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CULTIVATING CREATIVE CAPITAL

From the Vice-Chancellor
Cultivation of creative capital is one of the things that defines world-class universities. Creativity infuses all disciplines and is inherent to the research process. While creativity perhaps finds its purest expression in the creative arts, the same personal quality underpins the deep innovation that drives economies, the entrepreneurship that establishes new businesses and social endeavours and the fresh thinking that characterises effective leaders.

At Victoria, we place a strong emphasis on a multidisciplinary approach to creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship. We recognise the importance of being open to ideas from outside our area of expertise. Ideas are better connected than protected—it is the coming together of new ideas that sparks new possibilities and that is at the heart of innovation.

We are developing an entrepreneurial ecosystem at Victoria. Over the past two years, there has been sustained growth in our research commercialisation pipeline. Our intellectual-property base is expanding and more ideas are being licensed or progressed through start-ups with external investment. Through Viclink, our commercialisation arm, we have secured ten licences of substance, ‘spun out’ four technology start-ups and eight student start-up companies in the past four years alone. We also have an active pipeline of sixty projects being assessed for commercial potential.

Among those technology start-ups is Auramer Bio, a medical-diagnostics company that is commercialising new sensors for monitoring human health. Another is EdPotential, which has developed a data analysis tool that helps schools understand how their students are performing.

Our undergraduate students are also doing exciting things in this space. We give them opportunities to engage with others from different disciplines, offer student entrepreneurship clubs and run the Victoria Entrepreneur Bootcamp. This venture, now five years old, has produced a number of successful companies.

A notable example is Point Zero—a previously known as One Legged Crab—a company formed in the Bootcamp that has gone on to develop the world’s first customisable, interactive holographic experience that can be used to educate, tell stories and customise products—simply through playing. Point Zero is giving back to the University with its 3D virtual reality technology forming the basis for a research and commercialisation project being undertaken by Victoria and the MacDiarmid Institute for Advanced Materials and Nanotechnology.

Our location in the capital city gives Victoria a clear advantage in the area of entrepreneurship. Wellington has an exciting and flourishing innovation sector, which is well connected to the rest of New Zealand and internationally. Our links with the wealth of collaboration and networking agencies in the capital city help us to combine resources, skills, knowledge and experience to achieve scale and drive real-world outcomes for, and from, the work of our staff and students.
Understand what’s under the ocean

As a self-professed terrible sailor, Professor Lionel Carter says it’s ironic that he’s spent a large part of his career at sea. “I’ve spent a total of two and a half years of my life bobbing around on the ocean—the very thought makes me feel queasy!” he says. “But it’s all for the greater good and overall it has been a lot of fun.”

Lionel is a world-renowned ocean scientist based at Victoria’s Antarctic Research Centre and has specialised in geological and oceanic processes. He joined Victoria in 2006 and his many achievements demonstrate a true commitment to understanding New Zealand’s oceans.

In the early 1970s, Lionel helped map out the proposed boundary of New Zealand’s Economic Exclusion Zone (EEZ) and determined what lay within it. His reports were used to establish the EEZ, which extends 200 nautical miles (370 kilometres) out from the shoreline. At 4 million square kilometres, New Zealand’s EEZ is one of the largest in the world and accounts for more than 90 percent of our territory. “As a nation, New Zealand is responsible for a huge area,” explains Lionel. Including our EEZ and stewardship role under the Antarctic Treaty System, we are responsible for a territory that literally goes from the sub-tropics to the South Pole.”

Lionel is also a marine advisor for the International Cable Protection Committee, which works to protect submarine fibre-optic cables across the globe from natural hazards. “These cables are essential: they convey almost all of the world’s internet data, commercial and voice communications, which clearly have enormous social and economic importance. We are totally reliant on this network of cables, so it’s critical to protect them from human-related and natural hazards.”

The achievement Lionel is most proud of is finding the path of the Pacific Deep Western Boundary ocean current, and its impact on New Zealand’s sub-surface volcanic eruptions. Last year, Lionel’s contribution to science was recognised with the presentation of the 2015 Kelvin Medal, which is awarded annually by the Royal Society of New Zealand for outstanding research in earth, plant and animal sciences. He was made a fellow of the Royal Society in 2001 and received the Marsden Medal for outstanding service to science in 2012.

That sort of recognition really comes down to the considerable area of people I’ve worked with over the years,” says Lionel. “The problems in environmental science are so large you need all kinds of scientists—physicists, chemists, biologists and geoscientists—to get as much knowledge as possible about how the environment works. That’s why Victoria is such a great place to conduct this sort of research.”

Never one to sit still, Lionel is now turning his attention to finding out how New Zealand has responded to recent climate change by examining detailed ice and sediment deposits from the Ross Ice Shelf to New Zealand, again “with a little help from my friends.”

“I’ve been always been interested in how stuff works, and I’m lucky to be able to devote my career to studying the most fundamental laws of nature,” he explains. “I want to know how the planet we call home functions.”

Celebrating Celia

Victoria’s Stout Research Centre for New Zealand Studies has helped honour the legacy of social justice advocate Celia Lashlie, organising a seminar for the first anniversary of her death. The seminar included reflections on Celia’s work and the projects she was involved in; discussions about current initiatives with women in prison, youth, family and wānau; and affirmations of the value of Celia’s work with former prisoners who shared their redemption journeys.

A highlight of the day was a keynote speech by Celia’s daughter Rebekah, who shared thoughts about her mother’s work and the purpose of the day. The 2015 J.D. Stout Fellow, Kim Workman, says the one-day seminar was a chance to explore ideas and encourage forward thinking.

Advancing better government in the Pacific

Officials from Papua New Guinea’s Department of Foreign Affairs and Immigration have been invited to a seminar held in Wellington. The seminar has sparked interest among other Pacific nations and it’s hoped it will be extended across the region.

School of Government Associate Professor Graham Hassall says the programme empowers diplomats, prepares government officials for hosting foreign engagements and helps Papua New Guinea have stronger representation on the international stage.

The programme is run in conjunction with the foreign affairs ministries in New Zealand and Papua New Guinea.

International spotlight on Business School innovation

Victoria Business School’s Professorial Chairs’ programme has been showcased as one of the world’s ‘innovations that inspire’ at an international conference for business schools.

Of 399 submissions, the School’s programme was one of thirty innovations presented at the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business international conference in Miami. Pro Vice-Chancellor and Dean of Commerce Professor Bob Biddle says the programme is making a real difference in advancing specific research areas and issues that are central to New Zealand business and public policy.

“We have six Chair positions now, and these allow high-calibre academics to focus their research, teaching and graduate supervision on contemporary and critically important national issues,” he says. Each Chair is supported by an advisory group made up of stakeholders from the business, public and community sectors. The Chairs support partnering organisations in undertaking research, implementing initiatives and collaborating with staff on critical business and policy issues.

The Chairs are: the BNZ Chair in Business in Asia; the Diana Uniti Chair in Restorative Justice; the Chair in Digital Government; the Chair in Economics of Disasters; the Chair in Ethical Leadership; and the Chair in Public Finance.
Leading academics

Victoria's new chief operating officer Mark Loveard believes in getting to the coalface to see how the University ticks—including peeling potatoes and mopping floors if need be. Mark joined Victoria in November after a career in the aviation, telecommunications and electricity industries. He leads about 500 staff working in accommodation, early childhood centres, finance, property and technology, and says getting to grips with the organisation means spending time at the front line. “I was out on security patrol the night of one of the annual student Toga Party. It was very informative. I’m off to do a shift with one of the hall’s catering teams. I said I’d do a cleaning job too, and I might regret that.”

Mark is part of the senior leadership team, and each member brings complementary skills to ensure Victoria will meet its vision of being one of the great global-civic universities. He says Victoria has a critical role to play in the city. “Wellington needs to reinvent itself. It has lost a lot of corporate head office work. I said I’d do a cleaning job too, and I might regret that.”

Mark says students come to Victoria as academically healthy, research-healthy and financially healthy university for the next generation. "We’re here not to make profits for shareholders. We’re here to create an academically healthy, research-healthy and financially healthy university for the next generation."

Victoria is a great place to live, and the University has a top-rate academic offering and reputation. “As we start to work out what a truly world-leading capital city university is, we will only make it more attractive.”

Mark, married to Tanya, is a keen cyclist, runner and tramper. With three children studying, he and Tanya have a keen interest in tertiary education. Eldest daughter Pippa is studying at Victoria University of Wellington, and her brother Rennick is studying at Victoria University. Pippa’s partner Don had been lobbying for some time to come back to New Zealand to indulge his passion for tramping. She’s also looking forward to finding more about some of Wellington’s quirky corners. "This is a beautiful city. Simply stunning.”

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A true-blue green university

Associate Professor Marjan van den Belt is joining the University in June as the new Assistant Vice-Chancellor (Sustainability), the second person to hold the role. Eminent Professor Charles Daugherty became the country’s first Assistant Vice-Chancellor (Sustainability) at Victoria in 2014. Marjan, who hails from the Netherlands, is a globally renowned scholar and adviser on biodiversity and ecosystem services. Most recently, Marjan was the director and principal ecological economist of Ecological Economics Research New Zealand.

Over the course of her twenty-five-year career she has consulted on many international projects and moved to New Zealand seven years ago to become part of innovative sustainability initiatives taking place here. Meanwhile, Victoria has been acknowledged as a leader of the tertiary sector in both New Zealand and Australia when it comes to carbon reduction efforts, winning two prestigious Green Gown Awards at a ceremony in Geelong, Australia last year.

One award acknowledged Victoria’s success in reducing CO₂ from buildings and transportation on campus during a period of significant growth for the University.

The other award was to Vice-Chancellor Professor Grant Guilford, who won the leadership category for his ongoing work in a range of areas including integrating sustainability into the University’s strategic plan, facilitating moves to divert from fossil fuel investments, encouraging government to set more ambitious climate change targets and establishing the Assistant Vice-Chancellor (Sustainability) role.

Victoria was also a finalist in the student excellence category: Victoria University Students’ Association wellbeing and sustainability officer Rory Limbaker-Wang was nominated for his work championing campus initiatives such as an organic food cooperative, organic waste collection, a community garden and an energy-saving competition.

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At the front line

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Mark says students come to Victoria as
A virtual walk on the wild side

Three-dimensional (3D) scanning has been used to create an online gallery of Victoria’s unique animal skeleton collection, and provide a learning resource for the public.

The collection, owned by Victoria’s School of Biological Sciences, includes a number of rare skulls and skeletons such as a rhinoceros, a crocodile and a New Zealand Hector’s dolphin.

“The gallery is interactive—users can zoom in and out from all angles to get a good look at the skeleton’s intricacies,” says Adrian Pike, a technician who has led the project.

“Major museums like the Smithsonian Institution and London’s Natural History Museum are already doing this with their artefacts. It’s really exciting.”

Adrian says the earthquakes in Wellington in 2013 were the impetus for creating the scans.

“The earthquakes triggered concern that if another disaster strikes we may need to teach on campus, and may not have the right tools to carry this out effectively. Essentially, we wanted to make a backup of these irreplaceable skeletons.”

The focus then turned to using the digital scans as a teaching and learning tool.

“It’s useful for animal biology students to be able to view the specimens outside the laboratory and prepare pre-class or revise post-class,” says Adrian. “We also hope to get the public and school children enthusiastic about biology and other subjects.”

Victoria’s School of Design gave a helping hand during the scanning process, lending their equipment and expertise.

Work has now begun to take CT (computed tomography) scans of the skeletons and print 3D replicas.

“We have fragile bones, such as cat vertebra, that are studied frequently,” says Adrian. “3D printing gives us the opportunity to make plastic models that will be able to be used more and will last longer.”

View the 3D skull of a crocodile at http://bit.ly/2tQ2Wac

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Victoria Landscape Architecture students have taken out the top spot in an international competition for their re-imagining of the idea of urban ‘hangouts’—public spaces aimed at building community ties and fostering social resilience.

Public hangouts were the focus of the recent design competition run by the Australian Institute of Landscape Architects in conjunction with the Festival of Landscape Architecture: This Public Life. Out of seventy-seven international entries, the team of fourth-year Victoria landscape architecture students was awarded first place.

Aftershock by Alex Pruejan, Kate Nguyen and Michael Cook proposed a network of inner-city parks in central Wellington that could be adapted into post-disaster recovery spaces. City dwellers would all be within 200 metres of a park providing access to a safe haven.

“Aftershock’s collaged timeline suggests hangouts are temporal just as much as they are spatial, and can transform with the changing needs of a community.

“For example, an open courtyard may host food trucks during weekends, but become the centre of emergency food supply distribution following a catastrophic earthquake. A small amphitheatre for public performances would become the place where public announcements are given,” says Alex.

Post disaster, the parks would then return to being social hangout spaces.

These designs were informed by research into past natural-disaster responses.

“We found that once the basic psychological needs of Christchurch residents were met after the 2011 earthquakes, it was important to have somewhere where people could meet, share stories and offer support to one another.”

Aftershock takes into account both the straightforward and complex changing needs of community groups, offering innovative ideas for future city landscape projects.

Pacific nations unite on climate change

Organisers of Victoria’s first-ever Pacific Climate Change Conference say the region needs to weave together and act now to fight the devastating effects of global warming.

About 240 scientists, activists, non-governmental organisation representatives, artists, business people, community leaders and Pacific Island delegates gathered at the University to discuss the intertwining dimensions of climate change.

Discussions traversed law, politics, indigenous rights, economics, religion and the arts in the context of what opening keynote speaker Kiribati President Anote Tong described as “the greatest moral challenge facing humanity.”

Following the conference, Victoria University signed a memorandum of understanding with the region’s leading environmental protection agency, the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP).

Leota Kosi Latu, SPREP director general, said, “the conference was a fantastic three days of dialogue, but the time for talking is over. Now is time for action.”

Find out more at http://bit.ly/2zZtV0
New University Council hits the ground running

Victoria Chancellor Sir Neville Jordan is excited about the knowledge, skill and mana members of Victoria’s revamped Council will bring to the University.

The new Council results from a legislative change that requires universities and wāhanga to decrease the size of their councils to a maximum of twelve members. In February, Sir Neville was re-elected as Chancellor and returning Council member Neil Paviour-Smith was elected Pro-Chancellor.

Victoria’s Council membership reflects the demographic that we work in and serve, says Sir Neville. “We have a diverse and effective team in place to help ensure Victoria achieves its ambitious strategic goals, and grows in both size and influence.”

“All Council members are determined to support a high-performing university. We have started 2016 with our own house well in order to allow us to do this.”

A range of stakeholders, including staff, students, alumni, friends and supporters of Victoria participated in consultation to determine a new structure. Elections were held for the two staff and two student positions. There was also a public process for seeking nominations for external members.

Sir Neville says Victoria University is in a period of growth, in both size and influence, and a high-performing Council is essential to supporting a high-performing university. “I know members of the Council have high expectations of themselves and of the University and I am confident those expectations will be realised.”

The Council has several key priorities for the year ahead. These include:

- conducting a mid-point review of Victoria’s 2014-19 Strategic Plan, ensuring that overall university growth takes place to support Victoria’s central mission
- implementing innovative responses to the mounting competitive pressures from offshore
- ensuring that the Victoria University of Wellington Foundation—the University’s charitable trust—is resourced to play an increasingly important role in Victoria’s development
- continuing Victoria’s involvement as an independent, data-driven, publicly accountable research institution, which is central to our mission as a university
- remaining true to the demographic that we work in and serve, with a diverse and effective team in place to help ensure Victoria achieves its ambitious strategic goals, and grows in both size and influence.

The Council is also excited about the knowledge, skill and mana members of Victoria’s revamped Council will bring to the University.

Nobel Peace Prize nomination

Alumnus Professor Roger Clark, a 2014 Victoria honorary doctorate recipient, is part of an international legal team nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize.

The team is representing the Republic of the Marshall islands, which was devastated by nuclear testing. Between 1946 and 1958, the United States detonated sixty nuclear weapons on the islands, the equivalent of 1.7 Hiroshima bombs detonated daily for a dozen years.

The islands have launched three cases in The Hague to hold accountable the nine countries in possession of nuclear weapons. The cases being heard allege that the nuclear powers are in breach of their obligations, under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty of 1968 and international customary law, to negotiate in good faith to rid the world of these weapons of mass destruction.

A preliminary hearing on procedural issues took place in March concerning the legal bids that have the strongest theories for jurisdiction in the Court, those against the United Kingdom, India and Pakistan.

Roger says although it will be a hard case to win, he thought the team “had a good shot”. “This is very much a team effort by a strong legal group from the Netherlands, Italy, the United Kingdom and the United States, led by Tony de Brum, former foreign minister of the Marshall Islands.”

Raised in Wanganui, Roger graduated from Victoria in 1964 with a Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Laws. He added a Master of Laws in 1967 and Doctor of Laws from Victoria in 1997, along with a Master of Laws and a Doctorate in Juridical Science from Columbia University in New York.

He has played a significant role in international human rights law, especially in helping to establish the International Criminal Court in The Hague.

Roger has taught at Rutgers University-Camden in the United States for more than 40 years, where he insisted on the inclusion of a course on the international protection of human rights, an uncommon part of the law school curriculum in the United States at the time.

In the mid-1980s, he helped shape the discipline of international criminal law that is now taught at the majority of law schools across the United States, and is the subject of specialty programmes worldwide.

The Nobel Peace Prize Laureates will be announced in October, with a ceremony in Oslo in December.

Endowment to enhance public policy research

The largest endowment ever received by Victoria University of Wellington will allow academics at the Institute for Governance and Policy Studies (IGPS) to build on their significant research into the state of New Zealand’s public policy and the transparency of government.

The $7 million donation came from the Gama Foundation, a charitable trust set up by Christchurch philanthropists Grant and Marilyn Nelson. The IGPS was established in 2012 through an earlier $3 million endowment from the Foundation.

Based at the School of Government within Victoria Business School, the Institute is engaged in ongoing work leading thinking and debate around issues at the heart of the democratic process. It is a centre of high-quality, independent research into improving governance and decision making in the public sector. It also undertakes public policy research on important contemporary issues.

The director of the IGPS, Associate Professor Michael Macaulay, says he’s delighted that the Institute will be able to enhance its research capabilities as a result.

“The fund will enable us to substantially increase our research capacity, through both PhD scholarships and also full-time researchers. We have already commissioned a major survey on public trust, the results of which were published in April. It will also help us to completely revamp our communications and our website, and to work on bigger, more exciting research projects.”

LG Gibbs, the chief executive of Philanthropy New Zealand, says the Gama Foundation’s latest donation to the IGPS is “fantastically generous.

“There are a lot of philanthropists, the Nelsons like to keep a low profile and prefer to keep their giving private. But behind the scenes they’re doing a huge amount.

“Liz says there’s a trend internationally of philanthropists making significant contributions to causes they are passionate about. “A high profile example is Bill and Melinda Gates and Warren Buffett, who together set up the Giving Pledge six years ago to encourage the world’s wealthiest people to give most of their money away. Gifts such as the Nelsons’ are the New Zealand version of that.”

Among its current work, the IGPS publishes Policy Quarterly, facilitates regular roundtable discussions on issues such as climate change and is involved with New Zealand’s contribution to the Open Government Partnership, an international initiative to bring about more transparency and accountability in governance.

“We are very grateful to the Gama Foundation,” says Michael. “This endowment is a real vote of confidence in our achievements to date, and with the Foundation’s support we can extend our research and achieve our objectives.”

Michael says the Institute will be able to build on its existing research interests in areas such as anti-corruption, conflict of interest, improving democratic governance in New Zealand, trading in influence, and trust and integrity.

“We will now also be able to forge further partnerships with a variety of cross-sectoral agencies to carry out specific research projects,” says Michael. “The IGPS already makes a significant contribution to public policy as well as governance and management, and with the Gama Foundation’s generosity, we can do even more.”

Find out more at http://bit.ly/1T6RHMZ
Upping the ante

A Victoria academic will use a prestigious Fulbright scholarship to build the University’s expertise in micro-organisms for antibiotics.

Flicking through a copy of one of chemistry’s top international journals, Angewandte Chemie, a picture of a petri dish caught Dr Rob Keyzers eye.

The petri dish contained microbes—tiny single-cell organisms—gathered from a beach in the United States, and belonged to Dr Pieter Dorrestein from the University of California, San Diego.

“These microbes were being screened for the presence of new antibiotics,” says Rob, a senior lecturer in Victoria’s School of Chemical and Physical Sciences. “It’s something I’m really interested in and keen to learn more about.”

To do just that, Rob has a Fulbright Scholar Award, which will see him travel to California in July and study with Dr Dorrestein for five months.

“My research interests lie in natural products chemistry—that is, chemical compounds produced by nature, like dirt or the ocean,” Rob says.

“Natural products have been used in antibiotics for decades, since the discovery of penicillin by Alexander Fleming. They hold huge medical potential.

“I’m interested in looking at the potential of micro-organisms, as there are a lot of them and you can grow more as you need.”

Rob will specifically delve into the area of imaging mass spectrometry (IMS), where a sample of micro-organisms is cultured and then each interaction between species is individually scanned by a mass spectrometer, before being closely analysed.

Rob hopes to learn as much as he can about IMS from Dr Dorrestein and his team, and bring this knowledge back to New Zealand.

“I am looking forward to growing Victoria’s expertise in this area and exploring the potential of micro-organisms that are unique to New Zealand.”

Creating youthful, active citizens

In what is seen as a unique approach globally, New Zealand secondary school students are ‘mucking in’, both inside and outside the classroom, to create real social action.

Victoria Faculty of Education senior lecturer Dr Bronwyn Wood is leading a team exploring implementation of the 2011 National Certificate of Educational Achievement (NCEA) social studies assessment requirements for ‘personal social action’.

The internally assessed Social Studies achievement standards—at all three levels of NCEA—require students to take personal action on a social issue. This action often begins at NCEA Level 1 with fundraising and raising awareness, and as students progress through NCEA they often move to critiquing existing policy.

Bronwyn says that active forms of learning are in vogue: ‘It’s exciting and a great way to encourage students to be involved in society.

But there are differences in how teachers and schools individually interpret the achievement standard. As a result, Bronwyn is looking into the various approaches and what is really happening in the classroom.

“If this is compulsory and social action should be quite an intrinsic motivation, how does it work for students who aren’t motivated?”

“While the majority of students are highly engaged, this research has taken a particular interest in those who are less engaged,”

Dr Wood has been looking at the different strategies teachers use to provide guidance and freedom in the assessments. “They don’t want to push students too much so they allow their class to choose their own social issues and social action. Students we interviewed were really flat if they didn’t engage with the issue.

“The interesting thing is that the assessment doesn’t measure their social action but rather their reflection on how it went. So the social action could fail but students can still pass the assessment. This is a real strength of the assessment itself. Students are quite pleased to say ‘the social action failed but this is what we learned’.”

Cracking the code

What do the rules set for building houses in the United States just after World War I have to tell us about how to build in New Zealand today?

A Victoria researcher is looking to the past to see if there are lessons to be learnt from historic codes.

Dr Nigel Isaacs, senior lecturer in Victoria’s School of Architecture, has been granted a Fulbright Scholar Award to investigate the impact of an American code on the first New Zealand code, prepared over ninety years ago.

“The first New Zealand national code was published in 1934, and was based on the first United States national code published just two years earlier,” says Nigel.

“This link with America is important and one that has not been previously identified, especially as many people think it was not until the 1931 Napier earthquake that a building code was created.

“This discovery raised questions about each code—why was the American code structured the way it was, and what impact may it have had on the New Zealand code? And what may we have lost as we moved away from these early codes?”

Nigel’s experience with the New Zealand Building Code stretches back nearly thirty years, including helping develop the energy efficiency requirements for New Zealand and Australia.

He will spend more than three months in the United States, using archives in Maryland, Minnesota and Iowa, where he is based at the Illinois Sustainable Technology Center at the University of Illinois.

“The results will contribute to the wider discussion of the future development of the New Zealand Building Code,” says Nigel. “It will enhance the understanding of our code and add value to our decisions in the future.”

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New home for Karori art

Staff and students weren’t the only ones needing a new home when Victoria’s Faculty of Education moved from Karori to the Kelburn campus at the start of this year. Adam Art Gallery staff also had to relocate 117 pieces of art from the Victoria University of Wellington Art Collection that previously adorned the walls of the Karori campus.

Gallery collection officer Sophie Thorn has been leading the relocation project and says the work has required “nerves of steel”.

“Some of the works are incredibly valuable and not easy to move. Even with experienced handlers and careful planning it can be a little nerve-wracking.”

The relocations require up to three expert handlers as well as advice from professionals, including conservators, electricians, engineers. Victoria’s Campus Services and the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Māori).

One of the biggest challenges was navigating the transfer of large works up and down stairs and through the complicated architecture of the Karori campus.

Once the works are safely relocated to the Gallery’s new storage facility, Sophie will set about finding suitable homes for each piece. “There are a number of factors to consider to ensure the space is appropriate, including lighting, wall size, sunlight, student activity, surrounding furniture and other artwork.”

“We’re also trying to put things into really considered places, so we take into account the purpose of the space and who uses it.”

Superstar addition to the art collection

A major painting by Wellington artist Séraphine Pick has found a new home at Victoria University. Superstar is the latest acquisition to the Victoria University of Wellington Art Collection, which is managed by the Adam Art Gallery. According to the Gallery’s curator Stephen Celandler, the painting “has a commanding presence”, well suited to a busy, student environment.

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“This highly absorbing painting draws on Pick’s interests in popular culture and the ways in which our identities are formed through the formative experiences of youth. In Superstar, Pick traffics the internet to find images that capture scenes of mass entertainment; here, she focuses on one young woman at a rock concert who has lost herself to the music,” he says.

Pick is a nationally significant artist, renowned for her figurative style of painting, which often explores subjects such as dreams, fantasies and memory. The Gallery’s director Christina Barton says including her work in the University’s art collection ensures “an arresting piece of social commentary by a contemporary painter in her prime is now accessible to the University community”.

An out-of-this-world lecture

Victoria alumnus, geophysicist and astronaut, Dr Alexander Gerst, returned to Victoria in early 2016 to share his experience in space.

Dr Gerst was a member of the International Space Station crew from May to November 2014 as part of Mission Blue Dot. Dr Gerst and the rest of the crew carried out more than 100 scientific experiments while on the mission.

Watch the lecture Dr Gerst gave at Victoria: http://bit.ly/RRKdNL

The Governor-General visits Victoria

In February, the Governor-General, Lieutenant General The Right Honourable Sir Jerry Mateparae visited Victoria as part of his nationwide tour to learn about science research and innovation taking place at New Zealand universities.

The Governor-General and his staff, together with Vice-Chancellor Professor Grant Guilford, took part in a round table discussion on the state of Antarctica’s ice sheets and their potential contribution to rising sea levels.

The group also visited Victoria’s School of Engineering and Computer Science where senior lecturer Dr Taehyun Rhee presented his team’s research into 4D entertainment. Postgraduate students showcased their specialisations and gave Sir Jerry and Grant the opportunity to try 4D technology.

Celebrate your time at Victoria

Did you know Victoria has an extensive range of merchandise available for purchase from Vic Books? There is everything from t-shirts and hoodies to stationery and gifts. Our collection is great for Graduation, as a gift or a memento to share your pride in your time at Victoria.
Silicon Welly

Wellington’s status as a technology hub will be enhanced with the opening of the Wellington ICT Graduate School, in which Victoria is playing a key role.

The School—a partnership between Victoria, Wellington Institute of Technology (WelTec) and Whitireia New Zealand—is the result of a government initiative to increase the number of information and communications technology graduates in New Zealand, and fuel economic growth New Zealand-wide.

In 2016, it will offer Master’s qualifications in four areas: software development; engineering practice; professional business analysis; and information technology.

Professor Mike Wilson, the University’s Pro Vice-Chancellor of Architecture and Design, Engineering and Science, says it’s an exciting opportunity for Victoria.

“Information and communication technologies are already an important part of New Zealand’s productivity, and Wellington has the highest concentration of web-based and digital companies per capita in the country,” says Mike. “The Wellington ICT Graduate School will produce industry-ready graduates with transferable, high-level skills—there’s currently a surplus of ICT jobs out there, so we will be able to feed students directly into that needy market to ensure the burgeoning industry flourishes further.”

The School’s director, Rees Ward, is a Victoria graduate who has worked as a lawyer in London and as a diplomat at the New Zealand Consulate-General in Los Angeles, covering the western United States. “That role enabled me to see the key US innovation hubs in action,” he says. “For Silicon Valley, which is the world’s largest innovation hub, and Los Angeles, which is the world’s third largest, it was interesting to see that the education sector was a key pillar in their success. We hope to emulate that here in Wellington.”

Rees will be based at the Wellington Innovation Hub (also known as the BizDojo) in central Wellington. “This will allow me to work alongside leading ICT companies and find out exactly what they’ll be looking for in our graduates,” he says. “It’s more than academic success—they want graduates with real-world skills and business acumen, too.

“My main aim is to build a bridge between our students and the ICT industry they’ll be working within.”

Privacy and the media

With cameras on phones and drones, and ever-growing media platforms, anyone’s privacy can be invaded any time. But is it a case of once on the internet, forever available to anyone and everyone?

“We are all part of the media now,” says Dr Nicole Moreham from Victoria’s Faculty of Law. “It takes just a minute to record something in a photo or video and put it online.

“We are using media platforms not only to find out about the world, but also to tell our own stories. But the law recognises that sometimes the privacy cost of those activities is too high. So just because something has been posted online, that doesn’t mean it has to be on there forever, no.”

Nicole examines the legal and practical aspects of privacy protection in The Law of Privacy and the Media, which she edited with Sir Mark Warby, specialist English media High Court judge. The book was launched in both London and Wellington earlier this year.

Nicole is considered one of the world’s leading scholars of privacy. She says the new edition of the book responds to the continuing expansion of the law of privacy, including the so-called new media on social media platforms.

“It is aimed at both practitioners and academics. But internet giants like Google are increasingly finding themselves defending privacy cases, so there is likely to be interest from those quarters as well,” Nicole says.

“CULTIVATING CREATIVE CAPITAL is at the core of what we do at Victoria. Creative capital is the capacity of an individual or community to imagine, to express new possibilities through creative activity. It is the genius behind art, music and writing. It is also the curiosity and insight that finds new solutions to complex issues. It is the entrepreneurship that establishes new businesses. It is about inspiration, innovation and leadership.”

—Vice-Chancellor Professor Grant Guilford
Imagine clothes that adjust to suit changing weather conditions. Better still, think of the time you could save with self-lacing shoes like Marty McFly’s from Back to the Future. That’s not completely unrealistic, according to Victoria’s Anne Niemetz, programme director of Media Design at the School of Design.

Anne’s passion for wearable technology developed during a stint as a teaching assistant while completing postgraduate studies at a Californian university. Her supervisor’s enthusiasm for the topic was infectious. Twelve years on, Anne has established a wearable technology course at Victoria, in which she passes her passion on to her students.

Outside of the University, Anne has used her knowledge of wearable technology to collaborate with choreographers on multimedia performances. In 2014, she and a New Zealand choreographer produced an experimental dance performance where two dancers were equipped with body sensors and could control the pace of a 16 mm film projector, and the sound environment around them, through body movement. She has also designed a wearable technology costume for the renowned World of Wearable Art show—a feat that some of her students have also gone on to achieve.

However, she believes that the future of wearable technology lies with its recently discovered commercial potential. “When I first got involved with wearable technology, Arduino—an easy-to-use open source electronics platform—didn’t exist, but this technology has opened up the door for a lot of designers, and the possible commercial applications in this field have become clear,” says Anne. “We already have watches and items of clothing that can monitor our health. I expect in future wearable technology will become so advanced that devices will be near invisible and will act as second skins.”

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WHERE CREATIVITY COLLIDES

“Having more questions than answers feels just right for a group focused on creativity,” says Professor Jennifer Windsor. She chairs the steering group for Cultivating Creative Capital, one of Victoria’s eight distinctive themes, and says “uncertainty, flexibility and imagination” has been an ideal place for the group to begin its work.

“We think creative solutions rely on asking great questions, to explore and foster collaboration and inspiration—and that’s where we have started.” Jennifer, who is the Pro Vice-Chancellor of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences and Faculty of Education, says the thirteen Victoria staff on the steering group reflect many different aspects of creative capital.

“We have people with expertise in architecture and design, art history, creative writing, education, languages and cultures, museum and heritage studies, music, science history and theatre. For some at the University, cultivating creative capital is launching new creative works, for others it is collaboration and experimentation in research and teaching and for others fostering entrepreneurship.

“The consistent theme is imagination, innovation and risk-taking.” Victoria has a very rich tradition and history of staff and student creativity, Jennifer says. “We want to make our capability and contributions more visible and meaningful, nationally and internationally.”

Partnership and tangible projects will be central to the group’s work. “We’ll be talking broadly across Victoria University as well as with Wellington community leaders to understand their needs and how they imagine cultivating creative capital—and then we will get to work on new initiatives.”

“Victoria has a unique contribution to make in a city rich with creative practice. We are a community of pre-eminent researchers, educators and practitioners who can help create new ideas and experiences for students and staff, and partner in new ways with Wellington communities and businesses.

“I think we can make Victoria top of mind for creative thinking—we can make it the place of choice to explore and practise creativity in all its forms.”

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BECOMING ONE WITH TECHNOLOGY

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CULTIVATING CREATIVE CAPITAL

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CULTIVATING CREATIVE CAPITAL
Two academics from ostensibly disparate disciplines discuss how their areas of expertise intersect when it comes to cultivating creative capital.

In my latest novel, DadArt, two characters make a pilgrimage to the display case on the Kelburn campus of Victoria University to look at Alan MacDiarmid’s Nobel Prize medal in the building named after the great scientist. MacDiarmid was, like me (end of comparison), a paperboy in Lower Hutt. He then became a lab boy in the Chemistry Department of Victoria College, sweeping floors and washing dirty glassware. One day, he was asked to prepare some tetrarsulfur tetranitride. Speaking decades later as the key: ‘It really stems from the fact that I like colour. I like pretty things.’ Perhaps for remembered those bright orange crystals later as a Nobel Laureate, MacDiarmid tetrasulfur tetranitride. Speaking decades floors and washing dirty glassware. He then became a lab boy in the Chemistry Department of Victoria College, sweeping

I confess that one of the reasons my characters think about MacDiarmid is that his priorities challenge a lot of current thinking about what’s valuable in our lives. He ranked money ‘about one in ten in degree of importance’, and he thought that intellectual enjoyment was what mattered in ‘beautiful research’—just like, he said, beautiful poetry, music and art, adding that ‘if beautiful research was technologically useful, that was the icing on the cake’. This perfect inversion of the Government’s mantra on tertiary education should sit as the conscience of all our work around creative capital.

I chose to include poems in the anthology to give a different perspective on some of the topics—krill, melting icecaps, the Dry Valleys—written about by scientists. While four people from different parts of the University—a fiction writer, a composer, a theatre director and me, a science historian—spent many hours in a room together, sharing our stories and ideas, and talking about the future of the University. This group gathered together of of language, reliance on metaphor and poetry have much in common. Precision to their subject matter, science writing and poets’ and scientists’ different approaches there’s a pleasing tension between the different modes of expression. Victoria University has a history of scientists and poets working together—Paul Callaghan and Bill Manhire led a project that culminated in the publication of Are Angels On? in 2005—but it’s not an everyday occurrence. Perhaps it should be. In my experience, exciting things happen when you work with people from outside your own discipline.

In a radio interview with Kim Hill, I found myself doing my first—and probably last—on-air poetry reading when Kim asked me to read Ashleigh Young’s poem ‘Small Fry’. The poem is one of seven in my new anthology of Antarctic science, dispositions from Continent Seven.

I look forward to greater opportunities for unlikely and fruitful collaborations.
As a teen in the 1970s, Nick Bollinger yearned to discover more about Wellington's burgeoning music scene. Too engrossed in a coming-of-age story that describes a period of his formative experiences in a coming-of-age story that describes a period of New Zealand's culture than the dominant values of rugby, racing and beer.

The university campus circuit was the first opportunity for New Zealand bands to play original music—the pubs just wanted to pass as very fresh-faced first-year students, friends and I couldn't get into pubs because we were far too young, but we were able to turn very fresh-faced first-year students, and so we went to these psychedelic rock shows at Victoria's union hall. Anyone who was a student at Victoria in the 1970s would remember these concerts: it was the likes of Split Enz, Dragen, Bionta and Marmalade seminal bands that were utterly mind-blowing, playing nothing we'd ever seen or heard before.

Nick says Gonesville is far from a conventional history book. "It's partly memoir, partly musicology and partly social history. It includes my own experiences, where I've tried to inhabit the teenage mind—a gabblet 15-year-old who's discovering this amazing music, which I hope is quite funny for the reader. As part of the writing process, I also interviewed a number of key people from that era, which provides some historical context to what was happening in the music scene.

"I'd been thinking about how to weave these elements together—I'd heard a lot about Victoria's creative writing course, and thought that'd be a fantastic way to get the tools to shape my idea into a book."

And I'd be fair to say the project's been a packing success—Gonesville was the winner of Victoria's Adam Foundation Prize in Creative Writing for 2015. Nick is currently in talks with a publisher, with a view to having the book on the shelves later this year.
WAR AND PEACE

A Jewish rabbi, a South African throat singer, a Palestinian-Syrian rap duo and a Moroccan soul singer were among the musicians who came together on World War I’s battlegrounds as part of an epic global orchestra.

Te Kīkī New Zealand School of Music’s (NZSM) Professor John Psathas worked with director Jasmine Miles and cinematographer Matthew Knight to create No Man’s Land.

They filmed and recorded a global array of musicians, which was projected in both 2D and 3D on large screens and accompanied by a live performance of John’s original composition.

“Together these virtual and live performers create an international orchestra performing music that leaps musical genres as it does borders, from folk to hip-hop to rock and classical,” John says.

“My vision was to create an epic world symphony, bringing together descendants of opposing forces in World War I and reuniting them in friendship and musical exchange on the sites where their forefathers fought a century ago. “This project became the vessel of an enormous amount of love and commitment. I’m so deeply grateful to everyone who has been involved in No Man’s Land for their generosity of spirit and care,”

No Man’s Land premiered at the 2016 New Zealand Festival to a sold-out crowd at Wellington’s Michael Fowler Centre in March. It was also performed at the Auckland Arts Festival with regional shows in Tauranga, Napier, Whanganui and at WOMAD in New Plymouth.

Being involved in the epic No Man’s Land project turned into a once in a lifetime opportunity for three NZSM Master’s students.

Jack Hooker, Steffan Paton and Kenyon Shanahan—who completed their Master of Musical Arts during the project—were given scholarships to work on the groundbreaking project. The trio travelled with John and his production team to revisit battlegrounds and other important World War I sites in Europe.

John says all three students rose to every challenge presented to them during the project. “Jack, Kenyon and Steffan were fantastic ambassadors for NZSM, Victoria University and New Zealand.”

They spent a year undertaking pre-production work before leaving New Zealand, including a lot of time communicating with the musicians.

“On the road, I did some of the audio tech work.”

Kenyon and Steffan—as well as transcribing the score—prepared the performers for their roles in the project, ensuring that when they arrived to record their piece everything ran smoothly.

Working on the project was such an enjoyable time for the students, that it’s hard for them to name just one highlight.

“Every day was a highlight. There was huge variety across the 350 musicians involved—they are the best in the world at what they do. Everyone brought a new experience,” says Steffan.

Jack was thrilled to bring a huge group of musicians together to work on the same piece of music. “A musical project on this scale has never been done before.

“Everything that the musicians needed to do to stand up on that stage and play those notes, we were involved in—in one way or another,” says Kenyon.

The students are just one of the many highlights for John.

“The Menton fellowship will provide perspective for thinking about New Zealand in relation to elsewhere, and for thinking about place both metaphorically and very literally.”

Anna has published seven collections of poetry, most recently I, Clodia (2014).

Anna plans to work on a new collection of pastoral poetry during her time at the villa, where Katherine Mansfield lived and wrote during the latter part of her life.

“My second collection of poetry was The Pastoral Kitchen, published in 2001. I would like to start again with a little of the philosophy, it is very mysterious. What are mathematical objects? Are they real? Are they created or discovered? Cults of mathematicians can be just as sinister and mysterious as occultists."

He gave the main character his own name as a way to keep himself honest.

“Sometimes I feel like novelists make fools of themselves when they have these loosely disguised versions of themselves running around inside their books—they make themselves brilliant, witty, wry and attractive.”

The character Danyl is none of these things, and much of the book’s hallmark humour is derived from the bumbling investigations of the main character.

Although both his books have a local Wellington setting, Danyl says it was incidental, playing into the humour of the books.

“It wasn’t important for me to base my fiction in Aro Valley. It’s just a great comic setting for comedic novels and no one else was using it, so I thought I might as well take advantage of it.”

Not content with two careers, Danyl is also behind the popular political blog, The Dim-Post, which he calls a hobby.

“It’s what I do instead of watching sport, or transporting. I try to be accurate and insightful but I don’t take it too seriously. Ironically, the political commentary is more widely read and discussed, but hopefully the books will have a longer shelf life.”

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“A novel focus on mathematicians

Danyl McLaughlan rises early every day to write before he heads off to his day job as a computational biologist at Victoria University. His early-morning discipline has paid off.

“In June this year, Victoria University Press will publish his second novel, Mysterious Mysteries of the Aro Valley, a follow-up to his novel Unpeachable Secrets of the Aro Valley.

Danyl always wanted to be a writer but it wasn’t until his late thirties that he learned the importance of rewriting. “I learned all the basic storytelling stuff from working with a friend on a screenplay that was never made into a film. Then I started to write my first book when shows like The Wire and The Sopranos were doing all this complex innovative stuff in terms of storytelling, really paying attention to plot structure on a technical level.”

While his first novel was centred around a group of occultists in the Aro Valley, Mysterious Mysteries is a group of mathematicians who create havoc, setting the protagonist—a flawed anti-hero named Danyl—on a series of hilarious adventures.

Mathematics is widely seen as a science and something very practical, says Danyl. “But if you look closer at it and learn a little of the philosophy, it is very mysterious. What are mathematical objects? Are they real? Are they created or discovered? Cults of mathematicians can be just as sinister and mysterious as occultists.”

He gave the main character his own name as a way to keep himself honest.

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The ‘cultural diplomacy’ of travelling exhibitions

International exhibitions that tell the story of a culture through the use of stories and objects always prove popular with museum goers keen of stories and objects always prove to look at—they are also top-level academic has shown these exhibitions. One lecturer in Museum and Heritage Studies at Victoria's School of Art History, Classics and Religious Studies, has been studying two inter-connected international touring exhibitions. One study centre on Te Ake Standing Strong, a show about Māori ceramic art that was produced by Te Papa and which toured to Canada, France and Mexico. The other examines the Aztec: Conquest and Empire exhibition that was shown across Australasia.

“The projects were the first trans-national collaborative studies of international touring exhibitions,” explains Lee. “We wanted to find out how effective such exhibitions were in terms of audience engagement, intercultural understanding and cultural diplomacy.”

Fellow or postdoc interview museum staff at each venue about their experiences working on the exhibitions, as well as audience members about their interpretation of what they’d seen. “We found out what made a lasting impression on people—they tended to connect with objects that had some meaning to them personally, the special stories of individuals or exhibits that had multi-sensory or emotional components.

“There were a few lessons that emerged for the people who put these sorts of shows together—there were often challenges around communication when working internationally and across cultures. A common problem was the different ways each institution wanted to market the same show—some of the images the offshore institutions wanted to use to engage the public in advertising, for example, were not culturally appropriate for the countries the exhibitions came from.”

Lee says a symposium held at Victoria University last year provided an opportunity to discuss the fact that these exhibitions are a key way for New Zealand and other countries to present themselves on the world stage—done well they can help advance globalisation and intercultural understanding, and connect people across political, cultural and geographical divides.

Breaking the mould

By mixing traditional Māori materials with 3D technologies, an East Coast iwi is building a pavilion for its community. Ngāi Tāmāmuhiri has teamed up with Victoria's School of Architecture in the design and construction of a manuhiri whare—a pavilion for visitors on Muriwai Marae.

The project is part of a collaborative research lab between Victoria and Ngāi Tāmāmuhiri, known as SITUA (Site of Indigenous Technologies Understanding Alliance). The alliance partners with iwi and enables projects within iwi domains, using both mātauranga Māori (Māori knowledge) and new technologies.

The whare is being constructed using 3D printed tiles made onsite from locally sourced clay using a custom-built ceramic printer, and then pieced together by hand. “Apart from the technologies, everything used to build the structure is their own,” says Derek Kawiti, founder of SITUA and a senior lecturer at the School of Architecture.

“More and more using iwi knowledge and materials.”

This year marks 400 years since Shakespeare’s death, and what better way to commemorate the famous writer than to showcase his work to the public? The Summer Shakespeare Trust’s thirty-fourth production in February this year contributed to the worldwide celebrations by producing one of the Bard’s early comedies, Love’s Labour Lost.

“There are events and productions all around the world to commemorate this occasion, and it was great for Summer Shakespeare Wellington to be part of that,” says producer Sally Thorburn.

The annual outdoor theatre event, sponsored by Victoria, was performed at Wellington’s Botanic Garden and the Wairarapa’s Gladstone Vineyard to more than 2,500 people.

Love’s Labour Lost follows a king and his counsellors who vow to swear off women and commit to three years of study.

“As you can imagine, this all goes very wrong, because the gorgeous Princess of France and her ladies-in-waiting are due to arrive for a visit, and it isn’t long before the men become infatuated by their charms,” says Sally. “It’s a great battle of the sexes, and a debate focused on love and learning.”

The show featured actors ranging in age from twelve to thirty-seven, who were selected at open auditions.

“People were interested in the 3D printing and the local materials,” says Derek. "It’s special to us that they become involved with the iwi and they’ve really taken them under their wing.”

“Māori theatre is based on iwi knowledge and materials, where we explore our traditions and our culture.”

Breaking the mould

For the love of Shakespeare

“During the play, the costumes were designed and made in house.”

It’s always been a strong contingent of cast and crew that are Victoria University alumni or current students,” says Sally. “The relationship with the University dates back to 1983. It acknowledges the importance of training young people in the performing arts.”

All of the actors in the play cross-dressed, which Sally says was challenging and fun for the cast. “The men acting as women and the women as men added another element to the humour of the play. When the costume designer delivered the chaps’ dresses, the excitement in the room was palpable!”

Breaking the mould

For the love of Shakespeare  

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Law interpreted through a Māori love story

There’s a love story with a twist about a woman of substance, Rongomaiwahine, the principal ancestor of the people of the Māhia Peninsula in the North Island of New Zealand.

A young man called Kahungunu—from whom Hawke’s Bay’s Tai Ngāti Kahungunu takes its name—arrived in the area determined to marry Rongomaiwahine. Although she was already married, he set about impressing her and her family, observing how shags dive for fish and learning to do it himself to feed the tribe. Eventually, Rongomaiwahine’s husband drowned and she married Kahungunu.

Dr Carwyn Jones (Ngāti Kahungunu), senior lecturer at Victoria’s Faculty of Law, is collecting stories like this to explain Māori law in an accessible way. The three-year research programme, which explores Māori legal traditions, is funded by a Marsden Fast Start grant.

Carwyn aims to show there is more to Māori law than the customary rights that may be recognised by the New Zealand legal system. Customary law tends to be defined as a body of social rules that have developed through habitual repetition over time. But, he says, this is only a narrow slice of how law is created. Legal principles, reasoning and deliberation also play a key role in Māori law and it remains relevant to New Zealand public life. Carwyn says, “Māori stories can be viewed as a body of case law, in a similar way to a collection of decisions the New Zealand courts can illustrate a particular form of legal argument and reasoning. “Even at a very simple level, the story of Rongomaiwahine and Kahungunu provides some basic information about law and legal process,” Carwyn says. “For example, the story tells us about the site of decision-making authority. The marriage between these two ancestors, both from chiefly lines, was not only a decision for the two individuals involved. The wider community had both a stake and a say in whether the marriage would take place.”

Carwyn says a persuasive factor was Kahungunu’s ability to provide food for the community. When placed alongside other stories, this might reveal key principles and mechanisms of gift exchange and Māori forms of contract.

“Kahungunu’s study of the diving shags may also point to the importance in Māori law of a close observation of the natural world in determining appropriate ways of acting, perhaps in the context of resource management. The origins of the two key protagonists recounted in this story are also the basis for the present-day distinct political identities of the iwi Rongomaiwahine and Ngāti Kahungunu and have been relied upon in recent decisions about the allocation of commercial fishing assets.”

“Knowing Māori law and how it can be applied to resolve disputes, identify rights or establish and maintain durable relationships provides lawyers with a whole range of additional tools. Hopefully, this will enable the New Zealand state legal system to deal with Māori law in a more sophisticated way.”

“But the primary objective is to help strengthen the confidence of Māori communities to use our own law to manage a much broader range of public interactions,” Carwyn says.

Re-thinking organised criminality

Traditionally, organised criminality was syndicated, relatively visible and geographically bound. Today, it is often conducted by transient, opportunistic and highly mobile groups that co-ordinate activities anonymously through relatively inaccessible areas of the internet. Professor John Brocklesby, who heads Victoria’s School of Management, says that type of organised criminality is much harder to pinpoint.

After previous research with the United Kingdom’s Serious Organised Crime Agency, John knows exactly the sort of challenges posed by this new era of organised crime. “This new way of thinking about criminality and policing is more complex and presents huge challenges for crime-fighting agencies. Take, for example, the supply of illegal drugs or human trafficking. Beyond the obvious offenders, this can engage travel agents, transport operators and bank, customs and immigration officials, all with varying levels of complicity.”

“Likewise, on the policing side, there are groups like financial institutions, tax officials, neighbourd watch and surveillance via social media,” he says.

Considering organised criminality in this way requires a different view of crime fighting beyond traditional surveillance and apprehension, which is where John’s expertise in management science and organisational studies comes in.

The professor is currently working with academics and industry stakeholders examining inter-agency law enforcement collaboration. Through John’s membership of a Europol-based expert advisory panel, some of this work is channelled through to the European Union’s law enforcement agency that fights serious international crime in Europe. The group examines criminality processes and information networks to help police organisations identify, leverage points to prevent or disrupt less visible criminal activities.

“Global organisations such as Europol are often constrained in terms of what they can or are allowed to do. For example, national law enforcement agencies aren’t always keen to share information. But they’re undoubtedly making big steps in the right direction.”

Designs on the future

Anyone who dreams of following in the footsteps of Sir Richard Taylor by developing cutting-edge imagery for movies, television or the gaming industry can get a step closer to achieving their goals through a new programme offered by Victoria.

In what’s set to be a first for any university in New Zealand or Australia, students at Victoria will be able to major in computer graphics from the second trimester this year as part of a Bachelor of Science degree.

Leading the programme is Professor Neil Dodgson, who has returned to New Zealand after twenty years heading the University of Cambridge Computer Laboratory’s Graphics and Interaction Research Group. Neil, who grew up in Taipae, is also a world expert in 3D television, having pioneered an early version of the technology.

“A Bachelor of Science in Computer Graphics will equip students with a fantastic mix of engineering, mathematics and design,” Neil says. “It’s the perfect way to combine technology, art and creativity.”

“From their first year of study, students will gain an understanding of algorithms, mathematics and programming skills under the tuition of expert staff who have worked on films such as The Matrix sequels and Avatar. Furthermore, the School of Design will provide courses on the artistic and design side of computer graphics, giving our graduates a unique edge.”

Neil says the exponential growth of the entertainment and digital technology industries in Wellington means students will have the chance to work closely with world renowned organisations including Weta Digital and games developer Pik Pok.

“Victoria prides itself on the strong industry links it fosters so there’ll be many opportunities for our students to complete internships, work experience and industry projects in film, computer games, television and the web.”

Find more information at: http://bit.ly/1KMP4I1

Neil.dodgson@vuw.ac.nz
(64-4-463 9222)
Progress for progressive sufferers

They were designed to treat a variety of mental health disorders such as schizophrenia, bipolar disorder and autism—but two commonly used antipsychotic medications may offer new hope to multiple sclerosis (MS) sufferers.

A clinical trial is underway to test clozapine and risperidone in secondary progressive MS—which affects more than 35 percent of all MS sufferers and causes significant life-long disability. There is currently no effective treatment for this form of the disease.

Victoria immunologist Professor Anne La Flamme, an investigator on the trial, says repurposing medications is common for treating MS.

“The majority of agents used to treat the most common form of MS—relapsing remitting—were originally used for something else, like viral infections and leukaemia. “Clozapine and risperidone have always been targeted to mental illness, but our studies show they are able to tone down the immune system in the brain, which is what causes MS, and this anti-inflammatory action is promising,” says Anne. “We want to make sure that patients with secondary progressive MS respond well to the drugs and are satisfied with the level of monitoring required.”

The study—based at Wellington Regional Hospital—has been funded by the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment and supported by the Neurological Foundation of New Zealand and the Great New Zealand Trek Charitable Trust.

For more information about enrolling in the trial, contact Liz Gavde, trial nurse, at liz@gavde@cbch.org.nz

Contact: Professor Anne La Flamme, tel: +64 4 463 6033

What lies beneath

A team of Victoria researchers is using a sci-fi sounding technique involving hundreds of magnetic sensors to find corrosion in metal pipelines where the eye can’t see.

One of the biggest issues facing refineries and industrial plants is keeping a clean bill of health—especially for their pipeline infrastructure. Carrying out a clean bill of health—especially for refineries and industrial plants is keeping their pipeline infrastructure. Carrying out corrosion inspection to check underneath,“ says Joseph Bailey, an investigator on the trial.

The general population was involved in the creation of the book with Archie’s son, John—a former associate professor in Victoria’s Faculty of Education—writing the introduction, which describes how he discovered the diary and includes memories the Barrington family have of Archie’s time in prison.

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Contact: Professor Anne La Flamme, tel: +64 4 463 6033

 Sitting in a prison cell at Wellington’s Mt Crawford Prison in 1941, A.C. (Archie) Barrington scrawled in the margins of two religious and history books about his incarceration for maintaining his Christian pacifist opposition to New Zealand’s war effort during World War II.

The illicit books—which begin from the first day of his one-year sentence—were smuggled out by the prison butcher to Archie’s family, but after the war they were forgotten about.

More than sixty years later, and after Archie passed away, they were rediscovered by his family, who typed up the notes and passed them to Professor John Pratt, director of Victoria’s Institute of Criminology in the School of Social and Cultural Studies.

John describes the find of a prison diary, which gives great insight into prison life of the time, as incredibly rare. He estimates that Archie, who he describes as a principled and courageous man, wrote approximately a thousand words a day and also included sketches of himself in prison.

“In the 40s, the prison population consisted mainly of human dregs, like meth drinkers and alcoholics. The rest were pacifists or really serious offenders. “It’s a very different prison population from what we have today.”

Otago University Press published John’s book, The Prison Diary of A.C. Barrington: Dissent and Conformity in Wartime New Zealand, earlier this year. In it, he analyses the significance of the information in the diary about prison conditions and New Zealand society at the time.

“Why was New Zealand intolerant to war dissenters? The same behaviour in the United Kingdom and Australia at the same time would have been ignored. These are countries that we like to compare ourselves to.

“The general population was involved with, and supportive of, the war effort, but those who had different views were not tolerated.”

The book also explores the difficult and challenging prison conditions of the time, especially during the winter that Archie spent at Mt Crawford Prison.

“There was no heating and they weren’t given any special clothing—it’s remarkable they didn’t catch pneumonia. Archie was walking around in a short-sleeved nylon shirt and very thin, ill-fitting pants.”

Archie also noted the generous diet prisoners were given during the war. The problem was, though, that it was virtually the same meal every night—a big plate of meat, potatoes and carrots—and he describes the monotony of this, as well as his own attempts to add variety, smuggling vitamin-rich roots from the prison gardens.

“Archie referred to the porridge served each morning as disgusting. The limbs used to make porridge were also used to make tea, so the porridge tasted like tea and the tea tasted like porridge.”

The Barrington family allowed John to edit the diary because of his interest in prisons and prison history. The family has been involved in the creation of the book with Archie’s son, John—a former associate professor in Victoria’s Faculty of Education—writing the introduction, which describes how he discovered the diary and includes memories the Barrington family have of Archie’s time in prison.
Who’s in my room?

In this ongoing series, we ask an outstanding Victoria student to return to their old room at their former hall of residence and share stories with the current resident.

First-year Commerce student Nathan McDonald and 2016 VUWSA president Jonathan Gee discovered not much had changed at Weir House since Jonathan left in 2012. The walls were the same colour, toast was still everyone’s favourite food and the fun and friendly banter between floors was enduring.

The two met in room D-19, where political enthusiast Jonathan gave Nathan some pearls of wisdom for his time at Victoria, encouraging him “to really make the most of all the opportunities”, he has.

Watch the full story at http://bit.ly/1XJ5sU

Jonathan Gee

What’s it like to be in your old room?

It’s really weird to come back. When we came in and walked past the laundry, I remembered that distinctive smell, which reminded me that I’m back at Weir House. I remember this was one of the only rooms that’s walls were painted the same colour as the wardrobe. There were some mismatched rooms on the floor. I was happy to get the colour coordination.

Highlights of staying at Weir House?

I think the highlight for me was being part of such a great university community here. I came from an all-boys high school that was structured and sometimes strict, so leaving home I had newfound independence. University is a very liberal, open-minded place so it was great to come out of my shell and Weir House was very much a part of that.

Did you meet your neighbours? Are you still friends?

A lot of people were really social and probably not people who I would’ve normally been friends with, but my neighbours were really cool. We went through Law School together and still keep in touch. I’m actually now flatting with a friend who I met at Weir House. There is a great community at Weir House, not just within the hall, but within each floor.

How has the room changed since you lived here?

The room looks kind of similar to what I remember—most things in here are pretty much the same from when I was here in 2012. I think the only difference is that the wardrobe door has been painted. But apart from that, it’s like I had never left.

What advice do you have for Nathan?

Just to really make the most of all the opportunities that he has here. I really enjoyed my first year in a hall and I got to know a lot of people. I think it’s important to know that doesn’t end—when you leave Weir House or when you finish your first year—that university community continues. So make the most of that supportive community and make as many friends as you can, because there are so many of us who are still friends today.

Nathan McDonald

What are you studying?

I’m doing a Bachelor of Commerce with a major in Accounting. It’s lots of number crunching and that’s what I’ve always been interested in. So far it’s been pretty good—all the teachers have been good at explaining things. There’s a few people on my floor taking the same courses as me so we walk to class together, which is nice.

Is this your first time out of home?

Yes. It’s all new experiences and having to fend for myself, which is not what I’m used to. It was a bit nerve-wracking my first week—having to try and find my way around, seeing all these new faces—but I’ve managed.

Why Victoria University?

I am from Wellington and thought living in Weir House would be nice because it only takes five minutes to walk to class. Also, I already had a job in Wellington and it was important for me to keep that and keep saving while studying.

Was the room what you were expecting?

Not really. I’d seen my older brother’s room at his university hall and that was really cramped. But when I first walked in here, I was really stoked there was a sink in my room and lots of storage space. It’s so nice.

Thoughts on having the room of someone who’s gone on to be so well known around the University?

I guess it does make me feel proud to be in a room where someone like Jonathan was. Who knows? Maybe his success will rub off on me and I might go on to great things too.

What do you like to do in your spare time?

I’m a big fan of computer gaming—I like games like League of Legends and Skyrim. I also like reading.
Championing cybersecurity through collaboration

Many New Zealand businesses experienced a cyberattack at least once last year, and the number of security breaches is rising.

A new collaboration agreement between Victoria University and local company Total Risk will help tackle this issue by developing training, advice and protection services in cybersecurity. Total Risk is one of only nine worldwide accredited partners of the Software Engineering Institute’s CERT Division at Carnegie Mellon University in the United States—a world-leading authority on cybersecurity.

The collaboration will see Carnegie Mellon’s expertise and Victoria’s internationally-recognised cybersecurity education and research expertise combine to push on with a world-leading CERT division in New Zealand.

“Total Risk is the only one in New Zealand. It gives Victoria the impetus to move forward. It’s the only one in New Zealand. It’s the only one in New Zealand,” says Dr Daphne Rickson, one of six to receive funding as part of the Government’s Teaching and Learning Research Initiative.

Rickson and her team will examine the relationship between singing programmes and wellbeing at a Christchurch school that has been severely affected by the earthquakes, and encourage learners to express what classroom singing means to them.

“The significance of this collaboration cannot be understated,” says Victoria’s Dean of Engineering, Professor Dale Carnegie. “It gives Victoria the impetus to push on with a world-leading multidisciplinary cyber programme, and a CERT-certified one at that, which should prove very attractive for both local and international students.”

Employers’ wish list revealed

The top ten skills organisations are looking for when hiring university graduates or students are revealed in a Victoria Business School-commissioned survey.

The nationwide Employability Skills Survey found work ethic was the most important attribute for employers when hiring students or graduates. Verbal communication skills ranked second, and energy and enthusiasm third.

Pro Vice-Chancellor and Dean of Commerce Professor Bob Buckle says the results suggest employers want graduates who can produce quality work from the start.

Recruiters look for those discipline-specific or technical skills, but they also want graduates who have the ability to think critically and problem solve. Sound communication skills are also highly desirable so the new recruits can apply their technical skills effectively,” he says.

The Employability Skills Survey is the largest survey of its kind in Australasia, representing 346 organisations in the private, public and non-profit sectors.

For the full list and summary of results, go to http://bit.ly/2eitoy

Building for collaboration

A state-of-the-art building is taking shape in Kelburn, to be ready for science research and teaching in 2017.

Temporarily called the Gateway building, the facility has been designed in keeping with modern teaching practices and will reflect Victoria’s status as a leading science and research organisation.

To encourage interaction and collaboration, a double tiered lecture theatre with open areas will allow group work to be conducted alongside more traditional teaching. In some cases, lecturers will teach from the middle of the room, rather than at the front.

Science laboratories will be located alongside informal areas, allowing students to move easily between laboratories, lecture theatres and break-out spaces. There will also be other formal learning areas, undergraduate teaching laboratories, collaborative areas and social spaces. The laboratories, like the rest of the building, will be open and light, rather than old-school laboratories hidden in basements.

Science is a high-performing and rapidly growing area of capability for Victoria—the University is ranked number one in New Zealand for research quality in eight science subject areas and number two in a further three subjects.

One of Victoria’s primary goals in the next decade is to enhance research quality, quantity and impact.

Associate Professor Allison Kirkman, Victoria’s Vice-Provost, (Academic and Equity) says the University recognises that the way people learn has changed significantly in the past decade and there is now demand for blended learning, which combines online study with face-to-face interaction.

She says greater use of online research and digital devices—approximately 38,800 devices were used on Victoria’s campuses in 2015—has created a shift in how students want to interact with, and experience, learning.

“They want to be able to read course materials anywhere and any time. ‘But they also want to experiment and discover their own answers and to work in groups while discussing their ideas. In terms of physical space, we need facilities that are flexible and that encourage engagement, interaction, cross-pollination of ideas and collaboration.”

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Always inspired
Sarah Jane Moon
Portrait painter
BA Wellington

What kind of work have you been doing since you graduated?
I spent a few years teaching English in rural Japan before moving to Australia for two years to work in arts management. Following a brief stint in Kuala Lumpur, I arrived in the United Kingdom nine years ago and have forged a career as a portrait painter.

One of the highlights of my career was having a solo show at London’s Mall Galleries that ran alongside the Royal Society of Portrait Painters’ annual exhibition last year.

What are some of your favourite memories of Victoria University?
I have fond memories of arriving at campus early and pitching up in the library, forever distracted by the views of the clouds (inevitably) rolling in over the harbour and the colours of sea and sky. I loved the hills too and the intimacy of studying in a small city where everything is close by.

Where did you typically hang out, both on and off campus?
I loved the Adam Art Gallery and volunteered there on occasion. Off campus, I would often meet friends at the Malthouse, which was a regular haunt, and then various wine and jazz bars—we were all trying to be so very grown up!

What was the most useful thing you learnt at Victoria?
I think there are so many life lessons one learns at that age, but I think Victoria bred a certain resilience and confidence in me that has thankfully stuck. Also a friendliness—it was a real privilege to be part of such a tight-knit and convivial community. Also, not to wear heels when walking down The Terrace on a windy and wet Wellington day!

The job that never loses its appeal
Judge Peter Boshier
Chief Ombudsman
LLB(Hons) Wellington, GCTT USP

What kind of work have you been doing since you graduated?
My career has all been related to the law but certainly varied. After a period of practice, I was appointed as a District Court Judge. In 2004, I became Principal Family Court Judge. In late last year, I became Chief Ombudsman.

What are some of the highlights of your career to date?
My education at Victoria paved the way for some fairly interesting work. Coming in as Principal Family Court Judge when the Care of Children Act was passed and markedly changed so many aspects of Family Law, was a definite highlight as was the ability to spend so much time in the Pacific educating judges about family violence and youth justice issues.

What are some of your favourite memories of Victoria University?
Of course, the ‘professional’ side of my law degree was very enriching, but equally so was the force of student politics, debate and publishing both Salient (Victoria’s student magazine) and Caveat (the Faculty of Law student newspaper). My memories of through-the-night publications layout endure!

The old fashioned hotels and pubs around Wellington gave us plenty of choice for relaxing and discussing the world’s affairs over a beer.

What has stayed with you since you left Victoria?
You can’t undertake the sort of jobs that I have been lucky enough to have without a really sound base of good knowledge of law and technique. Victoria taught law so very well and still does. That, combined with some insights and maturity that I think student life gave me, set me up pretty well for what, I would have to say, has been a wonderful career.

Victoria’s global and local reach
Victoria continues to host events across New Zealand and the world, enabling current staff and students to reconnect with alumni. The following give a snapshot of some events held since the last issue of Victorious.

More than fifty Indonesia-based alumni gathered to meet at a networking event hosted at the Grand Hyatt Jakarta in October.

James Wong, Geoff Massam, Caitlin O’Donnell, Clarke and Susan Harcourt were among those hosted at a New York event in September.

Jan Akkachayanan takes a selfie with fellow alumni at a Bangkok event at the Grand Hyatt Erawan in October.

New Zealand High Commissioner to the United Kingdom Sir Lockwood Smith talks with alumni at The Royal Society in London in September.

Recent graduate Mitch Duncan spoke about his career in the animation industry. Mitch was joined by Weta Digital visual effects supervisor Matt Aitken at March’s Young Alumni event at Te Papa.

Sign up for latest alumni news
Keep up to date with our alumni e-newsletter, delivered monthly to your inbox. Your Victoria brings you the latest in Victoria news, events, deals and opinions. If you don’t already receive it and would like to sign up, email your full name to alumni@vuw.ac.nz with ‘Subscribe’ in the subject line.
Victoria’s growing influence in Auckland

The Faculty of Law will use this technology for five postgraduate courses in Auckland this year, which include special topics such as water law, patent law and law of privacy. The School of Information Management will again offer its professional Master’s programmes. These programmes combine intensive, face-to-face seminars with distance learning technologies for discussion-based, activity-rich learning, with lecturers splitting their time between Wellington and Auckland.

The School of Government at Victoria Business School has hosted several events at the Auckland premises since they opened.

Last month, the School established a more permanent Auckland presence with the launch of two of the four postgraduate courses.

Head of the School of Government Professor Brad Jackson says it is “imperative” the School extends its research, education and development activities to Auckland.

"Having a base in Auckland better allows us to engage with Auckland public servants, Auckland Council, health boards and the city’s NGOs (non-governmental organisations). Our presence also allows Auckland-based students and stakeholders to benefit from the expertise of Victoria’s Wellington academics and their connections to government agencies and businesses."

For more information on Auckland courses for 2016, go to http://bit.ly/ULiwfw

From BA to brewery

Richard Shirtcliff
Head boy at Tuatara Brewing

What kind of work have you been doing since you graduated?

On the face of it, my career looks a little disjointed—sponsorship, event management, marketing, business development, strategy, brand strategy and a few start-ups. And now, running a brewery, which is pretty damn magic! I’ve always been inspired by entrepreneurial pursuits and environments, so building businesses in New Zealand and taking them to the world was a natural fit. Also, the roles I’ve had along the way have helped me acquire key skills that give me a shot at doing that.

Describe your student experience at Victoria?

It was a hugely formative and fun time: all new friends, influences, socialising. Despite a learning mindset that’s made me curious and restless all my life, I didn’t really have a ‘love of learning’ at that stage in my life—that came later.

What was the most useful thing you learnt at Victoria?

At university you can be, think, act and speak as you wish (within the bounds of the law) and you’ll find a place for you. All you must do is open your mind to that, and embracing it is hugely liberating.

What’s some advice you’d like to share with current Victoria students?

Risk it all! When you’re in your twenties, it’s the very best time in your life to take chances that are the fastest ways to build hugely valuable experiences and success. At that stage, if you fail you’ll learn plenty and lose little.

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Also, approach life with a mindset that asks ‘what if it goes right?’ We’re constantly looking at the downside, but advances in humanity have rarely come from worrying about the downside.
Planting the seeds for future research

Victoria’s School of Biological Sciences is partnering with the Wellington City Council to establish an urban field station at Otari-Wilton’s Bush where staff and student research in terrestrial plant ecology can be progressed.

The field station will be housed in the recently refurbished Leonard Cockayne Centre, named after New Zealand’s greatest botanist and a father of modern science in New Zealand.

The Otari reserve includes 100 hectares of native forest and five hectares of plant collections and is the only public botanic garden in New Zealand dedicated solely to native plants.

Amanda Taylor, a PhD student, is one of the students undertaking research at Otari-Wilton’s Bush into the distribution of epiphytic plants—those that grow on other plants, such as mosses.

“Thirty percent of the general adult population, 47 percent of Māori adults and 66 percent of Pasifika adults are classified as obese. However, our focus is not trying to change larger patients or engage in weight-loss conversations with them. When these very large patients come into care—they should feel safe and they should be able to expect the same level of care as any other patient.”

Caz is working on the project with Lesley Gray from Otago University and Todd Bishop, who is the chief executive of Essential HelpCare, a company that provides equipment to hospitals and other healthcare providers.

When statements sound like questions

Many people are interested in language issues, particularly when they involve things they don’t agree with.

Uptalk—the use of rising intonation that makes statements sound more like questions—has become a talking point, with plenty of disapproving commentary.

Dr Caz Hales, who is a lecturer at Victoria’s Graduate School of Nursing, Midwifery and Health, is part of a new initiative called BMI, which in this case stands for bariatric management initiative called BMI, which in this case stands for bariatric management.

“We are working with industry providers—in this case Essential HelpCare—and healthcare professionals, as well as examining care from the perspective of obese patients in order to best understand where the issues lie.”

One tool the BMI team is using is a simulation suit, purchased by the Department of Primary Health Care and General Practice at Otag University, Wellington, for research and teaching.

“A major issue for very large patients is the need for specialised equipment that actually fits properly, which is obviously essential to ensuring they get the best care and are able to rehabilitate properly,” she says.

“HelpCare—and healthcare professionals, for obese patients. Todd Bishop, who is the chief executive of Essential HelpCare, a company that provides equipment to hospitals and other healthcare providers—has so far is that it’s a very powerful tool—”

Kevin Burns, acting head of the School of Biological Sciences, says Leonard Cockayne’s vision for the reserve was for it to be a working laboratory of scientific research on New Zealand flora. “We’re thrilled to be able to carry that mission forward. Victoria already has a well-established strength in plant ecology and having places like Otari-Wilton’s Bush, just a few minutes from the campus, has been invaluable in supporting field research that underpins this. “We are delighted to have the chance to increase this relationship further and have resources on site to support research.”

A new take on ‘BMI’

A fat simulation suit is the latest tool to help healthcare workers better understand and care for their patients, as Otago and Victoria University researchers work with the healthcare industry to improve support for obese patients.

Dr Caz Hales, who is a lecturer at Victoria’s Graduate School of Nursing, Midwifery and Health, is part of a new initiative called BMI, which in this case stands for bariatric management.

“The suit replicates the experience of being physically larger and we’re using it to help healthcare professionals empathise with larger patients. The feedback we’ve had so far is that it’s a very powerful tool—”

Caz in working on the project with Lesley Gray from Otago University and Todd Bishop, who is the chief executive of Essential HelpCare, a company that provides equipment to hospitals and other healthcare providers.

“However, our focus is not trying to change larger patients or engage in weight-loss conversations with them. When these very large patients come into care—they should feel safe and they should be able to expect the same level of care as any other patient.”

Caz is working on the project with Lesley Gray from Otago University and Todd Bishop, who is the chief executive of Essential HelpCare, a company that provides equipment to hospitals and other healthcare providers.

Thirty percent of the general adult population, 47 percent of Māori adults and 66 percent of Pasifika adults are classified as obese.

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Breathing new life into teaching resources

Kōhanga reo, Samoan kindergartens and schools around the country have access to a rich online audio teaching resource, thanks to restoration work by staff of Victoria’s Language Learning Centre (LLC). Balint Koller and Edith Paillat (pictured) were part of the LLC team that released free digital recordings of about twenty Māori and Samoan language learning readers that had been published non-commercially on tape in the 1980s and 1990s by the Ministry of Education.

The result is a digital audio-bookshelf that gives better access to precious and long-underused resources.

- View the digital collection: http://bit.ly/1OY0U5O

Warm welcome for new students

Members of the Samoan Students’ Association performed at the Welcome Festival in February for first-year Victoria students.

The vibrant event was filled with cultural and musical performances, sports activities, food stalls and the famous halls’ chant-off competition, which was won by Te Puni Village.

Vice-Chancellor Professor Grant Guilford, Deputy Mayor Justin Lester and Victoria University of Wellington Students’ Association President Jonathan Gee took the opportunity to welcome students to Victoria and to Wellington.

- Watch a short video of the Welcome Festival on Victoria’s Facebook page: http://bit.ly/1VmAj

VUCEL making a splash

In celebration of New Zealand Sea Week, the Victoria University Coastal Ecology Laboratory (VUCEL) in Island Bay opened its doors to the public on Saturday 5 March.

This year’s Sea Week theme was Toiora te Moana—Toiora te Tangata, Healthy Seas—Healthy People. Dr Jeff Shima, the VUCEL director, says the theme highlights the strong dependencies that we have on our oceans.

Visitors were able to see marine creatures up close and learn about the interesting biology of the marine animals and plants on display.

- See more photos from the day on VUCEL’s Facebook page: http://on.fb.me/1VdAch

SOMETHING OLD, NEW, GIFTED, BLUE AND TERRACOTTA

A unique collection of more than seventy late-Roman antiquities is a treasured addition to Victoria’s School of Art History, Classics and Religious Studies and the University’s Classics Museum.

The pieces—mainly pottery and glass—were gifted by Jeremy Commons through the Victoria University Foundation. Jeremy’s late partner, well-known artist and potter David Carson-Parker, brought them to New Zealand in the 1970s. They were purchased from a dealer in artefacts at a souk in Syria’s capital, Damascus.

Dr Mark Masterson from the School of Art History, Classics and Religious Studies says the collection dates from the middle to late Eastern Roman Empire and features a range of artefacts. “The glass pieces are my favourite—some of them are quite dazzling. It’s touching that something that was so important to David can serve as a lasting reminder of him here at Victoria. I’m very happy to be able to remember him in this way and that the collection will be named in his honour.”

Jeremy says that as a potter, David was interested in the work of all countries and periods, and it was an immediate and spontaneous feeling of affinity with Roman pottery that prompted him to collect it.

The process of cataloguing the collection, including photographing and writing descriptions for each of the pieces, is well underway and Dr Masterson says they will be on display by mid-2016 and will be used as a teaching resource in the Classics department.

The David Carson-Parker pieces will join the well-chosen collection of Greek and Roman artefacts at Victoria’s Classics Museum and will be housed in a purpose-built, earthquake-proof cabinet in the museum on Level 5 in Old Kirk building.

classics@vuw.ac.nz
+64 4 463 6909
Here they are. Twenty-one consonants and five vowels. What happens if you rearrange them? That’s when they can become more than twenty-six familiar symbols. They can convey ideas, tell stories, describe characters and situations. They can be anything you want them to be. Something that never existed, until you thought of it.

The International Institute of Modern Letters at Victoria University of Wellington is where writers play with the alphabet and find their unique voices. Victoria is New Zealand’s globally ranked capital city university. By inspiring and developing art, music and writing, we cultivate creative capital.

For more about world-leading thinking and research at Victoria, go to victoria.ac.nz