**13**	**JUL**	**Delightful, Wise and Funny | A Talk by Kurt Vonnegut** [YT]	**10 – 11am**	**Formosa Garden Village**
Sat	*18*	*JUL*	*Nelson Mandela Day*	*All day*	
Mon	**20**	**JUL**	**The Past, Present, and Future of Food [CS] & A foie gras parable | Dan Barber** [YT]	**10 – 11am**	**Formosa Garden Village**
Mon	**27**	**JUL**	**Æthelflæd: Lady of the Mercians | Prof Michael Wood** [YT]	**10 – 11am**	**Formosa Garden Village**
Mon	**3**	**AUG**	**What we're learning from Online Education; The Life-long Learner.** [YT]	**10 – 11am**	**Formosa Garden Village**
Sun-Mon	*9-10*	*AUG*	*National Women's Day , and Day Off*	*All day*	
Wed	**8**	**AUG**	**The diversity of flower visitors to Southern Cape forest trees. Talk by Rudi Crispin Swart**	**10 – 11am**	**Formosa Garden Village**
Mon	**17**	**AUG**	**The transformative power of classical music | Benjamin Zander** [YT]	**10 – 11am**	**Formosa Garden Village**
Mon	**24**	**AUG**	**History's Greatest Homes - The Rich and The Royal & Hampton Court Palace** [CS]	**10 – 11am**	**Formosa Garden Village**
Wed	**26**	**AUG**	**Knysna Featherbed outing**	**12am – 15pm**	**Knysna Lagoon**
Mon	**31**	**AUG**	**The Origami Code - Nature's folding principles applied to robotics, medicine and nanotechnologies.** [CS]	**10 – 11am**	**Formosa Garden Village**
Fri-Sun	**2-4**	**OCT**	**Visit to the Karoo Theatrical Hotel**	**Fri 3pm – Sun 10am**	**Steytlerville**

3 **Forthcoming Events**

3.1 Wednesday 8 July: presentation by Dr Margo de Kooker on Neurological Health

TITLE: Strategies for Neuroprotection and Building Cognitive Reserve

Anne C reports that Dr de Kooker will discuss the key factors in healthy ageing from the perspective of brain health.

Thus, many factors related to cognitive decline have been linked to reversible processes such as neuro-inflammation, brain energy decline, and loss of brain connectivity. This presentation will explore the factors that promote optimum brain function and the obstacles to cognitive health. From food, to stress, to environmental factors, we have a variety of ways to enhance cognitive health and slow decline. Dr de Kooker will also discuss the encouraging research in this field.

BACKGROUND

Dr. Margo de Kooker received her Physiology and Medical Degrees from the University of the Witwatersrand in 1988 and 1992 respectively. In her practice Margo focuses on health optimisation and has a special interest in light-life interactions, mitochondrial medicine, psycho-neuro-immunology and functional nutrition. She serves as a research associate and guest lecturer at NMU and is a member of the Eastern Cape Advisory Board for the Association for Dementia and Alzheimer's of South Africa (ADASA). She is also a member of the Missionvale Care Centre Trust. Margo is the Chief Medical Officer for the MedWave group in addition to her private practice, teaching and corporate wellness work. She has taught nationally and internationally and facilitates a variety of corporate health programs focusing on optimum performance in both the public and private sector.

3.2 Review of recent outing on Wednesday 24 June: Power van, George and Outeniqua Transport Museum

Beth reports that our group of 25 members enjoyed an outing on the George Power van on Wed 24 June. The two fully covered diesel coaches took us on the original rail line towards Oudtshoorn, travelling through beautiful scenery, winding passes and tunnels. Members stopped to enjoy a picnic lunch, and then towards the top of our route, they travelled next to the Montagu pass, one of the oldest mountain passes in the country. Everyone agreed that this was a most enjoyable outing.

Perhaps we should mention that this outing was fully booked within a day after the Notice was sent out….. which suggests that it sometimes pays to book as soon as possible. I believe there was a waiting list but because of last- minute cancellations everybody was accommodated on the outing although, in some instances, at the last moment.



Plett U3A members stop for a pic high in the mountains above George before continuing on the Power Van outing. Fortunately, the rain held off and members could enjoy their picnic without getting wet.



The Power Van arrives at the picnic destination and people start to disembark.

4 MONDAY VIDEOS IN JULY

Here is the video programme for July and in all instances the venue is FGV. As I mentioned in the previous newsletter, the Committee would very much welcome feedback from members on the videos we show. Thus, was a video of general interest, was the level

of detail right, and would members like more of the same? Or less. And if less, what else? History? Science? Football … since the World Cup is in full swing.

4.1 Monday July 6th: 10h00 – 11h00

This video, titled 'The Whales of San Diego' is by Domenic Biagini

It features spectacular footage of Dolphins, Fin Whales, Blue whales, Gray Whales, Killer Whales, Humpback Whales, and Orcas hunting.

4.2 Monday, July 13th: 10:00 – 11:00am

Plett U3A presents "Delightful, Wise and Funny" :| A Talk by Kurt Vonnegut

Known as one of America's literary giants, Kurt Vonnegut met with Case's College Scholars and gave a public lecture. Students heard the author of such books as Slaughterhouse Five, Cat's Cradle, Welcome to the Monkey House and other best-selling novels.

4.3 Monday, July 20th: 10:00 – 11:00am

We present two videos. The first is "*A foie gras parable*" by Dan Barber and the second is "The past, present and future of food"

In the first video, Chef Dan Barber tells the story of a small farm in Spain that has found a humane way to produce foie gras. Raising his geese in a natural environment, farmer Eduardo Sousa embodies the kind of food production Barber believes in.

I don't have any information at the moment on the second video, but I will give a full description in my events reminder on the Sunday before the showing.

4.4 Monday, July 27·10:00 – 11:00am

Æthelflæd: Lady of the Mercians by| Prof Michael Wood

Æthelflæd (c. 870-918) is one of the most remarkable women in medieval Britain, but the fragmentary records of her career are a striking example of the erasure of women's history. The eldest child of Alfred the Great, she governed the ancient kingdom of the Mercians for 32 years, the last eight as sole ruler. She founded cities, built fortresses and even led her troops into battle against the Danes, playing a crucial role in the creation of the kingdom of the English that emerged in the 920s under her foster son Athelstan. In this riveting illustrated talk, historian and broadcaster Professor Michael Wood explores the life, times and legacy of the Lady of the Mercians.

P M

1 July 2026

u3a Plettenberg Bay

w: https://plettu3a.org.za

e: u3aplett@gmail.com