

# MALA MESSENGER

*Newsletter of the Mature Adults Learning Association Inc. Rockingham Branch*

DECEMBER 2020

---

## FROM THE CHAIR

What a year 2020 has proved to be. Let's sincerely hope we do not have another like it.

At our recent AGM the Committee for 2021 was confirmed. The full committee list is to be found later in this edition.

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who has worked on the committee this year, without their efforts MALA could not operate. This year has been a particularly challenging so the thanks they deserve are particularly heartfelt. For those who have retired from Committee duties thank you for your great work for MALA. The roles you have fulfilled were many and varied, but all of them very valuable to our MALA cause. For those members who have volunteered their time to join the committee a special thanks too. It is reassuring to know that the work of keeping MALA strong in Rockingham will be on going. Thanks to all our members who have kept supporting us with their attendance at classes. Special thanks to those who have spread the word about us in their own communities and helped us grow stronger.

Christmas is coming a pace. I hope that you can find something really beautiful in the Christmas season. Be it the kindness of a stranger or a helping hand you may have offered, or time with family and friends, value each small thing and enjoy it.

All that remains for me to do is to wish you all a lovely, peaceful, happy and most of all HEALTHY Christmas. Stay safe and well until we can meet again in 2021.

**Bronwen Usher**  
Chair



*"Three phrases that sum up Christmas are:  
Peace on Earth, Goodwill to All Men and  
Batteries not Included." — Author Unknown*



Did you know?

That Google started tracking Santa's Christmas flight in 2004.

The tradition of Carols by Candlelight began in Melbourne in 1938.



**Our email address has changed**

[rockinghammala@gmail.com](mailto:rockinghammala@gmail.com)

is the one you will need to contact us now



---

---

## MALA ROCKINGHAM BRANCH 2021 COMMITTEE

CHAIR	Bronwen Usher
VICE CHAIR	John MacDonald
SECRETARY	Peter Lester
TREASURER	Chris Elliott
ASSISTANT TREASURER	David Abela
COURSE CONVENOR	Esther Grogan
MEMBERSHIP/ ENROLMENT OFFICER	Martin Hveissel
PUBLICITY/ PHOTOCOPYING	June Hveissel
TRANSPORT OFFICER	Janet McMahon
RECEPTION/ROSTER/ EVENTS OFFICER	Elizabeth Carton-Smith
GENERAL COMMITTEE	Julie Edwards
ASSOCIATION	Bronwen Usher and
REPRESENTATIVES	John MacDonald



A huge vote of thanks to the 2020 committee who got us through a difficult year with your commitment, dedication and hard work.

We welcome our new committee members Peter Lester – taking up the role of Secretary and David Abela – taking up the Assistant Treasurer - WELCOME ABOARD !



### Thanks to our outgoing committee members -

**Margaret Steele** - Margaret has been on the committee since our inception serving as both Vice President for some of that time. Margaret has actively promoted MALA, especially in raising our profile in the newer area of Baldivis. Thanks Margaret, you leave a great legacy of service behind you.

**Margaret Hicks** - Pre-COVID Margaret was the cup of tea of enrolment day driver. We have missed that freedom this year. I am sure we all appreciated that special service that Margaret offered. Thanks Margaret.

**Nada Lubay** - Thanks to Nada for her lively contribution of ideas, her willingness to hop in and help keep us COVID safe this year. Nada has also been a great promoter of the MALA cause and her contribution has been great.



*The oldest computer was owned by  
Adan and Eve.*

*It was an Apple with  
very limited memory.*

*Just 1 byte and everything crashed!*



Did you know?

President Roosevelt banned Christmas trees in the White House in 1901.

He was worried about tree conservation yet he was happy to shoot bears !



---

*VALE*

*VICKI FOSTER*

*A much valued member of MALA.  
Vicki had recently been elected to our committee  
and we were really looking forward  
to her calm considered wisdom being a part of our team.*

*We will really miss you Vicki*

*Our sincere sympathies to James and the family*



*VALE*

*ANNE MINISSALE*

*We were saddened to hear of the passing of Anne  
Anne was a lively and esteemed member of MALA  
Our sincere sympathy to all the Family*



---

---

## BOOKSHELF

**This month: Christmas reads - with a couple of 'Who Done it's' on the list.**

**First a weighty tome:**

*"THE PUNISHMENT SHE DESERVES"* by Elizabeth George

*I have to confess up front that I am an Elizabeth George follower so bear that in mind.*

*I find that the cleverly ingenious plotting, the psychological observations evident in her characters outweigh the sheer volume of words she uses to tell her stories. I love nothing better than to settle down and get stuck in. I am always intrigued by the character development, carefully build in the story. So many novels have skeletal character in the rush to have action, action, action. Take time and enjoy a good read with George's most loved characters Havers and Lynley.*

*Isabelle*

**Much smaller volume - and it's set in Australia:**

*"THE WIFE AND THE WIDOW"* by Christian White

*Set on an island in the dead of winter the atmosphere builds quickly in this very Australian story. It is told from two perspectives. Kate a widow how discovers her husband had a secret life and Abby, an island local who is forced to confront the evidence that her husband is a murderer. Both women set out to discover the truth about the men in their lives and that quest pushes them to the edge as the plot twists and turns. A great read. Christian White also wrote "The Nowhere Child" – another good read for when you finish this one.*

*Judy*

**For those who do not enjoy murder and mystery - a different type of read altogether:**

*"ELEANOR OLIPHANT IS COMPLETELY FINE"* by Gail Honeyman

*I was recommended this book by a friend and who said it was wonderful, unpredictable and funny. It is all three. It is a tale of survival really, a story of great loneliness and very amazing restorative power of human kindness.*

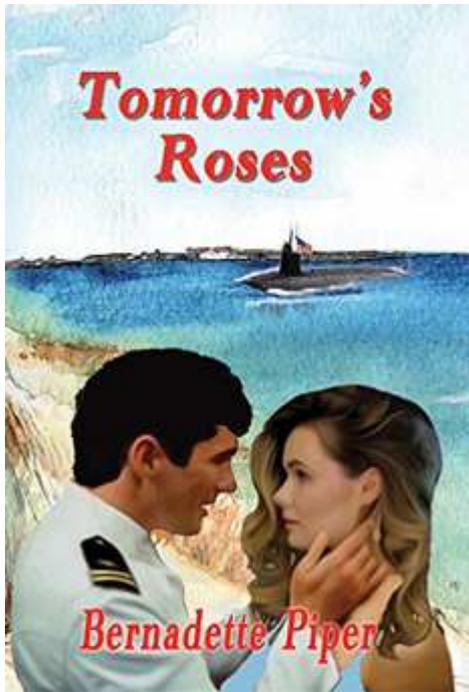
*Eleanor lives a very ordered, simple life and seems to want for nothing, she is happy. But there is a big gap in that seemingly perfect existence and one she must confront and overcome. It is an exceptional story, touching, funny and leaves you with lots to think about. My idea of a perfect read.*

*Diana*

---

Now a real treat – one of our own members, Bernadette Piper has published her first book:

*“TOMORROW’S ROSES”*



*World War II. Fremantle, Western Australian War widow Kate Kelly, raising her young daughter and niece, meets Lieutenant Michael Brannigan and feels an immediate connection. Both having suffered so much tragic loss, they resist the urges of the heart to avoid being hurt again, but realise they are each other's cure for heartbreak. Sadly, tragedy strikes again and again in a war that tears families, friends and loved ones apart, some never to return the same, if at all.*

*The book is available from Amazon or we will have some copies of it at MALA reception.*

*At only \$15 this is a great read.*

*If you are after a copy in time for Christmas, phone 0455 373 589 or 9527 7133*



*Do give books – religious or otherwise – for Christmas.  
They're never fattening, seldom sinful and permanently personal." Lenore Hershey*

*Books don't need batteries - Nardine Gordimer*



I look forward to getting some reviews in the near future

Response has been brisk this month for our latest offerings.

The animal lovers sought out “If Cats Disappeared from the World” (Genki Kamamura) with four members really enjoying the read and the fun of it.

“The Beekeepers of Aleppo” (Christy Lefteri) was appreciated by three members who expressed their gratitude to the writer for awakening them to the reality of being a refugee and it even brought one member to tears.



---

---

## MALA PEEL SUMMER SCHOOL

NEED SOME SUMMER BRAIN ACTIVITY ?

Why not head to the MALA Peel Summer School at the Mandurah Performing Arts Centre ?  
It's on in the week of the 11<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup> of January.

Find the program is on the website ([mala.org.au](http://mala.org.au)) It is full of things of high interest.

Topics from Aboriginal Art: Our Last Wilderness

Underwater Crime Detection

What is just forgetfulness – what means trouble ahead

Blood Cancers

The Role and Influence of Documentaries

The International and Western Australian framework for Climate Change Law and Policy

This year it is advisable to book in as with the COVID restrictions numbers will be a little limited.



**A quiet contemplation of an afternoon Christmas Holidays memory on Aunty Madge's Verandah**

The green painted fly-screen door creaks shut behind Aunty Madge. Her cherished china teapot, favourite cup and a generous slice of still warm, fragrant orange cake on her tray. Galahs wheeling and screeching above tell her it is about four o'clock. Time for a well-earned rest.

The hot north wind sends a few browned leaves skittering across the long expanse of the bare jarrah boards, as she makes her way to her old wicker chair and carefully places the tray on the table beside it. The welcome cool of the verandah's deep shade envelop her as does the smell of the newly blossoming wattle at its edge. Delighted bees and darting honeyeaters revel in the glorious golden bounty. Colourful petunias spill from suspended pots and give the end of the verandah a room like feel.

Sighing deeply she sinks into the cushions that line her capacious chair. Shuffling her current book and magazine aside, she makes room to pour her longed for cup of tea.

Brown Dog, claws clacking on the wood, appears and lies panting beside her, ever hopeful. The dust, the heat and the work forgotten. The tea, cake and the quiet are her daily glimpse of heaven.



*There are three stages of man:  
he believes in Santa Claus,  
he does not believe in Santa Claus,  
he is Santa Claus.*



---

---

## THAT'S ALL FOLKS

Watch out for the 2021 program in our next edition !



*Christmas is a magical time of year...  
I just watched all my money magically disappear. - Unknown*



To finish on a lighter note -

“Who’s the bane of Santa’s life? The elf and safety officer.” – Catherine Tate

Happy Christmas to you all

Bronwen Usher  
Editor

