

Life Stories: Being Human – The Final Chapter

Following the completion of the six presentations of “Life Stories”, John Cartmell reflects on his final session, “Being Human” and provides an update on the latest DNA research.

Two years ago, I asked Anne Lacey if we could end my Life Stories series of presentations with the ancestry of humans this September. I did so because I expected to see analysis of human ancestry this summer. There was some in August that I was able to describe to the group a fortnight ago—but the likely most contentious hadn't been published. It has now—in Science—and anyone can read the report at:

<https://www.science.org/doi/10.1126/science.ado9202>

It is almost exactly what I forecast at the meeting. This is incredibly exciting analysis of our ancestry, jointly with Neanderthals and Denisovans.

I have been pleased to have been able to describe the latest science research throughout the series but to end with a description a fortnight in advance of publication has to be a record!

Should anyone have the idea that u3a meetings merely regurgitate decades old school stuff—this is not so! We are ahead of the game. :-)

John Cartmell

Presenter of the Life Stories series for the Exploring Science group