

VICTORIOUS

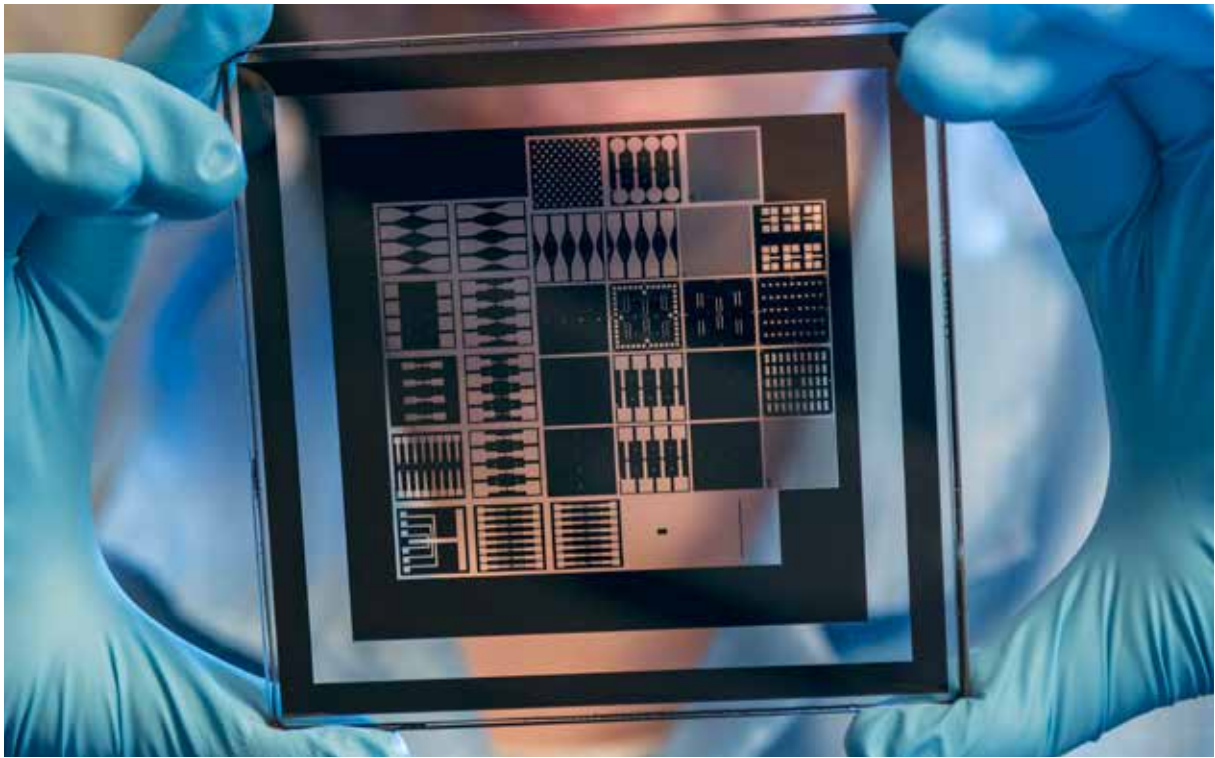
2018 Issue

VICTORIA
UNIVERSITY
WELLINGTON

TE WHARE WĀNANGA
O TE ŪPOKO O TE IKA A MĀUI



From the lab to the living room
Improving health and wellbeing



From the lab to the living room

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From the Vice-Chancellor

Health and wellbeing are the cornerstones of a happy life and a well-functioning society, but they mean much more than simply the absence of illness and infirmity—they encompass a broad state of mental and social wellbeing.

One of our eight areas of academic distinctiveness at Victoria University of Wellington is improving the health and wellbeing of our communities, which is the theme of this issue of *Victorious*.

The University has many academic units involved in health and wellbeing research. Our capability is multidisciplinary, and we are actively working to improve health and wellbeing in our communities by coordinating research and teaching across a number of key areas: Science, Engineering, and Design; Health Services and Policy; Arts, Education, and Business.

Thanks to our proximity to central government, district health boards, and many non-governmental organisations, we are also making major contributions to understanding how health outcomes can be improved by better policy settings, increased education, new technology, and reduced inequality.

In 2017, we established the new Faculty of Health, which builds on our existing strengths in areas such as nursing and midwifery, health policy and delivery, and biomedical research, as well as the University's broader expertise in public policy, government, business, and industrial relations. Creating a new faculty is an enormous and challenging undertaking, but under the leadership of Professor Gregor Coster, the Faculty has been a standout success. You can read more about Professor Coster and the Faculty in this issue.

We are also committed to improving health and wellbeing in other ways. Since 2017, we have been a health-promoting university, using guidelines from the World Health Organization and the Okanagan Charter (an international charter for health-promoting universities and colleges) to create healthy working, learning, and living environments. One result of this was the creation of the Student Wellbeing Awareness Team, a student-led group that organises events, campaigns, and projects promoting a well-balanced life while studying at university.

Together with the Treasury and the *International Journal of Wellbeing*, in September we also co-hosted the highly successful Third International Conference on Wellbeing and Public Policy, bringing together more than 350 policymakers and wellbeing researchers from around the world to share the latest findings on wellbeing and quality of life.

This issue of *Victorious* highlights many other examples of how our research contributes to improving the health and wellbeing of our communities, and how our academics, students, alumni, and professional staff are working hard to improve health and wellbeing across the University and within society.

Victoria University of Wellington values its role as a civic university. A civic university is one that values close involvement with the social, cultural, and economic life of its city and region. It naturally follows that the health and wellbeing of our communities is at the heart of everything we do, because community wellbeing is the combination of social, economic, environmental, cultural, and political conditions that are essential for individuals and communities to flourish and fulfil their potential.

This is the mandate upon which Victoria University of Wellington was founded more than 120 years ago, and it remains just as important today.

Professor Grant Guilford

Vice-Chancellor

📧 @GrantGuilford

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Victorious

✉ communications@lists.vuw.ac.nz

Victorious is published by Victoria
University of Wellington, Te Whare
Wānanga o te Ūpoko o te Ika a Māui
PO Box 600, Wellington, New Zealand

Editor: Samuel Burt

Design lead: Stephen Garrett

Editorial team: Crispin Anderlini,
Elizabeth Beattie, Sarah Boyd,
Alix Chapman, Vicky Cotterell,
Lucy Dickie, Katherine Edmond,
Jo Fisher, Samantha Fisher,
Craig Gamble, Kristina Keogh,
Kirsten McDougall, Fiona Shaw,
Andrew Smith, Guy Somerset,
Heidi Stedman, Grace Taylor, and
Jolene Williams

Photographs (unless otherwise
credited): Image Services,
Victoria University of Wellington

Cover image: Dr Natalie Plank,
photographed by Mike Heydon,
Jet Productions

ISSN 1172-0387

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The views expressed in *Victorious*
are not necessarily those of Victoria
University of Wellington.

This publication is printed using soya-
based inks. The paper is manufactured
and sourced from paper mills that have
accredited and audited environmental
qualifications and use sustainably grown
and harvested well-managed forests
and elemental chlorine free pulp.



University of Wellington

In September, the University Council voted to recommend to the Minister of Education that the legal name of the University be changed to University of Wellington. The Council also backed the adoption of a new Māori name, Te Herenga Waka, and made a commitment to the ongoing use of the word 'Victoria' to ensure the University's heritage is honoured and maintained.

Chancellor Neil Paviour-Smith says the decision was a challenging one for the Council and he acknowledged the significance of the name Victoria to alumni, students, and staff. "After careful consideration, the Council is satisfied that the name change is in the best interests of the University and is an important next step in achieving the University's vision and long-term prosperity."

The Council's decision follows well over a year of research, advice from experts, and discussion with staff, students, alumni, and stakeholders, including a consultation period during which close to 2,500 submissions were received.

Vice-Chancellor Professor Grant Guilford acknowledges that there is a "very understandable deeply personal connection to the name Victoria among many alumni".

"Unfortunately, however, the external context in which the University operates has changed very significantly and our current name of Victoria University of Wellington is no longer working well for us."

The rationale for the Council's decision crystallised around a number of key points: the proposed change of name to University of Wellington emphasises the word 'Wellington', which enhances the University's differentiation as New Zealand's globally ranked capital city university; it allows the achievements of the University to build the global reputation of the city and vice versa; and it creates a common destiny and enduring sense of partnership between

the University and Wellington.

Grant says a vibrant and successful Wellington offering an enhanced student experience and exceptional liveability for staff is critical to the University's future. "Similarly, a world-class university in Wellington is vital for the city and region to flourish."

While the word Victoria has great personal significance to many alumni, he says, it is problematic in many other respects.

"It is used prominently in the names of at least seven other tertiary educational institutions and, to some, the word Victoria evokes misleading or adverse associations such as with Victoria in Australia; with colonisation, dispossession, and discrimination; and with the staid nature of Victorian society rather than the creativity of Wellington.

"Others have noted the incongruity of naming a university after a monarch, given that monarchies symbolise heredity, stability, and power, whereas universities symbolise meritocracy, innovation, and speaking truth to power."

Grant says the name change fits into a wider programme of work to build the University's international reputation, which is not yet in keeping with the teaching and research excellence of the University.

"Realising our ambitions in an increasingly competitive and financially challenging sector requires the University to have a name that is both better aligned to Wellington and more distinctive internationally."



Welcoming all waka

The recommended new Māori name—Te Herenga Waka—is also the name of the University's marae, and means the mooring place of canoes.

Te Herenga Waka has been at the heart of the University community for more than three decades and the name signifies that all people are welcome on the marae.

Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Māori) Professor Rawinia Higgins says, "In using Te Herenga Waka for the whole University, we are saying that people from around the rohe, all around the country, and beyond, can tether their metaphorical canoes and find shelter here. Once people have finished at the University they can head off on their journey, while still maintaining a deep connection to Te Herenga Waka.

"The name also reflects the idea of coming to the city through the harbour, and being anchored and firmly placed here."

READ MORE ABOUT THE COUNCIL'S DECISION

www.victoria.ac.nz/name



A boost for innovation

Wellington has a growing reputation as a start-up city, and a new partnership between Victoria University of Wellington's commercialisation arm, Viclink, and New Zealand financial services company Booster will take this even further.

The New Zealand Innovation Booster is a game-changing partnership that will see Booster—whose executive chairman Paul Foley and managing director Allan Yeo are both alumni—invest at least \$10 million in start-up businesses spun out of the University's world-leading research.

It is the first time a New Zealand financial institution has joined forces with a university to invest in its start-ups.

Launching the partnership, Minister of Finance Grant Robertson praised Viclink and Booster for their leadership in “unlocking capital we need if we’re going to achieve the goals we have around research and innovation”.

He said the initiative “provides a massive opportunity not only for the researchers at Victoria University of Wellington but also for the wider New Zealand economy to be able to lift the value of what we do and develop partnerships that will sustain the standard of living New Zealanders want.”

Under the partnership, Booster will invest a minimum of \$2 million a year for five years in a portfolio of new start-ups.

The partnership reflects the shared commitment of the University and Booster to encourage entrepreneurialism and economic growth in New Zealand, says Vice-Chancellor Professor Grant Guilford.

“Booster is a Wellington-based company and this investment will increase the chance the start-ups will take root in a city we are both proud to be part of,” he says.

Dr Anne Barnett, chief executive officer of Viclink, explains that the money the partnership injects will give the start-ups more security in their cash-hungry formative years.

“Having the support of Booster dramatically improves the chances of the start-ups growing faster, making them more attractive to other investors.”

For Booster, the partnership reflects its commitment to New Zealand by helping

innovative ideas become productive businesses.

“Commercialisation of research has long been seen as an opportunity to enhance the contribution of our universities to New Zealand,” says Allan Yeo. “Historically, this financing has relied on angel funding or venture capital, which means opportunities to date have not only been hard to come by, but future commercialisation and growth benefits leave New Zealand.

“We are excited to be an integral part in growing these innovative Kiwi ideas for the future benefit of New Zealand.”

Viclink currently has equity in nearly 20 start-ups based on university research, including Avalia Immunotherapies, scientific instruments company Magritek, and medical diagnostics company Ferranova.

It aims to double that portfolio within the next decade.

➡ <https://bit.ly/2OEzTWS>



Dame Therese Walsh and Neil Paviour-Smith

Leading the way

Two leaders on the Victoria University of Wellington Council are ensuring the University is primed for future success.

Neil Paviour-Smith is the University's new Chancellor, succeeding Sir Neville Jordan, while Dame Therese Walsh has succeeded Neil as Pro-Chancellor, the Chancellor's deputy. Both were elected unanimously by their fellow Council members and took up their positions at the start of 2018.

Neil, a Victoria University of Wellington Commerce alumnus, is managing director of sharebroking and investment firm Forsyth Barr and a former director of NZX and Chartered Accountants Australia and New Zealand. He joined the Council in 2013.

Dame Therese, who studied Accounting at the University, is an independent director who is chair of TVNZ and incoming chair of Air New Zealand, and

serves on the boards of ASB, Contact Energy, and Antarctica New Zealand. She is also a trustee of Wellington Regional Stadium and a member of the Government's Major Events Investment Panel. She joined the Council in 2016.

Neil and Dame Therese took up their leadership reins as the Council prepared for one of the bigger decisions in its history—whether to simplify the University's name to University of Wellington.

"Victoria has been a core part of the University's identity for a long time, but we need to keep thinking about the future and how the University projects itself," says Neil. "There were compelling reasons to at least have the discussion. It was never going to be a decision taken lightly."

The Council "isn't just there to tick off day-to-day things," says Dame Therese. "We need to have courage and push boundaries, without disrupting what is working well. It's that nice balance you need to reach in your deliberations."

Name simplification feeds into one of the priorities Neil sees for the University over the next few years—increasing international recognition for the high quality of its teaching and research.

He would also like to see the University continue to strive to enhance the overall student experience and increase its engagement in Wellington. "Wouldn't it be great if in, say, a decade's time Wellington is considered to be one of the world's great student cities? In my view, the potential is there to aspire to."

INSIDE WHITE ISLAND

The heart of Whakaari / White Island volcano is a boiling, toxic plume that has prevented attempts by researchers to get a glimpse inside—until now.

New technology developed by Victoria University of Wellington's Dr Ian Schipper and his research team has helped to create a fleet of drones capable of taking samples deep inside volcanic plumes.

"Researchers can't get within a few hundred metres of White Island's plume because the air is so toxic," Ian says. "With these drones, we can send miniature versions of our instruments straight into the plume to take samples."

Researchers currently take samples from as close to the volcano as safely possible. These samples are often contaminated, however, as the volcanic gases of interest pick up dust or other particles from the surrounding environment as they

move away from the centre of the volcano. The ability to send drones into the heart of the plume will mean scientists can get better samples and a more accurate picture of what is happening inside the volcano.



"Our research team's aim is to build a system mounted onto these drones that can tell us how hot a volcano is and how deep the magma runs, and measure changes in the gases that

could signal a volcanic eruption," Ian says.

As well as improving scientific understanding of volcanoes, this equipment could also be vital in preparing for, and managing, emergencies, providing a pre-prepared field kit that can measure changes in a volcano and track eruptions in near real-time.

Ian is excited about the possibilities the technology will open up for scientific research.

"Our work shows drones are useful for far more than just taking pictures," he says. "As well as collecting measurements from the most toxic environments, they could also be used to monitor air quality and track pollutants and respond to fires, dust storms, and many other airborne hazards."

Ian worked alongside researchers from GNS Science, the University of Cambridge, and the Research Institute for Development in France on this project. This research has been funded for two years by New Zealand's Earthquake Commission.

✉ Ian.Schipper@vuw.ac.nz



Citizen Kun

What does it take to become a New Zealander? A Victoria University of Wellington academic tested this question with an unusual case and ended up breaking new ground in citizenship law.

From 2015 until 2016, Professor Claudia Geiringer from the Faculty of Law gave legal assistance to Roland Kun, the former Nauruan opposition Member of Parliament who spent a year trapped in Nauru when his passport was revoked after he was accused of being involved in anti-government protests.

Mr Kun's wife, who is an Australian citizen, and three children had recently settled in New Zealand at the time, and he was unable to leave Nauru to rejoin them. He was the children's primary caregiver.

The case created an international furore, but the legal mechanisms for getting Mr Kun out of Nauru were unclear. This is where Claudia stepped in.

She explains that New Zealand's Citizenship Act has a provision allowing the Minister of Internal Affairs to grant foreign nationals citizenship in special circumstances.

"The Department of Internal Affairs (DIA) was mainly using this provision in cases where there was a really obvious and concrete public benefit to New Zealand—to be in a sports team for instance, or in

cases where the applicant was going to bring a lot of money to New Zealand.

"They didn't regard it as being in the public interest simply to protect people from unfair treatment. And that was the battle we needed to have—to get it recognised that it was in New Zealand's public interest in certain circumstances for hardship of individuals to be avoided, especially where children are involved."

Claudia coordinated an open letter to then Minister of Foreign Affairs Murray McCully calling for New Zealand to suspend its aid funding to Nauru, which the Government then did, but she knew diplomatic intervention could only go so far.

"I knew it would be very difficult to get Roland citizenship because it was a delicate political situation. I believed our interpretation of the law was the correct one, but first we had to convince DIA it was wrong about the law, and then we had to convince the Department to reassess the facts in a way that was favourable to our client, in a situation full of political sensitivities."

It was a formidable task, but together

with distinguished fellow Sir Geoffrey Palmer, who provided strategic advice, and solicitor and Victoria University alumna Antoinette Besier, Claudia successfully convinced DIA that its interpretation of the law was incorrect—"so much so that they've amended their policy documents".

Claudia says this legal victory has opened the door for future applicants to make a case for citizenship on humanitarian grounds.

Mr Kun was granted a New Zealand passport and was able to return to his family. Claudia says the outcome of this case, which she has since written about in an academic article, strengthened her faith in New Zealand's legal system.

"The fact that they said, 'Yes we were wrong, and now that we relook at it, we're going to completely change our approach' and the fact that the Minister took them up on that, is extraordinary—it shows the rule of law is alive in New Zealand in a way that it is certainly not in Nauru.

"In this particular case, I think we saw the best of our public service in action."

✉ Claudia.Geiringer@vuw.ac.nz

MOOCS BREAKING THE MOULD

“Quality education for everyone, everywhere”—this is the idea on which the edX online learning platform was founded by Harvard University and MIT in 2012, and it’s the aspiration that is continuing to push Victoria University of Wellington’s own programme of edX massive open online courses (MOOCs), to create a range of unique courses.

Going from strength to strength, the programme now boasts the world’s first restorative justice MOOC and is breaking new ground at home with New Zealand’s first bicultural series of MOOCs.

Exploring the New Zealand landscape through the lens of both Māori and Pākehā cultures, New Zealand Landscape as Culture: Islands (Ngā Motu) focused on the country’s islands and the impact they have on culture, to teach learners to think about landscape as an expression of culture.

This was followed up by New Zealand Landscape as Culture: Maunga (Mountains), which explored the

geology, popular culture, politics, art, and literature of our high-altitude landscapes and the cultural identities attached to mountains.

In the year ahead, the University’s MOOCs will delve into the realm of ethical leadership and will also return to the coldest, driest, and windiest continent on Earth for a fresh new Antarctic virtual field trip.

Discussions are also underway with award-winning design studio Weta Workshop to develop a course revealing the secrets to creating participants’ own fictitious world through realistic props, costumes, and environments.

www.victoria.ac.nz/edx-victoria



Victoria University of Wellington is the **ONLY** university in New Zealand providing edX MOOCs



MORE THAN HALF of learners are from the USA, UK, Canada, or Australia



Learners range from **10 TO 90 YEARS OLD**



11,000+ LEARNERS



Conservation by numbers

New Zealand has amazing birdlife: nocturnal parrots, birds that can't fly, unique and beguiling birdsong, and varieties that turn up after 50 years of being thought extinct. Unfortunately, many native species require wildlife management programmes and their clever camouflage often makes them hard to monitor.

This is why Professor Stephen Marsland from the School of Mathematics and Statistics is co-leading a large, interdisciplinary project using mathematics, data science, and new technology to help New Zealand birds survive.

The project involves collaboration with mathematicians, ecologists, statisticians, electronic specialists, engineers, and iwi from across New Zealand.

"The aim of this project is to take recordings of birds collected in the field and identify all those that are calling, using mathematical and computational methods such as machine learning," says Stephen.

"Our research is unique as it uses automatic field recordings and the birds can range from 5 to 500 metres away from the microphone. This means that there can be a lot of background noise, which can make it hard to distinguish the calls.

"Sometimes there are a lot of species singing all at once. If you have a small number of species and high-quality recordings, then the problem is reasonably simple, but this isn't necessarily realistic. We're interested in the real-world version where you have a lot of species and noisy recordings."

Stephen and his team of researchers use their knowledge of the different species and statistical methods to turn the call rates into estimates of the numbers of birds present. "The software that we are writing will be freely available to everybody who wants to use it, from community groups through to the Department of Conservation and other researchers," he says.

"Not only are we developing new mathematical techniques, but we also get to try them out in the field and see the difference they make."

✉ Stephen.Marsland@vuw.ac.nz



Photo: Dr Joe Marlow

Deep-sea dwellers

We still don't really know what lives deep in the waters of Fiordland—especially when it comes to the creatures lurking more than 40 metres beneath the surface—but Associate Professor James Bell is on a mission to find out.

Earlier this year, James and a group of researchers spent 10 days aboard the Department of Conservation (DOC) vessel *Southern Winds*, exploring the waters of the Fiordland (Te Moana o Atawhenua) Marine Area, including the Dusky, Doubtful, and Breaksea Sounds. Using state-of-the-art underwater equipment, the group was able to focus on marine life living 40 to 150 metres deep.

"There's very little information on marine life at these depths, considering how many animals live there," says James, who is with the School of Biological Sciences. "Most studies focus on above 40 metres, because you can scuba dive to see what's there. It was great to get a look at the amazing creatures that live at these depths using specialised equipment."

James and his sponge ecology research group received funding for the expedition from DOC, which wanted to measure the abundance of organisms in the area

and set a baseline so it can measure any changes caused by humans. It's a piece of work that has been in the long-term monitoring plan of DOC and local conservation group the Fiordland Marine Guardians for a number of years.

"Previous studies have looked at what types of creatures live down there, but we're the first group to measure the abundance of them, which will make it a lot easier to measure future changes," James says.

A group of PhD students and one recent PhD graduate accompanied James on the research trip.

"This kind of trip is an opportunity very few people get," says James. "It gave the students a chance to see how research works in the field, including solving problems when things don't work out as planned—like having a soldering iron flown in by helicopter to fix some of our equipment!"

The students also had the opportunity to set up, test and deploy brand new, custom-built underwater research equipment.

"Fieldwork gives students the opportunity to observe and see science in action, as well as hands-on experience of what it's like to collect real data that's going to be used to help manage the area."

This trip was the first time DOC has funded a Victoria University-led team to conduct fieldwork in Fiordland.

"This was a fantastic opportunity to develop our relationship with DOC and the Fiordland Marine Guardians," says James. "We hope to do more work in the area, especially looking at how environmental and climate change might affect it."

"This is a perfect example of how the research we do has real-life impact in New Zealand."

✉ James.Bell@vuw.ac.nz

Fire, fury, and foreign policy

When Dr Van Jackson started writing his new book on the North Korean crisis, he wasn't sure whether or not there would be a nuclear war by the time he'd finished it.



Van, a senior lecturer in the School of History, Philosophy, Political Science and International Relations, is an expert on foreign policy and security issues in the United States and Asia-Pacific. He's asked regularly by international media to comment on North Korea and published his first book, *Rival Reputations: Coercion and Credibility in US-North Korea Relations*, with Cambridge University Press in 2016.

"Last year, we started seeing Trump and Kim Jong-un making threats of nuclear war and trading personal insults—this was all unprecedented.

"I was very concerned by what I was seeing. In the midst of that crisis, just after Trump threatened 'fire and fury' against North Korea, the editor from my first book called me up and asked, 'What do you think about writing a book about the origins of the nuclear crisis?'

"Cambridge was making an offer I couldn't say no to—it's a once in a lifetime thing. For academics, there's basically no better publisher."

There was a catch though—he had to write the 90,000-word book from scratch, and had only six months to do it.

To deal with this challenge, Van started a blog about his writing process called *Nuke your Darlings*, which he published in real time. Adding more writing to his daily workload might seem counter-intuitive, but Van insists it helped in a big way.

"It became a self-accountability mechanism. I didn't want to fall short of the expectations I'd created, and the blog forced me to find time to work on the book even on days when I was insanely busy."

As the crisis unfolded, Van diligently worked on his book while continuing to engage with the media and maintaining a busy teaching schedule. He says there were times when the looming deadline put a strain on his life, but his desire to make sense of the crisis helped him through.

"I was just consumed with worry, and trying to express that worry publicly. It wasn't enough to write a thousand-word opinion piece—the book was like having a larger canvas on which to explain how we got to the point where two world leaders were threatening each other with nuclear war."

Along the way there were some historic moments, including the summit between Trump and Kim Jong-un in Singapore last June.

In the end, the brinkmanship subsided and crisis was averted, albeit not through conventional diplomacy. Van puts it down largely to North Korean strategy and Trump's capriciousness.

"I hate to say it, but this train was driven primarily by Kim Jong-un," he says. "But at least it's not war—it's infinitely better from where we were last year."

Van is originally from the United States, where he worked for the Department of Defense in the Pentagon. His new book, titled *On the Brink: Trump, Kim, and the Threat of Nuclear War*, will be published in November.

Despite the nuclear crisis having cooled down, Van is wary of getting too comfortable. "Wars can happen even when nobody wants them to, and the underlying nuclear situation that bred the crisis in 2017 hasn't changed."

✉ Van.Jackson@vuw.ac.nz



Solving political puzzles

How do small- and middle-sized states navigate an increasingly turbulent world?
How do they find ways to construct order out of anarchy?

These are the questions Associate Professor David Capie, director of the Centre for Strategic Studies, is asking—and he says there's never been a better time to explore them.

"If you think of these questions in terms of New Zealand and our region, it's just infinitely fascinating at the moment. The Centre is really interested in what the consequences are for New Zealand when it comes to things like the rise of China, the changing role of the United States, and issues like the situation on the Korean Peninsula. We're thinking about what challenges and problems are out there, and what New Zealand can do to respond to them."

The Centre gives David the opportunity to not only teach and research these issues, but also to contribute to the wider public debate—

"I'm interested in puzzles in international politics, so it's a very fun time to be doing this sort of work."

—David Capie

something he says has become a much greater focus for the Centre over the past few years.

"We've stepped up our engagement on a whole range of big issues. We

think it's part of our responsibility to generate an informed public discussion about foreign policy, security issues, and defence policy.

"We don't try to push a particular line so much as raise questions and try to stimulate debate."

This year the Centre is undertaking a number of activities to celebrate its twenty-fifth birthday, including a maritime security conference. In July, the Centre hosted the launch of the Government's new Strategic Defence Policy Statement in the University's Council Chamber.

"New Zealand doesn't have a big think-tank culture, and there aren't many that have been around for 25 years. I think it's pretty special for the University, and more broadly for New Zealand."

✉ David.Capie@vuw.ac.nz

Tempted by our vibrancy



Professor Margaret Hyland loved her 18 months as chief scientist at the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE) and was sad to leave. But the opportunity to lead research at New Zealand's top university for research quality doesn't arise every day and was too tempting to pass up.

Margaret, who joined Victoria University of Wellington as Vice-Provost (Research) at the end of July, saw an institution “on a very positive trajectory. It had a sense of real vibrancy. There was an openness to change and exploring new directions I found very appealing.”

She also liked the idea of being directly responsible for delivering research again; as much as she loved her chief scientist job and the broader perspective it gave her, “it was more about influencing than delivering”.

Margaret was on secondment to MBIE from the University of Auckland, where she was deputy dean of its Faculty of Engineering. She joined the university in 1989 and her other roles there included three years as associate deputy vice-chancellor, research.

In 2015, Margaret was the first woman to be awarded the Royal Society Te Apārangi's prestigious Pickering Medal for excellence in technology, for her pioneering research to reduce fluoride emissions from aluminium smelting.

A former professor of chemical and materials engineering at Auckland, with a PhD in chemistry from the University of

Western Ontario in her native Canada, she has an impressive track record in external research funding, having secured more than \$39 million over the past 11 years as a principal investigator.

Margaret's vision for research at Victoria University “is encapsulated in the University's positioning around the global-civic ethos: it's about excellent research that makes a difference; research that is internationally recognised, in part because it has a particularly New Zealand flavour to it”.

That flavour manifests itself in many ways, she says.

“One is our connectedness. We have access to particular environments and ecosystems, including science and business ecosystems. We also have access to unique databases. And then, really importantly, there is our indigeneity—mātauranga Māori and the distinctive contributions possible through engagement with Māori thinking, Māori researchers, iwi, and Māori enterprises. I see at this University a serious commitment to exploring how that can be done well.”

✉ Margaret.Hyland@vuw.ac.nz

Authentic engagement



Dr Lucy Baragwanath was at the coalface during one of the most complex governance projects in New Zealand in recent years, working in various capacities for groups involved in the amalgamation of Auckland's local government into a single ‘super city’.

Now, she is bringing the skills she developed as a ‘specialist generalist’ during this period to Victoria University of Wellington as the new Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Engagement).

“While working at the Committee for Auckland, the Mayor's Office, the University of Auckland, and the City Centre Advisory Board, I experienced the challenges of finding common ground between interest groups as the amalgamation unfolded.

“It was an enormously complex process that continues to evolve, but ultimately it depended on effective engagement. Once people knew you were open to different perspectives and different approaches, they were far more willing to seek common ground with you.”

Lucy's interest in these challenges emerged during her doctoral and postdoctoral research into globalisation and New Zealand, which focused on the

interplay between theory, discourse, and public policy.

She put this research into practice at the University of Auckland and Auckland University of Technology, and she sees civic engagement as central to the work of universities.

“Our work is supported by public funds to deliver the critique, analysis, and innovation that leads to positive change. This requires authentic engagement with the communities we are here to serve—we can only play a role if we listen carefully to what our communities need, and think laterally about where we can help.

“Ultimately, I want Victoria University of Wellington to be renowned for actively engaging with people wanting to discuss new ideas or ways of doing things. Rather than simply sitting back and analysing what's going on in the world, we need to be working with the communities we serve to enable change.”

✉ Lucy.Baragwanath@vuw.ac.nz



On the set of *Wild*, directed by MFA(CP) Film student Steph Miller.

Putting creativity to work

In a world where many traditional jobs are at risk of automation, creativity and imagination will play a crucial role in the future of human work.

Victoria University of Wellington's new Master of Fine Arts (Creative Practice) (MFA(CP)) is preparing students for this eventuality by allowing them to explore the boundaries of their imaginations in partnership with some of Wellington's top creative talent.

An industry-focused creative arts degree, the MFA(CP) was established to inspire collaboration and innovation through highly intensive practical training. The degree has four streams—Film, Theatre, Music, and Design—and offers students the opportunity to build networks in Wellington's competitive creative industries, develop specialist skills, and gain an understanding of creative processes.

Dr Paul Wolfram, director of the Miramar Creative Centre where the Film and Music streams are taught, says the MFA(CP) represents an exciting new direction for the University.

"The MFA(CP) is an industry training degree—a Master's programme designed to take top students and prepare them for what can be a difficult

industry to get into. We provide them with opportunities that will help them discover where they can fit in the professional world of the arts."

For their end-of-year projects, students across the four streams are teamed up with one another and with other Wellington creative practitioners to create exciting new works. Each is able to choose a project that focuses on where they want to go in their careers, whether that means producing and directing a film, designing a multimedia performance, or engineering the soundtrack for a computer game.

Liam Reid from the Music stream worked with Film students Steph Miller and Shu Run Yap on *Wild*, a short film that explores post-traumatic stress disorder.

Liam says a highlight was recording with a chamber orchestra assembled from some of the top talent from the New Zealand School of Music—Te Kōkī orchestra.

"It was exciting to work with a variety of instruments and create a work that demonstrates the ambition and scale that I'm capable of," he says.

Theatre students Liam Kelly and Sam Tippet won two Fringe Festival awards for their MFA(CP) show, *How to Write an Album in 12 Hours*. Liam says, "The programme taught me so much about the business side of theatre and how to manage myself as an artist. I'm now keen to take the show on tour nationally, perhaps even internationally."

► www.victoria.ac.nz/mfa
✉ Paul.Wolfram@vuw.ac.nz

**SEE A SHOWREEL OF STUDENT WORK ON THE
MIRAMAR CREATIVE CENTRE WEBSITE**

► www.victoria.ac.nz/2018-showreel



Tahlia Crabtree, Andrew James, Dr Jim McGregor

Weather dependent

The weather is one of the most enduring topics of conversation—and Victoria University of Wellington's new Master of Meteorology (MMet) is certainly getting people talking.

"Back in the 1960s, meteorologists weren't taken as seriously as they are now," says Dr Jim McGregor from the School of Geography, Environment and Earth Sciences. "There was the saying 'The best way of doing a weather forecast is to look out the window and see what's happening.'"

Jim has been teaching at the University since 1983 and now leads the MMet, which is unique in New Zealand. Offered typically every second year, the first cohort of students graduated in May 2018.

The programme is taught in partnership with MetService, which is a short walk from the University's Kelburn campus. MetService leads the programme's two professional courses, during which the students work at MetService as paid employees.

"The whole programme is developed around our relationship with MetService," says Jim. "Over the years, we've built up a lot of trust and understanding with them. MetService has been very supportive of building the

programme here at the University, and they've always appreciated our input to their training programme."

Andrew James, who was one of the first MMet graduates and now has a full-time role at MetService, says the programme prepared him well for operational work.

"The MMet was a fantastic programme. A team approach is vital to weather forecasting, and this was reflected in the training. Collaboration within the class was strongly encouraged, and I now count a lot of classmates as close friends."

Andrew's former classmate and current colleague Tahlia Crabtree says she enjoyed the programme's balance of theory and practical work.

"You're learning by applying your knowledge to the weather each day. When I started officially forecasting at MetService, I felt confident since I'd already had plenty of practice."

The programme already attracts top-achieving maths, engineering, and physics students, and as it continues to build its reputation Jim expects to see

more international students applying.

Jim says meteorology has changed a lot since he first started studying it, especially since the advent of weather satellite technology in the 1970s. As the field has become more advanced, the demand for quality meteorological information has skyrocketed.

Regional councils rely heavily on meteorologists for information about climate and extreme weather events, as do the aviation, agricultural, and insurance industries.

"In a country that depends so heavily on transportation, agriculture, and the land, the weather is hugely important," says Jim.

Originally from Cumbria in the United Kingdom—which he describes as "probably wetter than Wellington"—Jim says there's no better place to study meteorology than New Zealand's capital city.

"It's stimulating. We can experience four seasons in a day, so it keeps things interesting."

✉ Jim.McGregor@vuw.ac.nz

Better, faster, stronger government

A new accelerator programme supported by Victoria Business School is helping put Wellington on the world map for government innovation.

The programme—Lightning Lab GovTech—developed by Wellington innovation hub Creative HQ and based on the methodologies used in their successful series of business accelerator programmes, provides a platform for selected teams to create ‘better, faster, and stronger government’.

Launched earlier this year, GovTech’s first cohort brings together 13 teams from central and local New Zealand government, the public and private sectors, and an international team from Taiwan Water Board, to design, develop, and test new approaches and technologies to improve government, civic, and social systems. Creative HQ head of acceleration Brett Holland says the innovations have the potential to be

picked up by similar programmes and agencies overseas, “allowing Wellington, and by extension New Zealand, to become a global hub of government innovation”.

Recognising the programme’s potential, major sponsors Spark and Revera have committed to support the programme for three years.

Victoria Business School’s director of entrepreneurship Professor Stephen Cummings says it’s exciting for the School to lend its expertise to the venture.

“Our researchers and students can help provide insights around effective innovation and entrepreneurship in the civic sector.

“This is one of the first entrepreneurial incubators applied to civic enterprise

and, as such, it’s already attracting international interest. One of the key issues of interest is around how to gauge the success of entrepreneurial ventures that can’t just be measured in traditional financial terms.”

The innovations to spring out of the programme should create real and positive changes, but Stephen says there are other flow-on effects.

“GovTech will also contribute to upskilling, training, and educating local entrepreneurial talent in the Wellington ecosystem and provide us with the opportunity to contribute to international scholarship in this under-researched area.”

✉ Stephen.Cummings@vuw.ac.nz

A room with a view

Victoria University of Wellington’s supporting partnership with the news and current affairs website *Newsroom* is going from strength to strength, with nearly 200 think pieces, analyses, and other articles now contributed to it by the University.



Newsroom launched in early 2017, founded by co-editors Mark Jennings, former head of news at MediaWorks (including Newshub across TV channel Three and Radio Live), and Tim Murphy, former editor-in-chief of the *New Zealand Herald*. The website was named joint Website of the Year in the 2018 Voyager Media Awards.

The University was a supporting partner from the beginning, with Vice-Chancellor Professor Grant Guilford seeing the relationship as a natural fit for the University and its commitment to promoting and leading public discussion

on issues affecting social, economic, environmental, and cultural wellbeing.

“We recognised that *Newsroom*, with its aim to cover ‘the things that matter’, was a kindred spirit, and so it has proved,” says Grant.

At the awards ceremony, attended by Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern, judges praised *Newsroom* for its in-depth and investigative reporting, saying it “has secured its place as a go-to website for hard-hitting news coverage”.

In all, *Newsroom* and its journalists were finalists in 16 categories, winning four, including Reporter of the Year and

Story of the Year for investigations editor Melanie Reid.

“The University is adding more articles to the site each week,” says Grant. “Many of our academics have had conversations with policymakers and influencers, received an invitation to speak at events, and appeared in other media as a result of being seen there.

“The partnership is helping them reach a wider audience with their research and thinking and to fulfil their role as a critic and conscience of society.”

➡ www.newsroom.co.nz

Keeping New Zealand on track

In 2015, New Zealand was one of 193 countries to adopt the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that promise to 'transform our world' by 2030.



While head of the School of Government Professor Girol Karacaoglu is first to admit the SDGs may not be at the forefront of most New Zealanders' minds, he's heartened at the increasing engagement with them by the public sector, businesses, non-governmental organisations, local government, and iwi.

He's also adamant that Victoria University of Wellington has a role to play in increasing public awareness of the SDGs and holding the Government

to account on its obligations—a role the University demonstrated in April when it hosted a day-long summit bringing together leaders from business, government, and the tertiary sector to discuss how to progress the SDGs.

Early next year, Girol—with the help of the School of Government's Toby Moore and statistics analyst Andrea Fromm—will launch a website that aims to 'hold a mirror' up to New Zealand's progress in achieving the 17 economic, environmental, and social goals.

Every quarter, the website will be updated with the latest Statistics New Zealand data to show the country's performance against measures under each goal.

Graphs will clearly show the progress over time and the website will allow comparisons with how New Zealand's performance stacks up against other countries.

Girol says the website will be a catalyst for regular conversations on the SDGs and will serve as a valuable resource for all New Zealanders.

"We also hope it will facilitate collaboration across all sectors and be used to inform and influence public policy to achieve the development goals."

Girol says the website is another way the School can uphold its role as critic and conscience of society, while strengthening the University's academic focus on sustainability.

"The University is independent of political bias, so we're able to show the New Zealand public exactly where we stand on any of the 17 goals. That transparency is vital to keeping the Government on track."

✉ Girol.Karacaoglu@vuw.ac.nz

Outside the mind

"We learn about these theories and challenges in the classroom, but we don't really see them," says Anjela Frost, a current Master's student in Forensic Psychology. "Completing this internship has given me the chance to see how forensic psychology actually works in the real world."

Anjela is referring to Forensic Psychology 401, a work placement undertaken by all Forensic Psychology Master's students at Victoria University of Wellington.

Every year, these students spend 12 weeks working at organisations including the Department of Corrections, the New Zealand Police, and Oranga Tamariki (the Ministry for Children), completing research projects with real-life impact and seeing how the skills they learn in their programme apply in the real world. Victoria University is the only New Zealand university to offer this Master's programme.

"This course is invaluable for students in terms of showing them first-hand the significant impact their knowledge and research skills in forensic psychology can have on important policy and, ultimately, on people's lives," says programme director Associate Professor Louise Dixon.

Students work on projects ranging from the links between nutrition and

mental health to how crime is covered by the news media. The findings of the students' projects are often used to inform policy and develop new programmes for the organisations they work for.

Annabelle Wride, who is researching the role of substance use in criminal offending, says her work may help to develop drug treatment programmes in New Zealand.

"My work will provide the organisation with background information that they could use to inform the development of new treatment programmes," Annabelle says.

"Applying our skills in real-world projects is the best part of this placement," Anjela says. "We could do written work in the classroom or anywhere, but this placement is a chance to get out in the field and work with real people."

✉ Louise.Dixon@vuw.ac.nz

🌐 www.victoria.ac.nz/forensic



Annabelle Wride

IMPROVING HEALTH AND WELLBEING

"Health and wellbeing is about much more than the absence of illness. Victoria University of Wellington researchers from the social sciences to the laboratory, from the humanities to the performing arts, from policy and law to the hospital corridors, are finding new ways to understand and contribute to the health and wellbeing of our communities."

—**Professor Annemarie Jutel**

Chair of Improving Health and Wellbeing in our Communities,
one of the University's areas of academic distinctiveness.





Sarah Tuck, Bop Murdoch, Jody Burrell

A GLOBAL SHORTAGE OF SELF-ESTEEM

A social enterprise based in Wellington's CBD is at the forefront of a global movement to bring mental health out of the shadows.

CoLiberate was established by Bop Murdoch, Jody Burrell, and Sarah Tuck, graduates of Victoria University of Wellington's Theatre programme who were named earlier this year as the most influential Wellingtonians working in health science by the Wellington Regional Economic Development Agency.

"It's about making self-care cool," says Bop. "We've developed a gym-like culture that normalises personal emotional wellbeing in an attempt to eliminate the stigma around mental illness and support the community to value mental fitness as much as physical fitness. There is a global shortage of self-esteem," she says.

Their first venture together was a nationally touring theatre company, Pat-A-Cake Productions.

"We were full-time artists building a community through theatre projects and we found that the most important part of our work was preparing people to feel mentally capable on stage, by building self-esteem and generating purpose,"

says Sarah. "But, in doing this, we saw a much bigger need around the mental health challenges that many New Zealanders face, and wanted to try to develop a venture that might help make people more resilient."

The trio began evolving CoLiberate two years ago by developing different workshops and testing ideas for a business model that could help Kiwis strengthen their mental health and wellbeing.

"We can see now that our work in theatre has been useful for building mental wellbeing in a range of individuals and, better still, for building a sense of pride in doing what it takes to look after your wellbeing while simultaneously doing your best work," says Bop.

CoLiberate is now firmly established in Wellington, with offerings ranging from a Wellness Wānanga—where participants share experiences—to Mindful Clay Sculpting and Reflective Writing. Accredited by Ko Awatea at Counties

Manukau Health, the most recent addition—a two-day Mental Health First Aid Certificate—has gone from strength to strength. The programme has already been delivered to teams across 42 organisations, including the New Zealand Transport Agency and the Royal New Zealand Police College, as well as numerous individuals.

"Mental health first aid is the help given to someone who is having a mental health crisis such as a panic attack, self-injury, or aggressive behaviour," says Jody. "The course teaches people how to assist someone who is struggling with their mental health, experiencing distress or a mental health crisis. There is an overwhelming need for this kind of care in our community," she says.

Jody says the work brings her all the joy that theatre once did. "The care that we're able to give people is what's so rewarding. It really feels like we're handing over a gift."

► www.coliberate.co.nz



FROM THE LAB TO THE LIVING ROOM

Fertility can be a fraught issue for many people, and fertility tests are an expensive and time-consuming process. But senior lecturer and MacDiarmid Institute principal investigator Dr Natalie Plank plans to change this by creating technology that will move routine fertility tests from the lab to the doctor's office, or even the patient's home.

Natalie, who is with the School of Chemical and Physical Sciences, and her research team are using their recent Marsden grant of \$950,000 over three years to fund the development of 'lab on a chip' biosensors.

"These biosensors have the potential to cause a paradigm shift in the way we run routine tests," says Natalie. "Taking fertility tests from the lab to a small portable test that can work with a pinprick of blood is a huge goal, but one that we'll be working hard to achieve."

Natalie explains the sensors will detect one particular hormone in the blood. When a person puts a small sample of blood into the sensor, biomaterials inside the sensor will bind to any trace of the hormone they find. Once this binding happens, the device will send out an electronic signal to show the outcome of the test.

The majority of this processing will happen on the surface of carbon nanotubes—tiny tubes one billionth of a metre in diameter that make it easier to create a portable device. These tubes can easily attract and process biomaterials, making them perfect for this kind of sensor.

Although Natalie's current research focuses on fertility, the technology she is developing could have many other applications.

"Making blood tests faster and easier will be beneficial for fertility patients, but the knowledge we gain from this research will potentially benefit other areas where sensing of biomaterials is needed, such as food safety or biosecurity," she says.

Natalie's background is in astrophysics, where she became fascinated with materials on the

nanoscale and their potential real-world applications.

"My research combines physics, materials science, electrical engineering, and a touch of biotechnology," she says. "Working at the MacDiarmid Institute has given me a lot of opportunities for interdisciplinary work, which has really helped with creating these biosensors."

The research is still in its early stages, but Natalie says it is proceeding well.

"We have evidence that our design is feasible, and we've been able to detect oestrogen well. Funnily enough, we won't start the bulk of the work until later in 2018, as I have been on parental leave. So you could say I have a lot of first-hand experience with blood tests and fertility!"

✉ Natalie.Plank@vuw.ac.nz

THE ECONOMICS OF HAPPINESS

For Professor Arthur Grimes, an important aspect of wellbeing is the ancient Greek concept of eudaemonia, or purpose in life.

"The concept goes back to Aristotle, as many things do," he says.

Arthur is the Chair of Wellbeing and Public Policy at the School of Government, where he spends much of his time thinking about how we can measure and maximise wellbeing.

"The difficulty that no one has yet mastered is how to incorporate wellbeing into a practical policy framework," he says. "It's all very well saying we want to improve wellbeing—and 2019's Budget is going to be a Wellbeing Budget, according to the Minister of Finance—but what does it actually mean?"

"Different people have different takes on this. Amartya Sen defines wellbeing as leading the life one wishes to lead, and having the capability to do that.

"The OECD's Better Life Index, which has 11 different domains covering things such as health, housing, education, and life satisfaction, is one approach to represent



the capabilities that individuals require to lead a fulfilling life."

As it stands, Arthur doesn't think we're faring too badly in the wellbeing stakes. "In the Gallup poll (measuring subjective wellbeing) New Zealand is always in the top 10. We also tend to come out as one of the top countries in the Better Life Index."

He says one area where New Zealand could do better is inequality. "For a developed country, we're quite unequal on some of these measures, including life satisfaction and consumption."

Since February, Arthur has been a member of the World Wellbeing Panel based at the London School of Economics. The Panel comprises almost 50 academics around the world, including economists, psychologists, political scientists, and sociologists.

Arthur was also involved in organising a very successful international conference on wellbeing and public policy in Wellington in September that was co-hosted by Victoria University of Wellington, the Treasury, and the *International Journal of Wellbeing*.

He says the conference highlighted some significant challenges to wellbeing, including sustainability.

"A big elephant in the room for future wellbeing is climate change. If that were to eventuate towards the worse end of the spectrum, sea-level rise alone would have devastating impacts on wellbeing.

"A further challenge is alienation through technology—people not interacting with each other directly." Arthur notes that research has found people often experience happiness from doing things for others. "Will technology lead to more, or less, of that?"

When asked what wellbeing means to him personally, Arthur pauses.

"I suppose having a life that I can reflect on and think that it's been worthwhile and enjoyable. And at a societal level, that essentially all people can say, 'I was really pleased with my life'."

✉ Arthur.Grimes@vuw.ac.nz

SHARING THE LOVE

How early is too early to jump online and announce the arrival of your new bundle of joy?

A Victoria University of Wellington study is exploring the role the internet and social media play in the 'golden hour' after birth.

The first 60 minutes of a baby's life are believed to provide important physical and emotional benefits.

These include major physiological changes to circulation in newborns, as well as in their neurological responses through exposure to light, sound, touch, cold, and gravity. Women also experience significant neuro-hormonal changes at birth that aid the attachment between mother and baby.

The multidisciplinary study, believed to be a world first, involves Dr Jayne Krisjanous from the School of Marketing



and International Business, Dr Robyn Maude from the Graduate School of Nursing, Midwifery and Health, and PhD student Marlini Bakri.

Jayne says the immediate wave of feedback to online announcements can disturb the bonding process, as it requires some attention and responding to.

While we live in an increasingly social-

media-saturated world, says Robyn, paying attention to the baby in those intimate moments after birth is vital.

"It's a time to explore each other, and allow the baby to ease into the newness of being outside the womb."

✉ Jayne.Krisjanous@vuw.ac.nz

✉ Robyn.Maude@vuw.ac.nz



NEW FACULTY HITS THE GROUND RUNNING

Establishing a faculty is a formidable task—but then, the dean of the new Faculty of Health, Professor Gregor Coster, is someone who does triathlons for relaxation.

The Victoria University of Wellington alumnus returned to his alma mater in 2015 as Professor of Health Policy and chair of the team leading the University's newly-established 'improving health and wellbeing in our communities' area of focus. The pan-university group quickly decided a faculty with a non-medical focus was the right direction in which to head.

"We are a start-up—that's exactly what we are," says Gregor of the new Faculty, which was launched in 2017. "It's edgy. That gives us every encouragement to drive hard and build something worthwhile for the University.

"We felt it was important to have a faculty of health in the capital city, with a national and global outlook. It's a faculty that's right next to key ministries—that's a huge advantage."

The Faculty brings together the University's existing Graduate School of Nursing, Midwifery and Health with a new School of Health and also incorporates the Health Research Services Centre. In September 2017 they were joined by the

Centre for Women's Health Research / Te Tātai Hauora o Hine, which has a focus on health and wellbeing of Māori women.

The new entity has been a standout success, to the extent that it had to seek larger lecture spaces when enrolments in the new Bachelor of Health qualification came in at double the target at the beginning of 2018.

Even more pleasing was breaking through the diversity targets. A quarter of all enrolments in the Bachelor qualification in 2018 are Māori and Pasifika, 85 percent are female, and half are students who are the first in their families to forge a path to university.

Gregor says there's a huge untapped interest in health and wellbeing from Māori and Pasifika people.

"Here is an opportunity where they can make a difference in the health of their communities. I think these young people will be leaders in their communities, iwi, non-governmental organisations, and so on."

Gregor brought to the role years of high-level health sector experience,

including as a GP, chair of two district health boards, and governance roles in PHARMAC, ACC, and WorkSafe New Zealand. During 2018, he was also the lead reviewer for the Independent Assurance Review of the National Bowel Screening Programme. That group reported to the Director General of Health in July.

In addition, the Faculty is deep in the development of new Master's programmes that will offer pathways for the current Bachelor of Health students as well as attract new students.

"To lead a team of people to achieve an outcome that I think so far has been successful—it's extraordinarily satisfying. I wouldn't do it if it wasn't."

For relaxation, there is always running. With 20 marathons and three Coast-to-Coasts under his belt, Gregor now competes in the World Age Group Championships as a triathlete.

"It doesn't sound it, but I think it's relaxing. But I have to be very organised, no doubt about that."

✉ Gregor.Coster@vuw.ac.nz



BRINGING LOCALS AND LAND TOGETHER

A group of academics from the Faculty of Architecture and Design is forging connections between locals and the land in a research partnership with eco-sanctuary Zealandia.

Senior lecturer Jacqueline McIntosh and deputy head of the School of Architecture Bruno Marques, along with several students, have created three proposals to bring mātauranga Māori to Zealandia and the Wellington landscape.

Each project looks at different ways of connecting with the landscape, improving wellbeing, and incorporating Māori values into architectural design.

“We’ve found some deeply meaningful values in the Māori approach to landscape in our age of overconsumption, waste generation, and landscape neglect,” Jacqueline says. “And we’ve really hit it off with the staff at Zealandia—our partnership has been an amazing fit for a lot of the work we want to do.”

Master’s student Katy Phillips designed a wellness centre to straddle the line between Zealandia and Birdwood Reserve, a smaller bush reserve across the road from Zealandia. The centre would offer traditional healing through rongoā Māori (Māori medicine), with the layout of the centre drawing on the traditional layout of a marae and the body of Papatūānuku

(Mother Earth) to encourage health, change, and new beginnings.

William Hatton, also a Master’s student, took a wider view, designing a series of interconnecting public spaces starting at Zealandia in Karori and leading to the sea. William’s proposal aims to improve access to public outdoor spaces and encourage visitors to connect with the land and each other through a series of landscape architectural installations inspired by the layout of a marae and Māori values.

Undergraduate students Susana Ou and Zarah Sahib (whose work won the University’s Summer Gold Architecture and Design Prize) also focused on rongoā Māori, proposing new pathways and signs to highlight the plants already growing in Zealandia and Birdwood Reserve that can be used for healing.

The students hope these projects will start a discussion on how we can further incorporate mātauranga Māori into our daily lives and encourage the sharing of knowledge in this area, Jacqueline says.

Bruno says projects like these, which incorporate sustainability and wellbeing,

are an important focus for the Faculty.

“One of our key research focuses is therapeutic and rehabilitative environments. This project is one of a kind, as it addresses issues with architecture and landscape architecture, healthcare, technology, and industrial design.”

As well as supervising these Master’s projects, Jacqueline and Bruno are part of a cross-disciplinary research group involving academics from the Faculties of Engineering, Health, and Science.

“With an ageing population in New Zealand, we’re looking for preventative measures and alternative solutions for the issues that accompany ageing,” Jacqueline says. “There is a national imperative to consider mātauranga Māori in everything we do to help improve the lives of all New Zealanders.”

The research was supported by the University Research Fund, the University’s mātauranga Māori project, the Health Research Council, and local community groups.

✉ Bruno.Marques@vuw.ac.nz

✉ Jacqueline.McIntosh@vuw.ac.nz



CELEBRATING 25 YEARS IN STYLE

Professor Jacqueline Cumming has devoted much of her career to under-researched areas of New Zealand's health system including, most recently, the performance of primary healthcare services.

So it's fitting that as she celebrates 25 years at Victoria University of Wellington, and the Health Research Services Centre she leads also turns 25, she has received a large Health Research Council (HRC) programme grant to research New Zealand's primary healthcare system.

Worth \$4.78 million over five years, the grant will support research that explores current models for delivering primary healthcare services through general practices, nursing clinics, and pharmacies, and how these models might be improved. A major part of the research will focus on the views of those using, or needing to access, care.

Jacqueline's interest in this area dates back to her work as a policy analyst with the Department of Health in the early 1990s. At

that time, New Zealand's health system was being reviewed. It then underwent major restructuring and Jacqueline found herself working at the coalface of planning and implementing these changes.

"It was an exciting time but no one seemed to know what practical effect the changes would make. I was intrigued by the work of Professor Claudia Scott, in the School of Government, who was looking at these reforms, and when Claudia told me about a new research centre being established to investigate precisely those questions, I jumped at the chance to join it."

When it was established in 1993, Jacqueline became a research fellow with the Health Services Research Centre, and was appointed director in 2001. Despite the many years she has spent working in primary healthcare research, Jacqueline says this research field in New Zealand is still relatively new.

"Research funding in New Zealand has traditionally gone towards developing new drugs or treatments, which are, of course, essential. But the health system—the primary healthcare system, in particular—is enormously complex and we need better information about where

things are working well and what we can do better so policymakers can ensure we get the most for our money."

Jacqueline explains that healthcare investment in New Zealand and around the world has gradually shifted towards primary services such as GPs and nursing clinics to reduce pressure on the hospital system.

The research programme she leads, Enhancing Primary Health Care Services to Improve Health in Aotearoa New Zealand, involves collaboration with colleagues at the University of Auckland and the University of Otago (Wellington), Pacific Perspectives Ltd, Whakauae Research Services, Counties Manukau District Health Board, and several international collaborators.

Jacqueline says she is looking forward to beginning the research programme and helping to improve health outcomes for New Zealanders.

"The Government spends \$18 billion on the health system every year, but there has been little investment to date to see how that system is working, so it's fantastic to see the HRC recognises the value of this sort of research with the new grant."

✉ Jackie.Cumming@vuw.ac.nz



THE MYTH BUSTER

Dr Fiona Hutton wasn't at Victoria University of Wellington long before people were emailing the Vice-Chancellor, demanding he sack her. She had appeared in the media talking about clubbers and recreational drugs. "I'd only been here a year or so. I thought, 'Hmm, this is going well.'"

Fiona is a senior lecturer in the Institute of Criminology, where one of her research interests is dispelling myths about drugs.

Understandably, her early experiences left her a little bashful about the media. But last year, increasingly frustrated at the level of misinformation demonstrated by not only the media but also politicians and policymakers, she steeled herself to return to the fray in order to set the facts straight.

"The vast majority of drug use we know about globally is recreational use of cannabis—the use of other drugs such as cocaine, ecstasy, amphetamines, and heroin is way behind cannabis users in terms of numbers," says Fiona.

"Most drug use is non-problematic, recreational, and does not cause harm to the drug user, their communities, or to

society. However, we are often presented with the opposite picture through moral-panic-type reporting, which serves to fuel public anxieties about particular groups such as drug-using beneficiaries."

Reforming drug laws would enable us to treat drug use as a health issue, not a criminal one, which would produce far better outcomes, says Fiona.

In her drive to raise public awareness on the subject, she has appeared on television and radio and written articles for a number of high-profile media outlets. Unlike Fiona's first time in the media, no one has called for her dismissal; on the contrary, she's had nothing but supportive responses.

"Somebody from the place where I get my hair cut said, 'I saw you on breakfast telly. I thought you were great. You said some things I'd never thought about

before.' So that's positive. That's the sort of wider New Zealand the politicians think are really punitive and opposed to drug law reform."

One of Fiona's most recent articles highlighted the need for the Government to ensure voters are properly informed of all the issues before its proposed 2020 referendum on legalising cannabis.

"A lot of people don't know what the issues are. If they don't use illegal drugs and don't know anybody who uses them, it's a bit off their radar. They're like, 'What's the problem with criminalising people? What's the big deal?' So we need to tell them what a big deal it is. I suppose in a way that's also behind my embracing of the media. Let's just get some debate out there."

✉ Fiona.Hutton@vuw.ac.nz



Migoto Eria

Manager Iwi Development / Pouwhirinaki ā-Iwi,
Te Papa Tongarewa

BA(Hons) *Well*

How would you describe your student experience at Victoria University of Wellington?

It was busy, full-on, and there was lots of study to do! I learnt to spend as much time as possible to get study hours in. It really helps!

What have you been doing since graduating?

I've taught te reo Māori at a range of schools, worked at the Māori Language Commission as a lexicographer, became an editor at Learning Media for the Māori-medium team, became a mother, and worked as a museum curator.

What's been a highlight of your career so far?

Having the opportunity to travel to Los Angeles to speak at an indigenous conference with a panel of other indigenous curators.

What do you love about your current role at Te Papa?

Being able to maintain and create relationships throughout the museum sector in promoting the importance of tikanga in museum practice. We get to support communities and iwi in networking and taking care of their taonga.

Why do you think health and wellbeing are so important for society?

Health and wellbeing, as I've come to understand in recent years, means more than being physically fit and able to perform your job. In roles where I've been engaged with taonga Māori (traditional Māori artefacts) in museums, health and wellbeing also stretches to include spiritual wellbeing, known as taha wairua, because working with Māori artefacts also means working with ancestral treasures and stories. The care of taha wairua in this sense is critical not only for oneself, but also for visitors who interact with exhibitions and programmes.



Benjamin Johnson

Freelance photographer and co-founder of the Free Store

BCA, BSc *Well*

What have you been doing since graduating?

In 2010, I co-founded the Free Store here in Wellington—it's an inner-city non-profit venture, redistributing quality surplus food to people in need each day. Every year, we rescue \$3.5 million worth of food and feed more than a hundred people each night from a variety of backgrounds: the homeless, unemployed, university students, refugees and immigrants, the elderly, and those struggling with physical and mental health.

What was the most useful thing you learnt at the University?

University taught me that no one was going to do the mahi for me, it was all on my shoulders.

What's been a highlight of your career so far?

With regard to the Free Store, I've had the pleasure of equipping and journeying alongside many communities around New Zealand and beyond to spread our kaupapa. There are now nine Free Stores nationwide, with Christchurch, Sydney, and London in the pipeline.

What do you love about your work?

I love that I have creative outlets but also a deep-rooted, grounding commitment to my community here in Wellington.

What are some of the challenges of your job?

Being self-employed and running a non-profit organisation are incredibly challenging at times, particularly in regard to time management, efficiency, and professional development. In most areas of my working life, I have played the role of pioneer, charting unknown territory and largely making it up along the way.

Why do you think health and wellbeing are so important for society?

Holistic wellbeing provides the solid foundation to be, and do, all that is essentially human. There really is no flourishing without it. Relationships are where it all begins. In the Free Store community, we place mutually transformative relationships at the heart of everything we do, seeking to uphold the mana of all involved—whether giving or receiving, rich or poor. The marginalised and vulnerable are not problems to solve, but friends to know.

BREAKING THE SILENCE

CHRIS BOWDEN, Lecturer, School of Education

As a suicide-loss survivor myself, I know that suicide leaves people navigating a world of grief, darkness, and silence that can threaten to overwhelm them.

Between July 2016 and June 2017, there were 606 suicides in New Zealand and 75 percent (457) of them were men. That means there are thousands of men out there who have lost fathers, brothers, uncles, workmates, and friends.

Despite this significant gender difference, the research on suicide bereavement has predominantly focused on female adults' and parents' experiences. The New Zealand draft National Suicide Prevention Strategy has also failed to prioritise addressing suicide in men, is gender blind, and includes no men-centred interventions; and suicide postvention and support for men is virtually non-existent in New Zealand. There are also some big gaps in the research and action plans.

To address these gaps and help develop an understanding of men's



experiences, I recently undertook a study that asked: How do young adult men (17–25 years old) experience the suicide of a close male friend? I spoke to some incredibly brave young men who broke the code of silence with me and described what it was like for them to lose their best mate to suicide.

One overarching theme was silence. The men described being gutted, remaining stoic, grieving in silence, being silenced by others, and breaking their silence with people they trusted. After analysing their descriptions of lived experience, I found they all experienced four types of silence: personal, private, public, and analytic.

From an early age, many men are socialised into traditional masculine norms and practices such as restricting and suppressing emotions, being tough, self-reliant, strong, and stoical. Some are taught to deal with their grief internally and cognitively and avoid things associated with femininity such as talking about feelings and expressing emotions.

Of the young men I spoke to,

most said that their beliefs about self-reliance, their desire to control emotions, and their fear of social consequences of emotional expression—looking, or being judged as, 'unmanly'—only reinforced their silence. Many New Zealand men have learnt to not talk about the messy stuff going on in their lives. They often compartmentalise, bottle it up, put on their armour, and go out into the world pretending they have it all together.

I found that the words and actions of others can also reinforce men's silence. Family/whānau, friends, colleagues, and professionals are often pretty clueless when it comes to offering support to suicide-loss survivors. People don't know what to do or say, and they don't know how to provide gender-responsive support to men.

Some men may need male-centred support, compared with the usual approaches. They need to set their own pace and remain in control. Offering men alternative ways to express their grief through art, music, and drama can also be useful for managing distress and making sense of their experience of loss.

Suicide and coping with suicide loss are major issues in our country. Recognising what contributes to silence after suicide and offering male-centred support is an important first step towards a solution.

✉ Chris.Bowden@vuw.ac.nz



DIGITAL TOOLS FOR MENTAL HEALTH

DR TERRY (THERESA) FLEMING, Senior lecturer, School of Health, with Kylie Sutcliffe, PhD candidate

New Zealand faces increasing demand for mental health and wellbeing services. This reflects both an increase in expressed demand (more people asking for help) and an apparent increase in anxiety, depression, and distress.

New Zealand mental health services are funded to address the needs of around 3 percent of the population, yet more than 10 percent of teenagers have significant signs of depression and more than 15 percent reported serious thoughts of suicide in the past year. This is an urgent issue that is attracting enormous public interest and government attention.

There is no one answer to improving mental health. Some people will benefit from talking therapies or medications, others from improvements in sleep, exercise, or life balance. Prevention is important, with action needed to reduce inequality, housing unaffordability, job insecurity, and rates of violence and abuse. Alongside these efforts, digital mental health tools form part of the solution.



Digital mental health tools are online or computerised programs, platforms, and apps designed to support mental health or wellbeing. They range from commercial products (such as Calm, an app offering meditation and 'sleep stories for grown ups'), to the use of

virtual reality for phobias and visual-processing games to reduce intrusive hallucinations. Some such tools are accessed by tens of thousands of people each month. Some have been tested in rigorous trials; others have no, or limited, research support.

I worked for many years as a clinical social worker, developing and delivering youth health and mental health services, mainly in South Auckland. Engaging young people with high needs in support services came with major challenges. Around the same time, in my role as a parent of teenage boys, one phrase was on high rotation: 'Time to get off the computer.' I thought there must be something we could use in this online thing.

With colleagues in Auckland, I co-created SPARX, a computerised therapy

for adolescents with depression. It uses a virtual guide and a game-like format where users can learn and practise skills in a non-threatening, yet responsive, environment. In one of the larger trials of digital treatment for teenagers in the world, we found SPARX to be equivalent to treatment as usual. The SPARX therapy is publicly available, funded though the Ministry of Health, and now has a life of its own, with a Nunavut development in Canada, a gender diverse version, an augmented reality version proposed in Japan, and trials around the world.

Early in 2018, I joined the University as a senior lecturer in the new School of Health. My research is in scalable approaches to improving mental health and wellbeing, including via digital approaches. I'm working with national and international groups on digital mental health projects, including a Digital Futures project with staff and the input of students from Engineering, Health, and Psychology.

As a clinician and as a bioware (human), I would never propose that digital tools should replace human support. However, they can be available at 3 am, provide an inroad to getting help (for example, by demystifying therapy) and offer alternative approaches for those who prefer them.

✉ Terry.Fleming@vuw.ac.nz

🌐 www.SPARX.org.nz

TAKING CHARGE

Addressing the challenges faced by young people struggling with their mental health is high on the agenda at Victoria University of Wellington.

A campaign dubbed The Wait is Over has been created by Victoria University of Wellington Students' Association (VUWSA) to put tertiary students at the heart of the nationwide conversation about spiralling demand for mental health services.

In August, VUWSA took its message to politicians, leading a rally at Parliament demanding that the Government properly fund tertiary mental health providers.

"We want the Government to recognise that tertiary student mental health services are already set up and servicing one of the most at-risk demographics, but they need better funding to be able to be effective in helping young people through difficult periods," says VUWSA president Marlon Drake.

On campus, the University has a number of initiatives underway that are designed to give students tools to improve and maintain their own health and wellbeing.

One is the Student Wellbeing Awareness Team (SWAT), led by students who are employed by Mauri Ora (Student Counselling and Student Health). The team focuses on empowering students to address

health and wellbeing issues to ensure that they succeed academically.

The SWAT leaders are passionate about the role they play, says one of the team, Alex Walker, a Master of Education student.

"Not only do we provide students with information about how they can help themselves, we're also helping to build a resilient, positive community of students who are confident, feel good, and who go on to promote positive wellbeing in our community."

The SWAT leaders work closely with Mauri Ora staff and are guided by the Okanagan Charter, an international charter developed for health-promoting universities in 2015.

Gerard Hoffman, manager of Student Counselling, says that as a health-promoting university, there is a strong commitment to providing a positive and

supportive environment for everyone on campus.

"SWAT is just one example of a health-promotion initiative in which staff actively partner with students to improve and maintain their physical and nutritional health and their emotional wellbeing, which in turn supports them to succeed in the classroom and to be more engaged learners."

Other initiatives around the University include the Bubble (a peer-supported, low-stress space for students to relax, connect, and take a break from study), a fruit and vegetable cooperative bringing healthy food into the University community, a Wellbeing Network made up of staff and students who discuss wellbeing on campus, and an annual Wellbeing Symposium.

✉ Gerard.Hoffman@vuw.ac.nz



Photo: Sian Moffitt Photography

REDUCING HEALTH INEQUALITIES

An endowment fund is being established to help grow the work of the internationally renowned Centre for Women's Health Research / Te Tātai Hauora o Hine.

Led by Professor Bev Lawton (Ngāti Porou), the Centre's research drive is to eliminate preventable harm and death for women and children by creating more effective systems and processes of care. Current projects include He Korowai Manaaki, a study involving added care and services during pregnancy, and He Tapu te Whare Tangata, which investigates self-testing for the human papilloma virus to prevent cervical cancer.

The Centre was founded in 2005 by Bev, an international expert on women's

health and a distinguished fellow of the Royal New Zealand College of General Practitioners. Staff transferred to Victoria University of Wellington from the University of Otago in September 2017, and the Centre is now part of the new Faculty of Health.

The dean of the Faculty, Professor Gregor Coster, says the idea of the endowment fund is to sustain and grow the work of the Centre, with its important focus on reducing health inequalities. The Centre has been successful in attracting

research funding but with ambitions to widen its scope to train more researchers and students, grow the capacity of equity research, and increase its impact globally and locally, it needs sustainable funding.

"We are reaching out to the philanthropic community to support this important kaupapa," says Gregor.

For information about the endowment fund, contact senior development manager Patricia McGarr.

✉ Patricia.McGarr@vuw.ac.nz



A HEALTHY DOSE OF SUBJECTIVITY

Is your home really a thriving therapeutic centre? Would you tell your GP you take alternative medicine? And are hospital decisions about treatment truly objective?

In comparing these three healthcare spaces and the assumptions around them, Sociology Professor Kevin Dew's research is uncovering some interesting truths about how ideas and practices gain legitimacy in healthcare and medicine.

You may not consider the medicine chest in your home, stuffed perhaps haphazardly under the bathroom sink, a part of your very own therapeutic centre. But Kevin's research highlights the fact that households are spaces where health and illness are constantly monitored, experimentation is undertaken, and a vast array of resource material is assessed.

"What amazes me is the complex process by which people bring together a range of sources to then decide how to treat a health issue," he says. "There are quite systematic processes that go on as people try to work out what is best for them, or their children, in particular."

On the other hand, the highly technical objectivity that we imagine is brought to bear by hospital specialists deciding treatments is not quite so cut and dried either.

Focusing on multidisciplinary team meetings that are held to discuss cancer cases in hospitals, Kevin's research looked at how subjective assessment feeds into the decision-making for patients' treatment.

Kevin gives an example of a case involving a patient who was a colour therapist. A specialist said in one such meeting they could recommend surgery to this patient, but didn't think the patient would 'go for that'.

"It's really interesting because the specialist categorised the patient as a colour therapist, and therefore someone who believes in an alternative approach," Kevin says. "It's brilliantly efficient and expresses a common understanding

among the team, but there's nothing objective about it."

The third healthcare area Kevin's research focuses on is GP consultation. In looking at how treatment decisions are made in these consultations, he says one observation that stands out is GPs' practice of trying to 'keep the orthodoxy' by, for example, dissuading patients from alternative options.

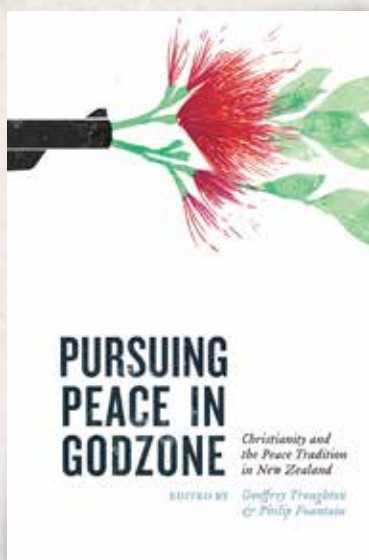
Kevin thinks it's a matter of practicality for GPs to take the approach that 'this is the space you've come to, this is the established and understood approach we take and I don't want to hear about the other stuff'.

"I'm not criticising what's happening in these spaces, as you can't remove subjectivity. I'm just unsettling expectations and assumptions around what we think is going on and how decisions are made."

✉ Kevin.Dew@vuw.ac.nz

KEEPING THE PEACE

How integral is the pursuit of peace to the New Zealand psyche? Victoria University of Wellington academics Geoffrey Troughton and Philip Fountain explore how New Zealanders have been inspired by visions for peace in their new book, *Pursuing Peace in Godzone: Christianity and the Peace Tradition in New Zealand*.



Focusing on diverse Christian communities, it examines some of the ways that peace has influenced their practices, lifestyles, and politics from World War II to the present—the period in which New Zealand’s peaceable image and reputation as ‘God’s own country’ grew and flourished.

The book also seeks to answer the question asked by Nicky Hager, author of *Dirty Politics* and *Hit and Run*—“How did New Zealand become a country where most people are sceptical of militarism, prefer peacekeeping to joining foreign wars and were strongly opposed to joining the 2003 invasion of Iraq?” As Hager goes on to say, “An important part of the answer is the work of the Christian peace campaigners who are the subject (and in some cases the authors) of this well-written and engaging book.”

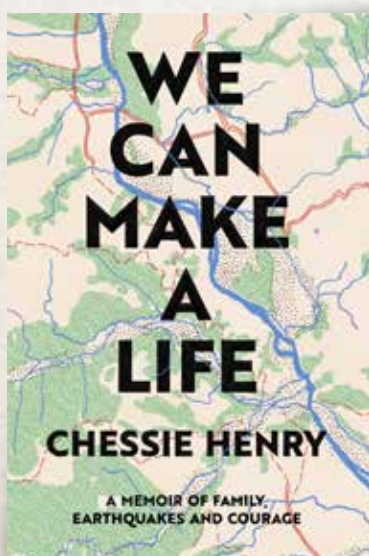
New Zealand Christians, and others, have worked for peace in many different ways, from attention-grabbing protests against nuclear weapons, apartheid, and war to quieter, but no less important, efforts to improve relationships within their churches and communities, and with the natural environment. Taken together, their stories reveal a multifaceted but deeply influential thread of Christian peace-making within New Zealand culture. These stories are by turns challenging and inspiring, poignant and amusing, and they continue to reverberate today in a world where peace remains elusive for many.

Pursuing Peace in Godzone: Christianity and the Peace Tradition in New Zealand, by Geoffrey Troughton and Philip Fountain, Victoria University Press, paperback, \$40.

🔗 <https://bit.ly/2BRNKOF>

MAKING A LIFE AFTER TRAUMA

Hours after the 2011 Christchurch earthquake, Kaikōura-based doctor Chris Henry crawled through the burning CTV building to rescue those who were trapped. Six years later, his daughter Chessie interviewed him in an attempt to understand the trauma that led her father to burnout, in the process unravelling stories and memories from her own remarkable family history.



In *We Can Make a Life*, Chessie rebuilds her family’s lives on the page, from her parents’ honeymoon across Africa, to living in Tokelau as one of five children aged under 10 before returning to New Zealand, where her mother would set her heart and home in the Clarence Valley, only to see it devastated in the 2016 Kaikōura earthquake, and the family displaced.

We Can Make a Life has already attracted some favourable reviews, including one from author Elizabeth Knox who says, “Chessie Henry ... has achieved something wonderful in this memoir. The patient confidence of her storytelling, her tenderness towards subjects, her feeling for place and joyous sense of being happened-on again and again by the beauty of the world and bodily happiness, make this account of the family formed and

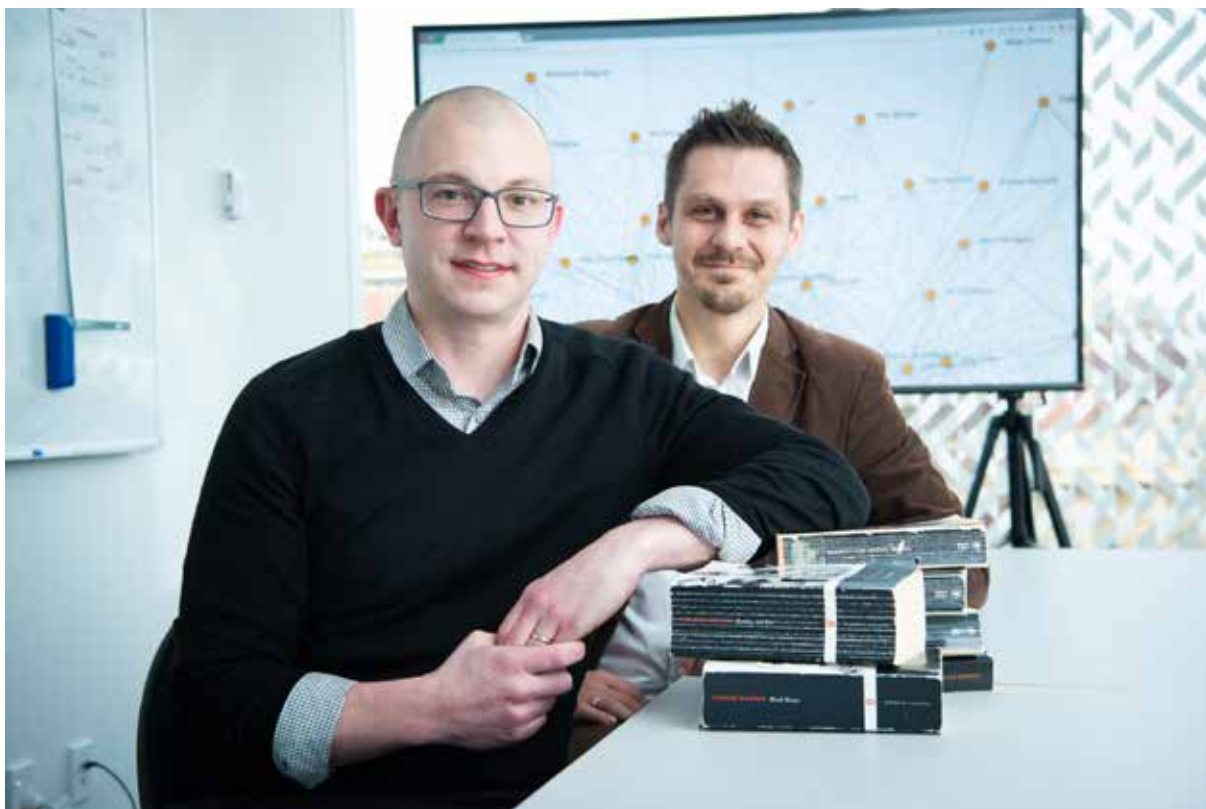
then tested by the everyday and by catastrophes, always to re-form, a compulsive and very moving read.”

Written with the same love and compassion that defines Chessie’s family’s courage and strength, *We Can Make a Life* is an extraordinary memoir about the psychological cost of heroism, home, and belonging, and how a family made a life together.

Born in 1992, Chessie Henry grew up in Christchurch and Kaikōura. She completed her Master of Arts in Creative Writing from Victoria University of Wellington’s International Institute of Modern Letters in 2016. *We Can Make a Life* is her first book.

We Can Make a Life, by Chessie Henry, Victoria University Press, paperback, \$35.

🔗 <https://bit.ly/2QLm2X1>



Dr Adam Grener, Dr Markus Luczak-Roesch

Mapping the world of Dickens

What if you could browse through all the literary works of an author and see underlying narrative structures in an instant? Victoria University of Wellington researchers Dr Markus Luczak-Roesch and Dr Adam Grener have created a visual program that aspires to do just that.

The pair are behind a prototype tool that applies natural language processing, information theory, and network science to allow readers to explore how Charles Dickens created and managed his complex world of characters.

Adam, a lecturer in the School of English, Film, Theatre, and Media Studies, says that while traditional literary scholarship is based on interpretation of the language of a text as well as its socio-cultural context, computational analysis offers new ways of capturing structural dimensions of texts that were previously inaccessible.

"The novels of Charles Dickens are particularly interesting within this field of research. Not only was Dickens a central figure in the development of the nineteenth-century novel, but his narratives construct vast and elaborate character networks representing the rapidly changing Victorian world," he says.

Dickens was a pioneer of the serial novel form, writing monthly or weekly instalments of his novels over the course of up to 19 months. His character networks are important because they capture complex social relationships.

Markus, a senior lecturer in the School of Information Management, acknowledges that the disciplines of English Literature and Network Science might appear to be incompatible, but says, "We're not abandoning literary interpretation; we're looking at what happens when these two elements are brought together and have found that they mutually inform each other.

"In most of Dickens's novels, characters are introduced gradually over the first half, and you can see that very clearly in our analysis with the tool prototype. In two of his later novels—*Our Mutual Friend* and *Little Dorrit*—all the characters are introduced in the first eighth of the story, so the graphs look very different from his early novels. This visually supports the findings of other Dickens scholars," says Markus.

Adam admits they soon discovered that using computational methodology to track characters can be a difficult process. "Dickens didn't name all of his characters, so using analytics fell down there," he says. However, these limitations have produced their own insights, with Adam and one of the team's research assistants,

Isabel Parker, now publishing an essay highlighting the importance of anonymous characters in Dickens's novels.

The tool has been tested on 19 novels—all 15 of Dickens's novels and four by other Victorian novelists for comparative purposes.

An initial user study to evaluate the tool was undertaken involving English literature scholars and university students. The study showed how the tool can help readers see important structural elements of a novel such as how characters in different social classes are kept separate in *Great Expectations*.

Do Markus and Adam have great expectations for future applications of their tool?

"We're excited about what else it will reveal in literary texts. We're now working with Professor Ronald Fischer in the School of Psychology to adapt our tool, so that instead of simply tracking characters, we can see how texts present human personality traits through time," says Adam.

✉ Adam.Grener@vuw.ac.nz

✉ Markus.Luczak-Roesch@vuw.ac.nz

🔗 <https://bit.ly/2oqFs6K>



Who's in my room?

When James Lynex was choosing his preferred hall of residence, his mum knew there was only one option—Victoria House, where she'd met James's father 30 years before. And James wasn't the last member of the family to call Victoria House home—last year, his sister Gemma continued the family tradition and moved into the hall.

James, who studied a Bachelor of Commerce and now works for accounting firm Grant Thornton, returned to his former room to meet current resident Kyndra Garton, who is in her first year of a Bachelor of Science in Biology and Environmental Science.

James

What was the highlight of living in Victoria House?

Victoria House has the whole family vibe—everyone always looks out for each other. I was never short of friends to go out for a walk with or go down to town with. Generally, we'd all study together here, and then we'd take a break and play cards each night.

How did your parents meet?

They were both in Wallis Wing, and I guess it just went from there. When I put in applications for halls, mum told me to put Victoria House as my first choice—that's how I ended up here, and it was the same for Gemma. Gemma had the same experience the rest of the family had—the whole cliché thing about everyone being there for each other. At bigger halls you just don't tend to get that as much.

How did you find the transition to living away from home?

I remember it took me a while to learn how to stand on my own two feet. In terms of study, my fellow Victoria House residents were definitely supportive. We figured out pretty quickly who was studying what, and then we could split off into study groups. One of my best friends, who I met in Victoria House, did pretty much an identical degree to me, and that meant we could support each other while we were here.

What advice would you have for Kyndra?

I'd tell her to think about who you want to be known as by the time you move out of here. Think about who you want to be remembered as, and what sort of friends you want to have. Because, nine times out of 10, you'll probably go flatting with them!

Kyndra

Why did you choose Victoria House?

I actually missed the cut-off date for applying for a hall, so it was all very last minute. I chose my degree because I really want to work with animals and get into conservation one day, and I chose to go into a hall because it was the best way to meet people. And I knew Victoria House—I used to visit my friends here all the time, so when I moved in, I already knew my way around.

How are you adjusting to life in Wellington?

I've always really liked Wellington—I'm from Palmerston North originally—and I used to visit here all the time when I was in school. I like that it's so different to where I'm from—it's so busy and there's always so much to see. And I feel like the University, and Wellington in general, is so open-minded. You can be friends with people you never expected to be friends with. Everyone's very relaxed about who you are and what you like—they just kind of accept you for who you are.

Have you made friends in Victoria House?

I've made a really good group of friends here—we've got a group of four girlfriends, and we also have a good group of guys we hang out with. Coming from an all-girls school, it's really nice to have guys in our friend group!

Are you enjoying living in Victoria House?

I love Victoria House! It's so fun—everyone is so nice, and you have friends everywhere. The residential advisers are really cool, and I feel like if you go to dinner by yourself, there's not a table you can't sit at.



Professor Grant Guilford, Tricia Walbridge, Neil Paviour-Smith

A quarter century of service

Looking back over the course of her 27-year fundraising career at Victoria University of Wellington, former executive director of the Victoria University Foundation Tricia Walbridge says Boxing Day 2005 was one of her most memorable days on the job.

"We'd been set a fundraising challenge by the founding patron of the International Institute of Modern Letters. He would put up \$1 million towards the Institute, if we could match that by the end of the year.

"After months of hard work, we were \$58,000 short with five days to go until the deadline.

"That was when I got one of those wonderful phone calls out of the blue that you only dream about. It was from an American philanthropist, who'd heard about the challenge and asked how much we still had to raise. When I told him, he barely paused for breath before saying, 'Count it as done.'

"I subsequently got to know Bob Morey and his wife, Timi, on their visits to New Zealand, and one of the things I learnt was that they just loved to help close challenge gift appeals. This underlined for me yet again the importance of really getting to know donors and understanding what it was they wanted to achieve."

Appointed in 1990, Tricia served the University as one of its most dedicated and successful fundraisers before retiring in 2017. As well as her work with the Institute, Tricia led fundraising efforts for a range of high-profile projects, including the Adam Art Gallery, the First Light

Solar Decathlon project, the Weir House extension, and a host of smaller projects and individual scholarships.

Her work for the University was honoured when she was elected a Hunter Fellow by the University Council. The award—one of the highest the Council can bestow—recognises outstanding service to the University. Tricia received the award at a ceremony in June.

"I was overwhelmed when the Chancellor rang to tell me of the Council's decision. I loved my time at the University and it was a privilege to help bring some great projects to fruition."

Investing in the future

The future is looking brighter for more young New Zealanders thanks to a new Victoria University of Wellington philanthropic programme.

In August, the University launched Great Futures, a new scholarship programme aimed at ensuring more talented young people can realise their potential through accessing and completing a university education. The programme aims to more than double the University's philanthropic

scholarship funds by 2020.

Great Futures will support students who face increased barriers to participation and achievement in tertiary education, including Māori, Pasifika, and refugee-background students.

The scholarship programme will help ensure recipients can focus on their studies and complete their degrees by covering the 'real costs of study'. As well as financial support, the scholarships will offer access to holistic

support, including mentors and health and wellbeing services.

Patricia Danver, executive director of the University's Development Office, says Great Futures will enable students who never thought tertiary study was an option to come to Victoria University of Wellington.

"Scholarships are not just a gift, they're an investment in the future," she says.

www.victoria.ac.nz/great-futures

The Biggest
in the World
by Joy Cowley
pictures by
Diane Perham



So ready to read



Anyone who attended school in New Zealand from the 1960s onwards will recognise the covers, but it's the words and philosophy of the *Ready to Read* series that capture PhD researcher Kay Hancock.

Kay has just completed her thesis on the first 25 years of the unique series, from its launch in 1963 to 1988. "This series was groundbreaking in that it had the aim of helping children not only learn to read, but also want to read," says Kay. "New Zealand was the first country in the English-speaking world to provide instructional reading materials for very beginning readers that were proper stories."

The *Ready to Read* series was—and still is—provided free to schools. It replaced the Janet and John books, which were imported from the United Kingdom and used a narrow range of words that children had already been taught, with short, contrived sentences. "The development of *Ready to Read* was a huge experiment, but it was totally in line with educational thinking of the time, much of it springing from the visionary leadership of [former Director of Education] Clarence Beeby. As well as wanting children to enjoy reading, there was a strong emphasis on reflecting children's real lives."

Kay discovered, as she delved into the history of the series, that before 1963 there were almost no picture books about New Zealand children. "The *Ready to Read* books helped fill this significant gap."

In developing the materials, series editor Myrtle Simpson consulted widely with teachers and the books were trialled in schools to ensure their success.

Kay says the original series gradually became outdated and, in 1975, a major review was carried out. After that, the series became much more 'literary', introducing fantasy stories as well as realistic fiction and aiming to produce materials with the same qualities as commercial picture books.

Writers such as Joy Cowley—whose *Greedy Cat* remains a beloved fixture in the series—and Margaret Mahy ensured that the stories had 'charm, magic, impact and appeal', key criteria for inclusion. By 1988, almost all the earlier material had been replaced or revised, with all new work being trialled in hundreds of schools.

The growth of biculturalism is another strand Kay has explored in her research. She found that prior to the series, there was a lot of content about Māori in commercially published materials, but it was targeted at Pākehā children. "The *Ready to Read* materials were the first books for children that acknowledged Māori children as part of the reading audience."

As a former teacher, series editor, and now series literacy consultant, Kay felt a focus on the materials was well overdue.

"I wanted to shed some light on how these little-known materials—and the thinking behind them—are important examples of an approach to reading that led the world."



Giant Soup





Fleur Knowsley (middle) at an alumni event in San Francisco. Photo: Glen Dandridge Jr, Creating Classics Photography

Waving the University's flag overseas

Victoria University of Wellington's reach extends well beyond our home in Wellington.

Increasing numbers of international students are coming to study in the capital city, and New Zealand-born graduates continue the great Kiwi tradition of the 'Big OE' after graduation.

To build our alumni communities internationally, the University has set up a network of regional ambassadors in key locations around the world, who coordinate activities for alumni based in these cities and surrounding areas and help maintain connections between alumni and their alma mater.

Established in 2016, the network now has ambassadors in seven cities across Southeast Asia, North America, Australia and Europe. The ambassadors are all Victoria University alumni and give their time voluntarily to help strengthen the University's international alumni connections.

Fleur Knowsley is the regional ambassador for the Bay Area in the United States, where she works as Legal Counsel for Google Fiber, Alphabet's high speed internet division.

"My focus for 2018 has been on building

up our alumni network on the West Coast by creating more ways for alumni to connect. It might be as simple as a casual get together over drinks but it's exciting to see the personal and professional connections that get established and the conversations that take place at these events," Fleur says.

"The highlight was definitely a screening at Google Headquarters of Gaylene Preston's film *My Year with Helen*, followed by a discussion afterwards with Gaylene and Helen Clark herself. But the annual summer picnic at Presidio Park for alumni and their families is always really fun too."

Following a series of focus groups facilitated by Sydney regional ambassador Sarah Richardson in early 2017, alumni in Sydney have been catching up for regular speaker events, panel discussions and coffee catch-ups coordinated by Sarah and alumni committee members Paul Barton, Jason Rohloff and Mike Wilkinson.

"Gaining some early insights into what interests our diverse Sydney alumni and how they'd like to engage was key. Our alumni have an enormous amount

of expertise in different fields, so our events are as much about professional development as they are about meeting new people," Sarah says.

"The research also indicated that ongoing communications and a sense of connection were relevant. And the focus groups identified the committee members, which has been a big contributor to our success."

Singapore regional ambassador David Tan has focused on strengthening connections between alumni and Singaporean students, supporting the revitalisation of the Wellington Singaporean Students' Association.

"We provide students with a pre-study briefing about life in Wellington, and then connect students to Singapore-based alumni to help get them started on their careers once they come home," David says.

"I've always been grateful to Victoria University for giving me a foundation for career success, and I want to help a new generation of students in turn."

Find out more about the regional ambassadors network:

➤ www.victoria.ac.nz/local-alumni-contacts



From Paengaroa to Parliament

Alumna and Labour MP Kiritapu (Kiri) Allan has had a remarkable journey to Parliament from a small town in the Bay of Plenty, and it all came about through a chance meeting with a patron in an Auckland bar.

"I grew up in Paengaroa, population 500. Formal education was never a big priority for my family—I'd never met anyone who'd been to university. The big thing was to get a job and pay your way.

"So, I left school at 16 and spent a few years working in KFCs, on orchards, selling vacuum cleaners—that sort of thing. It was really valuable in a way, teaching me the value of work. But even then, I was curious about why things are the way they are. Why things are tough for some and not for others."

While working in a bar in Auckland, Kiri struck up a friendship with one of the regulars, with whom she spent hours in debate over the law, politics, and social inequality.

"It turned out he was a law professor, and eventually he brought in an application pack, telling me I should think about doing a law degree. I thought why not, and ended up doing law.

"It was an amazing experience. I turned up—long dreadlocks, a bit of a rough nugget—but it transformed my life. I'd come from the middle of nowhere and ended up in the centre of politics and the law.

"We had the District Court, High Court, and Court of Appeal all around us. At the time, the Supreme Court building was still under construction, so we had the Supreme Court justices literally down the corridor from our tutorial rooms. Between lectures, I headed across the road to listen to debates in Parliament.

"It was all right there, and I threw myself into everything Wellington had to offer."

While studying, Kiri interned for then Prime Minister Helen Clark, and later worked for several law firms after graduating. She has also worked as a business consultant and sits on several boards, including the Kiwifruit

Growers Association and climate change organisation 350.org.

Kiri says the thread running through all her work is a desire to reduce social inequality in New Zealand, and to give a voice to people who are rarely heard in public debate.

"That's a big part of why I went into politics. I feel an obligation to help people like those I grew up with in Paengaroa, and make sure they feel as if they have a stake in our country.

"If I can offer one piece of advice to people growing up like I did, it's to make sure their kids know they matter, and that their story matters. Tell them that every day.

"And look out for those angels who are willing to put out a hand to help you. Like the professor in the bar, those people might not look like you, or act like you, but they're willing to help and it's up to you to take that chance."

Rugby career kicks off

Joanah Ngan-Woo became part of history earlier this year when she was named as one of 28 rugby players to receive a professional contract with the Black Ferns.

The contracts are the first of their kind for women's rugby in New Zealand.

Joanah, a Victoria University of Wellington alumna, has been playing women's rugby for nearly a decade and is excited by the growing interest in the sport.

"Women's rugby in New Zealand is getting better and more competitive, and the new contracts are an awesome step in the right direction," she says. "There are still some steps to go to reach equality with men's rugby—but we'll get there."

Joanah plays for the Wellington Women's Pride team and the Oriental Rongotai Premier Women's team. She joined the Black Ferns as part of the wider squad in 2017 and was on standby for the Women's Rugby World Cup in Ireland.

The 22-year-old is hoping to play her first game for the Black Ferns soon and,



Photo: David Brownlie

as part of her contract, trains for 10 to 14 hours per week. She juggles her chosen sport with a job at the New Zealand Qualifications Authority.

The gifted sportswoman also dabbles in rugby league and sevens rugby, and represented New Zealand in the World University Sevens Championship.

Joanah is looking forward to December when she will graduate with a Master of International Relations,

which she completed last year. She also has a Bachelor of Arts in Education and Social Policy from Victoria University, and one day hopes to work at the United Nations.

"I really wanted to further my studies, so the one-year Master's was perfect for me," she says. "Studying and playing sport can be challenging, but I had support from the University and learnt to manage my time really well."

75 years of football

At a time when most of the world's football fans were preoccupied with the FIFA World Cup, a group of alumni and students had something more important to celebrate.

In July, past and present members of the Victoria University of Wellington Association Football Club (VUW AFC) marked the Club's seventy-fifth anniversary with a day of festivities.

Founded in 1943, the VUW AFC is the third-oldest university football club in New Zealand and has a history rich with stories, which Club president Craig Harris has captured in a book published to mark the occasion.

Several past Club members went on to become All Whites, including Alan Preston, who also founded Unity Books on Willis Street. Another early member was Brian Sutton-Smith, who played for the Club in the 1940s and was the first



person in New Zealand to earn a PhD in Education, going on to become an international expert in children's play.

Craig says the Club's golden period was in the 1950s when it played in Wellington's top grade, finishing second in 1956 and making the semi-final of the Chatham Cup.

Today there are more than 350 members in the club across 21 teams (17 men's and four women's). Members are mostly alumni or current students, but Club captain Matt Lamb says anyone can join.

In the lead-up to the anniversary celebrations, the VUW AFC led a weekend away to Palmerston North to play teams from Massey University. Matt explains



that travelling around the country to play teams from other universities used to be more of a fixture of club life, but the tradition has died away in recent decades.

"We've tried to reinvigorate that relationship and we hope to make it an annual thing," he says.

Matt says the matches against Massey went well—the VUW AFC women's team won its game, while the men's team had a draw.

"The main point of the Club is to have fun, and going away for games and tournaments really adds to the enjoyment. It's also a great way to meet fellow students and alumni."

► www.vuwafc.com



Kitchen stories

It was the disconnect between media representation of refugees and the reality of their day-to-day lives that led alumna Rebecca Stewart to start a not-for-profit social enterprise.

Rebecca, who graduated in 2006 with a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology, was exposed to the reality of refugees' experiences while working for the New Zealand Red Cross.

"I saw these people who really wanted to give back. They were really grateful to be here, and they didn't want to be sitting around on the benefit. They wanted to get their new lives started and give back to the country they'd arrived in."

Rebecca's experience working with refugees motivated her to start Pomegranate Kitchen, a catering company that employs people from refugee backgrounds to make traditional Middle Eastern meals.

The aim of the company is not only to provide job opportunities for people who might face barriers to employment, but also to promote positive stories about refugees.

"Wellington is the perfect place to start something like this, because Wellingtonians love food, they love new things, and they have a real social conscience. There's a real feeling in Wellington that it's not 'elbows out'—everyone's just trying to give each other a helping hand."

—Rebecca Stewart

"We're a social enterprise, so making an impact is really the main thing for us, and our goal is to improve social and financial outcomes for people from refugee backgrounds. But we're also really deliberate and focused in the way we talk about the work that we do. The emphasis is on the people's strengths and the different skills that they bring."

The company, which was named one of the top five female-led Kiwi businesses by SheEO New Zealand earlier this year, has plans to diversify beyond catering in the coming months, with more pop-up events and cooking classes. Pomegranate Kitchen also gives Rebecca the chance to reconnect with her alma mater—"The University uses us for catering quite a bit, which is really nice"—as well as her hometown, Wellington.

► www.pomegranate.org.nz



Lisa Reihana, *In Pursuit of Venus [infected]*, 2015–2017 (detail). Single-channel video, HD, colour, 7:1 sound. Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki, gift of the Patrons of the Auckland Art Gallery, 2014 © Image courtesy of the artist and ARTPROJECTS

Oceania unveiled

Senior lecturer in Art History Dr Peter Brunt describes himself as a “student and a lover of art”, but as co-curator of the United Kingdom’s first major show to explore Oceanic art, he may be being modest.

Currently on show at London’s prestigious Royal Academy of Arts, *Oceania* celebrates the art of Melanesia, Micronesia, and Polynesia, encompassing the vast Pacific region from New Guinea to Easter Island, Hawaii to New Zealand.

The exhibition brings together around 200 exceptional works from public collections in British, European, and New Zealand museums, and spans more than 500 years of art. Some of the historic objects in the show have remained unseen in the stores of European museums for more than a century.

The art of Oceania is Peter’s area of expertise, and he has been working on the exhibition with Professor Nicholas Thomas, director of the Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology at the University of Cambridge, since 2013.

“Nicholas is one of the most eminent scholars of Oceanic art and history in the

world, so the opportunity to create this exhibition with him is an extraordinary privilege. We have worked together on a number of projects in the past, including the Marsden-funded Art in Oceania project, which came out as a major multi-authored book, *Art in Oceania: A New History*, in 2012,” he says.

“I’ve visited dozens of museums and storerooms in Europe, which hold amazing treasures from our region. What you realise is that they are not only carriers of our stories from the past, but remain meaningful for our relationships with Britain and Europe, now and in the future.”

Highlights of the exhibition include the fourteenth-century wooden *Kaitaia* carving, excavated in 1920, one of the oldest known objects to have been found in New Zealand; an eighteenth-century *heva tupapau* (chief mourner’s costume) from Tahiti, one of only six known examples in existence; as well as

one of the hits of the 2017 Venice Biennale—the large-scale panoramic video *In Pursuit of Venus [infected]*, by New Zealand multimedia artist Lisa Reihana, charting the arrival of the British in the South Pacific and its consequences.

The exhibition also includes previously unseen cultural treasures from the British Museum, including an enormous wooden feast bowl crafted in Solomon Islands, which features a crocodile holding a carved human head in its teeth.

Oceania opened in September, 250 years after the Royal Academy of Arts was founded in 1768—the same year Captain James Cook set out on his first *Endeavour* expedition. Following its run at the Royal Academy of Arts, the exhibition will travel to the Musée du Quai Branly, Paris, in February 2019.

► www.royalacademy.org.uk/exhibition/oceania

The last photograph

The extensive photography collection of the late gallerist Peter McLeavey is on display at Adam Art Gallery / Te Pātaka Toi, giving visitors a rare look into the iconic Wellington figure's life and private obsessions.

“
I think there is still one more photograph I have to find. The last photograph. I'm still looking for it. It's out there somewhere.

Peter McLeavey

”
Still Looking: Peter McLeavey and the Last Photograph is co-curated by Professor Geoffrey Batchen from the Art History programme and alumna Deidra Sullivan, who says this is a singular opportunity for New Zealanders to see an eclectic range of photographic masterworks in one place.

“It's very unusual to see an exhibition like this here in Wellington,” says Geoffrey. “Peter collected international

photography with a real sense of purpose. When he liked a photographer, he collected three or four photographs by them.

“The photographs he had are often the best possible prints available—he bought from the best dealers in the world, and he bought the best.”

After McLeavey's death in 2015, his widow, Hilary, inherited the collection, but even she has never seen it in its entirety.

“Peter was quite a private person, and he had a very personal relationship with the pieces he collected—he kept them close to himself,” says Deidra.

The exhibition presents more than 90 photographs from the collection for the first time, including masterpieces from Dorothea Lange, Robert Frank, Francis Frith, and Charles Clifford.

Geoffrey says the collection reveals a lot about the collector, such as his deep connection to Catholicism.

“He often said that he saw his collecting as autobiographical—he collected things that reminded him of his childhood and his Catholic upbringing.”

The show's enigmatic title refers to a quote from McLeavey about his ongoing quest for ‘the last photograph’, an idea that Deidra says can be read both metaphorically and literally.

First, it refers to his insatiable appetite for collecting photographs: “He used to describe the ‘hunger’ he had to acquire these images,” she says.

“But he also commissioned some portraits from New Zealand photographer Yvonne Todd in 2014, when he was quite ill. And so, in a sense, he commissioned his own ‘last photograph’.”

The exhibition is on until 20 December 2018.

📍 www.adamartgallery.org.nz

✉ Geoffrey.Batchen@vuw.ac.nz



Yvonne Todd, Peter, 2014. Chromogenic photograph. Collection of Peter McLeavey. Courtesy of Yvonne Todd.

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