

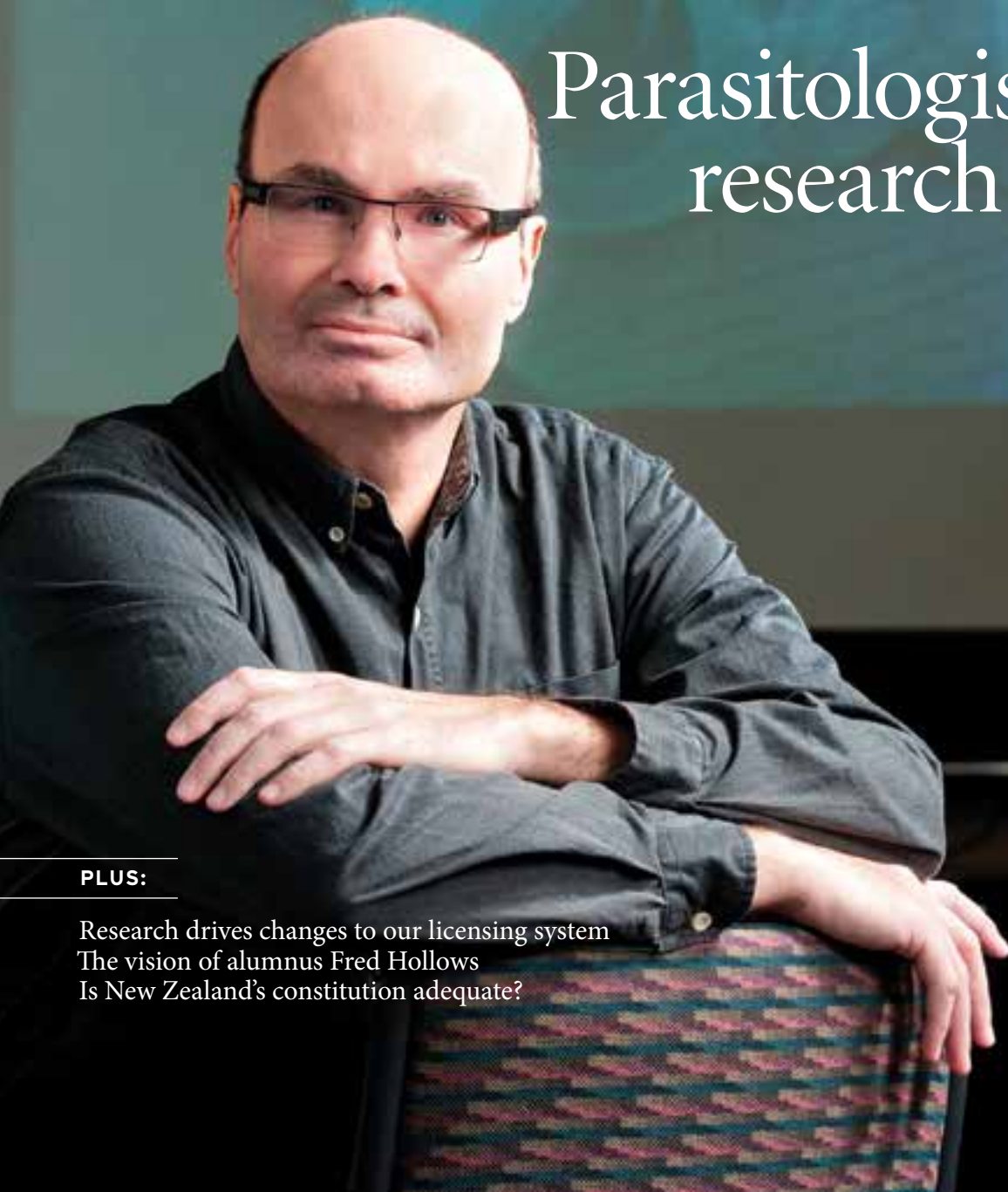
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Otago University Rugby Football Club

Winner of the Ainge Trophy 2013
Top club in Dunedin for the second year in a row

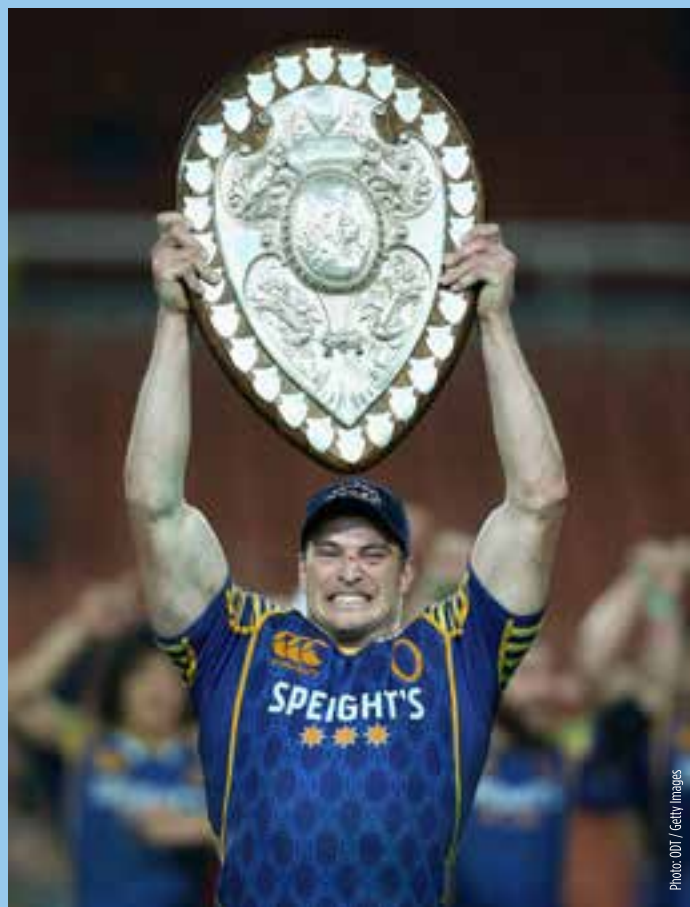


Photo 0017 / Getty Images

Another 2013 triumph!

Paul Grant, University A and Otago ITM captain, with Tom Donnelly, Matt Faddes, Fa'iasiu Fuata and Tama Turirangi, were in Otago's Ranfurly Shield winning team.

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VICE-CHANCELLOR'S COMMENT



Over the past few months, the results of the “Big 3” international university rankings systems were released. In general, the news for Otago was very good. Consistent with our results for the last five years, we scored in the 201-300 band in the ARWU (Shanghai) Rankings, in the 226-250 band in the *Times Higher Education* Rankings, and we scored 155th in the QS Rankings. When we take a closer look at some of the ranking data, Otago was the top university in New Zealand for the number of highly cited publications and the number of publications per capita.

Given that there are more than 10,000 universities around the world, the fact that the University of Otago has consistently scored in the top 1-3 per cent is something we should be very proud of. At the same time, we should also continue to look for ways to improve our performance. Like us, the New Zealand Government is extremely interested in university rankings because they are an important piece of information that international students use when making decisions about their study destination. Obviously, the best approach is for the universities and the Government to work together to find ways to enhance our international scorecard.

The key question is, what changes would make a difference? In order to answer this question, I took a careful look at the Top 10 Universities as ranked by the *Times Higher Education* to see if I could discover the secret to their success. Seven are located in America (California Institute of Technology, Harvard, Stanford, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Princeton, Berkeley and the University of Chicago); the remaining three are located in the UK (Oxford, Cambridge and Imperial College of London). Acknowledging the tyranny of distance, is there anything else that we could learn from the Top 10?

All of the universities in the Top 10 are research intensive. They are also old and well established. Their average founding date was 1699 and only one university in the Top 10 (Imperial College London) was founded after 1900. All of these universities are moderate in size; the average number of undergraduates is less than 9,000 and the average number of postgraduates is less than 7,000. Most boast that over 50 per cent of their classes include fewer than 20 students. This makes them very expensive. Their median tuition is \$NZ48,235 per annum. They are all residential and most students live on campus for the bulk of their undergraduate career. They are highly selective. The average acceptance rate for undergraduates is less than 12 per cent. Finally, their governance councils are large and include representation by staff, students and alumni.

On the basis of this information, we are clearly headed in the right direction at the University of Otago. We are research-intensive, we are old and well-established, we are the only truly residential university in New Zealand, and our Council is large and includes staff, students and alumni. Our best strategy is to continue to play to these strengths and resist any change that would interfere with our progress to date. One issue we do face at present is a desire by Government to reduce the size of New Zealand university councils to a level well below that which is typical of the world's great universities.

In terms of student numbers, a “more through the door” strategy is unlikely to enhance our international rankings. Instead, we have chosen to focus on excellence rather than raw number when recruiting students. It is now harder to gain acceptance to Otago and students must maintain satisfactory academic performance in order to continue. This strategy has led to a small drop in student numbers, which has caused some to worry, but it is important to keep in mind that the small decline is part of a larger strategy that emphasises excellence. The recruitment of more highly qualified postgraduate students continues to be a priority at Otago and we are intensifying our efforts to recruit the best and the brightest postgraduates from New Zealand and throughout the world. Funding remains a major issue as we try to balance constraints on Government support and tuition fees against our bold aspirations for students and staff.

I am proud to say that we have recently launched our *Strategic Direction to 2020*. On the basis of what I have learned about the world's greatest universities, I feel confident that the path we have charted for ourselves will help us to achieve our goals, not only in terms of international rankings, but also in terms of our contribution to New Zealand and the rest of the world. We remain an institution that is highly committed to enhancing outcomes for all students, to providing a collegial and stimulating working environment for staff, to solving important practical problems, and to contributing to the greater good of society and the environment. We do these things, not because they will affect our international rankings, but because they are the right thing to do. I warmly welcome you to view our *Strategic Direction to 2020*: www.otago.ac.nz/otago053226.pdf

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading 'Harlene Hayne' in a cursive script.

Professor Harlene Hayne
Vice-Chancellor, University of Otago

The accidental parasitologist

To most, parasites are regarded as disgusting creepy-crawlies. For Professor Robert Poulin, however, they have been the subject of a fascinating scientific career spanning more than two decades which has been recognised with the University's 2013 Distinguished Research Medal.

Having a parasite that lives in the rectums of Moroccan tortoises named after him is one of the more unusual of the many honours that have been bestowed on the 2013 recipient of University of Otago's Distinguished Research Medal.

Professor Robert Poulin (Zoology) has been awarded the University's highest research honour for the remarkable quality and quantity of his research on parasite ecology and evolution over the past two decades. He will be presented with the medal at a public lecture he will deliver in November.

Poulin describes himself as "an accidental parasitologist". He studied aquatic biology at McGill University in Montreal and at Université Laval in Quebec City before switching to the study of parasites.

"At the very beginning of my postgraduate studies on the growth and mortality of young fish, I noticed external parasites on the fish I was studying. My supervisor said, 'Remove them with tweezers and discard them. They are irrelevant.' But I put some of the fish with and without parasites in aquaria and it became clear to me that

the parasites changed the behaviour of the fish. So I decided to do my PhD on that instead."

The French-Canadian held fixed-term positions at two universities in Quebec province before he and his wife and the first of their two sons emigrated to New Zealand in 1992 to join the Department of Zoology. (Both boys have gone on to study worms and viruses at Otago: not in zoology, but in computer science.)

"I was looking around for permanent positions and came across an advertisement for a job at Otago. I found out that I knew of three people here [in the Department of Zoology]. And New Zealand was already on our short-list of places that my wife and I absolutely wanted to visit."

Two decades later Poulin is regarded as a world leader in the study of parasite ecology and evolution. His prolific publishing record includes writing, co-writing or editing six books, and writing or co-writing 25 book chapters and about 450 peer-reviewed journal articles. One of his books, *Evolutionary Ecology of Parasites*, a 342-page second edition of which was published by Princeton University Press in 2007, is an

international standard text in its field.

"My initial interest was on the impact of parasites on fish, but as I delved into the biology of the parasites I found out that they are not just these disgusting little beasts that have no other purpose than to suck energy from the host. They actually have a very complex biology of their own. So the research we do now is split between the biology of the parasite and the impact of the parasites on the biology of the host species."

Poulin says the research programme in parasite ecology and evolution he has established at Otago has three main branches, reflecting his main long-term interests.

"First, we are investigating the forces shaping the evolution of parasites, including their ability to manipulate host behaviour. Many parasites can pull the strings and make the host do what they want it to do. That might sound like science fiction, but it is a very common phenomenon."

Poulin gives the example of water-loving worms that grow inside land-loving weta. Once the worms have used up all of the resources inside the weta and are ready to come out, somehow the

Professor Robert Poulin:

"Since we are the first group to work on parasites of wildlife in this part of the world, every time we look at a new animal we find new parasites."

Photo: Alan Dove



signals in the wetas' brains are altered to compel the insects to jump into water. The adult worms then emerge and the expedient weta soon die.

"And if you grab the weta and you remove it from the water and you put it back on land it's going to reorientate itself, find the water again and jump back in," Poulin adds. "It's crazy."

Another area of research on parasite evolution involves documenting transmission routes of numerous parasitic worms from host to host

and their impacts on the survival and reproduction of key marine and freshwater animal species.

Poulin cites the case of trematodes (flatworms or flukes) that are transmitted from snails to whitebait to eels. Inside the aquatic snails the parasites castrate their hosts and transform them into parasite factories. The parasite larvae emerge from the snails and swim in the water until they contact the skin of young non-migratory galaxiids or whitebait and burrow inside, where they deform their

hosts' spines. The whitebait can't swim properly and are easy prey for freshwater eels. Once inside the eels the parasites grow to become adult worms and their eggs pass out in the faeces of the eels, hatch into small larvae that infect the snails and the cycle starts all over again.

Such stories help explain why Poulin and his students are more interested in studying parasites than cuddly pandas or cutesy penguins.

"The second major area we are studying is the role of parasites in coastal

“My initial interest was on the impact of parasites on fish, but as I delved into the biology of the parasites I found out that they are not just these disgusting little beasts that have no other purpose than to suck energy from the host. They actually have a very complex biology of their own.”

ecosystems, including how parasitism may interact with climate change to influence the properties of ecosystems.”

Poulin says as temperatures increase and oceans become more saline and more acidic, some species could disappear locally as a result of an increase in the number of parasites, which thrive in warmer temperatures, and a decrease in the hosts’ resistance to them because of changes in water temperature and quality.

“Third, I have long been exploring large-scale patterns of parasite biodiversity and biogeography, in the hope of better understanding the processes behind the diversification and distribution of parasites and diseases.

“We are interested in figuring out why, for instance, if you look at the five or six thousand species of birds that are currently known, some of them are parasitised by 50 or 60 different parasite species, whereas others only have two or three.”

Poulin and his Evolutionary and Ecological Parasitology Research Group of research fellows, researchers and postgraduate students have made significant contributions and discoveries, including identifying parasites new to science.

“Since we are the first group to work on parasites of wildlife in this part of the world, every time we look at a

new animal we find new parasites. For instance, the most common freshwater fish in New Zealand is a little fish called the common bully. These things are infected with parasites that no one had seen before. In Tomahawk Lagoon there are bullies that are so heavily infected with parasites that up to 25 per cent of the mass of the fish is actually parasite, and the species that accounts for most of these is a completely new species.”

Despite their negative press, Poulin says parasites can play a positive role – and not just as a contrived form of pest control.

“For instance, we found that in Otago Harbour the impact of one parasite species on the burrowing ability of cockles has, through a domino effect, had a positive consequence on the biodiversity of the inter-tidal mudflats. More cockles stranded at the surface make the habitat more suitable for a range of other little crustaceans, providing more food for fish and birds.”

The Distinguished Research Medal is the latest in an impressive list of honours granted to Poulin. In 2001 he was elected a Fellow of the New Zealand Royal Society and he received the New Zealand Association of Scientists’ Research Medal. The following year the Royal Society awarded him one of its prestigious James Cook Research Fellowships. The Parasitology Section

of the Canadian Society of Zoologists presented him with the Robert Arnold Wardle Award in 2007 in recognition of his outstanding contribution to parasitology. And he was honoured with the New Zealand Royal Society’s Hutton Medal for excellence in animal sciences in 2011.

Ethics (and a sense of modesty in most) prevent researchers from naming newly discovered species after themselves, but one of the side benefits of academic success is the honour of your peers naming new species after you. That’s what happened to Poulin in 2003 when two admiring French parasitologists gave the name *Tachygonetria poulini* to a species of pinworm they had discovered while researching parasites in North African tortoises.

IAN DOUGHERTY

Driving change

Otago's long-running New Zealand Drivers Study has been gathering information about our young drivers to help reduce the incidence of traffic-related injury among this high-risk group.

The leading causes of death in young people are car crashes and suicide, with fatal crashes generally outnumbering suicides among teenagers 15 to 19 years old. But, with the recent raising of the minimum age for learner driving licences from 15 to 16, there is hope that at least the road toll statistics may reduce.

The law change in 2011 came after decades of lobbying from Otago's Department of Preventive and Social Medicine's Injury Prevention Research Unit (IPRU). The IPRU's New Zealand Drivers Study (NZDS) provided convincing evidence to help push through the legislation after years of opposition.

For Dr Dorothy Begg, principal investigator of the NZDS, it had been a long battle.

"[Professor] John Langley and I started sowing the seeds of this study about 20 years ago. The national databases have records of crashes involving young drivers, but they have very limited data on the behavioural aspects of crashes.

"If we were going to make a difference, we had to look elsewhere for our information."

The team initially worked with the Dunedin Multidisciplinary Health and Development Study, which has been

monitoring about a thousand people born in 1972-3.

Despite indications of the risks faced by young drivers, attempts to get the learner licence age raised failed in 1998 – about the same time as the multidisciplinary study's participants grew too old to fit the young drivers' profile.

"We had been basing a lot of our arguments on evidence from international studies, so when we realised that people and politicians were not going to take any notice of these studies we decided we would do our own research and find out what we should be doing in New Zealand."

In 2001 Begg and Langley received funding from the Health Research Council (HRC) to undertake a pilot study to determine if it was feasible to do a large, nationally-based, multi-stage cohort study of newly-licensed drivers.

The pilot showed it was, indeed, feasible and, in 2005 with funding from the HRC, ACC and the Road Safety Trust, the NZDS began. The primary aim was to identify ways of targeting areas to reduce traffic-related injury among a high-risk group of drivers.

"One of the reasons for the drivers study was to obtain evidence *from* New

Zealand to try to influence policy *in* New Zealand, so the argument about international research not applying here could not be used."

Begg and Langley were joined by Dr Rebecca Brookland, Professors John Broughton and Shanthi Ameratunga, and assisted by Dr Pauline Gulliver and assistant research fellows Anna McDowell and Hamish Rogers.

They recruited almost 4,000 newly licensed car drivers in New Zealand, with a relatively representative spread of gender, ethnicity and location. The majority were teenagers, with most of the other young drivers in their early 20s.

The novice drivers agreed to share their experiences, motivation, training, alcohol and drug use, risk-taking, and traffic crashes and convictions.

One of the early key questions investigated was how the young drivers felt about raising the minimum age of licensing. Contrary to what many had believed, only about half of them opposed the change. The evidence also showed that few would really be inconvenienced by amending the legal age for driving to 16.

"It seems that having a licence isn't quite the rite of passage that we thought it might have been."

With New Zealand data being collected, Begg and Langley put forward a submission to a new select committee considering the change of law.

"We could answer all their questions and had the evidence to support our answers. Then, after years of resistance,



Dr Rebecca Brookland and Dr Dorothy Begg: “One of the reasons for the drivers study was to obtain evidence *from* New Zealand to try to influence policy *in* New Zealand ...”

Photo: Alan Dove

suddenly everybody decided it was a good idea to raise the age and it went through Parliament virtually unopposed. Clearly, they all thought its time had come. We’d been pushing it for years, so it was a really big moment,” says Begg.

But not everything was going quite as smoothly as the researchers would have liked.

The study’s plan is to interview the cohort at each of the three stages of the graduated driver licensing system – on gaining their learner licence, restricted licence and full licence. When they found that a sizeable proportion of their learner drivers had not progressed to a restricted licence when they had been eligible to do so for at least two years, the researchers decided to investigate this. The primary reasons given were that they were too lazy or busy, or had limited access to the means to drive.

Now the government is considering imposing time limits on learner and restricted licences, so non-progressors

will have to start again if they haven’t moved on to the next stage within a reasonable period, currently mooted at five years.

“Our findings showed that those learner drivers who had not progressed were, on the whole, not driving very much,” says Brookland. “They were also less likely to be issued with traffic offences.”

Extending the period of learner licensing from six months to a year is also under consideration.

The NZDS shows that learner drivers who spend longer on a learner licence under supervision are less likely to be involved in crashes when they drive unsupervised at the restricted licence stage than those who progress rapidly from a learner licence.

The results also show that many learners drive unsupervised and that this is associated with an increased risk of crashing. Making it more difficult to get licences is one strategy that has been

introduced to try to reduce those risks, says Begg.

“We could extend the time to be spent on a learner licence but, at this stage, the approach taken is to encourage 120 hours of supervised driving and the test for the restricted licence has been made more difficult. It is believed that these changes would give novices a chance to get more experience and be safer on the roads.”

Research into young drivers included interviews with 1,200 parents, which brought more surprises.

“Parents have recently become a very hot topic and what we have in the NZDS on the involvement of parents is probably unique in the world. We have a large sample and we have detailed information from them,” says Begg.

“As much as we have helped to influence policy for young drivers, I think in terms of developing new areas of research, this is one of the most important parts of the study. It’s very hard to get and no one else has got it.”

Brookland is discovering links between parental involvement and risk on the roads.

“When I started my thesis, parents were not really on the radar. There was no acknowledgement that parents were part of the picture at all. But now our study shows they have a very important role to play in keeping young drivers safe.

“The onus is not just on the adolescents or the police who enforce the rules. It’s a much wider community issue.”

Findings from the study show that parents can have considerable influence over their children’s driving by being good role models.

Supportive parents who enforce the rules and are involved in their adolescent’s driving experiences can reduce the risks. Unfortunately, the opposite holds true as well. If parents break rules and have crashes, their children are likely to follow suit.

The information is now being used as part of the New Zealand Transport Authority’s Safe Teen Driver programme development and Safer Vehicles for Teens campaign.

The NZDS study shows most adolescents drive vehicles that provide

poor crash protection and parents would benefit from learning what factors are important to consider when choosing a vehicle for their adolescent to drive.

For Brookland, the emerging data make her more conscious than ever of her own responsibilities as a parent.

“There’s a high level of non-compliance involved with so many crashes, so we have to find ways to enforce conditions that support safe practice.

“My thesis research has been my life for the past seven years. It began when my twin boys were two. Now they are nine. I’ll be well and truly looking after their safety when it comes to learning to drive. I won’t be encouraging them to start early.”

Although the funded drive of the NZDS is now complete, the follow-ups continue.

“This is the longest running study of its kind and it is highly relevant both in New Zealand and internationally,” says Begg.

“We have a statistically significant number of people and response rates have been consistently high all the way through. Even 85 per cent of the

parents are still in the study. It’s very comprehensive.

“The licensing system has been a central feature of our work along with the introduction of graduated licensing and our ability to evaluate that legislation. No one else has really done much on this in New Zealand.

“We’ve also been pushing for years for zero blood alcohol limits for young drivers. Alcohol is a huge problem. Even in the Dunedin Multidisciplinary Study we were seeing teenagers who were meeting the criteria for alcohol dependence – and they were self reporting. High-risk young adults have huge problems with alcohol. In New Zealand 40 per cent of fatal crashes involving those under 20 involve alcohol.

“These are the big issues, although we are also fine-tuning other ones. We’re very policy oriented.”

And with the researchers’ track record in influencing public policy so far, we can probably expect more changes – and safer roads – in the years to come.

MARK WRIGHT

“The licensing system has been a central feature of our work along with the introduction of graduated licensing and our ability to evaluate that legislation. No one else has really done much on this in New Zealand.”

Vision fulfilled

This iconic image of Fred Hollows on the streets of Hanoi in 1992. The boy, Tran Van Giap, has grown up to become a teacher in Vietnam when he otherwise would have been needlessly blind.

Photo: Michael Amendolia

From a working-class Christian Socialist background, Otago alumnus Fred Hollows developed a social conscience early in life. This never left him as he worked to save the eyesight of tens of thousands of people in the developing world. Since his death in 1993, the Fred Hollows Foundation has continued his mission.

Fred Hollows is more of a household name in Australia than in New Zealand.

Among many honours heaped upon him across the Tasman, his face appears on a special edition Australian coin and, in 1990, he was voted Australian of the Year.

It's not a bad record for a lad born in Dunedin and educated at the University of Otago.

His life's work of restoring sight to poorer peoples is the stuff of legend and, since his death from cancer in 1993, his influence has increased dramatically.

When he knew his time was limited, his colleagues set up the Fred Hollows Foundation to carry on what he started and to expand its horizons long after he was gone.

Two decades later, Gabi, his widow and co-founding director, says even he would have been amazed at his legacy. The Australian and New Zealand arms of the Foundation are active in 30 countries across Asia, Africa, Australia and the Pacific.

They have treated almost a million people for eye problems, established revolutionary lens manufacturing businesses, and set up eye clinics and teaching institutions that are well advanced in training local medical professionals to be able to continue Hollows' work.

The Australian Foundation set up six-month fellowships for recently-graduated ophthalmologists, giving

them invaluable experience working in low-resource countries while they share developed world experience and help with clinics.

Australian fellows have regularly spent two months of their term working with the New Zealand Foundation in islands around the Pacific.

The first Kiwi recipient of the fellowship was Otago graduate Dr Jesse Gale (see sidebar page 15). Now the New Zealand office is launching its own one-year fellowship, based at the Pacific Eye Institute in Fiji and serving the Pacific Islands.

For New Zealand Foundation Executive Director Andrew Bell – another Otago graduate – the new

fellowship is part of a natural expansion of Hollows' original vision.

"Fred's idea from the very start was not just to give people back their sight where he could, but to put in place local schemes that would enable people in low-resource countries to look after their own.

"Young ophthalmologists spending time in these often remote locations can continue Fred's work, pass on their knowledge and also learn new ways of doing things from the local eye-care team."

Everyone wins. Each positive combination of developed and developing worlds goes a small way to reducing the imbalances of opportunity that Hollows sought to address.

It has taken decades for Hollows' quest for social equality to gain the momentum that it now has. His own social awareness had its roots in New Zealand – and the University of Otago played no small part in its development.

Until Hollows was seven he was raised in Dunedin, which he remembered as

a cold, hard place in the 1930s. The family followed his father's railway job to Palmerston North, but later Fred returned to Otago to study religion and the arts.

As a regular church-goer from a non-drinking Christian Socialist family, he thought he might be on track to join the ministry, but Otago opened his eyes to new experiences.

As time passed, he seemed more at home in the pub with a few of the lads and, after a summer job at a mental hospital in Porirua, he returned to Otago a changed character. He continued his arts degree, but dropped divinity for chemistry and physiology, doing so well in later years that Otago offered him a place to study medicine.

He wasn't a model med student. He confessed to studying hard in bursts, but playing up a bit, and spent a lot of time in the mountains.

"Mountain climbing got into my blood then and it was important to me for the next 30 years," he later said.

"It puts things into perspective – risks and skills, life and death, gives you the measure of problems and people."

Hollows no doubt measured his fellow medical students, many of whom were from wealthy backgrounds. He said he observed them, but didn't aspire to join them. His social conscience was already formed.

In 1965 Hollows moved to Australia, where he visited many Aboriginal communities. He was shocked by the poor standards of eye health, particularly the incidence of trachoma, one of the world's leading causes of blindness. It's an infectious disease associated with poverty and overcrowding and a lack of access to clean water and sanitation.

Hollows made it his mission to address the imbalance between medical services in the cities and the outback. Between 1976 and 1978 he and his team visited 465 indigenous communities. They screened 100,000 people for eye disease, treated 27,000 cases of trachoma and performed 1,000 eye operations.

"Fred's idea from the very start was not just to give people back their sight where he could, but to put in place local schemes that would enable people in low-resource countries to look after their own."

Andrew Bell, Executive Director,
Fred Hollows Foundation NZ



Photo: Michael Bradley

He also helped establish the first Aboriginal-run medical centre, realising that the key to the future was not just to offer help from the outside, but also to train the locals to help themselves.

In the 1980s he worked with the World Health Organization in developing countries across Asia. He was appalled at the lack of medical resources and the prevalence of avoidable blindness.

Along with like-minded locals, Hollows adopted new techniques for performing basic cataract operations, and began setting up laboratories in Nepal and Eritrea to manufacture inexpensive plastic lenses to restore sight

at a fraction of the cost incurred in the developed world.

Today those businesses produce millions of lenses, with some of the proceeds reinvested in training local eye doctors and nurses.

In the last year of his life, Hollows began planning the Foundation that has continued his crusade to end unnecessary blindness in developing countries.

In New Zealand, Andrew Bell is in his third year with the Foundation. In his native South Africa he had worked with urban and rural poor and was heavily involved with social change.

He came to New Zealand with the intention of continuing postgraduate work started in South Africa, later becoming involved in the important areas of international aid and development work with the Presbyterian Church.

It was only after meeting Professor Murray Rae, head of Otago's Department of Theology and Religion, that he found a way to complete his Master of Ministry while still working full-time. Otago was receptive to transferring the credits of Bell's existing work and supportive of his efforts, he says.

"Otago was very welcoming to the distance learner. They understand that

Wubujub, a 12-year-old boy who has had a cataract for around nine years, waits to have his bandages removed in Daru, Papua New Guinea.

Photo: Hugh Rutherford



you are in the cut and thrust of daily work and make it as easy as possible to do the studies.”

After graduating, Bell moved to the Foundation, ready to capitalise on its key difference from many international organisations.

“Unlike many big organisations that provide broad areas of service in multiple countries, we do one thing and we do it exceptionally well. We currently provide some 50 per cent of eye care in the Pacific.”

Before taking the director’s chair, Bell saw the completion of the Pacific Eye Institute in Fiji, the National Eye Centre in Timor-Leste and the eye clinic at Kimbe General Hospital, Papua New Guinea.

“Over the last 20 years there have been huge advances made in ophthalmology. Lenses used in cataract operations have gone high tech, and laser equipment and new medications are available.

“The science of eye care has developed tremendously since Fred’s death. But, although surgical techniques have developed, small incision cataract surgery is still the preferred intervention in the developing world.”

Bell says Hollows is still the DNA of the Foundation and the inspiration for its work. Its methods may have changed and its scope expanded, but its basic goal of eliminating avoidable blindness in the developing world has not changed.

Hollows may have been dead for 20 years, but it seems his vision is as sharp as ever.

NIGEL ZEGA



Photo: James Ensing-Trussell

Dr Jesse Gale examines the eyes of a patient during a surgical outreach in Tonga.

New insights

Dr Jesse Gale would prefer not to be a public face of the Fred Hollows Foundation.

But, after six months working to restore sight in Nepal, Alice Springs and around the Pacific, he’s prepared to commit to most things if it means supporting fundraising for the Foundation.

“It’s not so much a charity organisation as a development organisation. It has such a long-term goal and that is an important point of difference. It’s really worthy of all those \$25 donations. It’s money well-invested.”

Gale has seen where the money goes. He’s seen the excitement and gratitude of patients when the bandages come off and they can see for the first time in years.

He’s seen the future return to people who thought they had none and he’s seen a world where acceptance of loss of sight is the norm, even though it can be treated easily and inexpensively.

He’s also learned techniques and skills that are rarely seen in mainstream eye care.

“I haven’t finished my training. There’s still a lot to learn and the Foundation job was a great opportunity to learn more.

“It’s a great privilege to be able to travel so widely and be able to learn from lots of different people. You quickly find you are not there to fix the problem - local doctors are often doing that on

their own - but you are there to see new ways of doing things.

“I was being trained, not just to become a better doctor, but to have the skill-set to train other doctors in the future. The Foundation’s goal is not just to address current needs, but to create long-term strategies.”

Gale started medicine at Otago not really knowing what he was in for, but found his niche in clinical ophthalmology. “It’s scientifically fascinating and you get job satisfaction from improving someone’s life. You also don’t face the tragic side of medicine - my patients aren’t in danger of dying.”

The Foundation has given him new insights. “You do new operations and find out about diseases not common in New Zealand, and about matching the health service to the needs of the population.”

Learning went both ways and Gale was able to pass on some of his knowledge at the new Pacific Eye Institute in Suva, where some trainees would become the first eye doctors in their home countries.

Gale is now in Los Angeles - “a planet apart from where I’ve been” - studying neuro-ophthalmology, with plans to study glaucoma at Cambridge before returning home to New Zealand.

“I’m not sure what shape my contribution will take, but my long-term plan includes going back to some of the poorer countries.”

Wide awake

Former University of Otago student Emeritus Professor of Psychiatric Neurobiology Anna Wirz-Justice has had an illustrious career in sleep and depression research.

During a visit to her uncle in Washington DC's prestigious National Institute of Mental Health while on an AFS exchange, a teenage Anna Wirz-Justice wrote in her journal that "being a researcher is so exciting. I want to be a researcher when I grow up."

Decades later, a grown-up Wirz-Justice began her own groundbreaking research into light therapy at the same institute – sharing an apartment with that same influential uncle. Although she doesn't remember writing those words at 16, Wirz-Justice says the experience in Washington – and the passion and excitement she saw in her uncle – started her on a path towards a 44-year career in biomedical research.

Wirz-Justice was responsible for introducing light therapy to treat seasonal depression in Europe. "This is the only treatment in psychiatry that has come from basic neuroscience," she says.

Wirz-Justice and her team at the Psychiatric University Clinics Basel were also one of the first to extensively study the antidepressant effects of sleep deprivation in the early '70s. They went on to spend more than 30 years of research on the basics of circadian and seasonal rhythms and sleep regulation in order to understand these non-pharmacological clinical applications.

In the constant routine sleep laboratory located in Basel – where the subject stays awake in bed for more than a day under very controlled conditions – the focus went on to thermophysiology (finding out that you need warm feet to fall asleep) and what changes the biological clock makes with age (it gets weaker).

"My time at Otago as a chemistry student made me a very compulsive scientist. Science is such fun – and I've always been fortunate to have such wonderful colleagues.

"Sleep and circadian rhythms research has developed so much over the 40 years I've been involved in it, so that sleep medicine has become a medical subspecialty with more than 90 clinical diagnoses of sleep disorders. When I began, sleep was something on the side, but we know so much more about it now. Our chronobiology research has many applications, from shift work to jet lag.

"For example, the 'lark' cannot do the night shift and the 'owl' can't do the morning shift without making mistakes and getting ill. It's a bit too complicated to match chronotype with the right shift, but that's the way we have to go. They call it personalised medicine, but I call it personalised chronobiology."

Wirz-Justice, a PhD graduate from University College, London, has made

a catalogue of significant contributions in the field of sleep and depression research – particularly in light therapy for seasonal affective disorder. She is a former president of the Society for Light Treatment and Biological Rhythms, a winner of the Anna Monika Prize for Depression Research and the Scholar's Prize of the City of Basel, awarded for outstanding achievement.

"Sleep disturbances usually precede a depressive episode and they are also an intrinsic part of depression," says Wirz-Justice. "The paradox is that staying awake all night can, within hours, improve a serious melancholic depression. This is quite extraordinary and was discovered 40 years ago – we did some of the first studies in Basel after it was discovered in Germany. Sleep deprivation can get people out of depression within hours.

"However, you have to find a way of keeping patients out of depression (they often relapse after recovery sleep) and that's taken a few decades, like giving them drugs or light. You can't patent staying awake and you can't make a pill, so nobody uses it. Why I'm still working after all these years of retirement is that if there are non-pharmacological, but biologically-based treatments that get people out of serious depression within hours, then why aren't we using them?"

This is radical thinking from a girl who hails from the bottom of the "edge of the world". But, it seems, science was always in the blood – her father was a chemist, so Wirz-Justice studied chemistry.



Anna Wirz-Justice: "... if there are non-pharmacological, but biologically-based treatments that get people out of serious depression within hours, then why aren't we using them?"

Photo: Alan Dove

"I was always good at science. But one didn't know what one wanted to be – there were no career thoughts in the '50s.

"Everything has been non-linear. I never had a career as such – I just meandered around and got into neuroscience because I discovered that organic chemistry was more interesting when it hit the brain, so I moved from chemistry and, instead, wanted to know how the brain works."

After two years studying basic science at Canterbury, Wirz-Justice went to the University of Otago to pursue biochemistry and philosophy. There she met Jocelyn Harris – later to become professor and head of Otago's Department of English – and began getting involved in Otago's active arts community.

"Most of my time at Otago was spent having an amazing time. There were 2,000 students in the early '60s, not 22,000, we knew everybody, and there was this intellectual ferment and curiosity.

"I used to take the bus up to Maori Hill with R.A.K Mason, the Robert Burns Fellow, and be quite tongue-tied with awe to be sitting next to this famous poet; we talked about the weather.

"At university anything was possible and, in Dunedin, I met these arts people and took part in this famous satirical revue called *Yes or No as the Mood Takes Us*, modelled on the Cambridge revues

of the '60s. I wasn't an actress type, so it was exciting to be involved. Our rehearsals took place at the marvellous home of Rodney Kennedy with even Charles Brasch sometimes attending."

Her love of the arts has extended throughout her career. Despite being firmly science oriented in her ongoing studies, Wirz-Justice, who won Otago's Philosophy prize back in 1962, neatly crosses the boundaries between science and the arts in her extensive collaborations with artists, architects and designers, inspired by the complexities of neuroscience. In 2011, she collaborated to bring fashion designer Eri Matsui's spring-summer collection for Tokyo Fashion Week, modelled on the theme of chronobiology and sleep, to the World Sleep Congress in Kyoto.

The world-renowned researcher has also interacted with architects to enhance the circadian impact of indoor lighting on sleep, mood and performance, and helped create a light room in the Swiss Pavilion at the Venice Biennale, *Physiological Architecture*.

She continues to advise on the uses of light therapy in buildings, transferring the knowledge about the biological effects of light on human behaviour to architectural and lighting design concepts, specifically in nursing homes for patients with dementia.

Like many other researchers, Wirz-Justice has been eager to share her knowledge with colleagues and students, and has attended countless conferences and given many lectures. In 2012, long after she officially retired, she was invited by the president of the Czech Psychiatric Association to develop the first Diploma in Chronotherapy to integrate light therapy and sleep deprivation into official guidelines for clinical practice and medical insurance reimbursement in the Czech Republic.

Earlier this year, Wirz-Justice received the Award of the Australian Society for Medical Research (ASMR) Medal for her contribution to sleep research.

Returning to the home of her undergraduate study before going to Australia to receive her medal and conduct a lecture series during the ASMR Medical Research Week, Wirz-Justice looked back on her years at Otago with fondness.

"Our generation was always at the edge of a change in the paradigm – feminism, left wing, being a hippie, trying out substances – we tried out different things and pushed boundaries because it was the times. My experience at Otago was all part of that. It got me some way to making me who I am today."

AMIE RICHARDSON

A head for business

Introducing Professor Sylvie Chetty, Director of the Centre for Entrepreneurship and holder of the Dunedin City Chair in Entrepreneurship.

Professor Sylvie Chetty's research experience on the internationalisation of businesses introduces a whole new perspective on entrepreneurial thinking to the University of Otago.

Chetty took up the role of Dunedin City Chair in Entrepreneurship at the University of Otago in October 2012, funded through the University's Leading Thinkers Initiative.

A year on, she's pleased with the progress she's made in strengthening the research focus of the centre while, at the same time, using her role to further foster engagement with the business community.

She has identified international entrepreneurship, ethics and social entrepreneurship as research areas for the centre to focus on, and is enjoying the opportunity to build on the research infrastructure and connect Otago's research externally. She's also working on building up the PhD programme in Entrepreneurship.

One of her first steps was to initiate an Entrepreneurs' Club in Dunedin to grow the relationship between business and research, encouraging business people into the University to transfer research and learning, and to strengthen links between the business community and academics. Held three times a year with a mix of practitioner and academic

presenters, it's deliberately hosted on campus to encourage business people in.

"It's been a really good way for our masters' students to mingle with entrepreneurs active in the business community, while our academics and local business people have, so far, shared information on international markets, advertising and branding, and communication."

Over the last year Chetty has extended the centre's seminar programme, using her international contacts to boost the stream of visiting academics from Australia and the northern hemisphere to present on a wide range of topics. This has included a Williams Evans fellowship for Professor Patricia McDougall-Covin, a leading international entrepreneurship scholar, to visit the centre.

"It's given the staff and students a good appreciation of international entrepreneurship – it prevents us from being New Zealand-centric."

For instance, entrepreneurs are increasingly looking to developing new business in Europe, with more programmes that encourage young people to commercialise ideas to combat high unemployment. "It's inspirational to hear stories from our visiting academics of young people creating their own opportunities through this wider entrepreneurial focus. With the current

spotlight on business closures here, extending entrepreneurial capabilities is a good message for us to start picking up on to generate positive business opportunities."

Chetty has also been working on expanding interdisciplinary links between the Centre for Entrepreneurship and other University departments. The Centre for Entrepreneurship now holds regular research workshops to foster these links with academics at Otago who are researching in entrepreneurship.

All these activities help to strengthen the Master of Entrepreneurship programme that is administered by the centre, ensuring the papers taught in the programme involve research-informed teaching as well as relevance for practice.

One of only two such master's programmes in New Zealand, it won an Award for Teaching Excellence from the United States Association for Small Business and Entrepreneurs earlier in 2013. "This is the best entrepreneurship programme outside the United States and it's good to see us gaining that international reputation – all credit to previous Chair [Professor] Brendon Gray and our staff over the years."

The 2013 programme has 20 students in Dunedin and a further five in Queenstown.

Chetty's research interests are in the internationalisation of firms, export performance, business networks and social capital, with experience on the internationalisation of businesses in Nordic countries.



Professor Sylvie Chetty:

"This is the best entrepreneurship programme outside the United States and it's good to see us gaining that international reputation ..."

Photo: Graham Warman

An internationally acclaimed researcher, she has worked in New Zealand for 23 years, at Canterbury, Victoria and, most recently, Massey universities. She has also worked in Iran, South Africa and Swaziland, and studied in Edinburgh (Scotland), England and South Africa. She spent her research study leave in Sweden for a year in 1997 and continues to spend a month each year as a research associate at Uppsala University.

While at Victoria University she joined the FRST-funded Competitive Advantage New Zealand project with Otago's Professor Colin Campbell-Hunt. Chetty won the American Marketing Association's prestigious Hans B. Thorelli Award in 2010 for an article co-authored with Campbell-Hunt – "A Strategic Approach to Internationalization: A Traditional Versus a 'Born-Global'

Approach", published in 2004. The award is given annually for the article published in the *Journal of International Marketing* that has made the most significant and long-term contribution to international marketing theory and practice.

The growth and internationalisation of small and medium size enterprises in New Zealand and other countries has been a focus of her research for more than two decades and she has produced some valuable insights into the processes used by Nordic and New Zealand business people to develop export markets. Not only that, it has also helped to globally profile the New Zealand businesses taking part in the research.

The Nordic countries are very similar to New Zealand, she says, and there are, therefore, advantages in learning from each. Both have a lot of smaller businesses, small economies and small

domestic markets, and the businesses in both countries have to look at exporting to grow.

What the Nordic businesses do differently, however, is to value entrepreneurs and entrepreneurial research more. She says they think about contributing to growing their local economy, not just what growth does for the individual business owner. In addition, there is a strong link between business, university and government to contribute to the national economy. They also operate in a more collaborative environment and, therefore, exploit the opportunities that clusters or networking brings.

Having already undertaken research on a cluster of New Zealand boat-builders to understand how to maximise their export potential, Chetty is keen to foster this Nordic practice and

experience and help strengthen the existing town-gown relationship in Dunedin.

She has categorised businesses as those born global (have to export to survive), those who go global gradually, and regional (which includes 80 per cent of sales in New Zealand and Australia). Each chooses a different strategy to get their product or service to market.

“Many New Zealand businesses are resource-poor, so grow their markets slowly, starting domestically, then expanding overseas as opportunities arise. Nordic, as well as New Zealand businesses, are able to share knowledge and experiences and to piggy-back off others in their industry who are doing complementary work – all of which helps to fast-track their entry into foreign markets. Through sharing their experiences during breakfast meetings and seminars they’re able to learn from mistakes and successes.”

Chetty has published widely in this area in international marketing and business journals as well as several chapters in edited books.

In Dunedin, she’s enjoying working in a research-led university, one with a strong sense of history and “a very beautiful campus”. Outside the University she enjoys travelling, tennis and walking, and has been pleasantly surprised by Dunedin’s scenery, history, architecture, and lovely gardens on her walks around town and the beaches of the Otago Peninsula. One of her favourite activities is shopping at the Saturday farmers’ market.

CLAIRE GRANT

About the Chair in Entrepreneurship

The Professorial Chair in Entrepreneurship was made possible by a \$1 million endowment to the University of Otago by the Dunedin City Council (DCC). As part of the University’s Leading Thinkers Initiative, the DCC gift attracted matching funding from the Government under the Partnerships for Excellence scheme.

Supporting Otago: Alumni Appeal 2013

The 2013 Alumni Appeal launched in February has resulted in a significant boost in funding for key University projects.

Undergraduate scholarships

Every year hundreds of academically-gifted year-13 students seek entry to the University of Otago with the dream of gaining a world-class education. For many of these young people, a University of Otago scholarship is the only way they can make this dream a reality. Funds raised in the 2013 Alumni Appeal will help around 15 first-year students from all over New Zealand get off to a flying start in their studies – and will, thereby, be investing in the future of this country.

Chair in Earthquake Science

Alumni gifts in 2013 are contributing to plans to establish a Chair in Earthquake Science, aimed at consolidating research efforts investigating crustal structure and fault zone mechanics that have, until now, been undertaken across a range of disciplines. The chair will be at the hub of a multidisciplinary Centre for Fault and Earthquake Science, drawing on cross-departmental expertise from Geology, Geography, Marine Science, Mathematics, Statistics and Surveying, and will be linked to national and international research partners.

Head of Geology Professor Dave Prior says the the chair will drive the University’s research into the fundamental understanding of faults and earthquakes, lead the training of a new generation of researchers and teachers, and provide a focal point for communication of earthquake science to the wider public. It is hoped that the chair will be filled in 2014.

MRI scanner

The \$4 million fundraising campaign for a MRI scanner has had a healthy start and, while there is still a way to go, the Brain Health Research Centre is pleased to see that this important project is growing into a reality. With the Neurological Foundation Chair in Neurosurgery now established in Dunedin, this equipment is the next progression in ensuring that the centre can continue to build on its reputation as a world-leading centre for the study of the brain.

Considerable interest is already coming from researchers interested in using the MRI scanner for a range of other applications, from the effect of diet on limb muscle function to improving heart health.

“The sooner the machine becomes a reality, the sooner we can meet this growing research need,” says Associate Professor John Reynolds. “Other potential uses include investigating how to slow the progression of disorders such as Alzheimer’s and Parkinson’s disease, and for clinical work too.”

To support research or scholarships at Otago
please visit <http://alumni.otago.ac.nz>
email development@otago.ac.nz
or telephone +64 3 479 5246

Healthy engagement

The University of Otago, Wellington's Public Health Summer School is gaining a dedicated following, opening the door to essential public health training.

With its 18th season fast approaching and 31 courses on offer, the University of Otago, Wellington's Public Health Summer School is set to continue as the largest and longest-running school of its type in the Southern Hemisphere.

Furthermore, the diversity of courses offered has been staggering. Social epidemiology, housing and health, Māori health, response to public health emergencies, health economics, sustainable cities and ethics are just some of the huge range. But behind the diversity is a common purpose – improving public health.

Summer schools with a public health focus are an established tradition in

the northern hemisphere, with well-established programmes including the Erasmus University Programme in Rotterdam, The Netherlands, and the European Education Programme in Epidemiology in Florence, Italy. In New Zealand and Australia, similar programmes have typically been small and short-lived. However, the Wellington campus of the University of Otago has broken this mould and now leads the field with its annual Public Health Summer School, which is run over three weeks every February.

First mooted during a Department of Public Health planning day in 1996, the Summer School's vision has consistently

been to offer high-quality professional training and to help disseminate research findings in the area of public health.

Co-director Professor Michael Baker says maximising accessibility has been a key driver in the ongoing development of the school. Courses are short – one to three days – and reasonably priced, making attendance possible for many who could not afford the time and expense to attend longer programmes. This approach has been reflected in steadily increasing enrolments, which eclipsed 500 for the first time in February this year.

When looking at these numbers, Baker and his colleagues are proud of just how far the school has come. Early Summer Schools offered a handful of courses run in off-site venues. While initially small, the school quickly established itself as a professional development option with a difference.



Photos: Michael Roberts

"We're making multiple connections, including providing research groups with the opportunity to disseminate their work to policymakers and public health practitioners. This also helps these groups build their collaborations and international linkages."

Professor Michael Baker



Photo: Michael Roberts

2008 marked a turning point, when the school grew from around a dozen courses to its present format of 25-30 courses per year. That growth also reflected expansion within the Department of Public Health itself, including several highly-active research programmes in areas such as health inequalities, housing and health, and health promotion. Alongside this, refurbished teaching spaces within the Wellington campus in Newtown provided more teaching areas as well as a purpose-built computer training suite, helping facilitate further expansion of the programme.

Baker notes that, throughout its existence, the school has had a strong emphasis on evaluation and continual quality improvement.

"We evaluate all courses individually, as well as each Summer School as a whole, to identify potential

improvements. That's something we've done from the very beginning. The course evaluations are almost invariably positive, but we really do work hard to identify any room for improvement and act accordingly."

Critical to the school's evolution has been a desire to respond to emerging public health issues where there is a need for scientific discussion and good evidence which, Baker says, is the research translation responsibility of academics.

"A huge advantage of our format is its flexibility and responsiveness to current issues. The 2013 school included courses on rheumatic fever, climate change, housing and health, hospital-acquired infections and health inequalities. We continually update the mix, with about a third of the courses each year being completely new."

The school is now thoroughly embraced by the public health workforce,

many of whom attend regularly. It also offers 20 annual scholarships to Māori and Pacific health professionals to attend at no cost, to support the development of the Māori and Pacific public health workforce.

Eru Loach, a health promoter with the Problem Gambling Foundation of New Zealand, based in Tauranga, was a scholarship recipient this year. At the time, he was a health promoter focusing on problem gambling at Te Kahui Hauora Trust in Rotorua. He attended a one-day course on Hauora Māori: effecting positive changes in Māori public health.

He says the course content was significant for him personally, prompting him to reflect on how he had worked in the past, how he currently worked and how he would work from there onwards, especially when working with tangata Māori.

"It also enabled me to up-skill, while at the same time helping me identify

other areas I need to gain tertiary education in to better support iwi Māori and their hauora.”

The school attracts interest beyond our shores too. Michael Minty, a junior medical officer in the Central Coast District in Australia, heard about the courses through his sister who works at Wellington Hospital and who has friends who had found them useful in previous years. He was able to conveniently time attendance with a visit to his sister.

“The short nature of the courses, and the fact that they were mainly stand-alone and did not require attendance at other courses, was a major bonus.”

Baker notes that the school now plays a key role in helping connect New Zealand researchers and practitioners with leading international thinkers involved in the health and public health fields. Recent contributors include Professor Ichiro Kawachi from the Harvard School of Public Health, Dr Carlos Dora from the World Health Organization, and Professor Johan Giesecke, chief scientist at the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control.

“We’re making multiple connections, including providing research groups with the opportunity to disseminate their work to policymakers and public health practitioners. This also helps these groups build their collaborations and international linkages.”

Based on the enthusiasm shown by the course convenors and the high level of support from the sector, Baker sees the Summer School as having a bright future. Given the challenging times we live in, he also sees a continuing need for rapidly evolving training to support the workforce so they can better respond to the public health issues of the day.

The 2014 Public Health Summer School will offer 31 courses. New courses that are expected to be well attended include:

Big Food: food policy, politics and population health

Using History in Public Health

Māori and Indigenous Suicide Prevention

Public Health Law

Compact Urban Housing: then and now

For more information visit

www.otago.ac.nz/uowsummerschool

KARYN AMMUNDSEN

Sharing ideas Finding solutions

In February this year, around 80 leading New Zealand and international researchers and doctors got together at a Summer School symposium to discuss how to reduce New Zealand’s high levels of rheumatic fever, particularly among Māori and Pacific children.

In addition to workforce training and research dissemination, creating a forum for key players to get together in one room to “thrash out” interventions and solutions to public health issues is an exciting aspect of the Summer School. For 2013, the government’s ambitious goal of reducing rates of rheumatic fever by two thirds within five years – part of its 10 Better Public Services Results – provided an obvious topic for concentrated scientific discussion.

Among the experts in the room were Australian researcher Professor Jonathan Carapetis and Otago University Professor John Tagg, whose research has developed the BLIS K12 Throat Guard probiotic as a possible prevention method. Other rapidly evolving areas of prevention discussed included housing interventions, school-based programmes and echocardiography screening for undiagnosed rheumatic heart disease.

Following the meeting, the University of Otago submitted proposals to the HRC’s special funding round on rheumatic fever, including a case-control study to identify modifiable risk factors for rheumatic fever (led by Professor Michael Baker) and a clinical trial of BLIS (led by Professor Julian Crane).

Looking ahead to the 2014 Summer School, symposium topics will again focus on some of the tough challenges facing New Zealand. These issues include food policy and the obesity epidemic, prevention of Māori and indigenous suicide, responding to climate change and the challenges of making our cities more sustainable.

New Zealand's Constitution

Having the conversation

I love to talk about New Zealand's constitution; I find it endlessly fascinating which makes me very odd, as far as New Zealanders go. Most of us will not have given our constitution a moment's thought and might be under the misconception that we don't have a constitution at all. We find mention of it dull and intimidating in equal measure.

When I teach students about the constitution I hope to make them aware that New Zealand does have a constitution, albeit one that operates differently from most other western democracies. I explain that our constitution is "uncodified", which means that it is not written down in one place. It is also "non-entrenched", which means that Parliament can make changes to almost all of our laws with 51 per cent support. In short, our Parliament enjoys "supreme sovereignty", it is extremely powerful and our courts cannot declare laws "unconstitutional" – they can only interpret those laws.

I like to throw in examples to show that constitutions are all about power and rights, and to wake up students in the back row. "If Parliament decides to forcibly take the babies of beneficiary parents into state care, it can, if it has 51 per cent support in Parliament." Most students look quite complacent about such a provocative scenario (that would never happen in New Zealand), but not all of them. On one occasion, as the class

finished, a recently-arrived exchange student rushed towards me clutching her notes and looking desperate. "You people are insane!" she cried. "It's not safe here!" she added, as she ran for the door.

I often think of that student when I talk to people about our constitution. Are we insane? There are only two other Western democracies with constitutions like New Zealand's – Israel and Britain. Most nations have codified (written) constitutions, which are entrenched to some extent; in other words, their rules about power and limits to power are found mostly in one document, and it is hard for governments to change those rules; they are supreme law that requires much more than a simple majority to amend. More importantly, the courts play a greater role in limiting the power of government.

New Zealand's current constitutional arrangements reflect a fundamental belief in our elected representatives. We entrust them to act in our best interests and we provide them almost completely unfettered authority to do so. We have made important changes to our electoral system to ensure that our Parliament better reflects the people in our communities, and that our law-making requires collaboration and consensus between parties. We have, until recently at least, had a proud history of high voter turnout, reflecting the fact that a general election is one of very few ways to rein in

a government and limit its authority.

But is it enough? Ought we to consider being more like everyone else? Should we entrench our constitution to limit the power of our elected representatives, limit the sovereignty of Parliament and give our courts greater authority?

These are questions many of us do care about, even if we don't see them in constitutional terms. And we are divided in our opinions. Some say we should leave things as they are, that it is better to entrust elected, accountable representatives than an elite, unelected judiciary. Others think this naïve and point to examples (of which there are many) where our governments have infringed peoples' rights in unacceptable ways. They say we need the courts to limit the power of government.

This debate about whether or not we should change our constitutional arrangements is one of many issues raised in the recent national Constitution Conversation. For much of this year, a panel of advisors has been encouraging us all to think about, talk about and write about the New Zealand we wish to see in the future. A range of topics was debated: What place should the Treaty of Waitangi have in our constitutional arrangements? How long should our Parliamentary term be? What should happen to the Māori seats in the future?

This "conversation" was reasonably successful, as far as these things go. The

Associate Professor Janine Hayward: "We should never be a nation which stops talking about the power of our government and the rights of our people."

Photo: Alan Dove

panel received over 5,000 submissions and held many public meetings around New Zealand. Conversations can, of course, lead to quarrels and this was no exception. Debate erupted, in particular, along the fault-line of the Treaty of Waitangi. But it did get us talking; some of us, at least. And it was exciting for a constitution fan like me to see people engaging on this most important issue.

The panel will report to government later this year on what it heard from people. The government is likely to act only on those recommendations that suit its own interests. Which brings us full circle to the question of power and limits to power: we may not be a nation which talks much about its constitution, but we should never be a nation which stops talking about the power of our government and the rights of our people.

Associate Professor Janine Hayward
Department of Politics

"In short, our Parliament enjoys 'supreme sovereignty', it is extremely powerful and our courts cannot declare laws 'unconstitutional' - they can only interpret those laws."



A world of difference

The University of Otago is strategically committed to its role as a good global citizen. The Centre for International Health contributes strongly to this, working to improve the health of people in developing countries.

In the 5½ years since the Centre for International Health was launched it has extended its influence from Dunedin out into the Asia-Pacific region.

Founding director Professor Philip Hill and more recently arrived co-director Professor John Crump already had well-established links in The Gambia and Tanzania respectively - links they have continued to foster.

But the focus is shifting increasingly towards Asia – including Indonesia and Myanmar – and the Pacific. The centre has been able to tap into Otago's special relationship with the National University of Samoa to conduct a population-based study of the prevalence of chlamydia which is being prepared for publication.

Hill says the Indonesian connection is well established and will be long-standing, enabling them to initiate tuberculosis (TB) research projects, obtain grant money and begin publishing.

"It has involved everything from public health to basic science. It's a special collaboration, involving Dutch colleagues from Nijmegen University, giving us links to be able to apply for European Union funding, which we have done successfully.

"We have two people on the ground there now. Ayesha Verrall who has an HRC [Health Research Council] clinical training fellowship for PhD research and Sue McAllister who is a research fellow working under an EU grant."

Dr Merrin Rutherford, who was the centre's junior research fellow in Indonesia from 2008 to 2012, has received her PhD through the Dutch collaboration and started medical school this year.

Much of the work focuses on TB case contacts – people who live in households where someone has TB, says Hill.

"We want to understand what might cause them to get the disease, try to understand how to manage that optimally and, from a public health point of view, break through some of the barriers stopping this high-risk group being prevented from getting TB themselves.

"Also, on the basic science front, we want to understand why some contacts are more susceptible to developing TB disease than others. Is it the different strains, their immune system, or even their basic genetic make-up?"

The centre is involved in establishing new diagnostic tests and in dealing with multi-drug resistant TB in Bandung


in Indonesia. Some of the research, which has recently been accepted for publication in the *Bulletin of the World Health Organization*, a major international public health journal, identified widespread gaps in the management of children in contact with TB cases.

A framework has been developed to identify the barriers to children being managed according to guidelines and it is intended to implement this framework at different sites around the world.

Hill's group is also playing a major part in European Commission-funded research into causative links between infectious and non-communicable diseases – in this case TB and diabetes mellitus (DM). The €6 million (\$NZ9.5 million) study titled TANDEM (Tuberculosis and Diabetes Mellitus) makes them part of a multidisciplinary consortium linking field sites in four TB-endemic countries experiencing rapid growth of DM – Romania, Peru, South Africa and Indonesia.

According to Hill, such developments fit with the basic concept of working together in partnership to compete for international funding and produce internationally competitive outputs while developing Indonesian researchers.

To address the shortage of genuinely internationally competitive Indonesian researchers, another new initiative has been developed – the Otago/ Padjadjaran training fellow. Dr Raspati Koesoemadinata, the first fellow, is based in Indonesia and will complete an MSc



Dr Susan Jack, Professor Philip Hill (seated) and Professor John Crump: "It is impossible to do the sort of work we do without interdisciplinary and international relationships."

Photo: Alan Dove

in epidemiology by distance through the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine. The long-term aim is for her to become a postdoctoral researcher able to compete internationally.

Developing researchers with an international focus is important and 15 postgraduate or BMedSc students have been, or are currently, linked to the centre.

Hill says they have also had fantastic extra support from Mercy Hospital in Dunedin through extra funding for their Asia-Pacific work.

Vaccine surveillance

Hill remains strongly connected to research in The Gambia including the development of a pneumococcal vaccine surveillance system, funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

The final analysis is about to be completed of the first monitoring of the conjugate vaccine that has been introduced into West Africa. “These vaccines cover only a certain proportion

of the pneumococcal bacterium that causes a significant proportion of pneumonia globally. The concern is that other serotypes not covered will replace pneumococci of the vaccine serotype.

“We have observed in The Gambia that there is a significant replacement phenomenon which could negate the overall effectiveness of the vaccine.” There are complicating factors, including the cost of adding extra serotypes to the vaccine and different predominating serotypes in different locations.

Gates Foundation Grand Challenges Explorations funding has also been awarded to a collaboration involving the centre and Dr Stephen Sowerby, director of the University’s Applied Science Programme.

This will evaluate a novel and portable fluid cell device for counting gastrointestinal worm eggs using digital images that can be sent electronically and analysed remotely.

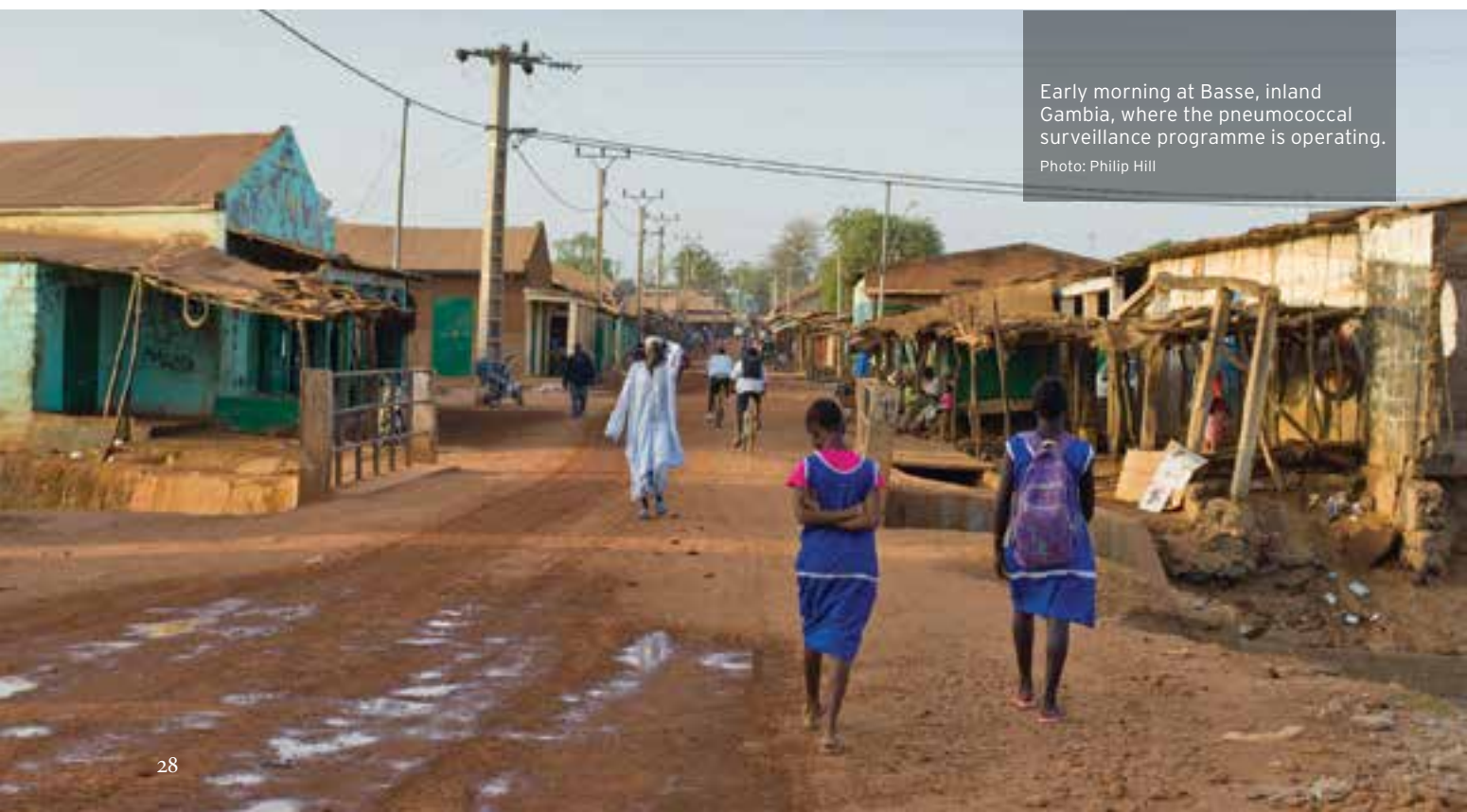
Fighting fever

Research Crump leads in Tanzania has been in the news recently after a project supported by the US National Institutes of Health (NIH) found an extensive over-diagnosis of malaria.

“Obviously, if you’re treated for malaria when you don’t have it, you do worse than those patients who do have malaria because you are not getting the treatment you need. Our work can be summarised around trying to think about fever much more comprehensively than just malaria and working on what’s causing all this other fever.”

This has led to a particular focus on Crump’s new NIH-funded research on zoonoses – infectious diseases such as leptospirosis that are transmitted between animals and humans.

“Zoonoses cause fever and, sometimes, severe illness in people, but also cause problems with fertility, growth and survival of livestock. So, the infections



Early morning at Basse, inland Gambia, where the pneumococcal surveillance programme is operating.
Photo: Philip Hill

affect human health directly through the infection and indirectly through the loss of livestock production, and that's an area of research New Zealand is pretty good at."

He is also involved in a Gates Foundation-funded project on typhoid fever that is estimating its incidence in Africa to help policymakers decide whether typhoid vaccine should be more widely used. There are now about 50 staff on these projects, including Tanzanian research fellows.

New collaborations

When Crump returned to Dunedin one of the goals was to develop a new institutional-level relationship between Otago and an institution in a less developed South-East Asian country.

Facilitated by the centre, the University of Otago has signed a collaborative agreement with the University of Medicine (1) in Yangon (formerly Rangoon), Myanmar. Seed funding has been obtained for small initial projects that will eventually lead to the ability to compete for larger grants together.

The first major grant application is currently with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT) under its NZ Aid Programme Partnerships for the International Development Fund, designed to support the activities of existing partnerships of New Zealand institutions and those in developing countries.

This opens the way for an exchange of postgraduate students, including students from Yangon who can conduct their research on health problems relevant to their home country, and then return to contribute to the education and health sectors in Myanmar.

The Otago International Health Research Network aims to foster the idea that international health is multidisciplinary and crosses all University divisions and campuses.

For example, a PhD student from Myanmar, who is studying multi-drug-resistant tuberculosis, has been "linked" with Professor Greg Cook (Microbiology) who has expertise in that area, while Professor David Murdoch (Pathology, Christchurch) is involved in laboratory training.

But the collaborations run even wider, involving several other departments including Human Nutrition, Economics, Biochemistry and Geography. Dr Sarah Baird (Economics) and Erin Pennon (Preventive and Social Medicine) are examining the non-malaria fever issue to see whether it is cost-effective to introduce tests for bloodstream infections as part of diagnostic testing so that people receive more appropriate treatment.

"It is impossible to do the sort of work we do without interdisciplinary and international relationships," explains Crump. "Funders primarily want to find reliable ways of supporting work in low-resource areas that improves health and well-being, and look to us to add value based on our technical expertise.

"The idea is that we'll gradually build this relationship over time, focusing on the areas of our expertise. As trust grows and we get a track record of success, then we create the mechanism by which others wishing to apply their particular expertise to global health problems can plug in."

MARK WRIGHT

Setting up a service arm

Funding from the Dean's Strategic Development Fund totalling \$100,000 over two years means the Centre for International Health can now develop a service arm.

Senior research fellow Dr Susan Jack, a former PhD student, worked in Cambodia for about 16 years and has experience with organisations such as WHO, World Bank and USAID which fund practical projects and evaluations.

"The establishment of this service arm allows us to focus some part of our work on those types of activity," says Hill.

"Very 'hands-on', practical types of people have a lot to offer so we wanted to see if we can host such an arm in the centre and provide a way for them to work in developing countries under our umbrella."

Both directors, and particularly Crump, have undertaken advisory work with WHO and other organisations, developing guidelines and working on how to best manage diseases.

Hill says aid-type funders are increasingly beginning to see the value of evaluation to prove health benefit of projects and the value of research tools in such evaluations.

"For example, USAID and NIH have recently combined in asking for proposals for operational research. This is exciting as it means that aid projects and research initiatives can link up, and Susan is ideally suited to developing this new arm to the centre."

In Her Hand

Previously unpublished letters of 18th and 19th century women writers - many of which were surprisingly found in the Dunedin Public Library - have provided the inspiration for a book published by a group of English honours students.

Changing tastes, or perhaps the forces of pride and prejudice, caused the work of many 18th and 19th century women writers to fade into obscurity. But a recent student publication based on the correspondence of 11 such writers sheds new light on their literary careers and personal lives.

In Her Hand: Letters of Romantic-Era British Women Writers in New Zealand Collections was produced in just 14 weeks by honours students enrolled in ENGL 404: Writing for Publication. The students based their research on previously unpublished letters and manuscripts in New Zealand library collections. Course co-ordinators Dr Tom McLean and Dr Shef Rogers say that, although the women writers discussed are now less familiar, many were once household names.

"There will be some excitement to see these letters published because the authors have all been the subject of recent scholarly research. What is very special is that our students are the first to comment on these letters and, in future, they will be the first ones cited in relation to this material," McLean says.

Most of the letters in *In Her Hand* come from the Dunedin Public

Library's Alfred and Isabel Reed Special Collection. From the 1920s, Reed – best known in New Zealand as a prolific author and publisher – bought miscellaneous collections of letters from London dealers. His collection was presented to the Dunedin Public Library in 1948.

"It really is by chance that these letters are here. There are researchers worldwide studying these writers who would never think to look for source material in New Zealand. The students could only have had this opportunity here at Otago, because if the letters were in Britain or the United States many of them would have already been published," McLean says.

The correspondence provides glimpses into the women's lives: social and political issues are discussed alongside personal concerns such as health, friendship, family and marriage, and the processes of writing.

Student Petra Westropp says the letters also touch on gender difference, which was increasingly relevant in an age that saw the emergence of writers such as Mary Wollstonecraft who questioned gender inequality and an idealised construction of femininity.

As McLean points out, few female authors of the Romantic era published under their own name. While there were notable exceptions, such as historian Lucy Aikin and poet Felicia Hemans (whose sales were second only to those of Lord Byron), many others – including Jane Austen – did not disclose their identity.

During the semester, students were immersed in the collaborative project. All publication details, including layout, design and final proofs, were developed as a collective.

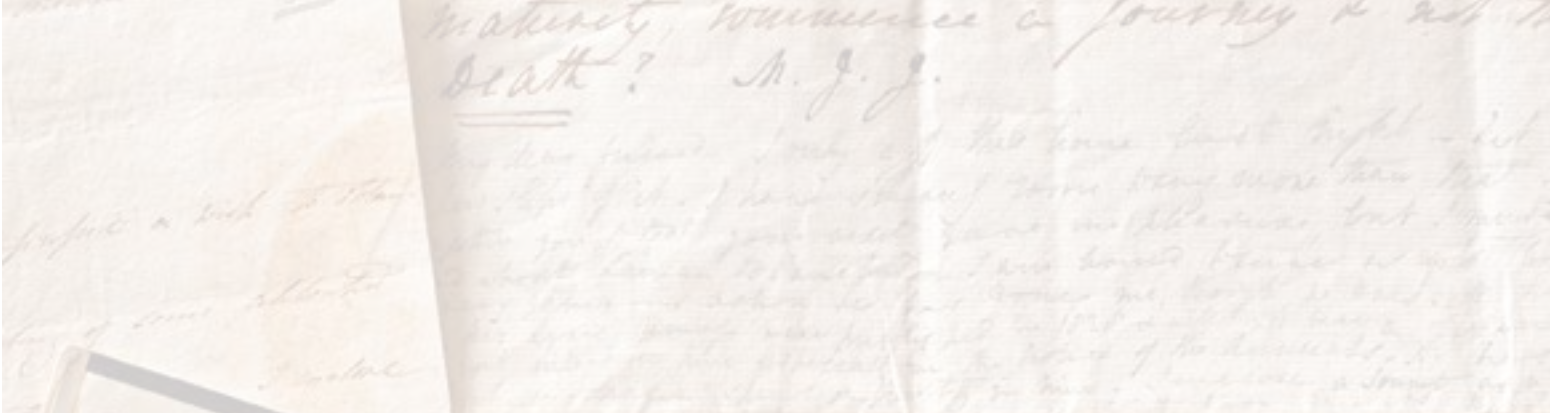
Westropp describes the process of producing the book, while simultaneously writing and developing several draft versions of her own chapter, as one of the most intense but rewarding experiences of her time at Otago.

"It is hard to gain work experience while studying, so this paper was invaluable. To be able to say that I was published at 21 is fantastic and the end product is something tangible I can use to boost applications for future study, specifically publishing courses."

Fellow student Samantha McKegg also describes learning about book production as "invaluable".

"We spent hours thinking about the book's look and feel, and its potential uses. There were sleepless nights and occasionally tensions arose, but this showed how much we really cared about the project. It was all worthwhile because the finished product is one to be proud of."

McKegg, who discussed writer Anna Jameson's emergence as one of the first



The class of ENGL 404 and authors of *In her Hand*.
Photo: Alan Dove

female art historians, said the “devil was in the detail” when making observations about the women’s lives.

“The excitement of scrutinising letters that were 200 years old never faded. My favourite letters were the notes to friends or relatives, and we all found that even seemingly inconsequential letters could show something interesting or significant about the authors’ lives and work.”

This attention to detail drew praise from external examiner Professor Devoney Looser of Arizona State University, who commended the publication as “a book of exceptional quality and scholarly importance” that presents the larger context “while providing readers with the ability to understand the minutiae of each of the letters”.

Professor Looser is not alone in her admiration. *In Her Hand* has already been acquired by research libraries in New Zealand, Australia and the United States.

In Her Hand can be purchased from the Department of English.

SAM STEVENS

Model management

A University of Otago marketing tutor has devised a management model aimed at a more sustainable future.

Dr Rob Mitchell created the model for his recently completed PhD thesis on sustainable market orientation, which he evaluated in the context of conservation and tourism management.

Mitchell says the model provides guidelines that enable organisations to take a holistic approach to strategy management - one that blends economic growth and continuing prosperity with environmental and social responsibility.

"I sought to integrate two conflicting concepts: market orientation, regarding the profitable management of consumption, and sustainable development, which has been promoted by the United Nations."

Mitchell applied the model to three tourism industry case studies: two competing tourism firms (Real Journeys and Southern Discoveries) and one government agency (the Department of Conservation) operating in the Fiordland National Park. He interviewed more than 40 people, both inside the three organisations and in the wider community.

"I chose the tourism industry to evaluate the model because it is important globally and, in New Zealand, it generates about 50 per cent of our overseas income. Long term, the industry's

viability depends on balanced economic, environmental and social management."

Mitchell adds that his thesis identifies the shortcomings in the Government's tourism strategy and recommends that it needs to be made more holistic. "The strategy just looks at economic and environmental aspects and doesn't look at the social side of things."

Mitchell has written several journal articles on the subject and is looking to evaluate the model in other commercial sectors.



Dr Rob Mitchell: His model provides guidelines that enable organisations to take a holistic approach to strategy management, blending economic growth with environmental and social responsibility.

A new way to quit

Smokers in the Wellington region have been taking part in a trial of a world-first nicotine inhaler developed at the University of Otago, Wellington.

The inhaler is based on the same design as puffer devices used to deliver medication to asthmatics, but instead delivers a short burst of nicotine.

Project researcher Dr Brent Caldwell says the inhaler is potentially a huge improvement on current therapies such as nicotine patches, gum and lozenges.

Research shows that, although the vast majority of smokers would like to give up smoking, current therapies only help about 10 per cent of those who use them to quit. New Zealand smoking rates are still at 17 per cent of the adult population, a figure that needs to reduce dramatically to reach the 2025 goal of a smoke-free New Zealand.

"We believe our inhaler will improve on current nicotine replacements because it provides an instant hit of nicotine, which is what smokers need when they feel that desperate desire to light up," Caldwell says.

He notes that, until now, nicotine inhalers have either been too harsh to inhale, or the nicotine replacement therapy is absorbed

too slowly via the mouth and throat instead of a rapid "hit" to the brain via the lungs.

"This approach is an innovative and practical way to help smokers give up smoking. It's as rewarding as smoking a cigarette, while also being highly tolerable and pleasant to inhale."

The trial has been funded by the Health Research Council.



Dr Brent Caldwell: "We believe our inhaler will improve on current nicotine replacements because it provides an instant hit of nicotine."

China watch

Trade between China and its neighbours mitigates regional territorial disputes in under-explored ways, according to an expert on China's foreign policy.

Dr Nicholas Khoo (Politics) is spending a month at the Peking University School of International Studies in Beijing, researching the relationship between China and neighbouring states.

"I will be interviewing Chinese academics to gain further insight into Chinese foreign policy over the last three or four years. During that period there have been a number of high-profile territorial disputes involving China and its neighbours, in particular Japan, Vietnam and the Philippines.

"These disputes have to be set against a backdrop of robust levels of trade between China and its neighbours."

He notes that China is the number one trading partner of Japan and Vietnam, and the Philippines' third largest trading partner.

"This makes for some very interesting and complex dynamics. While economic interdependence between states clearly does not prevent conflict erupting, it arguably does exert a restraining effect on all actors concerned," Khoo says.

"How powerful this effect is, and how it relates to other considerations, is an area of critical importance to policymakers and academics.

"There is clearly scope for further research exploring the relative importance of economics and other factors operating in the region, such as rising nationalism, the United States' alliance network and the role of multinational organisations."

A Singapore-national, Khoo is a former visiting professor at the China Foreign Affairs University in Beijing.



Dr Nicholas Khoo: "There is clearly scope for further research exploring the relative importance of economics and other factors operating in the [East Asian] region."

Rethinking literacy

What can be considered literacy in the modern world has undergone a rethink in a two-year research project led by the University of Otago College of Education.

Dr Susan Sandretto says New Zealand's literacy policy is at least 10 years old and hasn't caught up with the rapid changes in information communication technologies: one of the key themes was the need to shift what counts as literacy and the kinds of texts you work with.

"So why not use a purely visual text like a piece of art, or a video clip or a podcast? Each of those systems has its own codes and conventions that they use to communicate, so why not help students to add them to their repertoire of ways to communicate?"

The project involved year-7 and -8 teachers and students from primary schools, intermediates and a college, as well as a rural-based school. Sandretto says the focus was on how best to support teachers to support students to be able to attack any text that they come across because the form it is arriving in is changing all the time.

She says the feedback from teachers and students was extremely positive. They enjoyed learning more about interpreting

text, but students also emphasised that they wanted to create more texts.

"When you think about what kids have at their fingertips now - having a blog, a webpage, a wiki entry, a PowerPoint, or even a tweet. We have this amazing range of tools to make texts so why aren't classroom practices part of it?"



Dr Susan Sandretto: "We have this amazing range of tools to make texts so why aren't classroom practices part of it?"

Acceptable tolerance

A Muslim woman complains to the Human Rights Commission about being barred from a Hastings courtroom in 2009 for wearing a hijab, or headscarf. It's the sort of stuff that is guaranteed to light up talkback radio switchboards for days.

Increased coverage of Islam and these "flashpoint debates" surrounding the accommodation of Muslim beliefs and practices in English-speaking countries is a feature of a new edition of a book by University of Otago Professor Rex Ahdar (Law) and fellow law professor Ian Leigh, of Durham University (*Religious Freedom in the Liberal State*, Oxford University Press, 2013).

Ahdar and Leigh say religious people experience fewer problems in freely exercising their faith in Western countries than in many other parts of the world, but there is no reason for complacency.

They maintain that what some people dismiss as "innocuous anecdotal examples" of state restriction upon religious communities are, in reality, indications that religious freedom is under increasing pressure in the West. They cite, among many other cases, the recent banning of burqa in France and the curtailment of infant male circumcision in Germany.

Ahdar says New Zealand examples are, thankfully, less common. "We have actually been more accommodating of Muslim

practice and custom than many other liberal states. For example, all of our meat for prisons and most supermarket meat is subject to halal killing. In some countries that would cause a huge fuss." But, he adds, this accommodating, tolerant attitude will be tested as religious pluralism grows.



Professor Rex Ahdar: "We have actually been more accommodating of Muslim practice and custom than many other liberal states."

Dateline Dunedin 2063

A University of Otago research project is looking at what work might be like in Dunedin in the future.

The research is being undertaken by a team comprising five staff members from the Department of Management - Dr Sara Walton, Dr Paula O'Kane, Dr Diane Ruwhiu, Virginia Cathro and Rachel Turner - in partnership with the Dunedin City Council.

Walton says the research is focusing on the businesses we are likely to see in Dunedin and some of the ways that people will be working up to 50 years from now.

The team initially collated research on the future of New Zealand and extracted various themes. It then enlisted the help of 40 experts who either live in Dunedin or have a business or personal connection with the city, and are responding to various scenarios fashioned by the team about work in Dunedin in decades to come.

The researchers say people are so busy from day to day that they don't have a lot of time to grapple with the future and the team hopes the project will start people looking beyond short-term business plans.

Walton, the team leader, says the research was prompted by her frustration while researching sustainability and climate

change that there was a lack of vision about what these changes might mean to people living in Dunedin.

She says they hope Dunedin will act as a pilot study and they are then able to apply it to New Zealand's place in the world in 50 years' time.



Dr Sara Walton: Research is focusing on the businesses we are likely to see in Dunedin and some of the ways that people will be working up to 50 years from now.

“Five-plus” for farmers’ markets

Public health authorities recommend eating five-plus servings of fruit and vegetables every day, something that isn’t always easy for low-income families. New research from the University of Otago, Wellington shows that optimising the location of New Zealand’s humble farmers’ markets could help improve this.

The study collected data on current farmers’ markets, population distributions, area deprivation and roads, combined with geographic information system (GIS) modelling for locational optimisation analysis. Results showed that, currently, around seven per cent of the population are within 15 minutes’ drive of a farmers’ market. However, if the same number of markets were more optimally located, that figure would jump to around 22 per cent. For deprived groups, access would increase four-fold.

Researcher Dr Amber Pearson says evidence suggesting that improved locational access to farmers’ markets can increase fruit and vegetable consumption provides strong impetus for action.

“International studies have shown that in areas where access to farmers’ markets improves, the consumption of fruit and vegetables does increase. That may be partly related to lower food prices at farmers’ markets – although some specialty markets offer more expensive, organic produce – but also the

competitive impact of farmers’ markets in driving down fruit and vegetable prices at neighbouring outlets.”

Given that such farmers’ markets are so easy to establish and relocate, there is large scope for local and central governments to promote their optimal location and expansion for reasons of both public health and sustainability, Pearson says.

The study is published in the international open access journal PeerJ (<https://peerj.com/articles/94/>).



Dr Amber Pearson: “International studies have shown that in areas where access to farmers’ markets improves, the consumption of fruit and vegetables does increase.”

Pesticide hangover

The legacy of pesticides banned years ago remains in areas of rural South Island, according to research by a team from Otago’s Departments of Chemistry and Zoology.

Researchers compared the presence of chlorinated pesticides in streams running through sheep and beef farm clusters near Amberley, Akaroa, Outram, Owaka and Gore. Each area comprised an organic, a conventional, and an integrated pest management (reduced pesticide use) property.

Dr Pourya Shahpoury says the pesticide chlorpyrifos (approved for current use) was the most frequently detected chemical in sediment samples, with similar concentrations throughout the study areas regardless of the farming method used during the past 11 years. This was contrary to expectations and may have been due, at least in part, to vapour drift from conventional or integrated farms, highlighting potential issues about the spread of pesticides to areas where they were not directly applied.

Signs of more toxic and now-banned pesticides such as DDT, endosulfan and dieldrin were also found. Degradation products of DDT and endosulfan were detected in up to 75 and 42 per cent of sediment samples respectively, with the highest levels from conventional farms, a likely result of increased pesticide run-off.

Although mean pesticide concentrations across all samples were below recommended toxicity thresholds for freshwater organisms, up to 23 per cent had residues of individual pesticides above these thresholds, Shahpoury says.

“We can minimise the environmental impact of farming by moving towards organic farming, but our study confirms that we can’t eliminate the presence of pesticide residues from the environment – at least not for now.”



Dr Pourya Shahpoury: “Our study confirms that we can’t eliminate the presence of pesticide residues from the environment – at least not for now.”

Winning wine

When PhD student Rosemarie Neuninger (Marketing) purchased 28 bottles of Central Otago pinot noir from a Dunedin supermarket it may have been one of the rare occasions on which someone claiming they were buying wine for “research purposes” wasn’t using a euphemism.

Neuninger is investigating the role of awards in consumer decision-making and opted to case-study wine awards, using one of the most recently introduced grape varieties in New Zealand.

“I wanted to understand the influence of wine awards on consumers’ perceptions of wine quality,” she says.

First, she set up focus groups to explore how awards are perceived among different consumers. The 44 participants ranged from students to expert wine writers, and members of wine groups and wine associations. One of the things she found in the focus groups was a sophisticated consumer palate when it came to the integrity of wine awards.

“Consumers were really sceptical in terms of a lack of trust in the awarding process, who the judges are and the lack of transparency in some of the awards, although they still took note of awards, despite their scepticism.

“After that, I conducted a blind-versus-informed-condition experiment using students who were taking a Summer School

wine business and tourism paper. I basically concluded that consumers were influenced by the type of wine award, scoring wine higher when they could see the wine had a well-known award.”

Neuninger is still writing up her thesis, but has already prepared several articles for publication and presented her work at international conferences.



Rosemarie Neuninger: “Consumers were influenced by the type of wine award, scoring wine higher when they could see the wine had a well-known award.”

Genetic interpretations

Genetic testing of BRCA1 and BRCA2 genes has become common practice for patients with a strong family history of either breast or ovarian cancer.

Such tests can be helpful to identify those who have harmful mutations because they can then consider preventive strategies.

Information from genetic tests can also reassure family members who do not have these harmful mutations. However, a significant proportion of tests result in the detection of a genetic change for which disease association is uncertain.

Dr Logan Walker is a principal investigator in the Mackenzie Cancer Research Group, based at the University of Otago, Christchurch.

He is also the sole New Zealander in the global collaboration ENIGMA (Evidence-based Network for the Interpretation of Germline Mutant Alleles). ENIGMA is leading the world in determining whether these genetic changes increase the risk of cancer.

Walker and his international colleagues recently developed guidelines to help doctors and genetic counsellors better interpret ambiguous genetic test results.

The guidelines were developed using published data from BRCA1 and BRCA2 gene tests, but could be applied to any disease-associated gene. Laboratories around the world have already begun to use these guidelines.



Dr Logan Walker: He and his colleagues have developed guidelines to help better interpretation of ambiguous genetic test results.

Blooming good research

Dr Richard Macknight (Biochemistry) has a thing about peas and lentils and other legumes – not so much on a dinner plate as in a laboratory.

Macknight is involved in research that aims to discover how legumes use seasonal changes in daylight hours and temperature to control when to flower, and to understand how this process has evolved to allow legumes to be grown in different parts of the world.

Macknight says the research is based on the differences in the sequence of genes between ancient varieties of legumes that still grow in the Mediterranean region and don't flower in the shorter daylight hours and lower temperatures further away from the equator, and the varieties that do flower under those conditions.

"Every plant needs to know what time of day it is – to predict, for example, that the sun is going to come up and they have to get ready for all the processes that are going to happen for photosynthesis and the like. One of the key differences in the plants that flower in the shorter day hours is that they seem to have a different internal clock.

"Flowering is absolutely critical in any breeding programme and hopefully this knowledge will enable plant breeders to more

efficiently develop new legume varieties tailored for different geographical regions."

Macknight is carrying out the work with the assistance of research students and staff in his laboratory and in collaboration with other researchers, notably in the School of Plant Science at the University of Tasmania.



Dr Richard Macknight: "Hopefully this knowledge will enable plant breeders to more efficiently develop new legume varieties tailored for different geographical regions."

Cultivating traditional knowledge

Finding a way to farm Aotearoa in alignment with the principles of Mātauranga Māori and Totohungatanga Moriori (traditional knowledge) is at the heart of the Indigenous Agroecology (IA) project.

IA follows on from Ngā Pae te Māramatanga research fellow Dr Marion Johnson's Te Rongoā project, which investigated the incorporation of Māori traditional knowledge of the medicinal uses of native plants into modern farm management.

Johnson, based at the Centre for Sustainability, says this project is about combining the best of technology with Mātauranga/Totohungatanga and common sense.

"We've got rivers you can't swim in, dead soils and poor animal health. We can carry on the way we are. Or we can stop and change.

"Our aim is healthy soil, healthy pastures, healthy stock, healthy communities and clean water."

The IA team is working with three research link farms – Te Putahi (Banks Peninsula), Taiporutu (Mahia Peninsula) and Henga (Rēkohu, Chatham Islands). The farms link research to reality, ensuring a practical outcome, says Johnson.

There are a number of strands to the first stage of the project. These include recording knowledge of rongoā for stock before

it disappears, creating a record of the plants that traditionally grew on the link farms, encouraging diversity by adding value to riparian plantings and aligning traditional knowledge with science.

"With the Surveying School we are mapping the farms using GIS and cultural mapping so that we can get a picture of the best ways to implement change," says Johnson.

"There's a wealth of knowledge out there. It's a matter of weaving it together."



Dr Marion Johnson: "Our aim is healthy soil, healthy pastures, healthy stock, healthy communities and clean water."

Otago shines in performance indicators

The University of Otago is ranked top of all New Zealand universities in this year's Educational Performance Indicators (EPIs) released by the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC).

It is the first time any university has topped all four measures since the EPI system was introduced four years ago. Otago is placed first for all four EPIs, which measure course completion, qualification completion, student progression and student retention for 2012.

Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic and International) Professor Vernon Squire says the outstanding result affirms the excellence of Otago's teaching. "These results are a real tribute to our exceptional staff and the ability and diligence of our students."

Te Rangi Hiroa College to open

The University's newest residential college, Te Rangi Hiroa College, is set to open in February next year.

The college is located a block south of Cumberland College on Castle Street and will cater for 127 students. Converted from the former LivingSpace hotel, it boasts excellent facilities including a small theatre, a large common room, full dining room service, academic tutorial facilities and games area.

Te Rangi Hiroa College will also have a female-only floor and alcohol-free accommodation options. The warden is Ashley Day, who recently stepped down from the same role at Carrington College and, before that, was master at Unicol and at Dalmore House.

Arts Fellows selected

The University of Otago's support of New Zealand's multi-faceted arts community continues with the selection of its 2014 Arts Fellowships.

Kapiti Coast poet Majella Cullinane has been named Robert Burns Fellow; Auckland artist Patrick Lundberg as Frances Hodgkins Fellow; Hamilton-based composer Jeremy Mayall as Mozart Fellow; West Auckland choreographer Louise Bryant as Caroline Plummer Fellow in Community Dance; and Auckland novelist Melinda Szymanski will be the University of Otago College of Education Creative NZ Children's Writer in Residence.

Ophthalmologist wins supreme teaching award

Dunedin School of Medicine ophthalmologist Associate Professor Gordon Sanderson was recently awarded the Prime Minister's Supreme Award for Tertiary Teaching Excellence.

The award is regarded as the highlight of the annual national Tertiary Teaching Excellence Awards and recognises Sanderson's 40-year career dedicated to teaching tertiary students, sharing his passionate commitment to the profession of ophthalmology.

Four Otago academics have won

the Prime Minister's Supreme Award in the last 11 years. Last year Dr Rhiannon Braund, senior lecturer in the School of Pharmacy, was awarded the top teaching honour. Additionally, Faculty of Law Associate Professor Selene Mize won in 2009 and Associate Professor Peter Schwartz of Pathology won in 2003.

No other tertiary institution in New Zealand has matched this performance.

Vice-Chancellor Professor Harlene Hayne says she is proud that Otago continues to be recognised at the highest level for its outstanding teaching.

"I think the sustained achievement over the years is testament to the incredible talent and unwavering commitment that staff have for our students. It reinforces Otago's long-standing reputation as a leading institution that offers a world-class education to our students."

Strategic direction to 2020

The University has approved a new strategic direction document that will guide its activities over the next seven years.



Associate Professor **Gordon Sanderson** receives the Prime Minister's Supreme Award for Tertiary Teaching Excellence from the Minister of Tertiary Education, the Hon. Steven Joyce.

The Strategic Direction to 2020 document focuses on seven strategic imperatives: Excellence in Research; Excellence in Teaching; Outstanding Student Experiences; Outstanding Campus Environments; Commitment as a Local, National and Global Citizen; Strong External Engagement; and Sustaining Capability.

The document was developed following wide consultation with staff, students, graduates, and a variety of internal and external groups and organisations. Feedback led to the strengthening of statements and commitments in respect of sustainability and the environment; being more explicit about the University's commitment to supporting teaching and its development; and being clearer about the value placed on both staff and students having a voice in respect of University developments.

Boost for Peace and Conflict Centre

A half-million dollar donation to the University's National Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies has allowed the centre to continue building on its academic strengths.

The gift, from a donor who wishes to remain anonymous, ensures that the centre has a permanent lecturer in peace education and supports the extension of a postdoctoral fellowship on the economics of war and peace. Two top international candidates have been appointed to the newly-funded positions: Dr Katerina Standish from Canada is the new lecturer, and Dr Charles Butcher from Australia is the new postdoctoral fellow.

Since the centre was established in 2009, it has grown from one professor, a personal assistant and no students, to five tenured academic staff, one postdoctoral fellow, a centre administrator, 25 PhD students, 13 master's students and 19 postgraduate diploma students.



Celebrating the launch of Otago's Pacific Strategic Framework are (back row from left) Pacific Islands Centre Manager Tofilau Nina Kirifi-Alai, Professor Judy Bennett (History), Health Sciences Associate Dean (Pacific) Dr Fa'afetai Sopoaga and Reverend Tokerau Joseph; (front row from left) Judge A'eau Semi Epati, Vice-Chancellor Professor Harlene Hayne, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic and International) Professor Vernon Squire.

Photo: Sharron Bennett

It is New Zealand's first centre to combine global cross-disciplinary expertise on the issues of development, peace-building and conflict transformation.

Pacific Strategic Framework

A Pacific Strategic Framework identifying six over-riding goals to ensure the University meets the needs of Pacific People has been launched.

The framework, which extends to 2020, is the University's realisation of a commitment made in its Charter to meeting the needs of Pacific Peoples.

Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic and International) Professor Vernon Squire says the framework's launch marks a significant milestone in the University's longstanding engagement with local, national and regional Pacific communities.

The six goals are: Demonstrating and valuing leadership on Pacific matters; Encouraging Pacific research excellence; Strengthening community engagement; Promoting growth and development; Encouraging Pacific curricula; Contributing to the Pacific region and international progress.

Campuses to be smoke-free

The University is set to become fully smoke-free from January. Previously the Christchurch, Wellington and Invercargill campuses were all smoke-free, but the Dunedin campus had allowed smoking at a distance further than six metres from buildings.

Announcing the move, Vice-Chancellor Professor Harlene Hayne says the University's new policy would enhance the outstanding environment offered to staff and students who work

and study at Otago. In preparation for the move, Quit Advisors at the University are providing support for staff and students who smoke, but wish to quit, including the supply of Quit cards. These cards may be redeemed at participating pharmacies with the University subsidising the \$5 prescription fee for up to three rounds of subsidised nicotine replacement therapy per year until May 31, 2015.

Staff and domestic students are eligible and, as international students are not able to access subsidised medications in New Zealand, they will instead be able to receive behavioural counselling and support from Quit Advisors and Quitline staff.

Support for student volunteering

A Student Volunteering Centre is to be launched by the University to match Dunedin students with local voluntary organisations.

The initiative aims to harness student altruism for the betterment of both students and the wider community.

The new service will develop a better understanding of the need of organisations wanting volunteers, while at the same time matching this with student availability. It will be housed within the University's Career Development Centre.

The University has worked closely with OUSA in establishing this initiative, and has consulted widely over the last year with a number of local volunteering agencies and others.

Poisons database award

Otago Innovation Limited, the University of Otago's commercialisation arm, has won a national award for commercialising the National Poison Centre's database.

The database - TOXINZ - contains more than 190,000 documents



National Poisons Centre Operations Manager Lucy Shieffebien (left) with Otago Innovation Limited Commercialisation Manager Dr Tracey Smith and CEO Colin Dawson at the KiwiNet Research Commercialisation Awards.

with comprehensive and up-to-date information on poisonous chemicals, pharmaceuticals, plants and animals. Subscriptions to TOXINZ are currently being sold to poison centres, hospitals, state governments and health boards.

The success of TOXINZ was recognised at the inaugural KiwiNet Research Commercialisation Awards, at which Otago Innovation Limited received the BNZ Commercial Deal Award.

Funding successes for Otago researchers

Otago health researchers pursuing a range of innovative projects aimed at improving the health and well-being of New Zealanders gained around \$16.5 million in a recent national funding round.

The 12 Otago contracts awarded in the Health Research Council's latest annual round include a significant five-year programme investigating how proteins from a virus found in sheep can be exploited to provide potential therapies for skin wounds and other conditions in humans, such as cancer,

inflammatory disorders and viral infection.

Researchers from across the University's Dunedin, Christchurch and Wellington campuses have also gained funding for 11 other world-class projects. These range from gaining important insights into cancer genetics, to the development and assessment of a school-based asthma support toolkit for Māori children, who are twice as likely to be hospitalised by the condition.

In another recent funding success, two Otago projects received a total of \$1.92 million in support in the Government's latest science investment round. They involve enabling bio-manufacturing of key industrial chemicals and developing new bee-friendly insecticides.

Appointments



Professor **Helen Nicholson** (above) as the University's Pro-Vice-Chancellor, International. Professor Nicholson was Dean of the Otago School of Medical Sciences and has many years of experience in senior positions at the University. She succeeds Professor Sarah Todd, who this month takes up a similar position at Griffith University in Queensland.

Professor **Barry Taylor** (Women's and Children's Health) as Dean of the Dunedin School of Medicine. Professor Taylor is a distinguished researcher who has dedicated his career to improving the health and well-being of children. Dr **John Adams** has stepped down after 10 highly productive years in the Dean's role.

Professor **Steven Higgins** as Professor of Botany. An internationally leading plant ecologist whose research focuses on predicting how ecosystems might respond to environmental change, Professor Higgins comes to Otago from J.W. Goethe University Frankfurt am Main, Germany, where he had been a professor at that university's Institute for Physical Geography since 2007.

Professor **Stephen MacDonell** as Professor of Information Science within the Otago Business School. A leading information systems and software engineering researcher, Professor MacDonell was previously Director of AUT University's Software Engineering Research Laboratory.

Janine Kapa as Associate Dean, Māori, for the Otago Business School. Ms Kapa's (Kāi Tahu, Kāti Māmoe, Waitaha) role is to provide leadership and strategic advice to the school in all matters relating to the University's Māori Strategic Framework. She previously worked in the University's Office of Māori Development.

Awards/Achievements

Dr **Stephen Sowerby** (Applied Science) and colleagues received a Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation Grand Challenges Explorations Grant to develop a radically simple cellphone-enabled approach for the quantitative diagnosis of parasitic worms in humans.

Associate Professor **Gordon Sanderson** (Dunedin School of Medicine), Professor **Rachel Spronken-Smith** (Graduate Research School) and Dr

Moyra Sweetnam Evans won this year's University of Otago Teaching Excellence Awards. Associate Professor Sanderson went on to take top honours at the national Tertiary Teaching Excellence Awards (see story page 38).

The Otago University Students' Association named Dr **Roslyn Kemp** (Microbiology and Immunology) as Research Supervisor of the Year in its annual awards, and Associate Professor **Jacinta Ruru** (Law) as New Supervisor of the Year. A special, posthumous commemoration was announced for Dr **Tamar Murachver** (Psychology) who passed away at the beginning of this year.

World leading parasite ecology and evolution Professor **Robert Poulin** (Zoology) is this year's recipient of the University's highest research honour, the Distinguished Research Medal (see story page 6).

Dr **Shinichi Nakagawa** (Zoology), a behavioural ecologist who has earned a growing international reputation for his research, is the latest recipient of the University's Carl Smith Medal and Rowheath Trust Award. The medal and award recognise outstanding research performance by early-career staff.

Professor **Charles Higham's** (Anthropology and Archaeology) decades of research into the origins of South-East Asia's Angkorian civilisation was recognised at the inaugural Shanghai Archaeology Forum. He is one of 10 individuals or organisations worldwide selected in the category of major archaeological research findings.

Several current Otago students and recent graduates gained prestigious Fulbright New Zealand Science and Innovation Graduate Awards to undertake PhD studies at US institutions: **Ilsa Cooke**, **Gaya Gnanalingam**, **Sunkita Howard**, **Ani Kainamu**, **Kelly O'Connell** and **Charlotte Till**. **Charlotte Greenfield** received a Fulbright New Zealand General

Graduate Award to complete a Master of Science degree in Journalism at Columbia University.

Emeritus Professors

The University Council has granted the status of Professor Emeritus to **Evan Begg** (Clinical Pharmacology, Christchurch), **John Campbell** (Medicine), **John Drummond** (Music), **Alistair Fox** (English), **James Simpson** (Chemistry) and **Elisabeth Wells** (Public Health and General Practice, Christchurch).

Honorary Doctorate

In May the University conferred the honorary degree of Doctor of Science on Professor **Helen Heslop**, a distinguished Otago graduate who has forged an outstanding medical and research career overseas. Professor Heslop is an internationally recognised researcher who has helped to pioneer therapies that involve transfusing immune cells to fight viral infections and target and destroy cancers caused by viruses.

Queen's Birthday Honours

Alumni and staff to receive Queen's Birthday Honours include:

Officer of the New Zealand Order of Merit (ONZM): Dr **Stephen McCormack**, for services to community health; Associate Professor **David Perez**, for services to oncology; Professor **Piri Sciascia**, for services to Māori arts.

Member of the New Zealand Order of Merit (MNZM): Ms **Patricia Barwick**, for services to sport; Professor **Carl David Burgess**, for services to pharmacology; Dr **Simon Stables**, for services to disaster victim identification.

Queen's Service Medal (QSM): Mrs **Kathleen Barnett**, for services to music; Dr **Christopher Milne**, for services to sports medicine; Mrs **Jane Wilson**, for services to the community.

A word from the Head

With only two months to go before the end of the year it's time to look back and see what has been achieved by the Development and Alumni Relations team in 2013.

We've introduced many changes in the past 12 months, mainly in the way we communicate with you through publications, face-to-face activities and social media platforms. Opportunities for alumni to meet and socialise have been increased with the introduction of local networking, based on the model that has been operating successfully for many years in Melbourne. We now have groups meeting regularly in Chicago and Jakarta, and similar groups being established in Auckland, Napier, Perth, Singapore and Los Angeles. Getting together locally is a great way to establish new social and professional contacts and networks of Otago people to welcome new alumni and to provide a point of contact for graduate or exchange students travelling abroad for study or research.

The revamp of the Alumni & Friends website has also enhanced opportunities for communication via Otago groups on Facebook and LinkedIn. We are using these networks to post the latest news, videos and photos of what's happening on campus. A new feature of the website enables alumni to listen to talks by outstanding academics and distinguished visitors, either in real time or via podcast. Also planned is an e-newsletter that will bring you the latest news and events from Otago, as well as alumni stories, memories and photos from the archives.

Amidst all this innovation, the much-praised *Otago Magazine* still stands as the University's flagship publication,

bringing you features and stories about the best Otago has to offer in a high quality format. It can also be viewed online at www.otago.ac.nz/otagomagazine
Happy reading!

Otago's international networks

Alumni of the University of Otago in America, Inc (AUOA)

US-based alumni are welcoming the creation of new local groups offering the opportunity for socialising and networking close to home. The first of these was established in Chicago in April, followed by activity in Washington DC and Houston. Interest has also been expressed in setting up groups in Dallas and Seattle. These networks can take many forms depending on the particular interests of alumni in the area. Some are networks of retired alumni; others are networks of academic alumni offering research opportunities for postgraduate students in the US. If you are interested in setting up a network in your city, or if you would like to be put in touch with someone who has, please contact Kaitlin Wolf at kaitlin.wolf@otago.ac.nz

Through the generosity of the board of the AUOA, scholarships have been made available to undergraduate students who spend up to a year studying as part of the Otago Global exchange programme. Psychology honours student Emma Martin, who was one of the 14 students who received an AUOA Exchange Award in 2012, wrote of her experience:

Spending the past five months at the University of Texas at Austin was an absolute privilege. At UT I assisted in research on eating patterns with Dr Ray Hawkins. In this role I learnt first-hand all the nitty-gritty that goes into research, and it gave me much insight and



Alison Finigan:
Head of Alumni Relations

relevant experience for my 2013 honours project. Although I was there for academic purposes, I've learnt just as many life lessons. My semester in Texas is something I will never forget – the contacts I have made all over the world and the amazing true-American college experiences I will have forever.



Emma Martin (left) at UT (Austin).

The travel scholarship is one of a number of projects funded by the AUOA in 2013. Others include an investigation into the causes of mortality in yellow-eyed penguins, an Irish Studies honours and postgraduate fund to enhance research opportunities, and an endowment in perpetuity to support undergraduate scholarships for first-year students. The University of Otago is grateful to the board of the AUOA for their generous support of these projects.

Remembering Dr Kevin Novins

Dr Kevin Novins (below), a former staff member of Otago's Department of



Computer Science (1995-2001), died in January 2011. He was aged 47. Later that year his family contacted the AUOA, expressing a wish to make a bequest in his name.

Kevin grew up in Westchester County, New York, and attended Harvard University, majoring in computer science and graduating in 1985. In 1994 he gained a PhD at Cornell University. Kevin was on the faculty of two New Zealand universities for 10 years: first, at the University of Otago and, later, at the University of Auckland, specialising in computer graphics, user interfaces, computer vision and scientific visualisation. He returned to the United States in 2006 to work in the financial management industry.

The Novins family's gift in memory of Kevin was awarded by the Board of the AUOA to support the Kevin L. Novins Computer Science Travelling Scholarship for graduate research candidates whose studies may benefit from a period spent in the US, as well as to support visits of US computer science academics to the University. Kevin's brother Douglas says: "Kevin loved his years at Otago and hoped to return to Dunedin one day. This is a wonderful way for us to make sure that his passion for teaching and scholarship does return, and remains a part of the University for years to come."

Canadian Alumni Network

It was with great sadness that we learnt of the recent death of Professor Brian Merrilees. Brian was a proud Otago alumnus who played a pivotal role in establishing the Otago network in Canada. Along with fellow alumnus Allan Portis, he was a mainstay of the Toronto group, always ready to contribute his considerable energy and



enthusiasm to promoting events and projects centred on that city. His support for Otago's fundraising efforts goes back to 1995, with a particular focus on languages and cultures reflecting his academic career that began in Otago's French Department in the 1950s.

The University is particularly grateful for the support that Brian (above) and Pat have given over recent years to Otago students on exchange to the University of Toronto. These students have been warmly welcomed into the Merrilees' "home away from home", providing a safety net as they came to grips with living and studying in a new country.

Brian's outstanding academic achievements and high profile career as a Professor and Head of the Department of French at the University of Toronto mark him out as one of the University of Otago's most distinguished language and literature graduates. He was also a warm and sympathetic friend and will be sadly missed by so many at the University of Otago, where he maintained close links over the years.

The University of Otago Foundation for Malaysia

Malaysian alumni who studied at the University of Otago recall their

time in New Zealand with pride and nostalgia. One aspect of student life that always brings back fond memories is their participation in OMSA, the Otago Malaysian Students' Association, which celebrated its 50th anniversary this year. OMSA marked this significant milestone with a spectacular gala production for Malam Malaysia that attracted a capacity audience to the Dunedin College of Education auditorium in August. News of the production was passed on to the Board of the University of Otago Foundation for Malaysia who generously responded with a gift to help with production costs. The University and OMSA are grateful for the interest and support that alumni have shown in contributing to the celebration of 50 years of Malaysian cultural presence at Otago.



Upcoming events and University celebrations

Alumni events 2013

October

Wed 30 Alberta Network - Edmonton

November

Sat 2 US - San Francisco

Tues 5 US - Dallas

Sat 9 US - Philadelphia

Fri 15 Toronto

Otago Tertiary Chaplaincy Board 50th anniversary celebrations

The Chaplaincy Board was established in 1963 and has worked to serve the University and Otago Polytechnic throughout the last 50 years. To mark this, the Chaplaincy is holding a special dinner featuring a variety of musical items and an after-dinner speech by Emeritus Professor Colin Gibson, who served on the Chaplaincy Board for many years. Alumni of the University of Otago are warmly invited to attend the Tertiary Chaplaincy 50th celebration dinner at Salmond College on Wednesday 27 November from 6pm.

Tickets (\$65 each) can be obtained from Carol Clarke, Student Services Divisional Office, University of Otago, PO Box 56, Dunedin 9054, telephone 03 479 5752, email carol.clarke@otago.ac.nz

When ordering tickets please supply a residential address and the ticket/tickets will be posted to you.



The diamond anniversary of the Class of '53 graduation was very happily celebrated in Napier in March, attended by 14 of the year's graduates, their spouses and widows of graduates.

Reunions

MB ChB Class of 1973 reunion

Napier, 25-27 October, 2013
Contact karen@attend.net.nz
06 833 7440
www.regonline.co.nz/classof73survey

ScienceTeller Festival

Dunedin, 25-28 October, 2013
A celebration of science storytelling through film, writing, the arts and other creative media.

www.scienceteller.com

MB ChB Class of 1993 reunion

Dunedin, 1-2 November, 2013
Contact hlad@xtra.co.nz or
james.letts@southernhb.govt.nz

Arana College 70th anniversary

Dunedin, 22-24 November, 2013
info@arana.ac.nz

Cumberland College 25th anniversary

Dunedin, 2014, date TBC

MB ChB Class of 1959/60

Waitangi, March, 2014
Contact trcant@gmail.com

BDS Class of 1969 reunion

Queenstown, 25th – 27th April, 2014
Contact Pat Treacy
the.treacys@xtra.co.nz

Botany Department 90th celebrations

Dunedin, September, 2014
botany90th@otago.ac.nz

MB ChB Class of 1979

Auckland, 11-12 October, 2014
Contact Sally Urry
surry@middlemore.co.nz

MB ChB Class of 1994 reunion

Dunedin, 14-16 November, 2014
Contact Miriam Webster
miriam.martin@kiwisstat.com

MB ChB Class of 1974 reunion

2014, date TBC
Contact Judy Bent
JudyB@adhb.govt.nz

BDS Class of 1974

2014, date TBC
Contact Gordon Whiteacre
gordon@shdg.co.nz

MB ChB Class of 1966 reunion

Dunedin, 19-21 March, 2015
“In our 50th year ...”

Contact Graham Mellsop

Graham.Mellsop@waikatodhb.health.nz

MB ChB Class of 1964 reunion

Dunedin & Central Otago,
8-11 April, 2015

Contact Colin Fitzpatrick or
Alex Dempster
cbfitz@ihug.co.nz or
Alex.Dempster@sclabs.co.nz

Studholme College centenary celebrations /reunion

27-29 November, 2015

Contact Master of Studholme, Ziggy Lesa
ziggy.lesa@otago.ac.nz or 03 479 5505

Carrington College 70th anniversary reunion

2015, date TBC

Further information for all upcoming events, reunions and celebrations, including RSVP details, can be found on the Alumni & Friends webpages at alumni.otago.ac.nz/events
Alternatively you can contact us at functions.alumni@otago.ac.nz or phone 03 479 4516.

Be active, be social on our new website

The Alumni & Friends website, Your Otago Link, has been revamped with the theme “Be active, be social”. Now we want feedback about the ways in which you would like to be active and social.

Traditionally, institutional alumni engagement has focused on the tried-and-true model of events, general communications and appeal activity. However, we recognise that it is imperative to evolve and to maintain relevance to a changing alumni community.

We want to maintain excellent print communications – the *University of Otago Magazine* is a case in point – and continue to utilise face-to-face

Recent alumni events

Wanaka,
5 September,
Speight's Ale House



Queenstown,
6 September,
Millbrook Resort



Māori alumni reception, Wellington
13 June,
Te Papa Tongarewa



connections (alumni networks and events, career seminars). Yet, as a university, we face the challenge of how to engage alumni when most of you live outside Dunedin and the surrounding region. There are more than 90,000 of you living in over 140 countries (see <http://uoalumni.otago.ac.nz/where-in-the-world-are-you/>).

We have made a start with the re-launch of the Alumni & Friends website as the hub and using Facebook and LinkedIn to further disseminate information.

We aim to tailor activity and engagement to suit alumni from all life stages utilising physical and digital platforms to:

- inform and engage alumni about on-campus activities
- provide engagement tools to increase learning opportunities for national and overseas populations
- invite alumni to participate and share their experiences/stories since leaving university
- offer a range of services to connect, engage and do business online
- explore the potential to link alumni with university staff and students engaged in cutting-edge research.

New technology opens a new world of alumni relations. We would love to hear your feedback and ideas to help us develop features that are useful to you. Please email Louise Lawrence at louise.lawrence@otago.ac.nz

Alumni news

Octagon Prime: A short story collaboration celebrating the unique student culture of the University of Otago.

Recognising alumni achievement, celebrating the unique student experience in Dunedin and encouraging potential

undergraduates to choose Otago, is the inspiration behind a short story collection currently being developed.

Master's graduate Luke MacLean-McMahon initiated the project, bringing together close mates Charlie Stewart, Jack Henderson and James Greenland who wanted to give something back, acknowledging the character-defining experiences they enjoyed in Dunedin.

Initial reception has been positive, with numerous esteemed alumni including Sir Eion Edgar, David Cunliffe, Murray Webb, Mai Chen, Phillipa Gray, Professor Mark Henaghan, Sir Julian Smith and Hamish Pinkham agreeing to share their stories.

"The light-hearted and positive nature of the book will be a catalyst for former students to reflect and share their unique stories with a wider audience," says Luke. "A percentage of any profit will fund a new scholarship encouraging prospective North Island students to choose the University of Otago."

Alison Finigan, Head of Alumni Relations, has taken a keen interest in the project. "This is a fantastic initiative and we'd like to encourage alumni to be involved, starting with sending their stories, photos and memories."

The former Scarfies have set up a small business, Octagon Prime, to get started. To help, or for more information, contact luke@octagonprime.co.nz



Charlie Stewart and Luke MacLean-McMahon with Alison Finigan at the Hamilton alumni reception in May.

Appointment of Court of Convocation members to Council

It was recently announced that the University of Otago Council will recommend to the Minister for Tertiary Education a change in the process by which the three Court of Convocation positions on Council are filled.

The new policy will require that vacant positions be advertised, allowing interested parties to nominate themselves or others as candidates. It is hoped that this will lead to an increase in the number of graduates willing to offer themselves for membership of Council, and will also help ensure that Council has the best balance of skills across its membership.

Recent elections under the existing system have had a very low rate of response - less than six per cent in the last two elections - and have involved considerable cost. The University's alumni comprise more than 90,000 worldwide.

The terms of the current Court of Convocation representatives on Council expire at the end of 2014 and it is expected that confidential nominations and expressions of interest will be called for under the new process towards the end of 2014.

Alumni story

Gus Roxburgh, an Otago graduate holding a master's degree in Natural Resource Management, is an Emmy-nominated documentary producer based in both Santa Monica and Wanaka.

A documentary writer, director, producer and presenter, Gus is known to New Zealand audiences as the presenter of TVNZ's *Wicked Weather*, *Human Potential* and *Brain Power*. In September, Television One screened his latest documentary series, *Wild About New Zealand*, shot in New Zealand's stunning national parks.

Gus has worked in the media for over 15 years, originally as an award-winning freelance writer before branching into film and television in the 1990s. His work, encompassing travel, adventure, science and reality television, has premiered at the Sundance, Los Angeles, Deauville and Torino film festivals. He has been shortlisted for the Oscars and his 2007 documentary on LA gangs, *Crips and Bloods*, received an Emmy nomination for Best Documentary. In 2010, Gus' production *Dying For Everest* – a film about climber Mark Inglis – was the Documentary Channel's viewers' choice for Best Film.

To accompany the *Wild About New Zealand* series, Gus has also written a

book, to be published by Random House in October, demonstrating his passion for the *Wild About New Zealand* project and the importance of protecting our national parks and wider New Zealand environment.

His work thus far reflects the interests he pursued in his study at Otago, with a strong bent towards nature and the environment. He also produces work about life in parts of Los Angeles. Following his 2007 documentary on LA gangs, he is now directing and producing a feature documentary on the Drew League, a basketball league in a gang-infested part of LA which, he says, has become a beacon of hope in the community. The league has saved many young men from a life in gangs, providing them with an opportunity through basketball.

A world away from LA, and much closer to the national parks of *Wild About New Zealand*, Gus' experience of Otago was particularly valuable in terms of the work he has gone on to do.

"My time at Otago studying a diverse range of subjects – from geology to philosophy – certainly helped shape my later work where having a broad range of interests is a definite plus. It also set me up for later graduate studies in natural resource management, which helped



Gus Roxburgh filming in the blue ice caves of the upper Tasman glacier.

Photo: Jason Hosking

inform my strong views on the need to protect our environment.

"And of course, the city is surrounded by mountains and the sea. Otago is a fantastic place for anyone who loves adventure."

THE UNIVERSITY OF OTAGO MAGAZINE IS AVAILABLE ONLINE AT www.otago.ac.nz/otagomagazine and is sent – by post or email – to Otago alumni and friends wherever they are in the world.

Please email database.alumni@otago.ac.nz

- to update or change delivery address
- to read the Magazine and other alumni communications electronically
- to receive an email notification when a new issue of the Magazine is placed online
- to receive just one "household" copy of the Magazine.

KEEP IN TOUCH

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University of Otago
PO Box 56 Dunedin 9054

Physical address
Alumni House, 103 St David Street, Dunedin
Tel 64 3 479 4516
Email alumni@otago.ac.nz
Web www.alumni.otago.ac.nz



Being a Doctor

Understanding medical practice

By Hamish Wilson and Wayne Cunningham

University of Otago lecturers Hamish Wilson and Wayne Cunningham present a fresh approach to medical practice in their new book, *Being a Doctor: Understanding Medical Practice*.

This account of what it is like to be a doctor is based on many years of teaching family physicians, and they argue that being a doctor is much more than simply knowing biomedical facts and having good clinical skills. *Being a Doctor* explores principles and assumptions of modern medicine seldom taught in medical school, but which are integral to the day-to-day working life of health professionals.

Starting with the meaning of suffering and how the "science" of medicine has evolved, it examines the world of the patient, the world of the doctor and how these worlds intersect. Wilson and Cunningham use clinical stories to provide a fresh perspective on the work and role of the modern doctor.

This book is an antidote – an invaluable tool for doctors in practice, students and doctors in training. *Being a Doctor* provides valuable insight for all medical professionals and is an enlightening read for patients and clinicians alike.



Reconstructing Faces

The art and wartime surgery of Gillies, Pickerill, McIndoe and Mowlem

By Murray C. Meikle

The two world wars played an important role in the evolution of plastic and maxillofacial surgery in the first half of the 20th century. This book is about four of the key figures involved.

Sir Harold Gillies and Sir Archibald McIndoe were born in Dunedin. McIndoe and Rainsford Mowlem studied medicine at the University of Otago Medical School, and Henry Pickerill was foundation Dean of the University of Otago Dental School.

The author describes how these surgeons revolutionised plastic surgery and the treatment of facial trauma, working on soldiers, fighter pilots and civilians disfigured by bombs, shrapnel and

burns. Eventually Gillies et al. were supported by a vast surgical enterprise that included surgeons, dentists, anaesthetists, artists and photographers, nurses and orderlies.

The text is fully illustrated with photos, drawings and case notes by the surgeons and war artists at military hospitals at Boulogne-sur-Mer, Aldershot and Sidcup in World War I, and civilian hospitals at East Grinstead, Basingstoke and Hill End in the Second. The book includes a DVD of Rainsford Mowlem performing a variety of plastic operations in 1945.

For further information and more books: Otago University Press
Email university.press@otago.ac.nz or visit www.otago.ac.nz/press

Books by Otago alumni

The 100 Days: Claiming Back New Zealand, by Amy Brooke (Agnes-Mary Mora), HATM Publishing.

Doctor Colenso I presume? Missionary Medical Practice in Mid-nineteenth Century New Zealand, by Ian St George, The Colenso Society, 2013.

From the Big Bang to God: Our Awe-inspiring Journey of Evolution, by Lloyd Geering, Steele Roberts (NZ) and Polebridge (USA).

Early Medical Practitioners in the Manawatu and Palmerston North, by Richard Rawstron.

Crucible of Science, by John Exton, Oxford University Press.

The Teddy Bear's Promise, by Diana Noonan, October 2013.

Sell! by Hazel Phillips, Penguin Books New Zealand, May 2013.

Lives We Leave Behind, by Maxine Alterio, Penguin Books (NZ), 2012 (also published as *Des Vies Derrière Soi*, Editions PRISMA, (France), 2013).

A Place at the Table, by Shirley Erena Murray, Hope Publishing Company, Carol Stream USA, July 2013.

Little Truff and the Siamese Cat, by Ann Russell, AM Publishing New Zealand, 2013.

Dramatic Encounters in the Bible, by M.E. Andrew, ATF Theology, Adelaide, 2013.

Schoolgirl Pregnancy, Motherhood and Education: Dealing with Difference, by Kerry Vincent, Stoke-on-Trent: Trentham, 2012.

Alumni:

If you have recently published a book email the editor at mag.editor@otago.ac.nz

HOCKEN LEGACY

Trading places

The original diary and photograph assumed to be of William Crossan.
(Hocken Collections Uare Taoka o Hākena Misc-MS-1224)

A copra trader's account of his time in the Solomon Islands provides a fascinating glimpse into the everyday lives of traders and islanders, says University of Otago History Professor Judith Bennett.

William Crossan's diary, written mostly in pencil, records the six months he worked as a copra trader in Hada Bay on the island of Makira from 1885-6.

"Very few traders of this era in the Pacific have left documentation," says Bennett. "They tended to be transient - and not particularly given to writing diaries or letters. They flick in and out of history and we only hear of them from missionaries and warships.

"This diary is important for someone wanting to know what traders did, or about that island or the life of colonial labour recruiters."

The diary was donated to the Hocken in February 1987 by the then Dean of Dunedin's St Paul's Cathedral after being found in an old desk at the Deanery. The link between Crossan and St Paul's is unknown, however Crossan was an Anglican. The diary shows his thoughts on many topics, including island life and conflict, cannibalism and his social interactions with the coastal people, primarily with Chief Sono, whom he called Johnstone.

"For me, the most important thing was the relationship between Johnstone and Crossan," says Bennett. "It was reciprocal - not one dominated by the other."

Johnstone needed Crossan to give him access to goods. In return, Crossan needed Johnstone's support to collect copra and to protect him from the many dangers on the island.

"There was a kaleidoscope of changing patterns of power. The coastal people and 'bush people' had tension between them. And there was tension between the different coastal groups.

"Other traders had been killed in that area. They'd either cheated, looked at someone the wrong way or, before that, another white man had offended."

Crossan stayed out of the politics and had no major issues, but did anger Johnstone once by making a comment about his "sister". The chief did not talk to him for some time.

"I cannot think of what I said to the old fellow that he should take such offence as this."

The diary shows Crossan to be an intelligent, hard-working man who had his mind on the job, says Bennett.

"He was very single minded. You don't get money if you don't get copra."

A decline in the copra market, combined with the wounding of an

islander by his partner, may explain his sudden return to New Zealand.

"We think he thought it might be time to go home. We can only infer."

Bennett and geographer Tim Bayliss-Smith, from St John's College, University of Cambridge, England, have transcribed and annotated Crossan's diary in their book, *An Otago Storeman in Solomon Islands: The Diary of William Crossan, Copra Trader 1885-86*, which adds historical commentary as well as information about Crossan's life before and after his time in Makira. It is available online and was recently launched at the Hocken.

LAURA HEWSON

HOCKEN EXHIBITION

Place Makers: Artists and Iconic Landscapes

Hocken Gallery

Until 7 February 2014

Drawing on the Hocken's Pictorial Collections, this exhibition focuses on predominately 20th century depictions of place by New Zealand artists.

Photo: Alan Dove

... Stuart House (aka Arana Hall)?

As Arana College prepares to celebrate 70 years as a student accommodation provider, warden Jamie Gilbertson says the “characterful” facility owes much of its current success to traditions established over its long history.

To say that Arana College had humble beginnings is no understatement. In 1941, with less than £300 funding, founder Presbyterian minister the Reverend Harold Turner established Stuart House at 638 Cumberland Street. Turner was aware that an accommodation shortage had arisen and his previous experience as an assistant minister at Knox College had given him an appreciation of the positive impact residential life could have on students.

At Stuart House furniture from auction sales bedecked the rooms, donated blankets warded off the cold for its 20 or so residents, and the unsalaried Turner received £1 per week

accommodation supplement for himself, his wife and young daughter.

It soon became apparent that the facilities could not meet demand and, by 1943, Stuart House was re-established to its present site in Clyde Street and given the name Arana Hall (now Arana College). The centerpiece building – a Queen Anne-style mansion – was the former stately home of Member of Parliament, Minister of Defence and University of Otago Chancellor Sir James Allen. “Arana” was a Māori transliteration of his name.

The next significant construction work for the current main block took place in the 1960s with much of the development funded by the Colombo Plan – a scheme that assisted students from developing nations in studying at Western universities. By the late 1960s, when the Bates and Colombo accommodation wings were opened,

Arana’s basic layout had been set and accommodation for about 140 residents was provided.

An incident at the opening of the new wings is typical of a long tradition of hi-jinks providing a foil to studiousness – as Sir Keith Holyoake (who was carried to the ceremony on a litter) unveiled the foundation plaque a risqué image was revealed, placed there by a resident practical joker.

During his 12-year tenure as warden, Gilbertson has come to realise that antics and academic achievement have always co-existed at Arana.

“There is an engrained character at the college and a scallywaggery that goes back to the first students. Arana was an all-comers hall with students straight from home and others returning from war so, while they studied to gain vocations, there was also some thumbing of the nose at authority.



The Arana rugby team before a match against Carrington in 1959 (Arana won 17-5).



The Laurensen block intake of 1958, sunbathing.

“Once a group of students were crossing the Leith when they found a large eel. It was put in a sugar sack and placed in matron’s bath. The boys waited nearby for the scream, which duly came. That story is one of many.”

Arana’s roll call of former residents reflects a spread of talented people in a variety of fields, and inevitably a few names which are now associated with both character and controversy. Comedian Jon Gadsby, child cancer researcher Professor Michael Holdaway, Olympic gold medalist rower Nathan Cohen and paralympian Phillipa Gray are all ex-Arana residents.

Evident in the group photographs displayed in the college are several shifts in the make-up of residents. Over time, the starched white collars and matching black ties gave way to more informal attire, the college became more ethnically diverse and, in 1978, female students were admitted for the first time.

“Whereas boys once arrived by steam train or bus with a small suitcase, today’s residents might fly in with a bike or a snowboard,” says Gilbertson. “But their reasons for being here are the same. They arrive to study dentistry, medicine, physical education and teaching. While the antics have largely disappeared, they remain a highly spirited bunch.”

The recent addition of the Leithview and Rawiri wings has seen the college’s numbers swell to 401, comprised primarily of first-year students, but also Foundation students (including Pacific Islands and Māori students studying pre-health-sciences courses), and returning and postgraduate students and staff.

“We have a true cross-sectional slice of New Zealand society and we are lucky to have that representative diversity. It continues the college tradition of always having been a place for hardworking all-rounders.”

With some pride, Gilbertson describes academic achievement levels at Arana as “stunningly high” – in 2012, 48 per cent of the papers sat by students resulted in A- and above grades.

While traditional activities such as the inter-college sports competitions and the annual ball still take place, more recent regular features emphasise community work, outdoor pursuits, and choral and cultural events.

Another recent development indicative of the college’s cultural “coming-of-age” is Arana’s new haka, written by School of Māori, Pacific and Indigenous Studies Associate Professor Poia Rewi.

It is easy, once the history is factored in, to reconcile the college’s current status as a sought after residence with its “humble beginnings”.

“Turner, subsequent wardens and the Stuart Residence Halls Council had a vision for social mobility and betterment through education, and it didn’t matter what people’s parents did or where they were from,” says Gilbertson.

“The guiding vision was ‘come and join this community, do your best, then do well in the wider community’.

“People ask why the college is successful, and part of it is knowing where we come from and applying that vision and direction in a modern setting.”

SAM STEVENS

Memories, photos and memorabilia from yesteryear – Arana College is inviting past residents to share them all at its 70th reunion next month.

Warden Jamie Gilbertson says that an array of social and cultural events, and tours of areas familiar to past residents, are planned for the two-day reunion.

Events: These include tours of Dunedin City, the college and University of Otago campus, the Forsyth Barr Stadium, a cocktail function, photo shoot, celebration dinner and church service.

When: Events will be held between Friday 22 and Sunday 24 November 2013.

Registration: With limited places available past residents are encouraged to register interest as soon as possible.

Register and pay for the event by going to the registration page:
<https://secure-www.otago.ac.nz/conferences/arana/>
 Join the Arana College 70th Reunion group on Facebook to keep up to date with the latest news.

For further information contact: info@arana.co.nz or functions.alumni@otago.ac.nz



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