



## The Russian Enigma

With Scott Thomson, life member of the Institute, and Ray Stewart, former executive-secretary of the World Peace Council, discussing the myths and realities that have moulded the Russia of today and its relations with the world - the discussion will then be open to the floor.

In a multi-interest career, Scott Thomson studied Russian history at university. From a voluntary agency base he specialized in development aid and military technology. An ordained minister, he served on the Presbyterian Church's International Relations committee and later the Government Advisory Committee on Aid and Development.

He says: "As a life member of the NZ Institute of International Affairs I remain conscious of two questions: Where Now? Where next? Russia isn't the only world issue, but it is one that can't be ignored."

Ray Stewart's early involvement in the emerging peace and environmental movements led to him attending many regional and global conferences, and taking a leadership role in the rapidly developing NGO global peace movement. His work has taken him to more than one hundred countries, including lengthy periods in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, travelling from the Baltic, Arctic and Black Seas to the Pacific.

"In the 1970s and 1980s," Ray Stewart says, "my primary focus was working to understand what changes all sides needed to take to step back from the brink."

"It is one thing for all sides to believe their own propaganda," he notes, "but ordinary people often have very different views from those in government and academia."

After the Cold War ended, he realised that top down solutions needed to be matched by bottom up actions if humankind was to meet the challenges of a series of looming global threats.

"What is needed is to set aside the fear of others and their different approaches to life and get everyone discussing solutions to the real challenges humankind faces," he says.

**Venue: Rosewood, 417 Queen Street, Kuripuni, Masterton.**

**Date/Time: Thursday, 21 October 2021 at 8.00 pm– with tea and coffee from 7.30 pm.**

**Non-members: \$5.00 door charge.**

**All are welcome.**

**For more information about the Institute of International Affairs, contact:**

**Aileen Weston**  
152 Dreyers Rock Road  
R D 2, Masterton 5882

**Wairarapa Branch:**  
Secretary/Treasurer

**Phone: (06) 372 5741**

**Email: [aileen.weston@orcon.net.nz](mailto:aileen.weston@orcon.net.nz)**

**Website: [www.nziiia.org.nz](http://www.nziiia.org.nz)**