

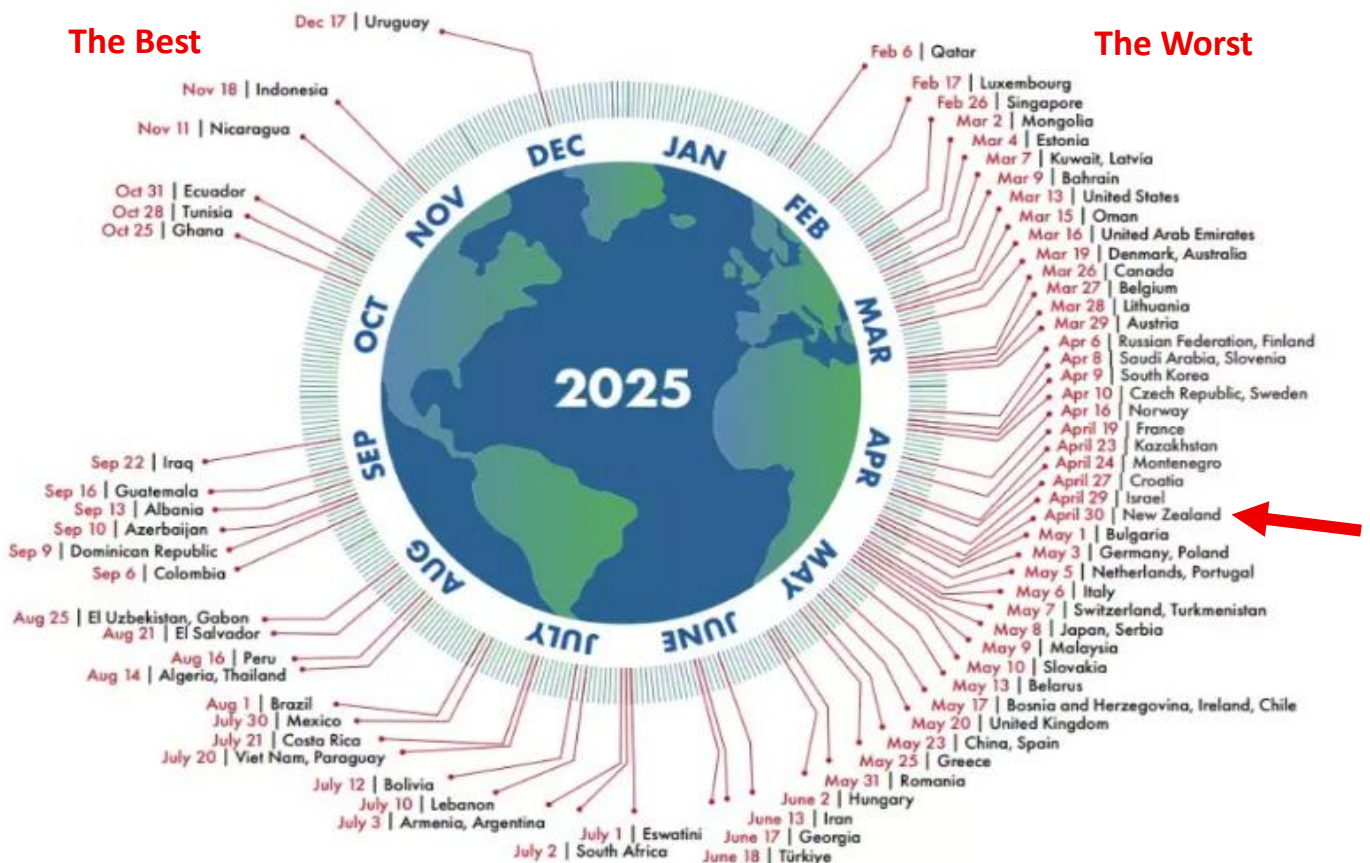
August 2025 Newsletter

From the President

Our recent speaker

Rose Challies, founder and CEO of Terra Nova Foundation spoke at our July meeting. Her topic was *"The Leading Generation - how our community elders can change the world"*. She has had an interesting and productive life, from growing up in Prebbleton, showing considerable sporting promise when young, but then going overseas for 20 years, laying the foundations for her current career.

Rose introduced us to the annual Earth Overshoot Day date, depicted in the diagram below. (<https://overshoot.footprintnetwork.org/newsroom/country-overshoot-days/>) It shows the point in 2025 at which human demand for ecological resources in various countries exceeds what the Earth can regenerate within the same year. The position of New Zealand indicates that, in comparison with most other countries, our demand for resources is excessively high. We cannot be complacent about this. Some countries remain within sustainable resource use limits. For example, Uruguay and Indonesia, reach their national overshoot days in mid-December and mid-November, respectively. In contrast, countries such as Qatar and Luxembourg exceed their resource budgets as early as February. While numerous countries are in a worse position than New Zealand, this diagram suggests that we can do much better in managing and utilising our natural resources in a sustainable way.



Rose left us the following challenge, to choose between the two options:

Owning your true story

I am successful.
I have status.

It's terrible what is happening
but what can I do.

We are locked into one or two
options. We're constantly cutting
costs to pay the bills.

It's too late.
It's just not possible...

We are life on Earth.
Our wellbeing is connected to the
wellbeing of all living things.

Being happy is me being me.
Giving is a natural & joyful experience.

Living well is addressing my needs in a
positive way.

Anything is possible...

Cutting the Cake

It was great to celebrate the milestone of ten years of U3A Ellesmere at the July meeting. Our first president, Lena Metcalf thoroughly recounted the early years of U3A Ellesmere. For those of us who were not members during this time, we learnt about how we started and the great range of speakers who were invited to the early meetings. Thankyou Lena for your foresight and leadership during your six years tenure as president. Around 25 of the original members are still members today.



The presidents – Errol Wood, Lena Metcalf, John Smith



A clarification

At our June meeting I asked the audience for an indication of support for a suggestion from the Committee that we sponsor a postgraduate student at Lincoln University. This was only intended to sound out members on the proposal, and was not a vote.

Following that meeting, the Committee received some negative feedback on the proposal. Given the lack of support shown at the June meeting, and the concerns raised by some members, the Committee has decided not to proceed with this proposal at present.

Please note: I will be out of the country for much of August and September, so there will be no newsletter next month.

Our upcoming speakers

Wednesday 27th August – “*Engineering Aid in Tonga: Empowering Communities Through Student-Led Innovation*”

Liam Bately and Aden Sadler, who are postgraduate students at the University of Canterbury, will talk about the growing field of bioengineering, and an overseas aid project they have recently been involved with in Tonga. Bioengineering uses engineering techniques to design and develop new devices, materials, and processes for various applications, particularly in healthcare.

Wednesday 24th September

Our speaker will be **Dr Sam Hampton**, Lecturer in the Department of Geological Sciences, University of Canterbury. His topic is “*The Formation of Banks Peninsula by Volcanic Processes*”

Sam is an earth scientist with over 15 years’ experience in teaching and learning. He uses his academic knowledge and adventures in the environments of New Zealand to encourage people to look and delve deeper into the landscapes, geology, and environments of our country.

Wednesday 22nd October

Sarah Anderson – Kaituitui (manager) of Te Ahu Pātiki Charitable Trust.

Wednesday 26th November (Our last meeting for 2025 & Christmas Luncheon)

Mark Rocket – Founder and CEO, Kea Aerospace.

The Last Word(s)

What’s in a name?

Have you noticed that babies’ names that were in vogue when you were young, such as Peter, David, and Christine (my siblings), are hardly ever used today? And some names that were once considered old-fashioned, such as Florence, Emily and Isla (our granddaughters) have become popular again. The “100-year baby name rule” is the idea that baby names tend to come back into fashion roughly every century. Consequently, names that were popular around 100 years ago often feel fresh and charming again, while names from the parents’ generation, around 30-50 years ago, can seem outdated.

In 2024, the most popular baby’s names in New Zealand were:

- Boy: Noah, followed by Oliver, Leo and George: and
- Girl: Isla, followed by Amelia, Charlotte and Lily.

Naming your child is important, and it can attract uninvited opinions from family, friends, and even strangers. To alleviate some of that pressure on parents, there are now baby-naming consultants that, for an exorbitant fee, can guide parents towards the perfect name for their little darling. In America these consultants may charge up to US\$350 per hour! I don’t know how many hours might be involved.

The Radio New Zealand web site provides a wealth of interesting programmes that we can access at any time, not only when they are first broadcast. Ruth and I particularly like listening to past episodes of Jim Mora’s “Sunday Morning” programme because of the wide range of interesting topics he covers. Recently we listened to an interview about babies’ names between Jim and Dr Laurel MacKenzie, an associate professor in linguistics at New York University.

The link to this interview is:

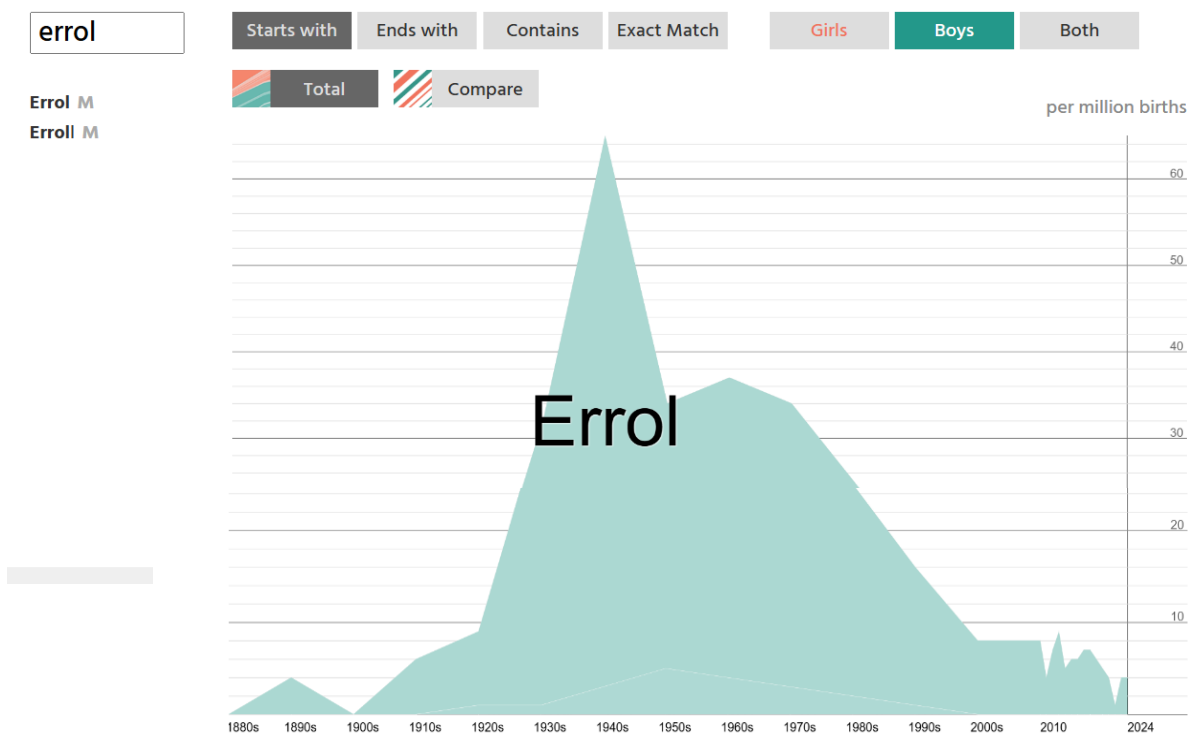
<https://www.rnz.co.nz/national/programmes/sunday/audio/2018995374/the-burden-of-choosing-the-perfect-baby-name>

In the Jim Mora interview, Dr MacKenzie recommended a web site that provide graphs for the popularity of baby's names in the USA, from 1880 to the present day. The link is:

<https://namerology.com/baby-name-grapher/>

I have checked out this web site by using my name, Errol. (It's a variant of the British name Earl, and means "chieftain," "nobleman," and "warrior.") I was named in memory of a great- uncle who, at the age of just 22, was killed in action in France, just four days before the end of World War 1. (Some of you may remember Errol Tweedy, who owned the garage at Springston many years ago. He is named after the same ancestor).

The graph below shows that the popularity of "Errol" in America peaked around 1940, possibly because of the fame of the swashbuckling actor Errol Flynn around that time. When I was born in 1946 there were 43 other Errols born in New Zealand that year. Since then, the name has undergone a huge drop in popularity in America, and there is likely to have been a similar trend in New Zealand. Consequently, when I occasionally meet another "Errol" we have a chuckle because we are members of a tiny club. Neither our son, nor our three grandsons, have been named "Errol". They have been given more "modern" names - Caleb, Emerson and Declan.



Finally, also check another Radio New Zealand story:

<https://www.rnz.co.nz/news/national/538525/what-do-our-favourite-baby-names-say-about-us>

Committee responsibilities for 2025/26 :

President – Errol Wood, **Vice-President** – John Prendergast, **Secretary** – Murray Allison,
Treasurer – Neal Borrie **Interest Groups Coordinator** - Lyn Minchington
Constitution Revision – Nancy Borrie **Membership Coordinator** – Dorothy Jordan

Morning Tea Team Leader – Nola Sutherland (not a committee member)

Our email address is u3aellesmere@gmail.com
