

UNIVERSITY OF OTAGO | JULY 2023

MAGAZINE

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New Zealand's new Director General of Health

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UNIVERSITY
of
OTAGO

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NEW ZEALAND

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friends of the University

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Tēnā koutou katoa

IT IS MY PLEASURE TO

INTRODUCE this *University of Otago Magazine* in my capacity as Acting Vice-Chancellor. I took up the role in a more formalised capacity in June, following the resignation of Professor David Murdoch. A recruitment process to find a new Vice-Chancellor will take place over the next few months.

I would like to begin by acknowledging Professor Murdoch for his hard work and wishing him all the best as he returns to the University of Otago, Christchurch campus as a Distinguished Professor. During his time as Vice-Chancellor, Professor Murdoch progressed a number of important initiatives, including helping to chart our path towards becoming Te Tiriti-led, the Compass culture change project, and progressing our overarching strategic plan which, on completion, will guide our University's future.

As you may have seen in the media, we are in the midst of a financially challenging time. A number of factors have played into this, including the downstream financial impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, a decline in first-year and returning enrolments, and funding from the Government that has not matched inflation for several years. The University requires ongoing operating cost savings of \$60 million a year to be financially sustainable – that is, permanent cost savings from our

"I value your support through these difficult times and know that my colleagues here feel the same."

current operating budget. This will come through permanent savings from budgets, including staff cuts where necessary.

We are not alone in facing difficulties, other universities around Aotearoa New Zealand and across the world are in a similar situation.

However, I wish to assure all our alumni and friends that we are working hard to get through this and that the University of Otago will continue to be an outstanding research and teaching institution, offering a campus experience that is second to none.

To achieve this, we are cutting our costs, including by redundancies in both professional and academic staff areas; postponing or stopping some of our capital development projects where possible; and speaking with Government on a sustainable funding model that can better withstand financial shocks.

I value your support through these difficult times and know that my colleagues here feel the same.

As you will see in this issue, there is much to celebrate at the University of Otago, including a very successful 150th reunion and conference for the Faculty of Law (pages 20 to 25); the University of Otago, Christchurch marking its 50th anniversary (pages 6 to 9); and our alumni going on to great things, including Professor Patila Amosa becoming the first woman Vice-Chancellor of the National University

of Samoa (pages 18 to 19) and Dr Diana Sarfati becoming the new Director General of Health (pages 29 to 31). We also mourn the loss of an incredible Pacific leader, Dr Tasileta Teevale (pages 42 to 43).

I hope you enjoy this issue of the *Otago Magazine*, and I thank you for your support of the University of Otago.

Noho ora mai,



**Acting Vice-Chancellor
Professor Helen Nicholson**



FEATURE

50 years of mahi

A milestone for the University of Otago, Christchurch

Some of the campus' staff around 1992.

In 1973, the University of Otago welcomed a small cohort of students to its new Christchurch Clinical School. From that humble beginning a thriving campus grew - this year celebrating 50 years.

KIA MAU – a call to come together and hold tight to one and all – is the chosen theme to celebrate 50 years of medical education and research excellence at the University of Otago, Christchurch.

More than 5,000 medical students have completed their training at the city's "health university" in the past five decades, along with several thousand health professional students (in nursing, mental health, physiotherapy, pharmacy, nutrition and radiation therapy) and health research students (masters, honours, PhD, summer students and postdoctoral students).

It is a history of which Dean and Head of Campus Professor Suzanne Pitama (Ngāti Kahungunu/Ngāti Whare) is suitably proud.

"In this, our 50th year, we celebrate where we have come from, how we have grown and flourished, and pay homage to the dedication and success of those who've helped shape our campus and gone on to achieve professional and academic success on the national and world stage," says Pitama.

"It's fitting that the theme of Kia Mau is being used to celebrate our campus in this special year, encouraging us to come

together and hold tight both to our history, the exciting adventures we are currently undertaking, and to the future endeavours we aspire to achieve."

The aspiration for a medical school in the Canterbury region took 120 years to come to fruition. Student placements were trialled in 1924, with an external review 44 years later finally recommending the establishment of the University of Otago's Christchurch Clinical School.

Ratified in 1971, the School welcomed its initial cohort of 43 fourth-year medical students in February 1973, with Professor

George Rolleston appointed first Dean of Campus.

The new Clinical School boasted nine departments - Medicine, Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Paediatrics, Pathology, Psychological Medicine, Preventative and Social Medicine, Radiology, Surgery and the Department of the Dean.

Staff and students were housed in a newly built medical centre next door to Christchurch Public Hospital in Rolleston Ave, featuring administration and teaching facilities, library spaces and laboratories. Departments with no link to the hospital operated out of older buildings nearby, either acquired by the University or gifted by the then Education Department. Most are still in use. A much-needed extension was added to the main site in 1998 – the campus's 25th anniversary – providing extra space for research and conferences, a foyer and a café.

In its first 10 years, 650 students entered the Christchurch clinical programme. A change of name in 1986 to the Christchurch School of Medicine and Health Sciences reflected the growing number of postgraduate students on campus; and in 2007, the name was simplified further to the University of Otago, Christchurch.

Paediatrics Professor Fred Shannon obtained funding for the internationally acclaimed Christchurch Child Development Study in 1977, employing social researcher David Fergusson and statistician John Horwood to set up data collection on around 1,200 babies born in the city from 1977. Now re-named the Christchurch Health and Development Study and housed within the Department of Psychological Medicine, the Study's findings repeatedly influence social and health policy in Aotearoa New Zealand and beyond.

The work of Mātai Hāora (see pages 10 to 12), led by Professor Christine Winterbourn, continues to attract research scientists and many awards. Winterbourn has been widely recognised for her work on the biological chemistry of free radicals and other reactive oxidants and their involvement in health

and disease. In 2011, she became the first woman to receive the Royal Society Te Apārangi's Rutherford Medal.

The Māori Indigenous Health Institute (MIHI) was launched in 2004, originally in the Department of Public Health and General Practice, with three part-time Māori academic staff in a single office space, no specific Hauora Māori curriculum time and a limited research portfolio. Later moving into the Department of the Dean, it was re-named the Department of Māori Indigenous Health in 2022. It now has around a dozen staff and a growing cohort of graduate students.

Other internationally acclaimed research taonga include the McKenzie Cancer Group, the Christchurch Heart Institute (the largest research group on campus), CreaTe (the Christchurch Regenerative Tissue and Engineering Research Group), the New Zealand Brain Research Group and many more.

The health reforms of the 1980s and 1990s raised grave concerns for patient care and safety in Canterbury hospitals among some of the campus' most senior clinicians and academics. Their staunch lobbying prompted an official enquiry by Health and Disability Commissioner Robyn Stent in 1998, which concluded that a preoccupation with efficiency and financial performance, forced on the Canterbury Health Board from above, had led to 'unnecessary deaths'.

Otago's Christchurch campus has been impacted by three major challenges in the past 13 years, which Pitama says have ultimately increased knowledge, skills and resilience, solidifying a strong team dynamic and environment of inclusivity.

"The Canterbury earthquakes disrupted lives and workflow, yet many of our clinical staff stepped up as frontline health workers, increasing our commitment to be responsive to the needs of our community," she says.

The quakes caused varying levels of damage to campus buildings – the main Rolleston Ave site was closed, with many staff and students shifting to temporary accommodation, including bowling and



Photo: Dave Bull

**DEAN AND HEAD OF CAMPUS
PROFESSOR SUZANNE PITAMA:**

"It's fitting that the theme of Kia Mau is being used to celebrate our campus in this special year, encouraging us to come together and hold tight both to our history, the exciting adventures we are currently undertaking, and to the future endeavours we aspire to achieve."



Tony Kettle, Christine Winterbourn and Glen Vile around 1988. Both Kettle and Vile were PhD students of Winterbourn at that time.



The 50th celebrations began in March 2023, with a formal academic welcome and picnic for staff and students in Hagley Park.

“The things we’re really good at, I see us improving on even more.”

golf clubrooms, residential buildings and local health facilities. The main campus re-opened in 2013 after a multi-million dollar strengthening project.

The 2019 Christchurch Mosque attacks also impacted many staff and students.

“Tragically, some of our staff and students or their whānau were in the mosques at the time of the attacks, while others were part of the clinical response,” says Pitama.

Earlier Psychological Medicine research investigating the impact of trauma from the Christchurch earthquakes was extended to incorporate a new “March 15 Project”, conducting ongoing interviews with terrorist attack victims, and helping support the Muslim community and its recovery. A recent one-day March 15 Project symposium provided a forum for research staff to report their initial findings back to the public, discussing their relevance for future health and wellbeing.

The COVID-19 pandemic has been an opportunity for staff to provide leadership, clinical expertise and community response. Professor David Murdoch – the

then campus Dean – chaired the Prime Minister’s COVID-19 Group and was the New Zealand representative on the Oxford University vaccine trial. MIHI partnered with Kāi Tahu to establish a mobile vaccine clinic, responding to the needs of the local Māori community.

Construction work is now underway on the University of Otago’s biggest building project to date – a new Christchurch campus research building, which will bring several departments together under one roof. The new six-story building, located in the nearby Te Papa Hauora Health Precinct, will house new laboratories and teaching spaces, enabling further growth of the campus’ world-class health-science research and education programmes.

The original Christchurch campus student cohort of 43 has grown to over 1,000, with more postgraduate than undergraduate learners, and representatives from over 20 nationalities.

There are now more than 50 postgraduate programmes on offer, including addiction and co-existence disorders, bioengineering, biomedical sciences, child health, continence management, health sciences, mental health, musculoskeletal and pain management, psychotherapy, public health and health management, and women’s health. The Department of Nursing, which opened in 2000 as the Centre for Postgraduate Nursing, is the largest postgraduate programme.

The campus boasts more than 35

research groups, covering specialist areas such as cancer, biomedical engineering, genetics, heart disease, indigenous health, infectious diseases, mental health, nursing and public health, with clinicians and research staff working collaboratively alongside Te Whatu Ora Waitaha Canterbury.

The campus’s 50th anniversary celebrations kicked off in March with a formal academic welcome and picnic for staff and students in Hagley Park, followed by a June evening showcase for civic leaders and key stakeholders. The public has been invited to a series of four public health talks hosted by leading campus researchers and clinicians through July and August. Celebrations will conclude with an end of year staff and student gala in November.

Pitama says the last 50 years has created a legacy of growth, development, initiative, innovation and forward momentum on which to build.

“The things we’re really good at, I see us improving on even more – producing growing numbers of culturally competent health clinicians, responding to workforce shortages and technological advances in health, contributing to national and international health innovation, and doing all of these things more efficiently and effectively.”

LORELEI MASON

Timeline of the University of Otago, Christchurch

- 1850**
Canterbury Association proposes medical school in Canterbury
- 1875**
Otago Medical School opens in Dunedin
- 1926**
Final-year class formally sent to Christchurch
- 1960**
Dr Don Beaven appointed full-time teaching and research
- 1970**
University agrees to build and equip "Medical Centre"
- 1971**
Professor George Rolleston appointed first Dean
- 1973**
First fourth-year intake arrives. Official opening of new building

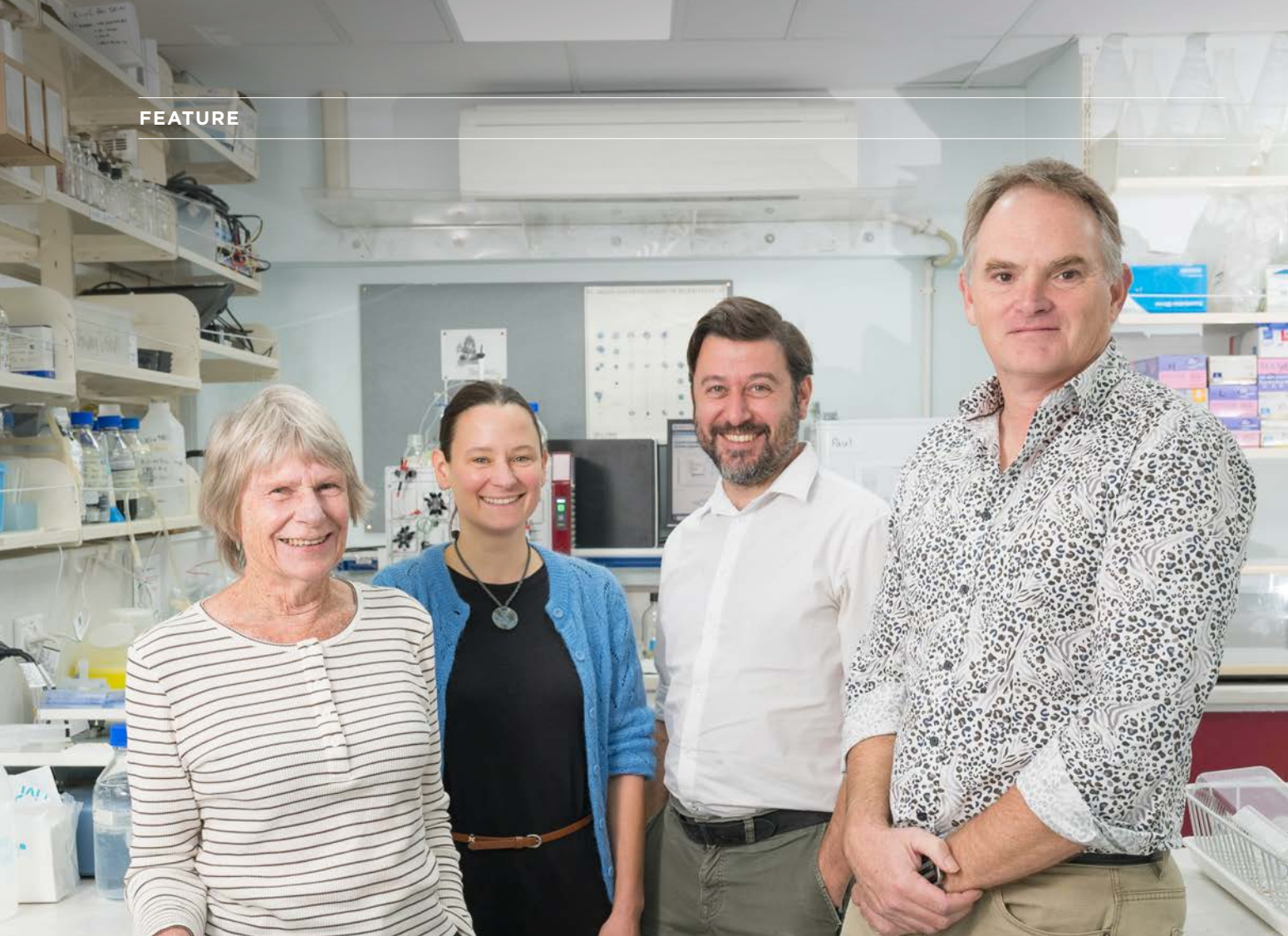


- 1982**
Professor John Hunter appointed as Dean
- 1986**
Professor Alan Clarke appointed as Dean
- 1988**
Number of postgraduate students exceeds medical students
- 1994**
Professor Andrew Hornblow appointed as Dean
- 1998**
Final stage of building completed after 25 years
- 2000**
Centre for Postgraduate Nursing Studies established
- 2002**
Professor Ian Town appointed as Dean



- 2005**
Professor Peter Joyce appointed as Dean
- 2007**
Name changed to University of Otago, Christchurch
- 2016**
Professor David Murdoch appointed as Dean
- 2021**
University of Otago Council approves new campus development
- 2022**
Professor Suzanne Pitama appointed as Dean
- 2023**
50th anniversary celebrated





Some of the members of Mātai Hāora – Centre for Redox Biology and Medicine (from left) Professor Christine Winterbourn, Dr Nina Dickerhof, Dr Christoph Goebel and Professor Mark Hampton: “Having a critical mass has been really valuable for the sharing of ideas and research expertise ... we have been able to maintain momentum over many years despite the challenging research funding environment.”

LAST YEAR'S UNIVERSITY OF OTAGO Group Research Award winner, Mātai Hāora – Centre for Redox Biology and Medicine, can trace its history back 50 years, to the early days of the University of Otago, Christchurch, and one of its founders Professor Christine Winterbourn.

Having moved to Christchurch in the early 1970s, she began working with Professor Robin Carrell who was head of Diagnostic Biochemistry at Christchurch Hospital.

Winterbourn says Carrell had a strong research background and was interested in haemoglobin, the protein that carries oxygen around the bloodstream. In

particular he was interested in molecules that had a mutation in them.

“They were called unstable haemoglobins and meant red blood cells didn’t last as long, leaving people with a form of anaemia. He had characterised some of these and their genetic mutations, and was interested in why these haemoglobins were unstable.”

It had been theorised the oxygen was loosely bound to the affected haemoglobin and came off as a superoxide radical, and Winterbourn and Carrell became among the first to provide evidence.

This gave rise to the idea that reactive free radicals were being generated within red cells, which was quite an unusual idea at that time.

“We then became interested in what happens to superoxide after it had formed. That was the start of the field of free radical biology.”

Winterbourn says the Christchurch team did a lot of research into a type of white blood cell called the neutrophil, which fights infections by making free radicals to kill bacteria. Sometimes neutrophils get out of control and can damage host tissue, particularly diseases such as cystic fibrosis and inflammatory bowel disease.

Winterbourn has received numerous prestigious awards, including becoming the first woman to win Aotearoa New Zealand’s top science accolade, the Rutherford Medal.



Radical research

Photos: Neil Macbeth

A research centre which has been part of the University of Otago, Christchurch, since it began 50 years ago won a prestigious award last year.

The *Otago Magazine* took a closer look at Mātai Hāora – Centre for Redox Biology and Medicine.

Although still deeply involved in research, the baton has been passed to former PhD students of hers, including Professors Margreet Vissers and Tony Kettle, and current Mātai Hāora Director Professor Mark Hampton who has led the group through the last five years that the Research Award was assessed.

During that time the group published more than 100 papers in international peer-reviewed journals and attracted more than \$15 million in competitive external funding from the Health Research Council and the Royal Society Te Apārangi's Marsden Fund Te Pūtea Rangahau a Marsden.

Hampton says one of the strengths of

the group has been the senior investigators' ability to work together and maintain a single entity.

"Having a critical mass has been really valuable for the sharing of ideas and research expertise. The University of Otago Research Group Award provided validation of this approach, and that we have been able to maintain momentum over many years despite the challenging research funding environment."

The group has recruited and retained a strong group of research fellows who provide a broad range of research skills and a supportive environment for postgraduate students. From this group two new principal

investigators, Drs Nina Dickerhof and Christoph Goebl, have recently emerged, ensuring the long-term future of the group looks bright.

Hampton says the group's research has changed significantly over the years. For a start, many of the reactive molecules that come from oxygen are not actually free radicals. To better reflect the scope of their research, the group was recently renamed the Centre for Redox Biology and Medicine. Hāora - the Māori word for oxygen - was also incorporated into the name.

"A lot of what we were doing initially was around the damaging effects of reactive oxidants on biological systems. What has



Assistant Research Fellow Te-Rina King-Hudson and Professor Mark Hampton in the lab.

“The group is huge for the department and school, and they are one of the University’s leading research groups. We are a far better institution and department for their presence.”

emerged over the last decade is that oxidants have more subtle effects, regulating a large number of processes essential to the life and death of cells.”

Their research has three areas of focus: infection and inflammation; cancer; and the study of ageing.

“The immune system uses oxidants to try and destroy bacteria causing infection, and we are trying to understand how bacteria protect themselves from these oxidants. We have recently identified new ways they can do this. The next step is to develop compounds that target the bacteria’s defence mechanisms and allow the immune system to clear the infection more easily.”

Even though cancer and infectious disease are very different things, the cancer work is taking a similar tack, examining the ability of cancer cells to protect themselves against various oxidative stresses they encounter. Understanding how they do this would allow new strategies to kill cancer cells more effectively.

Ageing is a relatively new area of research for the group, working in collaboration with the Dunedin Multidisciplinary Health and Development Study (the Dunedin Study) which has increasingly become a study of ageing as the participants grow older.

“There is a long-standing theory around

“What has emerged over the last decade is that oxidants have more subtle effects, regulating a large number of processes essential to the life and death of cells.”

the role of oxidative stress in the ageing process and we’ve been able to get samples from study participants and start to look for early signs,” he says.

“The Dunedin Study has been able to assess the rate at which people are ageing, and they have identified people who are ageing faster than others. We’re looking to see if there are greater levels of oxidative stress in these people.”

It is an exciting collaboration between two long-standing groups that have both been running 50 years.

Mātai Hāora – Centre for Redox Biology

and Medicine is part of Pathology and Biomedical Science, headed by Professor Martin Kennedy, who says it makes up about half of his department.

“It is unusual in that it is a very large group that has stayed together and been very successful for a long period of time,” he says. “It is actually very tough to fund long-term research programmes in this country, and globally, in the current economic climate. But they’re a group who have achieved this over four, if not five decades.”

Kennedy credits a range of factors, including the group’s willingness to collaborate, share resources and nurture new researchers, and he also acknowledges the huge role Winterbourn has played.

“Christine is a fantastic scientist and leader. She comes in on a daily basis and quietly mentors students and writes papers, and occasionally puts a lab coat on and goes into the lab.

“Christine set up very good processes and I think the current principal investigators have carried that on very well.

“The group is huge for the department and school, and they are one of the University’s leading research groups. We are a far better institution and department for their presence.”

MARK WRIGHT

**ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR DIANNE SIKA-PAOTONU:**

“My parents gave up everything to ensure that my brother and I had opportunities that they never had, so I carry that sense of responsibility to ensure I’m doing my part to give back and contribute to society.”

When science and empathy meet:

Associate Professor Sika-Paotonu wins the Prime Minister’s Science Communication Prize

WINNING AWARDS for her ability to communicate science is becoming quite the habit for Associate Professor Dianne Sika-Paotonu. She won the Australasian Society of Immunology BD Science Communication Award in 2008 (for the best presentation delivered in a non-scientific language), the 2020 New Zealand Association of Scientists Cranwell Medal (for excellence in communicating science to the general public), and she’s now scooped the most prestigious of the lot: Te Puiaki Whakapā Pūtaiao – the 2022 Prime Minister’s Science Communication Prize.

This latest award acknowledges Sika-Paotonu’s tireless efforts to communicate

health science information, including her work as a leading voice during the COVID-19 pandemic. Her positions as Associate Professor of Biomedical and Health Sciences in Immunology and Associate Dean (Pacific) at the University of Otago, Wellington, give her a valuable dual science/cultural lens. As a New Zealander of Tongan descent, she added a vital Pacific voice to discourse around the pandemic and unpacked the technical aspects of immunology, vaccines and infectious diseases for the general public.

During that time she was on the Expert Advisory Panel for two projects put together by *Stuff* in partnership with *Māori*

Television and the *Pacific Media Network: The Whole Truth: COVID-19 Vaccination* and *The Whole Truth: Te Māramatanga* (a broader series on public health issues prone to misinformation).

It wasn’t just her biomedical expertise that was so highly valued during the pandemic. Sika-Paotonu also has a formidable knack for conveying clear information to a worried public with resounding calm and personal warmth. At a time when there was a pronounced need to dispel the fearmongering caused by misinformation, she was science communication gold.

She is highly regarded by her peers. Former Director General of Health Sir Ashley Bloomfield has commended her for her listening skills, saying that these are a crucial part of what it means to be a great communicator. Professor Parry Guilford, the Director of the University of Otago's Centre for Translational Cancer Research, is also a big Sika-Paotonu fan. He was the one who nominated her for the Prime Minister's award. Guilford says she stood out as a sensible and informed commentator during the pandemic.

“Her humble, thoughtful and respectful approach to communication means that her messages have been very well received by the communities of interest.”

“Her knowledge has always been expressed with grace and empathy for her audience. She is a highly effective communicator who takes her audience with her.”

It seems that grace and empathy are qualities native to Sika-Paotonu, and were likely the very things that ushered down the Health Sciences path in the first place. She was only eight when she had her career epiphany: “When I was quite young, a family friend passed away from cancer and

this upset me a lot. So I promised my mum that one day I would cure cancer.”

It was this early filial promise that set her on the biomedical science path. She has since spent much of her career researching cancer, and as a Fulbright New Zealand Scholar she now has the opportunity to collaborate with colleagues at Harvard University and the University of Oklahoma over her research into acute rheumatic fever and rheumatic heart disease (conditions which disproportionately affect indigenous peoples in Aotearoa New Zealand, Australia and the Pacific region).

In a bid to communicate science to a broad audience she has travelled extensively to present at conferences around the world, and authored 69 commentaries in scientific journals and 82 published conference proceedings. Her media tally is impressive: Sika-Paotonu has undertaken more than 50 television interviews and presentations, contributed to more than 1,500 articles for New Zealand and international news media, and fronted at least 100 radio interviews.

Sika-Paotonu has long been motivated by the need for more Pacific and Māori scientists and researchers to be included in the western science framework. In 2021, she said: “As Pacific peoples, it’s also important we’re there at the discussion tables, being part of the talanoa and the korero, to ensure that we’re included and that our people are represented.” To this end, she has led and hosted many outreach events and activities gatherings.

There’s a quote by Albert Einstein that she keeps close: “Those who have the privilege to know, have the duty to act.” She never makes this service mentality feel like an onerous task, though. She attributes her commitment to giving back to society to her upbringing and her religious faith. In particular, she credits the selflessness of her parents, Tevita and Teisa Sika, who came



to New Zealand from Tonga in the 1960s, sacrificed much, and lavished much care and time on her and her brother Joey.

“My parents gave up everything to ensure that my brother and I had opportunities that they never had, so I carry that sense of responsibility to ensure I’m doing my part to give back and contribute to society. It is very important for me to be of service to Pacific communities in Aotearoa and the Pacific region.”

This means she always fronts up. “Whenever I’m asked to speak, or if ever I’m offered the opportunity to share, I accept the invitation, no matter what the forum or the context may be. I consider it my responsibility to give back, share and be



Dianne Sika-Paotonu (right) with the Minister of Health Hon. Dr Ayesha Verrall.

helpful to others around me.”

Otago’s Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Enterprise) Professor Richard Blaikie says the University is exceptionally proud of the recognition for Sika-Paotonu, who joins the ranks of some of the best science communicators from Aotearoa New Zealand and the Pacific (including the winner of the 2020 Prime Minister’s Science Prize, Professor Michael Baker from Wellington’s Department of Public Health).

Of Sika-Paotonu’s latest gong, Blaikie says: “Her humble, thoughtful and respectful approach to communication means that her messages have been very well received by the communities of interest. It is also an outstanding mark of her character and commitment that she intends

to use the funds from this prestigious award to support others.”

The Prime Minister’s Science Communication Prize comes with a handsome \$75,000 purse – money that Sika-Paotonu plans to use to support students and young people in the health, education and research sectors to become the next generation of science communicators. She also plans to continue her work communicating science to the public and Pacific communities.

CLAIRE FINLAYSON

Peace and wands

Associate Professor SungYong Lee won one of Otago's prestigious teaching awards last year – his father and role model watching from South Korea via Zoom.

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR SUNGYONG LEE is searching for a magic wand like the one his father flourished (figuratively) as a primary school teacher in South Korea.

When Lee took up his position at Otago's National Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies/Te Ao O Rongomaraeroa nine years ago, he was too intimidated by paternal example to come clean to his father about the educational aspects of his job.

"He was such a good teacher that I felt a bit embarrassed to tell him about what I do here," he says. "My father had a magic wand – he could make pupils laugh every 15 minutes. I vividly remember how much he was loved by the children he taught. So,

when I started lecturing, I didn't want to share details of my teaching activities with him until I learned to use his sort of magic. I still don't have the wand."

What he does have (in spades) is empathy and humility. These were the qualities that helped him win a University of Otago Award for Excellence in Teaching in 2022.

His colleagues know this well – they have spotted him sitting at his desk moist-eyed over war-ravaged narratives in journal articles.

Jenny Te Paa Daniel (Te Mareikura & Interim Director of the Centre) describes Lee as "a consummate scholar and researcher and a deeply compassionate professor who cares very much for his students."



ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR SUNGYONG LEE:

"He was surprised – he didn't know what influence he had on me."

Professor Richard Jackson agrees: “He’s one of the most conscientious and student-centred teachers I have witnessed. He really cares about them and goes to great lengths to make their learning experience a positive and enriching one.”

Lee teaches three papers at Otago: Theories of Peace and Conflict; Development and Peacebuilding; and Global Peace and Conflict. He wishes he had had access to similar courses during his own tertiary years at Korea University in Seoul.

“When I was in my twenties, my attention was on what I could do for those who might be in need. There weren’t many people choosing that sort of life trajectory in South Korea in the early 2000s, so I couldn’t find many role models who could guide me. I felt that I was the guinea pig – the first person who needed to navigate all those things myself. That was the biggest challenge.”

His hunger for learning in the areas of human rights protection and development was not well served by his degrees in Political Science and International Politics.

“Some 20 years ago, South Korea’s education system narrowly defined international relations to focus on politics between major states and security-related topics. So, I looked out for work with NGOs as a volunteer and later as an intern.”

Lee was further sold on the humanitarian path after winning a United Nations competition when he was 23 years old.

“One of the prizes was a trip to visit the UN headquarters in New York. That was a life-changing experience. I went into the General Assembly Hall where people were talking about the war in Iraq. It was mind-blowing. It really inspired me. I thought ‘this is what I want to do.’”

Between 2003 and 2007, Lee spent time as a peacebuilding field practitioner in conflict-affected societies. He provided education support and trained unemployed youth in India, tackled social issues stemming from post-conflict redevelopment

“He’s one of the most conscientious and student-centred teachers I have witnessed.”

and poverty in Afghanistan, and offered micro-finance support and education to rural villagers in Cambodia.

After that, Lee spent several years in the United Kingdom (completing a PhD at St Andrews in Scotland and lecturing at Coventry University).

“The whole university system in the UK was becoming more commercialised. The environment was challenging, particularly for a middle-ranking institution like Coventry, and it felt difficult to find time to generate knowledge and academic perspectives.”

So, when he got wind of a vacant position at Otago’s National Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies, he could scarcely believe his luck.

“The foundation director of the Centre was Kevin Clements – he is one of the people who you hear named when you start research in conflict and peace studies. Richard Jackson is another globally renowned scholar. These two names were good enough to convince me to put in an application form. I was also interested in biculturalism and decolonisation in Aotearoa.”

For someone whose research centres around conflict resolution and peacebuilding, Lee has landed in one of the most harmonious, isolated corners imaginable. Does he see the irony in that?

“I feel guilty. There’s now a huge gap between my life here and the livelihoods people are trying to maintain in places that I research like Cambodia, Indonesia and the Philippines. It’s a psychological dilemma.

It gives me some internal struggle.”

Professional guilt aside, Lee loves his adopted home. Two of his three children (aged 10, seven and six months) were born here. He is still astonished by Dunedin’s sense of community.

“When you look at the Dunedin news Facebook page, there’s usually a message about someone’s wallet being found. This is quite an extraordinary thing for a city. As a researcher in peace and conflict, the sense of morality that people share here amazes me. How a small country at the south end of the world can maintain this sense of community is quite fascinating. I don’t think many Dunedinites really appreciate it.”

Though Lee misses his parents and brother, he suspects his move to a different country was possibly his greatest peacebuilding effort so far.

“My brother works as a government law prosecutor in the Ministry of Justice in South Korea so his role is to protect the legal structure. When I lived there, part of my activity was to challenge the legal structures that were often harsh on social minorities. So, since I found a job outside of South Korea, we are in a better position to maintain peace at home.”

Lee’s father now knows of his son’s secret. He watched him receive the Teaching Excellence Award via Zoom from South Korea.

“That was the first time my father saw my teaching activities. My parents couldn’t understand anything said in the ceremony except for the words ‘my father’, so dad knew I was talking about him. Later he asked my partner what was said. He was surprised – he didn’t know what influence he had on me.”

Lee can probably stop the wand search now.

CLAIRE FINLAYSON



ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR TUIFUISA'A PATILA AMOSA:

"As a female leader, I encourage every woman to be empowered and face challenges."

Chemical attraction: Otago alumna becomes NUS Vice- Chancellor

Associate Professor Tuifuisa'a Patila Amosa has been recently appointed to the role of Vice-Chancellor and President at the University of Samoa – the first woman to hold that role.

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR TUIFUISA'A PATILA AMOSA tried her very best to dodge teaching. But teaching wouldn't hear of it. It wooed her to its lecterns at the National University of Samoa for 30 years' worth of educational service. She's now that institution's new Vice-Chancellor and President.

When Amosa was a young girl growing up in a village in urban Upolu, it was chemistry that caught her eye.

"I was fortunate to have very good science teachers in my junior years and then an excellent Australian volunteer teacher who instilled a passion for chemistry."

It was by virtue of this lively science education that teenage Amosa set her career compass towards Bunsen burners and beakers and all the chemical mysteries therein.

The usual path for tertiary-keen Samoan secondary school students in the 1980s was to head to New Zealand to further their studies.

"My friends and I were looking forward to going away, but we were told that the National University of Samoa (NUS) was being set up and we would be the foundation cohort. So, the first feeling was disappointment that we didn't get to go away to New Zealand but had to stay back in Samoa."

That was in 1984. Back then, NUS had an inaugural roll of 45 students and shared a couple of two-storeyed buildings with the Ministry of Education. Science students had to travel to another campus (the University of the South Pacific) for chemistry and biology labs.

Keen to stretch her academic wings, Amosa applied for a government scholarship to study abroad. She wanted to do a degree in pharmacy, so listed that as her first choice and a Bachelor of Science in Chemistry with a Diploma in Education as a second option. Fate delivered the latter.

Amosa headed to Flinders University in Adelaide in 1985 and spent the next four years there obtaining her science degree and teaching qualification. It was the first time she and her friends had been to South Australia.

"We cried on the plane there because no one we knew had ever been to this place. It was a big culture shock. We only met two other Samoans there – it was all white people. We were very homesick at first."

After her Adelaide stint, Amosa returned to Samoa ready to indulge her interest in chemical processes.

"But when I came back home, there was a teaching opportunity available at Samoa College so I took it and I've been stuck

in the profession ever since! There was a shortage of biology teachers, so I ended up teaching that subject, which I never really liked compared to chemistry. When I was later appointed to NUS, it was as a biology lecturer."

It was in Dunedin that she eventually fought her way back to chemistry – in the name of professional development. When NUS required its lecturers to upgrade to postgraduate degrees, the University of Otago chimed in with a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) that offered strategic scholarships to NUS staff. Amosa was one of the first beneficiaries of this MoU in 2005.

"I did my postgraduate diploma in science and a Master's degree in rainwater chemistry at Otago. I finally got there."

Was Dunedin as much of a culture shock as Adelaide?

"There were already Pacific communities there, so it wasn't as hard. Plus, the Pacific Islands Centre and Samoan Methodist Church provided a lot of support. But it took time to get used to the weather and wearing thick layers of clothing – it was the coldest city I've ever been in. I really miss Dunedin. I keep recommending Otago to students and parents because I know it's a true study city."

She liked her Otago time so much that she returned again in 2011 (with her husband and youngest daughter in tow) to complete a PhD in ocean acidification and climate change.

"I learned so much about climate change with respect to greenhouse gas emissions and impacts on ocean chemistry and the skeletal organisms that live in the sea."

It's just as well that she fell towards chemistry rather than pharmacy given the current acceleration of climate change woes. "Ocean acidification is an emerging priority here and there aren't many scientists and researchers in the Pacific with a background in ocean acidification."

Her PhD saw her promoted to Dean of NUS's Faculty of Science in 2016. Since then she's overseen the development of Samoa-bespoke courses and alternative paths to STEM subjects.

"We developed programmes based on

the needs of external stakeholders and the priorities of the country. We look at things like climate change and sustainable agriculture. Then we can build the capacity of our students for the local workforce and they can also assist their families."

So vital and rewarding was this steering of the Science faculty, that when Amosa heard the news of her appointment as Vice-Chancellor, she felt a pang of regret.

"I actually shed some tears – not because I was overjoyed with my new position but because I was sad at first that I would have to leave the faculty I had worked in for 30 years."

As the first female Vice-Chancellor at NUS, she knows the value of her appointment for encouraging the involvement of Samoan women in educational programmes to help ensure gender equality.

"I really miss Dunedin. I keep recommending Otago to students and parents because I know it's a true study city."

"As a female leader, I encourage every woman to be empowered and face challenges."

After a lifetime of trying (and failing) to duck the teaching profession, Amosa now heads Samoa's top educational institution with a staff of 400 and a student roll of around 3,800. There's much excellent irony in this. She says, "I believe teachers – and how they teach – play a big role in motivating students and getting them interested."

That sounds suspiciously like a glowing endorsement of the teaching profession.

CLAIRE FINLAYSON

Law 150th

Distinguished alumnus brings international perspective



Professor Jeremy Waldron gives the keynote speech at Otago's Faculty of Law 150th celebrations.

The University of Otago's Law Faculty celebrated its 150th anniversary in April 2023, with a reunion and a conference. Alumnus Professor Jeremy Waldron gave the keynote speech.

UNIVERSITY OF OTAGO alumnus Professor Jeremy Waldron is regarded as one of the world's leading legal and political philosophers. Despite his distinguished career overseas, he has never forgotten his alma mater.

Nor has Otago forgotten Waldron, awarding him an honorary doctorate in 2005 and creating a Chair in Jurisprudence in his name in 2019.

Other accolades include honorary doctorates from Brussels, Edinburgh and Buenos Aires, and memberships of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, the British Academy and the American Philosophical Society, which also presented him a prize for Lifetime Achievement in Jurisprudence.

Recently Waldron interrupted his busy

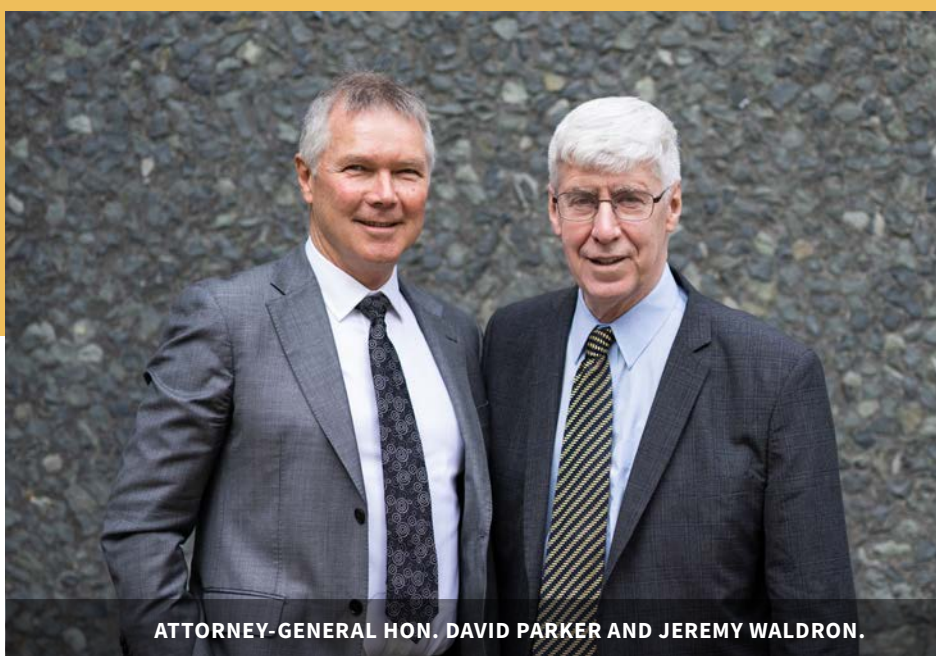
schedule at New York University's School of Law to be keynote speaker at a reunion conference held to celebrate 150 years of Otago's Faculty of Law.

"It was mid-term in New York but I wanted to make time to be in Dunedin because this was a major anniversary. And it's always good to be able to come back to see people from the past," he says.

He managed to catch up with his old law teacher Sir Bruce Robertson and classmates from his time studying at Otago in the 1970s.

Waldron was born in Invercargill and attended Otago because his family had gone there and it was the nearest university.

In his first year he was inspired by papers in philosophy and law and was able to take advantage of a new double honours degree that had just been pioneered by the



ATTORNEY-GENERAL HON. DAVID PARKER AND JEREMY WALDRON.

Philosophy Department and the Law School.

On graduation with first class honours he joined the staff at Otago to teach legal and political philosophy while he completed his LLB, again with first class honours.

It was a time of reforms, which imbued a strong sense of law belonging to the people whose lives it ruled and whose wellbeing it protected, says Waldron.

“We were all intensely interested in law reform, and we had seen the massive reform of tort law in the early 1970s. It was good to consider and study the prospect of law reform also in Family Law and Administrative Law.

“But we didn’t have the excitement which is associated these days, either with Treaty of Waitangi issues or with issues about judicial review of legislation under the auspices of a constitutional Bill of Rights. All of that came later.”

Waldron has fond memories of his lecturers including Noel Carroll (Commercial Law), Bruce Robertson (Family Law and Evidence), Ian Muir (Criminal Law and Criminal Theory) and John Smillie (Administrative Law).

“I was very fortunate to have been taught law by some fine teachers. Above all else, I was blessed with the friendship and mentorship of Gwen Taylor in the Philosophy Department, who introduced me to political philosophy and to the philosophical study of property.”

Taylor also introduced her student to the work of legal philosopher Ronald Dworkin, Professor of Jurisprudence at Oxford University, and advised Waldron to head for the UK. “She convinced me that I could use my talents to make myself a career in that business.”

Waldron’s arrival at University College, Oxford to study under Dworkin coincided with Dworkin’s vacation.

“Ronnie was away in Martha’s Vineyard and they had to find someone else for me to see until he returned so I began my studies at Oxford under Dworkin’s teacher and predecessor, H.L.A. Hart, one of the great contributors to jurisprudence in the 20th century.

“At that time Oxford was leading the world and it was an exciting, fun, interesting place to be. I found the people enormously welcoming. And while I was doing my doctorate, I was able to take advantage of another new educational initiative at Lincoln College, where they decided to take on a junior teaching fellow in political theory.”

Unfortunately, the fellowship had a limited lifespan. “I was still working on my doctorate but it was a seven-year terminating position with no possibility of extending it, so I started looking around for another job.”

New Zealand was not out of the question, as Waldron still had connections and had had offers. “There was always a possibility that I would return to New Zealand and teach there. It was very comforting to feel that was always there.”

In 1982 he and his wife visited New Zealand for him to spend the Northern summer teaching in Auckland. When they returned to the UK, it was not to Lincoln College but to a new position at the University of Edinburgh.

The historical connections with Dunedin were heart-warming. “It was wonderful to find out just how much resonance there was in Edinburgh after having lived in Dunedin. It was a glorious city to come to. It was one of the happiest times of my life.”

While teaching legal and political philosophy and political theory in Edinburgh, Waldron was attracted by what was happening in the USA.

“Friends who had been to America recommended the programmes they were teaching there. I looked at Jurisprudence and Social Policy at the law school at the University of California, Berkeley and I was convinced that it was a good programme. And they needed a legal philosopher to help teach it.”

With his Oxford doctorate now complete, Waldron took his growing family to visit Berkeley in 1986. It resulted in a move to California to teach Jurisprudence and Social Policy for the next decade. Now with permanent residency in the

PROFESSOR JEREMY WALDRON: “I was very fortunate to have been taught law by some fine teachers. Above all else, I was blessed with the friendship and mentorship of Gwen Taylor in the Philosophy Department, who introduced me to political philosophy and to the philosophical study of property.”



“The US Constitution is facing a bit of a crisis ... Democracy is not as respected in the courts as it should be, and judges tend to represent a particular class rather than the people they are applying the law to.”

States, Waldron continued to travel to teach around the world across a wide variety of subjects including The Rule of Law, Jurisprudence, Human Dignity, Democratic Theory, Multiculturalism, Sovereignty, Theoretical Foundations of Human Rights, Modern Legal Philosophy, Kant’s Political Philosophy, and Enlightenment Constitutionalism.

In New Zealand alone he was a visiting professor at Otago in 1991-1992, 1998 and 2001 and at Victoria, University of Wellington in 2003-2005.

But the likelihood of a permanent return to New Zealand was fading. “After Oxford, Edinburgh and then Berkeley that possibility started to become more remote. It was nice to have New Zealand universities willing to offer me positions if I wanted them. But my future lay in another world.”

From Berkeley, Waldron moved to Princeton University from 1996-1997 and then Columbia Law School from 1997-2006, where he became University Professor,

followed by an appointment as University Professor and Professor of Law at New York University, a position he still holds today. “I moved from California to New York also to be near my wife, who teaches law at Columbia University.”

He also held a concurrent appointment from 2010-2014 at Oxford’s All Souls College as Chichele Professor of Social and Political Theory.

With the experience of a wide variety of educational establishments and a world anxious to employ his skills, how does Waldron decide where to go next?

“Moving around in academic communities has involved finding places I wanted to work, where there were other people I wanted to work with, and different programmes that attracted me. Sometimes moves are initiated by people who want what I do.”

The invitation to return to Otago as a keynote speaker gave Waldron a chance to share his current topical views on the rule of law and democracy under an entrenched constitution.

He criticises judicial review as a main driver of law reform, arguing that the appointed judiciary may be too distant from the people for whom they are making laws. He suggests that democratically-elected legislators might be better placed to create laws for the people who voted them in.

The United States Constitution splits government into three branches intended to provide checks and balances on each other.

Congress is the legislative branch, consisting of the Senate and the House of Representatives. It can draft laws and confirm or reject presidential nominations for appointments.

The President heads the executive branch, which enforces the laws and can

veto legislation and nominate appointments for court officials.

Justices of the Supreme Court, the judicial branch, interpret laws and can support or overturn them.

The current political situation in America is seeing a struggle between the three branches, says Waldron.

“The US Constitution is facing a bit of a crisis. It’s been controversial since it was set up at the end of the 18th century. Judges are not accountable to the people. Democracy is not as respected in the courts as it should be, and judges tend to represent a particular class rather than the people they are applying the law to.

“Decisions such as the recent moves on the legality of abortion are creating a crisis of confidence in the system. Whereas in New Zealand major decisions are made by legislation, which leads to reasonable decisions.”

Does the United States Constitution need to be amended to bring it into the 21st century?

“It’s impossible to tell if change is possible at the moment, but judges do need to talk about their attitudes and the procedures for appointing them.”

Perhaps unsurprisingly, Waldron finds himself in the right place at the right time to oversee, comment and advise.

NIGEL ZEGA

Three special days -

Law alumni celebrate milestones



Tikanga Māori and the future of the legal system panel members (from left) Chair and former District and Family Court Judge, Annis Somerville (Kāi Tahu), Professor Jacinta Ruru MNZM (Ngāti Raukawa, Ngāti Maniapoto, Ngāti Ranginui), Kāhui Legal partner Natalie Coates (Ngāti Awa, Ngāti Hine, Ngāti Tuwharetoa, Tūhourangi, Tūhoe, Te Whānau a Apanui) and Metiria Stanton Turei (Ngāti Kahungunu, Te Ati-Hau-nui-a-Pāpārangi) from the Law Faculty.

A FANTASTIC TURNOUT of Law alumni from across seven decades joined faculty hosts at Law at Otago celebrations in April.

Ka mua, ka muri: Celebrating 150 years of Law at the University of Otago, and Te Roopū Whai Pūtake Otago Māori Law Students' Association's 30th anniversary reunion, saw alumni, staff, students and guests descend on Dunedin for a wide-ranging programme of conference sessions and opportunities to catch up with old friends and faculty.

Law 150th attendees travelled from as far afield as the United States, Canada, Chile, Australia, Hong Kong, the UK, Ireland, Singapore and Malaysia for the sesquicentennial event.

"The whole weekend was a wonderful reminder of what we remain committed to in the Faculty of Law: the focus on excellence in legal education within a community in which there is commitment to connection and

diversity in many forms," says Dean of Law, Professor Shelley Griffiths.

Law 150th organiser Professor John Dawson says the mix of serious intellectual material, lighter-hearted sessions and social events was very well received.

"After COVID-19 shutdowns, it was a most welcome opportunity to gather. The affection shown by graduates for the Faculty and the University was palpable.

"We were able to showcase developments in the law, the legal curriculum and the student body, and celebrate the enormous contribution made by our graduates, over a long period, to the New Zealand legal system. We are delighted with the whole event and very grateful to our sponsors."

Te Roopū Whai Pūtake Reunion Kōmiti member Paula Wilson (Ngāti Awa, Ngāti Whakaue) says the highlight for her was "he tangata, he tangata, he tangata".

"Catching up with my University whānau,

some of whom I had not seen in person for over 20 years. And also meeting and being inspired by the younger alumni and taura/students coming through the Law School."

In his Law 150th Opening Address, Attorney-General, Hon. David Parker, reflected on his student days at Otago in the late 1970s and early 1980s.

"We all carry with us what we learned here. This institution – which is the sum of its people over the last 150 years – has helped shape us, and through us the countries we live in."

The event's major sponsors, Anderson Lloyd and Gallaway Cook Allan made significant donations to the new Law Dean's Innovation Fund and provided generous support for social events, while Niche Recruitment supported Te Roopū Whai Pūtake events.

FEATURE



NZ Law Society president and Anderson Lloyd sponsor Frazer Barton speaks at the Anderson Lloyd Gala Dinner at the Otago Business School.

A lively staff vs former students debate wrapped up the conference sessions.



Pictured (from left) moderator Fiona Guy Kidd KC, and the alumni team of James Every-Palmer KC, Kate Wevers and Mark Scott.

Dean's Innovation Fund will support student experience



DEAN OF LAW, PROFESSOR SHELLEY GRIFFITHS: "[The fund will support the] many things not learnt in the lecture theatre."

LAUNCHED DURING Law at Otago's 150th Conference and Reunion, the Law Dean's Innovation Fund aims to support and improve student experience by empowering leadership with the ability to fund evolving needs and initiatives for students.

Dean of Law Professor Shelley Griffiths says the 150th celebrations were an opportunity not just to celebrate friendships and achievements, but also help shape the future of the legal profession.

Professor Griffiths says the Fund will give the Dean the opportunity to support the "many things not learnt in the lecture theatre".

This could range from providing petrol vouchers to travel to the Otago Corrections Facility, funds for trips to observe the Youth Court in Auckland, right up to larger support for teams to travel to national and international competitions. It could also help support the activities of the Faculty's five student groups.

Illustrating the need for such support, this year the Otago law students moot team won the national moot competition, which gave them entry to the Philip C. Jessup International Law Moot Court Competition in Washington DC. At the Fund launch, Professor Griffiths thanked Jessup competition alumni and the

Alumni of University of Otago in America for their generous support, which enabled the team to attend the competition in April.

The 150th event's two main sponsors, Dunedin legal firms Anderson Lloyd and Gallaway Cook Allan, have made significant contributions to launch the new Fund.

Professor Griffiths is grateful for their support and hopes other alumni will follow suit to help strengthen the faculty's ability to enhance the Otago experience for future generations.

Like to give?
otago.ac.nz/donatelaw

Don McRae receives Honorary Doctor of Laws



Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Enterprise) Professor Richard Blaikie presents Emeritus Professor Don McRae with his Hon LLD, while Chancellor Stephen Higgs (left) and Dean of Law Professor Shelley Griffiths (right) look on.

AT A SPECIAL CEREMONY in the University Council Chambers, an Honorary Doctor of Laws degree was conferred on eminent Canadian law professor and Otago alumnus Emeritus Professor Don McRae CC, ONZM, FRSC.

The event, timed to coincide with the Law 150th celebrations, was attended by University Council members, Law Faculty members, family of Emeritus Professor McRae, other Honorary Doctor of Laws recipients and eminent alumni who are members of the legal profession.

Professor McRae has worked as a professor of law in Canada since the early 1970s, at the University of Western Ontario,

the University of British Columbia and the University of Ottawa. He is Canada's leading authority in several international legal fields, particularly international trade and investment law, maritime boundary law and fisheries law.

His expertise has been regularly sought by UN agencies and other international organisations, and seen him serve as counsel, for both Canada and New Zealand, in maritime boundary disputes and World Trade Organization cases. He is also one of only three Canadians to have been elected to the United Nations' International Law Commission (in 2006), and has been a member of the Permanent Court of

Arbitration, based in The Hague, since 1998.

Professor McRae says his understanding of the role law plays in the major issues of our lives, as individuals, communities, states and nations, and the work he has gone on to achieve in his own career, all started at Otago.

"The world has undergone great change since my days at Otago. What I do now bears little relationship to what I studied at law school; international trade law did not exist as a discipline. But what I gained from Otago was the foundation for what is critical in legal thinking, in legal analysis."



Honorary Doctor of Laws recipient Emeritus Professor Don Macrae (centre), at the special ceremony to confer the degree in the University Council Chambers, with (from left) Sir Bruce Robertson, Dean of Law Professor Shelley Griffiths, Pro-Vice-Chancellor Humanities Professor Jessica Palmer, Chancellor Stephen Higgs, Dr George Davis, Professor McRae, Professor Hugh Campbell, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Enterprise) Professor Richard Blaikie, Professor John Dawson, Dr Royden Somerville KC, Dame Silvia Cartwright and President NZ Law Society Frazer Barton.

Testing the waters

FOR THE LAST 25 YEARS Otago alumna Dr Kim Currie has, every two months, boarded a University of Otago research vessel to take ocean acidity measurements along a 65km transect which runs in a straight line out to sea from near Taiaaroa Head at the mouth of Otago Harbour.

Along the way, she has collected water samples from the same fixed points along that transect. Only the water properties change, and therein lies the science.

This painstaking work by the NIWA scientist has helped build a local picture of how the ocean's absorption of carbon dioxide is making it more acidic.

Born in Dunedin but raised in Queenstown, Currie completed an undergraduate Chemistry degree at Otago and, after travel, returned to do a PhD focused on marine chemistry, driven by a desire to pursue environmental work. Getting into the marine side came from what she describes as her "hard-nosed approach" in deciding about her PhD.

"I knew the sort of person I would like to have as a supervisor, so I went to see those people in the Chemistry Department and saw who had a project on offer. Keith Hunter had a project in marine chemistry – and that's where my interest arose."

Her PhD looked at carbon dioxide in the sea water and the role of the ocean in the

carbon cycle.

"I wanted to do measurements of the carbon chemistry because there were none being made in New Zealand back then, so I developed some methods and got out on the University's research boat, which at that time was the *RV Munida*, skippered by Chris Spiers.

"I did an adequate job given I was starting from nothing. But now I have the benefit of basically a lot of experience and expertise and have tapped into a lot of international assistance and opportunities to really help us lift our game."

That PhD research established the so-called 'Munida Time Series Transect', which heads 65km straight out to sea, passing through neritic coastal waters – substantially influenced by the harbour and the Clutha River – before heading into subtropical and then subantarctic seas.

"The first fundamental thing we wanted to know was whether the ocean near New Zealand is taking up carbon from the atmosphere or putting carbon into the atmosphere?"

"Then we wanted to know if that changes between those different water masses, and does it change between seasons?"

But as scientists worldwide learned more about increasing carbon dioxide levels in the air, the focus shifted to

understanding what that meant for the ocean and how it was responding.

Currie says using long-term measurements to explore changes over time is particularly important. Is this season different from last season, is this year different from last year? Is an El Nino period different from a La Nina period?

In the case of the *Munida* transect it took 12 years before they saw any long-term trend. "We were fortunate here because we had an unbroken record going back to 1998."

Currie is a little careful about what she says in terms of what they are seeing. There is evidence of increasing ocean acidity in the subantarctic waters at the far end of the transect.

"It's what I call simple water – it's not too complicated. That's where we've been able to measure that the ocean is becoming more acidic.

"The inshore waters are much more complex, there is much more going on and so there are lots of other things affecting the ocean chemistry as well as climate change, which is obscuring the signal.





DR KIM CURRIE: "... now I have the benefit of basically a lot of experience and expertise and have tapped into a lot of international assistance and opportunities to really help us lift our game."

"I think if we can keep measuring it for longer, we may be able to tease that out."

A more recent area of focus involves the nationwide New Zealand Ocean Acidification Observing Network, examining the long-term effects of ocean acidification on coastal marine ecological communities.

Currie says most of the species that are going to be affected by ocean acidification, such as mussels and oysters, live inshore and currently little is known about coastal water chemistry around the country.

"So, we set up this programme where we send out sample bottles to people all around the country to do that."

At this stage they are not yet able to see any long-term changes, but they are developing an understanding of how the acidity varies from place to place and what factors are affecting that.

Acidification is known to hit animals, like shellfish, that form calcium carbonate shells, by beginning to dissolve them and making it hard for juveniles to form strong shells as they grow.

"It's a double whammy. They have to

Running the Munida Transect

Each run along the transect takes a day, starting at 6am and returning anywhere between 6pm and 10pm.

Currie opens each trip up to other scientists, students and even secondary school teachers on professional development, so they can pursue their own studies. So far about 140 people have taken up the opportunity.

She likes to do her work in one uninterrupted run on the way back into shore, so on the way out the others do what they came to do, maybe collecting plankton, dropping nets or spotting birds and whales.

"Once we get to the far end, I drop my instruments overboard and spend a bit of time there before we head home. That's my time. We don't stop and I do my measurements."

Currie's instruments are effectively collecting data as they go. Water is pumped up, goes through her instruments and then goes back over the side.

"I also have nine locations where I take water samples for later lab analysis."

The continuous measurements cover things like temperature, salinity, oxygen and pH; while the water samples are analysed for several carbon parameters, as well as things like nutrient levels.



work hard to form the shell, and once they have formed the shell it's more vulnerable. It can also leave them short of energy for other purposes, such as feeding or escaping predators."

Currie hopes the Munida Time Series will be kept going, even after she retires.

"The only way we can see how the ocean responds is by measuring these things in the same way, at the same place over time, to see if things are continuing to get worse as humans continue to emit carbon dioxide or, in the more hopeful case, if humans start to decrease their emissions, that the ocean will also respond."

Currie would also like to see it expanded to measure more things, so they can understand better what they are seeing and have more ability to interpret those observations.

"The only way we can see how the ocean responds is by measuring these things in the same way, at the same place over time ..."

"I would also like to see it expand by having instruments moored out there. We only go out there every two months, so it's only a snapshot and we can only go in relatively good weather."

To date, the data collected and findings made by Currie and her colleagues have attracted international interest, including being fed into Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) reports, the World Meteorological Organisation (WMO) State

of the Global Climate report, and the New Zealand Our Marine Environment Report.

"It has been a great opportunity for New Zealand-based science to have an international voice," says Currie.

MARK WRIGHT



Health head: Dr Diana Sarfati

An Otago alumna and former director of the University's Department of Public Health, Dr Diana Sarfati, is Aotearoa New Zealand's new Director General of Health and Chief Executive of the Ministry of Health.

The role made its way into public awareness during the COVID-19 pandemic, being immortalised by Dr Ashley Bloomfield.

Now it is Sarfati's and, as the *Otago Magazine* discovers – she brings to it her trademark passion and energy.

DR DIANA SARFATI: “It’s not a role I was expecting to have. It’s an amazing opportunity to be a part of finding solutions at a time of great change.”



DR DIANA SARFATI'S PATH

towards her new position as Director-General of Health and Chief Executive, Ministry of Health, was likely influenced by a cunning \$100 parental wager and a joyless cigarette.

It was her father's doing. Now a retired GP, he told his young tween daughters that he would give them \$100 (and invest it to ensure further financial oomph) if they didn't smoke until they were 21 years of age.

“My father is a wise man. Back in the 1970s, \$100 was a fortune,” Sarfati says. “The other thing he did was tell us we could smoke one cigarette to see what we thought of it – but that we had to do so in front of him and Mum. Smoking a whole cigarette in front of your parents is not a fun thing – you never want to touch one again. It was an interesting parenting technique but it certainly worked for us. It was a no brainer really – none of us took up smoking, whereas a lot of our school friends did.”

It wasn't just this tobacco-toppling lure that sent Sarfati down the health track. Her father's career as a GP was hugely influential in itself.

“I decided at a very young age that I wanted to be a doctor and follow in his footsteps. When I was a kid we'd always stop at car crashes so that he could help people. I thought it'd be great to be able to do that.”

She enrolled for a Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery degree at her father's alma mater, the University of Otago.

“I didn't even consider going anywhere

else. As far as I was concerned, Otago University was the place to go. My children followed suit and all went there as well.”

After graduating, Sarfati worked as a clinician – first at Palmerston North Hospital and then as a locum in London. The latter experience was sobering, especially having come from a post-Cartwright Inquiry New Zealand context where patient rights were newly to the fore.

“I was working in cancer wards in the UK where patients didn't actually know they had cancer because their families didn't want to upset them. It was a very paternalistic kind of approach.”

The clinical handovers there were limited too: “I'd arrive at a hospital that I didn't know, in a ward that I didn't know, and try to work out who the patients were and what was going on. In New Zealand, if you went away on holiday you'd leave detailed handover notes for the person who was covering for you so they knew what to follow up on.”

This UK experience gave Sarfati all the extra nudging she needed towards the sphere of public health.

“It made me think about the way that we deliver care and the importance of how systems are run. I enjoyed working with patients, but I wanted to get my teeth into something and work out how to solve a problem at a bigger scale.”

When she returned to Dunedin, she put those teeth to work on public health medicine and academia. After a couple of years at the Department for Preventive and

Social Medicine in Dunedin as a public health medicine registrar, she took up a position in the Department of Public Health at the University of Otago, Wellington, in 2006. Thirteen years later she had notched up a PhD, gained Professor status, and was Head of Department.

She also scooped a couple of teaching awards along the way.

“I enjoyed thinking quite carefully about how we could best prepare students for what they would need in the future as opposed to just giving them the facts or rote learning. I liked thinking about innovative ways of understanding reasonably technical subjects.”

While teaching, her interest in cancer research deepened.

“I started looking at inequities in cancer survival – it was the first time anyone in New Zealand had done that. It took me into health systems and how they can either exacerbate or improve things. That kind of research is quite widespread now, but back then it was the early days of acknowledging that the way the health system delivers care can contribute to differences in outcomes between groups of patients.”

During this time she was also Director of the Cancer and Chronic Conditions research group and held numerous roles that involved advocating for equitable cancer care at a national and global level. One of her initiatives, the Cancer Care at a Crossroads Conference of 2019, caused a stir – enough to prompt the establishment of Te Aho o Te Kahu, the Cancer Control Agency

“I didn’t even consider going anywhere else. As far as I was concerned, Otago University was the place to go. My children followed suit and all went there as well.”

and result in the launch of the New Zealand Cancer Action Plan. It also paved the way for Sarfati’s next big job: she became the Agency’s CEO.

It is little wonder, then, that Sarfati won *NEXT* magazine’s ‘Woman of the Year’ award in 2019 for her efforts to promote equitable cancer treatment. She was also named joint winner of the Union for International Cancer Control’s ‘Best CEO’ award in 2020 for exemplary leadership in managing a cancer control organisation.

Professor Chris Jackson (Oncology) says Sarfati’s influence on cancer research and care is hard to overestimate: “Every substantial policy or research article on inequalities in cancer in New Zealand will have cited, or been informed by, her work, or it was written by her.

“She is a once-in-a-generation intellect, and a true woman of influence.”

She is clearly a great galvaniser. When asked about her leadership strengths, she says: “I think I’m probably a good communicator in general but also I think strategically – I’m always thinking several steps ahead.”

Just as well, given that she has that rare and much-coveted thing: the ear of the government. Does being chief steward of the nation’s health system keep her awake at night?

“Absolutely. It’s not a role I was expecting to have. It’s unusual for someone who has come up through academia to end up in a position like this. It’s an amazing opportunity to be a part of finding solutions

at a time of great change. But at the same time it can be frustrating because none of those solutions are easy or quick. We’ll probably only see the benefits of the things that we do now in five years’ time. It’s the sort of role you really have to do because you want things to improve in the long term.”

Sarfati is good friends with her predecessor Dr Ashley Bloomfield.

“I spent a fair bit of time with him while he was in that role and had no expectation that I’d be taking it on when he stepped down. While Ashley was the DG, managing COVID-19 was all-encompassing for most of the time and he did an exceptional job. When I took over, the big thing we were dealing with was the health reforms and getting the health system back on track – which, arguably, is a bit less sexy. It really feels like a different job.”

She is relieved not to be fronting those televised one o’clock COVID-19 media briefing sessions at the Beehive lectern each day, though.

“It was funny watching Ashley going through that stage. I’d catch up with him to have a drink and it got to the point where we couldn’t get through the door because everyone wanted to stop and talk to him. I was chopped liver!”

She is happy to have a lower profile than the man whose face adorned tea towels, mugs and the odd pie-crust during the height of the pandemic. But surely Bloomfield sent her some sort of Sarfati-ised merch with her likeness printed on it when

she took over his job?

“He didn’t need to as my staff at Te Aho o Te Kahu, the Cancer Control Agency, gave me a tea towel with my face on it just to make me feel better.”

Possibly one of the most telling things about Sarfati is that she gets bored doing yoga. It is just too slow.

“Oh yes. It’s a weakness. It’d be nice to be able to be still enough to do yoga.”

That probably tells us all we need to know about her appetite for pace and challenge and work juggle. When asked for her best piece of advice in a 2019 interview, she said: “Just jump into life.” Two highly influential jobs later, she’s quite emphatically walked the talk on that.

At the end of those long, meeting-heavy Director-General days, there’s a pod of 20-somethings that keep her well anchored.

“My three kids have been incredibly supportive and they matter to me more than anything. They also have a grounding influence – whatever’s happening, the thing that really matters is your whānau and your friends.”

The Director-General of Health role is a demanding five-year appointment. Asked if she might have to reconsider yoga by the time November 2027 rolls around, Sarfati says: “Yes, what a good idea. Maybe I’ll start up a yoga studio – high-paced competitive yoga or something.”

CLAIRE FINLAYSON



ASSOCIATE PROFESSORS MIKE SAM AND MARCELLE DAWSON AND PROFESSOR STEVE JACKSON: "[Wellbeing is] surrounded by a kind of halo, automatically bestowed with a positive meaning, similar to concepts such as motherhood, democracy and freedom."

The wellbeing 'pandemic'

Mike Sam, Marcelle Dawson and Steve Jackson examine the wellbeing pandemic, asking whether the global drive for wellness is actually making us sick.

ARE WE IN THE MIDST of a wellbeing pandemic? The question may seem curious, even contradictory. But look around, the concept is everywhere and spreading: in the media, in government institutions and transnational organisations, in schools, in workplaces and in the marketplace. To be clear, it's not just wellbeing's infectiousness in public discourse that makes it pandemic-like. It's also the genuine malaise caused by the term's misuse and exploitation.

Do you sense, for example, that your wellbeing is increasingly being scrutinised by peers, managers and insurance companies? Are you noticing an increasing number of advertisements offering products and services that promise enhanced wellbeing

through consumption? If so, you're not alone.

But we also need to ask whether this obsession with wellbeing has undesired consequences. To understand why, it is important to look at the origins, politics and complexities of wellbeing, including its strategic deployment in the process of what we call "wellbeing washing".

The halo effect

While concerns about wellbeing can be traced to antiquity, the term has emerged as a central feature of contemporary social life. One explanation is that it is often conflated with concepts as diverse as happiness, quality of life, life satisfaction, human flourishing, mindfulness and "wellness".

The appeal of wellbeing may be its flexibility, in the sense that it can be easily inserted into a diverse range of contexts. But it is also surrounded by a kind of halo, automatically bestowed with a positive meaning, similar to concepts such as motherhood, democracy and freedom. To contest the value and importance of such things is to risk being labelled a troublemaker, a non-believer, unpatriotic or worse.

These days, there are two main concepts of wellbeing. The first – subjective wellbeing – emphasises a holistic measure of an individual's mental, physical and spiritual health. This perspective is perhaps best reflected in the World Health Organization's

WHO-5 Index, designed in 1998 to measure people's subjective wellbeing according to five states: cheerfulness, calmness, vigour, restfulness and fulfilment. Translated into more than 30 languages, the overall influence of the WHO-5 Index should not be underestimated. Governments and corporations have embraced it and implemented policy based on it. But the validity of the index, and others like it, has been questioned. Such measures are prone to oversimplification and have a tendency to marginalise alternative perspectives, including indigenous approaches to physical and mental health.

Individual responsibility

The second perspective – objective wellbeing – was a response to rising social inequality. It focuses on offering an alternative to GDP as a measure of overall national prosperity. One example of this is New Zealand's Living Standards Framework, which is guided by four operating principles: distribution, resilience, productivity and sustainability. These new and purportedly more progressive measures of national economic and social outcomes signal societal change, optimism and hope.

The trouble with such initiatives, however, is that they remain rooted within a particular neoliberal paradigm in which individual behaviour must provide the impetus for change, rather than the wider political and economic structures around us. Arguably, this translates into more monitoring and “disciplining” of personal actions and activities. Intentionally or not, many organisations interpret and use wellbeing principles and policies to reinforce existing structures and hierarchies.

Consider how the wellbeing agenda is playing out in your organisation or workplace, for example. Chances are you have seen the growth of new departments, work units or committees, policies, programmes or wellness workshops – all supposedly linked to health and wellbeing. You may even have noticed the creation of new roles: wellbeing coaches, teams or “champions”. If not, then “lurk with intent”

and be on the lookout for the emergence of yoga and meditation offerings, nature walks and a range of other “funtivities” to support your wellbeing.

Wellbeing washing

The danger is that such initiatives now constitute another semi-obligatory work task, to the extent that non-participation could lead to stigmatisation. This only adds to stress and, indeed, feeling unwell. Deployed poorly or cynically, such schemes represent aspects of “wellbeing washing”. They can be a strategic attempt to use language, imagery, policies and practices as part of an organisation's “culture” to connote something positive and virtuous. In reality, they could also be designed to enhance productivity and reduce costs, minimise and manage reputational risk, and promote conformity, control and surveillance.

Are there any solutions?

So, what are some potential solutions? There are literally thousands of potential strategies to improve wellbeing including some of those currently promoted: yoga, meditation, nature walks and group fitness activities – and these should not be dismissed. After all, broadly speaking, they are all forms of “exercise” or “physical activity” and, in conjunction with a healthy diet and positive whānau and community relationships, promote “the good life”. However, the aforementioned activities may sometimes only be treating the “symptoms” rather than the disease. What is likely required is a complete overhaul of our various social institutions: the economy, health, education, politics and even sport and recreation. We need to dismantle the neoliberal structures that have resulted in top-down authoritarian systems whose performance indicators are often the antithesis of wellbeing. As a part of this process we need new models of leadership and communication that are not rooted in a corporate ethos. We know this because, judging by the number of people suffering from mental health issues and the number of people quietly quitting, the current

“We need to dismantle the neoliberal structures that have resulted in top-down authoritarian systems whose performance indicators are often the antithesis of wellbeing.”

system is not only not working, it is failing and possibly making things worse. Thus, rather than trying to fix employees we need to fix the system – by reducing or eliminating the institutional obsession with efficiencies, risk management and the use of expensive (and often non-productive) consultants. Conversely, what is needed are more people who do the core work of most businesses – the ones who save lives, educate the next generation, generate revenue and make the world a safer and better place to live, rather than additional layers of “meddle managers” who take it upon themselves to decide what wellbeing means.

Conclusion

Ultimately, we argue that wellbeing now constitutes a “field of power”; not a neutral territory, but a place where parties advance their own interests, often at the expense of others. As such, it is essential that scholars, policy makers and citizens explore, as one author put it: “what and whose values are represented, which accounts dominate, what is their impact and on whom”.

THE AUTHORS:

Steve Jackson is a Professor and Co-Director of the University's New Zealand Centre for Sport Policy and Politics; Marcelle Dawson is an Associate Professor of Sociology, Gender Studies and Criminology; and Mike Sam is an Associate Professor of Physical Education, Sport and Exercise Sciences.

Note: An earlier version of this story was published in The Conversation.

Study shows benefit of binge breaks

Long winter evenings are here, but new University of Otago research shows the health benefits of getting off the couch and taking regular breaks from the screen.

Human Nutrition PhD student Jen Gale and Senior Lecturer Dr Meredith Peddie invited 30 healthy adults aged between 19 and 39 years into the lab on two occasions in the evening to binge watch for four hours as part of the Netflix and Move Study. The catch? On one of these occasions, they had to get up and perform three minutes of simple resistance exercises every 30 minutes.

The results showed that even this much movement produced an improved uptake of sugar from the blood – and therefore has the potential to meaningfully impact glycaemic control.

Peddie explains that long periods of uninterrupted sitting are associated with an increased risk of diabetes, cardiovascular disease and some cancers. Her advice?

“Try to get up at least once during each episode, and definitely every time you push ‘next episode!’”

The team is currently analysing the rest of the data from the study, which includes data on sleep, physical activity the next day, interstitial glucose for the following 48 hours, and qualitative data about whether the participants thought they could do this type of activity in their lives outside of the lab.

“Of course, we’d love it if streaming services considered adding messages to ‘get up and move’ to their platforms,” she adds.

The Netflix and Move Study was funded by the Health Research Council of New Zealand.



Photo: Alan Dove

DR MEREDITH PEDDIE AND JEN GALE:

“Try to get up at least once during each episode, and definitely every time you push ‘next episode!’”

Adventure and wellbeing connections examined

New research shows it is not just thrills and risk-taking that motivates participation in outdoor adventure sports such as whitewater kayaking, mountain biking and rock climbing.

Associate Professor Susan Houge Mackenzie (Tourism) and researchers from the UK, USA and Australia have explored how these sports may induce a state of “flow” in participants and support overall wellbeing.

Houge Mackenzie says adventure sport activities are highly engaging and immersive, and participants often report experiencing flow, which can be characterised as “a deep sense of connection, trust in their mind and body, a sense of mastery over high challenges, diminished self-consciousness and changes in attentional focus and the way time is perceived”. Colloquially known as “being in the zone”, flow has also been measured in a range of other contexts including more traditional sports settings.

Findings in this study complement earlier research by suggesting that adventure recreation may involve unique attributes, such as immersion in nature, which enhance the intensity of flow experiences and associated wellbeing outcomes, says Houge Mackenzie.

“These findings tell us that participants’ motives are more diverse than previously thought and may be linked to a search for meaning,

purpose, connection, competence, wellbeing and pleasure.

“As Aotearoa is renowned for natural landscapes that afford a wide range of adventure activities, as well as uniquely innovative approaches to adventure, this is a wonderful place to study the connection between adventure and wellbeing.”

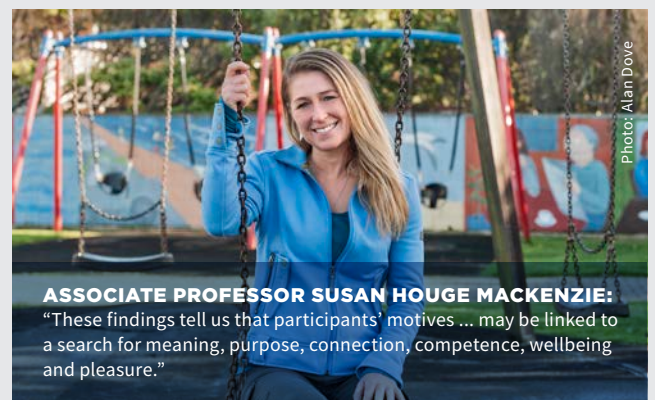


Photo: Alan Dove

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR SUSAN HOUGE MACKENZIE:

“These findings tell us that participants’ motives ... may be linked to a search for meaning, purpose, connection, competence, wellbeing and pleasure.”

Through the eyes of men

An innovative research project at the University of Otago, Wellington, is using photography to provide new insights into men's experiences of mental distress.

For the 'Through the eyes of men' project, Senior Research Fellow Dr Sarah McKenzie asked 21 men to take photos reflecting their personal experiences of living with depression, suicidal thoughts and anxiety.

She says the 'Photovoice' research method enabled men to articulate sensitive and emotional topics.

"Using photography was a great way for men to express themselves creatively and capture their feelings, particularly those with anxiety, because they could use visual metaphors to describe an experience that can be hard to explain to others."

McKenzie conducted follow-up interviews with the men to discuss their images, and their personal experiences of mental distress.

"Those interviews have provided a treasure trove of rich data, as well as unique insights into a wide range of issues related to men's mental health, because they are literally through their eyes."

The project builds on McKenzie's PhD and postdoctoral research which took a gender-based approach to looking at men's mental health.

She says more than 70 per cent of suicides occur among men, and this number has remained high for years.

"This stark fact suggests our current approach to preventing

male suicide is simply not working and, more importantly, we are failing to meet the mental health needs of men.

"They call it the 'black box' of men's suicide, because there are so many complexities when we look for the reasons behind these high suicide rates, but also the low number of men diagnosed with anxiety and depression.

"My project is about trying to unpack one of the many pieces of the puzzle."

www.throughtheeyesofmen.nz



Photo: Luke Pilkinton-Ching

DR SARAH MCKENZIE: "Using photography was a great way for men to express themselves creatively."

Breakthrough DNA discovery a 'lasting legacy'

The late Dr Andrew Bagshaw had his final scientific research paper published posthumously, just weeks after his tragic death while volunteering as an aid worker in war-torn Ukraine.

The study, led by geneticist Dr Bagshaw during his time as a researcher within the University of Otago's Department of Anatomy, shows DNA sequences bend and twist in ways which were previously unknown.

Professor Neil Gemmell, who supervised the paper, says Dr Bagshaw's "remarkable work" could lead to a better understanding of how genetic diseases arise and how they can be treated.

"It also opens up new avenues for research into the mechanics of DNA and could ultimately lead to the development of new technologies for manipulating DNA," Gemmell says. "Andrew possessed extremely strong analytical skills and was easily one of the most extraordinary students I have trained. This, his final body of work, is a lasting legacy to a scientist of immense promise and ability."

Gemmell says Dr Bagshaw's finding is important because DNA "secondary structures" can affect how genes are turned on and off, and the way a DNA sequence is bent influences its propensity to change or "mutate".

Dr Bagshaw and his British colleague Chris Parry were killed while attempting to rescue an elderly woman from Soledar, Eastern Ukraine.



The late Dr Andrew Bagshaw, whose work "opens up new avenues for research into the mechanics of DNA and could ultimately lead to the development of new technologies for manipulating DNA".

A linguistic analysis of te reo Māori

A project by English and Linguistics Honours' student Ngaru Wehi (Ngāti Patupo, Ngāti Hikairo, Ngāti Mahuta, Ngāti Māhanga, Tuhoë) gives a better understanding of, and an opportunity to preserve, the uniqueness of te reo Māori.

Ngaru and fellow student Saffron Calman-O'Donnell (Ngāti Toa, Ngāti Raukawa, Kāi Tahu) interviewed 28 people – 18 native te reo Māori speakers and 10 Pākehā, asking them to work through three genres of storytelling. One was anecdotal, for example recounting a childhood experience; the second was a retelling of the Ranginui and Papatūānuku creation narrative; and the third asked the interviewee to tell a story using a wordless picture book.

Ngaru transcribed and translated these recordings and is working through grammatical analyses, focusing on some of the linguistic differences between te reo Māori and English – such as the use of passive voice being more common in te reo Māori.

“I want to try and retain the usage of the passive in Māori in its own unique way rather than it conforming to, and mirroring, English syntax – especially given most Māori are bilingual and so there's a strong influence from English on te reo. I want to identify this and give this back to the people.”

This project grew out of a Māori Summer Scholarship in 2022 organised by Dr Hunter Hatfield, who noticed gaps in the linguistic knowledge of te reo Māori.

“As well as gaps in linguistic analysis in grammar, much analysis so far [of Māori narrative] has been of Māori speaking English; probably because that's the language the linguists speak,” Hatfield says. “Indeed, the project exists because Ngaru is with us. He is bilingual in te reo Māori and English, and this would not be possible without him.”



Unstructured lifestyle prompts weight gain

As part of an international research team investigating biorhythms of childhood growth recorded in teeth, Dr Carolina Loch of the University of Otago's Faculty of Dentistry and her collaborators stumbled onto an unexpected finding when their monthly measurements of children/adolescent growth were impacted by the onset of COVID-19.

The team identified that children and adolescents experienced more weight gain during the lockdown period that they did before or after.

This prompted the team to test the “structured days” hypothesis – the idea that children alter their sleeping patterns, reduce their activity and increase snacking when not in structured environments like in-person schooling. The COVID-19 pandemic presented an unprecedented opportunity to test this.

An alternative theory, the “biodirectional hypothesis”, suggests that overweight children are predisposed to further gains in unstructured settings.

However, the research found that all children – males and females, and regardless of whether they were initially overweight or not – gained more weight than usual during lockdown. This indicates that an “unstructured” lifestyle impacts more on weight gain than a child's

predisposition for weight gain does.

“If future lockdowns become necessary, public health campaigns should also emphasize the importance of regular physical activity and increase parents' awareness of the need for their children to maintain regular schedules, with regular meals, avoidance of excess snacking and consistent bedtimes,” Loch says.



What happens to migrants in small towns?

Discovering more about the immigrant experience in New Zealand's small towns has become a focus of Te Iho Whenua School of Geography's Dr Ashraf Alam.

"In Aotearoa, Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch are known as our gateway cities and migrants are expected to be there," Alam says.

"After 2006, when immigration policies diversified, we got this influx of migrants into industries such as freezing works and dairying that are based in small towns. These are small places that were very homogenous."

Alam's research aims to go beyond the economic narratives and look at the personal narratives and wider cultural implications for both migrants and the small towns, and the implications for planning.

Earlier this year, Alam and Professor Etienne Nell (also Geography) published research in *Australian Planner*, and recently the pair, together with Geography's Associate Professor Doug Hill and Social Anthropology's Dr Hannah Bulloch published their findings in the *Journal of International Migration and Integration*.

Alam and his colleagues have further expanded this research via a multi-country partnership development grant, funded by the Social Science and Humanities Research Council of Canada. The project entitled 'Beyond the Metropolis: Immigration to small and mid-sized cities in comparative perspective' is led by Toronto Metropolitan University, with Griffith University, Australia as another collaborator.

"Globally, small town migration is quite under-researched," Alam says. "For Australia, New Zealand and Canada, immigration and settlement has historically been colonial, starting primarily with European immigrations, but later all three countries have diversified their visa regime to include immigrants from other places."



DR ASHRAFUL ALAM:

"Globally, small town migration is quite under-researched."

A te ao Māori world of play

Researchers at the University of Otago, Wellington, have been awarded a major grant to develop Māori-led programmes for pēpi, tamariki and whānau wellbeing and to create intergenerational play spaces based on te ao Māori.

The researchers from Te Rōpū Rangahau Hauora a Eru Pōmare (the Eru Pōmare Māori Health Research Centre) are partners in a project headed by the Johns Hopkins Center for Indigenous Health in the USA, which has been awarded the top prize funding of \$US28 million (\$NZ43 million) through the LEGO Foundation Build a World of Play Challenge.

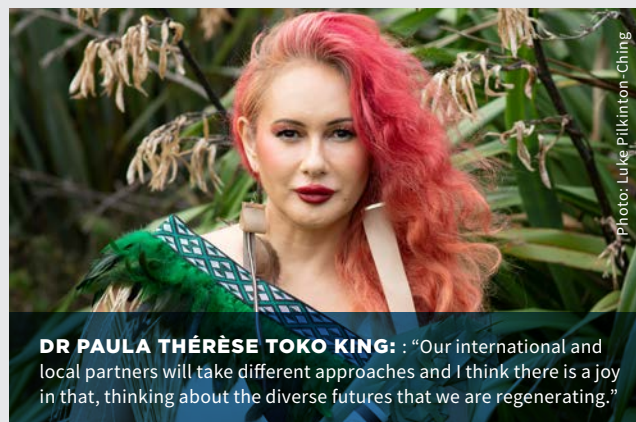
The Otago research lead, Dr Paula Thérèse Toko King (Te Aupōuri, Te Rarawa, Ngāpuhi, Ngāti Whātua, Waikato Tainui, Ngāti Maniapoto), says the grant provides an amazing opportunity to develop life-changing wellbeing programmes for whānau.

The two components to the grant include the development of intergenerational programmes focused on the wellbeing of pēpi and tamariki aged from zero to six years and their whānau, and the creation of Indigenous play spaces which support wellbeing. Dr King says the play spaces will likely be developed on marae, but they could also be Te Taio nature-based, centred on Māori ways of knowing, being, doing and relating.

The researchers are working as part of a global collective with the Diné People (Navajo Nation) in the USA, the First Nations Health Authority

in Canada and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in Australia, as well as with local Māori organisations Kōkiri Marae in Lower Hutt, Toi Matarua in Napier and Te Hou Ora Whānau Services in Dunedin.

"Our international and local partners will take different approaches and I think there is a joy in that, thinking about the diverse futures that we are regenerating."



DR PAULA THÉRÈSE TOKO KING: "Our international and local partners will take different approaches and I think there is a joy in that, thinking about the diverse futures that we are regenerating."

Funding success

Otago researchers received a significant \$51 million boost in the latest Health Research Council of New Zealand Project and Programme funding round.

Thirty projects and programmes were awarded between \$2 million and \$5 million each.

It is the largest amount of Health Research Council funding the University has ever received in any year and Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Enterprise) Professor Richard Blaikie says it is recognition of the world-leading researchers Otago has and the needs of the communities they serve.

The funded research covers a vast array of areas, ranging from a programme led by Professor **Jason Gurney** (Public Health, Wellington) to address the inequities of cancer care for Māori and their whānau; to a programme led by Professor **Rachael Taylor** (Medicine) to improve sleep in children from infants to adolescents; to a project led by Dr **Ashleigh Barrett-Young** (Dunedin Study) to investigate potential blood biomarkers of dementia.

Additionally, University of Otago researchers have been granted just over \$2 million in the Emerging Researcher and Explorer Grants funding rounds, announced in May. This funding includes a project led by Dr **Lisa Daniels** (Medicine), who will investigate how much milk a breastfeeding baby is receiving and how that compares to the mother's perception of supply; and a project led by Dr **Amber Young** (Pharmacy) who will identify and develop interventions to overcome barriers to maternal immunisation and improve vaccination uptake.

Excellence in teaching

The University of Otago's 2023 winners of Awards for Excellence in Teaching were announced in March, with a new team

category included this year.

The 2023 winners are:

Associate Professor **Anna High** (Law) (pictured below) for leadership in mindfulness pedagogy and student-centred legal education.



Associate Professor **Sunyoung Ma** (Dentistry) who fosters an environment that inspires intellectual and professional development so that all her students can reach their full potential.

Kaupapa Māori Award: **Arianna Nisa-Waller** for her services as a Hauora Māori Lecturer.

Endorsement in Supporting Pacific Learners: **Talai Mapusua** who integrates research and teaching models inspired by traditional Pacific practices.



Team category: **Disability Information and Support** team (pictured above) and the **CELS191** (Health Sciences First-Year paper) team.

Otago tops performance indicators

The University of Otago has once again topped the key Government indicators that measure the educational performance of students at New Zealand's universities.

Released in July by the Tertiary Education Commission, the annual Educational Performance Indicators examine course and qualification completion rates, retention rates and progression to higher levels of study at a range of tertiary and training organisations.

According to these measures, Otago ranked a clear first among universities for overall student qualification completion, course completion, first year retention, and progression.

Otago also ranked first in this latest round for both Māori and Pacific student qualification completions, second for Māori and Pacific student retention, second for Māori course completion, and third for Māori and Pacific progression and for Pacific student course completion.

Meanwhile, the 20th edition of the QS World University Rankings has seen the University of Otago move up to 206th place overall, from 217th.

New branding for University

For the first time in 154 years, the University of Otago will substantially change its brand.

The name, The University of Otago, will remain the same. A new te reo Māori name and tohu (symbol), created in collaboration with mana whenua, will be introduced to create a new brand.

The current te reo name will change from Te Whare Wānanga o Otāgo, to Ōtākou Whakaihu Waka – a metaphor meaning A Place of Many Firsts.

The new tohu draws inspiration from

Ōtākou channel, in Otago Harbour, which brings water, kai and life to and from the region – just as the University brings and shares knowledge across Aotearoa New Zealand.

In addition, a stylised version of the Coat of Arms has also been designed to be used in international marketing and alumni communications to reflect Otago's history.

Chancellor Stephen Higgs says the University undertook an extensive consultation process with its community.

“We have listened to the submissions from that consultation – there is strong support for this change.”

The changes were announced in July, and will take effect from May 2024, as the Council balances the desire for change with the current financial situation of the University. It is planned to roll out the changes over 12 months and across two financial years at a cost of \$1.3 million.

Arts Fellows welcomed

The 2023 University of Otago Arts Fellows were welcomed to the University and wider Ōtepoti community at an event at the Hocken in April.

Acting Vice-Chancellor Professor Helen Nicholson, Pro-Vice-Chancellor Humanities Professor Jessica Palmer, and Hocken Librarian Catherine Hammond hosted the evening.



The 2023 Fellows are (pictured above): Kathryn van Beek (Robert Burns Fellow);

Sean Donnelly (Mozart Fellow); Daisy Sanders (Caroline Plummer Fellow in Community Dance); Ruth Paul (University of Otago College of Education Creative New Zealand Children's Writer in Residence); and Emily Hartley-Skudder (Frances Hodgkins Fellow).

Social Impact leave

Following a successful six-month trial, the University will offer staff one day a year as Social Impact Leave to enable them time to volunteer in the community.

The trial was well received by staff, with many taking part in activities that supported sustainability or environmental initiatives.

The scheme will be widened to allow staff to volunteer with schools, marae and smaller community groups that are not registered charities.

New Year Honours:

24 Otago staff and alumni received New Year Honours for 2023. They are:

DNZM: Professor **Farah Palmer**, ONZM, for services to sport, particularly rugby.

CNZM: Mr **Hamish Bond**, MNZM, for services to rowing; Professor **Helen Danesh-Meyer**, for services to ophthalmology; Mrs **Leigh Gibbs**, ONZM, for services to netball; Ms **Kereyn Smith**, MNZM, for services to sports governance.

ONZM: Professor Emerita **Jennie Connor**, for services to alcohol harm reduction; Mr **John Darby**, for services to wildlife conservation and science; Dr **Natalie Gauld**, for services to pharmacy and health; Mr **Bernard McKone**, for services to the pharmaceutical sector; Dr **Apisalome Talemautoga**, for services to health and the Pacific community.

MNZM: Dr **John Armstrong**, for services to Māori health; Mr **David Bain**, for services to health and the community; Dr

Timothy Bevin, for services to health; Dr **Heather Came-Friar**, for services to Māori, education and health; Mrs **Anna Harrison**, for services to netball and volleyball; Ms **Bonnie Robinson**, for services to seniors and social services; Ms **Margaret Rākena**, for services to victims of sexual violence and the community; Mr **John Tait**, for services to education and Māori.

QSM: Mrs **Lynore Farry**, for services to the community; Mrs **Afife Harris**, for services to migrant communities; Mr **James Higham**, for services to rugby and education; Mr **Kenneth Morris**, for services to the community; Ms **Helen Whittaker**, for services to art and the community.

Honorary QSM: Mrs **Tofilau Nina Kirifi-Alai**, for services to education and the Pacific community.

King's Birthday and Coronation Honours:

18 Otago staff and alumni were recognised in this year's King's Birthday and Coronation Honours list. They are:



CNZM: Emeritus Professor **Alison Cree** (pictured above), for services to herpetology, particularly tuatara; Dr **Karen Grylls**, ONZM, for services to choral music; Mr **Colin James**, for services to journalism and public policy; Dr **Ruth Spearing**, for services to haematology.

ONZM: Dr **Michael Klaassen**, for services to plastic and reconstructive surgery; Ms **Deborah Panckhurst**, for

services to foreign affairs and Māori; Professor Emeritus **Alison Rich**, for services to oral pathology.

MNZM: Mrs **Yvonne Browning**, for services to education and youth; Dr **Siale Foliaki**, for services to mental health and the Pacific community; Mr **Gerard Hanning**, for services to education and the community; Mrs **Keni Moeroa**, JP, for services to the Cook Islands community; Mr **Derek Shaw**, for services to the environment, local government and athletics; Mr **Arthur Sutherland**, for services to outdoor education.

QSM: Dr **Handunnethi De Silva**, for services to health; Ms **Karen Knudson**, for services to choral music; Reverend **Alofa Lale**, for services to the community; Mrs **Bernice Lepper**, for services to the community and education; Mrs **Kirsty Sharpe**, JP for services to the community.

Appointments:

Professor **Helen Nicholson** is Acting Vice-Chancellor following the resignation of Professor David Murdoch.

Professor **Phil Bremer** is Acting Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) while Professor Helen Nicholson is Acting Vice-Chancellor.



Brian Trott (pictured above) is the new Chief Financial Officer.

Dr **David Clark** (pictured top, right) will be the new Registrar and Secretary to the Council from October when he



stands down as Member of Parliament for Dunedin North.

Mayhaka Mendis is General Counsel.

Bronwen Stephens is the new Manager of the Graduate Research School.

Professor **Maree Thyne** is Acting Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Commerce and Dean, Otago Business School, while a permanent replacement is found for Professor Robin Gauld, who stood down from these roles in late February.

Professor **Tracey Skelton** is the new Ron Lister Chair in Geography.

Professor **Simone Marshall** is the new Head of Te Pae Takata School of Arts.

Mark Brunton is Kaitohutohu Rautaki Matua Māori, Senior Strategic Adviser Māori.

Professor **Tim Cooper** is the new Dean of Learning and Teaching.

Awards and Achievements:

Associate Professor **Dianne Sika-Paotonu** (University of Otago, Wellington) is the first Pacific scientist to win the 2022 Prime Minister's Science Communication Prize (see pages 13 to 15). She has also been elected to chair the Health Research Council's Pacific Health Research Committee.

Professor **Gisela Sole** (Physiotherapy) has been appointed to the prestigious Australian Physiotherapy Council Accreditation Committee.

Dr **Lynne Taylor** (Theology) has been accepted into a Psychology Cross-training Fellowship Programme for Theologians,

which is run by Birmingham University with funding from the John Templeton Foundation.

A team from the University of Otago, Christchurch's **Māori and Indigenous Health Innovation (MIHI)** has been chosen as a joint winner of the UK-based *Nature* journal's Inclusive Health Award 2023 for its work aimed at "uncovering innovation and best practice in inclusive health research that's been influenced by engagement with affected communities and their expert representatives".

Professor **Rob Walker** (Medicine) has been awarded the College Medal by the Royal Australasian College of Physicians, for his significant international contribution to understanding and managing kidney disease.

Children's entertainer, play therapist and research assistant **Pip Milford-Hughes** (pictured below) aka "Pippity-Pop" (Women's and Children's Health) has won the *TV Three* reality game show *Blow Up*. Milford-Hughes works part time in diabetes research and as well as carrying out administration, she also entertains patients to take their minds off medical procedures.



Professor **Sheila Skeaff** (Human Nutrition) has won the 2022 OUSA Supervisor of the Year Award. The awards, held in conjunction with the Graduate Research School, aim to recognise and celebrate excellence in supervision at Otago.

Dr **Tessa Romano** (School of Performing Arts) has won the Division of Humanities Teaching Award for 2022. The award recognises commitment to innovative teaching, responding to the needs of students, incorporation of matauranga Māori, and willingness to grow and develop as a teacher.

Professor **Claire Freeman** (Geography) has been awarded the 2022 Te Kōkiringa Taumata/New Zealand Planning Institute's Distinguished Service Award in recognition of her depth of service to planning in Aotearoa, her contribution to planning knowledge and literature and her original research spanning more than two decades.

Associate Professor **Mark Falcous** (School of Physical Education, Sport and Exercise Sciences) has received a Research Fellow Award by the North American Society for the Sociology of Sport, for his sustained contributions to the sociology of sport research.

Three Chemistry researchers have been recognised in this year's New Zealand Institute of Chemistry awards. Dr **Sara Miller** received the ACES NZIC Early Career Researcher Award; Professor **David Larsen** received the Maurice Wilkins Centre Prize for Chemical Science; and Professor **Lyall Hanton** was awarded the Douglas Pharmaceuticals Prize for Industrial and Applied Chemistry.

Dr **Kim Currie** (NIWA Marine Chemist and Fellow of the Department of Chemistry) has been awarded the New Zealand Marine Sciences Society Award for her ocean acidification mahi (see pages 26 to 28).

Associate Professor **Harald Schwefel** (Physics) has been named a Fellow of Optica, the world's foremost organisation for the science of light and photonics.

Three researchers from the Department of Food Science have been recognised at the 21st World Congress of the International Union of Food

Science and Technology (IUFoST) held in Singapore. Professor **Indrawati Oey** became a Fellow of the International Academy of Food Science and Technology; Dr **Dominic Agyei** received the 2021 IUFoST Young Researcher Award; and Dr **Binam Kebede** was recognised with the 2022 IUFoST Young Scientist Award.

Professor **Jo Baxter** (Dean of the Dunedin School of Medicine) has won the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Award at the most recent Osmosis "Raise the Line" faculty awards.

Professor **Siân Halcrow** (Anatomy) (pictured below) has won a prestigious Fulbright Scholarship to further her research on the bioethics of skeletal collections in New Zealand and the United States.



Dr **Kevin Ly** (Pathology) has won a Postdoctoral Fellowship from the Cancer Society of New Zealand to conduct his research into predicting a patient's response to immunotherapy.

Four Otago academics have been elected to be Fellows of the Academy of the Royal Society Te Apārangi. They are Professor **Suetonia Palmer** and Professor **Lisa Stamp** (both from the Department of Medicine, Christchurch), Professor **Rachael Taylor** (Medicine) and Professor **Hallie Buckley** (Anatomy).

Professor **Brett Delahunt** (Pathology and Molecular Medicine) has won the Royal College of Pathologists of Australasia's 2022 Article of the Year Award for having the top research paper

published in its journal *Pathology*.

Associate Professor **Diane Ruwhiu** (Ngāpuhi) is the first Māori commissioner on the New Zealand Productivity Commission Te Kōmihana Whai Hua o Aotearoa.

The University's **Te Oraka** thrift shop and sustainability hub has won the student engagement category at the Australasian Green Gown Awards, which includes entry to the global awards.

Obituaries:

Andrew Nicholson was a valued staff member at the Portobello Marine Lab, who was killed in a motorcycle accident in December 2022. He was a friend to many and is very much missed.

Emeritus Professor **Colin Gibson** was a great scholar, known for his energy and cheerfulness. He was Head of the Department of English and held the Donald Collie Chair in English. Following his retirement in 1999 he continued teaching and delivering lectures. He passed away in late 2022.

Former University of Otago geneticist and aid worker Dr **Andrew Bagshaw**, died in Ukraine in January, while attempting to rescue an elderly woman from Soledar – an area of intense military action in Eastern Ukraine. His final research paper was published posthumously and could lead to a better understanding of how genetic diseases arise and how they can be treated (see page 35).

Professor **Martin Pollock** was a neurologist, devoted equally to his patients and his research. He worked in Preventive and Social Medicine. He died in June 2023.

Tasileta Teevale was at the forefront of Pacific development at the University of Otago for 10 years. She passed away at the Otago Community Hospice in April (see pages 42 to 43 for her full obituary).

Otago mourns loss of Pacific leader

OTAGO HAS LOST A LEADER

who has been at the forefront of Pacific development at the University over the past decade. Dr Tasileta Teevale passed away at the Otago Community Hospice in April aged 50.

Teevale regarded herself as having two “homes”. She was born in Samoa in 1973 and emigrated to Dunedin with her parents, Reverend Fuifui Teevale and Roberta Leisam-Teevale, and siblings, after her father received a scholarship to study at Otago. “I am a Dunedinite,” she later explained. “We left our Island shores for this very University.”

Teevale’s broad career in academia and public service also began at Otago, from where she graduated with a Bachelor of Physical Education degree in 1995.

She then lectured in exercise science at UCOL – Universal College of Learning (now part of Te Pūkenga – New Zealand Institute of Skills and Technology) in Palmerston North and completed a Master of Business Studies degree in Sports Management at Massey University in 2001. This included writing a thesis on *Pacific women’s netball participation in Aotearoa/New Zealand*.

Employment in the tertiary education public sector followed. She was Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) regional advisor for Counties Manukau; national advisor in the TEC’s Research Evaluation Unit in Wellington; and member of the Manukau City Council Strategic Development Unit.

She returned to academia to complete a PhD in Community Health at the University of Auckland in 2009, submitting a thesis on *Obesity in Pacific adolescents*; and worked as a Postdoctoral Research Fellow in that university’s School of Population Health.

Her research focused on Pacific family and adolescent health.

After nearly two decades away from Dunedin, Teevale returned “home” in 2013 as the University of Otago’s first Director, Pacific Development, responsible for monitoring the progress of the Pacific Strategic Framework the University had just launched, which set aspirational targets for Pacific student achievement at Otago.

Teevale explained at the time: “My role entails monitoring all Pacific-related activities the University delivers in all areas – academic, services, curricula, research, staff development, international relations and so on.”

During her 10 years as Director, Pacific Development, she was closely involved in the University, establishing an Associate Dean Pacific role in each academic division, a Pacific Leadership Group, support for a Pacific student voice in University governance, and the creation of the University of Otago Pacific Islands Students’ Association.

Teevale was also a founding member of Universities New Zealand Komiti Pasifika, established in 2018 “to advance and promote the collective national interests of New Zealand universities for any matters relating to the advancement of Pasifika”, and to provide strategic advice to the New Zealand Vice-Chancellors’ Committee. The Komiti comprises the people holding the most senior Pacific position at each of the country’s eight universities.

Teevale became a go-to person when all manner of advice was sought by the public sector on matters to do with Pacific education: from a Ministry of Education Summit; to a Ministry of Pacific Peoples Vision Summit; to reviews of National

“Tasileta’s passing is a gaping void left in the Pacific heartbeat of Otago University.”

Certificates of Educational Achievement, Tomorrow's Schools, and the New Zealand Qualifications Authority.

Her ongoing research activity at Otago included a study she led – on what enabled and disabled first-year Pacific student achievement at university – which resulted in the development of a credit-bearing university preparation programme for first-year Pacific students.

The many tributes that flowed following her death included one from Acting Vice-Chancellor Professor Helen Nicholson who described Teevale as “a much-loved leader and respected member of our community” who was “central to advancing the progress of our Pacific teaching and learning”.

“The positive impact she had in creating Pacific success both here at the University, and within the wider community in Aotearoa and the Pacific region is astonishing,” Nicholson wrote in a message to staff.

Professor Rose Richards (Va'a o Tautai Centre for Pacific Health) says memories that stand out for Teevale's small but dedicated team in the Pacific Development Office, past and present, include her unwavering belief in the work of the Office and its potential to drive innovation at the highest levels of strategy and policy at the University.

“Her team also remember her courage in never backing down from a difficult conversation, but approaching these with care that the mana of all involved was upheld,” Richards says.

An Otago graduate, Dr Charles Radclyffe, who was recently appointed as the first Pacific lecturer in Archaeology at Otago, says: “Tasileta was one of the most passionate and caring advocates for

the academic success of Pacific taura at Otago. As many strong Pacific mothers do, she led through action and humility, and represented a warm but powerful role model for Otago graduates fortunate enough to work with her, such as myself.”

Radclyffe, who is also a Pacific Islands Student Support Officer, says: “Tasileta's passing is a gaping void left in the Pacific heartbeat of Otago University. Her presence, advocacy and gift of connecting people will be sorely missed, but her legacy remains in the countless stories of success and growth of Pacific taura and staff at Otago that Tasileta enriched over the last decade.”

Similarly, Professor Patrick Vakaoti (Te Tumu – School of Māori, Pacific and Indigenous Studies) describes Teevale as “your quintessential Pacific woman leader” who “nurtured early career staff and created leadership possibilities for senior Pacific

colleagues”.

Family, friends, and colleagues of Leta, as she was known, also refer to her empathy, open nature, level headedness, calm demeanour, poise, grace, kindness, sense of stye, ready laugh and “really good hugs”.

A more formal acknowledgement came in the 2021 New Year honours, when Teevale was made a Member of the New Zealand Order of Merit (MNZM), for services to Pacific education and public health research.

Teevale is survived by her husband, Dr Matiu Ratima – a fellow Otago alumnus and former senior lecturer at Otago, now Canterbury – and their three children: Tai, Tama and Toa. Her family says that, despite her many accomplishments, her three boys were her greatest source of pride and joy.

Otago's Director of Pacific Development
Tasileta Teevale, who passed away in April 2023.

IAN DOUGHERTY

Paper to Pixels

THE UNIVERSITY OF OTAGO'S

Hocken Collections is embarking on a major digitisation programme that will make more of its material available online.

One important part of the digitisation work focuses on archival material related to the southern iwi, Kāi Tahu, and the Hocken has appointed Rauhina Scott-Fyfe (Kāi Tahu, Kāti Māmoe) to the role of Māori Archivist to spend a year working on the project.

Scott-Fyfe, a former University of Otago Māori Studies student and Māori language

“What we want to do is highlight the strengths and the richness of the collections.”

tutor, is working under the guidance of Head Curator, Archives, Anna Blackman, and is involving local rūnaka in the Kāi Tahu Digitisation Project, which is centred on digitising and making available online material from the Herries Beattie Papers.

“Kāi Tahu has identified the Beattie Papers as a very significant collection,” Blackman says, “and that is borne out by the amount of

research it gets. It has also been recognised by the UNESCO New Zealand Memory of the World register.”

James Herries Beattie (known as Herries) was a Gore-born journalist and author of Scottish descent. UNESCO describes him as an extremely thorough researcher whose papers “document the traditional knowledge and memories of 19th century South Island Māori and Pākehā during a key time in New Zealand history, a great deal of it based on conversations and interviews”.

According to UNESCO, the information he collected has been repeatedly used by researchers because it provides “reliable and detailed historical and ethnographical data not found elsewhere”. It includes thousands of South Island Māori place names.

Beattie donated most of the papers to the Hocken between 1955 and 1972, the year he died at the age of 90. The papers were added to the Memory of the World register in 2018.

Scott-Fyfe says it is not simply a matter of digitally copying material but also of describing the material – including titles, dates, and context – to increase “findability” online.

Of Kāi Tahu descent from Puketeraki and Oraka Aparima, Scott-Fyfe says the project is also not limited to increasing visibility and access for those who might connect with the material.

“It is partly about building relationships with our local rūnaka – Ōtākou, Puketeraki and Moeraki – as well as other Kāi Tahu whose ancestors’ stories are included in this material.”

Scott-Fyfe is mindful of the special nature of the Kāi Tahu material when it comes to handling and use. “The materials are considered to be taoka to Kāi Tahu, because they contain interviews with our tipuna, and in many cases they are the sources of what we know about traditional practices.”

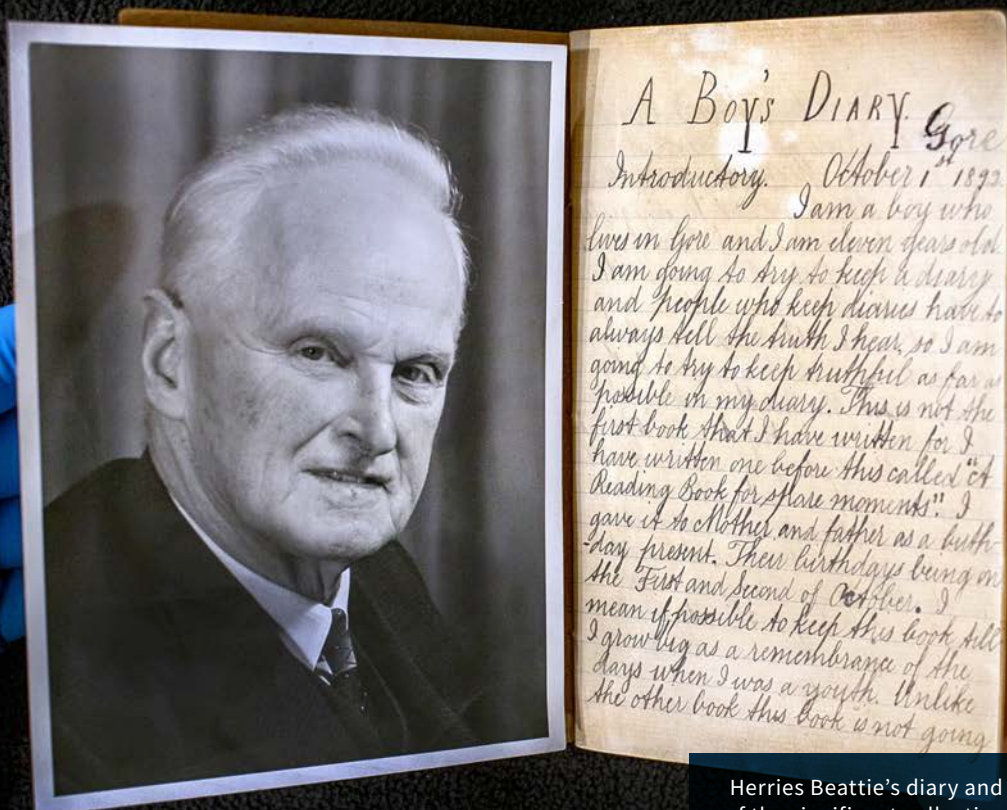
The Hocken is planning to have the entire Beattie collection digitised by the end of the 12-month project, with online access to the collection available from early next year.

Scott-Fyfe is also hoping to digitise some other archival material related to Kāi Tahu, similarly working with advice from mana whenua and the iwi’s Archives Team.

The physical task of digitising the material is being undertaken by a leading digitisation specialist, New Zealand Micrographic Services, at the Hocken, financed by a University of Otago Alumni grant.

Hocken Librarian, Catherine Hammond, says digitisation is important for preservation, particularly of fragile material held by the Hocken.

She says digitisation also has the obvious benefit of broadening access to material by



Photos: Sharron Bennett

Herries Beattie's diary and photo – just a small part of the significant collection which is being digitised.

making it available to researchers around the world, in addition to publicising the Hocken's collections.

"What we want to do is highlight the strengths and the richness of the collections."

Blackman says the Hocken has been digitising material, mainly artworks and photographs, for several decades. Many of the artworks have been made available online through the University's OURHeritage (Otago University Research Heritage) database, and the photographs via the Hocken's popular Snapshot database and its Hākena database.

The Hocken, in collaboration with the University's Centre for Research on Colonial Culture, has also digitised and put online the letters and journals of the missionary, Samuel Marsden, via the Marsden Online Archive.

Hammond notes, however, that only a small proportion of the Hocken's "amazing research collections" has been digitised so far, and only some of that is currently available online. The vast majority of users (and the Hocken gets up to 5,000 research visits each year) still front up to the Anzac Avenue building in Dunedin to view original material.

Although the current project only runs for a year, Hammond says they will be looking to continue the Hocken's digitisation

programme beyond that.

Hand-in-hand with the current digitisation project, the Hocken is re-developing its digital delivery platform on its website.

Blackman says this will bring together existing online material such as the Snapshot database; a host of digital copies of mainly artworks and photographs created over the years in various one-off digitisation projects, but not previously put online; and the newly digitised Kāi Tahu material. The Hocken is hoping to launch the redeveloped site by the end of the year.

As part of the redevelopment, a digital unit has been established at the Hocken, led by a newly-appointed Senior Imaging Technician, Richard Munro.

"The Hocken has about 400,000 books, about 11 linear kilometres of archives, more than 17,000 artworks and well over 1 million photographs, so it is always going to be a percentage that is digitalised," Hammond says.

She says she can envisage a time, however, when significant parts of the collections at the Hocken will be available online to researchers globally.

IAN DOUGHERTY



HOCKEN HEAD CURATOR, ARCHIVES, ANNA BLACKMAN: "Kāi Tahu has identified the Beattie Papers as a very significant collection ... It has also been recognised by the UNESCO New Zealand Memory of the World register."

Books by Otago alumni

Cenozoic Brachiopoda of South Australia: a photographic guide to the identification of brachiopod fossils in the Murray, Gambier, St. Vincent, Pirie and Eucla Basins of South Australia by John G. G. Morton, Blurb Publishing, November 2021.

Cancer Virus Hunters: A History of Tumor Virology, by Gregory J Morgan, Johns Hopkins University Press 2022.

Scalpels to Keyholes: A history of general surgery at Christchurch Hospital 1862-2022 by Claire Le Couteur, The Cotter Medical History Trust, 2022.

Applying Anthropology to General Education: Reshaping Colleges and Universities for the 21st Century, by Jennifer R. Wies and Hillary J. Haldane, Routledge, 2022.

Nightshades and Paperwhites by Sophie Rogers, CopyPress, September 2022.

Faith and Hope in Midlife: Reflecting on Churchgoers' Experiences by Anne Shave, Philip Garside Publishing Ltd, October 2022.

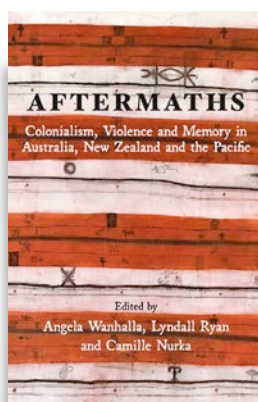
Children of the Rush by James Russell, Dragon Brothers Books Ltd, November 2022.

Changing Gears: Entrepreneurs @ 50+, by Angela Robertson, Amazon, January 2023.

Prayers for Southern People: prayers and poems for Christian worship and devotion by Joy Kingsbury-Aitken, Philip Garside Publishing Ltd, February 2023.

Walking Four Directions - A Journey for Regeneration in the Land of Enchantment by Robb Hirsch, Sunstone Press, February 2023.

Alumni: if you have recently published a book please email mag.editor@otago.ac.nz



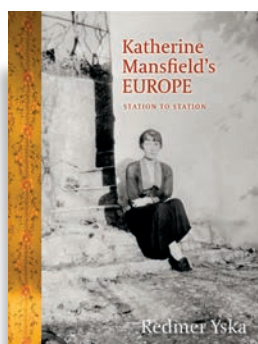
Aftermaths: Colonialism, Violence and Memory in Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific

Edited by Angela Wanhalla,
Lyndall Ryan and Camille Nurka
Otago University Press, April 2023

Aftermaths explores the life-changing intergenerational effects of colonial violence in Aotearoa New Zealand, Australia and the Pacific.

The settings of these compelling short essays range from Ōrākau pā in New Zealand's Waikato to the Kimberleys in northwest Australia, from orphanages in Fiji to the ancestral lands of the Wiyot Tribe in Northern California. Story by story, this collection powerfully reveals the living legacy of historical events, showing how they have been remembered (and misremembered) within families and communities into the present day.

Editors Angela Wanhalla, Lyndall Ryan and Camille Nurka have invited a group of prominent scholars to write about colonial histories by reflecting on a range of events through a variety of perspectives, including personal experiences, family stories, collaborative research, oral and literary histories, commemoration activities and contemporary artworks. The result is a readable, informative and often extremely moving book that makes an essential contribution to our knowledge of the effects of colonial violence and dispossession.



Katherine Mansfield's Europe: Station to Station

By Redmer Yska
Otago University Press, May 2023

Beautifully written and illustrated, *Katherine Mansfield's Europe* is part travelogue, part literary biography, part detective story and part ghost story. Guided by Mansfield's journals and letters, author Redmer Yska pursues the traces of her restless

journeying in Europe, seeking out the places where she lived, worked and – a century ago this year – died. Along the way, he meets a cast of present-day Mansfield devotees who help shape his understanding of the impressions Mansfield left on their territories and how she is formally (and informally) commemorated in Europe.

With maps and stunning photography, this engaging and well-researched book richly illuminates Katherine Mansfield's time in Europe and reveals her enduring presence in the places she frequented. Whether familiar or unfamiliar with Katherine Mansfield's work and life, readers will find Yska's account of her travels and travails in Europe freshly informative and deeply moving.

For further information:

Otago University Press
otago.ac.nz/press | university.press@otago.ac.nz



Te Rangihīroa

Photo: Dave Bull

Otago's first college build in 50 years

Otago will next year welcome 450 students to a new residential college, Te Rangihīroa.

Located on the corner of Albany and Forth Streets, it is the University's first purpose-built college since UniCol, which was opened more than half a century ago.

As the *Otago Magazine* discovers – while some student needs have changed since then, many others remain the same.

IN MAY 2023, the University's newest residential college, Te Rangihīroa College is nearing completion.

Over the past three years it has risen from the ground – and at the time of writing a shipment of 450 bed bases is due, the kitchen is taking shape and landscaping has begun.

Organisational Delivery Project Manager Kirsten Eichstaedt says getting to this stage of the project is a huge step in the right direction.

"When you have furniture, it begins to become a college not a building. Then we just need the people."

The build includes seven levels (a ground level, five accommodation levels and a plant room) spread over four wings. At the start of 2024 it will be ready to welcome 450 students.

Te Rangihīroa is the University's first "purpose built" college in more than 50 years, the most recent being University College

(UniCol), which opened in 1969 as part of the University's centenary celebrations. Other colleges have opened in the intervening years, but these have been either adaptations of existing premises, such as the conversion of the Abbey Motel complex into Abbey College in 2005 (now Caroline Freeman College East), or jointly owned projects, such as City College which opened in 2000 under the oversight of the Dunedin City Tertiary Accommodation Trust, and was later taken over by the University and renamed Caroline Freeman College.

Society has changed a great deal between college builds. 1969 was the year Neil Armstrong took his first, historic, steps on the moon; in New Zealand, it was the year the Auckland Harbour Bridge was widened from four lanes to eight with "Nippon clip-ons"; and it was the year Margaret Mahy first published

Changing times

As the University of Otago prepares to open Te Rangihīroa College, we look back at some earlier residential colleges and their residents. While times look vastly different, student needs remain fairly unchanged.



First years at Upper Studholme, 1932. From Professor Philip Ashton Smithells papers, MS-1516/075/001. Hocken Collection - Uare Taoka o Hākena.



Dining Hall of St Margaret's College, 1949. Prime Minister's Department photograph, Box-184-087. Hocken Collection - Uare Taoka o Hākena.



Student in room, Hayward Hall, from University of Otago Marketing and Communications Division records, MS-5249/002. Hocken Collection - Uare Taoka o Hākena.



Te Rangihīroa's distinctive cursive script has been used for the external naming of the new college.

A Lion in the Meadow, launching her career as a children's author.

Surely the needs of Otago students have changed out of all recognition since then?

"In some ways, yes," says Caroline Freeman College Warden Chris Addington. "But I don't believe what students want, and what they need has changed much.

"The basics are the same; students still need a roof, a bed and food. Now they also need Wi-Fi. But in meaningful ways, when I look around our dining room [at Caroline Freeman College], things are not much different now than they were when I began as a student at Stanford University's Branner Hall 43 years ago."

The Te Rangihīroa build began in late 2020 – amid the global COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore, the design of the college has been adjusted to reflect that, with common spaces that are able to be used flexibly and changed at short notice if a need arises.

Other aspects of planning and design have been approached significantly differently than they would have been 50-plus years ago, including a focus on both sustainability and accessibility, and consultation with Māori – including Te Rangihīroa's Ngāti Mutunga iwi and local Ngāi Tahu throughout the design process. This is particularly visible in the Māori artwork featured inside and out, including 3D façade panels featuring striking kaokao patterns, whakataukī embedded in the Bluestone wall, and Te Rangihīroa's cursive script.

The University's Strategic Architect Gordon Roy explains that the build aims to achieve a 5 Green Star sustainability rating from the New Zealand Green Building Council – a first for a residential college in New Zealand. This rating

is difficult to attain – and involves meeting requirements from design through to the finished product.

"The design must carefully consider responsible materials, thermal building envelope and thermal comfort, control of construction and demolition waste, and monitor the products specified throughout the project to make sure they are sustainable and viable," Roy says.

It is also the University's most accessible college. Eichstaedt says it has been designed to accommodate everyone. For example, every room is accessible to someone in a wheelchair. It also has more ensuite bathrooms than any other college and the other bathrooms are 'all gender'.

This is not the first time the University of Otago has led the way when it comes to gender in accommodation. The University of Otago was the first in Australasia to house men and women in the same residential college – mostly because of circumstance. At the end of the war in 1945, accommodation for male students was in short supply – so the Stuart Residence Halls Council offered rooms to men in one of two neighbouring houses purchased for women's college Carrington. As described by Alison Clarke in her book *Otago: 150 years of New Zealand's first university*, accommodating men and women in the same residential college was a pragmatic response to needs and opportunities rather than a deliberate scheme, but since it worked it carried on.

Back to 2023, and Te Rangihīroa will be the University's most state-of-the-art residential college.

But being built during a global pandemic has caused delays. Acting Vice-Chancellor Professor Helen Nicholson says the project was

Photo: Trev Hill



Photo: Dave Bull



Photo: Trev Hill

The Te Rangihīroa College build in progress in August 2022.

The construction team hard at work inside Te Rangihīroa in May 2023.

originally scheduled to be completed in May, but will now be ready early next year.

“We had hoped to open for students in semester two this year. However, because of pressure from industry-wide challenges and delays with the façade completion, we are working towards having Te Rangihīroa College completed this year and being open for students from semester one, 2024.”

The impacts of COVID-19 are also being felt in other ways. The University’s financial situation and incoming student numbers have changed significantly between 2020 when the build began and now, prompting questions around the wisdom of the University investing in capital development. Should the University be building student accommodation? Can online learning provide an equivalent experience?

Addington is adamant about the advantages of the first-year college experience.

“Yes, you can get academic learning via books or YouTube or other online platforms,” he says. “But you cannot get the sense of shared community and adventure that you get from leaving home and joining thousands of others who are in the same boat.”

He says that what students do outside of the classroom is just as important as the learning the University offers in its lecture theatres, labs and tutorials.

“At our colleges we have plays, sports, art competitions, volunteering, all sorts of things that help our young people to grow.”

With more than 85 per cent of Otago’s new students coming from outside Dunedin, it is vitally important to offer accommodation that fulfils their needs – from beds and food to pastoral care, support when homesick or when studies or relationships are challenging.

“Laying aside buildings, grounds and strategic plans, colleges are communities of scholars and staff. They are places for young people to come together with shared goals and shared challenges.”

What makes a college a home is the sense of community, he says. And one way that is achieved is through establishing a shared identity and a collegiate personality and traditions.

“It sounds unlikely, but students spend more time deciding what college they want to live in while they’re here, than what they want to study. It’s so important, that sense of belonging.”

Addington says the first and most important job of whoever leads the new Te Rangihīroa College is that they quickly establish their college identity.

And for Te Rangihīroa there are big shoes to fill.

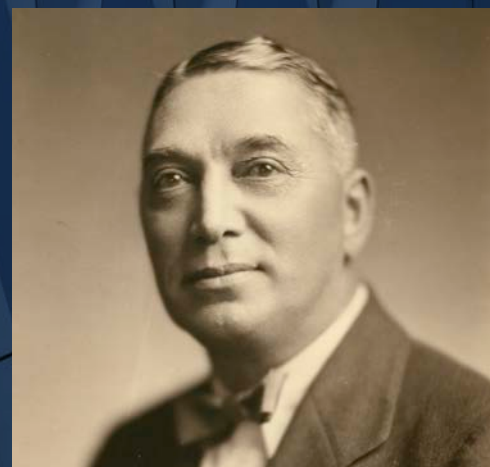
Otago’s Director of Campus Development Tanya Syddall says the new college is an opportunity to build on the Te Rangihīroa culture.

“It is important that we respect the taonga gifted to the University by creating a facility that can proudly bear the name of Te Rangihīroa.”

LISA DICK

The man behind the name:

Te Rangihīroa



Te Rangihīroa (Sir Peter Buck) was the first Māori medical graduate from a New Zealand university. He graduated in 1904, and later received an MD in 1910, his doctoral thesis being Medicine amongst the Māori, in ancient and modern times.

He is remembered as a great son of Taranaki, and a leader and doctor among his people; a man who used his medical training to stem the tide of profound and serious health problems that almost wiped out the Māori population in the first part of the 20th century. Te Rangihīroa was at the coalface of turning the tide on diseases besetting Māori, including smallpox, tuberculosis and scabies.

Te Rangihīroa later became a Member of Parliament and a distinguished soldier. He was decorated with the DSO for bravery in the field at Gallipoli and in the Somme, with the rank of Lieutenant Colonel. He also later developed a lifelong passion for anthropology with specific reference to the Pacific migrations and the cultures of Pacific peoples. For the last 20 years of his life he was the Director of the Bishop Museum in Hawaii, and was also made a visiting Professor at Yale University. Te Rangihīroa received an honorary Doctorate of Science from the University of Otago in 1937, and was knighted in 1946.

The name was gifted to the University of Otago in 2013 following permission granted from Te Rangihīroa’s iwi and his surviving family members. The original Te Rangi Hiroa College on Castle Street has been renamed 192 Castle College.

Te Rangihīroa (Sir Peter Henry Buck) c.1941. S.P. Andrew photograph, Box-001-037 Hocken Collections – Uare Taoka o Hākena, University of Otago.

The Sophia Charter

Te Kawenata Sophia

Sophia Crestani

Sophia Michelle McMillan Crestani, the youngest of three children and a twin, grew up in Wellington. She demonstrated her innate ability in mathematics at an early age, winning the St Benedict's School Mathematics cup and an annual scholarship to Queen Margaret College (QMC).

Sophia was a people person with an engaging and sparkling personality who could light up any space. She had a fun, friendly and a kind and caring nature. She was a Year 9 class prefect and over tutor at QMC and, later, a Year 13 mentor. Sophia was sporty and competed in netball, dragon boating and gymnastics. She came to the University of Otago to study Mathematics and Statistics.

Sophia tragically died while attending a party in North Dunedin in October 2019. For her parents, Bede Crestani and Elspeth McMillan, their daughter's death has been a loss that can be rationalised, justified or forgotten. Through the Sophia Charter, they hope "to keep other students safe as they go home to their families and mature into caring adults and have full lives."

The Sophia Charter is our shared commitment to the North Dunedin community.

The Sophia Charter is a commitment to the North Dunedin community, outlining the aims of the Charter and the shared commitment to the community.

The Sophia Charter is a commitment to the North Dunedin community, outlining the aims of the Charter and the shared commitment to the community.

While Sophia may have lost her life, she actually will live on in perpetuity through The Charter and the scholarships.

Elspeth McMillan, Sophia's mother

Memorial scholarships

Funded by generous support from Sophia's family and friends, Otago students and the wider community, two scholarships have been established in Sophia's memory.

The Sophia Charter Memorial
NZ\$4,500 to support student research

Find out more:

Photo: Dave Bull

Sophia Michelle McMillan Crestani Memorial Scholarship holders with Sophia's parents (from left): Bede Crestani, Maia Dean, Laura Graham, Elspeth McMillan and Emilia Haszard.

Sophia Charter display highlights importance of student wellbeing

THE DUNEDIN COMMUNITY

joined together with family and friends of Sophia Crestani earlier this year, to launch a new display outlining the aims of The Sophia Charter.

The display, a new permanent feature in the University of Otago's Ōtepoti Link, reaffirms the community-wide commitment to reducing harm and enhancing the wellbeing of North Dunedin taura (students).

The static display outlines The Sophia Charter, an agreement put together following the tragic death of Sophia at a flat party in 2019, and shares information about Sophia's life and her parents' commitment to keeping taura safe.

An iPad is set up as part of the display, inviting taura to have their say on what can be done to make North Dunedin safer. The display also provides information about the two memorial scholarships in Sophia's name, which will help support taura in perpetuity.

About 200 people attended the launch of the display and The Sophia Charter website. Sophia's parents, Elspeth McMillan

and Bede Crestani, were joined on stage by a few of the remaining students at Otago with a personal connection to Sophia, as well as recipients of Sophia McMillan Crestani Memorial Scholarships.

Mr Crestani told those gathered the goal of the Charter was to make the Ōtepoti Dunedin campus the "safest and best" in the country.

There had been a "ground swell" of improvements taking place within the campus community in the last couple of years, he said.

He noted there were still improvements to be made, and that it was a long-term goal for all stakeholders.

University Student Services Director Claire Gallop says the display and website are the result of Sophia's family and stakeholders of the North Dunedin community coming together and renewing their commitment to supporting students in an environment that is both safe and fun.

"We want taura to know that we want to hear from them. Student safety isn't just about authorities putting systems in place to protect people; we need students

to take responsibility for themselves too, and we want to hear from students about what we can do to help support them to do that."

"Student safety isn't just about authorities putting systems in place to protect people ... we want to hear from students about what we can do to help support them to do that."

The Charter is a shared commitment from Dunedin stakeholders, including the University, Police, Fire and Emergency New Zealand (FENZ), Otago Property Investors Association, the Dunedin City Council (DCC), Te Pūkenga Otago Polytechnic and the Otago University Students' Association (OUSA) and students.

Trailblazing young graduates recognised in 20Twenties awards



20TWENTIES RECIPIENT MARGARET-RAE CLARK: “Through various community grants, donations and events we have been able to improve access to oral healthcare and in many cases provide free dental care to those most in need.”

COMMITTED TO CLOSING the equity gap in access to oral healthcare, 20Twenties Young Alumni Award recipient Margaret-Rae Clark (Ngāti Awa), is grateful for the recognition of her mahi, and says it will help shine a light on the oral health field.

Clark works in both private practice and as a community dentist, based out of Ora Toa primary health organisation, an iwi-led health service in Cannons Creek, Porirua.

“Not long after beginning work, I found there was a huge equity gap in access to oral health services across the region. This encouraged me to find pathways for those in need of care.

“My main focus groups have been low-income adults, patients with diabetes, wāhine, and Māori and Pacific hapū māmā (pregnant women). Through various community grants, donations and events we have been able to improve access to

oral healthcare and in many cases provide free dental care to those most in need.”

Clark is one of 20 trailblazing young alumni recognised in the annual awards, which aim to celebrate and acknowledge graduates in their twenties who have demonstrated outstanding achievements, contributed widely to their communities, or shown exceptional leadership in their personal or professional lives.

Alumni Engagement Manager Donnella Aitken-Ferguson says the calibre of all nominations was extremely high.

“The panel of judges, drawn from across the University’s four academic Divisions, was very impressed with the range of significant professional achievements demonstrated by the graduates, alongside their commitment to the wellbeing of their communities through volunteer and leadership roles.”

2022 recipients

Callum August (Te Whānau-ā-Apanui) BSc(Hons), for involvement in community engagement and school outreach programmes.

Louie Bernhardt BSc(Hons), for leadership and support of others in the maths and statistics community.

Ashlee Berryman BSc, in recognition of voluntary work supporting vulnerable communities.

Olivia Burn BSc(Hons), PhD, in recognition of advances being made due to her research into cancer metastasis.

Anna Campbell BA, BCom, MEntre, in recognition of inspiring future generations of students into alternative business careers.

Abigail Clark BA, BSc, MPCS, in recognition of support to young people facing cancer and of vulnerable communities.

Jessamie Davidson BSc, MSPdM, in recognition of significant contribution to the growth and exposure of female cricket within Otago.

Sophie Dix BA(Hons), in recognition of bettering community through work in sexual violence prevention and education.

Claudia Grave BAppSci, BCom, for work in tackling climate change through changing workplace cultures.

Sharon Iose BSc, PGDipSci, for enabling the health and wellbeing of her community and making a positive impact through her research and outreach activities.

Ajay Kumar BSc, BPharm, for promotion of holistic health care and mentoring undergraduate students.

Kura Lacey (Te Arawa, Ngāruahine) BDS, in recognition of work to deliver equitable access to oral health services.

Melissa Lama BA, MBA, in recognition of work to create an environment where minority groups are well supported.

Sarah Manktelow BASc, in recognition of passion and commitment for conservation and nature.

Amelia Mannering BSc, MSc, in recognition of scientific work to preserve our marine environment.

Hannah Moore BA, for giving back to the community and making positive changes in the lives of youth.

Margaret-Rae Rhian Clark (Ngāti Awa) BDS, in recognition for work championing Māori oral health equity.

Troy Ruhe (Ngāpuhi, Ngāti Tūwharetoa, Ma’uke) BPhed(Hons), PhD, for research which positively impacts Pacific communities.

Finn Shewell BA, for commitment to furthering youth-led innovation in New Zealand.

Cherokee Walters (Ngāti Tūwharetoa, Ngāti Te Arawa), BSc, PGDipSci, in recognition of support for the application of science in the commercial world and for support of rangatahi in STEM.

Donor-funded Entrance Scholarships

DONOR-FUNDED ENTRANCE

Scholarship winners were welcomed to campus in March.

At the welcome, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (External Engagement) Professor Tony Ballantyne said he was very pleased the students had chosen to study at Otago.

“Each of you come to this university with significant achievements. On behalf of our scholarship donors, we look forward to walking beside you on your journey at the University of Otago. We welcome the generous donations. They make a real difference to the University and the wider community of Aotearoa, especially when our graduates enter the workforce,” Ballantyne said.

Development and Alumni Relations Director Shelagh Murray told the gathering that many of the donors were scholarship recipients themselves and appreciated the support they provided. A donor who initially provided two scholarships had increased it to five, which showed an appreciation for the significant benefit scholarships bring.

“The donor said they received a free education and are in a position to freely give towards the education of others.

In 2023 we have offered 50 Alumni Entrance scholarships from our generous benefactors.

“Work hard, commit to doing well, take the time to thank your scholarship provider and please enjoy yourselves here at Otago,” Murray said.

Ohn Khing from Myanmar is an Alumni Appeal Entrance Scholarship recipient studying Health Sciences First Year. She says the scholarship will help towards her studies and flatting costs.

Rotorua’s Mehak Walia, also doing Health Sciences First Year, says her Alumni Appeal Entrance Scholarship will go towards course fees.

Jemma Lewin, who received a Commerce Entrance Scholarship provided by a pair of anonymous donors, says without the scholarship she would have stayed in her hometown of Gisborne.

Napier’s Sophie Pollock, who received the same Commerce Entrance Scholarship, says it will help towards travel and residential college costs.

71-73 Alumni Frank Leong Entrance Scholarship winner Jasper Rainey says the scholarship will allow him to concentrate

“We welcome the generous donations. They make a real difference to the University and the wider community of Aotearoa, especially when our graduates enter the workforce.”

on his studies, without the need to do as much paid work.

Columbian-born Health Sciences student Karen Pardo Solorzano, has a Ralph and Eve Seelye Trust Scholarship, which has helped her attend Hayward College.

Mamata Kafle from Christchurch says her 71-73 Alumni Frank Leong Entrance Scholarship made it possible to attend university.





Public Health Communications Centre opens



Professor Michael Baker: "The PHCC's role will be to improve the communication of these research findings to support good policy responses and raise public awareness about opportunities for health gain."

A NEW CENTRE, hosted by the University of Otago and funded by a philanthropic endowment from the Gama Foundation, will boost the reach and impact of public health research, says its inaugural Director Professor Michael Baker.

Delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the launch of the Public Health Communication Centre (PHCC) was held in February 2023. The Centre will provide high-quality analysis and commentary from public health researchers for the public, the media and decision-makers.

Baker says Aotearoa New Zealand has world-leading public health research.

"The PHCC's role will be to improve the communication of these research findings to support good policy responses and raise public awareness about opportunities for health gain."

The Centre's small team is based in the Department of Public Health at the University of Otago, Wellington. Baker leads the Centre with co-directors Professors Nick Wilson and Simon Hales. Research affiliates Dr Tim Chambers and Marnie Prickett contribute to the work of the Centre with science lead Dr John Kerr and communication lead Adele Broadbent as the key staff.

The PHCC is independently funded by an endowment from the Gama Foundation which is managed by the University of Otago Foundation Trust.

Yes, I would like to support the University of Otago and its ongoing programmes. Your gift can be directed to any one of the following areas:

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- ☐ Research
- ☐ Pūtea Tautoko Student Hardship Fund
- ☐ Where the need is greatest
- ☐ Other

Amount of gift

- ☐ \$50 ☐ \$100 ☐ \$250 ☐ \$500 ☐ \$1000

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THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT



**CLUB CHAIRPERSON TROY ANTISS
AND COACH RAY FITIAO:**

“I love the Club. It’s like any sports club that you get involved in. It’s about the people that you meet and the things that you do together as a team.”

In a league of their own

Photo: Alan Dove

Otago was the first university in Aotearoa New Zealand to establish a rugby league club. The *Otago Magazine* looks at its history.

FORMED AFTER TWO STUDENTS

from Auckland missed their favourite sport and the potential it offered, rugby league began at the University of Otago nearly 70 years ago – making Otago the first New Zealand university to take up the code. But despite its long existence it has never had its own club ground or clubrooms.

New Zealand Universities and Tertiary

Students Rugby League (NZUTSRL) historian Carey Clements says the club has mainly operated out of Dunedin pubs and has always trained at Logan Park. It was established after a meeting at Marama Hall on 22 September 1953, following a recruitment drive by the co-founders the late John Drinkwater and Bob Dragicevich (both DipPhEd, 1956).

Clements says in the 1970s, many students at the club played both rugby codes, but due to league’s association with professionalism (a fact that has never been the case at student level), players often played under aliases. During this era, former *Spot On* presenter and current radio personality Danny Watson played for the club, although because of his TV presence he had to be careful to avoid noticeable facial injuries.

Other notable alumni that have played for the club include retired World Health Organization Director Professor Rex Billington (DipPhEd, 1960), and newly appointed Samoan High Commissioner to

New Zealand Afioa Afamasaga Fa’amatala Toleafoa (BCom, 1971, DipCom, 1972).

Clements began working at the *Otago Daily Times* in 1989. After seeing league in the weekly sports draw, but unreported, he asked the then Sports Editor Brent Edwards if he could cover a game.

After doing so and finding he enjoyed both the open style of the code and the people that went with it, he was soon elected to the Otago Rugby League Board of Control – which he says was due to “being someone that always backed the underdog”.

In 1996 Clements was asked by Otago University Rugby League Club (OURLC) stalwart Bruce Miller to help manage the premier team and administrate the club. For several years, he was the Club Secretary and in 1999 became its Chairperson, in a season that saw OURLC win its first club Grand Final title in more than a decade.

In 2001 Clements began studying at the University, graduating with a BA in 2004.

These days he is a Wellington-based archivist and historian and is writing a book on the history of the OURLC.

Sole survivor from the first OURLC team, retired Nelson GP Bruce Kaye (89), says his original playing jersey is still in mint condition. In the 1950s, lectures stopped for all students on Wednesday afternoon for sport. He was interested in playing rugby, but was considering his options. Growing up he had played league at the then Christchurch West High School (now Hagley College). He heard that two Physical Education students were trying to start up a rugby league club at the University and joined. Kaye played three years for the OURLC, but once his busy medical career began in the late 1950s he never played rugby league again.

OURLC coach of 25 years Ray Fitiao (BA, 1991) joined the OURLC in 1985, when his cousin asked him to play league for the University Gold team.

"I love the Club. It's like any sports club that you get involved in. It's about the people that you meet and the things that you do together as a team. Often a lot of the people you meet become lifelong friends. I am still catching up with people I met through the club in the 1980s.

"Some of the most memorable moments

have obviously been winning the competition with some great people. I've been lucky enough to represent and then coach Otago, and from this to playing and recently coaching New Zealand Universities. I am also enjoying being the Chairman of the NZUTSRL Council."

Fitiao has taught English for more than 25 years at Dunedin's Kaikorai Valley College (broken only by three years teaching at Rotorua Boys' High School). He says Otago is the only fully independent university-based rugby league club in the country.

"I still remember the warmth of the members who welcomed me into the club when I joined. In league it was 'we're all part of the same team', it didn't matter who you were or how good you were, you were just accepted. 'You want to play league, awesome' and I really loved that environment and that's what keeps me coming back."

Current Otago Rugby League Chair Troy Anstiss has played for the OURLC since 2019 and has won honours as both an Otago and NZUTSRL representative, including playing in Fiji. He is also the Otago Rugby League Development Officer, coaching in schools and helping to run South Island and national rugby league events.

In 2019, Otago Rugby League combined

with Southland to form a combined club competition, with the University finishing last. Their fortunes changed the following year with new blood, resulting in them winning the competition, Anstiss says.

Currently, there is only one OURLC side, which plays at Bayfield Park or the Kensington Oval in a local four-club competition that runs from July to September.

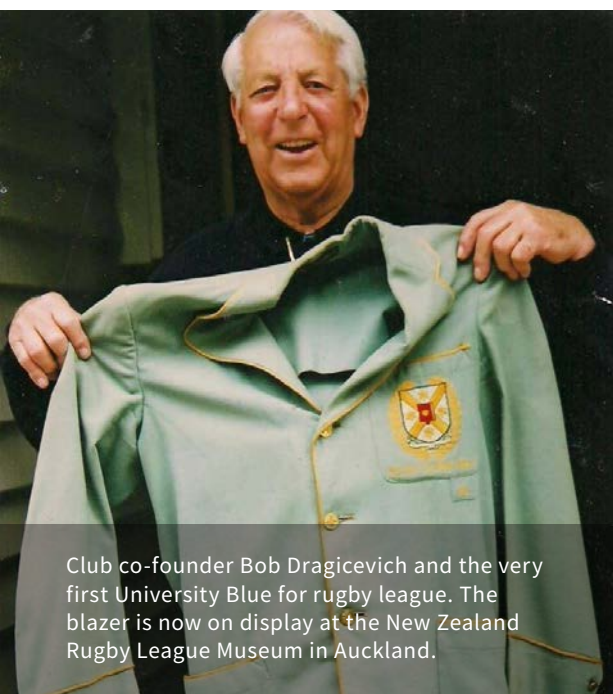
Trevor Patrick is the sole OURLC player to make the Kiwis (1969-1970). He played for the NZUTSRL from 1968-84 and in 1986 coached the side to a win in the inaugural Student World Cup in Auckland. For more than 20 years he has lived in Brisbane.

In 2014, Fitiao was given a New Zealand Rugby League Distinguished Service Award (NZRL DSA). The following year Clements (who is now extensively involved with rugby league in his hometown of Wellington), also received a NZRL DSA.

KERRY DOHIG

Get in touch:

If you have any memorabilia, photos or interesting information on the OURLC that could be used for the Club history, please contact Carey Clements, Ph: 021 073 4133 or email: cnathanclements@hotmail.com



Club co-founder Bob Dragicevich and the very first University Blue for rugby league. The blazer is now on display at the New Zealand Rugby League Museum in Auckland.



Above: The first Otago University Rugby League side of 1954.



Left: The 1999 team celebrate after winning the premier grand final in double extra time.

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