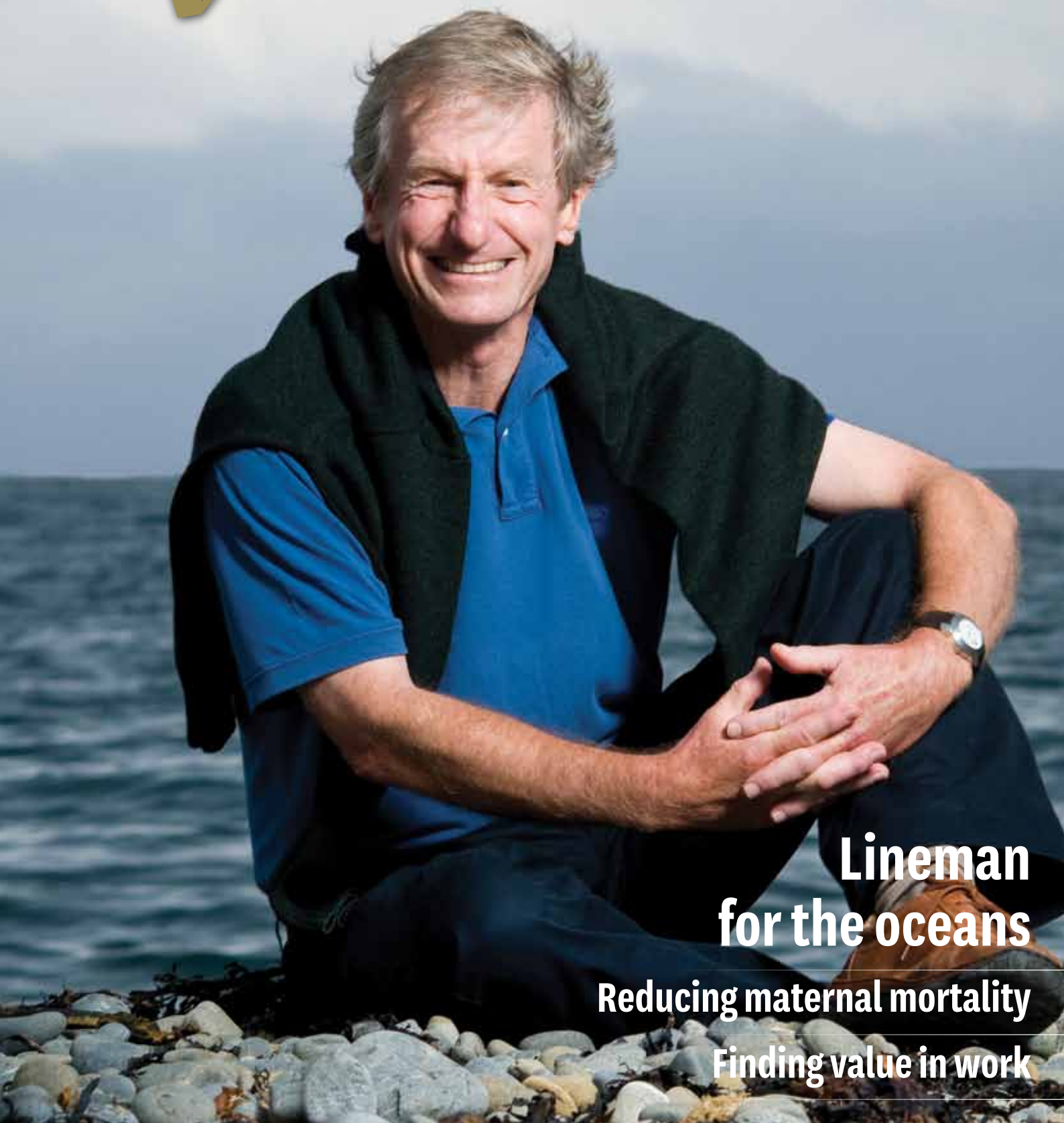


Victorious

AUTUMN 2010

MAGAZINE FOR FRIENDS AND ALUMNI OF VICTORIA UNIVERSITY OF WELLINGTON



**Lineman
for the oceans**

Reducing maternal mortality

Finding value in work



Green way to treat disease

Developing environmentally friendly treatments for diseases like tuberculosis and cancer takes time, but it's worth the effort according to 25-year-old Emma Dangerfield.

"Creating a new treatment is a slow process—it's not quick by any stretch of the imagination," she says.

"What I'm working on right now may come to fruition in 10 or 12 years' time so you have to be patient. It's one step at a time."

Emma's research focuses on developing more environmentally friendly ways to make drugs to fight tuberculosis. Over two million people die from the disease each year so new treatments could have a dramatic impact.

Emma's cutting-edge research is part of a joint project between Victoria and the Malaghan Institute for Medical Research, which is situated on the University's Kelburn Campus.

Emma is part of the Immunoglycomics group, the research group of Victoria lecturer Dr Mattie Timmer and Dr Bridget Stocker from the Malaghan Institute. Her research looks at drugs made from azasugars, a type of sugar which can fight diseases in the body, such as tuberculosis or cancer.

She has developed a method for making azasugar drugs more efficiently and in a way that is better for the environment.

"It's what we call green chemistry," says Emma.

"Azasugar drugs are not used much in drug manufacturing because they're hard to develop. We're working on making it quicker and cheaper."

Emma only started her PhD in 2008, yet her work has already been patented and published in international journals.

Her work enables azasugar drugs to be made using water and ethanol, less toxic replacements for commonly used solvents such as petrol. On a large scale, drugs manufactured using ethanol generate less toxic waste, are cheaper and more sustainable than those that use petrol, and can be more easily disposed of safely.

"Our new methodology could reduce the environmental impact of developing these drugs."

At Victoria, Emma completed a Bachelor of Biomedical Science with Honours, majoring in Pharmacology. She then worked at the Malaghan Institute before embarking on a PhD at the two organisations.

She recently received a Victoria Postgraduate Research Excellence Award.



Emma holds a round-bottom flask used in her research for chemical reactions. Photo: The Dominion Post

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From the Vice-Chancellor

All universities are operating in a rapidly changing environment. This is reflective not only of the shift in government priorities, but also of the economic changes we are seeing worldwide.

There are a number of competing priorities for government funding, and there will be limited investment in university education in the foreseeable future. This year we are seeing many changes to the sector, with a review of academic qualifications in the pipeline and a move to link student loans to achievement. From 2012, the Government will also be basing a percentage of university funding on how well our students perform academically.

Government and taxpayers have high expectations of a return on their investment in university education, and rightly so. The challenge for Victoria is how best to manage all these changes, while maintaining a high-quality institution and a high-quality education for our students. We strive to instil in our graduates the critical and creative thinking, communication and leadership skills that they will need to be successful in today's global marketplace.

We now need to manage enrolments tightly if we are to keep within the student places for which we are funded. To do this effectively, we are putting in place a system that ensures government-funded student places are allocated in a fair, equitable and transparent way. A major priority will be to keep our student population diverse, while also attracting the best and brightest students, who have the drive and ability to succeed.

We are now encouraging students to enrol early to ensure their place and will be adopting a ranking system which will automatically guarantee entry to students who have achieved a certain level in NCEA. Although we expect that most of our applicants will be accepted into a programme, this will enable us to place some limits on the numbers accepted if we are oversubscribed and to restrict access to some degrees—an extension of what the University already does with many courses.

Our approach to managing enrolments will continue to develop, but of course, changing our policies and procedures won't happen overnight. It will take some time to work through, but it is a challenge that the University will focus on in 2010 and beyond. As always, all decisions will be made with the best interests of students at heart.

Professor Pat Walsh, Vice-Chancellor

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Sunset for paradise?



Associate Professor Paul Kench, a collaborator from the University of Auckland, preparing a survey using Global Positioning System (GPS) satellites.

At last year's climate change conference in Copenhagen, the world's attention turned to island nations, such as Tuvalu, that are facing rising sea levels. But how the islands will respond to change is not immediately clear.

"People think it's like when you're in the bath—the water will rise and rise and eventually overwhelm the islands. However, this doesn't look at key differences between islands," says Victoria researcher Dr David Kennedy.

Researching Fijian reef islands, David and Master's student Hamish McKoy found that islands are affected differently depending on what they're formed from—some are made from corals, others from microscopic plants and animals called foraminifera.

These reef islands are some of the youngest of their type in the world, forming in the last few hundred years.

"Considering that islands are typically 2,000 to 4,000 years old, that's very young. These islands haven't had as long to build up their base core of sediment so they're more affected by change. Islands created by falling sea levels over the last 4,000 years are likely to be more stable."

David explains that the sand and sediment on islands are moving or migrating around beaches.

"Some of these islands need a constant renewal of sand. We're looking at what islands are made of, where that material comes from and whether any more is coming."

As well as rising sea levels, there are other problems for islands in the Pacific and Indian Oceans. In certain areas, sewage is pumped directly onto reefs, threatening the island's sediment producer. On some islands, sand is also mined for building use with people even selling sand beneath their houses.

"Resorts that sieve out gravel on beaches for tourists can also affect island stability because all beaches need a strong base."

As a next step, David hopes to create a model to categorise islands that will be affected by changes, helping to increase our knowledge of the future of our Pacific neighbours.

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Māori relations with the State



Māori asserting rangatiratanga at Parliament, Wellington, 1972. Photo: John Miller

A Victoria University historian has tackled the growing Māori movement for autonomy in the sometimes turbulent latter half of the 20th century.

Māori and the State: Crown-Māori Relations in New Zealand/Aotearoa 1950–2000 analyses Māori aspirations in terms of the longstanding quest for Crown recognition of rangatiratanga—Māori self-determination.

Professor Richard Hill, of the Stout Research Centre for New Zealand Studies, notes that the book represents the first substantial examination of Crown-Māori relations in this highly significant half-century.

"This is a period which covers the huge Māori urban migration and the 'Māori Renaissance' as well as the Crown's abandonment of its longstanding assimilation policies and the move towards bi-culturalism."

The book is a follow-up to Richard's *State Authority, Indigenous Autonomy*, which covered Crown-Māori relations in the first half of the 20th century, and it examines both continuities and changes since 1950—with special attention paid to the impact of post-war migration by Māori to New Zealand's large towns and cities.

"I've looked at the Crown's attempts to contain the energies of rangatiratanga and appropriate them for its own purposes. The book explores how Māori leaders and communities have utilised numerous opportunities to pursue rangatiratanga, including efforts to reappropriate the state institutions established to control them."

Māori and the State provides an essential background to Crown-Māori relations in New Zealand in the 21st century, and concludes with a chapter discussing prospects for the future.

Richard held senior Crown positions during the pioneering Treaty of Waitangi negotiations in the early-mid-1990s. He has recently returned from Cambridge, where he was a Visiting Fellow at Wolfson College and a Visiting Scholar in the Faculty of History. He has been appointed to the Waitangi Tribunal panel hearing the Te Paparahi o Te Raki (Northland) claims.

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Dr Joan Skinner in Kampong Chhnang, Cambodia, with a pregnant woman who had come to the clinic for an antenatal visit.

Reducing maternal mortality

Dr Joan Skinner is hoping to make a difference for the hundreds of thousands of women who die giving birth each year.

Late last year, the midwife and Senior Lecturer from Victoria's Graduate School of Nursing, Midwifery and Health got back from three months working as a midwife scholar with the World Health Organisation (WHO) in Geneva and Cambodia.

The task at hand was a mammoth one, but one she is passionate about—developing a much-needed global strategy for a reduction in maternal mortality, which claims the lives of more than half a million women each year—most of them in developing countries.

Joan was selected to participate in the scholar programme from among leading nurse and midwife scholars around the world and was able to contribute to the development of the strategy, which is a response to a global outcry about the high numbers dying, often from very preventable causes.

“Over 500,000 women die having babies every year—and that’s just the tip of the iceberg because there are millions of women who are damaged during childbirth, and lots of babies that die,” says Joan.

Ninety-nine percent of maternal deaths occur in poor countries, and the difference between these and developed countries like New Zealand is startling.

While the rate of maternal mortality is about seven per 100,000 births in New Zealand, Afghanistan has a rate of about 1,800 per 100,000. In Cambodia, the rate is about 460 per 100,000. Joan has worked as a midwife in each of these countries, and understands the challenges involved.

Improving maternal health is one of the United Nations’ Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)—eight goals to be achieved by 2015 to respond to the world’s main development challenges.

The MDGs are drawn from the actions and targets contained in the Millennium Declaration that was adopted by 189 nations and signed by 147 heads of state and governments during the UN Millennium Summit in September 2000.

While many of the other goals are being reached, there has been minimal reduction in maternal mortality, leading to considerable international pressure to focus on the issue.

“The goal was to reduce maternal mortality by 75 percent by 2015. But despite all the millions that have been put into women’s and babies’ health, there has been hardly any reduction at all,” Joan says.

She was initially based in the Department of Human Resources for Health WHO Headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland, to assist with developing a response to the urgent call for action.

“One of the reasons I was accepted into the programme was my particular background as a midwife,” says Joan, who has a PhD in midwifery, and has been a midwife since 1976.

Apart from her active support of the development of midwifery practice and education in New Zealand, Joan has also recently provided consultancy and advice for WHO in Cambodia and Kiribati and has also supported midwifery education in Afghanistan.

She says the key to solving the problem of maternal mortality is not rocket science.

“We know that women die of things that are really easy to prevent, and we know how to stop it. Often it’s things like bleeding, infection, unsafe abortion and eclampsia.”

She says developing better health infrastructure and providing skilled birth attendants at every birth in developing countries is crucial to reducing maternal mortality.

“We need good-quality primary health care services with well-supported referral hospitals. While there have been lots of interventions (parallel programmes) in countries, we haven’t seen enough in the way of a sustained development of infrastructure in those countries. That’s what we need.”

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Exploring the language of rural New Zealand



Māori shearers at Bowlands, Wairarapa, date unknown. Photo courtesy of Wairarapa Archives, Masterton.
Inset: Dianne Bardsley

A Victoria linguist has found influence from her rural childhood to produce the first book to explore New Zealand's rich heritage of rural language.

In the Paddock and On the Run: The Language of Rural New Zealand sees Dianne Bardsley from the School of Linguistics and Applied Language Studies explore the ways terms like 'snow-raking' and 'bidi-bidi' became part of the Kiwi vocabulary.

"The prominence of the rural world in New Zealand's history is long established and undisputed—we were once seen as the Empire's farm," says Dianne, who is also Director of the New Zealand Dictionary Centre.

She says the vastly different environment faced by the first European settlers to New Zealand, combined with the presence of an established Māori culture, led to a linguistic melting pot.

"The settlers adopted Māori names for the different flora, topography and geography they encountered, while adapting words that already existed in British English. Words like break, run and paddock were given new use."

The result is a book that combines essays on various rural themes with dictionary listings of more than 5,000 rural New Zealand terms.

Dianne says the language of rural New Zealand has had a tremendous influence on the New Zealand lexicon, and reflects the staunchness of the early settlers.

"The language conveys that sense of early hardship and stoicism that were required for the development of plains, hills and high country in all kinds of elements."

She says there is a dry humour that runs through much of the language, which reflects this strength, and explains the development of expressions such as 'dog tucker' and 'so wet frogs were jumping out of the sheep's wool'.

"The elements, isolation and the need for innovation in a new land required a lot of adapting. The rich language of rural New Zealand reflects that—farmers have initiated and generated more terms than any other occupational group in New Zealand."

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Improving complaint resolution

When people have a complaint about a product or service they often reach for the phone.

But Ann Weatherall, Reader in the School of Psychology, has taken the process one step further, researching how public complaints are made and the way in which businesses can better manage these complaints.

"Complaints and their effective resolution are important both interpersonally and to organisations," says Ann.

"My research aimed to investigate the challenges for effective dispute resolution and to develop recommendations and strategies on how complaints can best be handled."

Ann spent a year on sabbatical in the United States at the University of California, Los Angeles where the discipline of conversational analysis was founded, becoming the only New Zealander to train under some of the world leaders in the field. Returning to Victoria in 2008, she began

recording complaints to the Electricity and Gas Complaints Commission, an organisation she picked for its willingness to have its calls recorded and analysed. The research has since expanded to include calls to the Energy and Water Ombudsman of Victoria, Australia.

"Both these organisations are independent and not-for-profit, where some callers are in a heightened emotional state about their power bills or how they've been treated, and they expect a level of empathy or consumer advocacy from the call-takers. My research looked at how different expectations between the caller and the organisation were managed and resolved."

More than 200 calls were recorded, and Ann says one area of interest for her was the use of the word 'okay' and how it was used in conversation.

"Token words such as 'okay', which might intuitively seem like they show agreement with the complainant, are used to mark transition



points—such as a move from one phase of the call to another."

Ann believes her research will help to inform the growing body of international research aimed at how helplines work.

She is also hoping to expand her research into examining other telephone helplines, such as health lines and emergency calls.

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Finding value in work



Work to live or live to work? According to research by Dr Jane Bryson from the Victoria Management School either philosophy is valid so long as workers perceive that they are living lives of value.

Jane is the editor of a book due out in June, *Beyond Skill: Institutions, Organisations and Human Capability*, published by Palgrave Macmillan, which explores the conditions that are required to develop optimal human capability in the workplace. It includes chapters from leading workplace researchers in New Zealand, Australia and the UK.

“Human contributions to society are not solely through work, and organisational contributions to society are not solely economic,” says Jane.

“Workers aspire to live lives they have reason to value, that is to be capable humans—not just skill sets for the workplace.”

Jane’s chapter examines the findings of a five-year research project, funded by the Foundation for Research, Science and Technology and hosted in the Industrial Relations Centre at Victoria Management School.

“The research demonstrated that other than legal compliance, there is no accepted set of principles guiding employers. Management and human resource management practices are

largely buffeted along on the tide of ‘best practice’, personal beliefs or meeting the demands of a business strategy, where the needs of business survival and shareholder prosperity often outweigh other considerations.

“Hence, good managers and supervisors sometimes find themselves in the situation of being ‘custodians of bad practice.’”

One component of the study involved more than 200 interviews carried out across 30 organisations, which asked participants about the drivers and barriers to being able to develop capability in the workforce, with the aim of influencing employers.

Results indicated that to develop human capability it was more advantageous to be in a permanent job, which offered more stability and a willingness of employers to invest in development opportunities. Organisations that took a long-term view rather than prioritising short-term gain also got the thumbs up.

“Human capability as a notion looks at learning, not just qualifications; the utilisation of skills, not just the development of them; and the utilisation of other knowledge and attributes that people bring to the workplace.

“One of the interesting things we found going into factories were those that had, say, invested

in literacy and numeracy training for their staff, were actually getting much more loyalty and productivity from their staff—so, even though on the face of it these staff are easily replaceable, it still makes sense to invest in their development.”

The book includes recommendations on how to design jobs and work processes to provide good-quality jobs and experiences. It also advocates enabling workers to take part in decision-making and creating a workplace environment that encourages development.

The research findings have been used to develop a framework, which Jane hopes will stimulate discussion between parties with different interests, particularly unions and employers.

“The framework is a tool for examining the institutional and social structures within and around the workplace in order to determine whether they facilitate or constrain individuals from achieving their potential.

“Through the provision of good-quality jobs and work environments, organisations can improve upon their role as capability-enhancing institutions in society.”

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Lineman for the oceans

Victoria University researcher Professor Lionel Carter looks at issues that could go wrong with submarine cables that carry 95 percent of the world's communications data.

Whenever you watch a YouTube video, phone a loved one in London or send a text to a friend in Sydney, the data flashes at the speed of light through cables deep beneath the ocean.

Professor Lionel Carter says that our world is reliant on a vast network of cables barely wider than your finger.

"So much depends on submarine cables—from global financial markets to everyday activities such as making an airline booking or a credit card transaction, not to mention personal phone calls and internet use.

"The fibre optics in the cables ensure that the information is sent at the speed of light," says Lionel.

"The speed, volume and quality of fibre-optic communications is miles ahead of satellites, which rely on microwave technology."

Lionel has been at Victoria University for four years after working with cables for various clients while at the National Institute of Water and Atmospheric Research, better known as NIWA.

He now evaluates how cables are affected by hazards such as bottom trawl fishing, ships accidentally dragging anchors along the ocean bed, earthquakes and interference from marine animals.

"There were some shark bites on earlier cables which caused failures but it's not a big problem any more," Lionel notes.

"It's fair to say the greatest damage is from us. About 80 percent of cable faults are from fishing and shipping."

Lionel is the Marine Environmental Advisor to the International Cable Protection Committee (ICPC), a not-for-profit organisation representing 101 telecommunications companies from 47 countries.

Victoria was awarded the highly contested ICPC contract for the advisory role.

"I apply oceanographic and marine geological expertise to marine cables—where best to place them on the ocean floor to minimise risk from human activities and natural hazards," says Lionel.

"So much depends on submarine cables—from global financial markets to everyday activities such as making an airline booking or a credit card transaction."

Lionel recently contributed to *Submarine Cables and the Oceans*, a collaborative publication between the ICPC and the United Nations Environmental Programme.

Submarine cables vary, but are typically around 17 millimetres in diameter—about the size of a garden hose. Where the ocean is relatively shallow—about 1,500 metres deep—a protective armoured coating is added, increasing the cable diameter to around 50 millimetres. Cables are also often buried one to three metres under the seabed for added protection.

In deeper ocean, cables are laid directly on the seabed by specially designed ships with thousands of kilometres of cable coiled in their holds. Guided by satellites and highly detailed surveys, the ships gently lower the cables to the seabed.

To bury a cable close to shore, ships use a plough-like device that is towed over the surface of the seabed, cutting a trench into which it lays the cable.

When a cable is damaged, the fault is located by measuring how long it takes for an electronic signal to 'bounce back' from the damaged part.

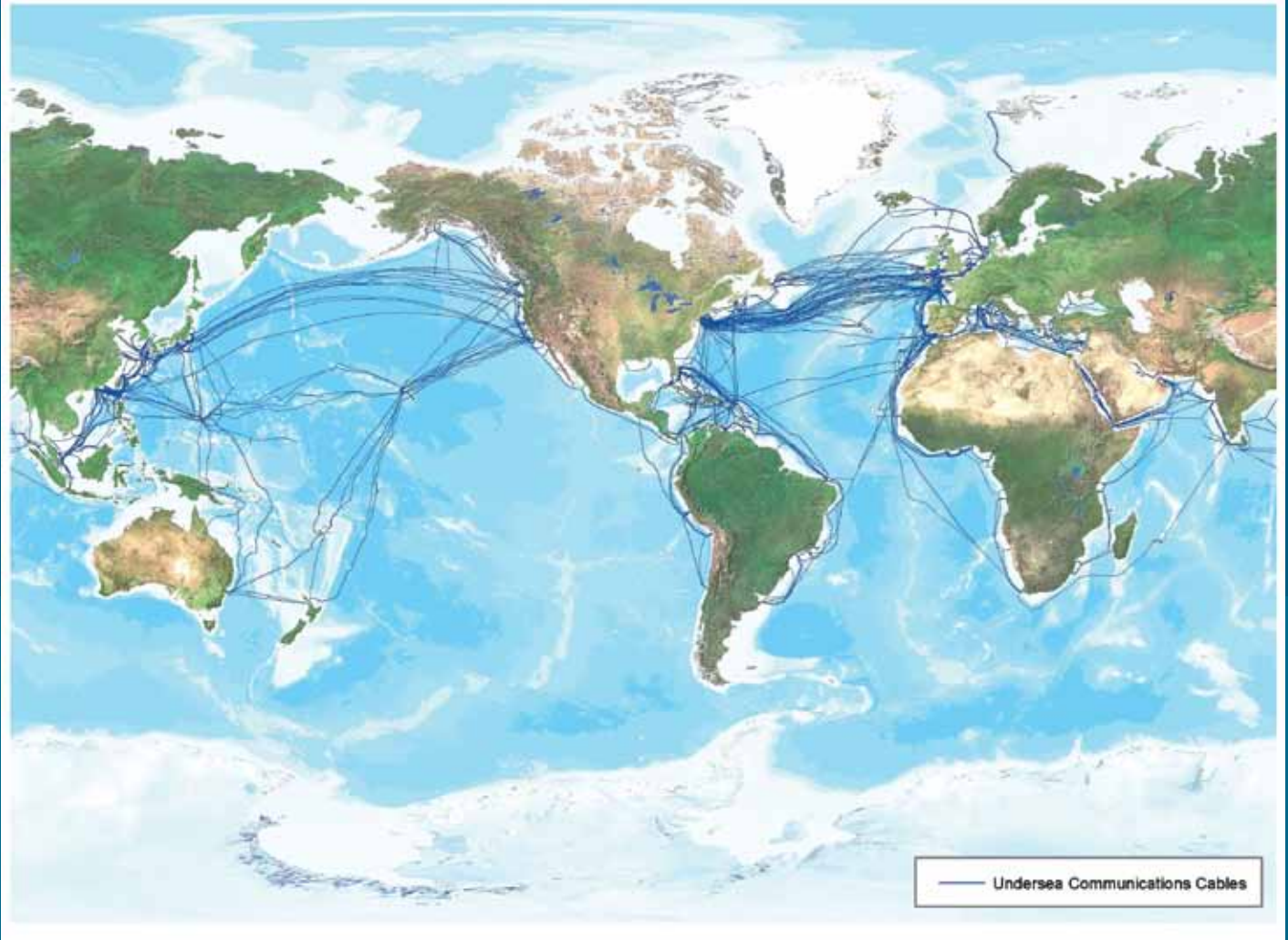
Once located, specialist ships are called in to undertake repairs. Currently there are 27 repair vessels on standby close to strategic sections of the fibre-optic network.

"It's all pretty hi-tech. A special device cuts the damaged cable and both ends are brought to the surface where a new length of cable is spliced in. The hair-like optical glass fibres have to be welded together perfectly."

A purpose-built heavy duty plastic covering is added to protect the repaired piece before it is lowered to the seabed.

As well as breakages caused by humans, the elements of nature play a part.

One of the biggest disruptions to the network resulted from a magnitude seven earthquake off southern Taiwan on Boxing Day 2006.



Map of undersea communications cables, 2009. Image: Tyco Telecommunications (US) Inc.

The earthquake was centred 21.9 kilometres beneath Luzon Strait, the ocean passage between Taiwan and the Philippines.

“Areas like offshore Taiwan are narrow and crowded with shipping. Moreover, there are many cables that reflect the rapid growth of the internet and fibre-optic communications in South East Asia,” says Lionel.

The earthquake set off a submarine landslide that rolled down a canyon on the seabed pushing water and sediment before it in what is known as a turbidity current. The current travelled 350 kilometres and broke nine cables.

Communications were disrupted throughout South East Asia. In Taiwan, international calling capacity fell to 40 percent of the normal level. Eleven repair ships worked for the next seven weeks to fully restore services.

History repeated itself in August the following year when Typhoon Morakot brought three

metres of rain in four days. A major river in Taiwan discharged its debris-laden floodwaters into the same submarine canyon as the 2006 event.

The muddy deluge turned into turbidity currents that swept down the canyon at speeds sometimes exceeding 30 kilometres per hour, breaking 12 cables en route. Lionel says this was a weather-related disaster with no earthquakes involved.

Lessons had been learnt from 2006 however. Communications were rapidly diverted via intact cables resulting in only minor delays to internet and data traffic.

“We’re using science to look for better ways to protect the network. Regions like the Pacific ‘Ring of Fire’ are places cables have to pass through but we’re looking at improving cable routes through these earthquake-prone zones to minimise risk.

“Are there safer routes? With the world so reliant on the fibre-optic highway, it’s a crucial question,” says Lionel.

“Climate change is another aspect that we are evaluating. How will rising sea levels affect the cables? Will we see more typhoons and hurricanes from changing weather patterns, as we did with Typhoon Morakot?”

Submarine communications are also faced with increasingly crowded seas.

“Offshore wind turbines, shipping, drilling and fish farming are all on the increase. More than ever, there is a need for those with interests in the ocean to work together towards developing and conserving an estate that covers 71 percent of our planet.”

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Adolescence through the eyes of the Victorians

A new book by Senior Lecturers in English Charles Ferrall and Anna Jackson looks at the remarkably different way adolescence was portrayed in Victorian times compared with today.

British Juvenile Fiction 1850–1950: The Age of Adolescence explores popular boys' and girls' own adventure and school stories, and argues that Victorians created a concept of adolescence that is strikingly at odds with post-Second World War notions of adolescence as a period of turmoil.

"In the enormously popular 'juvenile' literature of the period, adolescence is portrayed as a time of sexual awareness and yet also of a romantic idealism that is lost with marriage; a time when boys and girls acquire adult responsibilities and yet have not had to assume the roles of breadwinner or household manager," says Charles.

He says the book reveals a concept of untroubled adolescence that is very different from today's.

The Victorian version of adolescence is seen as a clearly defined space between childhood and adulthood where young people take on mature

roles—often very adventurous overseas missions for the Empire—before they settle down into adulthood and their principles become compromised.

"Teenagers today don't have that clearly defined space. They are kept in school and haven't yet hit the workplace—so they're not adult—but on the other hand they are portrayed as having sex and doing all these other adult things like drinking—so they are adult," says Charles.

The authors contrast the Victorian image of adolescence with the views of popular modern psychologists such as Nigel Latta, who go so far as to characterise adolescence as a mental illness.

Anna says the research could have significant implications.

"If adolescence is culturally constructed and not just a biological stage, it really has implications for the way we think about it and the kind of work that psychologists are doing. Drawing attention to this must raise questions."

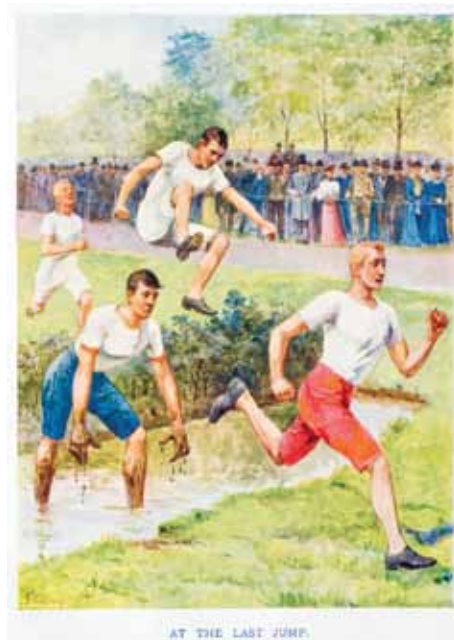


Illustration from *Chums*, June 7, 1905. From the Dorothy Neal White Collection at the National Library.

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Banking on research



Tania Smith is the face of Victoria's Research Trust, working behind the scenes to ensure researchers have smooth access to their grants.

"Our approach is a first in New Zealand," says Tania who has managed the Research Trust over the past three years.

The charitable trust holds all funds for research at the University—external grants, internal funds such as grants from the University Research Fund, and funds for scholarships.

Each research project has its own account, set up for the duration of the project so researchers don't have to worry about how calendar years or the University's year affect their funding or their research programme.

"My job is to make admin for researchers as easy as possible," says Tania.

"I previously worked in the University's finance team so understand the challenges from that perspective."

A winner of a 2009 General Staff Award for Excellence for her financial skills combined

with her personable approach, Tania is always willing to speak to researchers about problems they're having with funding or how the University could manage research funds better.

She says the Trust has been a resounding success, managing revenue which has increased from \$26.5 million in its first full year of operations in 2007 to \$45.9 million last year. Significantly, external research funding has grown from \$17 million in 2007 to \$25.6 million in 2009, a 51 percent increase over three years.

"Most of all, managing the funds in this way means researchers can benefit from interest on the funds, which Victoria invests back into research.

"Essentially, we're here to grow research at the University."

So far the Trust has generated around \$2.3 million in interest, helping it to create a \$400,000 endowment for research and to support summer research scholarships and future research projects.

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Born to teach



“The secret of life is to die young, and postpone it as long as possible.”

It's not surprising that Dr Dave Burton swears by this philosophy, given that he's taught at Victoria University for the past 51 years and shows no sign of giving up any time soon.

“I can honestly say not a day goes by that I don't believe I'm in the right place doing what I'm supposed to be doing,” says the 73-year-old.

Dave's relationship with Victoria dates back to 1955, when he started his BSc. That was followed by a Master's degree, and a PhD in cell biology at the University of Adelaide.

But the lure of Victoria proved too much, and in 1967 Dave returned to Wellington to teach his first class.

“I can remember standing at the front, feeling very nervous. But after a few minutes, I started enjoying it, and have been enjoying it ever since.”

Although Dave officially retired 10 years ago, he still teaches first-year classes in cell and animal biology and—his favourite—human evolution, reproduction and sexuality.

“I have no trouble holding students' attention when I'm talking about sex!”

The secret to his longevity is, he believes, timing and enthusiasm.

“A lot of what I teach is pretty complex so the key is to take my time to build up a framework of understanding and use stories and humour to illustrate it. A lot of teaching is about putting fish-hooks in the mind.”

Dave admits he's seen many changes at Victoria over the years, particularly in class sizes, which have tripled. Advances in technology have also affected his teaching methods, as he has moved from the 'chalk and talk' method to overhead projectors and PowerPoint presentations.

Once a student of Dave's, Dr Diane Ormsby, now lectures alongside him. She says he inspired her to become the teacher she is today.

“Dave's love of learning, his passion for teaching and his willingness to walk the journey of discovery with his students truly make him a teacher among teachers.”

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Who's new

Ian McKinnon



Ian McKinnon QSO JP has been elected Chancellor of Victoria University for 2010. The Chancellor is the Chair of the University Council and responsible for providing leadership to the Council. Ian succeeds Emeritus Professor Tim Beaglehole, who held the office for the past five years. Ian is currently a Wellington City Councillor and Deputy Mayor. He has worked in the independent school sector and has experience in governance roles, including chair

of the Wellington College of Education and The Correspondence School Board of Trustees.

Professor Ian Eggleton



Professor Ian Eggleton is the new Head of the School of Accounting and Commercial Law. A Victoria graduate, Ian obtained his PhD from the University of Chicago. He has held senior academic positions in Australia and New Zealand. He is immediate past-president of the Accounting and Finance Association of Australia and New Zealand and for the past decade has been Director of the Doctoral Colloquium, held in conjunction with the

Association's annual conference. Ian has extensive consulting and training experience in the public sector and not-for-profit areas.

Helen Sutch



Helen Sutch is Victoria's new Pro-Chancellor for 2010. She is an experienced public economist, having worked for the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, the Treasury and the Department of Labour before joining the World Bank where her most recent focus was on public sector governance in East Asia and the Pacific. She has also worked at the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).

Jill Rodgers



A Waikato resident for most of her life, Jill Rodgers arrived in Wellington from Hamilton in January to take up the role of Alumni Relations Manager. With an undergraduate degree in biological sciences from Waikato University, Jill started her career as a research assistant at the Ruakura Research Station (now AgResearch). She held the position of Alumni Manager at Waikato University for nine years and brings a wealth of experience to Victoria.



From the Pro Vice-Chancellor/Dean, Faculty of Commerce and Administration, Professor Bob Buckle

Making a public contribution

According to 19th century cardinal John Henry Newman, founder of the Catholic University of Ireland, one of the main purposes of a university is as a place for the communication and circulation of thought.

Almost 200 years later, it's a purpose that still applies, not only within the University, but extending into the wider community. One of the goals in Victoria's Strategic Plan is that of public contribution through our research, teaching and other activities.

There are various ways we make this contribution. It is implicit in the way in which we disseminate knowledge through our teaching programmes, as well as the way we build our student community. Our research helps broaden knowledge in different disciplines leading to advances in all sorts of fields.

There are also more explicit and immediate ways in which universities can make a public contribution, which Victoria is able to take special advantage of because of our close proximity to government.

Some of our academic staff participate on government advisory bodies. Richard Boast was a member of the Foreshore and Seabed Review Panel and Lew Evans was a member of the Electricity Taskforce.

Victoria also has research centres undertaking studies that contribute directly to public debate on issues—for example, last year the Institute of Policy Studies held conferences, workshops and public seminar series on a wide range of concerns including climate change, justice and local authorities.

The University sometimes undertakes research for government, a recent example being Victoria's Jessie Hetherington Centre for Educational Research, whose research funded by the Ministry of Education revealed flaws in the design of NCEA and led to changes in the qualification.

The inaugural lectures that Victoria holds to honour its new professors enable the public to connect with research emerging from the University. Last year, lectures ranged across public policymaking, IT systems in the health sector, intellectual property and Māori education.

Recently, Victoria has embarked on a number of initiatives that are changing the nature of the way we engage with the public. Last year we

conducted a regional lecture series outside Wellington, which attracted wide interest.

The way some professorial positions are funded has also changed, with some research chairs being funded by stakeholders in both the public and private sectors. This has been an excellent opportunity for academics to work on challenges facing the sectors. One example is the Chair in e-Government Professor Miriam Lips whose work you can read about on page 17.

Another project that has directly influenced public policy, and which I have been involved with as Chair, has been the Tax Working Group. This was an independent group established through a collaboration between Victoria's Centre of Accounting, Governance and Taxation Research, the Treasury and Inland Revenue, and endorsed by government ministers. The group brought together expert tax practitioners, academics, businesspeople and officials—those whose job it is to examine and set tax policy and those who deal with its impacts—to see if there was a common understanding of the issues and options for reform. Six meetings were held throughout the second half of 2009 to discuss aspects of the tax system.

It was a new form of engagement for the University, and we opened the process to the public, sharing our deliberations with media, holding a public forum to talk about our work and options for reform, and publishing a report.

The ultimate success of this process will need to be judged against the extent to which the public is more informed about tax policy issues and the extent to which the process has informed policy. Time will tell to what extent our tax system moves in the direction advocated by this process.

Looking back to the universities of Newman's time, though far more removed from the public than universities now, the underlying principle of communication and circulation of thought holds true for us today. The nature of universities' public engagement is evolving, and will continue to do so, for the benefit of all.

Improving access for students with disabilities

Being a student with a disability at Victoria provides a number of challenges, but with support from Disability Services they can achieve their academic goals.



Student Cath Soper says Disability Services has been a huge help with her studies.

Disability Services is the key service provider for people with disabilities at Victoria and has responsibility for evaluating a student's impairment-related needs and recommending appropriate strategies for successful study.

Victoria has about 700 students currently listed with some form of disability. Impairments can range from blindness to mental health issues or temporary impairments like a broken arm.

Manager Rachel Anderson-Smith says Disability Services provides a number of different services, all based around an ecological model of individual and environmental support.

"We provide individualised services like planning, adaptive technology, sign language interpreting, rest and study rooms and note-taking assistance. At an environmental level we provide advice and support for staff on inclusive built spaces, teaching and learning, technological systems, policies and practice."

Rachel says there are a number of barriers embedded in a university environment that can make life difficult for students with disabilities.

"A student may be proactive and well prepared for study but these strengths can't be utilised if they are unable to get through the front door. This is why we focus on not only enhancing individual resilience but also improving the accessibility of the environment here."

She says one of the biggest barriers for people with disabilities can be the attitude of others.

"This is an area where Victoria's academic staff have greatly improved. They are more responsive and flexible when it comes to meeting the needs of a diverse student population and are increasingly open to utilising accessible teaching methods."

Bachelor of Arts (Honours) student Cath Soper, who has cerebral palsy and a vision impairment, says Disability Services has been a huge help with her studies.

"The support I have received from Disability Services has been vital. Having an impairment will never prevent me from reaching my goals," says Cath.

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Learning with clickers



When did Victoria University purchase clicker technology?

Was it: A—2008, B—2009 or C—2010?

In the game show *Who Wants to Be a Millionaire?* the audience answers each question by clicking a button. Now a similar type of system, known as 'clicker technology', is used in a number of lectures at Victoria to facilitate learning.

Students receive a clicker a similar size and shape to a remote control and are asked to enter a multi-choice response to a lecturer's question by clicking the appropriate button. A table or graph summarising the group's response automatically appears.

Following a pilot last year which received positive feedback from staff and students, Victoria ordered several sets of clickers. Sets have now been installed in six lecture theatres across Victoria's four campuses and there will also be sets available to book and use in other spaces.

"It can be used to gauge how well students understand the material they are being taught and to encourage students to engage actively in lectures," says University Teaching Development Centre lecturer Dr Amanda Gilbert.

A champion of the technology is Associate Professor Kevin Gould from the School of Biological Sciences, who advocates the use of clickers alongside other teaching methods. His first-year course Biology of Plants was used in the pilot project.

"It's great for students' confidence as they can see they're not alone in not understanding something, or if they get a question right they are a lot more confident about jumping up in front of the class to express their point of view.

"It has also changed many lecturers' philosophies of teaching as they can adapt their courses by gauging students' levels of comprehension."

One drawback Kevin points out is that the technology requires more class time to discuss issues, meaning less material can be covered in lectures—but he says it's a matter of devising questions strategically.

He recently received a research grant from Victoria to examine the most effective way of using clickers.

"Often it's about finding the most appropriate question."

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Oscar winner teaches film



A three-time Oscar winner has brought his filmmaking magic to Victoria, coordinating a Film Honours course in the School of English, Film, Theatre, and Media Studies.

Alex Funke is a cinematographer who has worked with Peter Jackson on the *Lord of the Rings* trilogy and *King Kong*. A Member of the American Society of Cinematographers, he is teaching FILM 404 Digital Video Production Project at Victoria, passing on the knowledge that has seen him win three Oscars, three BAFTAs and several Visual Effects Society (VES) awards.

Alex, who has previously taught the craft of film at the University of California Los Angeles (UCLA) and at Loyola Marymount University, California, says teaching the next generation of New Zealand filmmakers has been very rewarding.

“Teaching a group of students with diverse interests is the best way for the teacher to learn. We have students with goals as writers, directors, cinematographers and producers—it keeps me on my toes to make sure that we look at the creative filmmaking process from all the angles.”

Alex has worked in the film industry for nearly 40 years, beginning work in film visual effects in the 1970s. His first visual effects projects were as cameraman on the television series *Battlestar Galactica* and *Buck Rogers*.

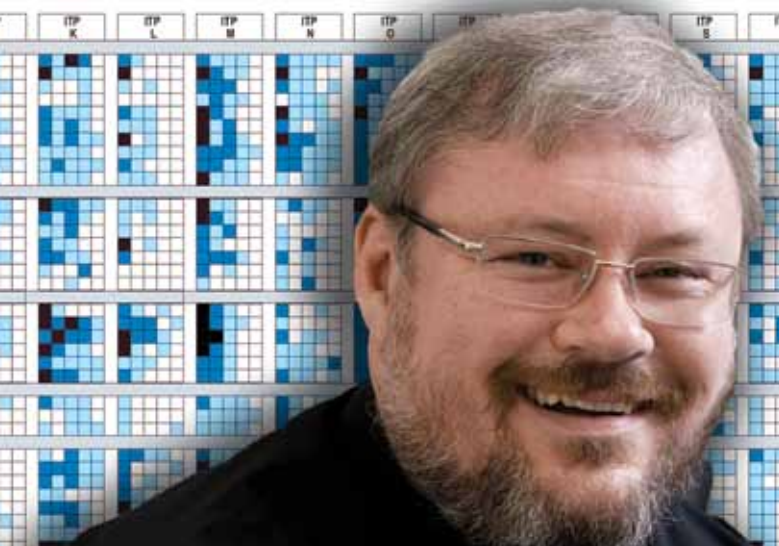
Alex was invited to New Zealand by Peter Jackson in 1999, where he set up and directed the shooting of the miniatures for *The Lord of the Rings*. The work won Alex two Oscars, three BAFTAs and two VES awards. He says the New Zealand film crews are the best he has worked with anywhere.

Alex has one central message for his students.

“In my course we try to get a good grasp of how design, camera, sound and cutting are all locked together in what we might call ‘cinematic vision’. The vast arsenal of tools and techniques available to the filmmaker exists for only one purpose: to tell the story.”

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Learning in cyber space



The biggest change in the past 20 years of teaching has been the rise of the computer and the move to online learning. But are students and staff benefiting from what's available?

Late last year, Dr Stephen Marshall was awarded a 2009 Ako Aotearoa National Project Fund Grant of just under \$100,000 for his research ‘E-learning and Higher Education: Understanding and Supporting Organisational Change in New Zealand’.

His research aims to improve how students learn online by identifying effective ways of changing an institution's teaching.

“Many tertiary organisations throughout New Zealand do the basics well,” says Stephen, who heads up Victoria's University Teaching Development Centre. “But there's more they could be doing.”

At Victoria, many courses use Blackboard, an online system which enables lecturers or tutors to upload lecture notes, reading lists, assessment information and other material online.

There's also the potential for students and teachers to interact through class announcements and discussion boards, but Stephen would like to see this go even further.

His work is based on an approach known as the ‘capability maturity model’.

“Essentially, in complex endeavours, an organisation performs a particular skill on an ad hoc basis, then each time they do it again it becomes easier.

“Successful organisations learn from their experiences, standardise processes and practices, and the very best organisations analyse and measure what they do to continuously improve.”

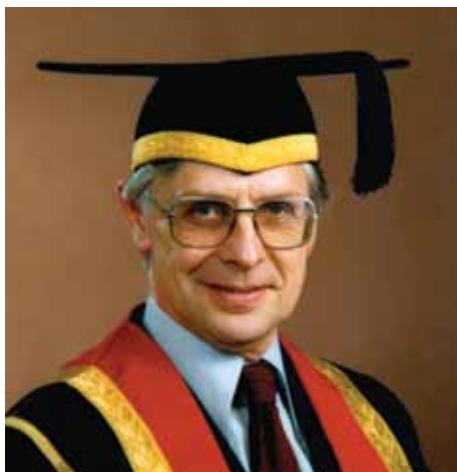
Stephen is collaborating with institutions internationally as well as in New Zealand, including with the Universities of Auckland and Canterbury, and the Auckland University of Technology (AUT).

The two-year study will measure e-learning capability at a university, a wānanga, a polytechnic and a private teaching establishment to examine how their actions impact their capability.

“Once you benchmark an organisation's capability, you can improve the way things are done. Measuring is insufficient in itself—you need to be changing and improving in response to the measurements.”

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Remembering Sir Ian Axford (1933–2010)



Victoria University was saddened by the passing in March this year of Sir Ian Axford FRS Hon FRSNZ, a former Vice-Chancellor and an honorary graduate of Victoria University.

Sir Ian was also one of New Zealand's most distinguished scientists with an international reputation in astrophysics and space science.

"Sir Ian was Vice-Chancellor from 1982 to 1985," says Vice-Chancellor Professor Pat Walsh. "He will be greatly missed by many within the University and the wider scientific community in New Zealand and overseas."

Sir Ian had also been the Chairman of the Foundation for Research, Science and Technology and of the Marsden Fund for Basic Research in New Zealand. He was named New Zealand Scientist of the Year and New Zealander of the Year in 1995, and was knighted in 1996.

"In his time at Victoria University Sir Ian brought an energetic approach to a number of areas, including—most visibly—the physical appearance of the Kelburn Campus. He was particularly passionate about the Hunter Building, and played a leading role in the

planning and building of Te Herenga Waka, the University Marae," says Pat.

Sir Ian led the creation of the Research School of Earth Sciences and encouraged the development of the Institute of Policy Studies and the Stout Research Centre for New Zealand Studies. He was a strong supporter of the arts, particularly of music.

His scientific achievements have been recognised with the Space Science Award by the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics (1970), the John Adam Fleming Medal by the American Geophysical Union (1972), the Tsiolkovsky Medal by the Kosmonautical Federation of the USSR (1987), the Chapman Medal by the Royal Astronomical Society (1994), the New Zealand Science and Technology Gold Medal (1994), and New Zealand's top science honour, the Rutherford Medal (1994).

Victoria alumni meet on Blues turf



Former All Black captain Graham Mourie.



Left to right: Chelsea Gosden, Kobi Gosden and Sarah Baynes.



Left to right: Greg Hope, Graeme Lay and Peter Christoffersen.

Former All Black captain Graham Mourie took centre stage at a social event held for Victoria alumni living in Auckland at the start of the year.

As a Victoria alumnus, Graham recollected playing rugby on Victoria's Boyd-Wilson Field. He was introduced by his former tutor Gerard Curry, also an alumnus and a Victoria Foundation Board of Trustees member.

More than 100 alumni of all ages and stages in life met at The Pavilion in the Vero Centre in downtown Auckland for the event, which was initiated by an enthusiastic group of Victoria rugby alumni who meet annually in Auckland to reminisce.

"It was the first event we have had in Auckland for a very long time, but this is just the start," says Alumni Relations Manager Jill Rodgers.

"I encourage Victoria alumni living in Auckland to contact me with suggestions for future social functions and events."

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Boy on the moon



Photo: European Space Agency

'Hello,' the six-year-old boy spoke into the radio. There was silence for a second or two, then he heard his voice, crackled with static, return from the moon.

The boy's grandfather—a ham radio operator—had pointed the antennae at the moon and bounced the radio signal back to earth, beginning Alex Gerst's fascination for the stars. "It felt like part of me had been on the moon," says the Victoria graduate, now an astronaut with the European Space Agency (ESA).

Alex was one of six chosen in May last year from an initial pool of 8,413 applications. The new recruits are the first to join the ESA since 1992.

"When I found out I was to be an astronaut, it was an absolute dream come true," says Alex. The 'curious kid' who was fascinated with the world around him studied geophysics at the University of Karlsruhe in his native Germany before coming to New Zealand. At Victoria, Alex completed a Master of Science under Professor Martha Savage.

"Even though Victoria's location is picturesque, it's very close to 'wild' areas, situated on a fault line and with volcanoes only five hours north. I came to New Zealand to study those forces up close."

The ESA selects astronauts with academic skills or with piloting credentials such as Air Force candidates. Degrees at Master's level or above in physics, biology, chemistry, earth sciences, medicine, engineering, information technology or mathematics are preferred.

Alex is partway through the 18-month basic training to prepare for missions to the International Space Station and beyond. The ESA usually flies two astronauts to the station each year.

To prepare for the complex tasks required during space missions, cadets study electrical engineering and space operations, learn Russian, undergo survival training and practice scuba diving to familiarise themselves with walking in space.

www.esa.int

Keeping government in check



Lyn Provost is used to people being wary of her.

But that's possibly to be expected when you've spent eight years as the Deputy Commissioner of Police and now hold one of the most important public guardianship roles in the land.

Last October, the Victoria alumna was appointed Controller and Auditor-General, a constitutional role that is often referred to as Parliament's watchdog.

"My role, as Auditor-General, is to provide assurance that public money is being appropriately spent and accounted for, and to let the public of New Zealand know that this expenditure is value for money."

Five months into the job and Lyn says she's grateful her position allows her to experience the breadth and depth of the public sector.

"There are more than 4,000 entities in New Zealand's public sector, so that means I get to focus on everything from education and scientific research to local government and transport. No two days, let alone no two hours, are the same in my job."

It's perhaps not surprising that Lyn is finding the Auditor-General's seat so comfortable—her first job after graduating from Victoria was with the Audit Office.

"I was an Assistant Auditor for three years before I left to go the UK and South Africa on my OE. I really enjoyed my time at the Audit Office and actually dreamt of one day being the Auditor-General, so I guess dreams do come true."

A passionate believer in the need for a robust public sector, the mother of two believes her ability to 'say it like it is' will prove valuable in dealing with the challenges she and her 400 staff currently face, including Auckland's local government restructure, improving public sector performance measures and an investigation into the use of MPs' credit cards.

"The life skills I developed at Victoria have stood me in good stead during my career to date and have prepared me to deal with whatever issues or crises life throws at me."

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Graduation highlights



Almost 1,000 students celebrated their graduation in December. Forty-two PhDs were granted, along with approximately 950 degrees, diplomas and certificates.

Honorary Doctorates were granted to the Chairman of the Malaghan Institute of Medical Research, Graham Malaghan; New Zealand colonial history scholar Emeritus Professor Alan Ward; and international civil servant Richard Carey.

Higher Doctorates in the degree of Doctor of Laws were also granted to Sir Edmund Thomas and David McGee.

A hunger for education



Mina Moayyed with her children Miaad (left) and Mava. Photo: Monib Moayyed

Iranian-born Mina Moayyed wanted a higher education so badly that as a teenager she left her country and family to achieve her dream.

Graduating last December with an MBA was a triumphant moment for Mina, who left Iran more than 20 years ago under a hail of bullets. It took three years to complete while she juggled work, family and other commitments.

As a member of the Baha'i Faith, she was deprived of the right to access higher education in her home country, despite having achieved top grades in high school.

"In Iran you have to fill out an application form for everything and the first thing you are asked even before your name is your religion. If you are a Baha'i it means no job and no university education."

As a Baha'i at that time she couldn't get a passport to leave the country, so Mina fled the border under cover of darkness with the help of a guide.

"The emotional feeling and fear for my life because we were being shot at is a moment I will remember for the rest of my life."

After travelling four days in the desert with barely enough food and drink to survive, Mina found refuge with the Baha'i community in Pakistan and was able to claim refugee status. While in Pakistan she met her Iranian future husband and they were able to apply for immigration to New Zealand because of his electronic engineering background.

Although Mina hardly spoke any English she was determined to study and within a few months she had mastered enough English to enrol in a basic course in office management. Next she began part-time study for a Bachelor of Commerce degree, which opened the door to a variety of jobs, including management roles.

Mina says she refuses to be a victim. "The Baha'i way of dealing with injustice is to act in a peaceful and loving way, and strive to achieve the very goals you have been denied by those who abuse their power."

Achieving an MBA hasn't curbed Mina's hunger for education.

"I'd like a PhD, but not immediately, I need a break. But it's one of my goals, even if I'm 70 when I get it!"

Creating for social change



Konstantin Dimopoulos at the recent unveiling of his sculpture *Ripples and Journeys* at the Monash Civic Centre, Melbourne. Photo: Lucy Di Paolo, Monash Journal

Drive from Wellington airport into town and it's impossible to miss the six-metre high grass-like sculpture swaying in the breeze at the roundabout.

Victoria alumnus Konstantin Dimopoulos' work *Pacific Grass*—a kinetic celebration of Wellington's abundant wind which glows red like fire at night—was a turning point in his artistic career, resulting in commissions around the globe.

A Sociology graduate in 1977, he started his degree with the idea of moving into the field of aged care.

"Looking back on it now I have always had a strong sense of social empathy," says Konstantin.

"Immediately after finishing university I started working as a social worker with the elderly, but always was drawn back to my art."

After graduation Konstantin moved to England and enrolled at the Chelsea School of Art in London. On his return to New Zealand he decided to pursue a career in art, painting by day and, to make ends meet, working by night for the *Dominion* and *Evening Post* newspapers

loading papers onto the back of trucks for delivery.

Today he works full-time as an artist, creating his iconic sculptures and installations around the world.

Following the success of *Pacific Grass* in 2002, which won the Wellington Civic Initiative award for sculpture, Konstantin made a strategic move to Melbourne with his family.

"I didn't know anybody there, but it was what I needed to move forward," he says.

This year Konstantin has been commissioned to install works in Canberra, Melbourne, Gisborne, Abu Dhabi, Denver, Boston, Palm Springs and Vancouver. Most of his installations contain global themes such as deforestation, cultural appropriation and migration.

"Although I was not to practise as a sociologist the thought process and ideas about humanity that are a principal part of that discipline are also important in my art practice.

"I want to evoke in people the idea that as individuals we can contribute to change."

www.kondimopoulos.com

From France with love



Photo: Isabelle Teboul

A piece of Juliet O'Brien still belongs to Wellington even though she hasn't lived in New Zealand for two decades.

A resident of France since 1989, the 43-year-old born and bred Wellingtonian recently returned to New Zealand to stage her ground-breaking play *The Letter Writer* at the New Zealand International Arts Festival.

Juliet credits her years at Victoria with introducing her to the twin passions of French and drama.

"At Victoria, I was able to explore my love of French by doing a BA in French literature and language. It made moving to Paris after I graduated in 1986 so much easier."

Joining the Vic Drama Club also provided Juliet with her first taste of the dramatic arts.

"Drama Club was a great place to cut my teeth. I remember learning an enormous amount about acting, and having lots of fun too."

Following her studies, Juliet travelled around Europe until 1989 when, having set up base in Paris, she decided to cement her drama training with a three-year diploma at international

theatre school L'Ecole Internationale de Theatre Jacques Lecoq. Later, she received a French scholarship to study at the Louis Lumiere National School of Cinema, and for the past 10 years has taught theatre at various establishments, including the Rosny-sous-bois National School of Circus.

Having been acclaimed as an actor and director in France, it seemed a natural extension to branch into writing, and in 1993 Juliet wrote her first play, *In Transit*.

"I've always loved writing and there are so many stories I want to tell. Scriptwriting is the perfect outlet."

A grant from the French Ministry of Culture allowed Juliet to develop her most recent play *The Letter Writer*. First staged in France, the work focuses on a young illegal immigrant whose life intersects with a cynical letter writer, an experience that changes them both.

"It's been wonderful to bring a piece of my life in France to my old home town. No matter how long I live away from Wellington, it's still very much a part of me."

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Overhauling Boyd-Wilson Field

Up close it will look just like real grass but the new artificial turf surface for Boyd-Wilson Field will ensure that students can use it every day.

In recent times, the field has been literally mired in the mud, its boggy surface limiting its use. This year though, the University is overhauling the field in a \$2.5 million project in partnership with the Victoria University of Wellington Students' Association Trust (Student Trust) and the Old Boys University Rugby Club (OBU).

"The new surface will ensure that the field, which was built by the University and the Rugby Club in the 1950s, will benefit generations of students," says Satish Dahya, Victoria's Development Programme Manager.

The field, which was named after Edwin John Boyd-Wilson, a Professor of Modern Languages from 1920 to 1954 and a stalwart of the Victoria Rugby Football Club, will also feature a running

track, spectator seating and surrounding landscaping.

After extensive research, the artificial surface, which looks and feels like real grass, was considered the best option because of drainage problems. Best of all, the new field will be able to be used each day, unlike a natural surface.

Satish says research shows that artificial surfaces, which many city councils are using more and more, are also safer.

The field will have some timetabled hours for groups and sports leagues, as well as space free for students who simply want to kick a ball around. The Student Trust consulted students and feedback from neighbours, including Te Aro School which uses the field, has also helped develop the project.

The upgrade is being funded by the University, a million-dollar contribution from the Student Trust and fundraising by the Victoria University Foundation and the OBU Rugby Club.



Artist's impression of the new Boyd-Wilson Field.

The fundraising appeal aims to raise \$500,000 for new floodlighting and spectator seating.

For more information about the appeal, visit www.victoria.ac.nz/foundation

Close up on e-Government

"e-Government is about rethinking and redesigning government of the 21st century," says Professor Miriam Lips.

As Chair in e-Government, Miriam's role is to examine the introduction, management and use of information and communication technologies in the public sector, and their external relationships and implications.

"Through my research I provide independent knowledge about what is happening in government as a result of using technology."

The Chair, established three years ago through the Victoria University Foundation, and renewed this year, is sponsored by Datacom, the State Services Commission, the Department of Internal Affairs, FX Networks and Microsoft New Zealand. Cisco was also a sponsor in the first three years.

"It's a win-win situation for all parties," says Miriam. "Connecting directly with people in senior management roles in government, as well as with the technology suppliers, makes it easier to see where there are gaps in knowledge."

One of Miriam's latest projects explored how to share information across agencies more effectively to assist individuals with complex



Left to right: Kevin Ackhurst, Professor Tony Smith, Professor Bob Buckle, Peter Brown, Professor Miriam Lips, Professor Pat Walsh, Steve Matheson, Murray Jurgeleit and Brendan Boyle.

problems, such as refugees, the unemployed or youth offenders. Other recent research projects included the use of new media by political parties during the 2008 national elections and electronic record keeping by public servants using emerging technologies such as wikis, video, SMS and instant messaging.

Research findings are shared through public lectures, workshops and seminars both in New Zealand and abroad, and articles have been published in international journals. Miriam also supervises PhD research on a variety of

e-Government topics, which adds to the knowledge base.

"As the university of the capital city, with close relations with government, Victoria has been the natural home for this work," says Miriam.

"We hope that our research will help increase effectiveness and efficiency in the use of technology by public sector agencies."

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Artwork brings ancient text to life



Left to right: Vessels collaborators Adam Alexander, Associate Professor Andrew Charleson, Nazia Kachwalla, Daniel Brown and Johann Nortje.

“When you take the axis of the world, begin in Jerusalem and push it through the globe it comes out at an island in the great Southern Ocean, above which shines a constellation of four stars in the shape of a cross.”

This 13th century prediction from Dante’s *Divine Comedy* inspired Associate Professor Daniel K. Brown’s multimedia installation *Vessels* for the New Zealand International Arts Festival.

“Dante said that the importance of that island is that on top of that island still sits the original Garden of Paradise,” says Daniel, who teaches in the Faculty of Architecture and Design.

“I thought that would be a beautiful thing for New Zealanders to recognise.”

Originally invited by the Museum of Wellington City and Sea to contribute a piece for the festival, Daniel brought a mix of Victoria staff and students together to collaborate on his concept—from an animator and an engineer to students from the New Zealand School of Music who played percussion on the installation’s structure on opening night.

“It became quite a ‘family’-oriented Victoria piece,” says Daniel.

Installed in a three-storey atrium at the museum, the piece symbolises the afterlife. It involves glass bowls of water of varying sizes sitting on a multi-tiered structure with the reflections illuminated by spotlights. Four digital animations flow over the piece at regular intervals, accompanied by music by composer Mark K. Johnson.

“Dante’s text talks about the vessel of souls that is taken from the underworld to the island, back and forth, to be purified, so that is the passage we were representing.”

The main Victoria collaborators were Associate Professor Andrew Charleson, who did the structural engineering, and postgraduate students Johann Nortje, who did the digital animations; Nazia Kachwalla, who did the digital renders; and Adam Alexander, who assisted with the testing and installation.

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Honey traps for hackers



Some of the many staff and students associated with the Victoria University Client Honeypots project. Left to right: Andy Linton, Ian Welch, Deb Shepherd, Ramon Steenson, Van Lam Le, Peter Komisarczuk, Dong Xia and Jan von Mulert.

What do a website selling artwork, a site promoting a window cleaning company and a Russian bride site have in common?

They were among 97 New Zealand websites with ‘malicious’ servers tracked by Victoria computer scientists as part of an international effort.

The team uses ‘client honeypots’ to contact web servers that deliver malicious code or computer viruses.

“A basic honeypot is a vulnerable computer used as bait for these bad guys,” says Dr Ian Welch, a senior lecturer in the School of Engineering and Computer Science.

“The client honeypots we’re using are tools that are more active than passive. Rather than waiting to be attacked, we run software that visits websites until we find one that attacks us.”

Part of the HoneyNet Project, an international organisation dedicated to improving internet security, the team at Victoria works with a mix of volunteers and academics from HoneyNet’s New Zealand Chapter.

Ian says that sites like the window cleaning one may be completely genuine but infected by hackers.

“In the past, websites were set up solely to deliver malicious code, whereas what we’re seeing more now is people hacking legitimate sites that are unprotected and vulnerable.

“Malicious sites are often associated with questionable activities such as downloading pirated software.”

The team can scan around 250,000 websites each month and while the sites surveyed may end in ‘.nz’, they are not necessarily located in New Zealand.

Capture-HPC, the tool developed by the computer scientists, is now used by government agencies in the Netherlands and Poland as well as organisations such as Mitre, a US not-for-profit working to improve IT and internet security.

Ian stresses that the initiative is the result of many students’ and staff members’ work and that it initially arose from work by Christian Seifert, a PhD student, who now works for Microsoft in Seattle and is on the board of the HoneyNet project. And for the team involved there’s always more to do.

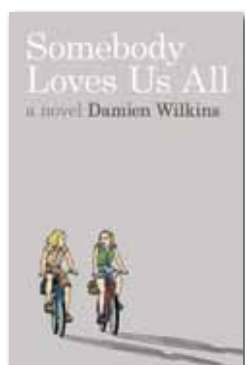
“One of the other areas we’re concerned about is suspect links on Facebook or Twitter—that’s something to explore next.”

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Off the Press

Somebody Loves Us All and *Since June* are two works recently published by Victoria University Press (VUP) and reviewed for *Victorious* by Sarah Jane Barnett.

Details of forthcoming publications by VUP can be read at www.victoria.ac.nz/vup



Somebody Loves Us All

By Damien Wilkins

On the surface, *Somebody Loves Us All* is about Paddy, a successful speech therapist and newspaper columnist, who has survived divorce and an identity crisis to find himself living with the smart and tender Helena in central Wellington. He has just turned 50. He has bought himself a slick bicycle and matching outfit. Apart from a client who refuses to talk and a prickly relationship with Helena's daughter Dora, Paddy is happy. Then, without warning, his ageing mother is struck by illness. Her main symptom is that she has started to speak in French. The story that unfolds touches on themes of family bonds and how we 'speak' to each other through language, silence and gesture. It is also a story about middle age, unlikely friendships such as that between Paddy and the Greek bowling alley owner Gorzo, and friends who are family, such as Paddy's best friend and cycling rival, Lant.

At times the character of Paddy can be overly perceptive but his close observations are regularly undone. This could be the main theme of the story—appreciating the people you love as new and individual. When Paddy and Helena go to a school fair and watch Lant, usually droll and joking, play the 'fiddle' for the first time, Paddy is pleasantly surprised by his friend's vulnerability. Paddy's idea of his mother changes as he sees her struggle with illness while, at the same time, hearing about her adventures as a young woman. Wilkins' novel starts slowly but the investment is worthwhile for the engaging story that follows. The book is clever, funny and layered with ideas about identity, intimacy and everyday strangeness.



Since June

By Louise Wallace

Since June is Wallace's debut book of poetry after completing a Master in Creative Writing at Victoria University in 2008, for which she won the Biggs Prize for Poetry. Set largely in New Zealand, the poems address themes of childhood and memory—the collection possibly sparked by the death of Wallace's grandmother June, to whom the book is in memory of—as well as the experience of living in a city, difficult love and misunderstandings.

This is a polished collection full of imagination and humour that is very enjoyable to read. While some of the themes are predictable for a first book, Wallace carefully uses language and structure to subtly open her poems so they offer the reader various interpretations and unexpected perceptions. One poem, 'The History of Water', captures the gap between an adult and child's experience of tragedy, while other poems feel like modern (and dark) fairy tales with their poison, pies, French cats and gypsies. Wallace's poems have an air of self-knowing that will make her readers feel at ease.

In the acknowledgements Wallace thanks the publisher for "not being afraid of the 'quietness'", and I can appreciate what she means. This is a quiet collection. Some of the poems are straightforward and, while the best use language in a slippery and challenging way, that same slipperiness makes a few of the poems fall away by creating an intellectual distance that doesn't seem to capture the true untidiness of experience. Still, this is a lovely and accomplished collection and well worth the read.



Sarah Jane Barnett is a writer, tutor and doctoral student who lives in Wellington. She has just started a PhD in the field of eco-poetics and has a Master in Creative Writing from Victoria University. Her poetry has appeared in a range of literary journals such as *Landfall*, *Sport* and *Takahe* and in the e-zines *Snorkel* and *Turbine*. In 2008 Sarah's poem 'The Drop Distance', was selected for the collection *Best New Zealand Poems 2007*.

Riding the waves of success



Photo: Kirsten Bennett

"Nose-riding on a longboard is the closest you can get to walking on water," says student Nicolas Brikke from France, who is currently working on a documentary film on longboard surfing for his Graduate Diploma in Arts in Film at Victoria.

SEWN ("South-East-West-North") features the longboard culture of four main surfing regions of the North Island. It uses the University's film equipment and editing facilities, and is supervised by Film lecturer Lee-Jane Bennion-Nixon.

Nicolas aims to do a release tour in surfing communities in summer 2011 and the DVD will

be available at surf shops around New Zealand. Nicolas has also recently finished his Master of Science in Geophysics, supervised by Professor Tim Stern.

His research produced a high-resolution 3D seismic traveltime tomography image of the central South Island of New Zealand, in association with researchers from GNS Science and the Australian National University in Canberra.

He will graduate with both degrees in December.

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Exploring Ancient Egypt



Photo: Brent O'Connor

People learn a great deal from books, but for more than 30 participants, theory came to life on a 21-day tour of ancient sites in Egypt. Organised by the Centre for Lifelong Learning, the programme saw participants attending evening seminars for six weeks prior to the tour. Teacher and guide Sarah Vidler, who has a Master's degree in Egyptian archaeology and more than 20 years' experience in the field, led the group through a tour of Egyptian ancient sites in chronological order, beginning and ending in Cairo.

"It's a proper archaeology tour exploring the monuments, but the only prerequisite is enthusiasm for the topic," says Sarah.

The Centre is holding a number of courses on ancient Egypt this year. Another tour is planned for January 2012, subject to demand.

www.victoria.ac.nz/lifelonglearning

Defence Force leaders talk politics



Photo: NZ Defence Force

Wellington and its bureaucracy can be challenging to the uninitiated. Last year, in acknowledgement of this challenge, the Centre for Lifelong Learning, in association with the School of Government, developed a course for Senior New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF) leaders on leading strategically within the bureaucratic and political framework in Wellington. The two-day programme aims to provide senior defence personnel with the knowledge and tools to communicate effectively with ministers and navigate through government agencies. This will enable leadership of discussion on the critical issues facing defence.

The course won the University Continuing Education Directors' Annual Conference (UCEDAC) Outstanding Course Award 2009. It will be continued and expanded this year to include courses tailored for other public leaders from outside Wellington.

www.victoria.ac.nz/lifelonglearning

New Zealand Sign Language goes digital



Photo: Deaf Studies Research Unit, Victoria University

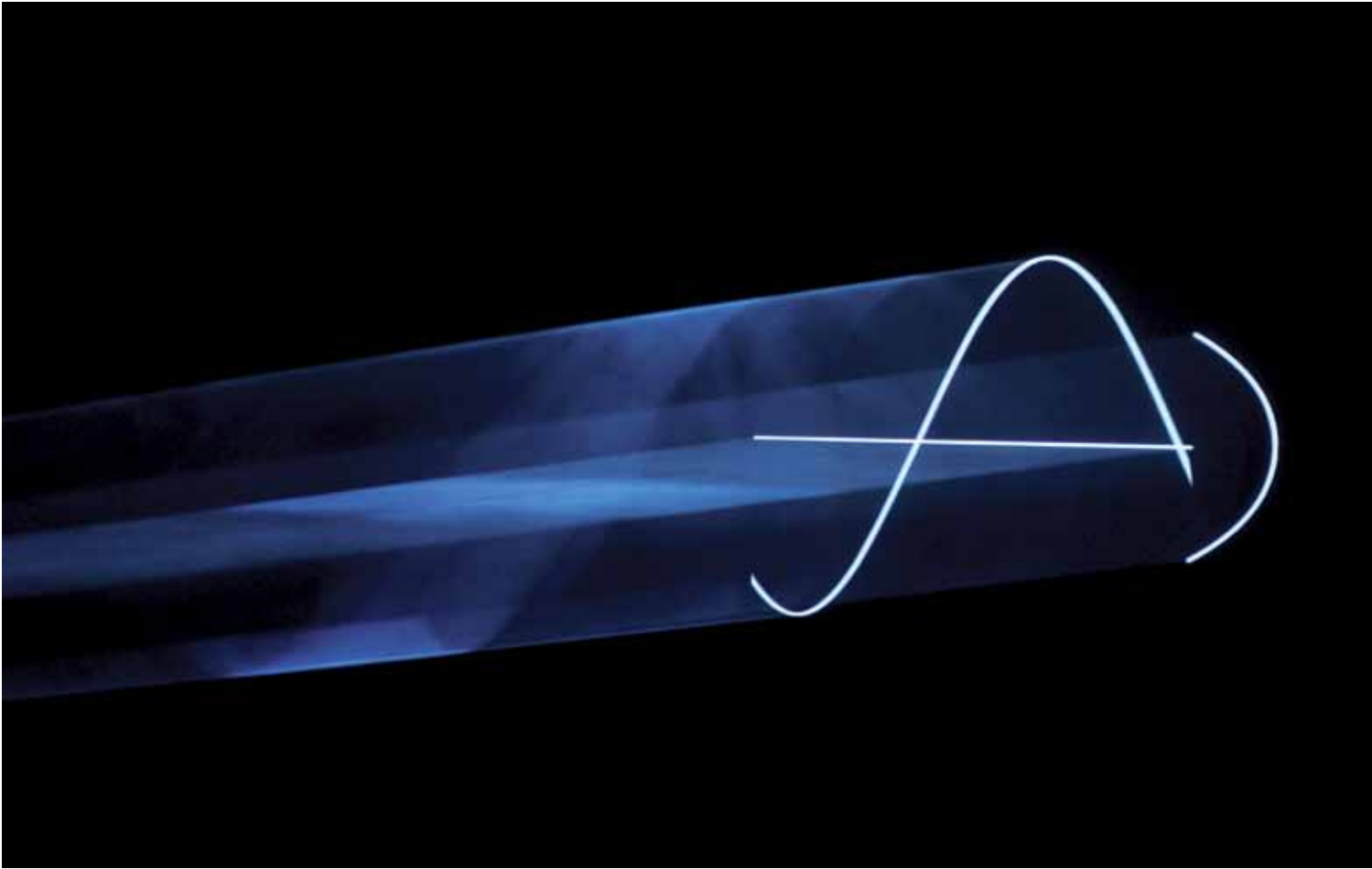
New Zealand's third official language will have its own online dictionary by mid-2011. Victoria's Deaf Studies Research Unit, which produced the first dictionary of New Zealand Sign Language (NZSL) in 1997, is working on an online multimedia dictionary with about 5,000 NZSL signs, accompanied by line drawings and video clips to show how to produce each sign and how the signs are used in context.

The dictionary will be available as a reference tool to a wide range of user groups in New Zealand and elsewhere, both within and outside the tertiary sector.

Partner organisations in the project are the Auckland University of Technology School of Languages and Social Sciences, Kelston and van Asch Deaf Education Centres, and Deaf Aotearoa NZ.

The project is funded by the Tertiary Education Commission Encouraging Innovation Fund.

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Anthony McCall, *You and I Horizontal*, 2006. Installation view at Adam Art Gallery, 2010. Courtesy of the artist and Sean Kelly Gallery, New York. Photo: Michael Salmon

Drawing with Light

New York-based artist Anthony McCall has carved a unique position in contemporary art, bridging the gaps between the cinematic, the sculptural and the pictorial by means of his 'solid light films' made by drawing in real space with projected light.

Anthony McCall: Drawing with Light, a major exhibition timed to coincide with the 2010 New Zealand International Arts Festival, exemplifies the Adam Art Gallery's vision to critically explore how art can move across disciplines, locations and through time.

"McCall's work simply must be physically experienced, to allow full engagement with his practice," says Adam Art Gallery Director and curator of the exhibition Christina Barton.

"This exhibition gives our audiences the opportunity to encounter the work of one of the most experientially enriching artists of our time."

The exhibition not only presents some of McCall's major 'solid light' installations in the complex and labyrinthine spaces of the Adam Art Gallery, but also offers insights into the full range of his practice, showing drawings, photographs and notations that record the development of his design process and reveal his work's philosophical and social intent.

After beginning his career in the 1970s at a time when the dim interiors of smoke- and dust-filled viewing spaces in New York allowed him to literally draw with projected light, McCall withdrew from making art—in part due to the increased institutionalisation of contemporary art and the process of enforced gentrification of the city—and only recently returned to producing his 'solid light' artworks, which have taken on a new shape with the advent of digital technology and the availability of haze machines.

The artist came to New Zealand to install the works and to attend the opening night of the exhibition. He then went on to deliver a series of lectures throughout New Zealand and in Australia.

The Adam Art Gallery is a purpose-built gallery based at Victoria's Kelburn Campus. It is a forum for critical thinking about art and its histories as well as the professional structure within which the Victoria University Art Collection is managed. For more information, visit www.adamartgallery.org.nz



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