



# U3A Avon Ōtākaro

## Series 3: The world around us

**Venue:** St Christopher's Church, 244 Avonhead Road

Talks are on **Mondays**, except for the second Monday of each month, **beginning** at 1.30 pm, followed by afternoon tea at 2.30 pm.

### Series 3: The world around us

In the last few years we have seen considerable unrest in various parts of the world and it seems as if the relative peace we have enjoyed since WW2 is being destroyed. The atrocities of Gaza and the war in Ukraine are just two instances where countries have eschewed diplomacy for aggression, and the rest of the world seems unable to resolve these issues.

#### 27 May: **The current conflict in Gaza**

**Prof. Douglas Pratt**, Emeritus Professor Religious Studies University of Auckland.

This session will explore some of the key historical and ideological markers that give a fuller context to understanding the current war in Gaza. Protest in support of one side or the other, or in objection to the actions of one side—most typically that of Israel—have sprung up around the globe. This address will highlight the problem of religious extremism that presently drives both sides and prevents peaceful resolution.

#### 17 June **The role of the Red Cross**

**Caroline Johnson**, Red Cross.

The topic is Red Cross: Past, Present and Future: what is the same, what has changed and why this matters in the following strategic areas:

- Disaster preparedness response and recovery – based on 25 years association,
- Migration (former refugees programme), and
- International aid.

Focus: 150 years of Red Cross. This presentation includes insights into “the *why* as well as the *what...*” of Red Cross services

Plus *how*, for over 150 years; Red Cross has continued to inspire support because it is guided by long-established fundamental principles which enable us to collaborate widely in the provision of humanitarian aid, not only in times of conflict but in response to

manmade disasters, driving lasting benefits and protection to communities at home and abroad.

#### 24 June: **Ukraine**

**Sergiu Toader**, former TV journalist.

The special operation in Ukraine is not only a European affair but a war between Western Society and an autocratic regime. There is a change in the old and the new international order. World peace is long gone.

#### 1 July: **The 2024 American election**

**Prof Phillip Field**, Associate Professor Phillip Field (History) University of Canterbury.

### Notices

#### End of Series Mix and Mingle (Afternoon Tea)

Following the final talk in the Chatham Island Series this **Monday 20 May**, we will be having a catered afternoon tea. We are catering for 30 so please set aside some time and join us for manaakitanga/hospitality and kai/food. This is a great opportunity to meet your fellow U3Aers.

This is the first time we have held such a ‘Mix & Mingle’ so come along and tell us what you think.

#### New Members' Afternoon Tea

On Monday 13 May we had an enjoyable and worthwhile meeting of the new members to U3A Avon Ōtākaro and the committee. It was great to learn a little about the members, both new and established (old). The new members shared some of their experiences of our U3A and many ideas about our programme. Their suggestions for future series will assist us in our programming.

We also acknowledged the contribution of Pam (afternoon teas), Sheila (hosting and name badges), and Tony (his many roles including IT).

Our afternoon tea was in the room that was built for the Deans' son's 21<sup>st</sup> (which lasted 3 days!) and at the table that was used by the Deans family.

## Invite a Non-member Friend

Reminder: As part of our strategy to increase our membership, we are offering non-members the ability to attend one of our series for a cost of \$20. This is a one-off charge for the complete series. There is no option to just pay for one or two presentations in a series. It is \$20 whether they attend one or the complete lecture series. We encourage you to publicise this to your acquaintances.

## Covid-19 and Flu vaccination

*This update is from the Office for Seniors:*

A new COVID vaccine for the XBB.1.5 strain has been approved to administer in New Zealand. This vaccine is more effective against recent sub-variants of Covid.

The XBB vaccine is recommended for those over 65.

It is recommended you wait at least 6 months since you had any other Covid vaccine or infection.

People who have had the previous Covid-19 vaccination are still expected to have protection against severe disease from recent Omicron sub-variants.

Rapid antigen tests are free until 30 June.

The flu vaccine is now available and is free to our age group. See your doctor or vaccination-approved pharmacy, or book a vaccine through: <https://bookmyvaccine.health.nz/> or search for a vaccination location: <https://www.healthpoint.co.nz/search?q=flu>.

## Smartphone apps

This series has now finished. We hope it was useful.

## Smoke alarms

If you didn't check your smoke alarm at the end of daylight saving, do it now by pushing the test button to ensure it works. If it has a 10-year battery (non-replaceable) it may not have indicated that it has reached its end of life—a smoke alarm has only a 10 year life and those with 10-year batteries must be replaced. Those with replaceable batteries usually start beeping intermittently (usually at night when it's cooler!) to signal that the battery needs replacing.

If you have a photoelectric smoke alarm which sounds for no apparent reason it is likely that dust has accumulated in it. Using a vacuum cleaner around the slots usually fixes it.

## Brain teaser

What has four letters, sometimes has nine, and never has five.  
*Hint: it's not a question!*

## Scammers

Scammers never sleep! Netsafe offers this advice: **SCAMS** is a simple acronym to help you identify red flags:

- **Surprise:** Is the message or problem unexpected?
- **Control:** Are you being pressured to make quick decisions or switch communication platforms?
- **Access:** Is there a request for personal information or passwords?
- **Money:** Are you being asked to make online payments?
- **Stop:** If you spot **any** of these warning signs, **stop** communicating.

Netsafe's helpline team are happy to assist with advice. Call on 0508 638 723 or email [help@netsafe.org.nz](mailto:help@netsafe.org.nz) However, if you lost money to a scammer, you must notify your bank immediately.

## 2024 Committee

Officers and Committee have yellow name-tags to make it easier for you to identify them and to suggest programme and activity ideas.

*President:* Miles Ellery

*Vice President:* Judith Miller

*Secretary:* Vivienne Mander; email: [u3a.avon@gmail.com](mailto:u3a.avon@gmail.com)

*Treasurer:* Murray Edlin, ph: 354 3441,  
email: [mredlin@xtra.co.nz](mailto:mredlin@xtra.co.nz)

*Committee:* Viv Grant, Chris Kissling, Gloria Street, Bryan Wright.

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*Note: Hyperlinks ([in blue](#)) are live links, just click on them to go to its website or to your email application.*

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