Victorious

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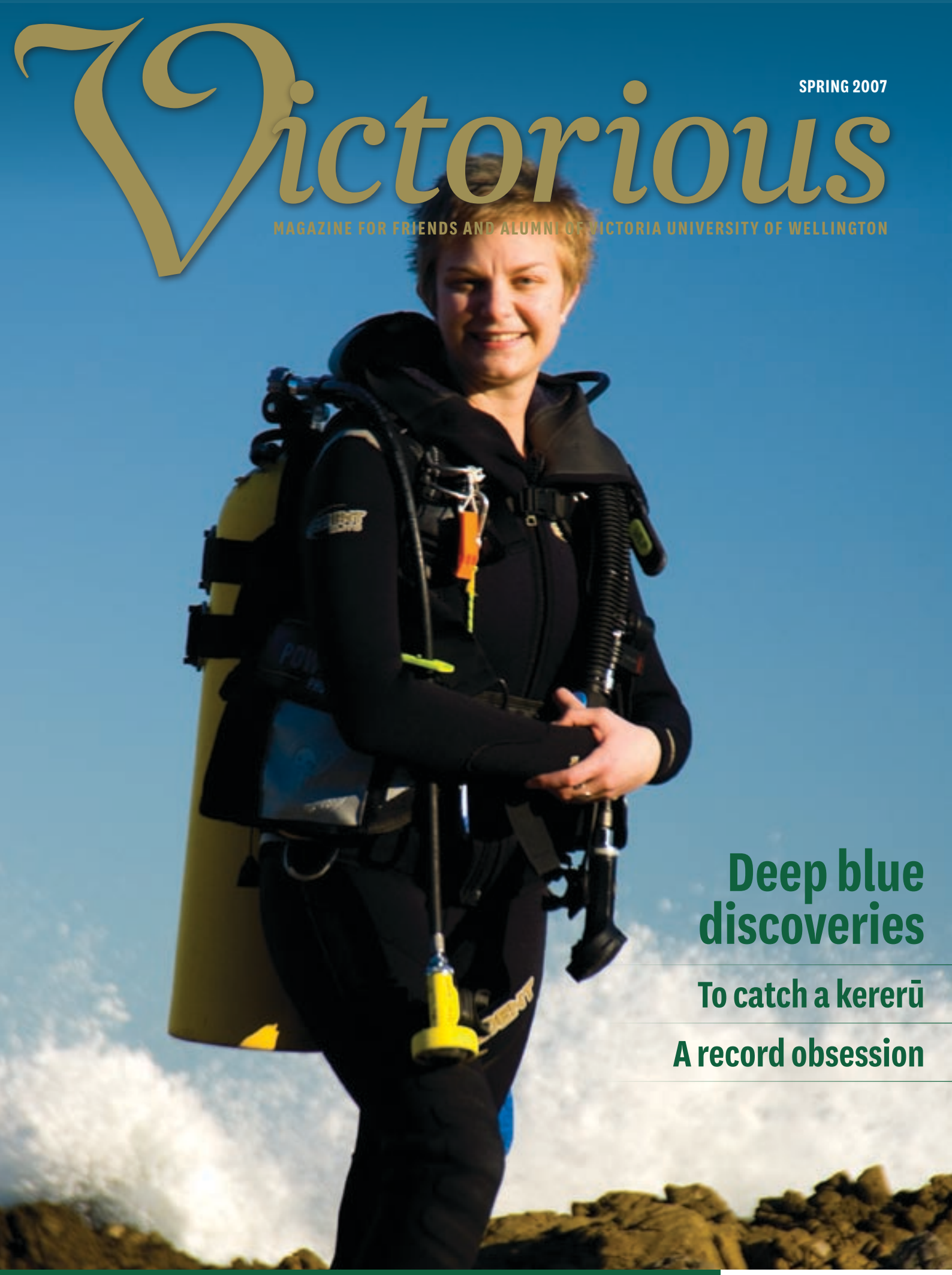

Deep blue discoveries

To catch a kererū

A record obsession

TE WHARE WĀNANGA O TE ŪPOKO O TE IKA A MĀUI
VICTORIA
UNIVERSITY OF WELLINGTON

Antarctica's tiniest lives under the microscope

A myriad of microscopic life exists beneath the seemingly inert surface of Antarctic sea ice – single-cellular creatures as sensitive to the effects of climate change as some of the continent's more familiar wildlife.

Dr Ken Ryan, a research fellow in the School of Biological Sciences, leads a team of researchers who are cataloguing the ecosystem within the ice.

The underside of Ross Sea sea ice, that which forms each winter to melt in warmer temperatures, is verdant with algae vital to the Antarctic food-chain. Within the ice itself, algae, bacteria and zooplankton thrive in the channels of salty water criss-crossing the crystals of ice. These too fill a valuable ecological niche.

Dr Ryan says changing patterns of microbial diversity in the Ross Sea are excellent indicators of climate change. The declining formation of sea ice in the region, alongside a dramatic loss of ice shelves on the Antarctic Peninsula, can be attributed to global warming.

"While geologists tell us about climate history, and atmospheric and climate scientists explain current and future climate trends, biologists explain the effects and significance of these changes," he says.

Back in Wellington, the researchers cultivate populations of organisms sampled from the ice to learn about their biological response to the simulated effects of global warming under laboratory conditions.

The environments for microbes existing above and below the sea ice are drastically different. On the surface a comparatively smaller biomass of microbes has adapted to strong light, low temperatures, and high salinity. Below the ice, a greater number of microbes live in low light and typical salt-water salinity. Rising temperatures result in the formation of thinner ice that lets in more light – impacting directly on the ecosystem beneath the ice.

Any change to the habitats of algae and zooplankton (krill), has a flow-on effect through the food-chain to the continent's largest mammals – seals and whales.

"There is a direct correlation between the number of penguin chicks that fledge into adulthood and the extent of sea ice formed the previous winter before it breaks up and melts in the Antarctic thaw," Dr Ryan says.

Since the first drilling project at Cape Evans in 2001, the project has grown to include collaborators from Australia, Norway, the United States and Brazil. The Victoria team – Dr Ryan, Dr Simon Davy, Dr Ronan O'Toole and a number of postgraduate students – has the support of Antarctica New Zealand. Their most recent funding of more than $463,000 came from a $4.5 million New Zealand Government fund to support International Polar Year research.

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Biology Master's students Daniel McNaughtan and Libby Liggins drilling sea ice in the Ross Sea region in the foreground of Mt Erebus.

From the Vice-Chancellor

The connections between Victoria and the city of Wellington have never been stronger. In fact in many ways Wellington is a university town, a notion conveying the strong senses of vibrancy, endeavour, intellectual and cultural diversity and, above all, excellence that we aspire to at the University.

This connectedness is borne out by our collaborations with, and links to, the Wellington community. The School of Music is a partnership with Massey University and the Wellington City Council, and will be housed at Ilott Green, named after Jack Ilott, a generous benefactor to the University and city. We work with Wellington-based Crown Research Institutes including Industrial Research Limited, the National Institute for Water and Atmospheric Research, Geological and Nuclear Sciences and the Institute of Environmental Science Research. We work with organisations as diverse as the Karori Wildlife Sanctuary, Weta Workshops and the State Services Commission – clear indications of our influence.

Importantly, we celebrate and share our successes with our community.

Our graduation ceremonies in May and December are for many students an academic pinnacle, and the graduation parade through the central city is a very public confirmation of their endeavour and achievement. Additionally, the University continues the tradition of awarding University Blues for sporting excellence, with many recipients representing not only Wellington, but New Zealand.

The University is also justifiably proud of its people and their achievements. The visibility of our research excellence is particularly important, and the standing of our people in the Wellington community and further afield cannot be underestimated. It is immensely gratifying when our people are approached by businesses, government, the community and media to give authoritative comment on areas of expertise.

We celebrate the success of our alumni through such vehicles as the Distinguished Alumni Awards, Hunter Fellowships and Honorary Doctorates. Their ongoing connectedness with Victoria after they have completed their study is a foundation stone underlying our continuing success.

Finally, it was with sadness that we marked the passing of Sir Roy McKenzie in early September. Sir Roy was a man of many talents, but will best be remembered for his philanthropic work, although he preferred to be known as a 'community volunteer'. His generous donation to Victoria allowed us to establish the Roy McKenzie Centre for the Study of Families, Te Pūtahi Rangahau Whanau, in 2003. In acknowledgement of Sir Roy's wonderful support over many years, Victoria awarded him an Honorary Doctorate in Commerce in 2004.

Professor Pat Walsh, Vice-Chancellor

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Cover Image: PhD student Wendy Popplewell on Wellington's south coast, one of the dive sites where she sources seaweeds (story p7)

Content

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Robots to the rescue

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The invention of a 'family' of search and rescue robots aims to reduce the time it takes to locate people trapped in rubble in the aftermath of an earthquake or bombing.

Dale Carnegie demonstrates the manoeuvrability of search and rescue robots developed in the Faculty of Engineering.

Unlike emergency workers called to precarious sites, the autonomous robots – organised in a hierarchy of 'grandmother', 'mother', and 'daughters' – are able to search for victims immediately after an event.

Led by Associate Professor Dale Carnegie, the project is a world-first from the Computer Systems Engineering Group in the Faculty of Engineering.

"This is an affordable system that will provide an exact list of places where a person is likely to be trapped, dramatically speeding up rescue times," he says.

{ This is an affordable system that will provide an exact list of places where a person is likely to be trapped, dramatically speeding up rescue times }

Sent to the edge of the disaster zone, the multi-terrain grandmother is the largest robot of the three. It acts as a platform to launch the more power-efficient mothers that clamber into the site and set up as base stations from which they launch up to 30 disposable daughters.

It is the daughters, Dale's invention, that make this system unique. Armed with microphones, heat sensors, carbon dioxide detectors and motion detectors, the daughters are agile enough to burrow and crawl into crevices. They send a 'found' signal to the mother, which then uses its own GPS system, along with information of the last-known position of the daughter, to give the grandmother a set of 'best guesses' for the location of trapped victims.

"Because they're disposable, the daughters can go further and deeper without the complication of not having enough power or the ability to make their way back."

At US$100 each, the daughters are part of a system that is significantly less expensive than current models. This would enable cities worldwide to have one on stand-by.

"The lowest component in other systems – the equivalent of the daughter in ours – cost up to US$80,000 which means that rescue teams would be reluctant to use them except in the most critical of circumstances."

Dale says the project, undertaken in collaboration with the Canterbury, Waikato and Auckland universities and the Manukau Institute of Technology, places New Zealand at the forefront of global mechatronics.

Heating up the climate debate

It is the 'hot' issue of the day, just as it will be tomorrow and for generations to come. But the climate change debate is in good hands when you consider the efforts of Professor Jonathan Boston, Deputy Director of Victoria's Institute of Policy Studies.

During 2007, at the request of departmental chief executives, the Institute hosted five roundtable discussions involving leaders from business, non-governmental organisations, research institutions and the public sector, focussing on the global policy architecture for climate change when the first commitment period under the Kyoto Protocol expires at the end of 2012. In particular, the sessions examined what kind of international agreement might be reached over the next few years for the post-2012 period and its likely impact on New Zealand's agriculture, energy, transport and forestry sectors.

The sessions also considered what kind of agreement New Zealand should press for and how these aims might be achieved.

"A key objective has been to enable the exchange of ideas, encourage debate and help inform New Zealand's negotiating position on climate change," Jonathan says.

"There are lots of difficult issues. For instance, should New Zealand take on another binding target for reducing emissions beyond 2012 and, if so, under what conditions? And how might it achieve this target?"

Jonathan has contributed significantly to public debate on climate change in recent years. Last year he helped organise an international conference on the subject, and co-edited *Confronting Climate Change: Critical Issues for New Zealand*. He is currently editing *Post 2012: Towards a New Global Climate Treaty*. This book will published prior to a major United Nations Climate Conference in December, and focuses on global policy post-Kyoto.

"People need to realise that the Kyoto Protocol was intended as a limited step in a long journey, a journey that will extend over many generations and require ongoing multilateral co-operation."

Jonathan believes the international community has the capacity to address climate change. "Even though the response thus far has fallen short of what is required, it's an issue that is getting more and more attention from world leaders and ultimately the pressure from business and the public for serious global action will be overwhelming."

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Left: Photo credit, Erick Green

Below: Monica with her radio tracking equipment

To catch a kererū

To catch a kererū you need a big net and plenty of patience.

The iconic wood pigeon – New Zealand's largest arboreal bird – is the focus of a major collaborative project, the research component of which is led by PhD student Monica Awasthy.

Aiming to boost declining kererū populations, the Kererū Discovery Project is a joint project between the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, Karori Wildlife Sanctuary, Wellington Zoo, Pukaha Mount Bruce, and Victoria's School of Biological Sciences.

Monica's PhD thesis will shed light on the birds' changing habitat amid increasing urbanisation, and fits into the relatively new field of urban ecology.

To trace the birds' movements, Monica first catches her subjects in a large soft net strung between trees before attaching a radio tracker to their tail feathers with dental floss and glue.

She is currently following ten tagged birds, each with its own radio frequency, in the greater Wellington region. All were caught in, and near, Otari-Wilton's Bush, and the team has also tagged two rehabilitated birds, released in the same spot where they were found injured in Otari-Wilton's Bush and Lowry Bay.

Monica says the ecology of animals in urban or suburban areas in New Zealand is largely unknown. The ecology of the kererū is especially important as it plays a crucial role in maintaining forest ecosystems – it is the only bird capable of eating and dispersing whole seeds of trees such as karaka, tawa, and taraire.

"We're using the kererū, which traditionally wouldn't be found in urban areas, to learn about their habitats. We're looking at their range, where they're nesting, and what they're eating."

Once common throughout New Zealand, the birds have been hit hard by more than a century of habitat destruction, the introduction of predators, and hunting. It is predicted that, in unprotected areas, the population could decline by 20 per cent every ten years. The Kererū Discovery Project and associated programmes aim to reverse this trend.

{ An urban environment that is designed for both nature and people will benefit everyone. }

Monica's research caught the eye of office supply company Corporate Express, who recently established a Doctoral Research Scholarship for research relating to current environmental issues. Monica was thrilled to be the inaugural recipient of the $25,000 scholarship, awarded on the basis that her research is expected to make a significant contribution to aid future conservation planning in general, and the kererū in particular.

Monica says it's great to be working in an area that is close to the hearts of many people. "I think it's really important to be doing something that everyone can get involved in. It's a very public project, and a great opportunity to educate the public in conservation issues."

Part of the education aspect has seen her visit local schools with Wellington Zoo educators to discuss conservation and sustainability. "As part of our school visits, we use radio tracking equipment to try and find a kererū if we think there's one around – and it's great when we can actually show them one."

Monica has been involved with birds for a number of years. After completing a BSc(Hons) from the University of Guelph in her native Ontario, Canada, she travelled internationally for three years as a technician on various bird projects. When she heard of a vacancy with the New Zealand project, she leapt at the chance to join the research team.

Monica's supervisor, Dr Wayne Linklater, says her work has important implications for urban planning.

"Where people used to only see introduced species in the city and suburbs, an increase in pest control and the planting of native trees means that native wildlife is coming back to these areas.

"An urban environment that is designed for both nature and people will benefit everyone."

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Unearthing the earliest tsunami

125,000 years ago a tsunami traveling at the speed of a 747 jet hit the Oamaru coastline near the mouth of the Shag River, flipping boulders like marbles in its wake. Evidence of this – New Zealand's oldest tsunami deposit from the last interglacial warm period – was confirmed in the new millennium when geologist Dr David Kennedy and postgraduate students took a closer look at a row of boulders 'stacked like dominoes'.

Taking a break from geological fieldwork are (left to right) Mark Dickson (NIWA), Sunayani Day, David Kennedy and MSc student Hamish McKoy.

Before a discovery can be confirmed, a certain amount of "geomorphic detective work" must be done, says David. In the case of the boulders, they had to eliminate other possibilities by which the boulders – incongruous to the coastline – came to rest. The comparative stability of the region suggested the boulders were deposited rather than raised by an earthquake. The possibility that the boulders had been moved by people as part of mining operations in proximity to the site was eliminated, as was the idea that the boulders were once part of a cave that later collapsed.

From the air, David identified four sites showing evidence of raised marine deposits that he later surveyed using electronic distance meters. With the assistance of postgraduate students he dated loess (wind-blown dirt) and sand using optical luminescence methods that date the point of an element's last exposure to light.

"The age of the loess packed around the boulders came very close to that of the sand, which indicated the boulders had not been moved there," David says.

He then applied established hydrodynamic formulae to calculate the energy required to move the boulders, and from there, calculated the height of the wave to be 2.7m. Tsunami and storm-surge are relatively common in New Zealand and a 2.7m high tsunami is feasible given the historical record along the coast.

"It wasn't a large event but it matches the historic record of other events. This one was likely to have been triggered by an earthquake on the South American coastline." He says the geological find in the archeologically-interesting area – home to the Moeraki boulders and fossilised moa bones – has applications to disaster planning. "Predictions can only be made if accurate historical records such as the New Zealand Tsunami Database can be built."

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The business of Māori

Some days change your life. For PhD student, biochemistry graduate and former marketer Philip Best it was a trip to the University's Te Herenga Waka Marae for a powhiri as part of the Māori 123 course.

At the time he was studying towards a postgraduate diploma in Māori business at the Victoria Management School, but within a year he was tutoring at the marae and had begun developing a particular interest in indigenous entrepreneurship and how Māori values and traditions are used by Māori to commercialise indigenous knowledge.

"Traditional Māori businesses are, among other things, based on family values, practices such as koha and the values of guardianship, hospitality and spirituality.

"These values are minimised in many western businesses which, while they may take into account issues such as ethics and the environment, are driven by the bottom line."

Philip is quick to point out that while all businesses need to be sustainable and profitable, the cultural aspects of business development make Māori entrepreneurship distinct.

"People start companies because of an opportunity, passion or ability they have and will often collaborate with people with similar views, backgrounds or complimentary skills.

"An increasing number of Māori entrepreneurs are using and developing traditional knowledge as the basis for their business practices."

He says determining exactly what traditional knowledge is can be complex, and people need to self-define.

"Traditions evolve, so we can't say that everything after Captain Cook's arrival in 1769 or the Treaty of Waitangi in 1840 are not traditional."

Philip's thesis looks at small and growing Māori companies rather than high profile Māori and iwi-based businesses that he says have already been well documented.

"I'd like the thesis to become a practical 'how to' document. I'm absolutely convinced of the value of using Māori traditions in entrepreneurship, and I hope there will be valuable insights for all businesses."

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The record collector

"There is a thread between all record collectors. One part nostalgia, one part a fun past-time, three parts music lover, and a grey area of strange obsession and hoarding behaviour that we try to ignore discussing."

Associate Professor Roy Shuker

These are the words of a record collector describing her subculture to popular music academic and author Associate Professor Roy Shuker. Like most of the women he interviewed she favours the term 'music lover' over 'record collector' in an attempt to distance herself from the obsessive-compulsive stereotype best defined in Nick Hornby's novel *High Fidelity*.

Roy says this type represents only a small number of contemporary record collectors.

"The older male collectors with a lot of esoteric knowledge about records come closest to the *High Fidelity* character, using their elite knowledge as a type of social capital."

The 80 people Roy interviewed were generally keen to talk about their activities and he has more than 400 pages of material to work through for his forthcoming book on record collecting as a social practice. This material is growing with regular updates from some of his chattier interviewees, but then Roy is a collector himself and so conversation flows.

A key question aimed at defining each collector asked if they would lend their records. Another fruitful line of enquiry – "can you remember the first record you bought?" – inspired articulate and lengthy replies.

"For many people that moment is a rite of passage of sorts, and the clarity of their recollections is perhaps an indication of their predilection for collecting, and for music."

He says collectors typically start in their adolescence, an age where people begin to fix their identities, conform to certain subcultures, and have more disposable income.

While impressive in their scope of musical interests, his interviewees were primarily collectors of blues and rock music, including its variants of rap, hip hop, reggae, heavy metal and indie/alternative music.

"A fundamental distinction emerged between the collector who 'loves music' and the one preoccupied with the size, rarity and monetary value of their collection."

Categories of collector include the 'accumulator' whose thousands of records require customised shelves and perhaps an extension to the spare bedroom. At the other end of the spectrum is the 'completist' who delights in their comparatively small collection relating to a certain label, genre or artist.

"Completists are an interesting lot, often in it for the thrill of the chase."

Then there is the connoisseur, those "careful to define their collection by taste, as buyers of the 'best', cutting-edge or obscure recordings."

The 78 – 1920s and '30s records made of brittle shellac – inspires enthusiasts of cultural preservation.

"For them the rarer the better so there's often a strange elitism that accompanies their collecting."

In an article published in the academic journal *Popular Music*, Roy included the anecdote of the 78 collector who walked into a warehouse stacked to the ceiling with 78s and asked "how much for the lot?"

A lecturer in the School of English, Film, Theatre and Media Studies, Roy has taught and researched popular music and cultural studies for almost 20 years. He currently teaches a course in popular music covering the international and New Zealand music industry, subcultures, fandom, textual and genre analysis and cultural politics.

His latest book will be the sixth to focus on popular music studies and besides defining the collector, will discuss cultural consumption, examine the nature and role of the music press and its infrastructure – specialised publications, sound museums and libraries, websites, interest groups and the paraphernalia of posters, cover-art and fanzines.

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A meeting of cultures

With so many different people thrown together, the workplace is a goldmine of diversity for those interested in social interactions.

Investigating communication in the workplace – Professor Janet Holmes (left) and Dr Meredith Marra.

The workplace has been a particularly rich resource for a team of Victoria researchers studying communication and the language of leadership in Māori and Pākehā organisations.

The School of Linguistics & Applied Language Studies established the Language in the Workplace Project in 1996 to take a closer look at verbal communication in the New Zealand workplace. More recently, the project has established links with the Victoria Management School's Centre for the Study of Leadership to compare workplace practice with management theories.

Awarded a Marsden grant last year, the project has since narrowed its focus to examine the ways in which leadership differs among Māori and Pākehā groups.

Research officer Dr Meredith Marra says the research team chose to unobtrusively observe and record interactions between workmates, rather than conduct large-scale surveys and interviews.

"We're interested in what people are actually doing – how they make decisions, delegate, criticise, and praise," Dr Marra says.

In the past 11 years the team has recorded approximately 1500 interactions from more than 500 participants in 22 workplaces.

This material and subsequent analysis has formed the basis of three books, six PhD theses, and more than 20 academic journal articles. Project director Professor Janet Holmes last year launched *Gendered Talk at Work*, a book exploring how women's and men's gender identities are integrated with their professional roles in everyday workplace communication.

Most recently, the team has identified a number of differences between Māori and Pākehā workplaces. "In predominantly Māori workplaces, Māori goals, values, and perspectives underlie workplace interactions. Often people will have more of a balance between personal and working relationships," says Meredith.

A Māori advisory group has also been brought on board for a wider perspective of the audio and video recordings. Meredith says this group frequently identifies aspects of communication that people accustomed to Pākehā-style proceedings might otherwise take for granted. "Often these are just little things, like the lack of formal opening of meetings. Where Pākehā usually launch into the agenda, Māori start with a karakia and are more explicit about formality at the meeting."

One of the major differences observed was the 'water-cooler tales' and anecdotes in Māori workplaces. Janet says that while stories are typical of all workplaces, and can reveal a lot about values and culture, in Māori workplaces they appear to have additional significance.

"Anecdotes, and especially self-deprecating and humorous stories, are often used to express uniquely Māori values in a Pākehā-dominated business world.

"They are a good way for organisational leaders to blend aspects of their personal, ethnic and professional identity in a comfortable and professional way," Janet says.

"People use stories in different ways at work. The mana of the bosses, for example, is apparent from their own stories, as well as those of others. Workplace stories skilfully weave a path between sensitivity to status and the highly regarded cultural value of whakaiti, or modesty."

Of the situation of Pākehā who work in predominantly Māori workplaces, Meredith says they tend not to be as marginalised as might be expected because they are usually committed to Māori goals and are willing to accept the cultural differences.

"They learn by experience, and in a very subtle way, learn what's acceptable and what's not."

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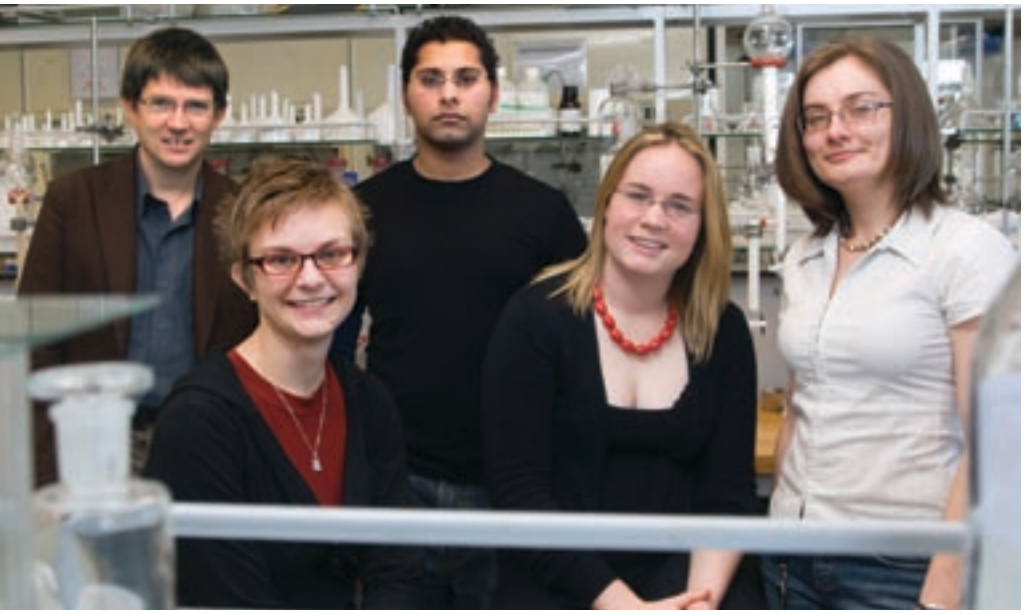
The Marine Natural Products team. From left, Peter Northcote, Wendy Popplewell, Jonathan Singh, Katie Dowle and Joanna Wojnar.



Deep blue discoveries

Weight-belts and wetsuits may seem incongruous in a chemistry laboratory, but for the Marine Natural Products team the diving equipment is as essential as the glassware and flasks of solution.

PhD student Wendy Popplewell is one of a team of four organic chemists under the supervision of Associate Professor Peter Northcote investigating the anti-cancer, anti-inflammatory and immuno-supressive potential of compounds they isolate from marine life. Unlike other lab stock, sea-sponges, nudibranchs and sea weeds can't be ordered from a catalogue, so Wendy dives for her own samples.

With an affinity for the ocean, her excursions to Wellington's south coast and to the warmer waters of Northland are an enjoyable part of her research. But sometimes, when the ocean is surging and it's chilly, she wishes another person in her team would get their diving licence. And she finds it difficult to switch off on recreational dives – on a recent dive in Australia she missed seeing a turtle glide by while "head-down, flippers-up" in a particularly interesting patch of seaweed.

Wendy studies red algae, a common plant well-studied earlier but which has since slipped off the radar. She is taking a contemporary look at the algae using powerful nuclear magnetic resonance spectroscopy to identify individual compounds and help determine their chemical structures. Once compounds are isolated they can be tested against human diseases as a way of discovering new and more effective treatments.

Seven years ago her supervisor Associate Professor Peter Northcote, with then PhD student Lyndon West, isolated a powerful anti-cancer compound from a sea-sponge native to the Pelorus Sound in Marlborough. The compound – peloruside A – has since been patented and is currently under development in association with the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center and a Dallas-based biopharmaceutical company.

The brightly-coloured skins of nudibranchs may contain compounds that kill cancer cells or restricts their growth without detrimental effect.

Peter says peloruside is similar in its action to Taxol, a cancer therapy agent that commands annual gross sales of more than $US2 billion. It is one of a handful of compounds being assessed as an anti-cancer agent as the pharmaceutical industry searches for a Taxol replacement with improved properties.

Most postgraduate students under Peter's supervision have worked at some stage on the peloruside project, awarded a $2.3 million grant from the Foundation for Research, Science and Technology. Wendy received funding from the Cancer Society for her research, as did fellow PhD student Joanna Wojnar who is focusing on the biological activity of toxic metabolites found in nudibranchs, or sea-slugs.

PhD student Wendy Popplewell on Wellington's south coast, one of the dive sites where she sources seaweeds.

The brightly-coloured skins of nudibranchs may contain compounds that kill cancer cells or restricts their growth without detrimental effect.

"Nudibranchs have very sophisticated chemical defences. They graze on highly-toxic sponges and then concentrate the toxic compounds in their own skin, for what we assume is a defensive purpose," Joanna says.

"The sponges are toxic enough to kill grazing animals, but the nudis are able to consume large quantities and sequester concentrated quantities. We can then extract the toxins from their skin to take a closer look."

There are more than 70 species of nudibranchs in New Zealand waters, mostly in the warmer northern regions, and Wendy emphasises that the diversity of the country's marine life cannot be taken for granted.

"We have extensive coastlines so there is a huge biodiversity of life different to that in tropical waters. There are also differences in the chemical components of the same species found in different regions. This leads to a greater diversity of chemistry and therefore more pharmaceutical potential."

Both Wendy and Joanna are close to completing their research and will leave Victoria to take up postdoctoral fellowships overseas. Close behind them however, are postgraduate students keen to pick up where they left off in the fight against human disease.

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FROM THE VICE-CHANCELLOR PROFESSOR PAT WALSH

Planning – more than just numbers

Victoria operates within a planning framework ranging from government agency reporting requirements to specific in-house planning and forecasting work.

Providing the basis for government funding, the University's Investment Plan also gives Victoria the opportunity to establish and articulate its distinctive strengths and capability.

Marking a three-year point in a ten-year planning cycle, the Investment Plan addresses what is needed to accommodate rapidly changing social, commercial and educational dynamics.

Victoria is using the development of the Investment Plan as an opportunity to establish what differentiates it from other universities. There has been a widespread consultation process to define the University's key and distinctive strengths, taking into consideration current and potential capability, history, aspirations and location, commitment to partnerships with key stakeholders, the Government's desire for an integrated but differential network of provision, and the University's current and future resource base.

A critical component of Victoria's special character is a strategy to develop a national and international distinction in science, while retaining an unyielding commitment to the traditional areas of excellence in humanities, law, commerce and social science.

Ten areas of interdisciplinary strength that will guide teaching, learning and research were identified after months of intensive consultation. This approach builds on the strategy linking the Faculties to facilitate new opportunities in areas of increasing relevance to the development of a knowledge economy. This is achieved through the provision of double and conjoint undergraduate degrees, and postgraduate courses combining science and architecture, engineering with building science and design, and science and commerce.

This focus on strengths will provide new ways to empower staff, identify the infrastructure and resources necessary to support strategic direction, and facilitate the University's ability to respond to national goals.

In the interests of depth of quality, Victoria will use these strengths as a lens to examine its current portfolio of provision, areas it will need to invest in, and how to best manage set levels of enrolments. This could result in the expansion of some programmes and the contraction of others, or amalgamation of provision at the postgraduate level with another university.

In this environment an enrolment plan will be necessary for 2009 – one that will focus on increasing postgraduate enrolments and carefully manage undergraduate provision. The University needs to do this in order to give effect to its strategic direction, stabilise size, address equity issues, keep its focus on continuous quality improvement, and ensure an appropriate flow through to postgraduate enrolments. This highlights a need for facilities that maintain excellent teaching and learning environments, and to do this Victoria is committed to significant capital investment over the next five years with a focus on the main Kelburn Campus.

{ Ten areas of interdisciplinary strength that will guide teaching, learning and research were identified after months of intensive consultation. }

Clearly, the Investment Plan is much more than a number crunching exercise.

A research-led University

Confirming the high standing of its research programmes and researchers, the latest Performance-Based Research Fund (PBRF) evaluation saw the University's average research quality score increase by 13 per cent from the first evaluation in 2003.

Victoria had the highest average score in six of the 33 subject areas in which we have academic staff, and was second in a further eight.

Psychology and Human Geography achieved very high quality scores and moved up to be ranked first nationally. The other four categories in which Victoria was ranked first were; Theatre and Dance, Film, Television and Multimedia; Biomedical (first equal); Sociology, Social Policy, Social Work, Criminology & Gender Studies; and Māori Knowledge & Development.

A key success indicator, the ratings allow the University to monitor its own progress and compare its standing in relation to New Zealand universities across a broad range of subject and research areas. The next PBRF evaluation takes place in 2012.

Uniting Pacific researchers in cyberspace

A web-based network with a data transfer speed 10,000 times that of a standard broadband connection is uniting postgraduate Pacific students nationwide.

The Pacific Postgraduate Talanoa Network was initiated and co-ordinated by Va'aomanū Pasifika, Victoria's Pacific and Samoan Studies unit. It builds on the Building Research Capacity in Social Sciences (BRCSS) group established with an $8m grant from the Tertiary Education Commission in 2003.

With the continued support of BRCSS and the Pacific Co-operation Foundation, the Talanoa Network is the first resource of its type for Pacific students.

The Network uses the super high-speed Kiwi Advanced Research and Education Network (KAREN) that enables users to connect with other sites in New Zealand for interactive video-conferencing and collaboration sessions using the Access Grid. Victoria has two Access Grid 'nodes' on the Kelburn Campus and a third will soon be in operation at the Railway West Wing.

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Associate Professor Peggy Fairbairn-Dunlop, Director of Va'aomanū Pasifika, says the Network is of immense value to Pacific researchers.

"The interactive sessions provide students with a place to both present their research and raise any issues. We have some very lively debates on issues relating to Pacific research methodologies.

"The Network also helps to break down feelings of isolation which many of our small but growing group of Pacific postgraduate students may feel, scattered as they are throughout New Zealand."

Peggy says the popularity of the Network has grown since its launch in June, with an average of 25-30 people attending the fortnightly online seminar sessions. Tertiary Education Commission and Ministry of Education staff are among the participants and the University of the South Pacific and the National University of Samoa are keen to link to the seminars.

With this success, the BRCSS Pacific team are now planning a national Pacific researchers' conference for 2008 where priority will be given to postgraduate presentations and issues.

Music to soothe student blues

He writes and performs songs such as "The 3 o'clock in the morning and I haven't started my essay blues" with undisputable empathy for his students, but Associate Professor Warwick Murray's music has a dual purpose.

The human geography lecturer incorporates music from around the globe to illustrate key themes taught in his classes. Popular with students, his style has also caught the attention of the wider academic community.

The recipient of a Victoria University Teaching Award in 2003, he was later awarded a Prime Minister's National Tertiary Teaching Excellence Award in 2006, and most recently won the New Zealand Geographical Society President's Award for Excellence in Teaching.

The musical aspect of his classes – which include on occasion singing to the students – has a multiple purpose, he says. "There's the obvious advantage that it's great for getting and holding attention, but it also lightens what can at times be a very sad and serious subject. It also allows me to express my feelings about the subject matter and I encourage students to do the same."

Apart from dealing with issues such as globalisation, human geography also looks at topics such as poverty, slavery, and famine. "We have to make sure it's not all doom and gloom and retains balance. At the start of every class in one paper I play music from the Third World to remind everyone that many beautiful things come out of such places."

Part of the School of Geography, Environment & Earth Sciences, Victoria's Human Geography Programme was ranked first in New Zealand in the 2006 Performance Based Research Funding assessment, and geography staff regularly publish in top academic journals worldwide. Warwick says it's attracting more and more students, and in 2003 he and Senior Lecturer Sara Kindon established a major in development studies – the first in Australasia at the time.

"I love being able to show that it is possible to make positive changes in poor countries. When people realise that they do have a lot of control over distant things, through what they consume and how they live their own lives, it's very empowering."

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Globalisation
in the world's longest country

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Ed Challies' PhD in human geography has taken him from the chill and hills of Wellington to the temperate provinces of Chile.

He is studying the globalisation of agriculture – mapping the viticulture, aquaculture, and horticulture industries and examining the socio-economic relationships between the people they employ.

He left for the South American country in August to spend a year talking to small-scale farmers and producers in rural areas, and to importers and exporters in metropolitan Santiago.

Ed's decision to study human geography stemmed from interests in development studies and in the process of globalisation. "It's such a complex concept with intricate or multifaceted or varied outcomes everywhere, and there's a real need for critical research to describe the impacts of globalisation on local communities."

The opportunity to travel has been a highlight of his time as a student at Victoria. He first travelled to Chile to study the dairy sector for his Master's thesis, and has also been to Sarawak, in Malaysian Borneo, as part of his Honours project.

"It's amazing to be able to experience the countries you read about and experience other cultures and social conventions.

"It's also been really helpful to be able to work with my supervisor's contacts. Victoria's very well-connected globally and within New Zealand which helps when it comes to doing research. Studying at Vic, it's easy to feel part of an international research and academic community."

Ed's supervisor, Associate Professor Warwick Murray, says one of the distinguishing features of human geography is that it allows researchers to combine fieldwork with the 'big ideas' presented in academic literature.

"This means geographers get to see the outcome of theoretical processes as they happen on the ground, or in the real world."

Georgetti scholarships for "the best brains"

Having made provision for his wife and three children, in 1943 William Georgetti instructed that the remainder of his estate be directed to a charitable trust by which, "the best brains available" would benefit.

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Since then the minds and drive of Victoria students have secured a significant number of the prestigious Georgetti Scholarships. This year PhD students Elizabeth Bisley, Greta Hawes, Adrian Jongenelen and Vanessa Schouten were awarded scholarships for their respective fields in design history, classics, engineering, and philosophy.

Administered by the New Zealand Vice Chancellors' Committee, the scholarships are awarded to postgraduate research judged to be important to the social, cultural and economic development of New Zealand.

Elizabeth was awarded $40,000 over two years to complete her Master's research into design history during the modern period. The Victoria alumna has taken up her postgraduate study at the Royal College of Art in London.

Greta was awarded $38,200 for one year to complete her PhD research in classical mythology, reception and Italian mediaeval literature, at the University of Bristol.

Adrian, awarded $30,000 over three years to complete his PhD project to develop a compact, portable, real-time range imaging system, will do so at Victoria in the newly-established Faculty of Engineering.

Vanessa was awarded $16,000 over three years to complete her PhD in moral and political philosophy, and is at Princeton University.

During his lifetime Mr Georgetti farmed an extensive property at Fernhill, near Hastings, and in keeping with his wishes the Trust still holds all 125.5 ha of Crissoge Farm. Currently leased as eight orchards, the farm provides a rental income that, with other investments, funds the scholarships.

From left, Lizzie Bisley, Vanessa Schouten, Greta Hawes. Absent: Adrian Jongenelen.

Making the world his stage

It is both a postgraduate student's dream and dilemma to be offered several valuable doctoral scholarships to choose between – a situation of Ryan Hartigan's own making.

Upon completion of his Master's degree from Victoria's School of English, Film, Theatre, and Media Studies, the theatre director and aspiring academic looked to the United States for further study.

With offers for places at three highly-regarded universities, he chose to take up a PhD in theatre historiography at the University of Minnesota with a US$200,000 Graduate School Fellowship package. The clinching factor was the American university's internationally-renowned programme in theatre historiography (the theory and methods of historical research) and critical theory.

Ryan says he's rapt at the thought of working alongside the likes of Michal Kobialka, an outstanding scholar of theatre historiography and the avant-garde.

"I'm also really looking forward to working with Margaret Werry, who is both a Victoria alumna and considered one of the finest emerging academics in the field."

Among a mass of funding awards and prizes, Ryan was the first New Zealander to win the Veronica Kelly Prize for Best Student Paper at the Australasian Association for Theatre, Drama and Performance Studies this year. He won the Chapman Tripp Theatre Award for New Director in 2004, and in the same year held an artistic residency at Massey University.

Head of School, Associate Professor Peter Whiteford, says the School is delighted with Ryan's success. "As well as being an outstanding

student, he's taught on a number of tertiary courses, has worked with youth and youth-at-risk, and is a highly competent improvisation educator and practictioner."

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Earth sciences go space age

A state-of-the-art geochemistry lab has put Victoria at the forefront of earth sciences research in New Zealand.

And unlike many laboratories of its calibre, it is used by undergraduate students who enjoy an early taste of blue-skies research alongside postgraduates and senior academics.

A huge asset for the School of Geography, Environment and Earth Sciences, the $2.7 million laboratory is more than proving its worth, says Associate Professor Joel Baker.

"Staff and students who previously would have had to go abroad to do front-line geochemistry research can now continue their research uninterrupted in a world-class facility."

One such study to benefit from the lab is a major climate change study underway in the University's Antarctic Research Centre in collaboration with the Institute of Geological and Nuclear Sciences.

Fully operational since February, the lab took two years to plan, fund and build. There is a wet chemistry room, a mass spectrometry room and an ultra-clean separation lab where anyone entering must don a full anti-contamination suit. Besides being used by the recipients of prestigious government funding, from the

Third-year undergraduate student Rebecca O'Donnell in the ultra-clean separation lab. She is working on a project dating the solar system's oldest solid material and volcanic rocks from asteroids that orbit the Sun between Mars and Jupiter.

Marsden rounds and from the Foundation of Research, Science and Technology, the lab is also extensively used by students.

Third-year students of a geochemistry course established in 2005 use the lab for an advanced undergraduate research project. Topics covered in the course include the analytical methods used to make chemical and isotopic measurements, formation of the elements in stars, cosmo-chemistry, formation of the Sun and planets, marine geochemistry, archaeology, environmental chemistry and medical geology.

A boost to Victoria's research capability, the geochemistry lab is an incentive for students to take up postgraduate study.

"New Zealand is a brilliant natural laboratory for the earth sciences – we have mountains, volcanoes and faultlines. Now the students can get out there, collect their samples and bring them back for examination and complete all their research with us. This lab has brought us into the 21st century."

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Who's new

Paul Meredith

In the role of Pou Hautu, Paul Meredith works with research managers to provide strategic oversight of Māori research and development.

It's a position that places him at the heart of university research, and he speaks highly of Māori researchers at Victoria. Paul, Ngāti Kaputuhi, Ngāti Maniapoto, is a graduate of Waikato University and at Victoria, will make the most of a supportive environment to complete his PhD on the political realm of early 20th century Māori.

At Waikato, Paul contributed to a major study of Māori customary law, and he has engaged in consultancies for the Office for Treaty Settlements, Crown Law and Crown Research Forestry and iwi, primarily researching and translating Māori historical material. His most recent work has seen him travelling the country to train iwi on aspects of the Resource Management Act.

Mark Ahn

The inaugural holder of the Chair in Entrepreneurship, Professor Mark Ahn works closely with scientists at Victoria, Crown Research Institutes and other research institutions in the Wellington region to help them commercialise technology-based innovations and realise their entrepreneurial potential.

Before joining Victoria, Mark was the founder and CEO of Hana Biosciences – a company he led from start-up to a Nasdaq listing – and he held executive positions at Genentech, Amgen and Bristol-Myers Squibb.

Mark serves on the Board of Directors of Transmolecular, RXi Pharmaceuticals, and Access Pharmaceuticals, and also for the Board of Governors for Chaminade University. His teaching and research interests include scientific entrepreneurship, management and innovation in biotechnology, strategy-based transformation, social responsibility and venture philanthropy.

The Chair is jointly held between the Faculties of Commerce and Administration, and Science.

Below left-right: Mark Ahn, Paul Meredith

The face of student journalism

Political science Honours student Nicola Kean was the sole New Zealander selected to attend the United Nations' Student Journalism Programme in September.

A feature writer for Victoria student magazine *Salient*, Nicola travelled to New York to cover the 60th annual Department of Public Information/Non-Governmental Organisation Conference.

The gritty conference theme of climate change placed the student journalists at the centre of what has become a topic of increasing focus for global media. The conference was attended by 2000 representatives of Non-Governmental Organisations from more than 80 countries and looked at the scientific evidence on climate change, including its consequences on indigenous peoples, water security, land use and the politics of energy.

Nicola says the conference gave her a lot to think about and was a fantastic opportunity to learn about the effects of climate change.

"It was really interesting to be able to see all the ways different nations respond to climate change, and the potential impact from a scientific point of view. It's really clear that climate change isn't just an environmental issue. The human costs will be massive, and I think the media can play a very important role in educating and informing people about the ways we can reduce those costs.

"It was both an inspiring and frightening experience."

→ 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 Foundation Executive Director, Tricia Walbridge. Email: Tricia.Walbridge@vuw.ac.nz Tel: +64-4-463 5109

Giving something back

Alan Eggers' lifelong interest in Antarctica was triggered more than 30 years ago when, as a young geology student, he first stepped onto the frozen continent.

Decades later the Victoria alumnus, professional geologist and leading figure in the Australian mining industry chose to donate $1 million to the University's Antarctic Research Centre. It was, in his words, an opportunity to give something back.

"I have really fond memories of my time at Victoria and I will never forget being part of the 1975 Antarctic expedition – that was a very special opportunity. I've kept up with the work of the Antarctic Research Centre. They continue to be world leaders in their field and I have wanted to contribute to their future success for a long time."

Alan's generous donation comes at a crucial time for the Centre and for Antarctic research in general. He says the research underway is vital to the understanding of how the planet's climate is changing in the face of global warming.

{ I wouldn't mind going back down there just to see how things have changed thirty years on. It would be a bit of nostalgia to see Scott Base. }

"The work carried out in Antarctica creates a relevant database for us all. Without it we are less informed and in order to start talking about moving forward, we need the most up-to-date information."

An advocate of nuclear power as an energy source for New Zealand, Alan says that renewable energy sources such as wind-farms will contribute to energy production in the future. He says there is, however, limited potential to expand these sources beyond their existing capacity.

The views he shares with United States President George Bush regarding nuclear power sets Alan at odds with the New Zealand Labour government. At the time of writing, one year from the General Elections, the party maintains its nuclear-free position and belief in the use of renewable energy.

Alan says New Zealand needs to encourage rational and informed debate on nuclear energy. "It is a clean, safe and competitive form of power and New Zealand should consider it an option, or at least start to talk about it."

Although Professor Peter Barrett, Director of the Antarctic Research Centre, does not share the New Zealand-born Australian businessman's controversial point of view, they both agree that more research is needed in Antarctica to determine the impact of accelerating climate change on the fragile region.

The two old friends may differ over the solutions to the problem, but they agree the issue is a pressing one.

Peter says that Alan's donation is a major boost for the Centre, and timely in view of increasing concerns about the consequences of global warming.

"At the time of Alan's offer we were considering further research opportunities aimed at understanding past and future Antarctic climate history, through drilling and increasing our modelling capability, and now we can get these underway."

To be invested through the Victoria University Foundation, the donation will boost the Centre's Endowed Development Fund to support young Antarctic scientists, the development of Antarctic drilling technology, and the Centre's scientific capability in the area of ice and climate modelling.

Does Alan ever see himself revisiting Antarctica?

"I wouldn't mind going back down there just to see how things have changed 30 years on. It would be a bit of nostalgia to see Scott Base. I've kept an eye on the Antarctic Research Centre over the years and have maintained an interest in what they are doing. It's a great pleasure to be able to give something back to the University, to support students and the Centre's valuable research."

Geology alumnus Alan Eggers in the field at the Mount Isa Project in Queensland when he was managing director of Australian mineral mining company Summit Resources Ltd.

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FROM THE VICTORIA UNIVERSITY FOUNDATION EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TRICIA WALBRIDGE

The year so far has seen two significant developments that impact positively on the Foundation.

In May the Government had very welcome news for those keen to support their favourite charities with the announcement that, from April 2008, the donation rebate threshold of $1890 on charitable giving would be removed.

This means donors will be entitled to claim a 33.3 per cent tax rebate up to their annual net income for qualifying donations. It is tremendous news for both the Foundation and New Zealand's charitable sector that has for many years campaigned to see the limit removed. It places New Zealand alongside leading countries in terms of tax incentives for donors.

We very much hope that our alumni will respond to this incentive by supporting the staff and students of Victoria University, in a field of their own interest.

The Foundation has also been approved for registration with the new Charities Commission – a development that sees the Foundation keep its charitable tax-free status, and ensures that donors will continue to be eligible for the charitable gift taxation rebate outlined above.

Established by the Government to monitor New Zealand charitable organisations, the Commission will also provide support, guidance and education to the sector on good governance and management. Registration is not automatic – the Commission applies a legal test for charitable purpose to every application.

Supporting students

A grant from the Trinity Newman Foundation has enabled the production of a DVD to help secondary school pupils with disabilities overcome perceived barriers to tertiary education.

Produced by the University's Disability Support Services team, the DVD features interviews with staff and students and footage highlighting the different services and support available on campus to students with impairments. It also includes general footage of Victoria to give potential students a glimpse of life on campus and in classes.

The Trinity Newman Foundation has generously supported a wide range of programmes and facilities for Victoria students for many years. These include the Trinity Newman PASS (Peer Associated Study Sessions) Mentoring Programme, the Trinity Newman Cyber Lounges and Cyber Common Rooms on the Kelburn and Pipitea campuses, a mentoring programme for first-year students, and a student welfare co-ordinator based at Weir House, one of Victoria's halls of residence.

More information about Disability Support Services at Victoria can be found at: www.vuw.ac.nz/st_services/disability

London calling

Ellen Deverall had a fair idea of what to expect when she left Victoria for the Royal Academy of Music in London – she had two friends already studying there.

They are, as is she, graduates of the New Zealand School of Music – a partnership between Victoria and Massey universities that combines more than 60 years' experience in the fields of performance, composition and historical research.

A talented clarinettist, Ellen graduated with first-class Honours last year and went on to win the Patricia Pratt Scholarship in Musical Performance. The $25,000 scholarship was established in 1998 by Annette Campbell-White in memory of her mother. Held by the Kia Ora Foundation, the scholarships ensure outstanding New Zealand performers further their musical development at an international conservatorium.

One of the world's most prestigious music institutions, the Royal Academy is a second home to students from more than 50 countries. Ellen is majoring in clarinet under the tuition of Angela Malsbury – principal clarinettist with the London Mozart Players – and at the completion of her postgraduate diploma intends to complete her Master's degree.

Ellen spent a month in London last year, as a recipient of a Royal Overseas Leagues scholarship, and fell in love with the vibrant city.

"There's so much to do there, with multiple concerts, operas and ballets showing at any one time. This time I get to be part of it all, as a player with the Academy orchestra," she says.

An A-plus student, Ellen has been a principal clarinettist with the New Zealand Youth Orchestra and a soloist in the Wellington Chamber Orchestra. Among many achievements, she won the Rotary Club of Wellington Music Scholarship in 2005, and last year received an Honours scholarship from the New Zealand School of Music.

Capping a kiwi icon

Humorist, writer and actor John Clarke – best known in New Zealand for bringing laconic farmer Fred Dagg to worldwide attention – received an Honorary Doctorate of Literature in Melbourne in June.

John's opening quip, "Chancellor, Vice-Chancellor, distinguished guests and the riff raff that came with me," set the tone of an acceptance speech interlacing anecdotes of time spent studying towards a Victoria degree he never completed, with expressions of respect for his classmates and friends he made at university.

He credits the influence of these people for sparking his creativity.

"There was a great deal of talk in those days, largely in the cafeteria, but anywhere would do. And we didn't talk in order to express what we thought. We talked in order to find out what we thought. The ideas and the slightly surreal perspective that emerged from all of that, and the humour, quickly became the major which I studied at Victoria."

In the capping revue *Extravaganza*, John enjoyed his first taste of performance and with Peter Graham ended up writing the show "largely because the people who were writing it ran away and we didn't have the brains to follow them."

A review in the student newspaper *Salient* described the show as "the torture and assassination of an old *Goon Show* script by the inmates of the University under the direction of nobody in particular."

Nonetheless, in 1970 John was back in the revue team and that year made his first public appearance as Fred Dagg.

On other influences, he says "Two teachers who taught me English at Victoria, Judith Dale and Reg Tye, went out of their way when I was quite young to encourage me to do more or less to do what I have done. It would get me out of their tutorials and it turned out to be quite smart.

"An obvious thing to say about university is that it is very exhilarating to meet the most intelligent and talented people in your generation. And my time there wasn't only social...the subjects I studied were quite varied, but let's not undervalue them. All through Fred Dagg and everything else I have ever done are laced bits of non-fiction and structure that resonate with an audience and actually help me understand what I'm talking about and I've always been very grateful I absorbed these things while I was having the time of my life. I loved every minute of it. I was extremely lucky to be there and I thank the University and I thank you all."

Humorist, writer and actor John Clarke

Alumni and friends in China

More than 60 alumni and friends of Victoria attended a reunion in Hong Kong in August.

Held at the residence of the New Zealand Consul-General and alumnus Julian Ludbrook, the event was one of three functions in Hong Kong, Shanghai and Beijing hosted by Deputy Vice-Chancellor Professor David Mackay.

Alumni and friends in China

Many of the group were graduates and current students of the University's international MBA programme taught in conjunction with the Asia-Pacific Institute of Business at the Chinese University of Hong Kong.

Alumni Relations Manager Matthew Reweti-Gould says there is a strong base of professional alumni in Hong Kong, as in Shanghai where the following night a function was held for an enthusiastic group of graduates from 2000-2005.

Hosted by His Excellency Tony Browne, New Zealand Ambassador, alumni in Beijing were joined by His Excellency Mahmoud Allam, Egyptian Ambassador, who studied law at Victoria throughout his New Zealand posting. Several of the 35 alumni at the Beijing function work for diplomatic agencies, and others are involved in preparatory work for the 2008 Olympic Games.

50 years of white Christmasses

On 30 December 1957, two third-year geology students stepped off the *H.M.N.Z.S. Endeavour* equipped with World War II field gear and hitched a helicopter ride to the unexplored McMurdo Dry Valleys in Antarctica.

Their mapping and reporting expedition formed the basis for the annual Victoria University Antarctic Expeditions that continue to this day in the summer season (October to February).

In June this year, those pioneering students – Peter Webb and Barrie McKelvey – joined members of the most recent expedition to share their stories of life on the ice at a dinner celebrating the 50th anniversary of the expeditions.

More than 250 Victoria staff and students have shared the excitement and satisfaction of discovering and understanding a remarkable part of the planet, and the event reunited people from Australasia, the United States and Canada.

Colin Bull, who led the first official expedition in 1958, says the early journeys paved the way for the quality, high-tech research that is now underway at Victoria.

Over the years, the nature of exploration has changed as the region has become increasingly well-known, and much of the research involves sampling otherwise inaccessible records by drilling for core-samples, on ice, on land and offshore.

Victoria is closely involved in the international ANDRILL project, that seeks to obtain more detail on past Antarctic climate from drill cores in the McMurdo region. The project represents a major technological challenge, with one of the sites in water deeper than 800m, and the other sites on floating ice approximately 100m thick.

Undergraduate students have the opportunity to draw on the Antarctic experience of staff in a course covering early exploration, climate change, tourism and environmental management.

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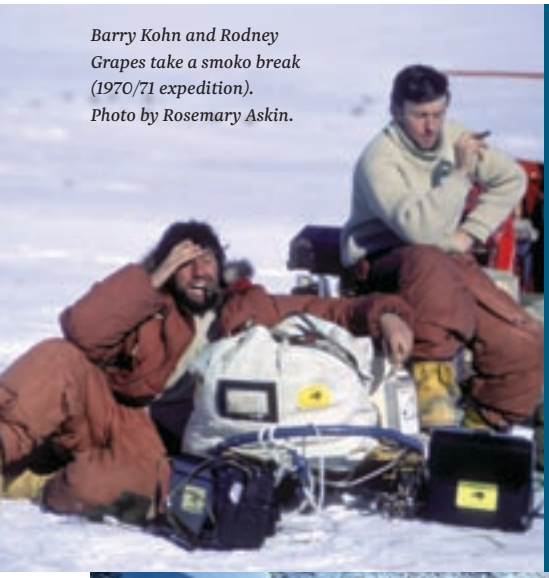

Barry Kohn and Rodney Grapes take a smoko break (1970/71 expedition). Photo by Rosemary Askin.

Antarctic Research Centre manager Tamsin Falconer is archiving slides, photographs and memorabilia contributed by people at the reunion and a small sample of these are reproduced here. They illustrate the spirit of the expeditions, and the high jinks of researchers enjoying a little downtime during the Christmas and New Year holiday season.

Negotiating sea-ice by toboggan (1968/69). Photo by Barry Kohn.

Distinguished Alumni Awards 2007

Janice Campbell

Janice Campbell (BA 1962, MA (Hons) 1965) was Principal of the highly regarded Wellington East Girls' College for more than 25 years. She secured a Historic Places classification for the College's main building, and was responsible for landscaping the grounds and successfully securing funding for a sports centre. A former chair of the New Zealand Secondary Principals' Council, Janice has been an active participant in the education debate, and in 2000 she received an “Absolutely Positively Wellingtonian Award” from the Wellington City Council. She is a recipient of the Queen's Service Order and is a Justice of the Peace.

Dr Robin Congreve

Dr Robin Congreve (LLB 1966, LLM(Hons) 1968) is a highly regarded lawyer and an advocate and patron of contemporary New Zealand art. He has been a senior lecturer in law, a partner at Russell McVeagh specialising in tax and commercial law, and has served on the boards of numerous private and public companies. He has been an associate of Auckland Art Gallery for two decades, and he and his wife Erika are members of the Museum of Modern Art and Tate Modern International Councils. He is also a founding benefactor of the University's Adam Art Gallery.

Theresa Gattung

Theresa Gattung (LLB 1987) was Telecom New Zealand's Chief Executive Officer from 1999 until June this year. Appointed as General Marketing Manager in 1994, she led Telecom through world-changing technological development to positions of market leadership. In 2006 *Fortune* magazine ranked her 23rd among the "50 Most Powerful Women in International Business". The same year she was placed at number 50 in *Forbes* magazine's "Most Powerful Women in the World" list.

Dr Harry Keys

Dr Harry Keys (BSc 1971, MSc 1973, PhD 1981) is a scientist with the Department of Conservation. He is responsible for volcano hazard management for Mt Ruapehu – the New Zealand mainland's most active volcano – in Tongariro National Park. In March this year he led a large-scale emergency operation in the region when a lahar breached the volcano's Crater Lake. The following day he led a team who assessed the crater's condition. As a member of the Alpine Cliff Rescue team, he was recruited to assist with the recovery of victims of the Erebus air crash in 1979, for which the team received a New Zealand Special Service medal.

Bernice Mene

Bernice Mene (BA 1998) is best known for her decade-long netball career, as the Silver Ferns captain in 1997, 2000, and 2001. She represented the team through the Fisher & Paykel Cup, two Fisher & Paykel series, and the Tri-Nations series. Since retiring from international netball in 2001, Bernice has involved herself in a range of projects, including sports writing and athlete career education work for the New Zealand Academy of Sport. She is a "Mission-On Lifestyle Ambassador" for Sport and Recreation New Zealand, a position that promotes healthy eating and activity in schools. In 2002 she was made a Member of the New Zealand Order of Merit for her sporting achievements.

Ross Mountain

Ross Mountain (BA 1969) is the Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Ross has had more than 25 years' experience in the fields of economic and social development, and in humanitarian affairs. He has co-ordinated United Nations aid programmes in the South Pacific, Lebanon, Liberia, Afghanistan, the Eastern Carribean, and Haiti. From 1998 to 2003 he served as the Assistant Emergency Relief Co-ordinator and Director of the Geneva Office of the Office for the Co-ordination of Humanitarian Affairs. In December 2003, he was appointed Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Iraq.

Happy birthday Weir House

A home away from home for first-year students since 1933, Weir House celebrates its 75th anniversary in 2008.

Former residents and alumni who have connections to the historic Hall of Residence are encouraged to update their contact details with the Alumni Relations Office so that they may be invited to attend anniversary activities.

Please contact Jane Fulcher, a Weir House warden for 17 years at: nzfulchers@gmail.com or email the main office at alumni@victoria.ac.nz

Warmth in the wilderness

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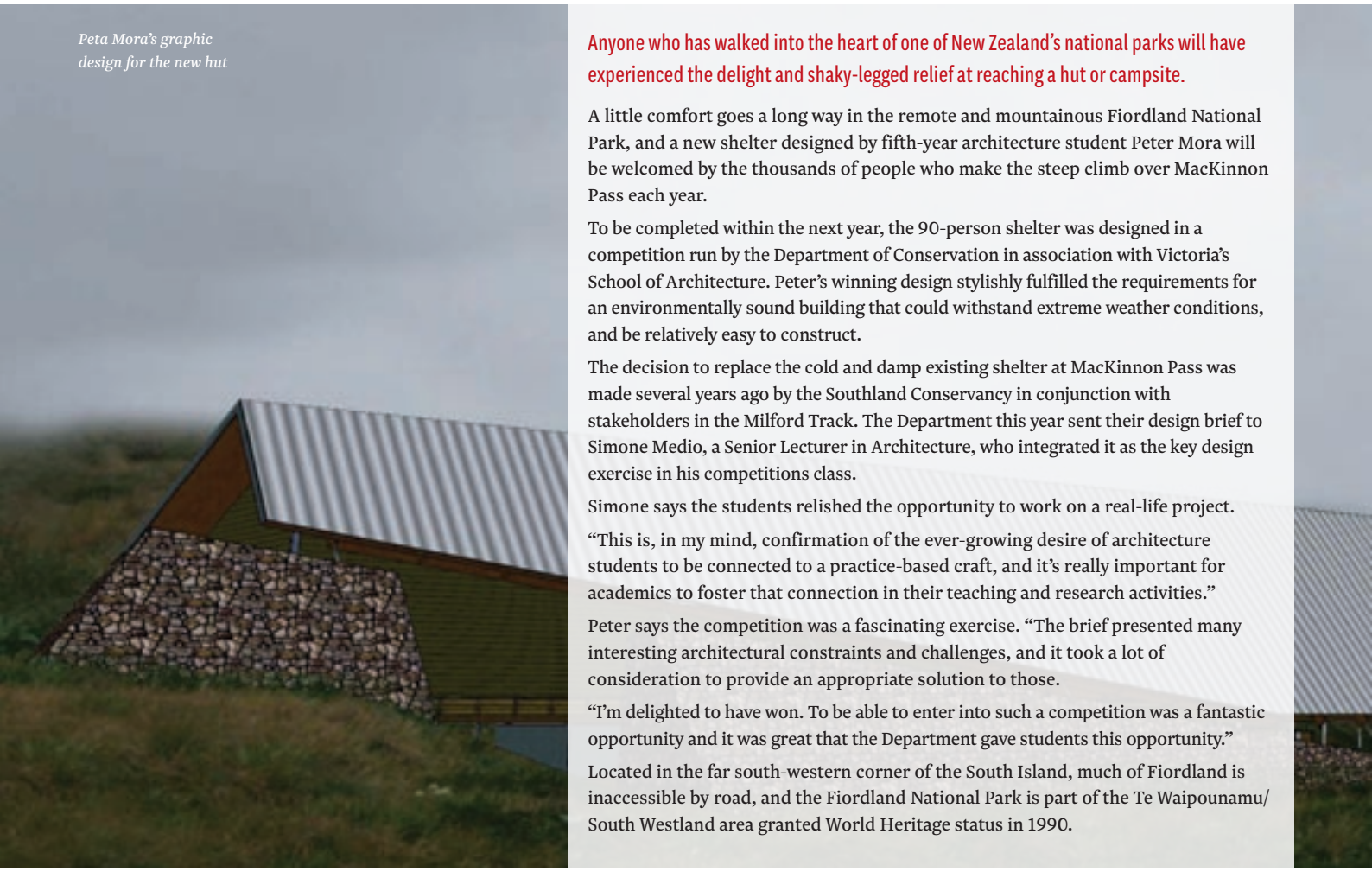

Peta Mora's graphic design for the new hut

Anyone who has walked into the heart of one of New Zealand's national parks will have experienced the delight and shaky-legged relief at reaching a hut or campsite.

A little comfort goes a long way in the remote and mountainous Fiordland National Park, and a new shelter designed by fifth-year architecture student Peter Mora will be welcomed by the thousands of people who make the steep climb over MacKinnon Pass each year.

To be completed within the next year, the 90-person shelter was designed in a competition run by the Department of Conservation in association with Victoria's School of Architecture. Peter's winning design stylishly fulfilled the requirements for an environmentally sound building that could withstand extreme weather conditions, and be relatively easy to construct.

The decision to replace the cold and damp existing shelter at MacKinnon Pass was made several years ago by the Southland Conservancy in conjunction with stakeholders in the Milford Track. The Department this year sent their design brief to Simone Medio, a Senior Lecturer in Architecture, who integrated it as the key design exercise in his competitions class.

Simone says the students relished the opportunity to work on a real-life project.

"This is, in my mind, confirmation of the ever-growing desire of architecture students to be connected to a practice-based craft, and it's really important for academics to foster that connection in their teaching and research activities."

Peter says the competition was a fascinating exercise. "The brief presented many interesting architectural constraints and challenges, and it took a lot of consideration to provide an appropriate solution to those.

"I'm delighted to have won. To be able to enter into such a competition was a fantastic opportunity and it was great that the Department gave students this opportunity."

Located in the far south-western corner of the South Island, much of Fiordland is inaccessible by road, and the Fiordland National Park is part of the Te Waipounamu/South Westland area granted World Heritage status in 1990.

Nurturing the words of young poets

Chloë Nannestad made the most of an after-school stint in detention to pen "Mosaic" – a poem judged the best in the New Zealand Post National Schools Poetry Award this year.

Chloë, a year 12 pupil at Epsom Girls' Grammar in Auckland, was named the overall winner of the competition run by Victoria's International Institute of Modern Letters.

Along with $500 prize money for herself and $500 for her school library, Chloë took home a literary prize package that included an iPod loaded with New Zealand poetry, book tokens, memberships to the New Zealand Society of Authors and the New Zealand Book Council, and subscriptions to the literary journals *Sport* and *Landfall*.

Hutt Valley High pupil Shannyn Boyd won the recording prize for "The Pact" – a poem with a lyrical content that caught the eye of The Black Seeds musician Barnaby Weir who then put the piece to music. Shannyn and Barnaby's song has since been distributed to radio stations and is available as a free download on iTunes and Digirama websites. A video of "The Pact", made by Rob Appierdo, can be viewed on the YouTube website.

Shannyn and Chloë joined the other eight finalists for a master-class with poets James Brown, Dora Malech, Andrew Johnston and Professor Bill Manhire, Director of the Institute. Afterwards they enjoyed a performance of *The Cape*, the latest play by Victoria creative writing graduate Vivienne Plumb.

Bill says it's exciting to see the range of literary styles among the hundreds of poems submitted by young writers. "This competition is going from strength to strength – and that means more and more young New Zealanders are taking pleasure in words and writing, which is brilliant to see."

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Chloë (left) Nannestad and Shannyn Boyd.

The nine runners-up also received prize money, book tokens, memberships to the New Zealand Book Council, and a subscription to *Sport*.

This is the first year that New Zealand Post has been the Award's major sponsor with funding provided through the Victoria University Foundation.

Hunting down history

The Faculty of Law is on a mission to find the lost, hidden and forgotten documents that are part of New Zealand's legal heritage.

In a major project funded by the New Zealand Law Foundation, Victoria researchers are appealing to people to help in their hunt for materials that will fill the gaps in the nation's legal history.

Dr Shaunnagh Dorsett of the Faculty of Law says there is a lack of archival material documenting legal cases in the period 1841-1883.

"This time represents early legal history and the information that exists now is patchy."

The researchers – Shaunnagh, Associate Professor Richard Boast and Associate Professor Geoff McLay – are joined by Mark Hickford and Damen Ward from the Crown Law Office.

Each team member contributes a different area of expertise to the project with the common intention to uncover, preserve and make available their findings. Damen says the first stage of the project will be to trawl for material.

"Until we start looking, we don't know what we will discover. But we are keen to examine manuscripts, judges' notebooks and letters – some of which will be literally turning to dust in boxes."

Once gathered the material will be evaluated and collated with the assistance of a reference group of leading legal minds. Eventually the information will be made public in an online database, a resource Geoff says will be of great value to people studying early New Zealand cases, and legal history in general.

"We hope to learn more about the origins of our legal system and how the courts functioned in the early years of the colony. It will show the depth and breadth of New Zealand law."

Richard is keen to see Victoria law students involved as well. "This will be a fantastic resource for research, a whole new body of material for us to study."

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Blowing the dust from New Zealand's legal history. From left, Richard Boast, Shaunnagh Dorsett, Geoff McLay and Damen Ward.

A river of fire in Rome

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The flames of 3000 candles illuminated Rome's Tiber River in an installation designed for the city's June summer solstice celebrations by Associate Professor Daniel Brown.

With New Yorker Kristin Jones and the help of 300 international students, Daniel floated a chain of 1000 candles down the centre of the river, and displayed 2000 more on the river's banks.

Intensifying the beauty of the installation, the student volunteers fought the drag of a swift midsummer current to pull the half-kilometre chain of flames in a serpentine motion.

To mark the longest day of the year, the *Tevereterno (Eternal Tiber)* installation blazed from sunset to midnight to the accompaniment of contemporary percussion compositions and electro-acoustic sounds.

Daniel says the snaking river of fire was a reference to the Tiber River, often referred to in Italian as 'the blonde serpent'.

"It also symbolically extends the light on the longest day of the year until after the hour of midnight."

Besides the logistical difficulties of a low water level and fast current, the act of lighting 3000 candles – the same style of candle used in ancient Rome – required careful planning.

"The wicks are quite thick and once lit they are virtually impossible to extinguish. Lighting each one with a typical lighter can take up to 15 minutes, so we were lucky to have the assistance of the water police and fire department. They donated boats and expertise to help light the candles using special torches once they were positioned in the river, and they were even more excited about the project than we were."

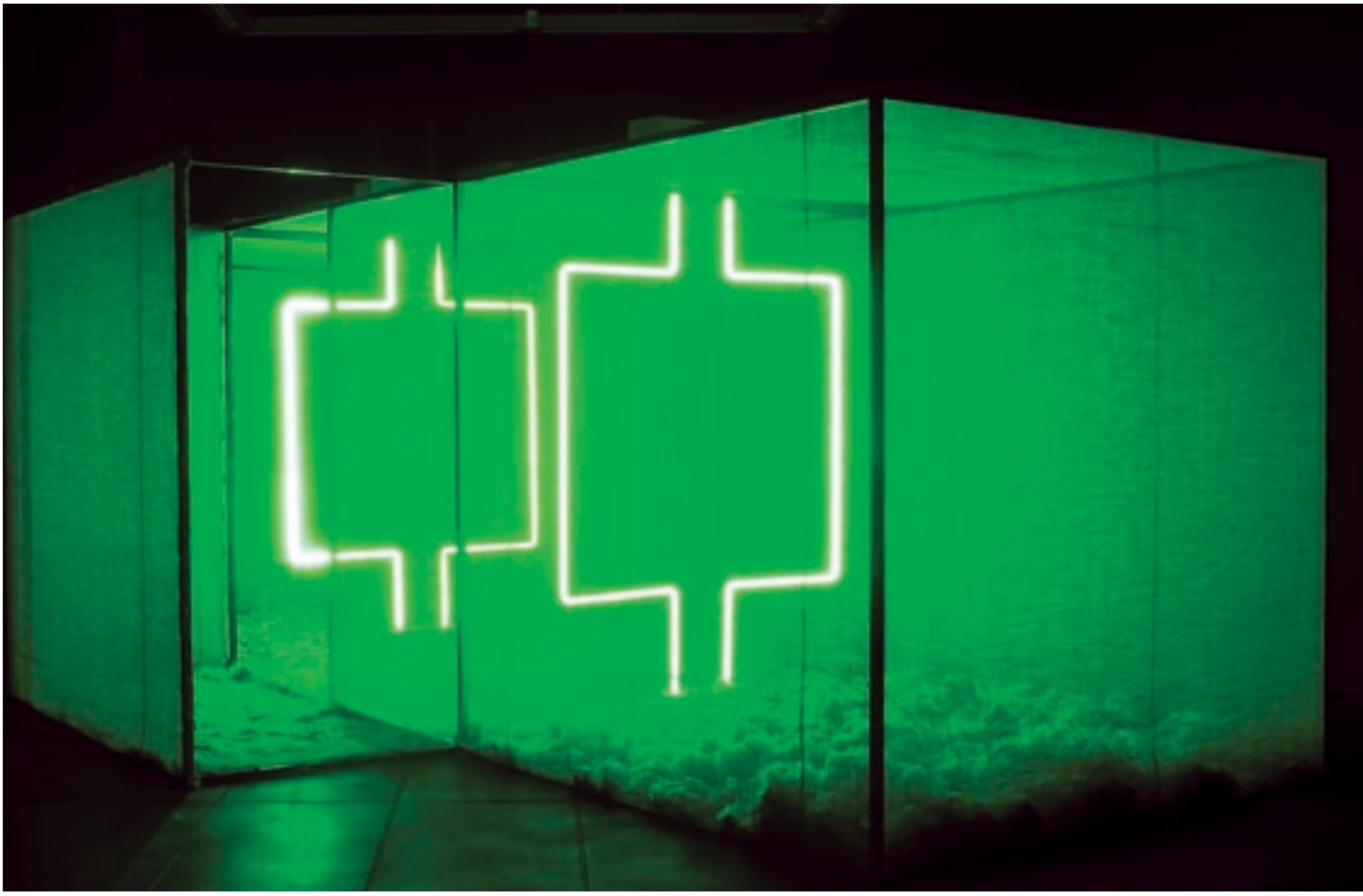
The annual event draws thousands of spectators and visitors to Rome's historical centre on the night of the summer solstice. At last year's *Tevereterno*, Daniel and fellow Faculty of Architecture and Design lecturer Erika Kruger projected digital animations onto the 12m high walls flanking the river with the assistance of five Victoria students.

INTERNATIONAL LANGUAGES WEEK To celebrate International Languages Week in August Professor Rob Rabel, Pro Vice-Chancellor (International), hosted a reception for the University's key stakeholders in language teaching and research. Foreign embassy staff and secondary school teachers and principals met with academic staff members who teach modern and classical languages. Professor Rabel says teaching and research activities centred around foreign languages and cultures are critical to the University's promotion of international engagement and understanding.

VICTORIA OPEN DAY In the photo Dr Diana Burton shows secondary school pupils a piece from the University's collection of Greek and Roman artefacts housed in the Classics Museum. More than 3000 pupils and teachers sampled university life on campus for the open day in August. Prospective students had their pick of 65 displays and information sessions, and made the most of their time on campus to discuss their study options with staff and current students. They toured the Halls of Residence, and enjoyed competitions, a lunchtime barbecue and performance by jazz-rock band Odessa. The Classics Museum provides free tours to school groups on request.

MEETING A FEMINIST ICON Former Black Panther Party associate Professor Angela Davis (right) visited New Zealand on a speaking tour supported by the University's Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences. Currently Professor of History of Consciousness at the University of California, the African-American philosopher has several connections to Victoria. She was Dr Teresia Teaiwa's PhD adviser from 1991-1994 and Teresia, a Senior Lecturer in Pacific Studies, was awarded a University of California graduate fellowship to work with her during this time. Professor Davis is a significant role model for young women worldwide, and was an inspiration for the founding of the Polynesian Panthers Movement in Auckland in 1971.

FOR THE LOVE OF BUGS Visitors to the Otari-Wilton's Bush Reserve open day in August took a closer look at some of the insects in the area during a demonstration by entomology PhD student Rudi Schnitzler. Rudi is studying the diversity of parasite species in fragmented forest remnants in urban habitats, and the impact of fragmentation on parasite communities with a focus on the kawakawa moth. The largest area of original native forest in Wellington, the Otari-Wilton's Bush Reserve is a unique plant sanctuary, and as such, is home to abundant insect and bird life. Rudi honed his public speaking skills in the weekly 'Bug Club' meetings for staff and students in the School of Biological Sciences.



Primary products

Jim Allen's ground-breaking 1969 installation *New Zealand Environment No 5* is best experienced in three dimensions.

Visitors to the Adam Art Gallery this year were invited to step into the eerie neon glow of steel and hessian cubes, fragrant with a thick floor of fleece and wood chips through which strands of barbed wire gleamed.

The artwork was one from five leading artists represented in *Primary Products*, an exhibition of sculptural installations and photographs from the 1950s and today.

Jim Allen, John Johns, Paratene Matchitt, Maddie Leach and Fiona Amundsen all focused on New Zealand's forestry industry or made use of exotic timber in their work.

Gallery Director Christina Barton says the show teased out new connections between New Zealand's emergence as a modern industrial nation and the history of art that accompanies this.

The rarely-seen photographs by John Johns, the New Zealand Forest Service's official photographer from 1951-1984, were shown alongside Fiona Amundsen's new photographs documenting the timber towns of Murupara, Kawerau and Rotorua in the central North Island.

Christina says she was especially privileged to host Paratene Matchitt's *Te Wepu*, a 22m sculpture first presented alongside the famous *Te Māori* exhibition on its return to New Zealand in 1986.

Maddie Leach's installation, *One Shining Gum*, traced the journey of a single tree from Wellington to Santiago, exposing New Zealand and Chile as rivals in the forestry trade and illustrating the barriers that still exist to global trade.

The Adam Art Gallery/Te Pataka Toi is a purpose-built public gallery based at the University's Kelburn Campus. Details of upcoming exhibitions can be read at: www.victoria.ac.nz/adamartgal.

How will future generations remember you?

For some of New Zealand's best and brightest, the only thing that stands in the way of their dreams is the lack of funds to make them real. By making a bequest to Victoria University, you can help to open those doors and allow these talented students to really excel.

You can choose to create a scholarship in a subject of your choice, direct it towards research or another specific project, or simply leave a gift to be shared in the future. Whichever you choose, it is a legacy that will be remembered forever.

If you'd like to know more about how to make a bequest to Victoria University, contact our Executive Director, Tricia Walbridge in confidence on +64 4 463 5109, via email at vuw-foundation@vuw.ac.nz or by mail at Victoria University Foundation, PO Box 600, Wellington, New Zealand.

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