



Mundaring
Community Bank® Branch



2024

SEPTEMBER SAGA

October birthdays: May the year that follows be a happy, healthy and contented one for **Frances** and **Paul's Valley Barbara**. Kick up your heels and enjoy your special days.

Wandering Spokes: **Lyndell** headed to Darwin for some R&R; eight spokes – **Carol, Cheryl, Glenise, Hazel, Lyn, Martha, Rosemary** and **Sally** spent 10 days in South Australia. **Helen** and friend spent a couple of weeks reacquainting themselves with the hills of Northern India. Whilst **Brenda** has returned after a marathon two months crisscrossing the American continents.

The wheel has expanded! We extend a warm welcome to **Julie** and **Glenn** Dewar of Mundaring – we trust you enjoy the ride!

Movement at the "station" – The Helena Valley Lifestyle Village is now home to **Steph**; we trust you're settling in comfortably and enjoying the shorter trip to work. And hope you'll keep coming up the hill to join us from time to time.

wheels Sculpture Park Art Project is gaining momentum – two of the three artists have been interviewed – one to go – so we should know soon what form the artwork will take and how we and the community can be involved. The kangaroo paws we planted recently are flowering, together with one or two other nameless shrubs – to increase the 'garden' we have 200 plants on order from the Shire's Seedlings for Landcare programme which will be available for planting next May!

Containers for Change: As more and more people collect for schools, sporting clubs and themselves it's getting harder to scrounge from public bins **so** please keep those bottles and cans rolling in – party, party!

Fashion Parade, Hub of the Hills, Craig Street - When; Thursday, 24 October 1.30 to 4.00 pm. Fashions by Kerry D. Fashion – refresh your Spring wardrobe!

wheels wandered –

Parliament House Art Tour: Oh dear your scribe has a mental block – again! This is a rather scrappy review. With our guide we wandered the corridors of Parliament not usually accessible to the general public to learn about and admire the artwork that adorn the walls – not just paintings, but sculptures, tapestries, woodwork the whole gamut of artistic expression. The European collection dates back to 1820, whilst the Aboriginal art collection, largely housed in the Aboriginal People's Room and adjacent Aboriginal People's Gallery began in 2004..

The collection has been enhanced through a generous loan arrangement with Edith Cowan University and through the Parliament and Edith Cowan University artist-in-residence program, a joint initiative established in 2016. We were also privileged to see some of the 97 works comprising the Local Government Art Gifts collection - A fascinating and interesting glimpse of a small section of the Parliament's collection. We enjoyed a light lunch at Zamia Café in Kings Park before heading home

Black Swan: - from Gwyneth's pen: *The Children* - Well, there's no happy ending in this work by very British playwright, Lucy Kirkwood. A trio of very accomplished actors took us on an intimate yet universal journey "this is the way the world ends, not with a bang, but a whimper". Quite some years ago a monumental disaster that seems to be a cross between Fukushima and Chernobyl has occurred. Three retired nuclear scientists discuss the dire situation at the local nuclear power station and surrounds where they once worked.

The couple in whose kitchen the play is set have children, the childless visitor has had a relationship with the man and once considered the wife a role model.

It eventually is revealed that the visitor is recruiting retired workers to take over from the younger people (The Children) who are still working there; the argument being that the older people have had a life and the younger ones need to be protected from the radiation.

Great acting, disarming set, (bit disconcerting that they hadn't managed to get a proper toilet system working in their eco-friendly house and the wife had totally closed off from reality.

(Yoga anyone?). Kept thinking of all those people young and old who tried to make Chernobyl safe knowing full well the hazards.

Nah, don't buy the premise. No train home so Sally took us all the way and back.

Still not signing up to Black Swan? It's a blast.

WASO – Elgar's Symphony No. 2 Although the second symphony followed the first by only three years, in the intervening period the world and Elgar had changed. The ebullient, confident mood of the early years of the century was dying, the tensions that culminated in the First World War were beginning to emerge and, by the time of the symphony's first performance, King Edward VII had also died.

While the symphony was well received by most standards, the audience's response to the first performance was polite perhaps because rather than a single theme recurring in all four movements, structural unity is achieved through extensive cross-references between movements, most dramatically when the rather ghostly theme from the first movement re-emerges as a frenzied outburst in the middle of the rondo followed by a somewhat sombre funeral march and an inner restlessness and mood of conflict which is only resolved when, in the closing minutes, the "spirit of delight" theme which opens the symphony returns to bestow a satisfying tranquillity/ Most of us are probably not so au fait with the First Symphony to make comparison and thoroughly enjoyed the performance. Lunch at the Camfield.

WA Ballet – Romeo & Juliet - Andrea Schermoly's *Romeo & Juliet* was originally created in 2023 for the Royal New Zealand Ballet. It is a three-act production which maintains a traditional take on Shakespeare's classic tragedy.

The most impressive feat of this production is the set design, by James Acheson. As the curtain lifted on Act I, the audience is transported to renaissance Verona by the towering stone walls and distant cathedral, pulled together by sunset-auburn lighting (by Jon Buswell). Subtle shifts in the set structures between scenes transform the space. .

The costumes are also designed by Acheson, and are exceptional. In the Capulet ballroom

scene, a sea of flowing, red velvet robes for the *Dance of the Knights* is a spectacle of power and opulence.

The WA Ballet presented a passionate performance of *Romeo & Juliet*. The dancers were devoted and charming, and the production elements were outstanding. (*Adapted from a review by Alanna Kildea in Dance Australia*)

South Australian holiday: Adelaide doesn't have maxi taxis – two cabs was an expensive 25-minute trip to the hotel! By good management we found a pub still serving meals so enjoyed a late dinner before hitting the pillow for a 6am pick up next morning. Just before reaching Cape Jervis the rain obliterated the view of Kangaroo Island, but by the time we reached the harbour 'twas clear and remained so for our visit. A calm crossing, all aboard the bus for a long day's touring from one end of the Island to the other - well, 320kms on narrow winding roads. The Flinders Chase National Park has only recently reopened after the devastating bushfires of 2019: the hardy coastal bush has regenerated remarkably well. The Park is 'home' to Remarkable rocks - perched above the sea the precariously balanced weirdly eroded rocks were indeed a remarkable sight. Further round the coast the decommissioned Cape du Couedic lighthouse pointed the way to the impressive Admiral's Arch – our guide's advice that there were 78 steps to negotiate deterred most of us from heading down – shame! (Cheryl & Sally took the plunge and the steps were well worth the effort! A fascinating visit to the Raptor Park and a display by the birds was a highlight– not all raptors, a magpie showed how to pick up rubbish and deposit it in the bin; and an owl was lured from its hollow to fly in the sunlight. Overnight at Kingscote, in ocean view apartments. Next morning those who took walk along the seafront spied a basking seal; most ambled to the ocean swimming pool. Touring again, another highlight was a visit to Seal Bay Conservation Park – some folk took a guided tour and ventured on to the sand close to basking and frolicking animals, whilst others walked along a very long boardwalk for a bird's eye view. We visited Emu Ridge Eucalyptus Farm and distillery. Established in 1991 the distillery is built from recycled objects so seems as though it's been there forever. The oil is extracted from the leaf of the Kangaroo Island Narrow Leaf Mallee, *Eucalyptus cneorifolia*, which responds to pruning so can be reharvested. From two hives kept as a hobby in the 1970s to a thriving business today, Clifford's Honey Farm is home to the purest strain of Ligurian bees in the world. A fascinating look at how the busy bees make honey and how it is distilled for us to enjoy its sweetness. Our short stay on the Island concluded with coffee overlooking the ocean at Penneshaw pub whilst waiting for the ferry to carry us back to the mainland. A morning in Adelaide, some folk wandered the Rundle Street Mall or went to the Art Gallery or the Zoo to see the pandas! Mid afternoon saw us heading to Mannum through farmland –checkered paddocks of glowing canola, wheat/barley green, the bush looked dry - to board The Murray Princess. Cosy cabins – two on the starboard, two on the port, were our accommodation for 3 nights – Hazel was unwell and took to her bunk and didn't surface again till it was time to disembark. We cruised up and down, between farmland, small clusters of riverside "shacks" here and there on either bank, tall cliffs up to 350 metres high, glowed bronze or gold depending on the light, a few goats clung to the cliff face on one section. Entertainment at and after dinner; various activities to join in during the day, or just veg out in one of the several lounge areas, gathering in the bar before dinner. A lazy two- and a-bit days, though some did take an excursion to the Monarto Open Plain zoo – lions, giraffes and other exotic beasts, but no elephants! – some too had a fleeting visit to Murray Bridge and a visit to the Round House, which wasn't round! Back in Adelaide with half a day to spend, some took a free trip to Glenelg on the tram, Glenise had a pleasant stroll round the Botanic

Gardens, others found time for coffee and cake. Next morning, to the airport to collect our transport for the next couple of days – twice round the internal roads before we found the exit then up the Highway to Hahndorf for a most interesting visit and tour of Hans Heysen's home and gardens. A prolific and well rewarded painter and conservationist, his property is now held in a private trust. A wander up Hahndorf's main street to find the German Cuckoo clock shop, much expanded, only a small portion devoted to clocks; the rest to Christmas decorations and other knick knacks to lure the tourist dollar. Lunch at the Hahndorf Inn, before winding through the hills to our accommodation. At Eden Vale we took a slight detour to the Memorial Gardens and Cross dedicated to the early settlers perched on top of a hill with 360 degree views of the rolling countryside – a lovely spot. Into Angaston, a pretty little town, with old and new buildings jostling for attention. A shop at Foodland, before heading back to our accommodation for 3 nights, Angaston Mews, after one of the coldest nights on record in the Barossa. Having decided who was up and who was down, we settled in for Happy Hour and an early night – Hazel again hunkering down for the duration. Next morning, we set the GPS for Maggie Beer's Farm Shop, winding along roads lined mainly with – you guessed it, vines – kilometre after kilometre interspersed with an occasional farm, village or industrial area. The Farm Shop is just that, a shop with all Maggie's offerings; a small kitchen demonstration area and a separate restaurant serving set priced lunches, all beside quite a large dam, where ducks lazily paddled. On to Seppeltsfield Village, the roads lined with 2000 palm trees. Established in 1850, the buildings refurbished and expanded were set in very formal well-kept grounds – not a leaf to be seen. We spent some time browsing the Gallery, mainly glass of various shapes and guises, the artists in residence at the weekends. There were a couple of other shops/galleries which most of us didn't find, settling for a light lunch at the cafe instead. Along more winding roads, vines, villages to Chateau Tanunda, established in 1890. Another paved and formal setting for the magnificent bluestone building. We didn't venture inside but wandered around the formal grounds - was that a cricket pitch we spied. The next day we set our sights for Burra and the Clare Valley – the countryside changed somewhat, winding through bare hills, not many vines, sheep farming and crops. Down Burra's main street a row of tiny old Cornish cottages a reminder of the town's beginning. First coffee and cake, then a visit to the Mine Museum which provided a fascinating insight into the history and workings of the mine and the part played by Cornish technology. In its heyday in the 1860s mine was the world's second largest copper mine. Open cut mining started in 1870 and ended in 1871. We were able to view the vast open pit, now a 'lake', from several vantage points deciding not to pay \$25 each for a key to the site. We left the hills behind on the road to Clare, vineyards becoming more prominent. Driving through a tiny village we spied some Silo Art and stopped to have a look. In Clare we drove round the town, spied the old Courthouse and Town Hall before finding a Vietnamese café for a light lunch followed by a short walk down the street, for a very large ice cream! On our way again we had a leisurely drive through villages and vines back to base. By this time several of us had been in touch with our GPs and obtained E-Scripts for the bug that had been bothering folk for several days. The weather was grey and drizzly for our last morning. We stopped for morning coffee, then took a detour through the hills to Williamstown and the water supply dam's Whispering Wall but we couldn't test its properties, it was pouring with rain. An uneventful journey through suburbia to the airport; an uneventful flight home (though our seats were dispersed again); we found Annette and the bus where it shouldn't have been – and so up the hill to home.

Park Visits – from Gwyneth's pen - G.O. Edwards Park is an unexpected little hideaway right next the busiest part of Great Eastern Highway opposite Crown. From the road you see the large fountain (cum aerator) and the hundreds of ibis perched in the melaleucas. Up close

you see the grebes, coots, ducks et al and a very interesting history of Victoria Park carved into five concrete slabs. It has everything a park needs including a very acceptable playground, plenty of seating and big shady trees.

After morning tea Annette took us on a drive through the CBD to check out all the changes and up to Kings Park where the spring wildflowers were in full bloom. Joyce "The view from here is really better than Sydney Harbour." Lovely day.

Noble Falls – from Annette's pen: Set out at 10am and left the Spokes bus behind as only 2 takers came and my steed was able to accommodate the crowd. Morning tea was pleasant at the Gidgegannup Bakery, so full up we went on to the falls. Frances set off at a clip whereas Joyce and I took a stroll over the bridge to look at the falls a little closer. On the way home we detoured to check out Lake Leschenaultia and the new works the Shire had put in. Lovely morning out in our lovely spring weather.

from **Verna's pen:** The final **Darlington Chamber Concert** for 2024 featured Messiaen's *Quartet For The End Of Time*.

Messiaen was born in France in 1908 and became an organist and composer until his death in 1992, making him a modernist with innovative ideas, particularly regarding rhythm. He was fascinated with birds and notated their song, which featured heavily in his music. He once said that he gave birdsong to those who had never heard them and rhythms to those who only knew marches and jazz. He was also a devout Roman Catholic and this too featured heavily in his music.

During WW11 he was drafted into the army as a medical auxiliary, subsequently captured and sent to a German prison camp and it was there that this quartet was written. A sympathetic guard provided him with manuscript paper and pencils, Messiaen discovered a violinist, a cellist and a clarinettist among his fellow prisoners and, say no more! The first performance was given in the camp on a rag-tag assembly of instruments with the composer on piano.

This work was not to everyone's taste. The complex rhythms, the variance in both volume and tempo combined with the frequent discordant sound was overwhelming. The intensity of emotion and level of physical effort was there for all to see. Geoff Bourgault, the clarinettist, told us the breathing required was almost beyond human endeavour, with breath marks sometimes 45 seconds apart!

There were 8 movements among which Jon Tooby on cello, Geoff Bourgault on clarinet and Semra Lee on violin each had a solo. The violin was the finale. It was deeply emotional and ended with a note so pianissimo as to be beyond hush. The movement of the bow was the only indication of sound. The piece was 50 minutes long and left the musicians both physically and emotionally wrung out. Like it or not, it certainly sounded like an apocalypse and the incredible musicianship was undeniable, as the fulsome applause indicated

Home movie: Finding Your Feet - When Lady Sandra Abbott (Imelda Stanton) discovers that her husband of 40 years is having an affair with her best friend, she seeks refuge in London with her estranged, older sister Bif (Celia Imrie). The two could not be more different - Sandra is a fish out of water next to her outspoken, free-spirited sibling. But different is just what Sandra needs, and she reluctantly lets Bif drag her along to a community dance class. In time, she loosens up, learns to love and lose again, and discovers the inherent value of family and friends, in particular Charlie (Timothy Small) who had problems of his own.

We enjoyed our fish and chip lunch in the sunshine on the back patio – with thanks to Sally and Ray for once again sharing their home for our enjoyment.

Classic Book Club: *The Old Curiosity Shop* by Charles Dickens (1812-1870) was printed in book form in 1841. In cold and brutal London, Little Nell and her devoted grandfather struggle to get by. Her grandfather wants the best for Nell, but in his efforts to secure her future, he ends up squandering what little money they have and when they are unable to pay their debts to the stunted, lecherous and demonic money-lender Daniel Quilp, the shop is seized, they find themselves penniless and they are forced to flee. They wander as beggars, encountering a diverse group of characters, good and evil, all the while pursued by friends and enemies from the past. Dickens's portrayal of the innocent, tragic Nell made *The Old Curiosity Shop* an instant bestseller that captured the hearts of the nation. It was an instant success when published and even Queen Victoria read and enjoyed it. Alongside the story's pathos are some of Dickens's greatest comic and grotesque creations: the ne'er-do-well Dick Swiveller, the mannish lawyer Sally Brass, the half-starved 'Marchioness' and the lustful, loathsome Quilp himself. A tragic and moving tale of love and devotion.

Rummikub: Slightly down in numbers booked, 6 of us pitted our wits – three against three. It was a new experience for some, but using skills remembered from younger days or playing Rummy with grandchildren we were soon all playing like champions! A fun afternoon which stimulates the grey matter of our brains!.