

As U3A Statewide Online has ceased, there is still uncertainty about what will happen going forward with the Italian Conversation for Interest and Travel Statewide Online classes which have been ongoing since 2022.

The Gawler U3A Italian Conversation for Interest and Travel is an Advanced Beginner Level course and we have continued to utilise as a baseline, our workbook which is accompanied by CD of dialogue by Italian native speakers.

We use A LOT of improvised, fun additional things though, so we are definitely NOT your average language class.

As older learners, I recognise the particular skills and interests of participants and incorporate this into the learning on the basis that learning is best undertaken as a FUN exercise!

I tend to utilise my own experiences from having travelled in Italy on 3 occasions and also attending Italian Language School classes in Italy for about 2 months.

The beginning of the year saw us engaging in a dialogue between Walter Santesso and Anita Ekberg. Do you recall the Fellini movie, *La Dolce Vita*?

Then a significant part of the learning was listening to dialogue about Raffaella Carrà, an influential woman, singer, performer, as one of the Italian Rich and Famous series.

Since our class will soon be attending a Puccini concert, we have debated our opinions about most popular of his most known works, based in part on degree of sentimentality; *O mio babbino caro*, *Nessun dorma*, *Donna non vidi mai*. Readers may recall that *Nessun dorma* has been performed at commencement of international sports events.

Overall commentary by participants confirms that the course is fun and has broadened the mind exponentially. Of course, one of the benefits in learning a language is the improvements noted scientifically on memory.

Next year, if there is sufficient interest, a beginner course will commence, with the Advanced Beginner Level course ongoing.

*Buon natale, Giulia!* (Julie Marshall)