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## Coming up in 2023

We start on 10<sup>th</sup> February 2023.

Our Programme so far:

- 1 Neurology
- 2 History of Medicine
- 3 Literature
- 4 Music
- 5 Politics

## Contact

We prefer to contact you by email.

If you have an email address, and we are not aware of it, how about letting us know.

Spare paper copies of the brochure are always available if you are unable to print one for yourself

Series organiser  
Jennifer Sinclair



**Invercargill**

**Series 1 - February 2023**

**The Brain Series - "Lets go to the Movies"**

Sometimes science is stranger than fiction and science fiction becomes reality.

In 2022, Prof. Steph Hughes presented at U3A Invercargill on the work her lab has been doing using viruses and stem cells to understand brain diseases.

In this year's brain series, we will delve deeper into the science and technologies used to understand the brain and brain diseases.

The talks are movie-themed but science-based.

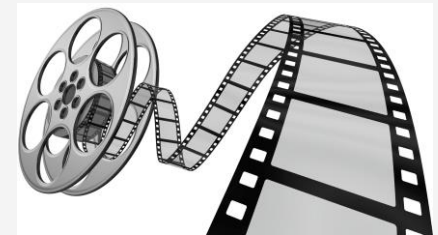


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**VENUE**

Venue: **Windsor Community Church  
19 Windsor St**

Time: 10:00 am

Cost: \$30 per person

## **Series 1 – Brain Series**

### **Session 1: Friday 10<sup>th</sup> February 2023**

Presenter: *Professor Steph Hughes*

#### **“A Beautiful Mind” - The Brain, Stem cells & Viruses**

An introduction to the brain, stem cells and viruses. This first talk of the series will give a primer on the workings for the brain, what stem cells are and how they are used in brain research and treatment and why neuroscientists should understand viruses.

Steph Hughes is a Professor in the Department of Biochemistry, University of Otago and the Director of the Otago Brain Health Research Centre. Her research focuses on Batten disease, a group of childhood neurodegenerative diseases.

### **Session 2: Friday 17<sup>th</sup> February 2023**

Presenters: *Drs Luci Schweitzer & Emma Deeney*

#### **“And the nominees are – Brain diseases, research and treatments”**

Brain diseases come in many forms and their horrendous impact on people’s lives make for dramatic movie plots. We will discuss a few movies and TV shows that feature these diseases for example “Rise of the Planet of the Apes” and “The Theory of Everything”.

We will talk about how realistic they are and link them to our own research. We will give an overview of the role of genetics, and what this means for studying and treating the diseases. We will focus on Alzheimer’s disease, Batten disease (a childhood disorder) and Spinocerebellar Ataxias (a group of motor disorders).

Dr Lucia Schweitzer is a research fellow in the Biochemistry Department at the University of Otago. Over the last 10 years, Lucia has investigated neurogenesis in adult brains as well as therapies and models for Alzheimer’s disease and Batten disease

Dr Emma Deeney recently completed her Ph.D. at University of Otago. During her Ph.D. Emma investigated mechanisms underlying exercise-induced motor recovery in a brain disease.

### **Session 3: Friday 24<sup>th</sup> February 2023**

Presenters: *Dr Indranil Basak & Kirstin McDonald*

#### **“Star Wars Ep IV: A New Hope”**

For this presentation, Indranil and Kirstin will talk about the pathologies in the rare childhood disease called Batten disease, and treatments. They will share the cellular model that they are using to understand the disease mechanism, and find a cure, not just for Batten disease but also for other neurodegenerative diseases.

Dr. Indranil Basak a research fellow in the Department of Biochemistry, University of Otago, received his Ph.D. from St. John’s University in New York, USA on Parkinson’s disease research. Ms Kirstin McDonald is pursuing a PHD in the Dept of Biochemistry at Otago University.

### **Session 4: Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2023**

Associate Professor Caroline Beck

#### **“The Color Purple”**

How our understanding of epilepsy has changed over time, my lab hopes to help make a better future for children diagnosed with rare epilepsies, by studying tadpoles!

In this film, “The Color Purple” adapted from Alice Walker’s novel, the protagonist Celie continues to dream of a future free of the abuse and powerlessness that defines her real life as an African American woman in the 1900s. It reminds us to always keep hopeful, and inspires us to keep searching for ways to make things better

Purple is also the colour that represents Epilepsy awareness. Like the movie, Epilepsy does not receive its fair share of recognition, despite being one of the most common disorders of the brain.

A/Prof Caroline Beck is a developmental biologist and lecturer in Zoology and Genetics at the University of Otago. Her research focuses on understanding how some animals are capable of regeneration, as well as on the developmental basis of epilepsy.

## **Registration Form Series 1 2023**

### **Payment Methods in Order of Preference**

1. Direct Credit  
To Acc: 03 1746 0080910 000
2. EFTPOS  
Debit card payment available on the day.
3. Cash in an Envelope  
Cash payments in an envelope, please, with your name or include this registration form.

Amount enclosed **\$30** per person

Name:

Cash Enclosed
\$

Payment to:

The Treasurer – John Low  
U3A Invercargill  
284 Mclvor Road  
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Ph 215 9472