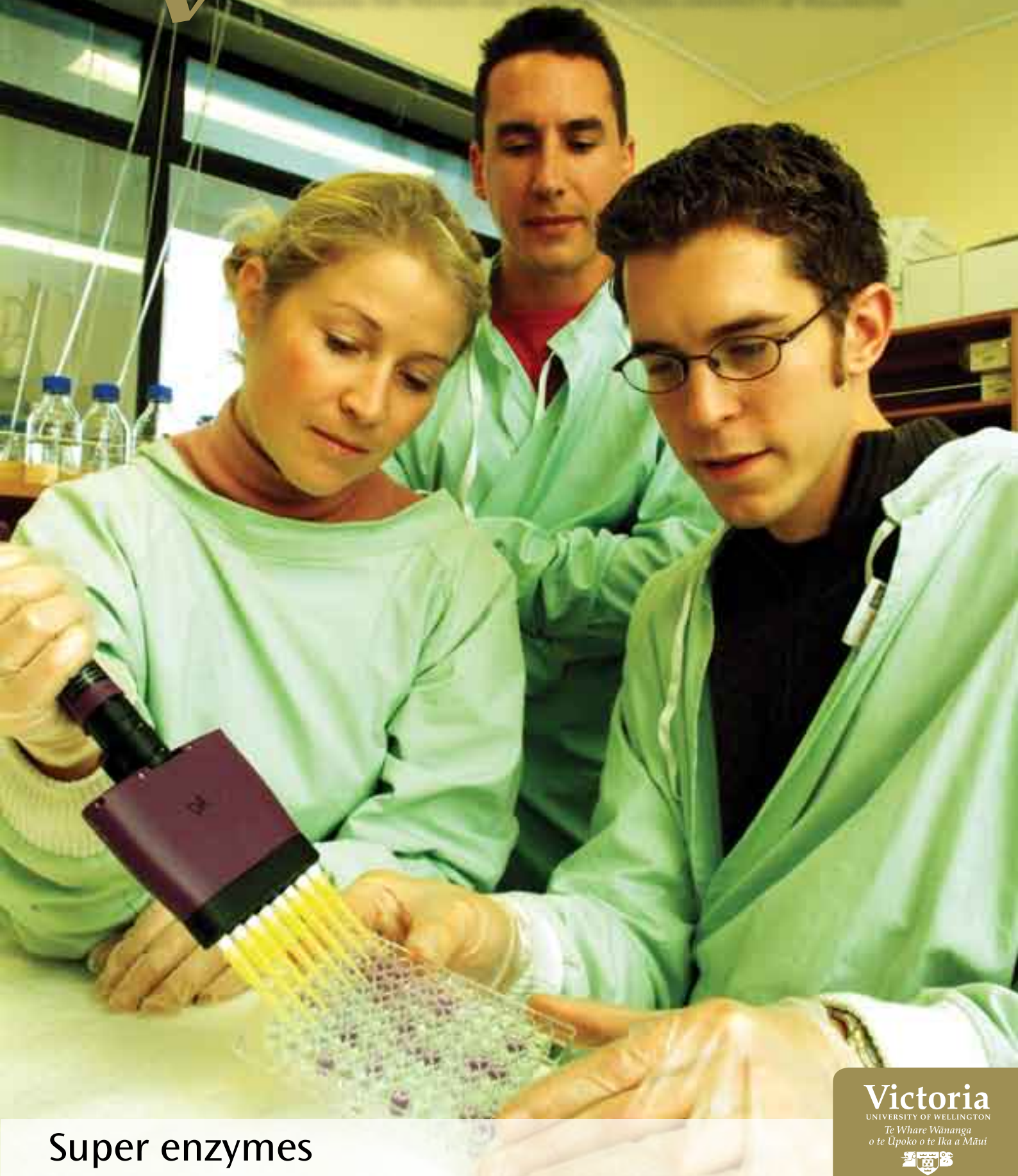


AUTUMN – WINTER 2006

# Victorious

MAGAZINE FOR FRIENDS AND ALUMNI OF VICTORIA UNIVERSITY OF WELLINGTON



## Super enzymes

Victory for Victoria | Family ties | Bright futures

**Victoria**  
UNIVERSITY OF WELLINGTON

*Te Whare Wānanga  
o te Upoko o te Ika a Māui*



CAPITAL CITY UNIVERSITY





Malakula locals weighing cacao beans.

## The Malakula gaps

Senior Lecturer in Linguistics, Dr Elizabeth Pearce, is part of a project racing against time to investigate and preserve the languages of Malakula, one of the Vanuatu islands.

The languages of Vanuatu and New Caledonia are believed to belong together in a Southern Oceanic subgroup within the Austronesian language family. Vanuatu is home to about 100 distinct languages. Of those, Malakula has more than 40 indigenous, mostly undocumented, languages, some of which are already extinct.

“We have descriptions of less than ten and only about 25 languages are still spoken on the island, so there are big gaps in our knowledge.”

Elizabeth has been working with Dr Martin Paviour-Smith of Massey University and the late Professor Terry Crowley of Waikato University on a Marsden Fund project investigating four previously undocumented Malakula languages. She is investigating the Unua language, which has about 400 speakers.

Spending two to three months in Malakula each year, Elizabeth interviews Unua speakers in their community, collecting and recording speech and songs to form the database for her analysis of the language.

“Our objective is to write a description of the language—how sentences are constructed, the use of tenses and so on—to help understand its characteristics.”

There are five villages in the area where Elizabeth is based. With basic housing, no electricity or telephones, the villagers make a subsistence living. The Vanuatu vernacular creole language, Bislama, is encroaching on indigenous languages like Unua.

The Vanuatu Government supports the use of vernacular language in early primary schooling. Elizabeth has put forward a proposal to create an orthography (spelling system) for Unua so that it may be possible for children to learn to read and write in their own language.

Elizabeth would also like to examine the Unua language in relation to other languages in the area.

“Preserving endangered languages like Unua will help construct a wider understanding of how the languages of the Pacific interrelate, and contribute to overall understanding of languages and how languages evolve.”

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Education Review

## From the Vice-Chancellor

As Victoria's original home, the Kelburn Campus has a particular resonance with alumni. Even with the inclusion of our three campuses at Pipitea, Te Aro and Karori, more than half of our students still study on what was once described as 'six vertical acres'. It is the site of the Hunter Building which opened 100 years ago, Victoria's first purpose-built building—an iconic landmark in the Capital and for the University's sense of identity.

Five years ago, we adopted a campus development plan that not only spearheaded the development of the Pipitea Campus, but also considerable work at Kelburn. This included the seismic strengthening of the Rankine Brown Building, refurbishment of the lower levels of the Easterfield Building as well as extending the Central Services Building to accommodate the Malaghan Institute of Medical Research.

We have been able to relocate many staff from individual houses to offices in the Murphy and Von Zedlitz buildings. Education Studies staff have moved to our Karori Campus. With the completion of the refurbishment of the Recreation Centre and the extension to Weir House, the first phase of planning is complete.

Our Facilities Management team has embarked on developing a new look for the Kelburn Campus. The project team, working from our Strategic Plan, has attempted to track the future services and facilities needed at Kelburn and their ideal location. A century of ad hoc development is to be addressed, along with improvements to foot and road traffic flows.

Later this month a draft plan is being released for consultation and will be available at [www.vuw.ac.nz](http://www.vuw.ac.nz). Many proposals, especially those concerning the future of the western side of Kelburn Parade, will be of interest and will provoke discussion. Alumni remain vitally connected to Victoria and have played an active role in past building and campus issues. We look forward to, and welcome your feedback.

**Pat Walsh**  
Vice-Chancellor

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Cover Image: Dr David Ackerley, centre, and Janine Kopp and Gareth Prosser. Image: Les Maiden, Image Services.





# Research & Innovation

Victoria's academic staff are leaders in their fields of research expertise. If you have a project that requires the skills and knowledge of our staff, contact Mike Doig at VicLink. E-mail: [Mike.Doig@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:Mike.Doig@vuw.ac.nz) Tel: +64-4-463 5072.



**Ken MacKenzie outside a traditional Mongolian house (ger).**

## Mongolian treasures

**Investigating the properties of Mongolian mare's milk could result in a major economic boost for the people of this struggling Asian nation.**

Associate Professor Ken MacKenzie, from the School of Chemical & Physical Sciences, has been collaborating with scientists from the Mongolian University of Science & Technology and the Mongolian Academy of Science to develop the country's abundant natural materials, which include the oil from mare's milk and a mineral called wolframite.

"Both these materials are of potential economic importance to Mongolia, whose economy has suffered since the withdrawal of Russian assistance. However, Mongolia has vast amounts of mineral resources, some as yet undiscovered, and wants to add value by processing them into more advanced materials rather than simply shipping them out as unprocessed minerals.

"With half the population under the age of 35, the future wellbeing and stability of Mongolia may well depend on the development and application of new technologies."

Horse products, such as mare's milk oil, play a prominent part in Mongolia's largely rural economy.

"Mare's milk oil is rich in lipids and compatible with the human skin, making it a sought-after component of Mongolian cosmetic products. However, the raw product tends to suffer from off-colour and an undesirable odour. Our collaborative research has identified a Mongolian clay mineral which, after chemical treatment, is particularly effective in bringing the oil up to cosmetic quality."

Another Mongolian natural resource, wolframite, is a mineral ore that can produce tungsten carbide—a valuable component of commercial cutting tools and abrasives.

"Collaboration between Mongolia, Japan and New Zealand has led to a new method for producing tungsten carbide from Mongolian wolframite and waste carbon from the thermal power station in the capital city, Ulaanbaatar."

As part of the collaboration, Ken was invited to Ulaanbaatar to present a plenary lecture at a recent international conference, *Rational Utilisation of Natural Minerals*, and to lead a workshop on synthesis of advanced ceramics from Mongolian clay minerals.

As a result of this visit, a Mongolian scientist is likely to spend a few months at Victoria researching methods for producing heat storage bricks and building materials from Mongolian minerals.

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## Thinking small

**Advances in electronics have seen computing devices getting progressively smaller—but this miniaturisation can't continue forever.**

Scientists have discovered that as electronic components become very small, electrons—the parts of the atom that carry a negative electrical charge—gain a life of their own and start escaping to other parts of the device in a process known as 'quantum tunnelling'. Classical physics says this shouldn't happen, but in the world of small things, strange things happen.

Research by Professor Alan Kaiser, from the School of Chemical & Physical Sciences, in collaboration with researchers at Seoul National University, indicates quantum tunnelling could give rise to the smallest imaginable conducting 'wires.' The research has been funded by the Royal Society of New Zealand's Marsden Fund.

Alan says the research has focused on quantum tunnelling that occurs on thin fibres of polyacetylene, a form of plastic that conducts electricity. The groundbreaking research that resulted in the creation of the first plastic to be a good electrical conductor earned a Nobel Prize for three scientists, including Victoria alumnus, Professor Alan MacDiarmid.

"This discovery was an inspiration to us," says Alan Kaiser, who is a member of the MacDiarmid Institute for Advanced Materials & Nanotechnology hosted by Victoria. "When high voltages are applied to these fibres at very low temperatures, their ability to conduct electricity increases dramatically.

"The tunnelling appears to occur independently on each of the polymer chains, which means that each one could form the smallest possible 'wire'.

"One way to separate out such wires might be putting them inside a carbon nanotube. A former PhD student, Dr Gregory McIntosh, with my colleagues in Korea, has calculated such a fibre could be stable if it was inserted into one of these strong but tiny tubular carbon structures. These tubes have a diameter of a nanometre, which is about 50,000 times smaller than the width of a single human hair."

Alan was invited to talk about his research to staff at Sony's Materials Science Laboratory in Yokohama, Japan, and is working with colleagues at the Max Planck Institute in Stuttgart, Germany, on carbon nanotube films that can act like transistors. "We think carbon nanotubes, conducting polymers and quantum tunnelling have a great future in electronics."



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Mike Bodnar

## Super selection

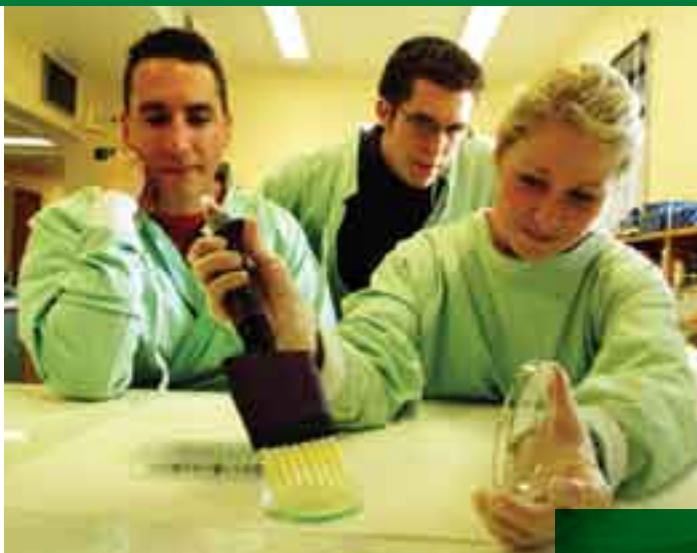
A new scientific technique that speeds up evolutionary processes is being used to develop super enzymes with the potential to attack cancerous tumours and clean up chromium pollution.

Biotechnology lecturer, Dr David Ackerley, is working with a team of postgraduate students in the School of Biological Sciences to evolve enzymes with enhanced prodrug and chromium-reducing activity, using a technique called directed evolution.

“This is a highly accelerated form of evolution, where high levels of random mutations are introduced into a system and a strong artificial screen is used to select for beneficial mutations that improve a desired function, such as the ability to detoxify environmental pollutants.

“Using this technique we can focus on just a single gene in a bacterial cell. As well as improving existing functions, we can also develop novel activities that aren’t necessarily beneficial to that cell, so would never evolve naturally. The screening systems we have designed use simple chemical reactions to identify modified genes that encode enzymes with the desired properties.”

David, who joined Victoria this year after spending five years at Stanford University in California, says



David, left, with his research team, Gareth Prosser and Janine Kopp.

using the super enzymes to reduce chromium pollution was the first of many possible applications he has investigated.

“Our enhanced enzymes were highly effective at detoxifying hexavalent chromium, which is an important environmental pollutant, featured prominently in the famous Erin Brockovich case.

“We are now looking at how we can apply the technology to prodrugs—anti-cancer compounds that become toxic when they are reduced. We can use various systems, including modified *Salmonella* bacteria that preferentially colonise cancerous cells, to deliver improved prodrug-reducing enzymes specifically to tumours. This will potentially enable more effective chemotherapeutic treatments that have diminished side-effects in the human body.”

Evolved enzymes could also potentially be useful in a wide range of industrial settings, says David, including cheese-making, detergents, and even the production of stone-wash jeans.

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## Education research boost

**From the effectiveness of professional development for teachers to the impact of the National Certificate of Educational Achievement (NCEA) on student motivation, Victoria’s College of Education is a leader in education research.**

Professor of Education and Research in the Office of the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Education), Luanna Meyer, says the College has been highly successful in picking up research contracts in the last year, with \$900,000 in grants gained since July 2005.

“When the merger with Victoria was touted, a key feature was to move the education of teachers into a research-led environment and a fund was set aside from the College’s assets to enhance its research capabilities. There’s a positive morale about the place because we have a plan that provides people with the support to do research and the grants we have picked up are an indication of that.”

To build on this success, the College is planning to launch a major educational research centre, the Jessie Hetherington Centre.

Luanna says the College has almost completed an evaluation of the professional development of early childhood teachers, into which the Ministry of Education has been investing heavily to substantially increase the number of qualified teachers in the sector. Two other projects in special education include an evaluation of Ministry activities designed to support teachers to develop programmes for gifted and talented students and a major analysis of the intervention literature on student behaviour problems.

With NCEA in its fourth year, College researchers are undertaking two projects. One is investigating the effectiveness of an innovative approach to teacher professional development. A second project, in collaboration with colleagues in the School of Psychology, is conducting research on the impact of NCEA on the learning motivation of secondary school students, which included surveying 6,000 students from across the country.

As well, in association with Massey University, Manukau Institute of Technology and Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangī, the College is undertaking a three-year \$400,000 project for the Tertiary Education Commission that examines tertiary assessment procedures and will involve surveying staff and students at all four institutions.

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Palmyra Atoll, now an international wildlife refuge.

## Island alert

**It looks like paradise, but this tiny uninhabited atoll in the Pacific Ocean, which is as ecologically significant as the Galapagos Islands, is under threat.**

The ecosystem of Palmyra Atoll is showing signs of deterioration, mainly due to introduced species, such as rats and ants, but Victoria is part of an international consortium undertaking research to help improve the atoll's future ecological stability.

A group of researchers from the School of Biological Sciences, led by Associate Professor Jonathan Gardner, are part of a team granted access to the unique atoll, which is a United States National Wildlife Refuge.

"Palmyra presents us with an interesting and challenging research opportunity. Although it doesn't have a real history of human habitation, the little contact it has had with humans is beginning to devastate its environment," says Jonathan.

"Invasive ants are killing a native tree, *pisonia*, that attracts birds to the atoll to nest. Without the birds, the atoll misses out on the bird's guano (droppings), which provide rich nutrients for its earth.

"Another problem is the prevalence of rats, which eat the new shoots off the native plants. Scientists are now investigating bio-control options for all invasive species on the atoll."

Palmyra's landscape has also suffered at the hands of humans, dating back to World War II, when 3,000 American troops were stationed there.

"They modified the lagoons, and built runways for their aircraft along with other structures around the atoll."

Visitor numbers on the atoll are now severely restricted, and the researchers—from several different disciplines—are working together to come up with a conservation and restoration plan.

Jonathan, along with Senior Lecturer Simon Davy and PhD candidate Laura Wicks, are travelling to Palmyra in July to focus on specific aspects of the atoll's biodiversity, including a study of the microbes and sedimentation of its substantial coral reefs.

"Victoria is very lucky to have access to this amazing place. Its isolation and unusual marine life and wildlife—including more than 27 species of crabs—make it like nowhere else."

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## Balancing coverage

**The debate over the Government's foreshore and seabed legislation provoked a storm of public debate, with the broadcast media playing a key role.**

That media coverage has been placed under scrutiny by researchers in Te Kawa a Māui, Victoria's School of Māori Studies, and the University's Health Services Research Centre, in a major project for the Broadcasting Standards Authority.

Head of School, Peter Addis, says while the coverage was generally fair when placed against the Authority's standards, the research raised questions about whether those standards adequately reflected Māori realities, concerns and interests.

The team carried out both quantitative and qualitative analysis of about 200 items of coverage on mainstream television, Māori-for-Māori television and national public radio, with a roughly equal split between radio and television. Stories were analysed for balance, accuracy, fairness, tone and use of tikanga Māori and the Māori language.

"While not all stories were balanced, broadcasters generally achieved balance over time although some of that 'balance' was questionable in that the Māori perspective was often gained by interviewing the Government's Māori MPs who were supporting the legislation," says Peter.

"We did find some instances of sensationalised stories, where individual Māori, with little or no mandate, were approached to simply get a reaction and manufacture a story. Stories in the mainstream media were also more likely to portray Māori as aggressive and non-Māori as rational and law-abiding, with the Crown as guardians of the national interest.

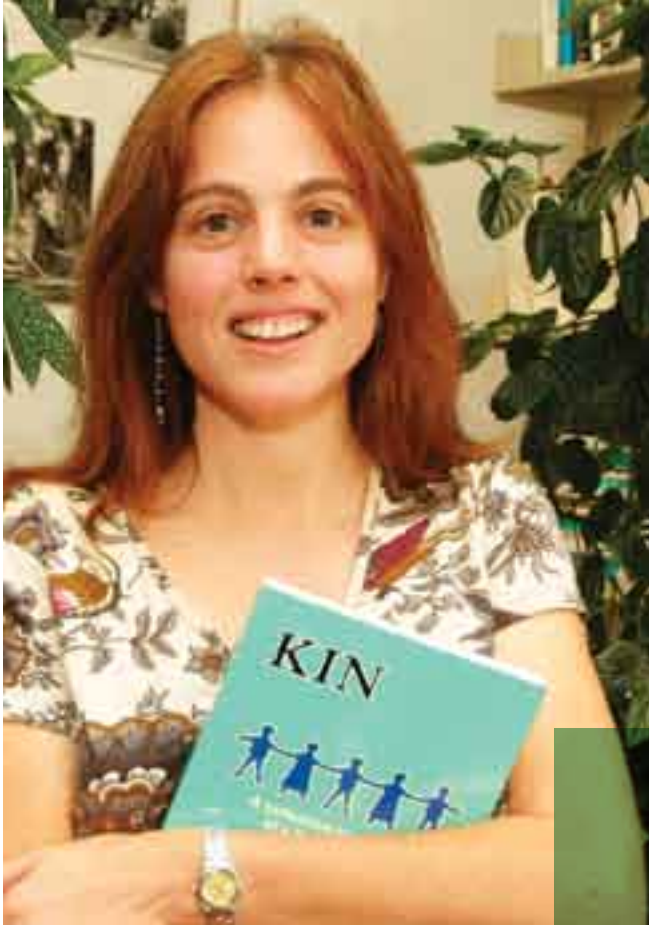
"But a key issue we have posed is whether the Authority's standards, which come from a Western construct, adequately take into account Māori interests. Looking at the Māori-for-Māori television, the reporters still asked hard questions, but they created a more comfortable zone for the people being interviewed, so the stories came out in a more natural way."

The School's success with this project has led to a further contract with Te Puni Kōkiri, the Ministry of Māori Development, to monitor Māori radio stations that are required to provide at least four hours of programming in te reo Māori per day.

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Above: Jack McCullough, far left, with, standing from left, his brothers Frank and Jim, and, front from left, sister Sarah, father William, and sister Margaret, in 1891.

Left: Melanie Nolan

## Family ties

**To be working-class in the early twentieth century you had to wear a cloth cap and be militant, left-wing and a pacifist—right?**

Not so, says Victoria labour historian, Associate Professor Melanie Nolan, whose research into the family of a Christchurch trade unionist has revealed a more complex picture of working-class life, culture and identity.

In *Kin: A collective biography of a New Zealand working-class family*, Melanie examined the life of Jack McCullough and his four siblings, Margaret, Jim, Sarah and Frank.

“I had done my MA thesis on Jack in the mid-1980s and after nearly two decades I decided to return to him to write a political biography. He was the classic ‘representative of the working-class,’ a skilled artisan who was the Workers’ Representative on the Arbitration Court, founder of the Christchurch Socialist Church, Labour Party member, a pacifist, a journalist and eventually a Legislative Council member.

“But I was drawn back to an interview I had with his niece in 1983. She kept asking me if I was not interested in her other uncle, Tom Taylor, who had been an MP, Christchurch Mayor and leader in the temperance movement. I politely said no and then she suggested her father Jim who had been a Labour city councillor and again I said no. She also suggested her mother, Lillian, might be worthy of my interest.

“Twenty years later that conversation made me look more closely into Jack’s siblings and to question my definition of the working-class.

How typical is Jack? What about the working class who were part of the patriotic majority in the First World War? Or the religious working class, or working people who were not members of trade unions but were involved in friendly societies?”

Melanie believes the traditional emphasis on militants, secularism, national political parties, pacifists and the skilled working class has misrepresented the dominant voice of the working-class. She says the lives of Jack’s siblings challenge that view.

Margaret, for example, undertook considerable unpaid work through Timaru’s Trinity Church, the Presbyterian Women’s Missionary Union and the Christian Temperance Union. Sarah never joined a political organisation or worked in paid employment but, unlike her brother Jack, she was a royalist and an active patriotic supporter during the War while her husband, Dave Kennedy, was a moderate trade unionist.

Jim was a community socialist and heavily involved with the Odd Fellows, a friendly society that provided many of the welfare services that the first Labour Government was to later introduce. Frank was the odd man out in the family and represents the movement of white-collar workers into the middle-class. Neither religious, a labour activist or pacifist, he was a travelling salesman who became a Kaiapoi Woollen Mill Company branch manager.

Melanie says *Kin* also raises questions about ‘typicality’ in biographies. “Biographies are the single largest historical genre, but my research has questioned how much the telling of the story of one well-known person can reveal about the many.”

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Tony (left) and Leon with their revolutionary device.

## From Kenya to Washington

An idea born in the wilderness of Kenya has spurred an innovative combination of technologies for two Victoria graduates that is attracting world-wide attention.

Leon Lammers van Toorenburg, who graduated with a BSc in physics in 1995, and Tony Thistoll, a part-time lecturer in the School of Information Management, have developed a rapid data capture device that is now being sold to the United States Army Corps of Engineers and the New Zealand Defence Force.

The 'ike 304™' combines global positioning with a personal digital assistant (PDA), a laser distance metre, compass and camera. The laser allows the user to get GPS data on a particular site from up to a kilometre away, while the digital camera ensures that each object measured in the field is the correct one, and each photo or position is date and time stamped.

Leon was working for the Kenyan police, surveying sites for police stations, when the idea for the device came to him.

"I would take a lot of photos of the site but no matter how careful I was with the camera's frame counter I would come back with a confusing collection of hundreds of photos of trees and I wondered if there was some way you could automatically place a photo on a map."

Returning to New Zealand in 2000, Leon, who is a Director and Chief Technical Officer of Surveylab, gained the interest of Wellington businessman Rex Nicholls, who believed the idea had potential. From the chunky prototype, a hand-held version was created and sold to Horowhenua lines company, Electra.

Leon says the laser means the user can be some distance from the target when gaining GPS data. This can be crucial when the site is inaccessible or if buildings or trees make it impossible to pick up a signal from a GPS satellite.

It proved its worth during Hurricane Katrina, when US Federal Emergency teams used ike to scout out possible sites for emergency housing and to document the damage to levees, canals and other infrastructure. Because information could be collected at a distance, there was less danger to the data collectors as they didn't need to get amidst unstable buildings. Such accurate information is vital to not only assessing the damage, but also in planning the reconstruction effort.

Tony, who has just graduated with a Postgraduate Diploma in Information Management and is Surveylab's general manager, has worked with Leon in commercialising the concept.

He says the company's big break came when a story appeared on a blog website, Slashdot. The company's website starting getting thousands of hits and emails began to flood in, including from the US Army Corps of Engineers and the US Forest Service. The company, which now employs 15 people, has opened an office in Washington DC to service its American clients.

"In taking ike from an idea to a commercial product we've adopted the plan business guru and renowned author Geoff Moore outlined in his book, *Crossing the Chasm*, by focusing all of our resources on one market segment, in our case military engineers, and once we're established there, moving out to wider markets."

In the development of ike from an idea to a concept and into a product, the pair say the assistance and advice of former lecturers at Victoria has been vital, as well as support from the Foundation for Research, Science & Technology and New Zealand Trade & Enterprise.

*Leon says the laser means the user can be some distance from the target when gaining GPS data. This can be crucial when the site is inaccessible or if buildings or trees make it impossible to pick up a signal from a GPS satellite.*

### Contact

[www.survey-lab.com](http://www.survey-lab.com)





## Reporting back to the future

**The University recently tabled its 2005 Annual Report in Parliament which, unusually, included a qualified opinion from the Auditor-General.**

This opinion did not arise from any concern our auditors have with our financial systems or management. Rather, it centres on how the assets of the Wellington College of Education were incorporated into our books and a constitutional issue of who owns New Zealand's eight universities.

The University Council does not accept the Auditor-General's view that the Crown owns Victoria and therefore has rejected his view that those assets should be treated in accounting terms as coming from 'the owners'. As a result, those assets have been recognised as unusual items in the 2005 accounts, meaning our consolidated surplus for the year has ballooned out to \$41 million.

In reality, the consolidated operating surplus was \$9 million, which includes not just the University, but also two trusts, our commercialisation subsidiary, Victoria Link Limited and its associate company, Magritek Limited. The University's operating surplus, which is available for investment in improved facilities and services for students and staff, was \$8.1 million.

The University's surplus has often been criticised by student groups who have argued that, if Victoria did not make surpluses, student tuition fees could be reduced, the implication being that the University is somehow 'greedy'. But this surplus isn't profit and doesn't go to the Government or to shareholders like a company. The reality is that the surplus, combined with our

number of students retraining or taking discretionary courses at universities.

All this comes back to a key policy issue I have focused on since being appointed Vice-Chancellor—the lack of Government investment in New Zealand's universities. Research undertaken by the New Zealand Vice-Chancellors' Committee indicates this country, when adjusted for purchasing power parity, invests in each student only 60 percent of that in Australia. Recruiting and retaining top quality staff is increasingly difficult when overseas salaries are considerably higher than those on offer here. I have taken part in the Tripartite Forum with Government and staff unions, exploring alternative models for funding university salaries. I have met with the Minister for Tertiary Education, the Hon Dr Michael Cullen, to discuss specific issues relating to the level of Government support for teacher education, and investing in the groundbreaking collaboration with Massey University—the New Zealand School of Music. I have also spent time discussing tertiary issues with the Chief Executive of the Tertiary Education Commission, Janice Shiner.

The Government has recently proposed a new system that provides for greater differentiation in funding of tertiary institutions to recognise their special characteristics. I welcome this initiative, as moving away from a per-student system could provide for greater certainty although I would be concerned if it created greater compliance costs.

In the case of universities, one of those special characteristics is research and research-led teaching, the cost of which is considerable, even with the funding available from the Performance-Based Research Fund. A good example of those costs can be seen in the many research and teaching collaborations we have entered into in the last few years. The Malaghan Institute of Medical Research, New Zealand's premier biomedical research centre, located on our Kelburn Campus, has developed significant research and teaching ventures with the Schools of Biological Sciences and Chemical & Physical Sciences. Likewise, we have established an innovative collaborative relationship with GNS Science in the Joint Antarctic Research Institute.

But while these partnerships are undertaking cutting edge research with a heavy involvement of postgraduate students—New Zealand's future researchers—they do not come without a price tag. If the Government is really serious about having highly educated graduates at the forefront of research that is feeding into new industries and innovative technologies, then it has to invest with greater precision in its Tertiary Education Strategy if it is to be seen as more than rhetoric.

***“The reality is that the surplus, combined with our depreciation provision, is fully reinvested into vital capital developments such as Library collections, information technology, scientific equipment, and buildings.”***

depreciation provision, is fully reinvested into vital capital developments such as Library collections, information technology, scientific equipment, and buildings. Additionally, the Government requires all tertiary institutions that receive public funds to achieve a minimum operating surplus of three percent of their revenue.

Our operating surplus in 2005 equated to just 3.8 percent of total revenue. That was an excellent result given the decline in international enrolments from China, weak growth in domestic student numbers and a significant increase in polytechnic enrolments and full employment reducing the



# Learning @ Vic

If you are interested in finding out about the dynamic courses and qualifications offered by Victoria, contact our Course Advice team. Email: [Course-Advice@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:Course-Advice@vuw.ac.nz) Tel: 0800 VIC UNI.



Victoria at Corpus Christi College, in Cambridge.

Victoria, who holds a BA(Hons) and MA from Victoria, attends Corpus Christi College, where she is continuing her study of Renaissance writer Edmund Spenser, who was a member of Cambridge's Pembroke College. Victoria's thesis was on Spenser's allegorical poem, *The Faerie Queene* (1590-1595), looking at his treatment of marriage during a time when that institution was undergoing changes as a result of the Reformation.

"My MA thesis highlighted to me how satirical Spenser can be, and I'm now attempting to place him within a tradition of authors who push chivalric romance (which is the genre of *The Faerie Queene*) in the direction of burlesque for satiric purposes. This area is relatively unexplored because *The Faerie Queene* is not obviously a burlesque or 'funny' poem."

Victoria is grateful for the support and encouragement she received at Victoria University, and says her MA in particular has really helped prepare her for Cambridge.

"I think the MA system in New Zealand is excellent training for a PhD here, as it forces you to work very independently. Here the PhD is preceded by a Master of Philosophy, a really intensive year of course work and deadlines. I feel I'm in a unique position having already worked on a supervised dissertation for more than a year, so I'm used to self-motivating without classes or deadlines to prompt me.

"To any students thinking about applying for a scholarship to study overseas, I would say don't be put off by the various administrative hurdles along the way. Talk to your supervisor, use the Office of Research & Postgraduate Studies and look at the websites of universities you want to study at."

## Following footsteps

Using the book collections her PhD thesis subject had access to several hundred years ago is just one of the thrills Victoria Coldham-Fussell is experiencing at Cambridge University, after receiving a Prince of Wales Scholarship.

The scholarship is one of several administered by Cambridge trusts to support students from around the world to study in residence at Cambridge.

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## Excellence rewarded

Five Honours graduates have been awarded the prestigious Victoria University Medal for Academic Excellence.

This year's medal winners represent a range of disciplines, from architecture to science.

Medals have been awarded to Christopher Fisher, who holds a Bachelor of Arts with Honours; Charlotte Goguel, who holds a Bachelor of Architecture with Honours; Hugh King, who holds a Bachelor of Laws with Honours; Timothy McKenzie, who holds a Bachelor of Science with Honours; and Richard Van Den Engel, who holds a Bachelor of Commerce & Administration with Honours.

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Vice-Chancellor, Professor Pat Walsh, says the Medals recognise the academic achievements of the best Honours students, as chosen by each Faculty.

"The students who receive these medals have distinguished themselves during their undergraduate and Honours years.

"The Victoria University Medal for Academic Excellence is one of the ways we can reward our highest achieving students, and encourage talented and dedicated students to reach their potential.

"I congratulate the medal winners and I am confident that they will continue to do well in their future endeavours."

Victoria offers a wide range of scholarships and awards to its students. The Office of Research & Postgraduate Studies holds information on undergraduate and postgraduate awards. Students are welcome to visit the office for advice and further details.



## Landscape leaders

The outstanding work of two Bachelor of Design with Honours graduates has been recognised by the New Zealand Institute of Landscape Architects (NZILA).

Graduates Nathan Young and Lyn Wilson received gold and silver awards respectively in the student category of the NZILA awards for landscape design. Nathan and Lyn were among the first graduates from the new Landscape Architecture major at the School of Design.

Nathan's thesis (*Home, Land, Sea*) combined his love of the sea with his interest in design and landscape architecture. It focused on Wellington's waterfront and dealt with the interface between the harbour and the reclaimed land.

"The results of my final design are concepts that could be incorporated onto any coastal landscape in New Zealand or the wider Pacific. I'm interested now in taking my research conclusion and getting real landscape constructed that responds to my findings.

"The award from the NZILA allowed me to talk about my research with landscape architects working on coastal projects—that exposure has given me good opportunities for future employment."

Lyn's project (*Landscapes of Incarceration*) involved interviewing former prisoners to set up a brief for designing landscapes that were rehabilitative rather than punitive.



**Above: A new take on home, land and sea in Wellington.  
Below: A new strategy, Landscapes of Incarceration.**

"I had experience of visiting prisons and couldn't see how the existing prison landscapes or design strategies brought about positive outcomes for the prisoners, their families or the community. So it seemed a good opportunity to explore these issues and attempt to develop a new strategy to change this."

Lyn was also awarded a prize from the Cement & Concrete Association of New Zealand for the same project. She is now back at Victoria, tutoring in Landscape Architecture.

Ralph Johns, Senior Lecturer in Landscape Design, says Lyn and Nathan's design work set exciting new agendas for landscape design.

"Our graduates have found employment at the best landscape architecture practices in New Zealand and Australia and are tutoring the next generation of landscape students. They are making a significant contribution to the continuing ascendancy of the profession in New Zealand."



## Scientific scholar

PhD student Tim Sargeant looked set for a bright future after he won a Top Achiever Doctoral Scholarship, but just how bright that future will be is becoming more apparent after he presented a paper to some of the most respected names in neuroscience.

Awarded the scholarship last year, Tim is researching the impact of opiates on brain development. His paper on chronic prenatal exposure to morphine was accepted by the Australian Neuroscience Society for its 26th annual meeting in Sydney earlier this year. The conference attracted more than 800 delegates from around the world and Tim found himself presenting his paper to highly-respected scientists, some of whom had published more than 100 papers on the topic, a potentially daunting experience.

"I presented to scientists whose papers I've been reading since I was an undergraduate, so there was certainly a level of trepidation.

"I also entered the poster competition, which meant I had to stand in front of the poster to answer any questions from delegates. The experience helped immensely—I was able to talk to a lot of other scientists and brought back ideas that will contribute to our work here."

In fact, Tim was one of six students to win a prize for their poster, although the \$100 prize money doesn't compare to the \$96,000 Bright Future Scholarship funded by the Tertiary Education Commission.

"The scholarship has made a huge difference. Without a scholarship I probably wouldn't be here."

Tim says that staff and his fellow PhD students at the School of Biological Sciences are a supportive group. "If you're prepared to put the work in, there is always someone here who will help you."

Tim hopes his research will bring a greater understanding of the biology that underpins brain development, and increase knowledge of how opiates—from analgesics to drugs of abuse like heroin—impact on that development.



# Future is Bright

**Caroline Morris at Parliament Buildings before heading to King's College, London.**

**Eight Victoria staff and students have been awarded Bright Future Scholarships in the latest round of awards from the Government-funded scheme.**

The Bright Future Scholarships scheme supports research through two scholarships—Top Achiever Doctoral Scholarships that support research at PhD level in all disciplines at New Zealand tertiary education institutions or appropriate overseas institutions; and Enterprise Scholarships that support students in partnership with private companies.

Three Victoria University students received Bright Future Top Achiever Doctoral Scholarships to continue their study at Victoria: Julia de Bres, Andrew Mahoney and Kyle Chard received scholarships collectively worth more than \$265,000.

Julia, a student in the School of Linguistics & Applied Language Studies holds a BA(Hons) and Graduate Diploma of Arts. Julia plans to research the promotion of positive attitudes towards the Māori language among non-Māori in New Zealand.

Andrew is a student in the School of Art History, Classics & Religious Studies, who holds a BA(Hons). He plans to undertake research on the use of theological expressions as costly signals of religious commitment.

A student in the School of Mathematics, Statistics & Computer Science, Kyle holds a BSc(Hons) and will be carrying out research into the efficient use of grid resources for network computer services.

Two students received Bright Future Enterprise Scholarships worth more than \$52,000 in total: School of Architecture student, Rachel Ryan; and School of Psychology student, Jared Thomas.

Rachel, who holds a Bachelor of Building Science degree with Honours, will use the scholarship to undertake her Master's degree, with support from Terralink International Ltd, creating a 3D interactive, web-enabled, multilayered model of Wellington city. Jared received a scholarship to undertake doctoral research, with the support of Opus International Consultants, into the social environment within public transport.

Two students and a staff member received Bright Future Top Achiever Doctoral Scholarships to study at Cambridge University in England. The scholarships, worth more than \$730,000 in total, were awarded to Kirsten McEwen, Mina Razzak and Caroline Morris. Kirsten, who holds a Bachelor of Biomedical Science degree with Honours, will be investigating how stem cells change into different tissue types. Mina holds a Bachelor of Biomedical Science and will be researching the synthesis of novel anti-cancer agents from marine natural products.

Caroline, a Senior Lecturer in Law and Victoria alumna, received a Top Achiever Doctoral Scholarship to study at the University of London's King's College. Caroline will be researching the regulation of parliamentary representation, a subject she is passionate about.

"I enjoy the mistiness of it—the fact that some legal questions can't be resolved simply by recourse to the law."

Caroline says recent cases, such as that of former ACT MP Donna Awatere-Huata, who was expelled from Parliament in 2004 after a long legal battle, have highlighted uncertainty around the question 'who is entitled to be in Parliament?' and, equally significant, 'who has the power to decide who is entitled to be in Parliament?'

"The law on this particular issue is in a state of confusion—I hope my research will help to clarify the answers to these questions."

A lecturer in the School of Law for the last five years, Caroline is also passionate about teaching public law. "I really enjoy exposing students to ideas they might not have thought about, and challenging them to explore the boundaries of existing case law."

Caroline will take up her place at King's College at the end of the year, before returning to Victoria, where she hopes one day to become Professor of Law.



## Get physical

If you're ever in need of a Pepper's Ghost or an electric pendulum, a team of Victoria physicists may have just the thing.

The New Zealand Physics Teachers' Resource Bank and website has been established by Victoria physics teachers to provide interesting and fun physics demonstrations and activities—both online and in person—for high school students.

John Hannah and Dr Howard Lukefahr, from the School of Chemical & Physical Sciences, say the aim is to create a database of resources to demonstrate concepts that are part of the NCEA science and physics curricula.

"We've visited quite a few schools in the Wellington region, bringing along equipment that is not practical for schools to own themselves, and staging some fairly exciting demonstrations," says John.

"Putting these resources online makes them available to a wider audience of students and teachers around New Zealand—we've even had a few enquiries from overseas."

The resource bank includes nearly 100 demonstrations in physics, including

thermodynamics, mechanics, fluids, electricity, optics, oscillations and waves, with more on the way.

"A particular favourite is the Sacred Heart College bed of nails demonstration, which shows the relationship between force and pressure, and features Victoria's Professor Paul Callaghan, recent winner of the Rutherford Medal, as the 'victim'," says Howard.

Other popular items are the Pepper's Ghost, a Victorian technique for producing virtual images on stage, and the electric pendulum, which allows a suspended ball to swing back and forth between two oppositely charged plates.

The website also hosts online demonstrations in te reo Māori, including an optical illusion of a candle burning underwater and the suspension of a ball in mid-air. These demonstrations were performed and filmed with Māori students from local kura kaupapa, and more are in development.

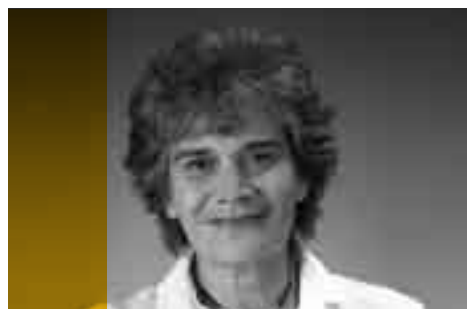
"We hope that our resource bank will encourage students from all parts of New Zealand society to consider a career in science," says Howard.

### Contact

[www.vuw.ac.nz/scps-demos](http://www.vuw.ac.nz/scps-demos)

## Who's new?

### *Peggy Fairbairn-Dunlop*



Associate Professor Tagaloatele Peggy Fairbairn-Dunlop has been appointed as the inaugural head of Va'aomanū Pasifika, the University's new Pacific studies unit. Peggy joins Victoria from the UNESCO Pacific Office, where she was Social and Human Sciences Adviser. Prior to this she held various posts at the University of the South Pacific. She has links to New Zealand's tertiary environment, having worked as a Lecturer in Professional Studies at Wellington Teachers' College before

returning to Samoa in 1980. She has also been an Adjunct Professor at Auckland University of Technology since 2004 and participated as a panel member in the Performance-Based Research Fund exercise. She has a Master's degree from Victoria and a Primary Teaching Certificate from the College and gained her PhD in 1991 from Macquarie University in Australia. Peggy also has more than 20 years' experience as a community development and gender activist in the Pacific.

### *Roberto Rabel*

Professor Roberto Rabel has been appointed as Pro Vice-Chancellor (International). Roberto is an alumnus of Victoria, graduating in 1978 with a BA(Hons) in history and international politics. He has served three times as the Director of the Otago Foreign Policy School and has also taught international history at Otago. His most recent position has been as the Director



of Otago University's International Office. Roberto has written or edited more than 35 history books and articles. His most recent book is a political and diplomatic history of New Zealand's involvement in the Vietnam War. Roberto was a Fulbright Scholar at Duke University where he gained an MA in 1980 and a PhD in American diplomatic history in 1984. He joins Victoria at a time when the University is looking to expand its student exchange programmes and increase partnerships with leading universities worldwide.



# Gifting

If you are interested in supporting students and staff with a donation of funds, resources or time, we'd like to hear from you. For financial contributions contact the Victoria University of Wellington Foundation Executive Director, Tricia Walbridge. Email: [Tricia.Walbridge@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:Tricia.Walbridge@vuw.ac.nz) Tel: +64-4-463 5109.



## Grand entrance

Author Rick Gekoski (left)  
with Carl Shuker (centre)  
and Bill Manhire

Carl Shuker has claimed in the past that he is only ever a writer for a few seconds at a time—when he writes something good. He might have to acknowledge his writing ability a little more now that he has been awarded a very large plaudit for his first published novel, *The Method Actors*.

Carl, 31, won the 2006 Prize in Modern Letters, worth \$65,000—a gift from an American benefactor. His novel, published in 2005, draws on the intensity of contemporary Tokyo to tell the story of the hedonism of a group of young expats whose lives collide with a secret history of Japan.

### Contact

[www.vuw.ac.nz/modernletters](http://www.vuw.ac.nz/modernletters)

“*The Method Actors* is a brilliant novel, a vast tapestry of interweaving characters pursuing their somewhat tortured destinies in Tokyo.... Shuker is a tremendous stylist and a tremendous observer, and these abilities guide the reader through the complexity and uncertainty of the narrative,” says Stephen Dobyns, one of the American judges on this year’s panel.

Carl started the novel in 2001 while enrolled in the MA in Creative Writing programme at Victoria’s International Institute of Modern Letters, under the direction of Professor Bill Manhire.

“I had an idea to write an episodic, fragmentary novel. It took two-and-a-half years to finish *The Method Actors*, but the encouragement of Bill and my classmates during the year that I was at Victoria gave me the momentum I needed to carry on.”

Carl says the Fellowship Fund set up by the Institute this year, from funds raised as part of the Challenge Gift, will be of enormous help to writers who are emerging from the programme.

“This kind of practical support will be a huge asset for students who are trying to complete and publish their work. When I was writing the novel, I had to keep going and hope that someone would eventually notice what I was doing. The Fellowship Fund will give graduating students a bit more flexibility to try to pursue a career in writing.”

Carl’s next novel, *The Lazy Boys*, which was begun before *The Method Actors*, will be published later this year.

## Challenging creativity

A fortuitous donation from an American benefactor has enabled Victoria’s International Institute of Modern Letters to meet a challenge laid down in 2001.

The Institute’s founder challenged the then fledgling Institute to raise \$1 million by 31 December 2005, promising to match the sum with US\$1 million if successful. The Institute and the Victoria University of Wellington Foundation gladly took up the challenge and by December last year had raised more than \$800,000.

A number of generous gifts were received during the final month of the challenge, but it was the generosity of Bob Morey, an American who has a home in Napier, which enabled the Institute to meet the challenge just before the deadline.

“We felt it was important that the challenge gift be matched,” says Bob, who, with his wife Timi, splits his time between Napier and Oregon.

“Our gift is made in honour of Jean Squire, a retired children’s librarian at the Napier Library. Jean nurtures the love of reading in children. She and her husband, Clive, continue to give unselfishly to the Napier community and this is our ‘thank you’ as neighbours and friends.”

Now that the challenge has been met, the Institute will use the funds to set up an endowed Fellowship Fund, which will provide awards for some of the top students each year who complete the MA in Creative Writing programme.

Institute Director, Professor Bill Manhire, says the fund will help students to complete their manuscripts after they have finished the programme.

“All too often students have to go straight into fulltime work when they graduate and their manuscript sits on a shelf gathering dust. This fund will enable us to help students complete their manuscripts and give them a chance to try to get their work published and recognised.”

### Contact

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+64-4-463 6808



## Strategic investment

Victoria will be honouring the past and encouraging a broader perspective on the strategic alliances between New Zealand and the rest of the world, thanks to a gift that establishes the Sir Howard Kippenberger Chair in Strategic Studies.

Professor Gary Hawke, Head of the School of Government, says Victoria will conduct an international search to recruit the inaugural holder of the Chair, which is named after New Zealand's most widely admired and respected battlefield commander of World War II.

"On his return to New Zealand, Sir Howard Kippenberger was an influential Dominion President of the Royal New Zealand Returned and Services' Association from 1948–55, who also oversaw the production of 23 volumes of the *Official Histories of New Zealand in the Second World War*."

The Chair has been generously supported by the Garfield Weston Foundation, a charitable foundation based in the United Kingdom and chaired by Sir Howard Kippenberger's grandson, the New Zealand Defence Force and the RSA. The total donation of \$570,000, which will be managed by the Victoria University of Wellington

Foundation, will fund the Chair for an initial period of five years.

The appointment to the Chair will be for three to four months each year, and the term of the first appointment is expected to be for three years. The holder of the Chair is likely to come from the United Kingdom, United States, Canada or Australia and will spend time undertaking research in these strategic communities and the Asia-Pacific region.

The holder of the Chair will also teach and undertake research in conjunction with the postgraduate strategic studies programme at Victoria, as well as contribute to research seminars and an annual conference organised by Victoria's Centre for Strategic Studies.

### Contact

Gary.Hawke@vuw.ac.nz  
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## Court of Convocation Elections 2006

The Victoria University Council constitution provides for 20 members to be appointed or elected by various bodies and constituencies. Of the elected members, five are elected by the Court of Convocation. Nominations to fill three of the five seats will be formally invited in July. If more nominations than there are vacancies are received, an election will be held on 5 October 2006.

All graduates of the University and persons who, not being graduates, were enrolled as members of the Court of Convocation and voted in one or both of the two preceding elections (2002 and 2000), are eligible to vote. The Register of the Court is maintained in two rolls, active and inactive. To check your status on the Register, please contact the Alumni Relations Office, Victoria University of Wellington, PO Box 600, Wellington, or email [alumni@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:alumni@vuw.ac.nz) giving your full name (and name at graduation

if different), your postal and email addresses, degree and date of graduation if known.

If your name is not listed, or is listed on the inactive roll of the register, and you wish to receive voting papers for the election, contact the Secretary of the Court of Convocation, Victoria University of Wellington, PO Box 600, Wellington or email [alumni@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:alumni@vuw.ac.nz).

### Contact

[www.vuw.ac.nz/council](http://www.vuw.ac.nz/council)



#### Contact

[Matthew.Reweti-Gould@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:Matthew.Reweti-Gould@vuw.ac.nz)  
+64-4-463 5246

## Alumni Relations Update

### from Alumni Relations Manager, Matthew Reweti-Gould

A little Wellington earthquake has quite an impact when you are sitting in a 300-seat lecture theatre. This lesson in plate tectonics during a Māori Studies lecture is just one of the enduring memories I have of my three years of study at Victoria. I have still more memories from five years of managing STA Travel. In all, this will be the ninth year I have spent on Kelburn Campus.

As the new Alumni Relations Manager, I serve alumni by managing links for communication and involvement with the University. As technology continues to change, the University will be able to deliver better service and information to alumni. It is therefore important for alumni to maintain up-to-date details with the University. This can be done through *Life After Vic*, the online alumni directory at [www.vuw.ac.nz/alumni](http://www.vuw.ac.nz/alumni)

There are already many ways for alumni to interact and participate in University life, but this year we will increase our efforts to bring the University to alumni, wherever they may be.

We will be holding Alumni Reunion Functions where alumni can meet current staff and other alumni. These Life After Vic events will take place in Hamilton, Auckland, Christchurch, Sydney, Melbourne, Kuala Lumpur, Kuching, Singapore, Bangkok, Ho Chi Minh City, Hong Kong, Shanghai, Beijing, New York and London and I encourage all alumni to attend a function.

The highlight of the local calendar, the inaugural Alumni Dinner, will be held on 12 October at the Wellington Town Hall. This black-tie event will be an opportunity for alumni to meet with staff and friends, past and present.

Later in the year, the New Zealand Alumni Convention, hosted by the Wellington City Council, will take place between 5-8 November. Following the conference is a separate two-day programme for Victoria alumni between 9-10 November, based around the Victoria campuses.

## Victoria Events

Alumni and Friends of the University are warmly invited to the following events

### 2006 Life After Vic Functions

<b>Hamilton</b>	<b>21 June</b>
<b>Sydney</b>	<b>27 June</b>
<b>Melbourne</b>	<b>28 June</b>
<b>Auckland</b>	<b>26 July</b>
<b>Kuala Lumpur</b>	<b>8 August</b>
<b>Bangkok</b>	<b>10 August</b>
<b>Ho Chi Minh City</b>	<b>12 August</b>
<b>Kuching</b>	<b>14 August</b>
<b>Singapore</b>	<b>16 August</b>
<b>Hong Kong</b>	<b>19 August</b>
<b>Shanghai</b>	<b>22 August</b>
<b>Beijing</b>	<b>24 August</b>
<b>Christchurch</b>	<b>6 September</b>
<b>New York</b>	<b>5 October</b>
<b>London</b>	<b>6 November</b>

Life After Vic functions are an opportunity to meet with other alumni, friends and staff. It is also a great way to learn what is happening now alongside future plans for the University.

Hamilton, Auckland and Christchurch functions will be followed by information evenings for new and prospective students. Alumni considering postgraduate study are invited to remain for the information sessions. Alumni wishing to introduce friends and family to the idea of studying at Victoria are welcome to bring guests to the function and then continue on to the information evening.

### Australs 2006

#### 2-10 July

The world's second largest debating tournament, the Australasian Intervarsity Debating Championships, will be held at Victoria's Pipitea Campus.

For more information: [www.australs2006.com](http://www.australs2006.com)

### Inaugural Annual Alumni Dinner

#### 12 October

Come and meet friends and lecturers from your time at Victoria. This black tie affair

will become a permanent fixture on the Wellington social scene and will be held at the Town Hall. The evening will include the presentation of Distinguished Alumni Awards and the launch of the Annual Alumni Appeal.

### New Zealand Alumni Convention

#### 5-10 November

The New Zealand Alumni Convention, to be held at the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa in Wellington from 5-8 November, will celebrate the lifelong connections that alumni and students from overseas, particularly from Asia, have made with New Zealand.

Following the Convention, alumni and friends are invited to attend a two-day programme for re-connecting with Victoria University, from 9-10 November.

For more information:  
[www.wcc.govt.nz/rd/alumni](http://www.wcc.govt.nz/rd/alumni)

#### Contact

[www.vuw.ac.nz/alumni](http://www.vuw.ac.nz/alumni)  
[www.vuw.ac.nz/events](http://www.vuw.ac.nz/events)



## Environmental patriot

The adventurous spirit of a pioneering conservationist has been captured in a biography by a fellow scientist—his daughter, alumna Mary McEwen.

Sir Charles Fleming worked as a paleontologist for the New Zealand Geological Survey and indulged his passions for ornithology and entomology in his spare time, often involving the whole family in cicada hunts and bird watching trips. With a Masters's degree in zoology from Auckland University, his fascination with the flora and fauna of New Zealand eventually led him to become a pioneering conservationist, vocally championing the Save Manapouri campaign and rallying against the sale of South Island beech forests for Japanese woodchips in the 1970s.

Sir Charles was awarded an honorary doctorate from Victoria in 1967 and taught during his retirement in the then Geology Department, before his death in 1987. Mary started working on the biography of her father after her mother showed her more than 50 boxes of her late father's letters and documents.

Mary is an ecologist who studied botany and zoology at Victoria in the 1960s. She completed a PhD in botany while working in the indigenous forest management research field at the Forest Research Institute in the Waikato. From the 1980s, she worked as a scientist at the then Department of Scientific & Industrial Research, and at the Department of Conservation, before turning her hand to writing.



Ken George

**Above: Sir Charles at the Waikanae River estuary.**

**Below: Mary McEwen**

“Writing the biography was as much a personal journey for me as a process to capture the spirit of an environmental pioneer,” says Mary. “His adventures throughout New Zealand are captured in his letters and writings, so it was incredibly rewarding to put together his biography and share some of his adventures and his environmental legacy with New Zealand.”



Allison McEwen

## Te Aute—Victoria rugby revived

After a gap of more than 30 years, Victoria and Te Aute College have met on the rugby field again.

The Pickett Cup, which celebrated rugby matches between Victoria and Te Aute going back to 1932, was last contested in 1975 when the Wellington side won the match.

No further games were held and the cup was thought to be lost until it was recently rediscovered at Wellington College Old Boys Victoria University Rugby Clubrooms.

When the two sides met on the Prince of Wales grounds in Wellington in March, Te Aute was victorious, winning the match 41-24. Afterwards, the Te Aute team was welcomed on to Victoria's Te Herenga Waka Marae on the Kelburn Campus.



**Old Boys University's Geoff Miller, centre, is tackled by Te Aute's Hoani Peacock.**

## Life After Vic

### *Nalini Mishra Baruch*

BA(Hons) 1988, LLB 1998



Nalini completed a BA(Hons) in Political Science in 1987 while working for the Bank of New Zealand and as a spokesperson for the group protesting against the 1987 overthrow of the democratically elected government in Fiji. After working for the New Zealand Dairy Board and Telecom, she returned to Victoria in 1995 to study law. Admitted to the Bar in 1999, Nalini is now working as a sole practitioner, while at the same time managing her Gold and Silver medal winning olive brand, LOT EIGHT. Nalini's passion for olive growing in Martinborough led to two years on the executive of Olives New Zealand and she most recently chaired the successful launch of Martinborough's first long lunch, Harvest Lunch Martinborough. The experience to date helps the lawyer in her to understand the daily struggle of small-to-medium-size businesses dedicated to maintaining quality, while attempting to succeed in New Zealand and grow into export markets.

### *Tui Te Hau* BA 1990



Tui made history when she became the first Māori woman to be appointed New Zealand Trade Commissioner for Trade New Zealand (now New Zealand Trade & Enterprise) in 2000. With responsibility for the Melbourne office for Trade New Zealand, she helped to

grow foreign exchange earnings for the New Zealand apparel sector in the Australian market from \$3 million to \$26 million in a two year period. Originally from Gisborne, Tui graduated from Victoria in 1990. She worked at the Ministry of Women's Affairs and the Ministry of Māori Development, before joining Trade New Zealand, spending four years in the Māori Enterprise Team until her posting to Melbourne as Trade Commissioner. Tui is now back in Wellington and is responsible for the management of Fashion HQ, a business incubator in Wellington dedicated to supporting high-growth apparel companies. Tui has a one-year-old son, Te Rino, who she describes as 'the best thing' in her life.

### *Bob Dykes* BCA 1971



Bob Dykes has spent the past year as chief financial officer of Juniper Networks, a Nasdaq-listed company with a market capitalisation of US\$10 billion. Born and raised in Wellington, Bob left New Zealand when he was 24. Holding a BCA from Victoria, he joined Ford in Melbourne before transferring to Ford's headquarters in the United States two years later. Bob moved to Silicon Valley to work for technology start-up companies in the early 1980s, when the technology stockmarket was booming. For most of the 1990s, he was chief financial officer of security firm Symantec and later electronics manufacturer Flextronics International. During his tenure at Flextronics, he helped guide the company's expansion from \$500 million to \$14 billion in revenue.

### *Angus Vail* BCA 1985, LLB 1986

A lawyer by profession, Angus worked as business manager for rock bands INXS and KISS before establishing his own management firm—White Hat Management. Angus counts working with INXS during its most successful period, when its *Kick* album sold more than 13 million copies, and with KISS during its



1996-97 *Reunion Tour*, among his career highs. Before he started working with INXS in 1988, Angus worked for the Bank of New Zealand at its corporate offices in London and Sydney. Angus is a member of the Music Industry Export Development Group, and bands on his books not only include KISS but also United States band, 3 Doors Down, and New Zealand bands, Shihad and Steriogram.

### *Viran Molisa Trief*

BTM 1999, LLB 2000



Viran completed her legal professional training course in Wellington after she graduated in 2000 and was admitted as a barrister and solicitor of the High Court in May 2001. Shortly afterwards she returned home to Vanuatu and has worked in the State Law Office since then. Now an Assistant Senior State Counsel, Viran's work involves providing legal advice to the Government of Vanuatu and representing it in civil litigation in the Vanuatu Courts. Most of her litigation work involves defending the Government in public law and land cases. In 2003, she spent three months in Sydney working in the Office of the Crown Solicitor of New South Wales. Viran is also a director of the local chapter of Transparency International, a non-governmental organisation that aims to raise awareness about corruption and other maladministration.





# Graduation

May's graduation saw more than 1,800 students graduate at six ceremonies. These successes included the conferment of 16 PhDs and three honorary doctorates.



## Reading beyond their years

**For most four year olds, reading is something adults take charge of—sitting down together to share colourful, interesting picture books.**

But Dr Valerie Margrain's PhD in Education has researched the world of young children who themselves read well in advance of their early years.

Valerie studied 11 four-year-old children in the greater Wellington area, who each read at the level of a seven to 12-year-old.

Her data supported three types of learning, derived through mixed-method case studies. "This included interviews, use of standardised tests, and observation in early childhood centres and new entrant classrooms."

Firstly, socially supported learning involved parents reading to children, visiting libraries, providing books and computer access. "While thousands of families provide such support to their children, precocious reading occurs in only two percent of the population."

Secondly, self-regulated learning involved children who taught themselves to read. "These children knew of their own abilities and showed persistence, yet their reading appeared to have emerged unexpectedly, without being taught by anyone."

Thirdly, spontaneous learning occurred when children read without being taught and without deliberate self-teaching.

"Such children learned to read rapidly, unexpectedly and without formal teaching, usually around three years of age. Parents were often amazed their children could read voraciously, enthusiastically and extremely rapidly, with secure comprehension at such a young age."

When asked to read words like 'contemptuous', 'terminology' and 'nourishment' the children did not decode chunks of words. Instead, they rapidly attempted the whole word. If taught to read, it is more likely they would try to break long words down into syllables.

Valerie says while adult support of children is necessary, precocious reading should be attributed to the children's individual cognitive ability and approaches to learning.

A mother of four, Valerie's PhD has been supported through scholarships awarded by Victoria University. She is now working at the Ministry of Education as Senior Advisor Assessment for Group Special Education.

## Leading with humour

**Heard the one about the funny boss?**

Dr Stephanie Schnurr's PhD in Linguistics is certainly no joke and her research has unearthed the importance and impact of humour in helping leaders achieve their workplace objectives.

Motivated by earlier organisational and leadership research that identified communication as a crucial but largely ignored aspect of leadership performance, Stephanie investigated how six leaders from three New Zealand information technology (IT) organisations used humour to help them perform.

"I analysed more than 40 hours of recorded workplace interactions, conducted interviews with the leaders and their colleagues, and consulted a range of organisational documents," she says.

"The interactions indicated that the type and style of humour used by leaders is crucially influenced by their working group and the organisational culture."

Leaders from different organisations used different types of humour to achieve similar ends.

In one competitive organisation, leaders frequently used challenging and teasing humour, while leaders in a more friendly and family-oriented workplace employed more supportive types of humour.

"These norms about appropriate ways of being funny at work constitute crucial aspects of being an accepted and well integrated member of the group, and have to be acquired by newcomers to the organisation," says Stephanie.

Humour also proved to be a valuable way of resolving the often conflicting demands of a leader's professional role and gender identity.

Female leaders, in particular, often used humour to make fun of the fact that they are the 'odd girls out' in the predominantly masculine IT world.

"In fact, humour is a very useful strategy for these women in their struggle to be perceived as successful leaders while still maintaining their feminine image," Stephanie says.

Stephanie's research illustrates the need to incorporate research on communication strategies into leadership and organisational theories, while highlighting the strategic importance of humour in daily interactions.



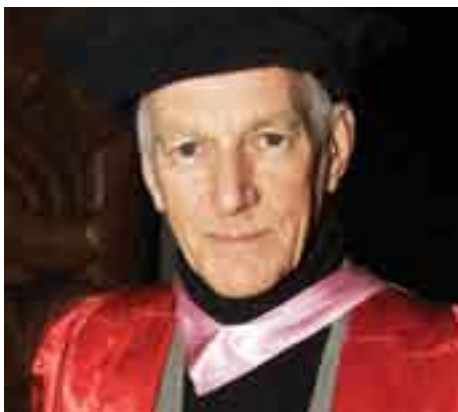
## Honours awarded

From Māori business, anthropology and poetry to constitutional law, the three honorary doctorates awarded at May's Graduation recognise lifetimes of achievement.



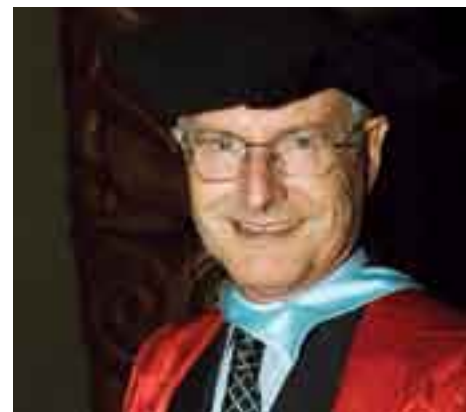
### *Sir Tipene O'Regan*

Sir Tipene O'Regan received an honorary Doctor of Commerce for his role in transforming Ngāi Tahu into a growing force in South Island business, and reinvigorating its language and culture. Graduating from Victoria in 1968, he came to national prominence as a broadcaster. Sir Tipene then played a leading role in reaching the first major Treaty of Waitangi settlement. As a member and then as chairman of the Ngāi Tahu Māori Trust Board from 1974-1996, he advocated for recognition of the wrongs the tribe had suffered, and the resulting Ngāi Tahu Claim Settlement Act in 1998 has provided a model for redress for subsequent settlements. Since retiring from the Board, he has continued to play a significant governance role within the public and private sector and is Assistant Vice-Chancellor (Māori) at the University of Canterbury. The *National Business Review* named him New Zealander of the Year in 1993 and he was knighted in 1994.



### *Professor Michael D Jackson*

Professor Michael D Jackson received an honorary Doctor of Literature for his international contribution to anthropology and literature. Michael is the Distinguished Visiting Professor in World Religions at Harvard Divinity School and has spent his academic career researching Kuranko and Aboriginal societies and culture. After graduating from the University of New Zealand in 1961, Michael completed an MA in Anthropology at Auckland University before commencing his PhD at the University of Cambridge in 1972. He has taught at universities all over the world, including time as Professor of Anthropology at the University of Copenhagen. He is also an author and poet, and has published award-winning fiction and poetry since the 1970s. He received the Commonwealth Poetry Prize in 1976 and the Katherine Mansfield Memorial Writing Fellowship in 1983. The combination of both strands of his work has led to him being regarded as a remarkable scholar, thinker and artist.



### *Professor Peter Hogg*

Professor Peter Hogg received an honorary Doctor of Laws for his outstanding contributions to law and legal scholarship. After graduating from Victoria, Peter went to Harvard Law School, gaining a Master of Laws degree, before returning to practise in Wellington and later to teach in Victoria's Faculty of Law. He also taught at Monash University in Melbourne where he earned his PhD. In 1970, he was appointed Professor of Law at the Osgoode Hall Law School of York University in Toronto. Now an Emeritus Professor, he remains actively involved in teaching, writing and practising law. A leading constitutional law scholar in Canada, his writing has been frequently cited by courts throughout the Commonwealth. He often appears as counsel in constitutional cases, and recently represented the Canadian Government in a case that had the effect of legalising same-sex marriage in Canada. He is a Companion of the Order of Canada, a member of the Royal Society of Canada and a Queen's Counsel.

Photography by Woolf





# Town & Gown

Take a look at the University's online database of varied and exciting events available to members of the University community at [www.vuw.ac.nz/events](http://www.vuw.ac.nz/events)



Lord Oxburgh (left) and Chancellor, Emeritus Professor Tim Beaglehole, check out one of Wellington's latest trolley buses.

## Climate convergence

Everyone from governments to business and individuals can play a role in tackling the global issue of climate change.

That was a key message from the Climate Change & Governance Conference organised by Victoria's Institute of Policy Studies and the School of Earth Sciences in March.

British Prime Minister, the Rt Hon Tony Blair, who spoke to the conference by video link, said New Zealand had a significant role to play in persuading other governments to tackle climate change.

He also urged private citizens to put the onus on governments to take action. "One of the things you and other people can do is to keep up the pressure. There are going to be some difficult decisions for government."

Keynote speaker and former chairman of Shell, Lord Ron Oxburgh, said climate change was one of the most pressing issues facing the international community.

"Oil is going to get scarcer and we must be looking for alternatives. Time is not on our side. The earlier we start doing things, the more effective we can be."

Recent climatic changes are not due to natural variations and the rate of change was "totally unprecedented" in the Earth's historic record, he said.

Changes in the climate would lead to more violent storms and severe droughts as well as flooding many low lying areas, including several Pacific nations, he said.

Attended by more than 400 people, the conference attracted unprecedented media attention and a wide array of national and international speakers. Public forums and lectures were also held in Wellington, Auckland and Christchurch, including a film evening at the Capital's Paramount Theatre.

As part of the conference Vice-Chancellor, Professor Pat Walsh, and Antarctic Research Centre Director, Professor Peter Barrett, boarded Wellington's trolley buses to emphasise the importance of public transport in reducing global warming as part of a competition organised by the Royal Society of New Zealand and Stagecoach New Zealand.

## Mapping journeys

Captain Cook's early journeys around the South Pacific provided an interesting departure point for three acclaimed artists featured in a new Adam Art Gallery exhibition.

*The Captain's Ghost: Three Contemporary Artists On Cook*, which runs until 23 July, brings together the work of New Zealand photographer Mark Adams, Auckland-based installation artist Christine Hellyar, and Sydney photographer Debra Phillips.

Gallery Director, Sophie McIntyre, says the artists reflect on the historical and cultural significance of cross-cultural encounter—the relationships that developed and the traces left behind following Cook's explorations to the South Pacific.

"This exhibition engages in topical issues relating to the early exploration of New Zealand and Australia, and highlights the profound impact of colonisation and cultural exchange on our respective national identities," she says.

Hellyar's installation, *Cook's Garden*, combines 'artefacts' left behind during Cook's voyages, including lace doilies, botanical plants, and Victorian dresses. She combines culturally specific motifs and objects, such as the fern with Tahitian 'god's eyes' and delicate Victorian dresses to create an insightful reflection on the impact of colonisation.

Phillips' photographic work, *52 sidelong glances*, focuses on Joseph Banks' drawings that form the *Florilegium* created during his journey on the *Endeavour*.

Adams, whose photographic series on Samoan tattooing, *Tatau*, was shown at the Gallery in 2003, turns his attention to the sites where the *Endeavour* landed in the South Pacific. Adams' photographic series reveal the complexity of Cook's journey, and highlight the conflicting attitudes to him.

Accompanying this exhibition of contemporary artists' works is a significant collection of historical images, archival material and botanical specimens drawn from the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa and the National Library of New Zealand. The collection was brought together by prominent Wellington-based curator Ian Wedde.

### Contact

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[www.vuw.ac.nz/adamartgal](http://www.vuw.ac.nz/adamartgal)



*The Death of Captain Cook, 1785, after John Webber, engraved by F. Bartolozzi & W. Byrne, collection of the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa.*



## Poetic salute

**Composer Douglas Lilburn, left, with Allen Curnow at a writers' conference at Victoria in 1979.**

A collection of music from one of New Zealand's most acclaimed composers centres on the inspiration he drew from our best-known poets.

*Douglas Lilburn: Salutes to Poets*, released as part of the Waiteata Collection of New Zealand Music, highlights the late composer's connection with some of our poetic greats, including Denis Glover, James K Baxter, and Allen Curnow.

The selection of recordings, from 1989 to 2006, includes two versions of Denis Glover's *Sings Harry*, the 1952 composition *Salutes to Seven Poets*, and incidental instrumental music that is inspired by the work of various New Zealand poets. The musical tributes are connected by narration from Douglas Lilburn himself.

New Zealand School of Music lecturer, Nancy November, who wrote the CD's cover notes, says Douglas found himself in inspiring company in Christchurch, during the 1930s and early 1940s.

"Enthusiasm, collaboration and cross-pollination of ideas were strong amongst his poet and artist peers. His close alliance with Allen Curnow and Denis Glover at this time was the beginning of a long and varied collaboration with New Zealand poets."

The composer himself recalls, in the CD's narrative: "All those writers and painters I knew listened readily to music and could talk very intelligently about it and, in fact, they gave me a lot of encouragement at that time and of course I was learning a tremendous amount from them too."

New Zealand Listener

This stimulation was reciprocated, with many New Zealand poets of his generation claiming he fuelled their sense of purpose, and gave them a deeper understanding of their own art.

Waiteata Music Press was established in 1967 by Douglas Lilburn, who taught at Victoria's School of Music for 32 years. He envisaged it as a non-profit 'composer facility', producing inexpensive scores of New Zealand music for performance and study, and this continues to be its prime function.

Since 1981, when Associate Professor Jack Body took over the editorship, Waiteata Music Press has become the principal publisher of New Zealand music.

*Douglas Lilburn: Salutes to Poets* published by Waiteata Music Press is now available from the New Zealand School of Music.

### Contact

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[www.nzsm.ac.nz](http://www.nzsm.ac.nz)



# Victory for Victoria

**With the largest ever team of athletes, Victoria was the clear winner of this year's New Zealand University Games and took home the coveted 83-year-old Games Shield.**

The Games, which were co-hosted by Victoria and took place at venues around Wellington, attracted more than 2,000 students from all New Zealand universities.

Vice-Chancellor, Professor Pat Walsh, says Victoria, with a team of 500 students and the home-town advantage, were deserved winners.

"This win confirms the strength of the dynamic sporting and cultural student life here at Victoria.

"I am really thrilled that our students have won the University Games, especially after the great week we had hosting the event. I welcome the Shield back to Wellington and look forward to supporting our students to defend the title next year."

The 2006 event was the most diverse Games ever, with students participating in 28 sports, seven more than the previous year's event.

Jim Ellis, Executive Director of University Sport New Zealand, says introducing the seven extra sports kept the Games up-to-date with contemporary sporting trends.

"We believe it's important for us to reflect what's happening on the national sporting scene. Lawn bowls, for example, has become a great success among university students, especially here in Wellington.

"Canoe polo, a combination of water polo, basketball and kayaking, is another interesting new sport developing in New Zealand that we wanted to support by including in the Games."

Some of Victoria's big successes during the competition included lawn bowls, badminton, underwater hockey, table tennis and inline hockey. For the seventh year in a row the Victoria debating team won the competition, placing first, second and third.

The New Zealand University Games were organised by University Sport New Zealand, and held in partnership with Victoria University, Victoria University of Wellington Students' Association, Wellington City Council, Sport Wellington Region and the New Zealand Community Trust.





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within easy walking distance to the CBD, Parliament and the Courts. Many are of historic or architectural importance. All can be hired at competitive rates.

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