

Formerly the U3A Ferntree Gully...

The U3A Ferntree Gully (now the U3A Knox, since May 2002) was established in 1993. Coonara Community House in Willow Road, Upper Ferntree Gully allowed the hire of a room for classes. The baseball clubhouse in Willow Park, and the Little Athletics Club house behind Coonara House were also hired for meetings and classes. An election was held and a committee was formed.

The committee worked from their homes, but this proved unsatisfactory, so a second-hand caravan was purchased to act as an office. A phone was installed and a post box hired so that the general public could make contact. Coonara House allowed the caravan to be parked in their front garden, just inside the boundary fence.

Our first classes were Language and Literature, Current Affairs, Public Speaking and Australian History. The course list was gradually extended as membership increased and the then Ferntree Gully Technical College was approached for the hire of two rooms. Eventually an office was established in Coonara House, after a major upgrade of that building, and the caravan was then sold. As our membership grew church halls and members' homes were used for classes. In 1996, after many discussions with Knox Council, we were offered the kindergarten in Park Boulevard, at a peppercorn rent, to use as our headquarters. We called this building Parkhills. The toilets were upgraded to suit adults and the members painted the interior and removed all traces of kindergarten activities. Our membership kept growing, so in 2000 two more classrooms were built on to the present facility. Membership continues to increase each year, although we always start the year down a little and build up again as the year proceeds.

We vacated our Parkhills premises early October 2005 for major renovation works. These took approximately 6 months, during which time we had temporary offices at Orana Community Centre, and Miller Homestead, while maintaining a full complement of classes. We have now occupied our fully renovated building since 28th April 2006, and the facility is very well designed for our needs.

As at 2nd October 2008, our membership stood at 1108, including 24 associate members, and we provided approximately 110 activities and courses each week. In addition to the Parkhills building we use 7 other venues, and several private homes.

The U3A Knox tutors, committee, office staff, librarian and data processing staff are all volunteers as are those members who carry out the many other tasks that are required in such an organisation.

We have maintained our membership fee at \$40 per year, offering 32 weeks of tuition for just \$1.25 per week. The range of classes, as well as social activities, exercise and sport, bus trips and other events, and the friendships with like-minded Third Age people, are what retirement is all about.

Spread your wings with the U3A Knox.

To view our constitution - please click [here](#)