



Supporting
Lifelong Learning

Howick Inc.

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SEPTEMBER 2021



COMMITTEE 2021/2022

ALAN LA ROCHE *President (534 7366)*

JAN NAISH-WALLIS *Secretary (027 2203777)*

JONI BURGESS *Treasurer*

COLLEEN RIGBY *Vice-President,*

Speaker Convenor

GERALDINE ROSE

Past-President, U3A network liaison,

Ten-minute speakers

JEANETTE PRISCOTT *Director of Studies*

MARY KENNEDY *Newsletter Editor*

DAVID DWERRYHOUSE *Membership*

ROSEMARY OVENS *Almoner/Welcomer*

(534 3429)

September General Meeting: Cancelled

Dear U3A Howick Members,

It is necessary to remind all Members and confirm that U3A Howick Committee policy (established in 2020) that no 2021 Meeting will be held until Auckland returns to Covid-19 Level One.

Alan La Roche, President

Editorial

Just as many countries overseas have opened up their borders and are returning to “normal” living, we are once again plunged into lockdown. We have been here before, but this time it has really sunk in for me that the world “post-covid” will be very different to pre-covid life. I can only hope that this crisis will bring out the best in humanity, that we will re-assess our values and work out what is most important in life, and come out more caring and resilient as a result. In the meantime, I hope you are all coping OK and keeping in touch with one another.

I am not putting out a group timetable with this newsletter (although some convenors have given me details) as we will be in lockdown for at least two weeks and future timelines remain uncertain. Once level drops are confirmed I will update group information and send it out to everyone. In the meantime, please contact your convenor if you have any questions.

August Speaker



Rhonda Preston Jones gave us a most informative talk on Dementia. First, she outlined the huge number of services provided by her organisation to enable patients to live their best life: cognitive stimulation therapy services for carers, awareness raising,

advice to families and assistance in navigating the health system, setting up enduring power of attorney, wills, trusts and driving licences. They also run support groups for spouses, and provide community and professional education. Finally, they have set up book, exercise and art clubs to assist people with mild dementia.

Rhonda first described normal aging of the brain. Sight, hearing, suppleness, processing information and memory all begin to decline, as well we know. Apparently, while young people get answers quickly, old people take longer but their answers may be wiser. After normal aging comes mild cognitive impairment and mild dementia. Most people can function normally with mild cognitive impairment, which is common in your eighties. More women than men suffer from dementia because men die earlier. Even though baby boomers are causing a similar boom in dementia, rates per population are dropping - possibly because of better food and education.

There are various forms of dementia. Dementia can be Alzheimer's, vascular dementia or Lewy Body (similar to Parkinson's disease). Frontal temporal dementia leads to changes in social skills. Head injuries can lead to early dementia. Diabetes, alcohol, chemicals and drugs can all damage the brain. The ways in which damage occurs varies widely and everyone is different. Rhonda showed us some pictures of the brains of those who have died with dementia. We could see that parts of the brain had atrophied and were on average one third lighter than a normal brain.

Rhonda gave us some tips about communicating with dementia sufferers. Talking to people about the past can be safer. Always introduce yourself. If you are concerned about yourself or a relative, she suggests you go to your G.P. Diagnosis consists of blood tests, physical, CT scans and cognitive tests. Though there is no specific treatment for dementia she suggests you might want to know so you can start planning. Plan to live as well as you can.

Her tips on fending off dementia are the same as those for keeping healthy in general. Keep track of your physical health. Exercise and keep a healthy weight. Control high blood pressure. Manage cholesterol. Get help for depression. Sleep well if you can. Don't smoke. Drink moderately. Keep active physically and mentally and socially. Learn a new skill. Have structure to your week. Enjoy life.

Membership

Alison O'Connell, Elizabeth Smith and Joyce Smith have resigned. We have two new members: Cyril Nevezie and Mike Dubey.

From the Committee

Thanks to those who have provided details of emergency contact numbers. If you have not already done so, you can send us an email via newsletter or fill in the form at a general meeting.

Out and about

- There are several online events posted on the Auckland Live website: RNZ Ballet, "The Firebird" until Sept 5, films from Doc Edge festival, and virtual tours of the Art Gallery to name a few.
- Coursera offers online courses from top international universities for free provided you don't want a certificate at the end.
- Monterey is offering movies online
- If you have online access to Auckland Libraries, you can access newspapers and magazines as well as order books.



