

Kerrie Smith

Take advantage of your opportunities and do your best

Kerrie has been a teacher throughout her career and following retirement has remained committed to providing learning opportunities for all ages, particularly through her involvement with U3ASA and U3A Campbelltown.

Kerrie was born in Victor Harbor, moving to Port Elliot when she was 12 years old where her father was the baker and her mother ran the famous Port Elliot Bakery from 1958-1988. Her parents were actively involved in community activities and received national and community awards for their services to the community.

Kerrie moved to Adelaide to complete her final year of school at Adelaide High School. Kerrie boarded for two years and while she was studying at University was a house mistress at Woodlands Church of England Grammar School. Kerrie remembers these years as being among the most formative providing her with levels of responsibility far beyond her years.

Kerrie was at Adelaide University and concurrently at Adelaide Teachers College from 1963-1967, graduating with Education and Arts degrees. Her first teaching position was at Campbelltown High School in 1968. She remembers the school as being large with 150 staff and more than 1700 students. Kerrie taught English and history and was one of the first teachers to teach mixed gender classes. Kerrie's students were among the brightest in South Australia, winning the 1971/2 South Australian round in the television program 'Its Academic'.

Kerrie was appointed to teach English, history and computing at Thorndon High School in 1986, developing her love and expertise for the burgeoning technologies. She was named Computer Educator of the Year in 2000.

Kerrie taught adult re-entry courses in word processing and other computer programs during this period to women who were looking to increase their work readiness skills. It was here that she saw the benefits of lifelong learning and the value of being able to 'learn something new'.

Kerrie appreciates the value of being involved in sporting activities. She was a member of the SA State hockey squad and trained an extensive range of school sporting teams. When her children were small they attended Kindergym and Kerrie became President (and now a life member) of the Kindergym Association of SA.

Kerrie moved to the City of Campbelltown area when she married and has seen many changes in the community during the 50 years she has lived and worked in the City, particularly the physical and education environments.

Kerrie retired in 2010 and became involved in the University of the Third Age (U3A). She was President of U3A Campbelltown from 2014-2018 and is currently Curriculum Manager of the group. She has been President of U3A South Australia since 2017. Both groups are very active and ensure that Kerrie follows her mandate to "keep her mind active and be involved".

"From house mistress at Woodlands to U3A Curriculum Manager, I'm always learning something new, and providing opportunities for others to do the same."

Celebrating International Women's Day with the Women of Campbelltown project – inspiring stories of local women, their achievements and contributions to the Community'.

Thank you to the women who participated and the volunteer interviewers Di Booker and Katrina Spencer for their time.