

PEEL MATURE ADULTS LEARNING ASSOCIATION 2023: SEMESTER 1 Part A

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13 March – 17 April

09.00 am – 10.30 am

Dr Sheila Twine

Cities of the Ancient World

Large, settled populations have complex needs including water and food security, organisation and justice systems, trade and defence. In this glorious exploration of ancient history, we will examine some classical civilisations, the remains of which still astound us and draw visitors in their hundreds of thousands every year. Petra, Mesopotamia, the Indus Valley, ancient Turkey and China are a few of our destinations on this 5 week tour of the ancient world.

Dr Sheila Twine lived and trained as a teacher in Scotland before embarking on higher education and an eventual PhD in WA. Now in retirement, Sheila is a member of numerous community societies including U3A, Zonta and Jarrahdale Heritage Society. She remains a passionate educator and, in 2020 was named WA Senior of the Year.

13 March – 17 April

11.00 am - 12.30 pm

Dr Damian Lettoof

Snakes: exploring their natural history and environmental interactions

These lectures will explore the ecology and evolution of snakes, as well as global human-snake conflicts. Week one will introduce snake biology, evolution and ecosystem functions. The following three weeks will focus on case studies grouped into: invasive snakes, human-snake conflict, and snake evolution on islands. The final lecture will be focusing on my research exploring the impacts of urbanisation on tiger snakes, and their use as an indicator of wetland health.

Damian is a herpetologist and ecotoxicologist with an interest in urban ecosystems and environmental monitoring. His research investigates the health of reptiles and amphibians (parasites, contaminants, biochemical and whole-organism) in response to anthropogenic stressors. Currently, he is working for CSIRO assessing the impacts of pollution on frogs.

13 March – 17 April

1.30 pm - 03.00 pm

Dr Patrick Baker

Maritime Archaeology – a photographic illustration

Anyone with an interest in Maritime Archaeology should not miss this beautifully photographed underwater exploration of our most iconic shipwrecks in a historic journey stretching from our own shores off WA back to Tudor England and across the Mediterranean. Using knowledge from a lifetime of interest in marine biology as well as archaeology, Patrick will share his long-time involvement as a key member of excavation and research teams richly illustrated with images from his 60 year photographic archive.

Dr Patrick Baker is, primarily, a specialist photographer for Maritime Archaeology. In this role he was employed by the Western Australian Museum from 1973, based at their Fremantle 'Shipwreck Museum'; the walls and showcases are mostly adorned by Pat's images. Despite retirement in 2017 his enthusiasm for life-long maritime interests continues, with the additional establishment at his Hamilton Hill home of his own Underwater Photography Museum & Library

PEEL MATURE ADULTS LEARNING ASSOCIATION 2023: SEMESTER 1 Part B

01 May – 29 May

09.00 am – 10.30 am

Candice Myers

Waste Management in WA

This course will consider most aspects of waste management in WA homes, communities and the wider world. Candice will ask and attempt to answer questions as basic as “What is waste and where does it come from?” to the complex issues surrounding circular economies, closed loops and, so called, green washing. She will talk about not only the environmental issues of waste, but the social and economic ones as well.

Candice is an experienced sustainability professional with a focus on waste minimisation, and management.. A passionate educator she shares her passion for informing people on the effects on inconspicuous consumption in a modern and always changing world. Candice holds a Bachelor of Sustainability from Edith Cowan University and is currently working towards a Masters in Environmental Sciences.

01 May – 29 May

11.00 am - 12.30 pm

Richard Offen

Heritage: Friend or Foe?

To put to bed forever the notion that “Perth has no history”, Richard will share his deep understanding of heritage in the UK and in WA. These 5 lectures will cover The History of Heritage, our Sense of Place, the UK National Trust, Western Australia’s heritage and Conservation in Action. These lectures will suggest that heritage is for everyone and that learning about the history surrounding us is not only fun, but an important model to assist in planning a successful future for our communities.

Richard is a heritage engagement consultant, historian, writer, broadcaster and speaker. He specialises in public engagement with history and heritage. He spent 14 years of his career as a senior staff member of the UK National Trust and is President of the Royal Western Australian Historical Society.

01 May – 29 May

1.30 pm - 03.00 pm

Dr Krista Nicholson

Marine Mammals of the Peel-Harvey Estuary

This course provides an overview of marine mammals and their environment while focusing on our dolphin population of the Peel-Harvey Estuary. Topics include an introduction to marine mammals and the research methods used to study them, our much-loved dolphins in Mandurah and the threats they face locally and, as a species, globally. Marine mammal conservation and the contribution of our governments will be examined and the complex dynamics at all levels will be discussed.

Krista is a population ecologist at Murdoch University and has a particular interest in dolphin ecology and conservation. She established and continues to run the Mandurah Dolphin Research Project investigating dolphins occupying the Peel-Harvey Estuary and adjacent coastal waters. Prior to this she studied dolphins in Shark Bay and has been part of multiple marine mammal research projects.

PEEL MATURE ADULTS LEARNING ASSOCIATION 2023: SEMESTER 1 Part C

19th June – 17th July

09.00 am – 10.30 am

Dr Michelle Olaithe

What's so good about growing old? Mental health and ageing.

In this course, Michelle will take you on a deep dive into the strengths and challenges of mental health as we age. While blessed with greater emotional and social stability and intelligence, ageing is also accompanied by a unique set of challenges, largely surrounding grief and loss. This can include illness, frailty, loss of independence and change in living arrangements, financial stress, and increasing social isolation. She will explore your personal experiences around these ageing dynamics and share a psychological skill set dedicated to helpfully manage some of the thoughts and behaviours that may deepen distress.

Michelle is a mother of two, a Clinical Psychologist and a researcher with the UWA. She investigates healthy ageing, with a focus on sleep, mood, and brain health. Michelle was nominated to provide a TED-X talk on sleep health, named one of twelve UWA 2021 Rising Stars, with publications in the top 1% of cited literature. Michelle has set up an online resource for people with mental health difficulties: www.myThereo.com, which offers over 40+ instructional videos, with pdf worksheets, for free.

19th June – 17th July

11.00 am - 12.30 pm

Prof Byron Lamont

Adaptations of the Unique Western Australian flora

In this course, we will examine the biogeography of Western Australia from when it was still attached to Antarctica 100 million years ago. No other group of plants is better adapted to extreme summer droughts or dry-season fires, to the world's most impoverished soils and to unique pollinators and herbivores with its spectacular flowers and sculptured leaves. The outcome is a unique flora that currently accounts for one-third of all species in Australia within an area that covers just 4% of the continent.

Byron retired in 2010 as Distinguished Emeritus Professor at Curtin University. He became a Member of the Order of Australia that year for services to Australian botany. He was listed among the top 0.02% of researchers in the world on fire ecology in 2022 and has just received (2023) the Wright Lifetime Achievement Award from the international Association for Fire Ecology based in Oregon, USA.

19th June – 17th July

1.30 pm - 03.00 pm

Dr Adam Andreotta

Ethics of Artificial Intelligence

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is no longer Science Fiction. It has drastically changed our everyday lives and many ethical issues have arisen. Who is responsible for a machine making a harmful mistake? Can the AI data that researchers use be biased? What if companies' AI practices aren't transparent to users? What about issues of consent and will we ever need to grant AI rights to machines rather than regard them simply as tools for human use? This course will examine just such challenging questions.

Dr Adam Andreotta is a philosophy researcher and lecturer at Curtin University. His main interest is the philosophy of self-knowledge, which focuses on how we know our own mental states. He has also written about the philosophy of artificial intelligence, specifically on the Ethics of Big Data and AI Rights; and the history of philosophy, with a keen interest in David Hume. His current research interests include the ethics of artificial intelligence, rudeness, the future of work, adoration and leadership. For a complete list of his published works, see his website: <https://www.ajandreotta.com/>