

June 2018 Newsletter of NZCIS



NEW ZEALAND
CHRISTIANS
IN SCIENCE
TE KĀHUI
WHAKAPONO KI NGĀ
KAIPŪTAIAO O TE MOTU

Greetings everyone!

This has been a very busy half year for NZCIS.

In Auckland, the collaboration between NZCIS and Maclaurin Chapel has continued to be fruitful. We were able to join the chapel staff at the **Student Orientation UoA** free-for-all in Albert Park. This gave us good exposure to students before they even began their year.

Our first event was a panel on **human nature** (*What a Piece of Work is Man*) at Maclaurin Chapel in March in Auckland. RC chaplain Fr. Chris Denham, Maclaurin Chapel chaplain Rev. Dr. Carolyn Kelly, NZCIS advisor Professor Andrew Shelling as well as philosophy student Tom Yates fielded questions that relate to both human dignity and to science.

This was followed by a series of lectures in Dunedin & Wellington (in partnership with Centre for Theology and Public Issues --CTPI) and in Auckland by **Dr.**

Jennifer Wiseman, an astrophysicist attached to the Goddard Space Centre. These were highly successful events and Jennifer had already been interviewed on Kim Hill before the series began. We all enjoyed hearing about the latest research on exoplanets and the possibility of alien life; we watched beautiful images connected to the birth of stars, and we resonated with her closing comments on the connections with the biblical story of creation. She said that astrophysicists were used to thinking in terms of long stories and these fit well with notions of God and creation.



This was followed in May by seminars In Auckland and Wellington on **Dawkins and the New Atheism**. In Wellington this was again in partnership with CTPI and the St Johns Center in Willis St. Speakers. The seminar presenters included Professors Peter Lineham, Jeff Tallon, Neil Broom, Carolyn King and John

Bishop, Drs. John Owens and Graeme Finlay, as well as Emma Belcher, Tom Yates, Zain Ali and Kate Hannah in Auckland, and Sonya Lewthwaite in Wellington. Students and other attendees gave enthusiastic feedback.

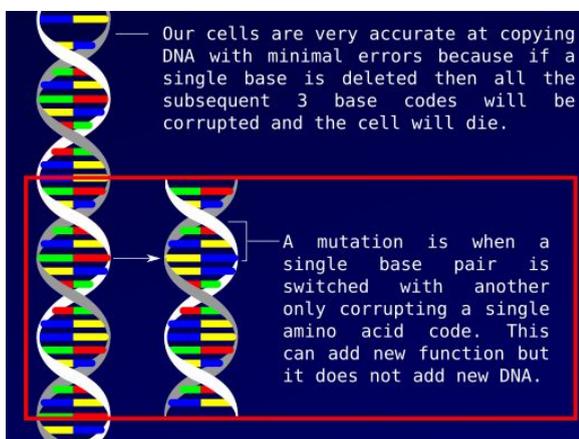
Some highlights from these seminars

Peter explained the varieties of and reasons for the increases in the response “none” to the religious question on the census. John Bishop, Tom Yates and Emma Belcher discussed the problem of evil. Graeme Finlay talked about history in an evolutionary context. Kate Hannah asked hard questions about who was or wasn’t included in the science/faith conversation. Sonya Lewthwaite explained the theology of creation and how that is relevant for scientists. Audio and video of some of these lectures will be on the website soon.

Discussion

In Dunedin student discussion has begun under the leadership of Mike Summerfield. In Auckland three of us have visited two schools to talk to senior students. More visits like this are planned. Two NZCIS lectures, including Jennifer Wiseman’s took place in Dunedin as part of the NZCIS lecture programme.

Look out for events coming up in the second part of the year. **Prof. Carolyn King** will speak on July 25th in Auckland on models of science and faith (a repeat of the talk she gave in Wellington), and **Dr. Graeme Finlay** will give a September lecture on viruses and the placenta (a fascinating story). **Winter Lectures** are planned at Maclaurin Chapel on August 1, 8 and 15. Speakers are Dr. Ruth McConnell, Dr. Helen Saunders and Prof. Brian Broom. The theme this year is **God and healing**. Come along for light refreshments and a lecture/discussion at Maclaurin Chapel.



In the second part of the year **infographics** from Graeme Finlay’s book *Human Evolution* will be appearing on the website. Look out for these. They are truly astonishing.

In **Dunedin** two more lectures are planned for the second part of the year (including one by Dr. Finlay) as well as an intensive course in science and theology facilitated by Nicola (in November/December)

Ideas

If you have any ideas for your part of the country please let us know. Or if you would like science/faith lectures to be publicised by us please contact Nicola. Speakers can also be sent to your location. Or if you would like to be added to a speaker inventory also contact Nicola. If you have ideas for blogs please do submit them to Nicola.

Books

We have had contact during this year with Paul Stock, a chaplain at Massey University who has written a book *Duet or Duel*. We would recommend this book for student and church discussion. Copies can be obtained from him, or in Auckland from the chaplaincy.

Other books by New Zealand members include

The Gospel According to Dawkins, and *Human Evolution*, both by Dr. **Graeme Finlay**.

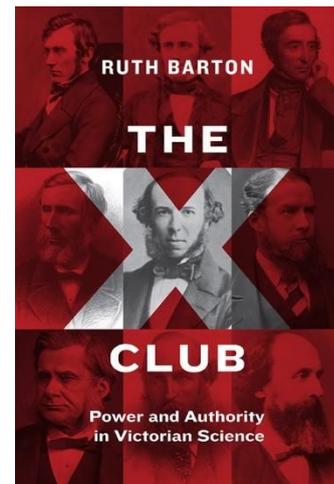
Prof. **Philip Pattemore's** book *Am I My Keeper's Brother: Human Origins from a Human and Christian Perspective?* has been very popular. *Taking Rational Trouble over the Mysteries* is co-edited by

Nicola Hoggard Creegan and **Andrew Shepherd**, as is the new book, *Creation and Hope: Reflections on Ecological Anticipation and Hope from Aotearoa New Zealand*

Animal Suffering and the Problem of Evil is also by Nicola.

We have some copies of these books. So, either follow the links or ask Nicola for details about how to obtain them.

We are also looking forward to the publication later in the year of Dr. **Ruth Barton's** *The X Club: Power and Authority in Victorian Science*



We are grateful again to the Templeton World Charity Foundation Inc. for their generous support of this project. We are also looking to the future when we will be having to self-fund NZCIS. **Donations** are always welcome and giving is easy through the website.

And congratulations for getting to the end of this Epistle.

Nicola Hoggard Creegan

Graeme Finlay