



NORTH-WEST

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NEWSLETTER APRIL 2022

OUR NEXT MEETING WILL BE HELD ON MONDAY 11 APRIL 2022

We will be meeting in person at Henderson Bowls, 2/20 Alderman Drive, Henderson Programme

9.45 President's welcome and announcements

10.00 AGM

10.20 Morning tea

10.40 Guest Speaker: Anna Lemalu, Forensic Scientist



Anna Lemalu is a Senior Scientist in the Forensic Biology group at the Institute of Environmental Science and Research (ESR).

She started her Forensic career at ESR by completing her Masters degree in 2009 involving the validation of an mRNA method for the identification of body fluids. Her first forensic job was in Tasmania as a Forensic Technical Officer where she examined items and attended crime scenes for analysis. In 2013 she moved to Queensland, following a job offer of a Reporting Scientist in DNA for Queensland Health before moving back to home turf in 2016 for her current role.

Anna lives in Auckland with her husband and young children. She enjoys supporting her children in their sport and interests and playing Softball herself.

Anna will speak about the Institute of Environmental Science and Research and the role that they play in the community, focussing on Forensic Biology and the analysis of DNA samples collected in relation to the investigation of crimes by the New Zealand Police. Anna will speak about the different DNA analysis techniques that are used, as well as those that are going to be used in the future, including case examples.

ARRANGEMENTS AT OUR MEETING

Please wear a mask.

For your continuing safety we will continue to ask for vaccination passes.

Morning tea will be served, but probably in disposable cups. There will be special arrangements for serving the tea and coffee so that people are not standing in queues.

MAY MEETING

Our meeting in May will be held on Monday 9 May. Our guest speaker will be Dr Emma Woodward, a psychologist, who will be talking about “Coping with Covid”.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The background papers for the meeting, which will be held as part of our April monthly meeting, have already been emailed to all members. Please read them before the meeting.

Please note that if you are not a financial member you will not be able to vote at the meeting. **So please pay your subscription. See the instructions below.**

We need some new people to serve on the committee. If you would be willing to help in keeping our great organization running smoothly, get in touch with our president, Mike Smith (phone 021-1720737, email mike.s@xtra.co.nz) or our secretary, Alexis Langhorne (835-2237, email alexis@value.net.nz) to see what is involved.

TIME TO PAY SUBSCRIPTIONS

It is now time for us to pay our annual subscription for 2022. Each individual member subscription is \$20.00. There are no joint subscriptions any more.

Please pay using internet banking. The U3A account is with Kiwibank and the account number is 38 9017 0781684 00. Please put your name in the particulars box and 2022 in the reference box.

If you do not use internet banking you can pay in cash at the monthly meeting. Our Treasurer, John Stagg, is not able to be at the April meeting but Rosemary Stagg will be standing in for him and will be able to receive subscriptions. She will be at the little table in the back corner where John usually sits.

ALMONER

Jenny Wilcox is our almoner. If you are aware of anyone who is ill or should be contacted for any reason please let Jenny know. Her email address is jennywilcox@xtra.co.nz and her phone number is 0275382641.

COMMITTEE 2022

The members of the current committee are listed below:

President: Mike Smith, phone 021-1720737, email mike.s@xtra.co.nz.

Vice-President and Study Group Coordinator: Martine McGregor-Reid, phone 021-2113548, email martinem@xtra.co.nz.

Treasurer: John Stagg, 027-2405520, email johnstagnz@gmail.com.
Secretary: Alexis Langhorne, 835-2237, email alexis@value.net.nz.
Speaker Coordinator: Jude Black, phone 832-4037 and 021-02453347, email: juderblack@gmail.com.
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Morning tea roster: Peter Wright, phone 837-0042 and 021-08251083, email wrightpm2@gmail.com.
Morning Tea Coordinator: Bill Whittome, 836-7433 and 021-02515489, email whittw64@gmail.com.
Greeting Coordinator: Jenny Freewalker, phone 022-0670963, email jenny.freewalker@gmail.com.
U3A Network representative: Peter Wright, phone 837-0042 and 021-08251083, email wrightpm2@gmail.com

UPDATE OF STUDY GROUPS HANDBOOK

This year's edition of the Study Group Handbook has now been completed and all members of U3A North-West will have been sent an electronic version. A printed booklet will be available for distribution when we are next able to meet in person.

Brainwaves Creative Writing Group

We are a group of writers who love to write. Each month we set a theme and share our creations with the group. It never ceases to amaze us how differently we each interpret the same core idea, as you can see from the following extracts of stories written on the theme of 'Crisis/Emergency/Disaster.'

Extract from "Hillsborough" by John McKeown, based on a true story

"Hillsborough," the disaster is known as. Ninety-six Liverpool football fans died, crushed to death, in an awful nightmare. My nephew, Paul Murray, had his 14th Birthday that day (15th April) and what a great present it was, since he was football crazy and a Liverpool fan to boot, to be given a ticket to go to the semi-final along with his dad, on his birthday. He was delighted. How could anyone have known what would happen?

Extract from "Emergency" by Peter McConnell in which his main character has tried fruitless run-ins with digital technology to summon help to fix a geyser of water pouring from his frontage.

After wading through menu after sub menu, again, he eventually found what appeared to be a local number with the oxymoronic title "Customer Services." He dialled it. It started to ring.

Whoopee, he thought, perhaps we are getting somewhere. “This is Regional Council Customer Services. You have reached us outside our normal office hours. Our hours are Monday to Friday 9am to...” At that point he hung up, put his head in his hands until his pulse rate slowed, and went and poured himself a large libation.

Extract from ‘The Emergency’ by Jude Black in which Tom, the main character, is caught short while out shopping and is frantic to locate a toilet...

Each step was agony. He chanted to himself... *c’mon, concentrate... do arithmetic in your head... try not to think about water flushing... almost there... you can do it!* Sweat was pumping from him now; his shirt plastered in a patch on his back, rings pooling under his armpits... *no, no, don’t think about liquid...* Now he was panting, determined not to admit panic was driving him to desperation...

A neat little typed sign affixed to the door front announced: ‘Closed for the foreseeable future due to Covid-19.’

Extract from ‘End of day’ by Elaine King in which her characters have survived an accident.

The evening sun was unforgiving across the sweep of valley that was still comatose from the heat of the day. Slowly the sun reached for the horizon, hung onto it then slid like melting orange jelly over the edge of a plate.

The condensation on our wine glasses dribbled and dripped as we quaffed the last of the bottle. We hadn’t spoken since we came back after it had happened and I didn’t know about Judy, but I was still shaky.

“Just awful,” said Judy. “I mean, there was nothing left.”

Extract from Jill Poulson’s ‘The Irrational Emergency’ a post-Covid dystopian fantasy.

I blame the poor education system. Once governments realised so many families in Asia and Saudi Arabia wanted their kids to learn English, they started selling education to foreign students, so it became a commodity. The local kids couldn’t afford it, and anyway, everything had to adjust so the second language speakers could keep up, and a bachelor’s degree became the new School Certificate. Only you had to pay for it.

People misunderstand statistics and the stuff they read on the internet. Did you know that everyone who died last year in Auckland had been drinking water, and most of them had been eating bread as well. Bread and water are so dangerous. In 2022 I once read that of 50 people in hospital, just two were unvaccinated. So why get vaccinated, when most of the people in hospital have been vaccinated? But 48 out of millions of vaccinated people, is not the same as two out of 250,000 unvaccinated people.

Extract from ‘Where’s the Baby?’ by Tricia Lee

“I thought I was going to lose you.” My usually unemotional husband had tears in his eyes as he kissed me. I was so happy to see Mum and him but was really too exhausted to do more than smile at them.

We sat quietly for a while until Mum asked, “Where’s the baby?”

I suddenly remembered that, yes, I'd given birth to a baby. That's what all the fuss was about. But where was the baby? There was no sign of the cradle.

"Oh my God! What's happened? Have they taken him away? Is he ill? Is he dead?" Questions whirled around in my head. I knew I'd had a little boy and I remembered holding him. But where was he?

Ken searched the other bedrooms and the bathroom to no avail.

Extract from 'Across the Bridge' by Beverley Young

"He might be over this way" Evie said, launching herself into the undergrowth. She came out at the riverside. Grasping handfuls of greenery to steady herself enough to stand and look for Arty, Evie saw a sight that chilled her to the bone.

She screamed and screamed.

It was Arty, floating down the river, away from her, his face white, contorted with fright, his fists hitting at the water, his little body helpless and small.

Sandra joined her, but neither could swim. They stood rooted to the ground, unable to move, unable to do anything. It was only when her father pushed past her and leaped into the river that Evie realised she had been screaming at the top of her lungs.

Poem: 'Crisis of an Earthquake – Lisbon, Portugal 1755' by Robin J Nelson ©

In the early hours of the morn, when most had risen from their sleep

Out at sea on the ocean floor a stirring rocked the deep

And on the land the surf retreated and left the foreshore bare

And all the people held their breath or wailed in their despair

For soon to come a tidal wave did break upon the strand

And wash away the vanity of their city proud and grand

Violent were the shocks that came and shook the ruptured ground

Anguished were the cries of those that cowered at the sound

Forty thousand poor souls perished, much of the city crumbled

And in the churches under rubble, heartfelt prayers were mumbled

The firestorm that followed sucked at the very breath

Of those who could not run away and so they met their death

Was this a crisis, you might ask or was it a disaster

Ask the ghosts of those who died. For them it does not matter