

# Ingenio

THE UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND ALUMNI MAGAZINE | Spring 2008



## LEADING THE WAY

\$100 million  
fundraising campaign

Advancing medical  
technology

Artist Peter Robinson

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## Cover photo

Professor Richard Faull, guest speaker at the Campaign launch.

Photo by Bruce Jarvis.

See story on page 5.

# From the Vice-Chancellor

## Building philanthropic partnerships

One characteristic of the American university system – particularly the private universities but increasingly the public institutions – is the strong emphasis placed on philanthropic support from alumni and friends. The extreme example is Harvard with an endowment of over \$30 billion, but philanthropic activity is becoming increasingly common throughout the system. I well recall my astonishment when I was at Cornell University and the graduating class of 1983 – the students – became the first year-group to raise over a million dollars for their university.

That kind of support is important for several reasons. First, and most obviously, it creates additional revenue for the university, giving it a degree of financial freedom to invest in new and exciting areas. Each \$1 million of endowment generates about \$50,000 of revenue, and it does so in perpetuity (do the sums for Harvard!). Second, it forces the institution to think more carefully about what those new and exciting areas might be – in other words about institutional strategies and priorities. Philanthropy is, after all, an exercise in matching the interests and desires of the donor with the needs of the institution. Neither party wants to see such precious resources squandered. And finally it creates a whole set of new relationships – many donors develop a deep and sometimes inter-generational interest in the university they are supporting.

These many benefits of philanthropy have led The University of Auckland to enter into this area, one in which New Zealand universities have relatively little experience. The first major steps involved the “World-Class Business School” project, in which the University, with the help of many corporate and individual donors, raised over \$40 million in response to a matching donation of \$25 million by the government through the Partnerships for Excellence programme. The magnificent Owen G. Glenn Building, home of the Business School, is just one outcome of that initiative.

Now we are extending our fundraising activities to the whole University, and on 14 November we launched our first University-wide fundraising campaign. The “Leading the way” Campaign seeks to raise \$100

million to support our teaching, research and community service activities. During the “quiet phase” (run since 2006) we have raised over \$48 million. I am therefore very confident that the \$100 million target will be achieved during the “public phase” of the Campaign, which ends in 2012.

A campaign of this type requires a great deal of effort by many people both within and outside the University. We have established a major Advancement group within External Relations to create the expertise required to underpin ongoing philanthropic activities. This includes staff who represent the University in the US and Europe. Foundations to support the process and to steward gifts have been set up in New Zealand, the USA and the UK, along with appropriate mechanisms for tax deductible giving in those countries and others.

During research prior to the establishment of the Campaign, prospective donors told us they wanted to see the University making a real difference. The Campaign will therefore focus on building philanthropic partnerships in five key areas: health, especially biomedical research; child development, including physiology and education; improved economic development; better infrastructure, planning and design for our cities; and issues of national identity and culture. While they are by no means our only areas of interest, they are themes for which many donors have indicated a high level of support.

Of course, none of this would be possible without the willingness of our donors to invest in the University. Their support has been extraordinary – \$48 million in the Campaign to date and with a number of other gifts yet to be confirmed. These gifts will be of profound importance to The University of Auckland, not only because they will enable us to invest in the excellence that increasingly characterises this University, but also because they will change the way New Zealanders and friends of New Zealand think about supporting institutions such as ours. I am grateful to those of you who have brought us to this point and encourage all staff, students and friends of the University to continue to support the Campaign as we head towards our \$100 million goal.



A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a stylized 'S' followed by a long horizontal line extending to the right.

STUART MCCUTCHEON

## Nine generations in medicine

The cover of the Autumn [2008] edition caught my eye as among the 125-year-oldies is my father (centre back row).

My father, James McMurray Cole, born in 1874, went to AGS [Auckland Grammar School] from his home in Onehunga. He did two and half years at Uni for a BA but didn't complete his final year as he decided to do medicine and his Presbyterian minister advised Edinburgh – to which a number of NZers went at that time – Otago being a bit limited. He qualified in medicine and went on to train as a surgeon (FRCGE). He and my mother (English) came back here in 1922. He was on the Auckland Hospital staff as a surgeon, dying prematurely in 1947.

I followed him in to surgery (Orthothoracic) and was later Dean of Medicine here for 15 years. Two granddaughters are in the two medical schools and when qualified will be the ninth generation with medical members.

Thank you for this reminder – it is one of the few good photos we have.

Yours sincerely,

David Cole,

Dean of The University of Auckland's School of Medicine, 1974 to 1989

*This letter was sent to Ingenio in May. Professor David Cole died on 8 September, 2008. An eminent cardiothoracic surgeon based at Greenlane Hospital he was among the first appointed to the teaching staff of the University's new medical school, established in 1968. Over the next few years he took up the role of Associate Dean of Graduate Studies before being named as Deputy Dean and later succeeding Professor Cecil Lewis, the Foundation Dean.*

## Teaching in Fiji

I have opened the alumni package addressed to Miss Margaret Barrie (BA 1971), one of your members who taught in Fiji at Central Fijian Secondary School from the 1960s to 1980s. The school has now changed its name to Sila Central High School.

May I on behalf of the school and its former pupils convey to the University our gratitude and appreciation for her hard work. As your graduate she displayed a wealth of skills and talents, she was dynamic and versatile. During her days here, students were taught

music, drama, poetry, public speaking and good discipline. She was head of Language and Literature in the school.

Our school will celebrate its 50th anniversary in August this year while you celebrate 125 years: Congratulations.

I was fortunate to be taught by Miss Barrie for five years and salute her for her contributions to education in Fiji.

I have been informed by a fellow teacher who returned from New Zealand that Miss Margaret Barrie had passed away. May she rest in peace.

Analaisa Nacola,  
Sila Central High School, Fiji

## Graduation day

Medieval men and women haunt the trees on Princes Street on Graduation Day.

There are flowers, photographs and smiles like everyone's wedding day has

come at once and the bride wears black.

Tartan and ebony are leading the procession. How serious these pipers are.

But we are laughing, and waving

and looking back to when we were the medieval men and women

and the pipes and drums were playing for us.

And like children picking the most colourful lolly in the party bag

we choose the most gorgeous satin that we would wear

should we ever haunt the trees on Princes Street again.

Written by alumna Christine Tyler (BA 1974) as a result of attending a University Summer School poetry workshop.

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Preference will be given to letters that address the content of the magazine. The editor reserves the right to edit letters for style and content.

# Campaign under way

The smiles from the stage said it all. The University's "Leading the way" fundraising campaign was officially launched and the attainment figure to date of \$48,089,001 in gifts and pledges was every reason to feel positive.



From left: Vice-Chancellor Professor Stuart McCutcheon; Campaign Patron Jenny Gibbs; Campaign Chair Geoff Ricketts; Chancellor Hugh Fletcher; Campaign Patrons John Graham and Chris Liddell.

More than 400 guests, including major benefactors of the University, members of the Campaign Leadership Committee, University senior management and staff representatives, alumni and friends, and students gathered at a gala dinner on 14 November to launch the Campaign aimed at raising \$100 million by 2012.

"In this time of economic uncertainty, it has never been more important than it is now to fulfil the goals of the 'Leading the way' Campaign and to help create in this country a university of genuinely world class achievements that have a positive impact on people's daily lives," said Vice-Chancellor, Professor Stuart McCutcheon.

An audiovisual presentation depicted the five themes that underpin the Campaign goals: the health of our nation; the development of our children; the growth of our economy; the future of our cities; and

the expression of who we are. These are the areas that the University has identified as being likely to attract significant philanthropic support with enormous potential for further development to the benefit of New Zealand – and the world.

In the buildup to the announcement of the Campaign target and attainment to date, the Chancellor, Hugh Fletcher, awarded Fellowships of The University of Auckland to Dr John Buchanan and Bridget Liddell. Both are alumni with long-standing connections to the University. Both also play a key role in the University's offshore fundraising, with John being Chair of the London-based UK Friends of The University of Auckland, and Bridget Chair of the US Friends of The University of Auckland.

Guest speaker Professor Richard Faull told guests the story of how he and his team advanced a dream to scientific reality thanks

to philanthropic support from the Freemasons NZ and family trusts.

"With this vital funding – I call it dream-money – we ended up producing irrefutable scientific evidence from our human brain studies that, against all dogma, the human brain can repair itself by making new brain cells."

Postdoctoral Fellow Dr Jessie Jacobsen, a member of Richard's research group, spoke of her "blue skies" PhD project – the successful creation of a unique model of Huntington's disease. "This will hopefully have the downstream effect of fast-tracking treatments for this and other neurological disorders in the clinic."

You will find more information about the Campaign goals in the "Leading the way" publication.



IMAGE: NEW ZEALAND HERALD

Charles Bidwill in the glory days of business in the 1980s as managing director of Ceramco

# Magnificent gift, major challenge

The man behind a major new gift to The University of Auckland wants to change the way New Zealand does business in the coming century...for the better. Louise Callan reports.

When Charles Bidwill was sent from a childhood growing up in Sydney to secondary school in Christchurch, the differences between the two countries made a lasting impression. Decades later, it proved the seed for one of the more unusual philanthropic gifts to The University of Auckland.

The Charles Bidwill/University of Auckland Business School (UABS) Entrepreneurial Challenge is a \$3million fund which will assist New Zealand businesses of real promise that have reached a critical stage in their growth and development to move to the next level. It will be distributed through an annual competition run by the Business School and The University of Auckland Foundation, which will hold the funds.

The intention behind the challenge is a perfect reflection of Charles Bidwill's own life and beliefs and those first youthful impressions, which were only confirmed once he left school to go into business.

Charles began a BCom at The University of Auckland when it was common to do commerce and accounting degrees part-time, out of business hours. He had started work in a share broking office where his university studies were in constant competition with trading on the floor. Ultimately the stock market won, and when he left New Zealand in 1963 he left his studies as well. Over the next three years, Charles travelled through stock broking offices in Australia, the United States and the UK. He was fascinated and energised by what he saw.

He says now that given free choice, he would have stayed overseas and gone to work in those international markets. Instead he returned home and rejoined his old firm, which became Statham, Kay, Bidwill & Company. He had been offered a partnership if he returned. "I actually had to think very hard about coming back; and I very nearly didn't. But I'd given a commitment to the senior partner, Bill Statham, whom I felt respect for."

That same year, at the then unusually young age of 26, he became a member of the Auckland Stock Exchange. The knowledge and contacts he had made overseas gave him an advantage. Business with Australia

was growing and he built on the relationships he already had in place. He also became involved in the fight by the pirate radio station, Radio Hauraki, which broadcast from a ship in the Hauraki Gulf, to win a radio licence.

"I undertook to underwrite their prospectus personally, within the firm's partnership. They were facing very vigorous opposition from the government through the Broadcasting Corporation. It was really the introduction of private radio to New Zealand and once Hauraki had its licence others sprang up all over the country. I ended up being a director of three radio companies in which Hauraki was a major shareholder. It was a fascinating time, an early signal of what was to come in 1984."

In 1969 Charles was ready to step out on his own and form a new company. If he'd had any doubts about his initial impressions of the local business environment, these were the years that irrevocably confirmed them.

"Through most of my business life in New Zealand, the country was basically a welfare state on one hand with Muldoon on the other. If you believed in entrepreneurship and markets and business and capitalism, then there were a huge number of ingredients missing in New Zealand."

At the beginning of the 1980s, Charles teamed up with fellow businessman Alan Gibbs, who was in the process of getting out of investment banking. Their timing was good. The country was about to experience one of its seismic shifts as the Muldoon years gave way to the Lange/Douglas partnership of the fourth Labour government. Suddenly deregulation and a business model for government were the game. For the next ten years, Charles and Gibbs were involved in the restructuring that took place in both state and private sectors. Charles Bidwill's name was connected as general manager, shareholder or director with some of the country's best known companies – Ceramco, Steel & Tube, Bendon, Baycorp.

By 1994 he was ready for change and in 1997 he and his wife Sue left for overseas, this time indefinitely. Once again he was drawn to the opportunities in international markets. "My

everyday activity now is foreign exchange and bonds. They're interesting because they are very international and almost anything and everything can influence them."

When he looks at New Zealand today, it is with those international influences in mind. Britain and America have had their time as the great economic powers. Now, and for the next century, it is Asia's turn. "We fail to engage with this change in the economic landscape at our peril.

"Here you have a small isolated country sitting on the fringes with a people who are very entrepreneurial. If New Zealand is going to take advantage of this, those who want to have a go should be given the opportunity. But I'm not sure there's the framework that allows that.

"The other thing is that a country of 4.5 million in a global economy cannot be an ordinary country. There has to be something special about it. The only people who can define those little areas where you can be special and successful are business people. Government will never find those niches. Generally it is small entrepreneurial companies that, if successful, are the ones that increase employment on a far greater percentage than larger companies."

All of this has fed into his decision to support the UABS Entrepreneurial Challenge which is to be set up by the Business School in conjunction with the University Foundation. The aim is that the Business School will not only support these developing companies, but also build a long-term relationship with them.

Vice-Chancellor Stuart McCutcheon sees the Charles Bidwill gift helping to stimulate a spirit of entrepreneurship in New Zealand while at the same time helping the Business School build even stronger links to the business community through its involvement in the winning companies' early stages of development and progression to an export emphasis, which New Zealand needs.

"What is particularly unusual about this very generous gift is Charles' willingness to see it placed at risk, through investment in new businesses, because he knows that without taking some risks business cannot succeed in

“New Zealand has terrific potential. We just have to approach things differently. And for me, that means being entrepreneurial.”



Charles Bidwill 2006

the international marketplace. In this Charles is undoubtedly “Leading the way” in the true spirit of our Campaign for the University.”

“Sure there’s risk,” Charles agrees. “The market place is all about risk. I just hope that I can contribute to inspire and enable people to get out there. New Zealand has terrific potential. We just have to approach things differently. And for me, that means being entrepreneurial. Hong Kong and Singapore are great examples. If that was New Zealand, the country would be in a totally different place from where it is today: the standard of living would be much improved.”

His reasons for placing this programme and his gift to fund it within the orbit of The University of Auckland are personal, which is how he sees philanthropy. “I think philanthropy is a very personal thing and now at my age, I look at my friends and they are supporting things that are close to themselves, that are personal in some way – education, medicine, business. Certainly what

has staggered me since I’ve been living in Britain is the wealth of universities here and in America through gifts from ex-students. I want to put my money into what is personal to me, my belief in the role of the entrepreneur, and to make that investment in New Zealand.”

For Professor Greg Whittred, Dean of The University of Auckland Business School, philanthropy provides vital support for the Business School’s entrepreneurial ecosystem: “The Bidwill/UABS Entrepreneurial Challenge Fund will provide companies that demonstrate potential with much needed assistance at a critical stage in their development. The ongoing benefits will reverberate through New Zealand’s economy. This gift is testament to Charles’ commitment to New Zealand and his belief in the importance of enterprise in driving the nation’s economic growth and productivity.”

The Challenge will be launched in 2009 and Charles Bidwill is looking forward to seeing the people who win and how they develop from year to year.

“This is the fascinating part.

Entrepreneurism is all about people. The secret is in judging the people who are going to have the potential. If we get it wrong we’ll lose money. But get it right and we’re sowing seeds for success.”

He also hopes it is the beginning of a virtuous circle: “Even if this scheme is only successful with 15 to 20 per cent of the companies, when they are successful businesses I hope those people will say in turn, ‘I wouldn’t be where I am today without this chance and these people.’ And in 10 or 30 years they will want to come back and support the Business School in mentoring and gifts.”

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# Our donors

Philanthropy at The University of Auckland is often seen in the shape of magnificent architecture – the sweeping curves of the Owen G Glenn Building or the intricate dome of the Gus Fisher Gallery – yet the motivation for many of our long-standing benefactors is as much to do with our place in the world as it is our place on campus. Helen Borne talked to several major donors about the aspirations behind their generosity.



IMAGE: PATRICK REYNOLDS

## Jenny Gibbs (CNZM)

For Jenny Gibbs, a life-long commitment to education began with her involvement at Playcentre in Titirangi, Auckland, in the 1960s.

“I have a deep and increasing belief in the transformative powers of education. If there was one thing I would wish on every child it would be the chance for a good education.”

Although best known as an art patron, Jenny has a 30-year history with the University and academia. An Arts alumna (MA 1962, Honorary DLit 2008) of the University, she was twice Pro-Chancellor and served on the

University Council for more than 25 years. She is a founding trustee of both the Auckland Medical School Foundation and The University of Auckland Foundation. In June of this year she received an honorary Doctor of Literature.

Her passion for visual arts, music and theatre and her commitment to making an active contribution to education and the community have inspired her involvement in numerous projects at the University. She is a significant donor to the Elam School of Fine Arts, the Liggins Institute and the Hood Fellowship Fund, which enables

leading academics from New Zealand and internationally to collaborate and to share their research with University and wider communities.

Jenny’s newest role at the University is as part of the leadership committee for the “Leading the way” fundraising campaign, which is chaired by Geoff Ricketts and includes 23 New Zealanders living here and offshore. Along with Chris Liddell, Chief Financial Officer of Microsoft Corporation, and John Graham, headmaster of Auckland Grammar for 21 years and Chancellor of the University

## CAMPAIGN

for five, Jenny is a patron for the Campaign, which is aimed at supporting the University's ability to make a significant contribution to major issues for New Zealand and globally.

"We need top quality leaders, thinkers, researchers to really make a difference. I've chosen over the years to give some money and a lot of my time and energy to The University of Auckland because it is one of the few

institutions in the country that is of world-class calibre. In an increasingly competitive global world the only way for a tiny remote country like New Zealand to survive is by using our brains and staying ahead, at least in some areas where we have a competitive advantage."

Jenny is a firm believer in New Zealand continuing to look outward and benchmark

ourselves against the best in the world.

"It's why I have supported, for example, the Hood Fellowships and the international residency programme at Elam. We need that outside stimulus; we do far too much anguished and inward looking navel-gazing."



### Douglas Myers (CBE)

A conviction that New Zealanders need to regain confidence that they can be successful on the world stage has driven much of the support that Douglas Myers has given across the domains of business, education and sport.

Douglas was a fourth-generation member of the Lion Nathan brewing dynasty and a dominant figure in the New Zealand business scene throughout the 1980s and 90s, after which he moved to the UK. Philanthropy was a tradition in the Myers family, which made generous gifts to the people of Auckland and various charities over many years.

Douglas believes that New Zealand's position as a successful First World country is at risk and that education and, in particular, business education, is one of the keys to "reversing New Zealand's slide".

"The University of Auckland should, in my view, focus on being the best possible centre of academic scholarship - that's the function and contribution of a university. Providing community leadership is a fine objective, with the rider that those who speak out should be

scholars in line with international thinking."

In 2000 Douglas was principal donor to the University's visual and performing arts centre, named the Kenneth Myers Centre in memory of his father.

He played a leading role in raising funds for the Business School project and his personal gift of \$1 million in 2002 was noteworthy for more than its magnitude. It took the fundraising attainment over the \$25 million mark and allowed the University to draw down the full \$25 million pledged by the government to match private sector donations.

His encouragement of New Zealanders to focus on offshore opportunities has also taken the form of Douglas Myers Scholarships, which offer outstanding Year 13 Kiwis the chance to embark on study at Gonville and Caius College at Cambridge University, where he himself read History.

Douglas Myers was conferred with an honorary Doctor of Laws degree in 2005.

### Owen Glenn (ONZM)

Owen Glenn's much publicised \$7.5 million gift to the Business School in 2005 - believed to be the largest private donation in New Zealand educational history - again demonstrates the belief of a successful expatriate New Zealander in the benefits that high quality business education will give the economy and society.

Owen is the founder and chairman of US-based container shipping giant, OTS Logistics Group, which has operations in more than 100 countries through various brands. He is one of the most successful business people this country has produced and a fitting inspiration for young entrepreneurs who are determined to make their mark internationally.

Known as a colourful and generous figure, Owen is a major supporter of numerous

charities and not-for-profit organisations in New Zealand and around the world. While in Auckland for the opening of the landmark Owen G Glenn Building in February 2008, Owen took the opportunity to visit the University's South Pacific Centre for Marine Science at Leigh, a project to which he donated \$500,000 in 2003 to support the establishment of a Chair in Marine Science.

"I have made my living from the ocean so it was nice to be able to support this particular initiative," he said.

Also in keeping with his interest in marine science, he is a founding member of the International Seakeepers Society, a group of superyacht owners who allow the University of Miami to install computer equipment on their yachts to analyse oceans.





## Gus Fisher

Gus and Irene Fisher have been part of the University community for almost a decade. Generous supporters of the University, they are also frequent guests at events and celebrations including the annual Distinguished Alumni Awards Dinner, which they have attended every year since 2001.

Gus is very clear on his reasons for being a major philanthropic partner: his own strong desire and sense of responsibility towards contributing to the greater good coupled with his respect for the University's "expertise, consistently high standard of education and dedication to making a better society."

"I'm very aware of how fortunate I am to be in a position to help and my association with the University has afforded me enormous pleasure."

A pioneer of New Zealand's fashion industry, Gus was founder of the top-end women's fashion company El-Jay NZ Ltd. Gus's design talents were recognised by Paris designer Christian Dior who, in 1954, asked him to reproduce his collection under licence in New Zealand.

His outstanding support to the University is best known through the Gus Fisher Gallery, established in 2000 as part of the University's visual and performing arts centre.

"I've always been passionate about art," said Gus. "I have always felt how important it is to a healthy society to have a good cultural understanding. The University didn't have an art gallery and I was very happy to be asked to help."

An added attraction for Gus was his admiration for the building: "It has always been one of my favourite buildings in Auckland. I was so proud to be involved."

He was a founding donor to the Hood Fund and more recently his generosity and family history led to the creation of the Gus Fisher Postdoctoral Fellowship in 2004, specialising in neurodegenerative diseases and the quest for a cure for Parkinson's disease. This is the first fellowship related to Parkinson's research ever offered in New Zealand. He considers philanthropy to be "absolutely vital" for the University to make the most of its expertise and succeed with its efforts to advance research.

Gus was conferred with an honorary Doctor of Laws degree from the University in 2005 and a Mayor's Living Legend Award in 2007.

"I'm very aware of how fortunate I am to be in a position to help and my association with the University has afforded me enormous pleasure."

## Anonymous Trust gift to the Business School

In 2006 a gift of \$5 million was made to the Business School from a private trust with a number of philanthropic activities in New Zealand which have tangible, direct and lasting benefits to New Zealand. This was given with the promise of a further \$5 million if the Business School raised \$10 million from other sources, creating a potential endowment of \$20 million.

The motivation behind this milestone gift was noted in documentation drawn up at that time. It was the view of the trust that the private sector should help itself by making contributions to produce the next generation of business students who would then become the next generation of business leaders and entrepreneurs. It worked with the Business School to set up a perpetual structure so that the benefits would be multi-generational.



### ASB Community Trust

The ASB Community Trust has given \$10 million to the University since 1999. The most recent major grant has been to the Starpath project, which has resulted in a partnership with a “perfect fit” says CEO Jennifer Gill.

The project is a Partnership for Excellence between the University and the Tertiary Education Commission and is aimed at transforming educational opportunities for those groups who are underrepresented in higher education.

“We recognised that the University was stepping outside of its own interests and looking at broader education issues, namely educational inequalities and the long tail of underachievement predominantly amongst our Māori and Pacific populations. We have moved away from supporting buildings; we’re much more interested in underlying social issues.”

The Trust made a \$1.5 million commitment to the project, which then attracted a further \$1.5 million in matched government funding. The Trust was then the impetus behind Starpath’s expansion into Northland in 2007.

“It’s a partnership in the true sense of the word. Our strategic vision and the University’s are aligned. It’s win, win, win.”

As well as her role as the Trust’s CEO, Jennifer Gill also holds the position of Chair of Philanthropy NZ.

She considers that philanthropy will play an increasingly important role

in the development of New Zealand.

“New Zealanders have ambitions - for our children, for our communities, for arts and culture - that are beyond what the taxpayer can provide. Our self-image is that we are a generous people. We want to see a better place, where everybody has a fair go.”

In comparing our culture of giving with that of the US, where average giving per annum is 2.2% of GDP as opposed to our 1%, she says that it’s not that New Zealanders are uncomfortable with giving; it’s more that we’re uncomfortable with asking.

She sees the recent changes in the New Zealand tax laws governing charitable giving as cause for great hope.

“I am very optimistic that the extraordinarily generous mechanisms that the government has put in place to stimulate giving will result in a significant change over five to ten years.”

## Explore and develop your creative talent

### Art, Writing and Language Workshops Wednesday 7 – Tuesday 13 January 2009

Come and enjoy “A Summer Affair” at The University of Auckland’s Centre for Continuing Education.



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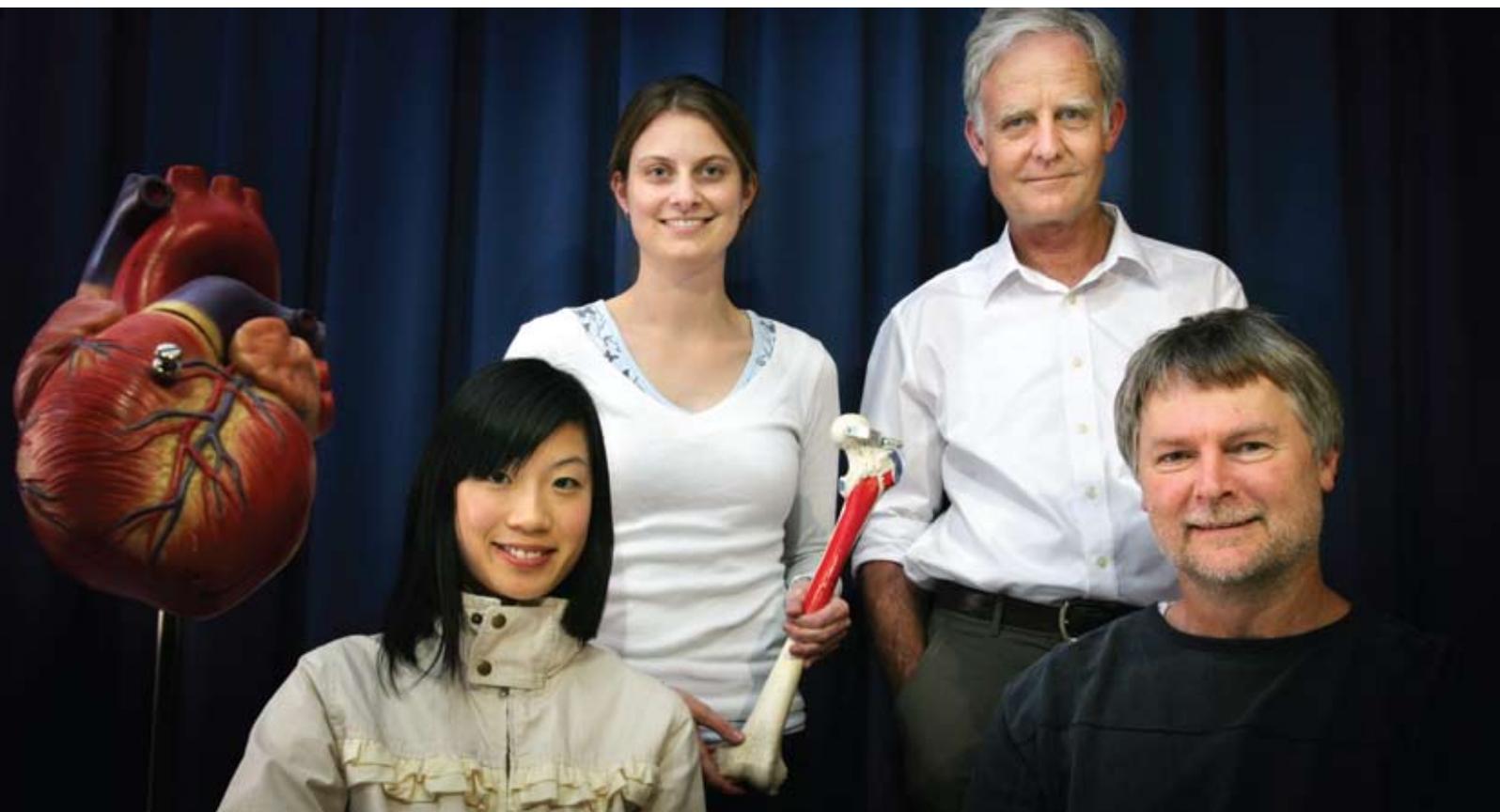
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# Advancing healthcare technology



Left to right: Bioengineering researchers Jessica Jor, Dr Hayley Reynolds, Professor Peter Hunter and Associate Professor Poul Nielsen.

The University of Auckland is a world leader in advancing technology to aid medicine. Judy Wilford, with input from Emma Timewell, explores three of our outstanding success stories: The Bioengineering Institute, the Centre for Healthcare Robotics and the National Institute for Health Innovation.

## At the heart of it all

Two great advances have transformed biological sciences over the last 50 years.

One is the human genome project, giving us a new understanding of the body and how it works at a cellular and sub-cellular level.

The other is the development of powerful imaging techniques that allow us to “view” the body and its systems in ways that have never been seen before.

Together these have provided the base of data that supports the human physiome project, a worldwide collaboration which aims ultimately to provide a linked hierarchy of working computer models of every organ and system of the human body for purposes of research, training and education, and for testing of drugs and other treatment. These

models will bring together information at all levels from the cellular and sub-cellular to the tissue and “whole body” levels.

A leading international player in the human physiome project is the Auckland Bioengineering Institute (ABI), established in 2001 and directed by Professor Peter Hunter, who is working in collaboration with Oxford University to create a complex integrated model of the human heart.

While the heart model is the most advanced of any in the world to date, teams of researchers from the Bioengineering Institute are collaborating with prestigious institutions such as Oxford, Harvard and Massachusetts Institute of Technology to produce models of other organs of the body, from which many applications are arising.

“The work is ongoing,” says Peter Hunter. “As you build and extend the models you expand the range of applications.”

In just one of many applications, a PhD student, Katja Oberhofer, is assisting Dr Sue Stott, a surgeon at Auckland Hospital, to help improve the gait of children with cerebral palsy.

As the child moves with markers on his or her legs, the movement can be tracked, Peter explains. When mathematical models of the anatomy of the leg are mapped onto the movement patterns, this assists the surgeon’s assessment of how to reorient the muscles to improve the child’s gait.

“You can also use the model to do ‘what ifs,’” says Peter. “‘What would happen if I reattached the muscle here? What would that

do to the gait?"

A project just completed on the lymphatic system, by PhD student Hayley Reynolds in collaboration with the Melanoma Unit at Sydney Hospital, is aiding clinicians treating melanoma patients by giving them information about how the cancer cells from a particular region of skin are likely to spread through the lymphatic system.

Among the dozens of other projects is a "virtual" model of the eye to be used for training surgeons, developed in collaboration with Harvard University; a model of the breast in different "loading" conditions designed to improve diagnosis of breast cancer; and a model of childbirth, developed to predict possible obstetric problems for elite athletes whose pelvic floor muscles are larger than those of most women.

A further application of high global significance is the projected use of the heart model to test, at a relatively early stage of development, whether drugs have any adverse effects on the "QT interval" (the "resting" phase between heartbeats). This interval is of great significance in healthy heart action and the costs can be huge if it is discovered at a late stage of development that a drug (for treatment of any condition) is detrimental to its functioning. A consortium of large pharmaceutical companies is supporting this research.

However, Peter believes the most important scientific advance to come out of the Auckland Bioengineering Institute in terms of supporting scientific endeavour worldwide, has been the CellML language, developed by Associate Professor Poul Nielsen (with colleagues).

This language, based on common mathematical formulae, has enabled the creation of a platform which makes it possible for researchers to "share" models directly and electronically.

"Mistakes are inevitable when models are translated into printed form to be published in refereed journals," says Poul. "To have them directly accessible through electronic channels using the same mathematical expressions totally avoids these mistakes and at the same time saves huge amounts of researchers' time."

Poul's team works with the authors of refereed papers to translate the published models into CellML language. These can then be made available on the CellML website ([www.cellml.org](http://www.cellml.org)) for downloading by other scientists working on related models. There are now over 360 peer-reviewed models on the site (of which around 20 were created

in Auckland). The site has been made freely available on the "open source" principle, says Poul, and is widely used by scientists from all over the world.

He quietly agrees that it is "neat to have been instrumental in developing a tool that has proved so successful because it is useful".

To enter any laboratory at the Bioengineering Institute is like stepping into a force field of intellectual excitement and energy. With its 140 researchers including 70 postgraduate students, there is a predominance of young faces.

And this, says Peter, is the most exciting aspect of the institute: "We have the ability to keep talented young people here in New Zealand, engaged in projects that are highly momentous on the world scene, and to attract people back to this country to do work that is of international significance. When we create opportunities either in terms of research projects or spinout companies, we are helping to make New Zealand a more attractive destination for talented young people."

## Creature comforts

Most people think of robots as having creature-like qualities, like R2D2 in Star Wars, says Dr Elizabeth Broadbent (pictured below).

"This is quite different from their perception of computers, which they simply see as tools."

Liz, a lecturer in Health Psychology at The University of Auckland, with a BE in electrical engineering as well as a PhD in Psychological Medicine, is conducting research on psychological aspects of human-robot interaction, as part of a much larger international project based in the University's newly-created Centre for Healthcare Robotics.

Over the last 12 years the University has developed advanced capabilities in robotics research. Now recognised as an innovator in human-robot interaction, it has joined forces with South Korea's Electronics and Telecommunications Research Institute (ETRI) to develop inexpensive mobile robots at the Auckland centre for use in health and care facilities for older people.

The project aims to keep older people at home longer and help nursing staff with duties that could be effectively managed by a robot.

"The developed world's population is ageing rapidly, and in many countries facilities for older people are struggling to maintain quality care. Mobile robot technology developed by the centre will help meet the challenge," says Dr Bruce MacDonald, who heads the new centre.



“Robots can perform simple tasks that don’t require hands-on care, such as recording vital signs, managing information, and delivering medication.”

The team will develop a robotic care assistant and a medication delivery robot, networked with broadband technology to a central service which will deliver the IT support they need.

A multidisciplinary research team is running the three-year project, including staff from Engineering, Medical and Health Sciences and the National Institute for Health Innovation, building on the University’s expertise in robot programming, human-robot interaction, psychological and clinical evaluation, healthcare informatics, wireless propagation and speech recognition.

Liz Broadbent has already conducted two research projects on robot-human interaction. One looked at people’s different reactions to robots that “behaved badly” (by not following instructions they were given), and to those that “behaved well”. Not surprisingly they “liked” the latter better.

The other was on people’s preconceptions of robots, and how this influenced their reactions (and their blood pressure levels) when it was a robot doing the measuring. Generally, says Liz, the blood pressure levels remained about the same – which was reassuring.

Liz is now conducting research at an Auckland retirement village to discover how the staff and residents would like a robot to look, and what they think it would be useful for. She has begun with focus groups, “which yield rich data”, but will also administer questionnaires “which allow for wider coverage”. The results will then be fed back to the roboticists, who will design the robots to accord with the needs of the users.

All rest homes are experiencing problems with staff retention, says Liz. People at the village are enthusiastic because they know the technology could help, at their own village and similar ones all over the world.

## Riding the wave

Why is New Zealand among the world leaders in electronic management of medical records?

Professor Jim Warren, chief scientist at the National Institute for Health Innovation (NIHI) at The University of Auckland, offers two excellent reasons.

“Vigorous use of software by our GPs means most clinical data is kept electronically,” he says, “which provides a strong base of information that countries like the US and

Canada simply don’t have.”

Another boost has been “the National Health Index (NHI) number – the unique health identifier implemented over several decades and now assigned to every child born in a New Zealand hospital. This,” says Jim, “is the envy of Australia which is still trying to implement one.”

For the patient it means continuity of care, since the plan is to allow our healthcare data to be accessed, extended and managed by all relevant providers.

For the researcher it allows the collection of statistical and demographic data to give valuable insights into the health of whole populations, and the distribution of diseases.

The central interest of the NIHI, launched in 2006 through a \$7 million grant from the New Zealand government’s “Partnerships for Excellence” programme, with additional funding from industry partners, is in improving New Zealanders’ health. A major aim is to inform policy decisions and help implement the government’s Health IT strategy.

One current research focus is on preventing mismanagement of medication, recognised as a problem worldwide. This includes the large number of people with chronic conditions who do not take their treatment as prescribed.

When NIHI researchers, in collaboration with West Fono Trust in West Auckland, analysed records for patients prescribed medication for high blood pressure, they discovered a large proportion were not requesting repeats at the right time. As these drugs prevent life-threatening conditions such as heart attacks and kidney failure, it definitely benefits both the patient and the health system to ensure that blood pressure is consistently controlled.

Hence in a new outreach programme patients will be contacted as their medication repeats are due. The aim is to understand what the issues are and ultimately improve health through control of blood pressure.

Jim sees an upcoming revolution in the use of healthcare technology. While New Zealand is one of the leading countries, there is still a lot to do, he believes, to ensure maximum benefits from the great wave of change.

“A number of organisations and companies are now offering people access to their own health records online. Denmark is encouraging people to schedule their GP appointments online. There is huge potential for IT in health care, and we need to make sure New Zealand is using all the best practices to make it work for us.”

# Choosing write

Award winning writer, alumna Charlotte Grimshaw talks to Nicholas Reid.

"The whole thing is a unified composition, so I don't even think of it as a collection of short stories."

Charlotte Grimshaw (BA/LLB 1990) is speaking of her book *Opportunity*. It won the 2008 Montana Fiction Award and then the supreme prize, the Montana Medal for Fiction or Poetry. They are the latest accolades for a literary career that is going from strength to strength.

Charlotte's first novels *Provocation* and *Guilt* were published in 1999 and 2000, to considerable critical acclaim. Her third novel *Foreign City* followed in 2005. In 2006 her story "Plane Sailing", later included in *Opportunity*, won her the Bank of New Zealand Katherine Mansfield Award. *Opportunity* was shortlisted for the O'Connor International Short Story Award before it won the important Montanas.

The mother of three, Charlotte is committed to her career as a fulltime writer. She writes every day between 9am and 3pm when the children are at school. But plenty of other life experience came before the writing career was established.

As a student at The University of Auckland she undertook a conjoint BA/LLB, before spending two years working in commercial and property law. Both the Arts and the Law sides of her degree proved invaluable for her later writing life.

"I've always been more interested in the criminal law than in the commercial side for reasons that you can imagine – because there are so many good stories. In fact, as a student, I had a close friendship with a criminal lawyer. He had a lot of criminal clients and I would go to murder trials and to Waikeria Prison with him. At that time I met a lot of people accused of murder. I found it really fascinating."

She agrees that even then "at some level" she was thinking in terms of the interesting stories she could make out of what she encountered. But it was not necessarily the



IMAGE: BECKY NUNIES

matter of criminal motive that interested her. Rather she was intrigued by the question of free will. "That is one of my main interests. To what extent we are responsible for our actions?" A story called "Free Will" features in *Opportunity*.

As for the BA side of her studies, she majored in English, and also took papers in European languages.

"Of course I did the 20th century novel paper but, weirdly enough, I remember that I loved doing the Chaucer paper too. Your writing has to be improved by the fact that you have studied English literature," she says. "I would say that the English literature parts of a BA are of far more value to the writer than a creative writing course would be, because the way to learn how to write is to study the Canon. You can't learn how to write without reading the classics, learning what writing is, and understanding what is good and what is not."

Inevitably questions about her University studies lead to questions about her father, the distinguished novelist, poet and critic C.K. Stead. For twenty years he was Professor of English at Auckland before taking early

retirement to devote himself full-time to his writing.

Asked to what extent her father has influenced her own writing, Charlotte says: "It's really hard to answer that. Any influence would have to be something subtle. I think of his poetry as having aesthetic excellence, so to a certain extent we might have the same sort of sensibility. But we would never sit down and analyse each other's work or discuss work in progress. When I was a student he was not the sort of parent who tried to have any influence over what I chose to do, and at that time I was more engaged in the Law degree than in the Arts degree – in fact I came to a real fixation on literature only later. My father is not my 'mentor' in any literary sense."

In writing *Opportunity*, she was not aware of any literary model for the book's concept of interlocking stories with recurring characters, although of one story she does say "there's something a little Moravia [Italian writer Alberto Moravia] there because I let ambiguity creep in at the end."

"I'm always reading and reading and reading, so in terms of the prose there would be all sorts of influences, but I can't think

continued on page 18

# A tour de force

Alumna Margaret Medlyn talks to Tess Redgrave about her opera career.

"Put your tongue down and aim for the far wall."

This was the advice Margaret Medlyn's mother gave her daughter when she went for a singing audition at The University of Auckland's School of Music in 1974.

"So that's what I did," remembers Margaret. "But to my utter annoyance Professor Peter Godfrey [then head of the school] rang up Mum – not me! – and said 'this girl has got a voice and it should be trained!'".

The rest is history. Margaret Medlyn was accepted into the School of Music in 1975 and graduated with a Bachelor of Music Performance in 1979. After a year teaching in Britain she did her apprenticeship as an opera singer touring for four years with the Kent Opera company. She has since sung for English National Opera, Covent Garden, Vienna State Opera, all the opera companies in Australia, and is a regular performer in New Zealand opera productions. She has had title roles in many of the great operas – *Tosca*, *Aida*, *Turandot*, *Salome*, *Il trovatore*, *Parsifal*, *Der Freischütz*, *Die Walküre*, *Il tabarro* and *Duke Bluebeard's Castle* – and she has an extensive concert repertoire.

"Margaret brings an extraordinary presence to her opera roles," says Aidan Lang, General Manager of New Zealand's NBR Opera. "She builds a character in a meticulous fashion leaving no stone unturned and gives a compelling performance."

Aidan points out that Margaret is extremely rare because she manages to have an active career while based in New Zealand. "There's nobody else like her here at the moment," he says.

Yet becoming an opera diva was something of an accident for Margaret. When *Ingenio* caught up with her in Auckland in September rehearsing for the Czech Opera *Jenůfa*, the Wellington-based singer explained slightly wistfully that in fact she'd gone to university wanting to become a doctor.

"From the age of five I was going to be a doctor," she says. "At university that first year I took social anthropology, prehistoric archaeology, Renaissance literature, English grammar – and music purely because I thought I knew something about it.

"My family is very musical," she explains.

"We always sang in a choir and on Friday nights we'd go up to my grandparents for singalongs round the piano. Mum originally had a place in the London Royal College of Music but then the war came and in the 1960s we moved over here from England and she started directing. Her love was light opera, music halls, Gilbert and Sullivan – that sort of stuff. She managed to rope in my younger sister Helen [also one of New Zealand's leading singers] but I was rather fat and sceptical so I worked backstage."

After completing her first year at the University, Margaret found herself enrolled in the School of Music's performance degree almost as a fait accompli "and stupidly all my ideas of going to medical school went out the door.

"I was the first in my family to go to university," she says. "No one said to me think about this... you've always wanted to be a doctor. You've always been interested in things medical. I don't think it would've been possible to combine the two careers but it could've been possible to keep some interest in medicine going. What I would very much like to do now is to be something like an ENT specialist but specialising in voice – I'm very interested in the physiological aspects of singing."

Interestingly, on this note, Margaret has undergone an unusual voice change in her opera career: she began singing as a "mezzo" soprano and is now a "dramatic" soprano.

"What I understand now is that I've got quite an unusual voice in that it's not a nice, light soprano," she says. "It's a very heavy sound and these voices take a long time to mature because they



IMAGE: ADRIAN MALLOCH

Margaret Medlyn as Kostelnička in *Jenůfa*

## Medlyn continued

need the physical strength and maturity of the apparatus to sustain the amount of sound and quality of sound that you need to produce.

“Unfortunately that early misdiagnosis has led to some light muscle patternings I can’t change,” she says adding that New Zealand singers really suffer from the way they speak. “We have quite a lot of tongue grip – like this,” she immediately drops into a low, deep voice. “As a singer you have to be aware that this is something that pulls you back all the time. I have to get myself up and out of it every morning.”

Margaret sang her first big dramatic soprano role as Leonora in *Il trovatore* in Adelaide in 1999; she has since won considerable acclaim as a soprano. “This is a soprano who doesn’t shirk from the big sings,” praised a 2007 *NZ Herald* review of her role as the icy heroine in Puccini’s *Turandot*.

Dramatic sopranos are in demand and Margaret could work all over the world but she chooses to stay close to New Zealand. “I made the decision to be based here when my children [Tom, 20, Jess, 22] were younger and it’s paid off,” she says referring to the fact that both have emerged successfully from their teenage years and are now launching their own careers.

Being an opera singer is hard work and a way of life, she says. “You can’t go out raving, you have to look after your health and your

voice - all of which gets tedious. Sometimes you just wish you could go off on a bender. If you’re travelling away from home, you’re staying in hotels and your life is on hold.”

She retains some balance by combining singing engagements with teaching at the New Zealand School of Music. But while she loves the work she is wary of the mystique that can surround singing teachers. “You know the attitude ‘I will unlock your voice’ – which is rubbish. You teach someone, you give them

New Zealand singers really suffer from the way they speak. “We have quite a lot of tongue grip.”

the tools and then they ‘unlock their own voice’.”

She stresses that getting a good academic grounding like she had at The University of Auckland is vital for young singers, as is a good grounding in the languages of opera: French, German, Italian.

“I’ve spent my life catching up on languages,” she says. Though one senses she’s a master now. Between rehearsals for *Jenůfa* which is sung in Czech, she was flying back to Wellington to rehearse for *Duke Bluebeard’s*

*Castle* which is sung in Hungarian.

“No mean feat,” observes Aidan Lang.

As well as singing, an opera diva must be able to act and this is the side of her career that Margaret particularly relishes. “When I get up on stage I don’t worry about the singing. I know I can do it. I’m interested in delving into the role or an aspect of the character to bring to life.”

Invited to watch a rehearsal of *Jenůfa* out at NZ Opera’s warehouse-based studio in Onehunga, *Ingenio* witnesses the “drama” Margaret brings to her performance. The international cast are rehearsing the first scene of Act III, which will reveal that Margaret’s character Kostelnička has drowned her stepdaughter’s baby under winter ice. As a nervous, haunted figure, distractedly fingering rosary beads and muttering to herself shuffles across the stage, Kostelnička comes to life and Margaret Medlyn vanishes.

Three weeks later when *Jenůfa* opens in Auckland, Margaret’s performance is acclaimed by an opening night reviewer as “a tour de force for the soprano”.

“I imagine singing Kostelnička until I’m nearly dead,” she says. “It’s a fantastic role, so emotional. I think it’s important not to have operas that are all about pretty singing.

“If opera is going to survive, it needs these gritty, dramatic pieces.”

## Grimshaw continued

of one dominant influence. For example, if I read a lot of Katherine Mansfield, I feel it increases the intensity of my writing. It’s like going to the gym to get fitter. There would be various writers who help me with that sort of intensity. Somehow you absorb something of their rhythm. But in terms of the structure, I can’t think of somebody who has put together stories in the way I’ve attempted here.”

She emphasises that *Opportunity* is not a random collection of stories.

“After I’d written the second story, I thought this is going to grow in a particular way and it’s going to have a particular structure. They’re all going to fit together – it’s going to be a single composition. The title story, *Opportunity*, is linked to one of the strongest themes of the collection, which is opportunism and which again is linked to my strong interest in free will.”

All the stories in *Opportunity* are narrated in the first person. The narrator of the opening

story sets up the collection by speculating on whether we are animals following instinct or conscious beings with free will. But really “he’s that Modernist construct, ‘the unreliable narrator’, as all my narrators are”.

She cannot remember facing any particular struggle to create distinctive voices for each narrator. “I become very absorbed in each character who takes up the narrative, so that I find I don’t want to be finished with them.”

How aware is she of where a story is going to end when she begins it? “I think I’ve got a good idea of where it’s going to go when it’s a short story. When it’s a novel there’s more waiting to see what you’re going to do next.”

Charlotte is modest about her 2008 Montana awards. Ironically she notes that she received a third award at the Montana ceremony – the BPANZ (Book Publishers’ Association of New Zealand) Reviewer of the Year Award for her book reviews in the *Listener*. She says that after one particular

review “into which I put a lot of energy”, she was more confident about receiving the reviewer award than the major fiction award.

Uncharacteristically among authors, she is willing to say a few words about her current project.

“I’ve got a sequel to *Opportunity* with many of the same characters and a direct sequel to the title story. I think I’ve resurrected the characters because they’re so vivid to me. I’ve also resurrected them in the third person. The next book will be in the third person.”

Could she ever see a time when she might abandon writing and return to a practice of the law?

“I like being involved in the law. I like going to trials. I find the criminal law intensely interesting, but I wouldn’t want to practise it, mainly because I wouldn’t be writing, and writing is what I really want to do.”



# Dial a sauvignon

University researchers are leading a \$9 million project to find out what makes New Zealand sauvignon blanc so distinctive on the global market.

The aim of the six-year, government-funded project, is to understand what compounds contribute to the typical NZ sauvignon “fruity” or “green grassy” characteristics wine lovers can taste and smell.

Soon, winemakers may be able to “dial a flavour”, consistently producing wines with the intense flavour-burst New Zealand sauvignon has become recognised for.

The secret lies in two compounds – the fruity passionfruit-like thiols and green, capsicum-esque methoxypyrazines. While these are probably present in all sauvignons produced worldwide, New Zealand sauvignon, particularly from Marlborough, has much higher levels.

“So the next question is why, and how do we control them?” says the project’s lead investigator, University of Auckland Professor of Biological Sciences, Richard Gardner.

University researchers are looking at the yeast used in winemaking and have found this impacts on the aromas produced during the fermentation process. They are also looking at the chemistry of the compounds - how they are formed during the winemaking process, how they are affected by bottling and aging, and if there are other compounds not yet identified that individualise New Zealand sauvignon. The data produced at the University is matched with sensory panel data from HortResearch, to compare and contrast chemistry results with human senses. Simultaneously, the Marlborough Wine Research Centre is looking at what happens in the vineyards and how the soil, weather, irrigation, farming and harvest of the grapes impact on the aromas ultimately produced.

The project, coordinated by the Foundation for Research Science and Technology, is already producing results. On a purely scientific level, some yeast behaviours required for alcohol production have been explained. In addition, a new collaboration with Canadian researchers will allow some of the lessons learnt to be applied to other “New

World” wines, while exploring more of New Zealand wine’s distinct characteristics.

“There is a benefit in becoming known as an expert in a specific wine style,” admits Dr Paul Kilmartin from the University’s Department of Chemistry. “Think the wine regions of France,” he says concluding that with the tools developed in this project, “we can hopefully retain the success of New Zealand sauvignon into the future”.

Emma Timewell

## ALUMNI-RUN VINEYARD SITE OF RESEARCH

University researchers’ quest to understand how yeast impacts on wine has taken them to Kumeu River Wines, run by winemaker Michael Brajkovich and his three siblings Milan (BE 1985), who looks after the vines; marketer Paul (BCom 1990) and sister Marijana (BCom 1983) who takes care of the finances.

Researchers have looked closely at the vineyard’s use of natural rather than commercial yeasts and discovered numerous different yeasts growing naturally on the grapes and vines, but low levels of *Saccharomyces cerevisiae*, or brewer’s yeast, which is required to completely ferment the grape juice. They are now trying to find out if the amount of *S cerevisiae* present in the vines is enough to cause the fermentation reaction, or if it is being introduced elsewhere in the process.

Dr Mat Goddard of the School of Biological Sciences is convinced yeast is one of the keys to producing a good wine. “If the right conditions allow fermentation to take place using the diversity of natural yeast, it will potentially produce different wines to using commercially available yeast,” he says. “The aim is to isolate a range of natural beneficial yeast and provide it to winemakers as a ‘spice-rack’ to produce more premium consistently-known results.”



Associate Professor Peter Robinson is this year's Walters Prize recipient while his latest work has been hailed by international curators and young viewers alike. He talks with Tess Redgrave.

# Cool stuff – the art of Peter Robinson

“A consistent thread that permeates my practice has been a sense of paradox; the sense that what you see is not necessarily what you’re getting.”

Associate Professor of Fine Arts, Peter Robinson clicks to a new frame on his laptop.

“For example here,” he says pointing to an image of a length of chain made out of that ubiquitous disposable material – stark white polystyrene. “There’s something strange going on there. The chain motif is associated with strength, constriction and restraint yet the fragile materiality of the installation contradicts this reading.”

It is early evening and Peter and I are sitting behind the desk in his large office at Elam School of Fine Arts. It’s been a busy day for the artist who is in the midst of a four-week stint as acting head of school. But now as the corridors outside hush to a pin-drop quiet, he uses a PowerPoint presentation created for students to explain the academic and artistic journey he’s been on during the last two years.

And what a journey it’s been, framed at either end by two high-profile and groundbreaking works of art. The first of these is *ACK*, a sprawling sculpture carved out of polystyrene that one critic called “a huge biomorphic critter” and which won this year’s Walters – New Zealand’s most prestigious contemporary art prize – prompting French curator and judge Catherine David to hail it as “multi-layered, engaging and universal”, a work “that could be shown in Paris or New York and not lose its resonances”.

The second work is *Snow Ball Blind Time*, a gigantic installation comprising six tons of polystyrene which weaved and probed its way through seven levels and 574 square metres of New Plymouth’s Govett-Brewster gallery. Just “wrapped” and on its way to being recycled, the installation has taken the New Zealand art world and New Plymouth locals alike by storm. “This is a great moment in New Zealand art history,” exclaimed Simon Bowden, the Executive Director of the New Zealand Arts Foundation when he viewed it. “My aunt suggested I came. I was amazed! – its really cool stuff,” wrote a viewer identified only as “under 15 years old” in the gallery’s

comments’ book. Throughout the show [13 September to 23 November] Govett-Brewster’s numbers have, on average, more than doubled as people who wouldn’t normally set foot inside an art galley flocked to see the spectacle.

Pushing boundaries with his art is nothing new to Peter Robinson. After graduating from the University of Canterbury’s Ilam School of Fine Arts in 1989, he spent the 1990s exploring identity and cultural politics deploying loaded symbols such as the swastika and producing a series of paintings calculating the exact percentage of his Māori heritage at 3.125%.

Time spent in Europe at the end of the decade, including in Berlin on the Künstlerhaus Bethanien Residency, resulted in a shift from the specifics of cultural identity into a more universal, philosophical discussion of existence culminating in “Divine Comedy,” one of two works chosen to represent New Zealand at the 49th Venice Biennale in 2001.

It was soon after this that he returned home and in 2003 joined the staff of Elam. Perhaps it is no accident that at the same time his art started to shift in a new direction, back, in fact, to the concerns of his major university discipline, sculpture, and to revisiting formal propositions such as “materiality, line, scale, balance, tension, pressure” that he was teaching first-year students.

“The university context has reinvigorated my practice,” he reflects. “I’ve become more critical and I’m more critically engaged; I find the interaction with staff and students very stimulating.”

Certainly that stimulation has reaped rewards in the art world. In 2006 Peter’s visceral, mixed media sculpture *The Humours* was chosen as a finalist in that year’s Walters Prize. At the same time *ACK* made its first appearance in the public arena at Auckland’s ARTSPACE bursting through a wall between two rooms, testing the gallery’s architectural space, and viewers, to the limit.

It was as a result of seeing *ACK*, that Rhana Devenport, Director of New Plymouth’s Govett-Brewster Gallery, decided to

## RESEARCH

commission Peter to create a single-artist show “that would really interrogate the architectural space of the gallery.

“When the Govett-Brewster opened in 1970, Leon Narbey [then at Elam, now a renowned cinematographer] put on a fantastic single-artist light show called *Real Time*,” explains Rhana. “I was keen to commission a work that would be in conversation with the spirit and experience of that.”

Although daunted by the sheer scale of the project and the ethical issues of working with a huge amount of polystyrene, Peter Robinson accepted the challenge. With the help of a National Institute of Creative Arts and Industries research grant, he spent the next 18 months researching and testing ideas that had surfaced during the making of *ACK*.

“The moments I’d really enjoyed with *ACK* were the way simple, formal architectural propositions were juxtaposed against organic elements. So for the next work I started by re-looking at minimalist and post-minimalist art from the 1960s and 70s, people like Eva Hesse and Robert Morris [both US artists]. There’s a softening of minimalism in these artists,” he explains showing me some of their work on his laptop screen. “Minimalism is characterised by hard, geometric architectural forms. Here there’s a more organic, more open sense of materiality coming into play.”

He also looked at the work of French essayist, novelist and theorist Georges Bataille – in particular his theory on the formless and its relationship to post-minimalism.

“Bataille talks about resistance to the institution – dirt, excrement, mess – providing subversive potential in relation to modernism which is about purity, utopian ideals, hard edges and a singular voice.”

As Peter developed his ideas he began fleshing them out through six smaller exhibitions. At each stage he carefully documented the process (approximately 2,000 images, plus notes and architectural drawings) and created a storehouse he can now draw on in his teaching.

“It is very satisfying to be able to teach from your research,” he says to me, “and with this project my work has become an active part of the teaching process.”

But today I am “the student” as I sit beside him peering at the objects sculpted out of polystyrene on the screen: tiny delicate 30 millimetre chain links which could be jewellery or a necklace perhaps? Now a polystyrene rock which looks like it’s blasted in from the Antarctic.

“I’ve worked in a linear and sequential way,”

says Peter. “Through small steps things are achieved and developed. But within that there are interstices: moments where I relinquish control, where I simply throw things around and see what happens and respond to it. In terms of my research methodology – that’s where I’m at.”

Polystyrene is also a deliberate part of the research methodology. “If you limit materials and techniques, it allows an incredible freedom and a clarity of expression.”

More steps towards *Snow Ball Blind Time* beam up on the screen: a piece of aluminium metal which appears to have a polystyrene puff penetrating its surface so that it inverts



the opposition of an architectural geometric structure supporting something organic.

Slowly the objects are getting larger too: big, life-size rocks and now giant chain links three metres long. “But this not just about getting larger,” cautions Peter. “It’s about testing the limits of the material through the shifts in scale.”

About 12 months prior to the opening of *Snow Ball Blind Time*, Peter began working directly with an architectural model of the Govett-Brewster Gallery 1/25th its size. As he experimented with hundreds of installations he let the gallery’s architectural bones provide the logic for the work. At the same time he negotiated a deal with an Auckland polystyrene manufacturer to recycle the entire installation once the show was over.

Four months out from opening night, the first of eight 40ft containers of flat-packed

polystyrene began arriving in New Plymouth where two volunteers were occupied full-time at the Govett-Brewster linking, by hand, many of the 300,000 chain links in seven different sizes. Back at the University many of Peter’s Elam students were also employed connecting chain links.

When *Snow Ball Blind Time* finally opened on 13 September, viewers were enthralled by the chains sometimes propped up on a bed of white rubble, at other times leaping across voids, snaking from level to level through the gallery, and all the while guarded by polystyrene stanchions – a reference to the building’s former history as a cinema – “standing at the ready” on the ground floor.

“The excessive, gestural and organic nature of *Snow Ball Blind Time* suggests freedom and openness and even subversion or resistance to the architectural constraints of the institution,” reflects Peter, referring me again to Bataille’s theory of the formless.

“This is an extraordinary work that succeeds on a number of levels,” says Rhana Devenport, one of three curators who have written an essay for a book on the process from *ACK* to *Snow Ball Blind Time* to be published in early December. “It is an important new work by one of New Zealand’s leading artists and it is also a work that is pulling in all ages. It is significant and powerful in terms of the encounter and leaves a tremendous amount of room for viewers to bring to the work their own ideas and emotional associations.”

This may be the ultimate accolade for Peter. Earlier we had discussed how a broader audience might be confounded by his work. In response he mentioned Austrian sculptor Franz West who had held his own interest “because his work resists interpretation”. And then he paraphrased fashion icon Coco Chanel on the difference between fashion and art.

“I was telling students today how she’d described a fashion garment as something you desire immediately, you want it and you think you can’t live without it. Time goes by and it becomes less and less important, to the point where you may throw it out, dismiss it. Never want to see it again.

“Art is the inverse of that. To the extent that the first time you see it, it might be disturbing. It might irritate. It mightn’t make any sense but the more time you spend with it, the more you desire it – the more it releases, more and more.”

# An EPIC day for Hayley

A smile flashes across four-year-old Hayley Martin's face as she experiences the thrill of moving herself independently for the first time.

Hayley (pictured right), from Carlson School for Cerebral Palsy in Epsom, is the first person to test a "motorised wheelchair platform" built by students from the Faculty of Engineering's EPICS programme.

EPICS, which stands for Engineering Programmes in Communities, was founded at Purdue University in the US in 1995 to give engineering students a chance to work on projects out in the real world. Auckland is the only university outside America running the programme.

"There are many community groups that may have the best intentions and ideas, but do not have access to the engineering skills and resources to realise them. EPICS is bridging that gap," says Civil Engineering senior lecturer Dr Doug Wilson.

This year, at Carlson School, EPICS students designed a platform to help children with cerebral palsy develop vital motor skills, and to help them qualify for a government-funded motorised chair of their own.

Bev Anich, an occupational therapist at Carlson School, explains that her students must demonstrate they can drive an electric chair before they receive funding, but they are often only given days to practise on a loaned chair.

"The trial period to learn how to operate an electric chair is often quite short and the students may not develop the necessary skills in time," Bev says. "We hope that with use of this platform, some students may be able to progress to their own motorised wheelchair, and for many of our students the platform will just remain as an opportunity to experience self-motivated movement. We are extremely grateful to the engineering students for their enthusiasm and ideas in coming up with a solution to this problem."

Any child's manual wheelchair can be rolled on to the platform, effectively turning into an electronic chair with controls for forward, backward, left or right. It enables children with cerebral palsy to practise motorised movement at their own pace and in the comfort of their own wheelchair. Experiencing self-motivated movement, especially at an early age, is believed to improve the development potential



IMAGE: BRETT PHIBBS

of children with cerebral palsy.

Dr Doug Wilson, who mentored the Carlson School project with fellow senior lecturer in Mechanical Engineering Dr Roger Halkyard, says it captured the spirit of EPICS. EPICS' projects are long-term, resulting in systems that have a significant, lasting impact on the community organisations and the people they serve.

Doug says the wheelchair platform has attracted some commercial interest and he is investigating patenting the device.

Creating a wireless sensory room at Carlson School is the next project being explored by EPICS. Other EPICS projects in the past year have included developing new milk bottle recycling technology for Waiheke Island, on-site recycling of waste cooking oil on Waiheke, the digitisation of artefacts in The Auckland War Memorial Museum, and improving the food preparation area of the Reipae Dining Hall, part of the Marae complex on the University's City Campus.

Danelle Clayton

OPINION



IMAGE: KATHRYN ROBINSON

# Getting Auckland moving

Having been fortunate enough to live in a number of cities in Europe, Asia and North America, I was surprised to find that Auckland, with an urban population of just over 1.4 million, experiences some of the heaviest traffic congestion during peak periods for a city of its size.

My research revealed that the greater Auckland region is characterised by an average of 19 persons per hectare (2001) which is low density residential development, even by Australian and North American standards. In fact in 1911, average persons per hectare was about the same. In part the geographic formation of the Auckland isthmus

has meant that urban development was pushed along a north-south axis resulting in suburbia progressively replacing rural land. This development has reinforced a reliance on the private motor vehicle.

As new residential development occurred, employment, leisure and commercial activity became decentralised. In 15 years the CBD share of regional employment fell from nearly 20 percent in 1967 to 12 percent in 1991. This had a dramatic effect on the passenger transport system which had previously been centred on the Auckland City CBD. Patronage of public transport dropped dramatically as private vehicle trips expanded rapidly.

Over the years there has been a staggering number of transport reports written on what investment in public transport the Auckland region should adopt; I recall that one of Auckland's newspapers in 2001 (my first visit) called it "Mass transit merry-go-round".

This "merry-go-round" started in the 1930s when the Railway Station was shifted from Queen Street to Beach Road to allow for the development of an inner city and outer city Loop Rail Network. It never happened. Then the *Master Transportation Plan* of 1955 recommended that motorways be built in



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preference to the underground extension and electrification of suburban railway.

In 1973 the Labour government was ready to fund the first stage of rapid rail in the southern rail corridor and a project began work but a change of government halted this. By 1976 a review called the *Comprehensive Transportation Study (CTS)* recommended completion of the motorways and modest upgrading of the existing rail system. The 1988 CTS Update recommended an O-Bahn guided busway be built on rail corridors. A year later the ARC resolved to build a light rail system over existing rail tracks.

In 1995 the *Regional Land Transport Plan* recommended a start on the light rail system and the western lines by 2000. In November of 1999 the *Regional Transport Plan* endorsed rapid transit on the western and southern rail corridors and a high frequency busway alongside the northern motorway.

The Northern Busway is now built and is New Zealand's first purpose-built road dedicated to bus passenger transport. Is this the start of a new era in reducing traffic congestion?

The above chain of events reminds me of the following story: two marketing people

from a European shoe factory are sent to investigate the potential sale of shoes in Africa. A few days later, faxes from each of them arrive at the manager's office. The first fax reads: "No chances, everyone is barefoot." The second fax urges: "Lots of chances, everyone is barefoot."

For Aucklanders there are lots of chances; the City Fathers don't need to wait for yet another plan to be developed.

One possible definition of a prudent public transport service, shifting people from cars to bus, rail and ferry, is this: an advanced, attractive public transport system that operates reliably and relatively rapidly, with smooth (ease of) synchronised transfers, part of the door-to-door passenger chain. Improving public transport routing and coordination is one of the ingredients of resolving successfully Auckland's traffic struggle.

It is pleasing to note that New Zealand now has coherent transport legislation, a new New Zealand Transport Agency, and proactive local and regional transport organisations ready to make a difference. Galileo Galilei said: "Science proceeds more by what it has learned to ignore [...past plans] than what it takes into account [...a new plan]."

Professor Avishai (Avi) Ceder is the director of the University's new Transportation Research Centre (see: [www.trc-auckland.net.nz](http://www.trc-auckland.net.nz)). He has had a distinguished academic career in Israel and is a former chief scientist at the Israel Ministry of Transport as well as being Israel's delegate to the Transport Programme of the European Community.



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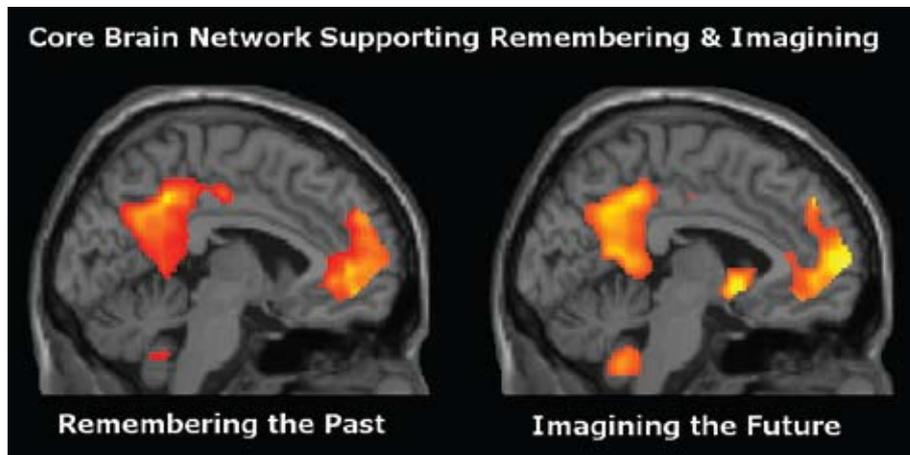
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# Remembering the future



Memory lies at the base of our identity. What we remember is a powerful determinant of who we are. Judy Wilford speaks to two researchers who are gaining exciting new insights into the meaning and purpose of memories.

What do we do when we plan a party?

We think of other parties we have given or attended. We think of food, of flowers, of colour and music and lighting; perhaps we experiment mentally with the best arrangement of furniture or imagine a convivial flow of people to and fro through doors to a deck.

And of course we consider the friends we might invite, their personalities and their compatibilities. Will they argue, flirt or fight? Will they love or hate one another?

What we are doing here is drawing from a variety of personal memories to create an imagined scenario of a future event.

And this habit, according to two researchers from the Department of Psychology at The University of Auckland, might well be at the heart of what it means to be human.

Dr Donna Rose Addis completed her BA in Psychology and her MA in cognitive neuroscience at Auckland, following this with a PhD at the University of Toronto and three

years as a postdoctoral fellow at Harvard.

Since returning to take up a lectureship at the University, she has joined her expertise with that of Professor Michael Corballis (University of Auckland) and Professor Daniel Schacter (Harvard University) for a three-year, Marsden-funded study of the links between memory and imagination and the peculiarly human facility for the mind to move between them.

The human mind, says Michael, flows constantly on a continuum between the remembered past and the imagined future. In that sense all of us are “mental time travellers”.

Could it be that the function of personal memory is in fact to help us plan and create our lives?

Basically humans have two kinds of memories, Michael explains. “There’s remembering, which is your actual memories of what you’ve seen and done – often called episodic or autobiographical memory. The other is a form of memory that we like to call ‘knowing’, so you may know for example that Paris is in France, that Christmas is in December and Shakespeare wrote *Macbeth*.”

This kind of knowledge also encompasses skills, Michael adds, like the memory of how to read, ski or play the violin.

But one question Michael, Donna and other psychologists find intriguing is why autobiographical memory is so much more fragile than the “knowing” kind, with people brain-damaged through accidents or dementia retaining knowledge (sometimes called semantic memory) long after personal memories are gone. (There are even

documented cases of brain-injured children who attended school without any memory of being there, but retained the skills and facts they were taught from day to day).

Even in healthy people, episodic memory tends to be much less accurate than “knowledge”, which is evident to anyone speaking to witnesses of an accident or a crime – and which presents a puzzle if the function of memory is seen as autobiographical.

However, if the purpose of personal memory is not about reproducing the past but about using it to construct the future, then flexibility becomes essential, even if it comes at a cost of accuracy and results in greater vulnerability.

As Donna explains, when she thinks with pleasure of introducing her cat – (still in quarantine in Boston at the time when she was speaking) to her grandmother who lives in Auckland – she conjures up an imaginary picture by bringing together memories from two different countries and from widely varying times. She also incorporates some information she “knows”, such as the date the cat is arriving and what the temperature is likely to be at that time.

What we need therefore is not a memory like a videotape, which plays back a recorded and immutable experience, but a mind which gathers information from a myriad of memories to create new scenarios of possible futures.

To investigate the mental activities of remembering and imagining, Donna uses magnetic resonance imaging (MRI), which uses colour coding to show the areas of greatest neural activity, measured by the increased flow of blood to support it.

Through studies of this kind she has already confirmed that memories of a single event are not stored together but are “compiled” through an “act” of memory that brings together information from different parts of the brain.

She has also shown that the hippocampal region of the brain (traditionally seen as the seat of memory) activates in a very similar way for a person remembering the past or imagining the future. The colour-coded record of brain activity maps very closely from one to the other, with differences arising mainly in the detail.



For the Marsden study Donna (who is principal investigator) and Michael will continue to explore the nature of brain activity in remembering and imagining, and the overlap between them.

This type of research offers insights not only into conditions such as Alzheimer's disease, which causes memory loss, or temporal lobe epilepsy, which often results in damage to the hippocampus, but also into the processes of healthy ageing as they relate both to memory and imagination.

"We know the hippocampus atrophies with age and is no longer fully functional," says Donna. "These changes which are specific to the hippocampus make it harder to bring together the fragments stored in different parts of the brain."

And in fact Donna, with colleagues Daniel Schacter and Alana Wong from Harvard, has found that when younger and older adults are asked to describe their experiences, older people tend to rely more on facts and events than on painting a vivid picture with context, dialogue and colours. In other words, as the autobiographical memory fails, they draw in more "knowledge" to augment their descriptions.

"This is a qualitative change, affecting the imagination as well as the memory. Past and future events are more richly detailed in the accounts of young adults," says Donna.

"Though this may not necessarily be to the detriment of older people," the 30-year-old adds. "Perhaps they don't have the same need to look to the future."

Michael Corballis believes the links between the memory and imagination are unique to human beings and are fundamental to human culture.

"Mental time travel causes trouble," he says with a smile, "because it makes us understand we're going to die. It can also be seen as underlying the development of religion, since religious beliefs offer us ways of imagining that our mental life may continue forever."

In addition he believes it underlies our passion for storytelling and our enjoyment of gossip.

"That's why we're obsessed with fiction," says Michael. "It's why we watch soap operas, go to plays and read novels – because they give us information about how people behave and how the world is."

"And I think all those stories are very adaptive. They allow us to plan our lives."

From left: Professor Michael Corballis and Dr Donna Rose Addis



# That'll get me into trouble

Psychologist, television personality, author and showman Nigel Latta talks with Prue Scott

"They are not right in the head," shouts alumnus and clinical psychologist Nigel Latta (MPhil 1995, PGDipClinPsych 1995) from the stage of the Western Springs College Hall in central Auckland.

"This is the message for tonight," he continues. "Teenagers are not right in the head!"

It is a cold, wet mid-winter's evening but the school hall is bursting at its seams with parents from across central Auckland. They have come to see Nigel present his one-man, multimedia extravaganza: 'The politically incorrect parenting show: Revenge of the teens'.

Based on his recently published book *Before your kids drive you crazy, Read this*, the show gently pokes fun at some of today's parenting taboos - like winning and losing, for example.

"These days kids are raised on the idea everybody gets a prize," says Nigel in mock indignation. "In life everybody doesn't get a prize! ... and we've got rid of the 'P-word' (punishment)."

Cleverly navigating his way through the tricky territory of teenagers, Nigel has the audience shaking with laughter - so familiar are the scenarios he paints, and so relieved are they to hear that their Lily's behaviour is no different than that of millions of Lilys, Georgias, or Ninas.

Based in Dunedin with his young family, Nigel Latta originally set out to be another Jacques Cousteau. It didn't work out, though he says his marine science training (he has a Master of Science in Marine Science from Otago University) came in handy while sitting in a stream eating his Weetbix one morning and knowing the names of the bugs in the water.

"I got pragmatic pretty quickly. I was never going to be a marine scientist."

Getting through something quickly to get to the next thing comes up time and time again with Nigel. He studied psychology at Otago and came north for a woman. "Celia Lashlie told me: find a girl with a plan and follow her. So I did."

He fell into psychology at The University of Auckland because he saw it as the way to an interesting job - corporate, clinical, forensic, adult, children - without years of study.

Auckland introduced him to the world of children, youth and family. His masters was an evaluation of SAFE, now New Zealand's largest community-based professional treatment programme for adult and adolescent sex offenders.

"Ten days in the Kaimai in huts lit with

candles and a bunch of disturbed teenagers with backgrounds in adolescent sex offending.”

He has since become an expert in adult sex and other offending and today is as equally renowned for his forensic psychology and television show *Real crime: Beyond the darklands* as he is for his work with families and teenagers.

He thinks teenagers are fun. “If they don’t like you, they just tell you to get \*\*\*\*\*, which I quite like. Kids are so much more direct.”

He calls it honest, whereas adults are often schooled in the language of slipperiness, which opens up the subject of the system, bureaucracy and professionals.

“We get all wound up in this PC stuff about what does and doesn’t make a difference, but the truth is – the stuff that makes a difference is commonsense. The fix is pretty simple, too, but because it’s not exciting, no one’s interested. They’re focused on the ideology, not the reality.”

He cites a recent stopping violence conference where ex-Police Minister, Annette King was proud of the Labour government’s latest programme to stop family violence – a Canadian programme involving babies in schools.

“Give me a break. It sounds cool and that’s why they go for it, but the Otago multi-disciplinary health studies have proven beyond any shadow of doubt that early intervention is crucial.”

His suggestion to drastically reduce the number of young kids dying as a result of violent abuse is to scrap the Families Commission.

“You take that \$9 million [which funds the Families Commission each year]. You put all of that into paying people quite well to go into houses each morning to help parents get their kids up, showered, dressed, fed and ready for school. Then they sit down with Mum and Dad and debrief them with strategies about what did and didn’t work.

“At the end of the day, they come back and do the homework, figuring out what to cook for dinner.” It’s not about having a servant but a parenting coach, a practical, hands-on, commonsense approach.

But what about those dysfunctional families whose exploits make the six o’clock news? Nigel says we have pockets of dysfunctional families, but on the whole we’re doing a pretty good job of parenting.

It’s the killing of kids that gets him going again. “When some kid dies we spend three weeks beating our chests. What bloody use is that?”

“I was talking with someone the other day.

They were filming in South Auckland and a three-year-old girl on a bike gave a passing police car the finger. How does that happen?”

This leads him back to the theme of early intervention. “One of the most commonsense suggestions from the Labour government was that they start screening before the age of five so they can identify the problem kids, but the civil libertarian beige brigade starts screaming about invasion of privacy and labelling children as criminals, which isn’t what we’re saying at all.”

For Nigel, it’s that ideology versus commonsense issue again... and it’s still there when our children become teens.

“Adolescents aren’t right in the head. They look like adults but there are really important parts of the brain that don’t work until they’re in their twenties, so they can’t evaluate risk, they’re not good at interpreting facial expressions or emotions. They can make good decisions but only if they sit down and reason them through - but then they get carried away by their mates.

“Whack that on top of a lack of parenting, a lack of response, a lack of fear, a lack of consequences because we don’t punish kids any more, and this is where you end up.”

Nigel says we’ve turned punishment into this rude word we’ve chucked out the back door. “Now it’s all about consequences and self-esteem, but punishing bad behaviour is also important because it’s an essential part of teaching kids right from wrong.”

And don’t suggest role models. “I don’t think there’s a bunch of kids out there who started punching someone because an All Black does. Kids do things because it’s right there in the moment and they don’t think about the consequences. Or, if they do something bad and nothing happens, they just do it again.

“Role models are one of the things it’s easy for us to get focused on. You know, I’ve never sat in a room with a kid and said ‘why’d you rob that bank?’ and they go ‘aw, lack of role models’.”

It comes down to commonsense, which “for some reason people find offensive”.

That brings us back to the night at Western Springs College and you get an idea of how his approach will put him and his new television show [*The Politically Incorrect Parenting Show*, to screen on TV One early next year] back in the firing line with the ideologists and the “civil libertarian beige brigade.

“It’ll get me into trouble,” he says, “but I don’t think that’s reason enough not to say something. Heresy has always been a bit underrated in my view.”

“You know, I’ve never sat in a room with a kid and said ‘why’d you rob that bank?’ and they go ‘aw, lack of role models’.”



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## Former Vice-Chancellor's memoirs



There can be much more to a Vice-Chancellor's career than meets the eye.

That is certainly true of Sir Colin Maiden, The University of Auckland's second holder of that office from 1971 to 1994. And it is amply borne out in his recently published memoirs, *An Energetic Life*.

When he was appointed to the helm aged just 37 his had already been a life of singular achievement which

had taken him well beyond the halls of academia before the call of home lured him back to Auckland.

After gaining an ME in Civil Engineering at Auckland he went to Oxford as a Rhodes Scholar where he emerged with his DPhil. There followed 12 rewarding and exciting years as a research engineer in space and defence science in Canada, and as an engineer and executive for General Motors in the United States.

His two and a half decades as Vice-Chancellor brought tremendous expansion: in the student roll, massive new buildings, a sharp boost in research activity (his special priority), new sporting and cultural amenities. The Medical School was established along with the Tamaki Campus and Auckland UniServices Ltd.

Amid the stresses of running an ever larger and more complex university Sir Colin made time to take on company directorships (never more than three at once). He also helped spearhead the government's synthetic fuels programme and urgent moves to partial energy self-sufficiency through the 1970s and 1980s.

His outside activities, unusual for a Vice-Chancellor in those days, were strongly supported by the Chancellors and Councils with whom he served. "As well as benefitting the institution they kept me alive and sane. I wouldn't have lasted as long at the University without them."

The book recounts his accomplishments in the methodical yet matter of fact and unassuming manner which characterised him at the University and in the world beyond. There are revealing personal glimpses of a man who has always relished tennis, travel and vigorous socialising.

Sir Colin never set out to produce a book for public consumption. As he cut back on his directorships over the last three or four years and found himself with more spare

time he decided to compile his memoirs purely for the family.

"As I got into it I realised that the parts dealing with the University, energy and the corporate world had much broader interest. For instance, not a lot has been written by those who go through the ups and downs of being a director."

He had no shortage of material on which to draw. "Letters that Jenefer [his wife] and I sent my mother from Oxford were a tremendous source for the early years."

Technical reports from his time in Canada and the US jogged his memory as did his appointments diaries and bound copies of *The University of Auckland News*. Similarly he could call on copious records of his involvement in energy and as a company director.

The first draft he sent to former colleagues for feedback "in case I had missed anything". From his University days they included such key lieutenants as Warwick Nicoll (Registrar from 1980), Don Smith (Professor of English and an Assistant Vice-Chancellor), and Nicholas Tarling (Professor of History who long served as Dean of Arts and chaired Deans Committee as well as being Deputy and Assistant VC).

"Nicholas was particularly helpful, picking up things I had either forgotten or hadn't got quite right. He also did a first edit."

Don Smith told him: "I enjoyed it immensely but it is never going to be a bestseller because you haven't done the dirt on anyone." Unhesitatingly Sir Colin responded: "That's not me and I am not going to start such a practice now."

Piecing together his memoirs gave him even more satisfaction than he expected. "It refreshed my memory and gave me a reason to contact many people I had worked with over the years. I essentially relived my life."

Dunmore Publishing agreed to publish the book without fully funding it. Sir Colin had to make a sizeable financial contribution which, given all the effort he had devoted to the research and writing, he was happy to do.

The response from friends, colleagues and family alike has been gratifying, he says. All seem to have enjoyed reading the first part (pre-1971) "because that's an aspect of my life they didn't know about". Some felt he had "held back a bit" in the University segment because he was "still too close" to the events described.

People familiar with what went on have confirmed that the section on energy is "a very accurate record" while others "particularly liked the chapter on what I have learned as a company director".

These days Sir Colin visits his alma mater and former workplace only occasionally for functions while keeping a keen and discerning eye on its fortunes. He salutes John Hood's focus on excellence and how successfully he "got the University's finances and its building programme back on track. Stuart McCutcheon has been building on a solid base and doing a very good job."

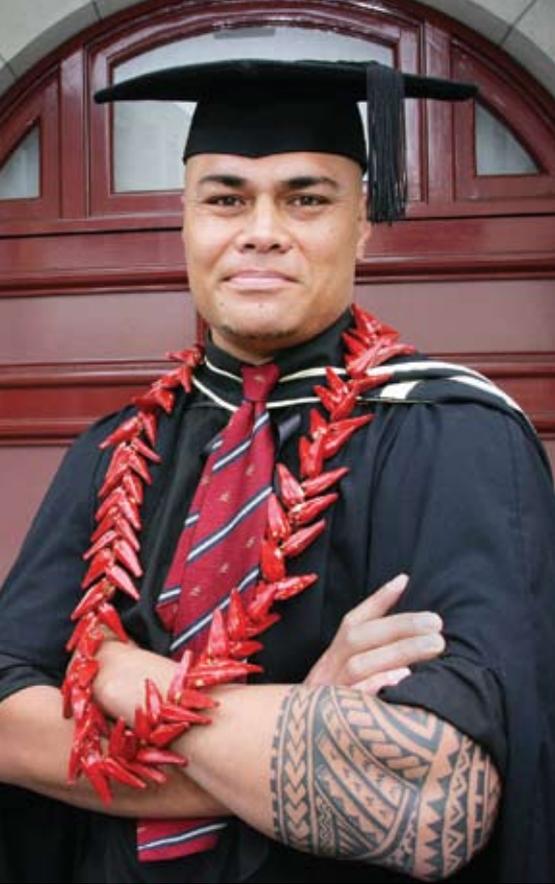
One dramatic change has been the increase in full fee-paying students from overseas and their "positive impact on the University's finances". He also notes "the greater devolution of authority to the faculties and the increased emphasis on funding from non-government sources".

Sir Colin wonders whether there is now less participation by academics in University decision-making while accepting that this may simply be because it is now "a much bigger organisation".

- *An Energetic Life*, 256 pages long and well illustrated, is published in paperback by Dunmore Publishing, P.O. Box 25-080, Wellington. It costs \$34.95 and is stocked by most booksellers.

Bill Williams





## Pacific trailblazers

Two students from the National Institute of Creative Arts and Industries (NICAI) have blended their Pacific heritage with their knowledge of architecture to become two of New Zealand's – and possibly the world's – first research-led Pacific Masters of Architecture.

Lama Tone never imagined that a near-fatal neck injury would lead to a postgraduate degree in architecture. But for the former builder-turned-professional-rugby-player, a serious neck fracture in 2001 – his second in four years – gave the New Zealand-born Samoan athlete pause for thought.

"I hadn't planned on retiring at that stage of my career, so I had to dig deep and find out what I really wanted to do with my life," says 37-year-old Lama, who spent five years between 1996-2001 traveling the world as a member of Manu Samoa. "I enjoyed working as a builder and was always fascinated by the architecture I saw on my travels – so that became the inspiration for me to pursue architecture at the University."

As a child, New Zealand-born Tongan Charmaine 'Ilaiu spent hours drawing floor plans, and imagining different worlds and how people would live in the spaces she drew. Today, with her masters degree in hand, the 24-year-old wants to combine her creative skills with her desire to become a social entrepreneur.

"As a result of growing up in Otago, I am not only interested in Pacific architecture and art but also in community development," she says. "I want to help individuals, families and societies develop in a self-sustainable way that doesn't compromise the values of their community."

Lama and Charmaine share a strong respect for and commitment to their Pacific cultures, traditions and designs and their research reflects a desire to incorporate indigenous ideas and aesthetics into western architectural practices.

Lama's thesis, "Designing with Pacific Concepts", focuses on how contemporary New Zealand architects (most of whom are New Zealand European) use Pacific themes and ideas for designing sustainable, 21st century buildings. By interviewing professional architects and examining case studies, Lama

explores the ways in which mainstream forms of modernism and postmodernism have been enveloped within Pacific forms, themes and ideas.

"Pacific architecture is about community, the connection and engagement of people coming together within communal spaces," he says. "In contrast, mainstream architecture comes from the notion of individualism. As a Pacific Islander studying architecture, I believe it is important to know what and how relationships are forged between people and their architecture."

Charmaine's thesis, which began as a personal journey of understanding her architectural heritage, presents six case studies of contemporary fale archetypes in Tonga. These forms, she contends, reflect the ways in which the designs of the 19th century fale Tonga persist on the island today. And because Tonga was never colonised, the western homes seen on the island are not evidence of architectural assimilation but rather an act of appropriation, as Tongans respond to social and technological change.

"My research intends to highlight and assist in developing a culturally appropriate means of understanding existing Tongan architecture," says Charmaine. "It was challenging to straddle the two worldviews – the western and the indigenous – and understand how these different perspectives govern the way people live and interact with their buildings."

Lama and Charmaine's trailblazing research has established Pacific architecture as a new research discipline at postgraduate level. School of Architecture and Planning Senior Lecturer, Deidre Brown, who supervised both Lama and Charmaine, says their commitment to embarking on virtually unexplored paths of research makes her particularly proud of their achievements.

"Both of these students have produced high quality, cutting-edge research. I hope their efforts will be recognised within the professional industry and that one day, their work will help form the basis of a respected, if new, tradition of Pacific-influenced architecture in New Zealand."

Amber Older



IMAGE: IAIN MACDONALD

## Resurrecting Mollie

When alumnus Martin Edmond (BA 1975) was five years old he witnessed events surrounding the death of a circus elephant in Ohakune.

Called Mollie, the elephant was one of a troupe of performing elephants which toured New Zealand with Australian circus company Bullen's, in the 1950s. Mollie, in particular, was famed for her ability to stand on her front legs and was often the star of the big ring.

But in 1957, while being walked by elephant handlers, Mollie ate some poisonous tutu. She promptly died and was buried near the main trunk line at the entrance to Tongariro National Park.

"I remember as a child going to look at the mound of dirt; perched on top was a tiny bouquet of flowers bittersweet, so funny, so sad," writes Martin in his book of essays: *Waimarino County*.

The death of Mollie would've remained a potent yet fragmented childhood memory for Martin, but for his friend Associate Professor of English, Michele Leggott.

Earlier this year Michele (New Zealand's current Poet Laureate) learned that in 1957 a technician from the University's then Zoology Department had gone to Ohakune to exhume a dead elephant's skull.

It was just the impetus Martin needed. While he gleaned as much as he could

about the history of circus elephants in New Zealand, Michele made tracks to the University's Old Biology Building – once home to the extensive McGregor Biology Museum. By sheer coincidence Biological Sciences staff, only a couple of weeks earlier, had been investigating the contents of an old locked cupboard when they discovered two elephant skulls stored in a large, glass case.

For Dr Mary Sewell, curator of the current McGregor Museum, the discovery was a revelation. As a result, a unique multi-disciplinary seminar bringing together poets and scientists, retired and current University staff was convened at the University in August.

"The purpose was to invite back to the University people who knew the real story of Mollie," explains Mary.

The first to speak was alumna and retired Associate Professor of Zoology, Joan Robb [BSc 1954, MSc 1957] who told the story of the McGregor Biology Museum housed in the purpose-built Roy Lippincott building and once regarded as the best teaching museum in the Southern Hemisphere. Joan praised the museum's founder, the late Professor William Roy McGregor as "the last of the Victorian-style naturalists" with his field research and unabashed desire to tell a coherent story of evolution in the items which he arranged for

display.

Martin Edmond then tabled his research about circus elephants in New Zealand, how they were treated (on the whole, badly) and how many of them had died in accidents like Mollie's. His older sister, alumna Frances Edmond (BA 1972), read some of their mother – famed writer Lauris Edmond's – evocative writings about living in Ohakune in the 1950s.

Then it was the turn of alumnus Derek Challis (MA Zoology, 1970).

In 1957, Derek was a young technician in the Zoology Department when he read about the death of Mollie in the *New Zealand Herald* and decided to catch a train to Ohakune. With the help of a local farmer and his two-man cross-saw, Derek had soon decapitated Mollie's carcass and retrieved the skull for the McGregor Museum.

To a fascinated audience, he detailed how the skull was de-greased, bleached and preserved. He also gave a strong sense of his own youthful impressions. "The elephant was lying on its side, blown up like a barrage balloon and looking disgusting."

To the surprise of many, Derek noted that Professor McGregor, who had been away overseas at the time of the elephant's death, did not praise his technician for his work but rebuked him for upstaging his own purchase (from Britain) of another elephant skull for display.

Now however, nearly half a century later, Mollie is getting her due. In Ohakune moves are afoot to acknowledge Mollie's memory while at the School of Biological Sciences, staff have resurrected Mollie's skull, and that of her African relative, from the dusty annals of history.

"We're going to recreate the elephant display exactly as it was in the original McGregor Museum," says Mary Sewell. "The skulls will be used as teaching aids and they will be on permanent display in the primate room."

Nicholas Reid and Tess Redgrave



Martin Edmond

## ALUMNI NEWS

### MESSAGE FROM THE ALUMNI RELATIONS MANAGER



I thank all our Alumni & Friends who have attended Jubilee events either at home or overseas this year. It has been wonderful to see

record numbers turn out to help us celebrate the University's 125th anniversary.

Our Alumni & Friends Events Calendar kicked off in March with 620 people attending The Distinguished Alumni Awards Annual Dinner and we had excellent turnouts at the Distinguished Alumni Speaker Series. Numbers were also strong at a former staff function and Town and Gown event organised by the Vice-Chancellor's Office and at our events in London, New York, Sydney, Whangarei, Hong Kong, Seoul, Beijing and Shanghai.

The University of Auckland Society (an independent alumni group run by alumni for alumni) held some well-attended events in 2008, including a University of Auckland Strings concert and another Great Tertiary Debate. The recently re-launched Pacific Alumni Group held a packed Pacific-style ball on 24 October in Auckland to celebrate the University's Jubilee and Pacific achievement. Informal events were also organised by our volunteer alumni coordinators in New York, Hong Kong and other locations.

One of our final Jubilee events was held fittingly in the nation's capital post-election with 207 Alumni and Friends attending a reception at Te Papa with Distinguished Alumnus, Mark Weldon as the guest speaker and the NZ Trio as the entertainment. Another end of year highlight was the annual Golden Graduates luncheon celebrating alumni who graduated 50 or more years ago. The function took place in Auckland at the Langham Hotel.



Amanda Lyne  
Alumni Relations Manager

### ROWING RE-MATCH ON THE WHANGANUI

Olympic rower and 2007 Young Alumnus of the year, Mahé Drysdale (BCom 1999, GradDipCom 2001), will get a chance to avenge his loss to gold medalist Olaf Tufte when the two meet in a re-match on the Whanganui River next month.

A firm favourite for gold in the men's 2000 metre sculls in Beijing, Mahé was struck down with a severe gastrointestinal illness, shedding 4kg in the week before the race. Clearly suffering in the final, he was unable to maintain his early lead finally crossing the line in third place.

But now on 7 December, Mahé will row against his Olympic rival Olaf, as well as a "wild card" singles sculler in a premier event in the Billy Webb Centennial Challenge on the Whanganui River. The race, over approximately 5 kms, will honour Billy Webb who 100 years ago defended his world championship title on the Whanganui.

For Mahé, who hopes to compete at the 2012 Olympics in London, the event is a great opportunity.



From left:  
Ondrej Synek, Olaf Tufte and Mahé Drysdale

"I've read a lot about the history of our great sport and to replicate a race that took place 100 years ago against the Olympic champion will be a fitting tribute to William Webb, one of the greats of our sport.

"Obviously I would love to beat Olaf and get one back after the Olympics, but no matter what happens I'm sure it will be a great event and a great race".

### PIANIST HOME FOR AWARD



John Chen and Roe de Lisle

A musical treat awaited the 200 people who congregated at the Fale Pasifika early in Spring for the presentation of the 2008 Young Alumnus of the Year Award.

After applauding pianist John Chen on this honour the audience settled back to enjoy his 18-minute performance of Beethoven's Sonata in E major op 109.

John is studying at the Colburn School of Performing Arts in Los Angeles. His commitments prevented him joining the other 2008 Distinguished Alumni Award recipients at the gala dinner in March.

John gained his Master of Music degree from the University at the age of 18 and became the youngest ever winner of the Sydney International Piano Competition. Since then he has performed with major orchestras

and conductors in New Zealand, Australia, Japan, the USA, Germany, Singapore and Hong Kong.

Giving the citation for John, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic), Professor Raewyn Dalziel, said he was "at the absolute forefront of young New Zealand musicians of his generation".

His achievements had been "an inspiration to young musicians throughout the country, proving to them yet again that New Zealand can be a launching pad for a remarkable career in music".

Rae de Lisle, Senior Lecturer in the School of Music who taught John for 11 years, said he "could have done anything and had his passion led him to another field, he would have been a high achiever there too".

She praised John's "wonderful attitude" while at University. "He was hungry for knowledge and was able to absorb from every comment given so generously by the other teachers on the staff: Tamas Vesmas, Bryan Sayer, Mary O'Brien, Georgina Zellan Smith. Even now when he is in New Zealand he often seeks us out to play to and to receive our constructive criticism.

"He is a young man of the utmost integrity and humility which makes him a pleasure for any instrumentalist or conductor to work with. John's international career is already well established and will go from strength to strength."

## ENTERPRISING GRADUATES TAKE SYDNEY'S COFFEE SCENE BY STORM

Going to Sydney soon? Try some coffee at a leading new coffee house run by three of our alumnae. Sisters Gina, Vicky and Aileen Young (pictured below left to right) have all recently completed their degrees at The University of Auckland (BCom/LLB, BCom/BSc and BCom



(Hons) respectively) and have now combined their skills and corporate experience to start a family business in Sydney called Velluto Nero. Velluto Nero is a coffee bean roastery, retail store, online business and contemporary café set in the heart of Sydney's CBD.

Gina, Vicky and Aileen contacted the Alumni Relations Office to generously offer some giveaway packs of coffee beans and free coffee vouchers for all the guests who attended the Sydney Alumni & Friends reception at the Museum of Contemporary Art in July.

Just seven weeks after launching their brand, they won their first national medal for coffee roasting and within the first six months they won the coveted "Champion Espresso" title and the only Gold Medal awarded for coffee at the prestigious 2008 Sydney Royal Fine Food Show. This was shortly followed by a rating for Velluto Nero from the *Sydney Morning Herald* Good Living's independent review "Sydney's Best Coffee". The Alumni Relations office strongly recommends that if you find yourself in Sydney, you visit the girls at their coffee bean boutique, 259 Clarence Street (between Market and Druitt Streets in the city) and enjoy a very fine cup of coffee or visit their website at [www.vellutonero.com.au](http://www.vellutonero.com.au).

## ALUMNI SURVEY

In October and early November 46,000 of our alumni community received an email from Colmar Brunton inviting them to complete a 15-minute electronic survey on the Alumni Relations Office. The survey aims to gather

feedback on our core services so that we can improve them and give you better ways to connect with each other and the University.

The results will be analysed and will shape our strategic priorities for the future. We thank the 5500 respondents who participated in this research project. Your support and feedback are highly valued and warmly received.

## @AUCKLAND E-NEWSLETTER

If you would like to receive the monthly Alumni & Friends community e-newsletter @auckland for details of upcoming events, photo galleries from past events, current University news items, discounts on AUP books and other special offers please visit [www.alumni.auckland.ac.nz/update](http://www.alumni.auckland.ac.nz/update) to provide us with your current email address.

## SAVE THESE DATES

Up and coming Alumni & Friends events for Autumn 2009:

### Friday 13 March

Auckland Distinguished Alumni Awards Annual Dinner

### Saturday 14 March

Auckland Distinguished Alumni Speaker series

### Monday 16 March

London Alumni & Friends Reception

### Wednesday 18 March

New York Alumni & Friends Reception

### Friday 8 May

Auckland Graduation Concert

### Wednesday 14 May

Vancouver Alumni & Friends Reception

For further information and to ensure you receive notice of any events in your area please visit [www.alumni.auckland.ac.nz](http://www.alumni.auckland.ac.nz) or [www.alumni.auckland.ac.nz/update](http://www.alumni.auckland.ac.nz/update) if you need to update your details.

## INTERNATIONAL ALUMNI NETWORK

If you live in or near any of the areas opposite and would like to be involved with local alumni, we encourage you to make contact with your volunteer alumni coordinator. If you would like to consider being a coordinator for your area, please contact Sarah Crosswell, at [alumni@auckland.ac.nz](mailto:alumni@auckland.ac.nz) for further information.

## INTERNATIONAL ALUMNI NETWORK

If you live in or near any of the areas below and would like to be involved with local alumni, we encourage you to make contact with your volunteer alumni co-ordinator.

### Australia

**Brisbane** – Allannah Johnston  
[a.johnston@business.uq.edu.au](mailto:a.johnston@business.uq.edu.au)

**Melbourne** – Rupert Saint  
[r.saint@cartermackenzie.com.au](mailto:r.saint@cartermackenzie.com.au)

**Perth** – Margaret Sims, [m.sims@ecu.edu.au](mailto:m.sims@ecu.edu.au)

**Sydney** – George Barker, [BarkerG@law.anu.edu.au](mailto:BarkerG@law.anu.edu.au)  
Regan van Berlo, [regan@bennelongholdings.com](mailto:regan@bennelongholdings.com)

### Canada

**Calgary** – Allison Hall, [allisonhall77@hotmail.com](mailto:allisonhall77@hotmail.com)

**Vancouver** – Nigel Toy, [nrltoy@stgeorges.bc.ca](mailto:nrltoy@stgeorges.bc.ca)

### China

**Beijing** – Yang Jiao, [vivianny@gmail.com](mailto:vivianny@gmail.com)

**Chengdu** – Hua Xiang, [xianghua@swufe.edu.cn](mailto:xianghua@swufe.edu.cn)

**Hong Kong** – Raymond Tam  
[tmkramond@yahoo.com.hk](mailto:tmkramond@yahoo.com.hk)

**Shanghai** – Jessie (Li Jun) Lin, [lijunlin908@msn.com](mailto:lijunlin908@msn.com)

### Europe

**Germany** – Philipp Schuster  
[philippschuster@hotmail.com](mailto:philippschuster@hotmail.com)

**Scandinavia** – Duncan Lithgow  
[duncan@lithgow-schmidt.dk](mailto:duncan@lithgow-schmidt.dk)

**Belgium** – Ken Bauer, [eualumni@skynet.be](mailto:eualumni@skynet.be)  
*Ken also welcomes contact from alumni in Europe where there is no coordinator in their area.*

### India

**Chandigarh** – Rahul Gautam  
[rahul.gautam@idp.com](mailto:rahul.gautam@idp.com)

### Indonesia

**Jakarta** – John Wishart, [jwishart@jisedu.or.id](mailto:jwishart@jisedu.or.id)

### Israel

Ofir Goren, [ofir.goren@solcon.co.il](mailto:ofir.goren@solcon.co.il)

### Japan

**Tokyo** – Simon Hollander, [nzhikozaemon@yahoo.co.jp](mailto:nzhikozaemon@yahoo.co.jp)

### Korea

**Seoul** – Nalin Bahuguna, [nalinb123@yahoo.com](mailto:nalinb123@yahoo.com)

### Malaysia

**Kuala Lumpur** – KC Yong, [keecyong@streamyx.com](mailto:keecyong@streamyx.com)

### Singapore

Von Chan, [vonchan@servtouch.com](mailto:vonchan@servtouch.com)

### Taiwan

**Taipei** – Mago Hsiao, [mago.hsiao@nzte.govt.nz](mailto:mago.hsiao@nzte.govt.nz)

### UK

**London** – Cecilia Tarrant  
[cecilia.tarrant@btinternet.com](mailto:cecilia.tarrant@btinternet.com)

### USA

**New Hampshire** – Rushan Sinnaduray  
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**New York** – Rosena Sammi  
[rosena@rosenasammi.com](mailto:rosena@rosenasammi.com)

**Philadelphia** – Nai-Wei Shih, [naiweishih@hotmail.com](mailto:naiweishih@hotmail.com)

**San Francisco** – Sue Service  
[sue@serviceconsulting.com](mailto:sue@serviceconsulting.com)

**Texas** – Jyoti Maisuria, [j.maisuria@gmail.com](mailto:j.maisuria@gmail.com)

**Washington, DC** – Ruby Manukia  
[rmanukia@yahoo.com](mailto:rmanukia@yahoo.com)

## ALUMNI SNAPSHOT

**Shasha Ali (BA 2006)** represented New Zealand in a global IT campaign in August to address the declining numbers of females taking up technology studies and also leaving the industry. Entitled "Doing IT around the world", the initiative showcased 36 women in IT around the world and detailed their day on 11 August – from sunrise in New Zealand and Antarctica to sunset in Hawaii. The initiative was led by Sonja Berndhardt, CEO of Thoughtware Australia and supported by Women in Technology (WIT) NZ. The diaries, images and videos are available at [www.passionit.info](http://www.passionit.info).

**Distinguished alumna and Emeritus Professor of History, Judith Binney (BA 1962, MA 1965)** was the historical consultant for Vincent Ward's new film *Rain of the Children* set in Te Urewera. Both Judith and Vincent spent time staying in Te Urewera in the late 1970s and in 1977 and 1978 Judith interviewed Te Pahi Tatu, the central character in *Rain of the Children*, as part of her historical research for *Mihaia: the prophet Rua Kenana and his community at Maungapohatu* (Oxford University Press, 1979) which she wrote with Gillian Chaplin and Craig Wallace.

**Neil Campbell (LLB 1999)** was appointed the managing director of Peter Webb Galleries in May this year. Peter previously served as the Executive Director of the New Zealand Screen Directors Association, was Television New Zealand's in-house legal counsel for six years and more recently acted as Head of Strategic Alliances and Partnerships for Telecom's video services group. He is involved on a personal level in a large international photography project which aims to document every heritage site known around the world.

**Rebecca Caughey (BA 2003, BA (Hons) 2004)** at 26 years old was the youngest recipient of this year's Sir Peter Blake Emerging Leader Awards. Rebecca founded her music management company Funktion Music while still at University. It has since grown to include handling the world-wide management of local musicians Shapeshifter and Ladi6. Rebecca is also a leading music industry publicist, working with top New Zealand acts such as Anika Moa, Elemeno P and Brooke Fraser, as well as touring international artists.

**Tim Cossar (BA 1984)** is the new head of the Tourism Industry Association which represents

some 2000 businesses all over the country. Tim moved into marketing and tourism while living in Rotorua in his 20s, and before taking up his latest position in July, 2008, was the Chief Executive of Positively Wellington Tourism.

**Nicholas Jones (BE 1980)** has just become the first Dean in Engineering at Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore to receive the Rome Deanship - a \$10 million donation in honour of a "Mr. Rome" from the US construction industry. The money will be placed in an endowment within the John Hopkins Faculty of Engineering and in consultation with Nicholas will be used for research and the recruitment of faculty members and top students.

**Judy Millar (BFA 1979, MFA 1982)** is one of two artists chosen to represent New Zealand at the 53rd Venice Biennale of International Art next year. Judy's installation "The Collision" is made up of large-scale painted

canvases that will poke through floors and ceilings, reach out into the space beyond the proper confinements of the building, fold in and out and deliberately discard conventional modes of display and exhibition design. See [www.nzatvenice.com](http://www.nzatvenice.com)

**Sarah Robb O'Hagan (BCom, 1993)** is the new Chief Marketing Officer for the Gatorade Company, a division of PepsiCo. Based in Chicago her job involves marketing Gatorade in the United States and in Latin America. Sarah began her marketing career with Air New Zealand and before joining PepsiCo worked for Nike.

If you would like your contemporaries to know what you are up to, email the editor: [ingenio@auckland.ac.nz](mailto:ingenio@auckland.ac.nz)

### MAKE YOUR MARK ON THE WORLD



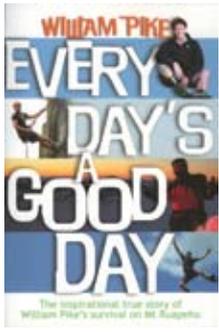
A neuroscientist studying the neuropsychological underpinnings of depression in Germany, a doctor working in Afghanistan, an English language assistant based in New Caledonia and a wildlife biologist living in Southland.

These are just some of the stories of alumni featured on the University's unique Make Your Mark site which you can get to via: [www.makeyourmark.ac.nz](http://www.makeyourmark.ac.nz)

Created by the University's Marketing Department, the interactive graduate map features 387 alumni from all corners of the globe talking about their time at Auckland and their careers now. Once you are in the site you can search via categories such as: Unconventional occupations, Incredible journeys, The greater good, Entrepreneurs and All the way to a PhD.

You can also get to the map through the University homepage: [www.auckland.ac.nz](http://www.auckland.ac.nz)

## Everyday's A Good Day



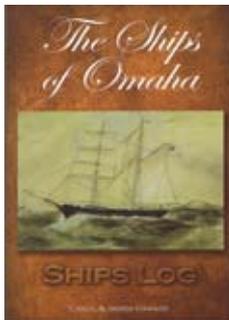
At 8.25pm on 25 September 2007, alumni William Pike, (BEd (Tchg) (Hons) 2008), and James Christie (BEd (Tchg) (Hons) 2008), were just settling down to sleep in Dome Hut at the top of Mt Ruapehu when the mountain erupted.

During the ensuing storm of volcanic rock, mud and water battering the hut, William was thrown against the back wall and pinned down by solidifying rock and mud. Unable to free him, James dashed through the night down the mountain to get help.

The next day the amputation of William's right leg and miraculous survival after suffering from severe hypothermia – his body cooled to a literally heart-stopping 25 degrees Celsius – hit national headlines.

Now in *Every Day's A Good Day*, published by Penguin, William tells the story of his life and the events leading up to and after the accident. Imbued with an unrelenting enthusiasm, the story is made more vivid by the testimony of professionals involved in his rescue and by the heart-rendering accounts of family and friends as they watched their loved one's life hanging in the balance.

## The Ships of Omaha

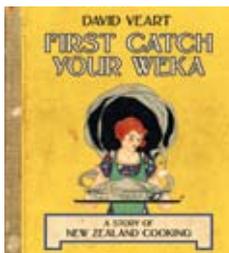


This book was written by alumna Carol Ramage (nee Meiklejohn) (BSc 1989, MBA 1996) and her husband James to celebrate the 150th reunion of the 1858 arrival of the Meiklejohn family in New Zealand. They were farmers and early shipbuilders in the Omaha area north of Auckland and Carol is a direct descendant.

*Ships of Omaha, New Zealand 1858-1921* introduces the Meiklejohns and other local shipbuilding families, then writes about each ship in chronological order. Official registration details are given followed by a narrative of the life of each vessel and its eventual fate where known, and a list of owners. The Meiklejohns are known in particular for building the first New Zealand scow Lake Erie in 1873.

The book is 164 A4 glossy pages in portrait format with text and illustrations in both monochrome and colour. It can be purchased by phoning (09) 422-7567 or by emailing [carol.ramage@xtra.co.nz](mailto:carol.ramage@xtra.co.nz)

## First Catch Your Weka

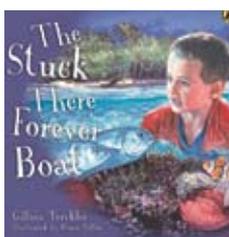


"First catch your Weka", the explorer Charles Heaphy advised in 1842, "then stuff it with sage and onion and roast it on a stick." In that simple way began a great tradition of New Zealand cooking, from Heaphy to the Edmonds Cookery Book, Alison Holst, Hudson and Halls, and the meal on your plate today.

In *First Catch Your Weka: A story of New Zealand cooking* published by AUP, alumnus David Veart (LLB 1974, BA 1983, MA 1987) tells the story of what New Zealanders cooked through the recipes we used.

Analysing the crusty deposits and grubby thumb prints on a century and a half of cook books, David chronicles the extraordinary foods that we have loved: from a boiled calf's head to the Bill Rowling cake, Irish famine soup and tinned kidneys with mushrooms.

## The Stuck There Forever Boat



By day, alumna Gillian Whalley (PhD Medicine 2006) is a Senior Research Fellow in the University Department of Medicine's Cardiovascular Research Laboratory. By night and, whenever she has time, she's an author of children's books. *The Stuck There Forever Boat*, published by Penguin, is her ninth. It tells the story of Tama who lives on a beautiful Pacific Island with one major problem - climate change. When the villages have to be evacuated, Tama's nanny refuses to leave. She was born on the island the same night a storm shipwrecked a boat there and will leave only when the stuck-there-forever-boat leaves too. What will Tama be able to do if his nanny won't leave?

## In brief

**Wesley Jones**, published by Arun books. "It's true that if you persist, you can turn your dreams into success," says alumnus David Arrowsmith (MA in Political Studies 1978, DipCounsTheory in Counselling 1996). He used to teach English, but now teaches history and has just written his first book *Wesley Jones*: about a 17-year-old boy (Wesley) growing up on a poultry farm near a small New Zealand town (Puketua) in the 1970s. The book focuses on Wesley's relationships with his father, with his Catholic Lebanese girlfriend, Mary, and then - after a breakup with Mary - with the new and very different girlfriend, Rose. David deals quite explicitly, albeit sensitively, with a teenage boy's preoccupation with sex.

As well as being concerned with how young people grow up, the novel explores social and cultural life in New Zealand in the 1970s. "It's an entirely different thing, teaching and writing," says David, "but I like to think that writing this book has made me a better teacher. It's made me approach the classroom more creatively, and also, I've encouraged the students to be more creative too."

### **Globalization and Translation: Towards a Paradigm Shift in Translation Studies**, published by VDM

Verlag Dr Muller Aktiengesellschaft & Co KG, Saarbruecken, Germany. This book by alumnus George Ho (MA (Hon) 1989, PhD Translation Studies, 2005) advocates a paradigm shift in translation studies to close the gap between translation theory and practice. By analysing five aspects of globalisation and their respective impact on translation practice, George indicates that globalisation has changed the mainstream of translation practice from canonical translation to professional (non-canonical) translation. Therefore, he says, it is justifiable to posit a paradigm shift in Translation Studies to meet the demand of and challenges for the translation profession and industry impact of globalisation.

If you have published a book in the last six months, or will do so in the next, email the editor: [ingenio@auckland.ac.nz](mailto:ingenio@auckland.ac.nz)



## University founder re-discovered

In 1953 a portrait by New Zealand's first professional portrait painter, Louis John Steele (1842-1918), was discovered in an Auckland shop. Signed and dated in red pigment in the lower left-hand corner, "L. J. Steele 1893", it was identified as Sir Maurice O'Rorke, founder of Auckland University College.

Last summer while doing some research at the Auckland War Memorial Museum, scholar Kyla Mackenzie found a newspaper clipping which reported on the portrait's discovery. Dated 1953, it detailed how Archie Fisher, the director of the University's Fine Arts Department and a seasoned connoisseur of academic portrait painting, had examined the portrait and it was subsequently bought by the University College Council for 10 guineas.

But though the newspaper clipping indicated the Steele portrait was in the University Art Collection, no one knew where it was until during a move at the Art History Department in July this year two high-quality portraits were found in a cupboard – one of them the Steele portrait of a young Sir Maurice O'Rorke.

Portentously, the discovery coincided with the 125th anniversary of the founding of the University for which Sir Maurice O'Rorke (1830-1916) had vigorously argued its case in Parliament as an Auckland representative. In 1883 he went on to become the first chairman of the University College Council.

The Steele portrait (as shown above) is one of two O'Rorke portraits in the University Art Collection. Remarkably, in 1913 the Council had contributed to the O'Rorke Portrait Fund Committee's subscription for an official portrait of the same subject from Charles Goldie, for which a far more substantial 80 guineas was paid. Such public subscriptions were not uncommon in the late 19th century for financing costly official portraits such as this one.

Steele's portrait is bust-length, comprising the head and shoulders, with the subject positioned at a three-quarter angle so that one half of his face is in strong shadow. This was a customary format used in commissioned portraiture, and in many cases it was the result of working from

a photograph rather than a live model. Undeniably, the portrait is akin to many official photographs of local government officials in the colony. In keeping with Steele's strong academic training, the outline of the figure is carefully inscribed (with the outline visible on the right side of his face). Details of physiognomy are also emphatically incised, with particularising details like his heavy jowl and the shape of his facial features. These details are all comparable with Goldie's 1913 portrait, where the same hairline frames the face, though the sitter has aged considerably. Some incongruities might be attributed to Steele's possible working from a photograph, as in the blue eyes Goldie captures so clearly, but which are brown in the Steele. Such was the importance of Goldie's commission that a life sitting would have been seen as essential since O'Rorke was still alive.

Notwithstanding the probability of Steele's use of a photographic model, the painting is a very fine portrait. Flourishes such as the slight puff of his white starched shirt to suggest that O'Rorke is shown seated give the picture a palpable presence. The brushwork is calculated and the colouring is sensitive, with traditional touches like the use of pink pigment in the corners of the eyes and under the nose.

Goldie's portrait is far grander in its aspirations with O'Rorke appropriately commemorated as a leader in education. This is signalled in the MA gown he wears, the closed book he holds in his right hand, how he is seated at his desk, writing drawers open, quill pen handy, and books slightly askew from recent consultation. With his lips just slightly parted, the gifted orator could be ready to speak, perhaps citing one of the many rulings that still bear his name, quoting a classical author, or reading Māori.

The two portraits of O'Rorke, in the generic role of a gentleman-elite in Steele's bust-length portrait, and as a learned leader and a leader in learning in Goldie's portrait, thus offer fascinating insights into function and significance of official portraits and notions of leadership in New Zealand.

Dr Erin Griffey

Erin is a senior lecturer in the University's Art History Department. She is curating the exhibition *The Power of Portraiture* at the Gus Fisher Gallery from 28 November through 24 January 2009.



## Learning across borders

“This was one of the best courses I’ve done for a long, long time: revolutionary to say the least,” says Kam Madaliar, who recently completed a unique Law masters course taught via video-conferencing across four countries.

His classmate, Anelka Vuletic-Phillips, agrees, acknowledging that the course, “Comparative indigenous peoples and the law”, has taken her in directions she hadn’t even thought of.

Bringing together students from The University of Auckland, Monash and Queensland universities in Australia, Ottawa and Saskatchewan universities in Canada and Oklahoma in the United States, the course has given young Law scholars a kind of “virtual OE” - allowing them to gain valuable overseas experience without leaving home.

Kam and Anelka were two of just four students in Auckland and of 60 overall, who attended weekly seminars at which lecturers from each of the institutions took turns in presenting audiovisual material via high-definition autocom.

The students just “love it,” says senior law lecturer Dr Nin Tomas who contributes from Auckland. “They love being transnational, hearing stuff straight from the horse’s mouth instead of a New Zealand interpretation. They love interacting with teachers half-way across the world and getting immediate feedback.

They like emailing us after class to get extra info. They like having a relationship outside their own borders. It makes them feel like globetrotters without going anywhere”.

What Kam and Anelka also appreciated was the focus on their own specialisations within the context of indigenous law, with opportunities to understand a variety of perspectives on the issues they were considering.

Anelka was looking at property rights in body tissue and genetic material, comparing New Zealand and American law.

“This study lends itself to being expanded to a PhD, which is what I want to do,” she says. “There are quite exciting and very contentious issues associated with this topic.”

Part-way through a masters degree in Law and tutoring in the Law Faculty at the same time, Anelka has the ambition to be an academic lawyer. “I’d like to show students that law can improve people’s lives,” she says, “and that ethics in law are crucial.”

In this she was influenced from early childhood by her grandfather, “a very honourable lawyer”. (Anelka comes from a family of lawyers, featured in the May 2008 issue of *Ingenio*).

Her plan is to follow her masters with a doctorate at Oxford or Cambridge, though she intends ultimately to return to New Zealand, where her family has been living

since the 1840s.

Kam, who has an LLB/BCom from the University, and completed the course in Indigenous Law as part of his Master of Laws, investigated how the jurisdictions of New Zealand, Australia and Canada have dealt with indigenous challenges to petroleum resources.

Now Manager Legal at Rodney District Council, north of Auckland, Kam has an interest in and an appreciation of indigenous concerns (“legal and otherwise”) to do with the land.

He appreciated the international exposure and perspective the course offered. The fact that it was taught in association with five other leading universities in Australia, Canada and the United States was another attraction. “The lecturers involved are global leaders in indigenous people’s law.”

Nin says a huge plus for both students and lecturers is the diversity of people and the rich perspectives they offered. She herself combines Māori and Dalmatian ancestry, while Kam is a Fijian Indian by birth who became a New Zealander at the age of 16. Anelka’s father’s family originated from Dalmatia while her mother’s ancestors are from Britain, Ireland and Chile.

Judy Wilford



Artist's impression

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Artist's impression

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