



SUMMER 2011

# Victorious

MAGAZINE FOR FRIENDS AND ALUMNI OF VICTORIA UNIVERSITY OF WELLINGTON

**Engineering students  
go Android**

**Transit of Venus forum**

**Our Rutherford Discovery Fellowship winners**





# Victoria team third in Solar Decathlon

The teams in the 2011 Solar Decathlon packed into the main tent on West Potomac Park in Washington DC and waited in silence for the announcement of the awards.

Minutes later, the Victoria team leapt in the air, ecstatic—they had finished third in the prestigious international competition.

The team's Meridian First Light house—inspired by the Kiwi bach—ended with a total of 919 points in the US Department of Energy Solar Decathlon, a competition run to promote solar technology. The winner of the competition, that involved 19 university teams from around the world, was the University of Maryland with 951 points.

“While we may not have won overall, we were incredibly proud to have represented New Zealand on the world stage. We had such an amazing response from the US public along with supporters back home,” says team member Nick Officer.

The team was the first ever from the Southern Hemisphere to make the finals of the competition, which challenges teams to design, build and operate solar-powered houses that are cost-effective, energy-efficient and attractive.

The competition is made up of 10 contests in a number of different areas including energy balance, home entertainment, architecture and engineering.

The Victoria University team had high scores in many of the contests, winning the Engineering contest, gaining first equal in Hot Water and Energy Balance, second for Architecture and third for Market Appeal.

“Our house performed how we designed it, and it looked great too,” says Nick.

“It managed to produce more energy than it consumed over the competition period, achieving net zero energy consumption, despite 10 days of undesirable weather.”

The house maximises the use of solar energy while minimising energy use. It has four layers of wool insulation, solar panels above the house that power all the electrical appliances (including the ventilation and heating systems) and the windows are triple glazed.

“The house is a result of two years of hard work by students and staff from Victoria, and the support of our amazing sponsors. What started out as a project in the School of Architecture expanded to include people from right across the University and beyond,” says Nick.

“The best part is that thousands of visitors to the Meridian First Light house came away learning about what makes the New Zealand lifestyle unique.”

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



*The Solar Decathlon team celebrates winning the Engineering contest—on their way to coming third overall. Photo: US Department of Energy Solar Decathlon*

*Inset: Meridian First Light house. Photo: Ron Blunt*

## From the Vice-Chancellor

As 2011 draws to a close, it is an ideal time to take stock of the year that's been. I'm very proud of the University's achievements this year, in an environment which has posed its share of challenges. New Zealand's financial position, changing student demand, and global financial and political uncertainty have had a major part to play in our planning and decision-making processes this year—yet the University has remained buoyant and in good heart.

Successes this year have included numerous awards won by staff and students, the awarding of a wide range of research grants, as well as some exciting new collaborations both within and outside the University community—some of which are showcased in this issue of *Victorious*.

I was delighted with the success of our Solar Decathlon team, pictured left. They placed third overall out of 19 university teams from around the world. They not only succeeded in putting New Zealand and Victoria on the map, with thousands of visitors coming through their eco-friendly Kiwi bach, but the project also led to fruitful collaborations with staff and students across a number of faculties.

Some of our newest collaborative projects include our partnership with Readers and Writers Week at the International Festival of the Arts and our sponsorship of New Zealand at Kings Place in London (which will feature many Victoria staff and alumni). We are also leading the Transit of Venus forum, involving collaboration with local iwi at Tolaga Bay and the Gisborne region. You can read more about these three projects on pages 6 and 7.

Another significant collaboration is the \$1.75 million regulatory reform project led by Victoria's Law School (featured on page 5), which has brought together a research team including stakeholders from several government departments to examine the important regulatory issues that are facing New Zealand.

Working in partnership is a strong focus of all universities—and the wealth of perspectives we gain from this can only be beneficial. The University is not in the business of simply delivering information; we are searching for better questions, better answers and better ways of making collaboration work as we seek to enhance the society in which we live.

I wish you all a safe and happy holiday break and look forward to sharing more from the University with you next year.

*Pat Walsh*

Professor Pat Walsh, Vice-Chancellor



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# Saving critically endangered species



*Alice the rhinoceros, immediately after her release into a game reserve in South Africa. Photo: Wayne Linklater*

**Wellington is a long way from Africa, but research being conducted at Victoria University is helping restore populations of animals, such as rhinoceros, that live on the African savannahs.**

Dr Wayne Linklater, from the School of Biological Sciences, is leading a research project looking for affordable ways to successfully conserve populations of large mammals on the African continent through relocations and breeding programmes.

“Animals are transferred from one location to another for a variety of reasons, including removing them from danger, reintroducing them to habitat once occupied by their species or restocking an existing population,” says Wayne.

“However, there are typically very high death rates after the animals are released in a new environment, and female breeding rates also tend to go down.”

His team has been analysing data sets covering 682 releases of rhinoceros over 25 years.

Factors examined include characteristics of the new physical and social environment,

when the animal was released, the age of the animal and the presence of predators.

Wayne says existing scientific literature is full of elaborate hypotheses about what will ensure a successful transfer, but his research has found that, when it comes to the rare black rhinoceros, the recipe is actually quite simple.

“When restocking a population, the most important thing is the age of the animal when it is released. They have to be adults that are capable of fending for themselves which, in the case of a black rhino, means six years or older.”

While rhino numbers are increasing, Wayne says they remain a critically endangered species.

Wayne says his research can also be applied to studies of endangered species in New Zealand.

“There are lessons we can learn from what happens in other places.”

Wayne's work has been funded by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior.

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# Language maestro visits Victoria



*Jack Richards (left) with Vice-Chancellor Professor Pat Walsh at one of the public lectures.*

**It was a homecoming of sorts for Victoria University's 2011 Ian Gordon Fellow Professor Jack Richards, an internationally renowned specialist in second and foreign language teaching.**

Jack received a Master of Arts degree with First Class Honours in English at Victoria in 1966, and has since developed a distinguished international

reputation as an applied linguist and educator. He is the author of numerous professional books for English language teachers, as well as many widely used textbooks for English language students.

Speaking in three public lectures in Wellington in August, Jack addressed the topic of English language teaching.

His visit to Victoria University was courtesy of the Ian Gordon Fellowship. The Fellowship was established to support and promote the study of English language and Linguistics at Victoria through an endowed gift of \$500,000, made by the late Professor Ian Gordon to the Victoria University Foundation in 2003. The Ian Gordon Fellow is hosted each year by Victoria's School of Linguistics and Applied Language Studies.

Professor Janet Holmes of Victoria's School of Linguistics and Applied Language Studies says feedback on the Ian Gordon lectures was extremely positive, with much admiration for Jack's wealth of experience as well as the amount of information packed into his lectures.

“The lecture topics addressed such issues as how the English language teaching enterprise has been shaped by changes in the status of English worldwide, and what constitutes professionalism in language teaching.”

She says students and staff benefited greatly from the visit.

“A highlight was a round table meeting that provided an opportunity for postgraduate students to meet him, inform him about their research and obtain valuable comments on their projects.”

Professor Jack Richards will return to Wellington for Victoria's December Graduation where he will be conferred with the honorary degree of Doctor of Literature in recognition of his contributions to English language teaching and the arts.

The Ian Gordon Fellow lectures can be viewed at <http://mdsweb.vuw.ac.nz> (right-hand panel—‘View Public Recordings’).

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# Success for emerging researchers



Left to right: Rutherford Discovery Fellowships winners Dr Justin Hodgkiss, Dr Nicole Moreham and Dr Nancy Bertler.

Victoria University researchers won three of this year's 10 Rutherford Discovery Fellowships, which support talented emerging researchers.

Dr Nancy Bertler will work on the Roosevelt Island Climate Evolution project in Antarctica, Dr Justin Hodgkiss' project engineers solar cells that optimise light harvesting and energy conversion, and Dr Nicole Moreham will write a book setting out the protection of privacy in English private law.

The successful researchers each receive between \$150,000 and \$200,000 per year over five years to investigate their research topic, and help them further their career in New Zealand.

Vice-Chancellor Professor Pat Walsh says the Fellowships were a significant achievement for the researchers involved.

"These awards, set up by the Government last year, enable some of our best and brightest researchers to achieve their potential to make an enormous contribution to New Zealand.

"I am delighted to see those who have dedicated their career to discovery and world-leading research being supported and recognised in this way."

## Dr Nancy Bertler

Nancy is jointly appointed by Victoria University and GNS Science. She leads the National Ice Core Programme and manages the New Zealand Ice Core Research Laboratory.

She will use the award to further her

investigations of the climate history of the Ross Ice Shelf in Antarctica.

"It is a huge privilege and I'm excited about the research the Rutherford Discovery Fellowship will support," says Nancy.

As Chief Scientist, she will lead the international Roosevelt Island Climate Evolution (RICE) project in Antarctica, which involves a team of 50 scientists and engineers from eight nations recovering a 750 metre deep ice core from the remote Antarctic Roosevelt Island.

"This study will significantly improve computer models that predict the future behaviour of the Ross Ice Shelf, and hence West Antarctica's potential contribution to rising sea levels," she says.

## Dr Justin Hodgkiss

Justin is a Lecturer in Physical Chemistry at Victoria University and a Principal Investigator in the MacDiarmid Institute for Advanced Materials and Nanotechnology.

Although solar cells have been available for many years, uptake has been limited by their cost. Justin is investigating an alternative option of making solar cells from polymers or plastic.

He says the major advantage is polymers can be dissolved to make an ink and then printed in sheets.

"That opens the possibility of making them quite cheaply. Solar energy is such an untapped resource, one that could easily meet global energy demands if properly harnessed," says Justin.

"It's also promising for New Zealand. The fabrication process for polymer solar cells is so simple, there is no reason we can't do it here."

Justin says he was motivated to study in his research field because of the pressing need to find new, clean and sustainable sources of energy.

## Dr Nicole Moreham

Nicole is a Senior Lecturer in Law at Victoria and the first legal academic to be the recipient of a Rutherford Discovery Fellowship.

She will write a book setting out the protection of privacy in English private law.

The book addresses four central questions: What is privacy? Why is it worthy of protection? How is it currently protected in the law? What further developments are needed to create a comprehensive, coherent legal privacy right which sits appropriately with competing interests?

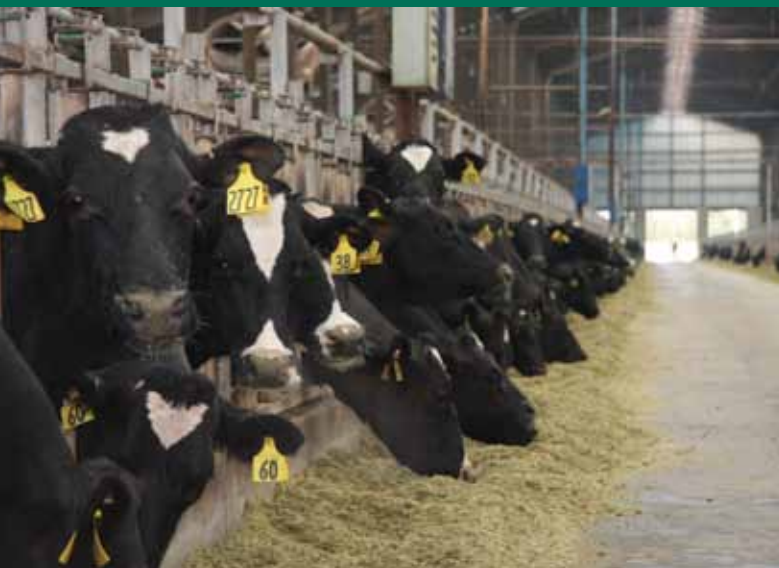
"The past two decades have seen an explosion in technology, making it easier than ever before to obtain, store and disseminate private material about a person against his or her wishes," says Nicole.

"The perennial tension between individual privacy rights and the media's need to obtain and publish the news also continues to be negotiated."

Her book will question how the law should respond to these, and other, privacy issues—both in New Zealand and overseas.



## The impact of investment in China



Fonterra's Tangshan Farm is one of 20 Fonterra dairy farms planned for China.  
Photo: Fonterra

To meet growing Chinese demand for New Zealand dairy products, Fonterra began opening dairy farms in China four years ago.

This investment by Fonterra is part of a study by two political scientists from Victoria's New Zealand Contemporary China Research Centre on the impact of the New Zealand-China Free Trade Agreement (FTA).

"Traditionally, foreign companies shift manufacturing to China then sell their products to the Western market, but Fonterra is following a new model and selling the product within the domestic market," says Dr Jason Young, who is funded by an Emerging Researcher Grant from the Asia New Zealand Foundation.

Jason and his colleague Dr Marc Lanteigne are researching the bilateral investment in the agricultural sector, which has been the main focus over the three years the FTA has been operating.

The project aims to gain a better understanding of how China's commercial diplomacy in New Zealand is affecting both countries' economic and political policies.

At the same time as Fonterra is establishing dairy farms in China, Chinese companies are starting to buy New Zealand dairy farms and processing companies.

Marc says that while Chinese trade and investment has been credited with sheltering the country from the worst of the global recession, some people are concerned that New Zealand could be losing its economic sovereignty.

"The dairy industry is the jewel in the crown of the New Zealand economy and traditionally there's been a great deal of reluctance to allow too much foreign ownership. How would China influence the sector if they continue to invest here?" says Marc.

"We'll be looking at China's policy motivations and what the economic and political motivations of this accelerated investment are.

"Fonterra and New Zealand's dairy industry will be crucial case studies in the understanding of this little-studied form of Chinese diplomacy."

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## Self-assessment gets tick for tertiary study



Dr Roseanna Bourke views self-assessment as a powerful tool that helps unlock students' ability to apply their knowledge in new situations.

The Senior Lecturer from the School of Educational Psychology and Pedagogy says self-assessment is not self-grading but "a higher form of learning" that encourages students to focus on what they have learnt, as opposed to their mark or grade.

In September, she presented her research into online self-assessment at an international symposium for researchers and policy makers working in the area of assessment. Victoria University hosted the conference which was co-sponsored by the University of Auckland, the Ministry of Education and the New Zealand Qualifications Authority.

Roseanna is trialling a number of self-assessment methods with undergraduate and postgraduate students in the Faculty of Education. Examples include asking students to explain (rather than answer questions about) what they have learnt from set text readings. After completing a 3,000 word literature review on learning, they then present their own theory on the topic in just 14 words.

The benefits, she says, are simple. "Self-assessment requires students to pose problems, seek solutions and collaborate with others—all of which teaches them to apply and use knowledge.

"We want our future engineers, lawyers, teachers, artists and scientists to have strong university-based credentials but we also want them to be able to react well in situations they haven't been specifically trained for."

A number of Roseanna's students are as enthusiastic as she is about self-assessment, praising it for helping them to "check" what they have learnt and increasing confidence in their ability to make decisions.

Ultimately, Roseanna would like to see self-assessment become a mandatory component of tertiary-level study.

"If we are going to really value it, it has to have the same status as other forms of assessment."

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# Lessons for regulatory reform

A year of intensive study by some of Wellington's leading researchers has produced a book that looks at how New Zealand can improve the way it creates, implements and reviews regulations.

Victoria University's Law School is leading a \$1.75 million regulatory reform project funded by the New Zealand Law Foundation. The project analyses the ways that regulation impacts on a variety of areas—from buying a household appliance to attracting foreign direct investment to New Zealand.

Victoria researchers, with others from the New Zealand Institute of Economic Research (NZIER) and practitioner input from law firm Chapman Tripp, have identified regulatory issues facing New Zealand in 17 aspects of economic, commercial and social activity.

Areas under the microscope include consumer credit, electricity, telecommunications, building, property rights, intellectual property rights, human rights, public consultation and participation, international trade and the trans-Tasman relationship.

Findings from the first stage of the project are brought together in *Learning from the Past, Adapting for the Future: Regulatory Reform in New Zealand*, which has recently been released by legal publishers LexisNexis.

Further results from the research, including recommendations for the way ahead in the areas under scrutiny and a tool kit for regulators, will be completed in 2012.

Project leader Professor Susy Frankel, from Victoria's Law Faculty, says many international issues affect the design of regulation for New Zealand.

"We can learn lessons from overseas and sometimes even adopt overseas regulation.

"New Zealand's regulatory framework, however, should suit our own particular circumstances. The research is helping us understand how New Zealand's unique features, such as its small market size and market economy, are relevant to regulation."

Susy says a goal of the project is to stimulate discussion among a wide cross-section of New Zealanders, not just policy and law makers.

"The cost of regulatory failure can be spectacular and far reaching, as the global financial crisis and New Zealand's problems with leaky buildings have shown.

"No one accurately predicted the downstream effects that light-handed regulation of the



Building regulation is one of the issues the New Zealand Law Foundation-funded research is examining. House illustration by Svilen Milev, [www.effective.com](http://www.effective.com)

building industry would have, or the trial and error in regulating to fix the problem."

She says a goal of the current research project is to learn from what went well and what did not in regulatory experiments.

Other topics being examined by the research team include issues around how consumer interests should be regulated in areas such as reducing obesity, discouraging tobacco or alcohol consumption or dissuading consumers from taking on dangerous levels of debt.

"Does government, for example, need to intervene in the marketplace to protect consumers from themselves or are such interventions paternalistic or 'nanny-state' measures?" says Susy.

The project also puts the spotlight on what does and does not benefit New Zealand in its trade agreements and looks closely at collaborations with Australia.

"We're asking when combining resources with Australia makes sense, and when it's better for New Zealand not to do things with its trans-Tasman neighbour.

"Researchers are looking at the apparently successful New Zealand/Australia relationship around food safety and labelling standards and compares that with the yet-to-be established combined therapeutic and medicines authority."

Susy says having an interdisciplinary and multi-institutional research team is delivering benefits.

"By bringing together a range of different disciplines, characters, opinions and experiences, we are broadening horizons and achieving a cross-fertilisation of ideas, which will lead to cutting-edge interdisciplinary outputs."

A range of stakeholders, including government agencies, have joined workshops over the last year, ensuring the research takes a broad spectrum of perspectives into account.

The project is the second largest ever funded by the New Zealand Law Foundation and runs for two years.

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# Victoria out and about

## Transit of Venus forum— Contemplating our nation's future



*Victor Walker, Co-Chair of the Tolaga Bay Transit of Venus Steering Committee and CEO of Te Ruhanga o Ngati Porou, and Professor Sir Paul Callaghan at Tolaga Bay. Photo: Nori Parata*

Some of New Zealand's brightest and best young thinkers will gather at a three-day forum in Gisborne next year, where they will contemplate New Zealand's future following a rare astronomical event—something that 240 years ago changed the direction of the nation.

In 1769 in Tahiti, Captain James Cook observed the Transit of Venus (when Venus passes between the Earth and the sun), and then continued west in search of the 'Great Unknown Southern Continent', landing in Gisborne. After a violent clash with local Māori, Cook and his crew sailed up the coast to Anaura and then Tolaga Bay, and were able to communicate successfully with the Māori who greeted the ship through Tupaia, the priest and master navigator who had come with them from Tahiti.

Tolaga Bay is where forum participants will gather on 6 June 2012 to observe the Transit of Venus, the day before the forum commences.

"That initial Tolaga Bay meeting was the first friendly encounter of the two cultures, and involved young people on both sides—Cook's

crew were all under 40 except for Cook, and the Māori were young, too, as people didn't live very long in those days," says Professor Lydia Wevers, Director of the Stout Research Centre, and one of the Steering Group members of the Transit of Venus forum.

"The two parties exchanged plants and knowledge, and their meeting really was a turning point for the country. So we thought it would be interesting to hold a national forum in the same place to think again about this encounter of peoples, focusing on what younger people think about the future."

Convenor, Victoria's Professor Sir Paul Callaghan, says the forum, a partnership between the University, the MacDiarmid Institute and the Royal Society of New Zealand, will be an opportunity to ask some important questions.

"What are some new ways we can create jobs and wealth in this country—our water, wind, dark skies, remoteness, storytelling genius, trans-Pacific bandwidth? What kind of country do we want to live in? What kind of people do we want to be?"

Participants will come from a broad cross-section of New Zealand society and a wide range of inspirational guest speakers will each present a perspective on New Zealand's future potential. Confirmed speakers include Craig Nevill-Manning, Director of Engineering, Google New York; Victoria alumnus Derek Handley, co-founder and CEO of mobile advertising agency The Hyperfactory; and anthropologist Dame Anne Salmond.

The forum will be accompanied by a number of associated events. This includes replanting the foreshore of Tolaga Bay with plants that would have been there when Cook arrived—a plan that is being facilitated by the Allan Wilson Centre for Molecular Energy and Evolution.

"This will hopefully include seeds and seedlings from actual plants that botanist Joseph Banks took away with him, now growing in the Royal Botanic Kew Gardens in London," says Lydia Wevers.

Professor Bill Manhire, Director of Victoria's International Institute of Modern Letters, plans to invite schoolchildren to think about their vision for the future of New Zealand, through various activities. "I've already reserved a Twitter account for Captain James Cook and he's going to tweet furiously as he 'sails' towards New Zealand.

"It's important to involve young people as they don't yet have that world weariness of older people, and they will bring a sense of what's possible rather than what's probable. You need a few 'wise old wolves' like Paul Callaghan running around, but it's also important to involve the energies of people who will be around in 50 years time.

"The Transit is an opportunity to stand in the present, aware of the past, but looking towards the future."

Attendance at the forum is by invitation, or you can register directly for the open places at [www.royalsociety.org.nz](http://www.royalsociety.org.nz) (places are limited).



## Kings Place—New Zealand on show

A group of New Zealand's top musicians, composers and writers—many with strong Victoria connections—will showcase a lesser known side of the country in London next year.

A contemporary festival of New Zealand-themed music, poetry and ideas will feature at Kings Place, one of London's hottest new venues.

The week-long March event 'New Zealand at Kings Place' (26–31 March 2012) will be centred on the New Zealand String Quartet, which has been Quartet in Residence at Victoria University since 1991. Entitled *New Worlds: New Perspectives*, the Quartet's three programmes will explore migration across oceans, centuries and cultural boundaries through the work of New Zealand composers.

"We will be presenting a contemporary face of New Zealand, which emphasises how multicultural our society has become—something many overseas audiences won't realise," says Project Manager of New Zealand at Kings Place, Elizabeth Kerr.

The Quartet's repertoire will feature both traditional and contemporary works, including



*New Zealand String Quartet. Left to right: Rolf Gjølsten, cello; Gillian Ansell, viola; Helene Pohl, first violin; Douglas Beilman, second violin. Photo: Robert Catto*

music by Jack Body, Michael Norris and Professor John Psathas, staff members of the New Zealand School of Music; former staff member Ross Harris; and Victoria Honorary Doctorate recipients Gillian Karawe Whitehead and Richard Nunns.

Complementing the programme will be a performance of three New Zealand poets: Victoria graduate and Honorary Doctorate

recipient Fleur Adcock, who has lived in London since 1963; Director of Victoria's International Institute of Modern Letters Professor Bill Manhire, who represents a generation of poets that stepped away from the British tradition; and New Zealand Samoan poet Tusiata Avia, who provides a Pacific perspective.

"We hope through our work the audience will gain an insight into New Zealand's literary imagination and the way in which the narrative of our place in the world has developed," says Professor Bill Manhire.

New Zealanders will also perform in Kings Place's regular experimental 'OutHear' session, with Michael Norris curating a programme called 'The Body Electric', combining live musicians with electronics and multimedia.

"Victoria is the primary sponsor of this event, because of our close connections," says Vice-Chancellor Professor Pat Walsh.

"It's excellent to see so many of our people represented on the world stage."

[www.kingsplace.co.uk/whats-on-book-tickets/curated-weeks/new-zealand-at-kings-place-new-zealand-string-quartet](http://www.kingsplace.co.uk/whats-on-book-tickets/curated-weeks/new-zealand-at-kings-place-new-zealand-string-quartet)

## Writers and Readers Week collaboration

More Victoria staff and recent Victoria graduates than ever before will be part of Writers and Readers Week for the biennial New Zealand International Arts Festival.

As a partner of Writers and Readers Week for March 2012, Victoria University will host visiting international writers who will deliver lectures and master classes. Ten postgraduate students will be Writers and Readers Week volunteers, with responsibilities including assisting with the day-to-day running of the programme, attending sessions and working closely with the writers. Also, for the first time in New Zealand, Bill Manhire, Director of Victoria's International Institute of Modern Letters, will give a public Poetry Masterclass.

"The Festival's Writers and Readers Week has always had strong links with Victoria but next year we are taking that relationship a step further," says Anne Chamberlain, Writers and Readers Week Manager.

"It is a wonderful opportunity for students to experience engaging sessions with world-class writers."

The New Zealand International Arts Festival's Writers and Readers Week opens on Friday 9 March with the Chairman of the Copenhagen Climate Council, Tim Flannery, giving an opening address in the Wellington Town Hall. The other high-profile Town Hall Talks include an evening with Germaine Greer and a closing address by three-time Pulitzer Prize winner Thomas Friedman.

"This is a natural collaboration for Victoria," says Professor Deborah Willis, Pro Vice-Chancellor and Dean, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences.

"It builds on our strengths in creative writing and literary translation and enables postgraduate students to gain enormous benefit from interactions with authors of international calibre."

Writers and Readers Week takes place in Wellington from 9–14 March. The full programme will be announced on 26 January.

[www.nzfestival.co.nz](http://www.nzfestival.co.nz)

*Books of some of the authors who will participate in Writers and Readers Week.*



# Balancing Christianity and Samoan culture



Samoan-born New Zealander Sadat Muaiava has recently been awarded his MA with merit in Pacific Studies, with his soon-to-be-published thesis the first scholarly examination of the experiences of and issues facing Samoan pastors and their children.

The son of a faife'au (pastor) himself, Sadat was 19 when his father was called to lead a congregation in Wainuiomata.

"We weren't sure what to expect," says Sadat. "It was hard to adapt, especially when you're not born into the parsonage. Being a faife'au's kid means that people expect a lot from you—but there are privileges too."

Sadat explains that the first missionaries arrived in Samoa in the 1800s. "As time went on, the missionaries replaced Samoan religion with Christianity. But Christianity was balanced with our Samoan culture and traditions."

In his thesis, Sadat explores the polarisation of fa'asamoa (Samoan cultural values and beliefs) by examining the expectations and privileges accorded to children of faife'au—expectations and privileges that combine two opposing Eurocentric and indigenous concepts.

He explores the relationship between Tagata ese, a concept introduced by Christian missionaries meaning that pastors could only practise in another village, not their own; and feagaiga, the Samoan cultural relationship of brother and sister.

"Somehow we have made these concepts work together—but fundamentally, they contradict," says Sadat. "Tagata ese means that faife'au are taken away from their own village and placed into another, contradicting the essence of feagaiga, which is about the value of the familial bond."

Sadat's work has generated interest and enthusiasm in Samoan communities. "I'm excited about that," says Sadat. "It's something that hasn't really been discussed before. They might agree with it, or argue with it—but either way, they're talking about it."

Sadat was recently appointed to the Pacific Navigator position at Victoria's Kelburn Library—a role that provides academic consultation with Pasifika students, enhances their use of library resources and develops the Library's Pasifika collection.

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# Marsden project challenges traditional accounting



Traditional accounting focuses on corporations, financial markets and maximising shareholder wealth. However, according to the Marsden-funded research of a Victoria professor, this focus is too narrow.

"Mainstream accounting has downplayed or ignored many issues of concern in contemporary society, including questions about corporate accountability, sustainability

and social justice," says Professor Judy Brown from Victoria's School of Accounting and Commercial Law.

"I would argue that this attitude makes accounting complicit in many of the financial, social and environmental crises currently facing the developed and developing worlds."

Judy's research project 'Dialogic Accounting: The Challenge of Taking Multiple Perspectives Seriously', which received \$685,000 in Marsden funding last year, seeks to help open traditional accounting to critical scrutiny and provide alternatives that recognise the needs of various stakeholder communities.

The project aims to foster new 'dialogic' forms of accounting that enable groups such as environmentalists, ethical investors, unions and indigenous communities to co-develop accountings that take account of their own political and value standpoints.

"Approaching accounting from multiple perspectives helps to open up questions of what is accounted for, how it is accounted for and on whose terms," says Judy.

The research builds on Judy's published work on 'democratising accounting'.

"We are drawing on ideas and findings from contemporary political theory and a number of other disciplines to inform our research."

"We are also seeking to develop new theory and practice by working with academics from various disciplines and potential beneficiaries of the research such as NGOs, activists, environmentalists, unions and Māori in a participatory learning and action research group."

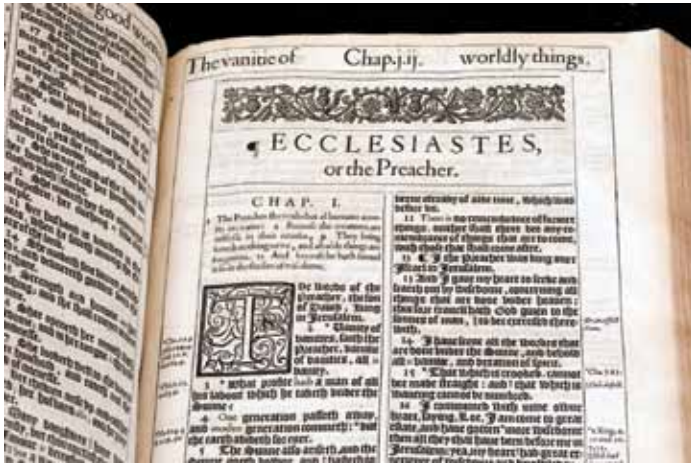
Judy is working on the project with Professors Jesse Dillard and Trevor Hopper, both leading international researchers in critical accounting, and two PhD researchers—Sendirella George and Farzana Tanima.

To date, the research team has presented at conferences and symposia in New Zealand, the United Kingdom and the United States. They are also currently developing a website to maximise opportunities for online discussions and dissemination of their research.

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# King James Bible turns 400



The Holy Bible, printed in 1613. Courtesy of Bible Society in New Zealand Collection, Rare Books and Fine Printing, Alexander Turnbull Library.

English Professor David Norton says the English we speak today could have been very different if it weren't for the publication of one book 400 years ago—the King James Bible.

To mark the 400th anniversary of one of the greatest works of English literature and religion, David has produced a new book providing a history of the translation of that Bible, which was undertaken from 1604 and published in 1611.

David says the new version was an attempt to unify the church.

“King James liked the idea of keeping all parties of the church working together. He had various motives—but his primary motivation was a sense that earlier translations could be improved on by making the new Bible as theologically neutral as it could reasonably be.”

David says it took a while for the new version to become widely accepted.

“After 1644 anyone in the English-speaking world who wanted to buy a Bible had only one choice, the King James version. It had a unique position for entire generations from about 1660 onwards—it was heard and read from earliest years to grave, a single standard of truth and language.

“Because of this it had a profound impact on the English language. It was a case of the most read book acting as a standard of the English language.”

David says readers of his new book—*The King James Bible: A Short History from Tyndale to Today*—will be struck particularly by the long, painstaking effort involved in the creation of the King James Bible.

In conjunction with the 400th anniversary of its publication, David has had a busy year of events around the world, including keynote addresses at conferences, special lectures, including four in Cathedrals, and dozens of media interviews.

“That’s what happens when your specialist area becomes a fashionable topic for a year.”

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## Motivating Māori students

Teachers who get to know their Māori students personally and culturally, care about their learning and have high expectations of them get results, according to a study carried out by Faculty of Education researchers.

The Director of the Jessie Hetherington Centre for Educational Research, Professor Luanna Meyer, and Te Kura-Māori Professor Wally Penetito, led the bicultural team that evaluated Te Kotahitanga, a professional development programme that helps teachers in mainstream schools raise Māori student achievement.

Te Kotahitanga, developed by Professor Russell Bishop at the University of Waikato, informs teachers about Māori students’ experiences of schooling, highlights their own attitudes and helps them be more effective.

The evaluation team included an expert in multicultural education from the United States and used Māori research protocols, such as having Māori participants interviewed by Māori researchers.

The research team interviewed students, teachers and principals, and conducted more than 440 observations of Year 9 and Year 10 classes in 33 North Island secondary schools using Te Kotahitanga. They also compared achievement data from those schools with others not using the programme.

A team member, Dr Anne Hynds, says Te Kotahitanga resulted in teachers putting more effort into relationships with their Māori students, valuing Māori culture and language more highly and expecting as much from Māori students as they did from others.

“They were more likely to give a voice to all students in their classroom,” she says.



Left to right: Professor Luanna Meyer, Dr Anne Hynds and Professor Wally Penetito.

Data from schools using Te Kotahitanga showed Māori students came to school more regularly and were more likely to enrol beyond Year 11 study. They also out-performed peers in comparison schools in maths, science and physics.

The programme was beneficial for students who were able to “feel Māori at school in a positive way” and to their families who said their young people were keener on school and more motivated to achieve.

“The study shows the importance of high-quality professional development and that good teachers really can make a difference,” says Anne.

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From the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) Professor Penny Boumelha

## Establishing our vision for future education

**The challenge for any university is to realise the transformative power of university education. A university education can change lives, broaden minds, support personal growth and open up many opportunities.**

It follows that Victoria's response to shifts in the environment we work within—such as technological advances and global developments in education—will shape our future, and thus the futures of our graduates. Change is all around us, and it is essential that we regularly refresh our thinking and update our practice.

It is a fundamental feature of universities that the community of scholars takes collective responsibility for the quality of the teaching programmes and the qualifications they offer. No matter how many individual examples of good practice can be found, no university can achieve educational excellence unless it strives for systematic improvement. We must take advantage of opportunities to learn from, and contribute to, the continued development of a broader body of knowledge.

### Reviewing Victoria's undergraduate education

Our current Learning and Teaching Strategy identifies as one of its key objectives to “establish a distinctive vision for education and the student experience at Victoria”. A review of our current undergraduate education has been undertaken as a key element in developing this distinctive approach.

The review set out to build upon our many current examples of good practice and establish a clear commitment to making Victoria a national, and over time, an international, leader in its approach to all aspects of the educational endeavour.

The aims of the review are to:

- arrive at a shared, distinctive approach to our portfolio of undergraduate degrees, with appropriate alignment to recent international developments
- ensure that Victoria's undergraduate programmes are of excellent quality, enriched by the research intensive environment of the University, shaped both by discipline knowledge and by opportunities to develop the Victoria graduate attributes, and extended by well planned co-curricular opportunities
- enhance the Victoria learning experience
- ensure that our programmes are designed to produce graduates with the knowledge, skills and intellectual flexibility that will prepare them for future success.

### Working in partnership with the Victoria community

In May this year a discussion paper was released across the Victoria community seeking feedback on several areas critical to the future of the University: our curriculum design, innovation in learning and teaching, quality assurance, the value of our qualifications and the experience of our students.

We sought a wide range of views and ideas and were heartened by the end result, receiving 20 responses from staff and students, including a very valuable submission compiled from extensive consultation of students by VUWSA, our students' association.

At the same time, five working parties were established, each chaired by a senior academic, to consider central aspects of learning, teaching and curriculum, and to make recommendations for improvements and new approaches. There was broad engagement across the University in these groups; in all, there were nearly 60 members, representing faculties, central service units and students. In addition, each group received all of the submissions made by members of the university community.

All five working parties have now produced their reports on the critical areas identified, each providing detailed definitions, summary literature reviews, extended analyses and examples of good practice. Each report makes recommendations which, together, give us a clear and coherent picture of how undergraduate education at Victoria might look in the future.

We are currently consulting with staff and students on these reports, and on a set of proposed Academic Principles for what we are calling the New Victoria Learning Partnership: the vision that Victoria will be a university where learning through inquiry is explicitly at the centre, and is fostered by partnership between learners and teachers.

### Next steps

Once the consultation is complete, the Academic Board will be asked to adopt these proposals so that we can begin to plan the implementation of the agreed changes. This process will demand extensive and detailed work across the University, and is currently scheduled to take place over 2012 and 2013.

I look forward to sharing with you our progress on the New Victoria Learning Partnership in a future issue of *Victorious*.



# Engineering students go Android



*Engineering student Nick Malcolm designed a lost objects locator application to go with his website 'Lost Lookout'.*

**A lost objects locator, a public transport information application and a fitness monitoring tool are just some of the recent applications Victoria University Bachelor of Engineering students have designed for Android phones.**

Through the contacts of a Victoria alumnus, Google has donated 50 Android Nexus One phones to Victoria's School of Engineering and Computer Science for student research.

The state-of-the-art phones have 3G data capability, are GPS-enabled and include inertial sensors to detect movement.

The new devices have been used in second- and third-year Network Engineering courses taught by Dr Kris Bubendorfer, Andy Linton and Dr Ian Welch.

Although there were no strings attached to the gift, Kris says Google is interested in hearing the results of the students' work.

There is also interest from businesses in Wellington who are looking for staff to help with mobile applications.

"This is pretty new technology and people are looking for graduates with the skills to apply it in their businesses.

"With this type of interaction, our students are developing the technical expertise required by employers, and will be able to make a difference from day one in the workforce."

Kris says having access to the phones inspired students and staff alike.

"It's great to see students grasp a concept and then get out there and develop their own novel applications. But it was also rewarding for staff. Using the phones was probably the most fun I've had in a university course—I left some of those lectures really buzzing."

Victoria is the only university in New Zealand to offer a specialisation in Network Engineering, a programme in which students study the design and implementation of modern forms of communications technology.

The other two digital engineering programmes offered at Victoria are Electronic and Computer Systems Engineering and Software Engineering.

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# Getting students addicted



*Professor Kevin Gould in action.*

For some first-year plant biology students, it is the dances Professor Kevin Gould performs that help them remember what they have been taught.

For others, their enthusiasm for the subject is sparked by Kevin's singing, shouting, smashing tomatoes with a hammer—or from the opportunity to engage in role play as garden curators.

The plant biology professor's inventive and passionate approach has led to him receiving a 2011 Sustained Excellence in Tertiary Teaching Award from Ako Aotearoa.

The win achieves a career goal for Kevin—entry to an academy of past award recipients that is focused on promoting excellence in teaching and learning.

"I think we can improve the teaching/learning process, particularly at the 100 level. First-year study is conventionally seen as the time to accumulate facts and knowledge, and advanced courses as the place to learn creative and critical thinking skills. I totally disagree with that—young people have an unbridled capacity to process and apply new information."

Kevin has also received teaching awards from both Auckland and Otago Universities, where he lectured before joining Victoria's School of Biological Sciences three years ago. In 2009, he was instrumental in a complete redesign of Victoria's first-year Biology of Plants course.

Now, rather than following prescriptive protocols and "the rote learning of hundreds of facts", Kevin's students enjoy theatrical demonstrations like a performance of the witches' incantation from Macbeth, stories and the chance to use remote-controlled devices or 'clickers' to respond to multi-choice questions.

Another innovation is the introduction of short video clips which are posted on YouTube for students to watch before they come to class.

Kevin spares no energy in his mission of igniting young minds and sharing the exhilaration of finding something new and important. "Scientific discovery is a drug; it can be powerfully addictive and is immensely rewarding, yet most students are unaware such a fine drug exists."

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# Making movie magic



*Alex Funke shows a student how to load the camera.  
Photo: Paul Wolffram*

The first ever 16mm production course run at Victoria University has introduced film students to traditional filmmaking—at a time when the art is threatened in an increasingly digitised industry.

‘Shoot on Film’ was taught by Paul Wolffram and Oscar winning cinematographer Alex Funke.

Paul says he decided to run the course due to the wide interest in the skills, processes and techniques of shooting on ‘real film’.

“At a time when film production is becoming more and more digital there is a huge amount of interest in shooting on real film,” he says.

“Most young film makers learn on digital cameras that are becoming increasingly sophisticated and shooting amazing images, but these cameras are quite different from traditional film.”

Over a nine-week period, the 12 students each shot a scene under the supervision of Alex Funke, who has worked with Peter Jackson on the Lord of the Rings trilogy and King Kong.

“With Alex’s help we borrowed some cameras from Peter Jackson and managed to get cheap film stock,” says Paul.

The 12 scenes, which were scripted by Paul, combined to form a short film which screened at Miramar’s Roxy Cinema in October.

“Given that the script was designed and written to accommodate the needs of the course and 12 student cinematographers it’s quite remarkable that we ended up with a coherent story. But we did, thanks to Alex and the commitment and passion of the students,” says Paul.

Paul says students benefited hugely from the course.

“The opportunity to work on film is quite rare because of the costs involved. Students were given a unique opportunity to get hands-on experience with this iconic medium. While some dismiss film as a relic, most big budget films are still shot on it and it is constantly being improved, and will continue to be a filmmaking medium for years to come.”

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# An international approach

The first challenge Korean-born Simon Park faced while studying in New Zealand was when his Auckland teacher got frustrated with him for not following her instructions. He wasn’t being deliberately disobedient, he says—he simply hadn’t understood.

Now course coordinator for first-year Information Systems course INFO 101 through Victoria’s Faculty of Commerce and Administration (FCA), Simon is part of a faculty-wide pilot project to ensure that international students are not only better at understanding and being understood, but that they are also more active participants in the classroom.

“In the first tutorial we try to mix students up, so that international students are not just sticking together—we also have some tutors who are international students,” says Simon.

“The first few tutorials include some fun activities so that students get to know each other and are comfortable working together.”

The joint initiative with Student Learning Support Services (SLSS), sponsored by Victoria’s Learning and Teaching Development Fund, aims to provide an international experience for all students, and to produce students who can function effectively as global leaders.



*Tutor Nadia Ali, from India, helps one of her student groups.*

“For our international students, we want them to feel more at home and happy talking about how things work in their country—and for our domestic students, we want them to be more aware of the international perspectives from those around them,” says Associate Professor Vicky Mabin, Associate Dean (Teaching and Learning), FCA.

SLSS facilitators, led by project co-leader Karen Commons, have been working with a number of FCA staff, tutors and lecturers. Together, they have been developing new teaching activities that

incorporate multicultural perspectives. There is an emphasis on active, experiential learning—such as role plays, group discussions and student panels.

Karen says the best thing about the new approaches is that the students are learning from each other.

“The next step in our project is to review course material to ensure global perspectives and examples become an integral part of the curriculum.”

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# Curating an impression

After World War II, money and film stock were scarce, and so New Zealand-born artist Len Lye started making cameraless photos (photograms) in New York. A collection of these works—possibly the largest display of Len Lye prints ever in Wellington—is being curated for exhibition by eight fourth-year students for the Art History Honours paper History of Photography.

The students have spent the full nine months of their course focusing on the exhibition, which is on display in the Kirk room of Victoria's Adam Art Gallery until 18 December.

Course leader Professor Geoffrey Batchen says the curating process is often underestimated. "People seem to assume exhibitions go up almost on autopilot, but actually they're endlessly complicated and involve a huge amount of time and effort. The nine months the students had to come up with the exhibition is a short timeframe in the world of curating."

The programme throughout the year included an introduction to the art of curating, research on the history of cameraless photography and the work and career of Len Lye, and even a workshop on making photograms.

The students selected 26 of the almost 50 portraits that are held by the Govett-Brewster Art Gallery in New Plymouth and also decided to include some supplementary items that help to put Lye's work in historical context. Each student wrote an essay on a selected image, which is included in the exhibition catalogue.

Len Lye's 1947 collection included famous subjects such as jazz musician Baby Dodds, painter Georgia O'Keefe and poet W H Auden. To make the photograms, the subject would lie on the floor on a piece of photographic paper, with an overhead light being turned on for an instant then turned off, leaving an impression of a profile view rendered in stark black and white contrast.

The exhibition *Shadowgraphs: Photographic Portraits* by Len Lye was made possible through sponsorship by Photography by Woolf, who sponsor a student-led exhibition every

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*Len Lye, Baby Dodds, 1947, photogram. Photo courtesy of Len Lye Foundation, Govett-Brewster Art Gallery.*



# Course aids Asian development



Ngoc Tuan Mai (from the Ministry of Defence in Vietnam) and Sambath Hang (from the Ministry of Police in Cambodia) barbecuing eggs on the ELTO field trip to the Wairarapa. Photo: Hilary Watson

Watching 111 calls come in to the Police emergency centre and visiting Customs staff at Wellington Airport gave South East Asian government officials studying at Victoria a unique insight into New Zealand's security systems.

Twenty-seven officials working in governance and security in Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar and Vietnam made up this year's first intake of the English Language Training for Officials (ELTO) programme, which is funded by the New Zealand Aid programme within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade. They arrived in January and spent seven weeks at technical institutes in Nelson and Napier, followed by 14 weeks at Victoria's English Language Institute (which celebrated its 50th anniversary this year).

"Improving English language skills is a top priority, but ELTO participants also get to look at parallel services to those in their home country," says Programme Manager Hilary Watson from Accent Learning, a division of VicLink, which runs ELTO.

That included visiting the Police Training College, Police National Headquarters and Wellington Central Police Station, as well as accompanying Customs officials to look at ways of combating drug and wildlife smuggling.

"They make connections with each other and with officials in New Zealand which is extremely useful," says Hilary.

One graduate, for example, has been working with staff she met through Interpol's New Zealand Bureau since returning home to Vietnam.

ELTO course coordinator Annie Marengi says the officials make a big sacrifice to come to New Zealand.

"They leave families behind and all sorts of things happen while they're away. One of our students missed the birth of his first-born son while he was here.

"A special bond develops between those on the course because they share all kinds of interesting, comfortable and uncomfortable experiences while in New Zealand."

Since 1992, more than 800 people have graduated from ELTO. A range of Victoria staff have had input into ELTO with the Centre for Strategic Studies being a key partner for the intake on international security.

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# Catching up with old friends

Many of our alumni have had the opportunity to meet up with old friends in the last four months, with a series of Victoria alumni events hosted in New Zealand and abroad.

An event was held on the Auckland Viaduct in September, with guest speaker Associate Professor Marc Wilson from Victoria's School of Psychology talking about the psychology of winning and losing—which was a pertinent topic in the lead up to the Rugby World Cup.



Alix Raine, Graham Mourie and Margo Neas at the Wellington event.

An early October event in Wellington was themed specifically around the Rugby World Cup, with guest speaker Victoria alumnus and ex-All Black Graham Mourie.

At the end of September/beginning of October, alumni events were held in Indonesia, Thailand and Vietnam, with a further two events hosted in Malaysia and Singapore in November.

Photos from some of these events are below. For more photos, visit [www.victoria.ac.nz/alumni/events.aspx](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/alumni/events.aspx)



Alumni from the Vietnam event in Ho Chi Minh City. Left to right: Anh Nguyen, Nghia Tran, Hieu Le, Phuong Nguyen, Man Phan, Phuc Nguyen.



A group of Thai alumni who attended the Bangkok alumni event.



Some Thai alumni model the Victoria University fridge magnets. Left to right: Sanida Na Ranong, Jiraporn Tatiyapornsuk, Beli Taychamanoon.



Alumni with the Vice-Chancellor at the Malaysia event. Left to right: Hanis Hassan, Hazwani Hashim, Professor Pat Walsh, Zul Anuar.



Alumni at the Singapore event. Left to right: William Yap, Xiu Hui Ho, Qi Su Lim, Qi Hua Lim, Shen Wei Teo.



# IT guru starts small



Rowan Simpson's business journey began with a desire to get his hands dirty in the brave new world of the internet.

The software developer and investor was employee number three and a shareholder at Trade Me and an early investor in online accounting firm Xero. He now runs investment and consultancy firm Southgate Labs.

"At university I chose subjects that sounded challenging," says Rowan, who completed a Bachelor of Science in Computer Science at Victoria in the late 90s.

"I enjoyed it, even though I didn't have a strong computer background. I can remember one third-year assignment was to put together a basic webpage, something that would be straightforward these days but was fairly new then."

After graduating, Rowan joined Andersen Consulting, working on IT projects in Wellington and Sydney.

"I was flying back from Sydney every other weekend and trying to rent a flat, but by the

time I'd get back, all the good places had gone. Being young and naive, I started a website called Flathunt, leaving what was a well-paid job for a recent graduate to work on the site full time."

Six months later, Rowan joined former schoolmate Sam Morgan at Trade Me.

"I kept working on Flathunt which eventually became Trade Me Property. It was a very busy time—Trade Me membership went from 10,000 to 100,000 in the first year I was there," he says.

Now, through Southgate Labs, he offers technical and business advice and funding to startup companies.

"The entrepreneurs who impress me most have worked out a way to just get on with it—they're not 'waiting for permission' to start their business," says Rowan.

"One of our latest ventures is a company called VendHQ.com that provides a web-based retail point-of-service. It's fantastic to be actively involved in the adventures these businesses are having, rather than simply investing from the sidelines."

[www.rowansimpson.com](http://www.rowansimpson.com)

## New Victoria memorabilia



Award-winning graphic artist Sarah Maxey has designed a stunning new range of Victoria-branded clothing and memorabilia—the perfect souvenir of your university studies. All products can be purchased at vicbooks on campus or online at [www.vicbooks.co.nz/memorabilia](http://www.vicbooks.co.nz/memorabilia)

## Library services for alumni

For a small fee, Victoria alumni can now choose library membership options, including access to all printed materials or electronic databases—or a combination of both. To find out more, visit <http://library.victoria.ac.nz/library/borrowing/alumni.html>

## FIND US ON facebook

We invite you to join our alumni Facebook page. The page is updated regularly so you can keep in touch with the University, other alumni and the latest events. Simply search on Facebook for 'Victoria University of Wellington Alumni'.

The University also has a Facebook page—'Victoria University of Wellington'.

## Send us your email address

Do you receive our alumni e-newsletter every few months? If not, it's because we don't have your email address. Email us at [alumni@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:alumni@vuw.ac.nz) to get connected and receive invitations to our events.

# Top literary prize for Gemma



Photo: The Dominion Post

Science graduate and creative writing student Gemma Bowker-Wright has affirmed her outstanding literary promise by winning the top prize in New Zealand's most distinguished literary awards.

Gemma has won the BNZ Katherine Mansfield Award for published writers for her story *Katherine*, which is about the fading mental powers of a wife and the effects of that on a happy marriage.

Gemma has a background in science—holding both a Bachelor of Science in Marine Biology and Ecology and a Master's of Science in Restoration Ecology and Conservation Genetics from Victoria.

"I think having the thinking discipline that comes from studying science or having a grounding in science subjects helps a great deal with creative writing," says Gemma, who has worked as a science analyst at the Department for the Prime Minister and Cabinet since graduating with her Master's in 2008.

In addition, this year she has been studying towards a Master's in Creative Writing from

Victoria's International Institute of Modern Letters.

"At work I write in a highly structured way. I love creative writing, as it allows me to think differently and perhaps more freely about a topic."

Gemma won the Sunday Star-Times Short Story Award in 2010, and was shocked to learn that she had also won the Katherine Mansfield Award, worth \$10,000.

"Writing has always been a much-loved hobby but this prize will enable me to focus on writing my stories, with the aim of hopefully publishing a book one day."

Head judge and leading New Zealand fiction writer Owen Marshall says *Katherine* was a pleasure to read and that he re-read it several times.

"*Katherine* is an excellent piece that I hope gets published in the future. Gemma's writing is confident and original, with balance, compassion and restraint," he says.

Gemma's winning story can be found at [www.bnz.co.nz/about-us/sponsorships/bnz-literary-awards](http://www.bnz.co.nz/about-us/sponsorships/bnz-literary-awards)

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# Giving something back

Master of Public Policy graduate Diego Gonnet Ibarra received this year's Prime Minister's Policy Prize—and promptly donated his prize money to the Christchurch Earthquake Appeal to give thanks to the people of New Zealand for his NZAID scholarship.

Born and raised in Uruguay, Diego graduated in 2005 with a BA in Political Science (Hons) from Uruguay's Universidad de la República, where he stayed on as a researcher until 2008.

He completed Victoria's Master of Public Policy programme between 2009 and 2010, with support from a scholarship through NZAID—an initiative run by the New Zealand Government to promote sustainable development in developing countries.

Diego applied for the scholarship because he wanted to help others in his home country. "Countries such as Uruguay face countless problems, seriously hampering people's abilities to achieve even the most basic goals in life. Politics and public policy have great potential to transform this—which is why I studied political science.



Diego at Castle Point, New Zealand. Photo courtesy of Diego Gonnet Ibarra.

"But I realised that analysing problems from an office may not be enough, so I decided to combine my academic career with working as a policy analyst and adviser."

Diego is now putting his learning into practice, in his current role in Uruguay's Presidential Planning and Budgeting Office. "Teachers at Victoria merge strong knowledge of the theory of public policy and public management with sharp insights on how institutions and rules are put into practice. I can proudly say I'm taking full advantage of the knowledge I gained in New Zealand."

In September Diego received the Prime Minister's Prize in Policy—after achieving the highest grade point average in his Master's programme—and he donated his prize money to the Christchurch Earthquake Appeal.

In his acceptance speech Diego expressed his gratitude towards NZAID. "By making your education system available to international students—particularly those from underdeveloped countries—you are helping your own people to understand and positively engage with the rest of the world."

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# What really makes us happy?



Dan Weijers says one of the things that makes him happy is his son Eli.

An open access online journal devoted to the study of human wellbeing, co-founded by Victoria alumnus Dan Weijers and Open Polytechnic Psychology lecturer Aaron Jarden, is helping academics and practitioners worldwide better understand what makes people flourish and thrive.

*The International Journal of Wellbeing* involves over 50 of the world's top interdisciplinary wellbeing researchers.

Dan Weijers, who graduated with a Master's in Philosophy in 2009, and is now a fixed-term lecturer in the Philosophy programme at Victoria, says the journal has been created to help researchers and practitioners learn from other disciplines to better understand and promote human wellbeing.

"Since the journal is open access and accessibly written, policymakers from all over the world will be able to gain deeper insight into what promotes wellbeing so that society is able to flourish," says Dan.

The development of the free access online journal was a natural extension of the research he has been carrying out with Aaron and over 70 international collaborators of the International Wellbeing Study—one of the largest wellbeing studies in the world.

"*The International Journal of Wellbeing* breaks down traditional academic and publishing barriers by making the very research that can change the world for the better easily available," he says.

The journal has a strong focus on interdisciplinary research, including research from the field of positive psychology, a relatively new sub-discipline of psychology that focuses on what is going right with people rather than what is going wrong—their strengths, levels of engagement and happiness.

In addition to his ongoing work with the journal, Dan, Aaron and Philip Morrison from the Geography programme are planning a major international conference titled *Wellbeing and Public Policy*, to be held on 13–15 June in Wellington next year.

"With rising academic, public and political interest in wellbeing, more and more government officials are considering using wellbeing research to inform their policy decisions."

To access the free online journal, go to [www.internationaljournalofwellbeing.org](http://www.internationaljournalofwellbeing.org)

For more information about the conference, go to [www.wellbeingandpublicpolicy.org](http://www.wellbeingandpublicpolicy.org)

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# From smashed egg to smash hit



Joseph Herscher gets the ingredients together for his Falling Water cocktail Rube Goldberg machine. Photo courtesy of Joseph Herscher

Three years ago, Joseph Herscher designed a comically over-engineered obstacle course to smash a chocolate egg, and launched a new career path.

Obsessed with making complex humorous contraptions since childhood, known as Rube Goldberg machines, the Victoria alumnus filmed the egg rolling along the obstacle course spanning two walls of his lounge, for a national contest run by Cadbury.

The device was made in his spare time while working as an interface developer for Datacom Systems Ltd. Although he didn't win the competition, Joseph's creation featured on current affairs show *Campbell Live* and to date his YouTube video of the egg's journey has attracted more than two million hits.

As a result, vodka company 42 Below offered him his first paid job as an artist to devise a machine to make its iconic Falling Water cocktail.

The following year he was commissioned to design a Rube Goldberg style clock that counts down to Christmas, for a mall in London.

Now living in New York, where he was born, Joseph has held intensive workshops at summer camps, teaching children how to make Rube Goldberg machines. This year, he was invited to lead a workshop at the Venice Biennale.

"I completed my degree in Computer Science and Mathematics at Victoria in 2006, primarily because I loved it, although I did have in the back of my mind the safety that I could always get a job in software afterwards," says Joseph.

Joseph's 'safety net' job is as interaction designer for software development firm 9mmedia where he has worked for the last two years, but he recently went part time, to focus on his machines.

"Right now I'm building a machine that turns the light off when you leave the room. It uses a camp-cooker to boil water that soaks into a sponge that turns on an iron that burns some clothing which disturbs some cockroaches and makes their cage tip and eventually turns the light off.

"Ten years from now, I'd like to be making large public installations that run on the side of buildings."

[www.josephhersch.com](http://www.josephhersch.com)

## A gift to the next generation

**For Victoria graduates Sahra Grinham and Dennis Chippindale, the decision to leave a bequest to Victoria was an easy one.**

"We took a future view and wanted to make a difference to something we both felt passionate about," says Sahra, "and Victoria has been part of the landscape of our lives."

The couple met when Dennis was completing his Architecture degree in the 1980s.

"I had started my first job as a receptionist at the University and Dennis would come in to buy photocopy and drawing paper," laughs Sahra.

After travelling and working overseas together, they returned in the mid-1990s and Sahra began studying at Victoria, where she graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in Art History and Classics.

"Study opens up possibilities and gives you new skills—you think in a different way and see the world differently," says Sahra, who is now a public relations consultant and also became a board member of the Victoria University Foundation this year.

Dennis, a principal at architects and engineers Stephenson&Turner, has also retained ties with Victoria.

He designed the laboratories for the School of Chemical and Physical Sciences, as well as working on other architectural projects at the University. Stephenson&Turner also sponsors an Architecture award for fourth-year students and was a Gold sponsor of Victoria's Meridian First Light house.

"Victoria has been an important place for us, so when we decided to make a bequest we felt very confident that the University was the right choice," says Dennis.

"We wanted to make sure our gift would have a lasting legacy under the care of a solid organisation—a safe pair of hands."

Sahra says their bequest will help students in Art History and Architecture, the subjects they both studied.

"It's something that will make a difference to someone else's life. We won't know these people—they're probably not even born yet—but we feel good being able to give in this way," she says.



If you are interested in leaving a bequest to the Victoria University Foundation, please visit [www.victoria.ac.nz/foundation/donation/bequest.html](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/foundation/donation/bequest.html) or phone 0800 VIC LEGACY (0800 842 534).

## Community spirit inspires family of donors

**On the wall of Laywood and Joyce Chan's home, in Chinese characters, hangs their family philosophy.**

*"Bear in mind benevolence and righteousness.  
Act with devotion and steadiness.  
Discipline yourself with modesty and diligence.  
Be honest and tolerant towards others.  
Devote yourself to your career and be one with the community."*

That spirit, says Laywood, encouraged the Chans to support the work of Victoria University.

"I've always thought that education was essential for people. I never had the opportunity to attend high school, let alone university, but I knew it was important," says the businessman, who has shared the philosophy with his six children, several of whom graduated from Victoria.

In 2008, he established the Laywood Chan Charitable Trust Scholarship for the top student studying Chinese history, culture or language at Honours or Master's level.

"It is more rewarding to give than to receive," says Laywood, who was recognised with membership of the Victoria University Foundation, which honours the most significant donors.

This year, Laywood made a further generous donation to honour his wife Joyce with



membership of the Foundation and the couple renamed the scholarship the Laywood and Joyce Chan Scholarship. Most recently, he gifted an apartment to the Foundation—the proceeds from which will support a new scholarship in Joyce's name.

Daughter Yvonne Chan, a partner in New York law firm Paul Weiss, has also been a very generous supporter of her alma mater.

"I wouldn't be here today without my Victoria education—when you go out into the world, you

appreciate that the quality of education in New Zealand is so high," says Yvonne.

She supports a biennial conference in international economic law at the Law School and has established a Visiting Fellowship with Renmin University in China to bring legal scholars to Victoria.

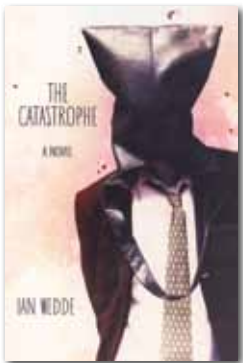
"My parents always appreciated the value of education. Education is not only very important for social mobility; it's part of a person's wellbeing," she says.



# Off the Press

*The Catastrophe* and *Bird North and other stories* are two works recently published by Victoria University Press (VUP) and are reviewed for *Victorious* by Briony Pentecost.

Details of forthcoming publications by VUP can be read at [www.victoria.ac.nz/vup](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/vup)



## *The Catastrophe*

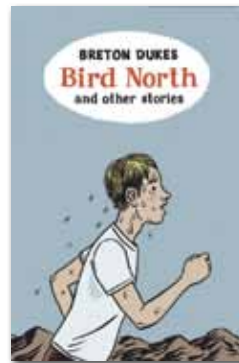
By Ian Wedde

*The Catastrophe* is the sixth novel from current poet laureate Ian Wedde. Set in Nice, the novel centres on Christopher Hare, a Kiwi ex-pat. A once-successful food critic, Hare has become somewhat redundant of late, due to a societal turning away from excess in favour of a simpler lifestyle.

The novel opens in a restaurant, and within 11 pages two people are dead and a disillusioned Hare finds himself following the gunwoman back to her taxi. This cinematic beginning is perhaps a whirlwind of improbability, but if one is willing to make that initial leap, the implausibility of such a premise isn't troublesome.

Although the novel concerns itself with a brief but dramatic encounter, the narrative wends its way through expansive back stories, while the present situation develops slowly in a series of neatly integrated advancements. Those who enjoy political thrillers with rapid-fire, action-packed plots may at times find *The Catastrophe* a little slow and existential. Whilst it is thrilling in parts, the reflections provided by the three narrators (Hare, his ex-wife and the gunwoman turned accidental kidnapper) encourage a contemplative reading of the compelling narrative.

At its heart, *The Catastrophe* is an adroit vehicle for social and political commentary, especially regarding the Middle East. It begins with a bang, and continues as a confident and artful demonstration of tone, pacing and tension.



## *Bird North and other stories*

By Breton Dukes

*Bird North and other stories* is the debut collection from Breton Dukes, a recent graduate of Victoria's creative writing programme.

Dukes offers a consistently original perspective in this collection, concerned predominantly with the lives of New Zealand men. The situational, emotional and physical terrain of each story is quite distinct. He seems to turn from stereotype at every opportunity, subverting common ideas about the Kiwi male to present men who are a little unsure, a little trapped, perhaps a little unhappy. These are men caught up in trying to do the right thing, say the right thing, be the right thing—all the while trying to escape the expectation of others.

This begins to paint a picture of a somewhat dismal if well-written collection, but it is by no means all doom and gloom. Although there is some of that, it is balanced with an equal dose of deft touches of levity. Dukes writes with assurance, and has an eye for detail and an ear for conversation. His prose is concise, colloquial and often lyrical, and carries a strong sense of location, both in time and place.

In these stories, Dukes offers his readers small windows into the ordinary lives of his characters. The resulting collection is something rather extraordinary, leading the reader to interesting, sometimes uncomfortable places, and then not always offering complete resolution. *Bird North and other stories* is a collection which has a resounding impact for quite some time after the final page has been turned.



Briony Pentecost describes herself as an avid reader and writer. She is currently completing a Master of Arts (MA) in Creative Writing at Victoria.

# In the footsteps of Peter the Great

Peter I the Great of Russia set off from Moscow in the spring of 1697. He was only 24, with a retinue of 300, and was heading to visit Western Europe. What was officially known as the 'Great Embassy' turned out to be Peter's 'OE'.

More than three centuries on, 16 participants, including several Victoria alumni, embarked on a four-week study tour, offered by the Centre for Lifelong Learning (CLL). The study tour started in St Petersburg, Russia, and followed a route similar to Peter's through the Baltic States as far as Berlin.

"One of the best things about the tour was the diverse range of scenery and historical sites along the way— everything from grand palaces and stout fortresses to sand dunes and a primeval hunting forest," says tour leader Martin Boswell, who speaks fluent Russian and German.

Martin is planning further tours to Russia and Scandinavia.

The next CLL study tour 'Paris, Provence and the Painters of Modern Life' will take place in September 2012.

[www.victoria.ac.nz/studytours](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/studytours)



*The Pechory (Caves) Monastery, Pskov region, Russia. Photo: Martin Boswell*

## Poster power



*Dr Sydney Shep with examples of posters made by course participants.*

Two intensive one-day courses teaching letterpress techniques proved so popular this year that the Centre for Lifelong Learning offered extra courses.

Participants learnt how to design, typeset and print their own A3 poster using the Wai-te-ata Press' large collection of 19th century wood type.

Sydney J Shep, Senior Lecturer at Wai-te-ata Press (which is based on Victoria's Kelburn Campus), says the course, entitled 'Poster Power', attracted a diverse range of participants—from graphic designers to those with no previous experience of design.

"Despite the popularity of new digital technologies there is still a fascination with old printing techniques.

"People like the tactility of old type and the whole experience of constructing a piece of typographic architecture that they can then print."

[www.victoria.ac.nz/wtapress](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/wtapress)

## Lights over Wellington



*Lights projected from Pipitea and Te Aro Campuses.*

During the Rugby World Cup, spotlights beamed from three of Victoria's campuses, shining a light over Wellington each evening.

Victoria University had teamed up with a group of companies to project high-powered beams from buildings at each of Victoria's Kelburn, Te Aro and Pipitea Campuses.

"Victoria University is proud of its capital city location and this light show was part of the amazing atmosphere that gripped the city during the exciting sporting and cultural events," says Andrew Simpson, Chief Operating Officer at Victoria University.

Fuji Xerox, Dimension Data, EMC, Mainzeal, Downer and NEC Business Solutions sponsored the project.

## Internet by numbers



*Andy Linton at the APNIC conference in Hong Kong, 2011. Photo: APNIC*

Every computer, cellphone or iPad that connects to the internet has its own unique numeric address. The problem is that these numbers are running out.

"The internet has been so successful that we're close to running out of the current set of internet protocol (or IP) addresses," says Andy Linton, Teaching Fellow in the School of Engineering and Computer Science.

"We're moving from a system with four billion addresses to one that will give us 340 billion, billion, billion possible IP addresses, but it's not without its technical difficulties."

To help adapt, Andy is involved with the Asia Pacific Network Information Centre (APNIC) that manages internet numbering for half the world's population. He will chair the policy group for the next two years with meetings every six months.

[www.apnic.net](http://www.apnic.net)





*King of Faeries Oberon (Bianca Andrew) plans his triumph over the sleeping Queen Tytania (Bridget Costello) in NZSM's production of A Midsummer Night's Dream. Photo: NZSM*

## Monumental year for NZSM

2011 has been a monumental year for the New Zealand School of Music (NZSM), with a New Zealand premier opera season, a national Jazz Festival and an internationally significant orchestra concert among its many activities.

In early August, Wellington audiences flocked to Victoria University's Memorial Theatre to see the New Zealand premiere of Benjamin Britten's opera *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Directed by Sara Brodie, with Michael Vinten conducting the NZSM Opera Orchestra, the three-act show received outstanding reviews, with the *New Zealand Listener* describing it as "breathtakingly beautiful" and classical music review website *Middle C* noting its "kaleidoscopic beauty and infectious energy".

"It was a challenging work for singers and orchestral players alike and the students rose wonderfully to the occasion," says NZSM Director Professor Elizabeth Hudson. "Working intensively with professionals like this is an invaluable step in their musical education."

Later in August, NZSM students were mentored by three American jazz stars, brought to New Zealand for the NZSM's inaugural Gala Jazz Concert, held at the Wellington Town Hall.

Alex Sipiagin (trumpet), Steve Houghton (drums) and Bob Sheppard (saxophone) not only performed with NZSM lecturer Rodger Fox (trombone and big band leader) with backing by the NZSM Big Band and Wellington Jazz Orchestra, they also tutored NZSM students and gave clinics, workshops and constructive feedback to the big bands and combos participating in the festival.

In a change of pace, the NZSM Orchestra showed that it could perform deeply moving works, when in late September it organised a concert commemorating the 70th anniversary of the 34,000 Jewish civilians who were murdered by Nazi forces at Babi Yar, a ravine in Kiev, Ukraine.

The orchestra performed *Requiem 'The Holocaust'* by Boris Pigovat, a work written in remembrance of his grandparents and aunt who were victims of the massacre; as well as *Schelomo* by Ernest Bloch, *Remember Parihaka* by Anthony Ritchie and *Luminous* by John Psathas—all of which reflect on tragic events. NZSM Professor Donald Maurice featured as the solo violist for *Requiem* and Inbal Megiddo, NZSM's newly-appointed Lecturer in Cello, was the soloist for *Schelomo*.

"These three big events have been the most visible of an exciting range of activities this year at the NZSM," says Elizabeth.

"Our students are performing at an outstanding level, and it has been great that they have been able to showcase their talents to such diverse audiences."

For more information on the New Zealand School of Music, visit [www.nzsm.ac.nz](http://www.nzsm.ac.nz)



# Get behind tomorrow's best.

It's amazing what someone can achieve when they are given the opportunity. Making a gift or leaving a bequest to Victoria will help the next generation fulfil their potential, whether that is through research, a new scholarship or a donation to be used where it is needed most.

Gifts of any size are highly valued—to find out more, contact Diana Meads in confidence at [diana.meads@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:diana.meads@vuw.ac.nz), by mail to Victoria University Foundation, PO Box 600, Wellington 6140, New Zealand or by calling 0800 842 4438.

For more information, visit [www.victoria.ac.nz/foundation](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/foundation)



FOUNDATION