

Hi,

Our new year started well with an excellent session by Alan Blackburn.

Alan spoke about China 'A civilisation State.' His interest in China can be attributed to an early introduction and interest instilled in him by his Grandmother who had travelled widely.

His thought-provoking lecture encouraged members to put aside their prejudices, and to think about the humiliation suffered by the Chinese at the hands of the rest of the world. To think about the great engineering feats from the Great Wall of China to the amazing engineering projects such as the high-speed railway from the airport to central Shanghai and their amazing architecture today. He summed up by saying, 'China is becoming a great power. Economically, diplomatically, and internationally it is on the verge of greatness and yet it still tends to think and speak like a victim. It is sensitive to criticism, imposes ridiculous censorship on the media – literature and the arts.'

Alan concluded with President Xi Jinping's quote. "Civilisations don't have to clash with each other; what is needed are eyes to see the beauty in all civilisations. We should keep our own civilisations dynamic and create conditions for other civilisations to flourish. Together we can make the garden of world civilisations colourful and vibrant."

March Meeting:

Date: 12 March 2021

Venue: Darfield Baptist Church, 15 Greendale Road, Darfield

Time: 10am (Cuppa, then members announcements followed by the speaker)

Topic: Polish Immigrants: Borkowskis, Szymanskis, Gierszewskis and Kiesanowskis

Speaker: Margaret Copland

Margaret Copland, a professional storyteller, will use slides and poems to tell of those Polish Immigrants who arrived in 1872 and settled in Marshland.

Polish/German speaking and Catholic, they experienced many of the problems that new immigrants still face.

Speakers until June 2021

April 9th, 2021: Pseudo Science and how to tell the Difference.

Were the moon landings faked? Is the earth flat? Are vaccines dangerous? Dr Simon Pollard from Canterbury University will talk about how science works and why it is different from the pseudoscientific claims of its often-vocal detractors.

May 14th, 2021 (AGM): Canterbury Vegetation.

Peter Gatehouse will explore what was the natural vegetation of the Canterbury Plains.

Reminder that nomination forms for Officers and committee members are available on the website <https://u3a.nz/lists.htm> under Malvern, or at the meetings.

June 11th, 2021: Understanding Highland Clearances.

Martin Sutherland grew up in Darfield and spent a number of years working in the Justice department before completing a PhD in History at the University of Canterbury and training for the Baptist Ministry. Martin will explore the mass movement of communities and the subsequent depopulation of the Scottish Highlands between 1760 and 1860 that had many causes.

Future Speakers

July 9th, 2021 Lance Jennings, Clinical Virologist

August 13th, 2021 Influence of Religion in USA

Dr Peter Field says: “An American, I have lived in Canterbury for 20 years on and off. I also teach in the USA, although not lately!

I am completing my 4th book—this one on Abraham Lincoln. The first two books were related to American religion.

I am now head of Humanities and Creative Arts at Canterbury. In truth, I am a teacher. And I love my job.

America and religion is a complex issue. The country was settled in part by very religious folk. Yet its Founding was decidedly secular. Today there is a great divide between the religious (Right) and the agnostic Left. Yet, paradoxically, the Right seem to be devotees of the Founding and the Left seem to manifest traits some have compared to religious enthusiasm. Let’s see what we can sort out in under an hour.”

Attendance Notice

Attendance at Darfield Baptist Church in 2021 for U3A meetings will be in accordance with common Covid-19 practice. Attendees will need to register their presence by telling the people on the desk. Remember to bring your name tags! New attendees will be asked for their name, email and phone number.

Financial members who have paid a sub since the last meeting will be able to collect name tags from the entry table.

Anyone who is unwell or feels uncomfortable about being in crowds at this time is encouraged to stay at home.

Subscriptions

The next year’s subscription is to be set at the AGM on May 14th, 2021. It will payable online, or in a cash deposit at Kiwi Bank, or on a meeting day to the treasurer. Those who are not financial are casual attendees and will be asked for a koha per meeting until joining.

Special Interest Groups

We have the following groups operating and will start a waiting list for those groups that are full so contact the Group leaders to register your interest.

Mahjong. Members are very active meeting 1st and 3rd Monday of the month with Susan Baldwin tutoring. Contact Ruth Warren: rwifwarren@gmail.com

Current Affairs 12 members meeting on 4th Monday of the month. Interesting discussions on elections, economic recovery etc. A topic is set at each meeting so members can research for the next meeting. Contact Ian Warren: rwifwarren@gmail.com

NZ and Local History. The March meeting on the 24th is a Greendale walk(drive) around, meeting at the Greendale Domain at 1:00pm. Planning and hosting is by Ian Warren and Paul Jarman. From the Domain we proceed to Frews' store, TW Adams Arboretum, Baptist Church, Millennium project, War Memorial gates, inside Greendale Church, future Greendale museum, Greendale cemetery and families. Guests welcome. If wet, an indoor meeting (discussion on Greendale) with the walk-around in April.

Contact Jim Copland: adjimcopland@gmail.com

Everyday Te Reo. Up to 5 members currently meeting weekly at 4pm on Wednesdays in Darfield. Contact Margaret Copland: coplalex@snap.net.nz

A special interest group for a Library based “**Appreciation of New Books and Authors**” has been suggested. Put your name down on the list at the desk next meeting if you are interested or contact Jim.

Jim Copland is still keen to hear from you with ideas for **new topics for interest groups**. There will be a box to post ideas in at the March 2021 meeting.

Phone 318-1712 or email adjimcopland@gmail.com

Advance notice of Canterbury Network Curious Minds Seminar- May 14th, 2021

This day seminar was due to be held in 2020 but has been transferred to this year. There will be five speakers with the keynote speaker being Peta Mathias. Details will be published as they come to hand. Tentative venue is:

ST ALBANS BAPTIST CHURCH, 64 McFaddens Rd, St Albans, Christchurch 8052

We will get back as soon as the above is confirmed.

We look forward to seeing those of you able to attend the meeting in March.

Janet MacDougall, Newsletter and Website Co-ordinator