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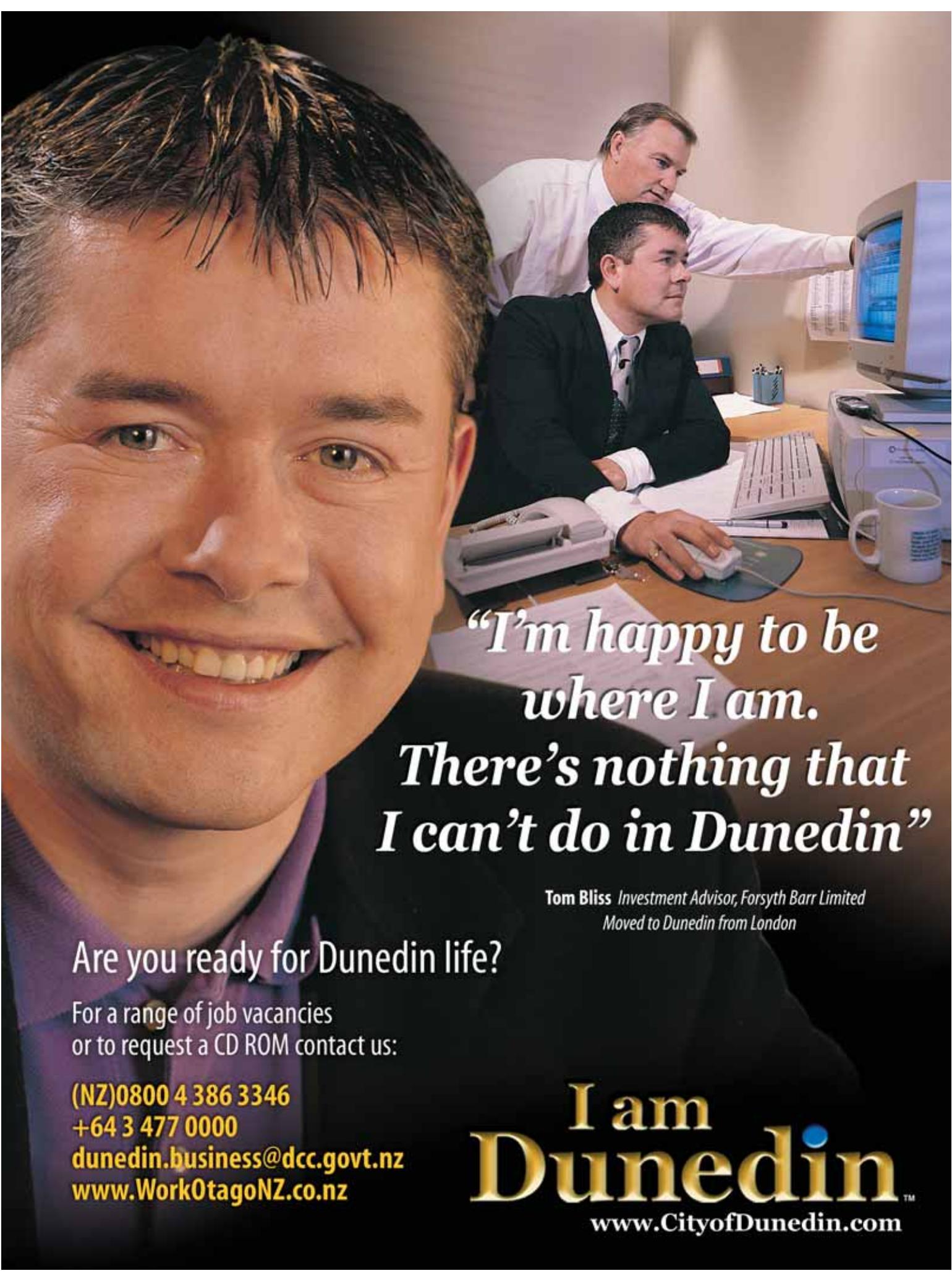
ISSUE 11: JUNE 2005

## NATURAL high

THE SCIENCE AND ART OF NATURAL HISTORY FILMMAKING

DENTAL DETECTIVE: THE FASCINATING WORLD OF DENTAL FORENSICS  
OUR MAN IN AICHI  
CONFRONTING CANCER FACE-TO-FACE





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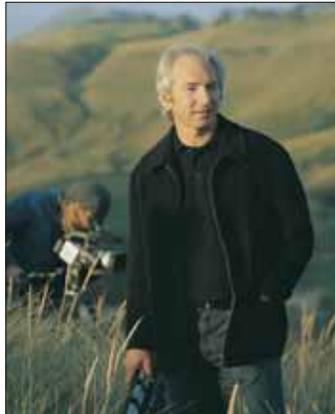
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## VC's COMMENT

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Last year the University of Otago enrolled 2,604 international students. They came from 82 countries, with the largest numbers being from the USA, China, Malaysia and Germany (in that order). Many of these students came for either a semester or a year of study, as part of their degree programme at a university in their own country. Others came to study for their whole undergraduate or postgraduate degree at Otago.

The majority of these students paid international fees, but many came under one of the student exchange agreements which we now hold with 84 overseas universities. We also encourage our own students to grasp the opportunity provided by such agreements and, indeed, we send more students abroad than any other New Zealand university.

Our international roll does not include students from Australia, who are regarded as equivalent to domestic students. I was interested to learn that quite a number of the excellent students who come to us from Australia are in fact sons and daughters of Otago alumni.

That brings me to the point of this message. Recently I had the pleasure of attending Otago alumni functions in Los Angeles and Dublin. Several alumni said to me that they would dearly like their children to experience the unique academic and student life of Otago. Of course, it will not always be possible for such students to come to Otago for the whole of their university education, but you might want to encourage your daughter or son to spend a semester or a year at Otago, while earning credit towards a degree at their home university.

If your son or daughter is eligible for one of the exchange schemes, they would just continue to pay fees to their home university. Otherwise they would pay fees to Otago, but those who hold New Zealand citizenship qualify for the lower domestic fees. Whatever the fee structure, you can be assured of value for money!

If you would like to explore opportunities of this kind, our International Office would be pleased to give advice. It is always a pleasure to welcome the sons and daughters of Otago alumni to this University.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "David Skegg". The signature is fluid and cursive.

*Professor David Skegg*  
Vice-Chancellor – University of Otago

# NATURAL high

Otago's Postgraduate Diploma in Natural History Filmmaking was the first of its kind in the world. At the forefront of the inaugural WildSouth International Wildlife Film Festival, it combines science and art, promoting a genre that is increasingly fast-paced.

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IT TAKES A RARE COMBINATION OF TALENTS TO MAKE good natural history and science documentaries.

Telling stories about wildlife requires an understanding of both animal behaviour and the techniques of good filmmaking – skills usually acquired only after years of on-the-job experience.

Now the University of Otago is offering would-be filmmakers a head start.

As its Postgraduate Diploma in Natural History Filmmaking and Communication (PGDipNHFC) enters its fifth year, a new master's programme is starting and the University is seeking to establish a Chair in Natural History and Science Filmmaking. This will cement Otago's position as the premier place in the world for the study, development and critical analysis of wildlife and science documentaries.

The University's diploma was a world first and, even now, there is only one other similar academic path to the world of wildlife documentaries.

Otago's course is the result of an unusual partnership between town and gown, being taught in association with Dunedin's world-renowned television documentary producer, Natural History New Zealand (nhnz).

Course director and Department of Zoology Associate Professor Lloyd Davis had made a number of wildlife documentaries with nhnz over the years. When a colleague raised the idea for a filmmaking course, Davis worked with Richard Thomas, an executive producer at nhnz, to develop a format.

The idea was to turn scientists into filmmakers, says Davis. "nhnz said that the best natural history filmmakers were often the people who understood the biology and the behaviour of the animals, but initially they don't have the film skills. And people with film skills don't necessarily understand animal behaviour. We planned to take graduates from subjects such as biology and zoology and add value by giving them editing and camera and storytelling skills so they could make natural history, science and wildlife documentaries."



*Scientist, writer and filmmaker Associate Professor Lloyd Davis with students Michael Booth and Chris Kugelman: "... what sets us apart is our connection with nhnz and our storytelling. Storytelling remains the core aspect of the course."*

“As soon as we started, the whole field of natural history filmmaking changed, especially after 9/11 when things got really tight for broadcasters. Blue chip gave way to more fast-paced, reality-based, people-based programmes. We had to look at the whole rationale of what we were trying to teach our students. You can't teach them the abacus when they need computer skills, so we went with the change.”

When the course was approved, Davis successfully applied for the directorship. Even he was surprised by the response to the launch.

“We were inundated with applications. We'd tapped into something we had never realised was there. We had anticipated lots of undergraduates looking at an attractive option, but we found a whole lot of people in New Zealand and worldwide who really wanted to make natural history films.

“Many were muddling along trying to get an 'in' to wildlife filmmaking in their own way. This course was perfectly tailored to their dreams and aspirations. We have had a wonderful selection of applicants to choose from. The standard has been incredibly high.”

Each year, up to 100 applicants have vied for the 12 places on the course, with rising international interest – two thirds of last year's students coming from overseas. The average age of successful students has been about 30, which has made for a very mature course, says Davis.

Initially the diploma consisted of four natural history filmmaking papers and two optional science subjects, but this changed as the course evolved.

“We listened to the students and they didn't want more science papers at the cost of not learning things that would help them make films, so in the second year we did away with the electives and produced six papers related to filmmaking,” says Davis.

“Then we found that the course didn't sit well with the academic year. Students had to make a film during the

University year, but the best animal behaviour tended to be in spring and summer, so we changed the course again in the third year to run from July to June. It opened up a wider range of filmmaking possibilities.”

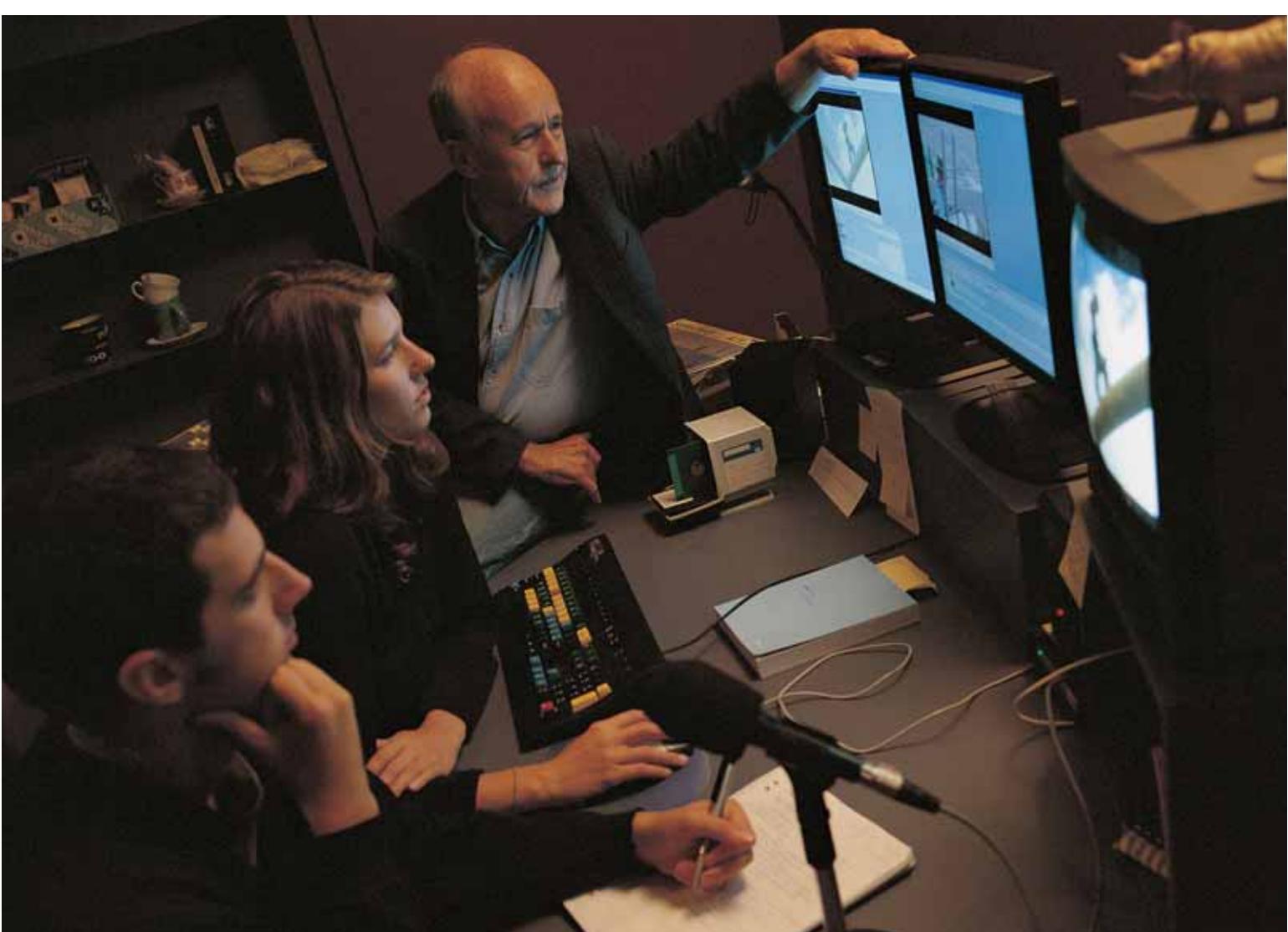
Internationally, television audiences were changing too, and the course had to respond to that. Traditional blue chip natural history films, with high production values and featuring nothing but animals, were considered too slow for the developing market.

“Almost as soon as we started, the whole field of natural history filmmaking changed, especially after 9/11 when things got really tight for broadcasters. Blue chip gave way to more fast-paced, reality-based, people-based programmes. We had to look at the whole rationale of what we were trying to teach our students. You can't teach them the abacus when they need computer skills, so we went with the change,” says Davis.

Student feedback resulted in further honing. “We aim at graduating potential producers and directors who can create a good story and a good documentary – storytelling is the heart – with some exposure to cameras and editing programmes as is necessary for them to understand what is possible,” says Davis.

“But the reality is that all of the students want more hands-on skills. In the fourth year we increased the amount of hands-on work, especially with cameras and editing software. The best of our students come out very skilled, and some have gone on to become editors and camera operators rather than trainee directors or producers. There are hundreds of filmmaking schools where you can learn craft, but what sets





Richard Thomas (top), of Natural History New Zealand, with students Chris Taine and Tamsin Chance.

us apart is our connection with nhnz and our storytelling. Storytelling remains the core aspect of the course.”

Davis should know. He is an award-winning writer, with scores of publications, two academic texts and two commercial books to his name. His *Plight of the Penguin* was the first non-fiction work to win Book of the Year in the New Zealand Post Children’s Book Awards in 2002. This success followed on from his *Penguin: a season in the life of an Adelie penguin*, which won the PEN Best First Book Award for non-fiction in 1994.

His filmmaking credits go back to 1985, when he directed and wrote *Eating like a Gannet*, going on to write and direct *Under Galapagos* and, more recently, *Meet the Real Penguins* which won 11 major international awards.

For the diploma, Davis teaches creative non-fiction writing for documentaries and the biology of natural history. Students take papers in Techniques of Natural History Filmmaking, The Craft of Natural History Storytelling, Biology as Natural History, do work experience and make a



“We want WildSouth to become for southern hemisphere wildlife and natural history filmmakers what Sundance is for feature filmmakers...”

commercial half-hour documentary.

Much of the course is taught by professional filmmakers such as nhnz coordinator Richard Thomas and teaching fellows Steve Downes and Paul Donovan. Guest lecturers give students practical advice based on years of experience in their specialities.

It's the first time teaching and assessment of a University qualification have been partially entrusted to a major industrial entity. As the world's second largest producer of factual filmmaking, nhnz provides students with decades of experience to draw on, and opportunities to work in a busy production facility with practising producers, directors, writers, camera operators, sound operators and editors.

nhnz also offers internships for one or two top graduates each year, which can lead to full-time jobs. “You have to walk before you can run,” says Davis, “but several of our graduates who interned with nhnz are still there – because they are good.

“You can't always prove your worth in just a year or two, but reactions to the graduates coming out of our course have been very favourable. People who have taken them on say they have proved good value and our reputation has started to grow.

“Most of our graduates leave us with a set of skills that allows them to go out and be independent filmmakers. Natural history is a limited market. Many have gone on to work in the field, but not necessarily in filmmaking.”

About two-thirds of the diploma graduates have found employment in the industry and are currently working in the UK, USA, Canada, Asia, Australia and New Zealand.

Demand for the course has been so great that places may be increased from 12 to 16, and a new Master of Science in

Natural History and Science Filmmaking starts this year, with a view to expanding it to a PhD in the future.

The University believes it would not only provide leadership in the field, but would reinforce Dunedin's already strong reputation created in large part by nhnz. The long-term goal would be to see Dunedin become the world centre for factual filmmaking.

The proposed Chair in Natural History and Science Filmmaking would facilitate interdisciplinary studies across a range of departments including Zoology, Design Studies, Film and Media Studies, English, Communication Studies, and the Marine Studies Centre and Portobello Marine Laboratory. Initiated by the University's Development Office, the *Leading Thinkers* campaign is seeking possible donors whose gift toward the chair will be matched by the government dollar-for-dollar through the Partners for Excellence Programme.

Other evolving developments for the course include supporting festivals to showcase the films of graduating students in Dunedin, and strengthening the new WildSouth International Wildlife Film Festival, which launched in Wanaka in April this year.

The WildSouth festival, planned to coincide with Wanaka's Arts Festival of Colour, is proposed to run alongside it every two years, with post-festival screenings in Dunedin.

Davis was at the forefront of the WildSouth idea, which is also supported by nhnz. “We want WildSouth to become for southern hemisphere wildlife and natural history filmmakers what Sundance is for feature filmmakers: a place that provides an identifiable community, a place that pushes the boundaries and a place that is the spawning ground for new talent,” he says.



*Porker Stalker* by Claudia Babirat and Ruth Barton

# Telling good stories . . .



Photo: Graham McKerracher

Back on campus, diploma graduate Sina Walker is now working on a 10-part reality television series about student life.

In addition to highlighting films about southern wildlife, science, adventure, peoples and places, the festival's aim was to encourage new and emerging filmmakers by giving them a voice and a venue, and by bringing them into close, informal contact with key executives and top producers.

Speakers included executives from Discovery International and Animal Planet, and workshops and seminars brought together filmmakers, broadcasters, educators, scientists and storytellers.

"Until now the three main natural history festivals have been in the northern hemisphere," says Davis. "We're trying to create a little bit of balance in the south, as well as providing an outlet for new filmmakers."

Those filmmakers, of course, include Otago's diploma graduates.

"Our students have ridiculously small budgets to make films," says Davis, "but they produce a quality product, showing that the technique and craft and vision you bring to something are important."

Proving this point, *Porker Stalker*, produced by students Claudia Babirat and Ruth Barton, was nominated in both the best newcomer and best people and places categories at the WildSouth festival, ultimately winning the best newcomer award.

"You give some creative people their head and they will make something that will blow you away. Seeing their creative potential unleashed is really rewarding."

Nigel Zega

DIPLOMA GRADUATE SINA WALKER IS NOW WORKING AS a video journalist on a 10-part reality series nhnz is making for TVNZ about student life at the University of Otago. The job followed a six-month, paid internship at nhnz.

Walker applied to the diploma course after gaining a BCom, attending film and television school, and working at TVNZ.

"I wanted to redirect where I was going with my career," says Walker. "I'd always wanted to work with nhnz, not just because of the wildlife connections, but because they made such good documentaries and they told good stories. The big thing at nhnz is that there are some amazing people there to learn from.

"I didn't know what to expect as it was only the third course. I found it was not all theory, but had a lot of hands-on. We were given instructions on techniques and then allowed to develop our skills ourselves as much as we wanted. It was quite self-directed.

"I think that was the right way to do it because everyone was at different levels regarding what they had already done. Some had no background in television, some had no background in science. People could find their own level.

"The tutors put a lot of weight on storytelling – how to make our writing effective and 'alive' – and I learned a lot. You never stop learning.

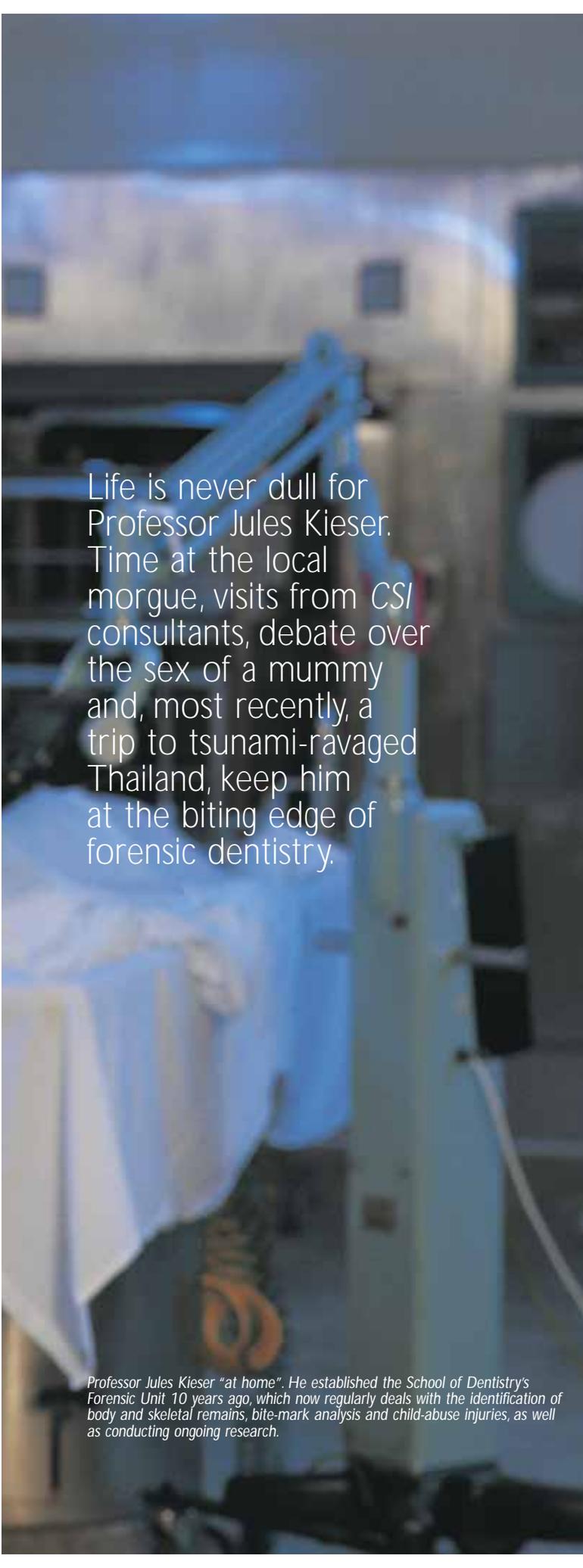
"I'd like to carry on developing my directing and writing skills, and I'd like to do social documentaries – I suppose everything is a people story in the end."

Scarfie Days, the reality series nhnz is making for TVNZ, is expected to screen towards the end of this year. Focusing on six first- and second-year students, it follows them through their year at the University of Otago.



# Dental detective





Life is never dull for Professor Jules Kieser. Time at the local morgue, visits from *CSI* consultants, debate over the sex of a mummy and, most recently, a trip to tsunami-ravaged Thailand, keep him at the biting edge of forensic dentistry.

*Professor Jules Kieser "at home". He established the School of Dentistry's Forensic Unit 10 years ago, which now regularly deals with the identification of body and skeletal remains, bite-mark analysis and child-abuse injuries, as well as conducting ongoing research.*

NINE PERFECTLY-PAINTED RUBY-RED TOENAILS AND A tenth half-finished: that's one of the images that will stick in the mind of Professor Jules Kieser following his trip to tsunami-ravaged Thailand. The toenails belonged to the body of a woman that Kieser, as a member of a New Zealand disaster victim identification (DVI) team, helped identify. That one unfinished toenail yielded a whole heart-breaking scene: a bikini-clad woman enjoying the Boxing Day sun on an idyllic Thai beach and having nothing more taxing to do with her time than paint her toenails ... until nature dumped its aquatic fury at her feet.

When Kieser (head of Oral Sciences at the School of Dentistry) first arrived on Phuket Island, the scene there didn't tally with the unimaginable devastation he'd seen on television. He and his fellow forensic workers were delivered to the door of a hotel that wore very little trace of the tsunami's wrath.

"It was really, really flash. It was a magnificent hotel and it was untouched. I had a room on the beach that I could never have afforded to stay in because the charges are about \$US800 per night. There was nobody in the hotel so they gave it to us for just about nothing. Only the agapanthus lilies had died and there were a couple of tropical fish that got into the pool, so we thought 'What are these people talking about'. I couldn't believe it – I thought nothing had happened to it. But then we drove up to Khao Lak and saw these beautiful beaches destroyed – there's nothing there. The whole bus just gasped – it was just like a nuclear zone."

Kieser had to work 12-hour days in a make-shift morgue (erected in a Buddhist temple) in 35-degree heat amid a profusion of decaying corpses. When dry ice was put down to preserve the bodies lying outside the temple, the whole scene became very surreal. "It was eerie," says Kieser, "like something out of *Star Wars*."

Examining bodies for dental evidence is a vital part of the identification process. The shape of an individual's teeth and the pattern of crowns and fillings are unique. Fingerprinting, on the other hand, can be more difficult given that the body's extremities are often the first to decompose, and DNA testing is a slower and more expensive method of identification.

“If you are unlucky enough to be attacked by someone,  
I suggest you fight back and bite really hard.

These bite marks are really important for us from an evidential point of view  
because sometimes they are the only signs of who attacked that person.”

Although examining the dead was grisly business, it was the data entry and analysis that Kieser found more harrowing: anonymous bodies suddenly assumed real lives and identities.

“You become very clinical. You depersonalise it. You have to be professional otherwise you go mad.” But when he had to match the dental records of a Czech couple to the happy honeymooning photos found on a digital camera in their hotel room, that professional mask slipped a bit. “My goodness, that was terrible.”

His second and third weeks were spent entering and matching all the ante-mortem data (dental records, photographs of victims, blood types) with post-mortem information such as DNA, fingerprints, rings, watches, piercings, tattoos, artificial hips, breast implants, cardiac pacemakers, details of operations or glass eyes. “There’s nothing holy in this business,” he says.

While in Thailand, Kieser heard many tales of tsunami naivety and foolishness. “I spoke to one survivor who was in a boat when the tsunami struck and when she looked back the sea had gone a long, long way out. There were fish everywhere and people were running around picking up the fish. Kids were picking them up and playing with them. I also heard that at one school in Sri Lanka the teachers took the kids down to the beach to have a look when they heard that the tsunami was coming.”

At the time of this interview there are still about 4,000 bodies to be identified and two of Kieser’s dentistry colleagues – Ross Meldrum and Norman Firth – have just headed off to join another DVI team in Thailand. When asked if he’d go back for another stint he says, “No, you don’t do that sort of thing more than once”.

But although Thailand has been ruined for him now, he is happy in the knowledge that he aided the grieving process of the survivors. “If there isn’t a body then people can’t close – it’s terrible. It’s something to do with our psyche.”

Kieser’s interest in dental forensics was first prompted by a trip to Paraguay. There, he saw that the existence of the locals who lived on the banks of the River Paraguay was very much at the mercy of their environment. When the weather was favourable they fished quite happily, but when the rainy season arrived with its ensuing floods they migrated, often leaving behind the old and the young to die.

“I was looking at a lot of the skulls there to see how this harsh environment affected their teeth and the way they grew because they’re only tiny little stunted people. That got me interested in the signs and symptoms left behind on the skulls of what happened in the past. So, I ran a double sort of career, as a dentist in practice and as a physical anthropologist, and that’s what I got my PhD in – Physical Anthropology.”

When Kieser came to New Zealand from South Africa in 1995, there was little interest in forensic dentistry because nobody was really teaching it.

“I’ll never forget the policeman I went to see who said, ‘Oh we won’t be needing you because Dunedin is very quiet – nothing ever happens here’. Then he phoned me the next day because there had been this horrific murder in which a man had killed this woman with a screwdriver.”

Kieser established the School of Dentistry’s Forensic Unit 10 years ago and now heads a team of four which regularly deals with the identification of body and skeletal remains, bite-mark analysis and child-abuse injuries, as well as conducting ongoing research.

With Dr Geoffrey Tompkins and a couple of Dental Science students, Kieser has been studying bite marks – often the only forensic evidence that links the perpetrator of an assault to their victim.

“If you are unlucky enough to be attacked by someone, I suggest you fight back and bite really hard. These bite marks



Kieser works in the make-shift morgue with fellow New Zealand forensic dentist Wayne Laing. “You become very clinical. You depersonalise it. You have to be professional otherwise you go mad.”

Photo: supplied

are really important for us from an evidential point of view because sometimes they are the only signs of who attacked that person.”

He says that most of the bite marks they see are from child-abuse or rape cases. Naturally, the first thing that someone will usually do when raped is go and shower, and this destroys traces of the attacker’s DNA. But the bacteria in our mouths are unique and, when deposited on the skin during a bite, they stay there. Analysing this genetic material means that the bacteria can be matched to the organisms on the teeth of a suspect.

“We had students biting themselves – they loved that,” Kieser says of their research. “Just gently – like little hickey bites. We had a lot of volunteers for that! We looked at the streptococci on the bites, plated them out to see if they were constant over time and found that they were. The bugs in your mouth stay the same even if you drink alcohol – which is a poison – or use mouthwash.

“We put our student volunteers on a bicycle until they were good and sweaty (to simulate the rape), got them to bite themselves and then asked them to shower. Then we looked to see if we could find any of these bugs – and they were still on the skin even after a shower.”

The implications of this research for the courtroom were so compelling that a forensic consultant for the television programme *CSI* (Crime Scene Investigation) took a look at

what Kieser and his colleagues were doing in their labs while she was in New Zealand for a book launch. The fruits of this Otago biting research were used in a subsequent episode of *CSI*.

Another strand of Kieser’s research is archaeological excavation. With a team from the University and the Otago Museum he has been trying to identify an Egyptian mummy donated to the museum in 1893.

“The Hallenstein family bought it – as you did in those days – and donated it to the Otago Museum. You went to Europe and, on the way back, you just went shopping and bought a mummy. Some people think it’s a mummy; I think it’s a daddy.”

With the help of a special computer programme, they may even be able to reconstruct the face of the mummy without having to unwrap him/her. A CT scan taken a few years ago would yield enough information to build up a plastic skull.

With time at the local morgue, trips to Thailand to identify tsunami-ravaged bodies, research on bite marks, visits from *CSI* forensic consultants and a spot of debate over the sex of a mummy, the Kieser days are never lacking in dramatic dental oomph. To this Kieser says, “You ain’t seen nothing yet. Forensics is a hobby – wait until I show you our real research!”

Claire Finlayson



A surreal environment for the DVI teams working in Thailand: dry ice was placed around the bodies of tsunami victims lying outside a Buddhist temple.

Photo: supplied

# Our man in Aichi



*Phillip Gibson: "What we are doing at the Expo is presenting an image of New Zealand that shows how we endeavour to live in harmony with the environment. And at the same time, of course, we are working to promote New Zealand."*

University of Otago graduate Phillip Gibson is the soul of diplomacy, a high-flyer from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs who, three decades on, still holds dear the virtues and values of his Dunedin education.

A DAY OR TWO AHEAD OF THE OFFICIAL OPENING OF the Aichi World Expo 2005 on March 25, the Commissioner-General for the New Zealand Pavilion is enjoying the lull before the storm. For a man in the midst of a multi-million-dollar undertaking, charged with nothing less than the future image of New Zealand in Asia, Phillip Gibson is remarkably calm.

"I'm always cautious not to tempt fate," the urbane high-flyer says from his hotel room in Japan. But, he adds, after a belated start the New Zealand contribution at the Expo is looking good.

"We were one of the last countries to sign up to do it, but once the decision was made we made up a lot of ground quickly."

Gibson makes it sound like just another day at the office, but then grace under pressure is a quality that has undoubtedly propelled the former Dunedin boy and University of Otago graduate into the upper echelons of New Zealand's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade. A "career diplomat" is how he modestly describes himself; others point to him as one of our most senior and highly-regarded.

Seconded to lead New Zealand's contribution to the biggest World Expo in history while still Ambassador to Japan, Gibson fulfilled dual roles for the first year or so of preparation. Then in December 2004 he formally finished his embassy post, left Japan as etiquette requires, and returned early this year to take up the position of Commissioner-General full-time.

He has had his work cut out. The Aichi Expo site covers 160 hectares and houses the pavilions of 123 countries, as well as those of 13 of the most prominent Japanese corporates. To compete for attention the New Zealand operation has to be special. The project attracted funding in excess of \$10 million from government and industry contributions.

The theme of this year's expo is "nature's wisdom" which, Gibson says, is a particularly apt choice.

"The Japanese have been very wise. They said, what is the biggest challenge facing mankind over the next 100 years? And it's essentially living in harmony with the environment.

"What we are doing at the Expo is presenting an image of New Zealand that shows how we endeavour to live in harmony with the environment. And at the same time, of course, we are working to promote New Zealand."

New Zealand already has a particular image in Japan – "clean, green, beautiful and majestic" – which the Kiwi pavilion builds on.

"But at the same time we want to do it in such a way that shows we are also smart and innovative."

Gibson, whose long professional association with Asia began 20 years ago, speaks with a passion on New Zealand's relationship with Japan and the wider Asia-Pacific region. Coming from a five-year stint as Ambassador, he has the statistical currency at his finger tips, pointing out that Japan receives \$NZ3.5 – 4 billion in exported goods, is worth another \$700 million in tourism receipts and feeds a further \$200 million into the national kitty through education. Then there is the more than \$1 billion of Japanese funds invested in New Zealand, which takes the total annual return to New Zealand up to about \$5 billion.

But the former Ambassador is quick to point out that, as essential as the economic relationship is, the people-to-people relationships are just as important.

"Japan has made a point of building sister-city relationships in other countries and about 44 of these are with New Zealand cities. When I first came here I was a little skeptical, but I had a Paul-on-the-road-to-Damascus experience. They are extraordinarily valuable."

He cites the huge numbers of Japanese school students who, in addition to the 16,000 long-termers, come down here for shorter visits: 5,000 from Fukyoka to Auckland in October, 3,000 to Rotorua, as many as 15,000 – 16,000 altogether.

“I personally believe these sorts of links are now the strongest we have with any country after Australia and the UK.”

While he confesses to not being a Japanese “specialist” – that is to say, linguist – Gibson has formed a deep attachment to the country over the last five to six years. “I have developed an enormous respect and affection for Japan. It is a remarkable country.”

second secretary in 1974. In the early 1980s he spent four years with the New Zealand mission in New York and, in 1985, was sent to the Embassy in Manila. From 1992 to 1996 he was Ambassador in Bangkok, accredited to Thailand, Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos and Myanmar. From 1999 to 2004 he was Ambassador to Japan.

It was in Thailand that Gibson met his wife, Chansuda, with whom he has two sons, Harry, 9, and Dean, 6. “We have a bilingual household,” he says. “We speak both English and Thai at home.”

Given the demands on his time, a certain discipline is necessary to maintain family life.

“For most of us who have gone through it, Otago has always been special. It’s a special campus and full marks to the city of Dunedin. They’ve made it special.”

It’s a long way from Dunedin to Aichi. Gibson, second son in a family of four boys, attended Otago Boys’ High School. Contemporaries recall him as that rare and gifted type who excelled academically and on the sports field. He was both dux and best all-round pupil in 1967. “It was one thing to be a tremendous Latin scholar,” says an old classmate, “but it almost defied belief that he should be such a good cricketer as well.”

Gibson, who remembers attending capping parades as a boy, says there was never any real debate over his choice of university. He had his sights firmly set on Otago, and graduated in 1971 with a BA(Hons), majoring in Latin. It appears the admiration was mutual: that year he was one of two Rhodes Scholar nominees from the University. Only one was awarded and, in the event, Gibson missed out. The successful candidate? The current Vice-Chancellor, Professor David Skegg.

“I look back with a lot of gratitude to Dunedin,” says Gibson. “I’ve always been very proud of my Dunedin roots, both living and growing up there, Otago Boys’ High School and the University of Otago. And I’ve always taken every opportunity in my career to do something in gratitude for what I feel that upbringing gave me.

“For most of us who have gone through it, Otago has always been special. It’s a special campus and full marks to the city of Dunedin. They’ve made it special.”

Having spent a working life periodically returning to Dunedin to visit his mother and other family, Gibson cites one occasion as having particular significance. “It was a very proud moment for me when I came back to give the graduation address in May 1999.”

Following his own graduation, Gibson joined the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade in Wellington in 1972. His Latin expertise stood him in good stead for a posting to Rome as

“Given my lifestyle as Ambassador, I’m out just about every night of the week, but I do have a rule and that is I don’t accept weekend engagements, unless it’s absolutely essential, beyond Saturday lunchtime.”

Gibson has maintained his interest in sport, in particular jogging and skiing – and following Otago rugby from a distance. And, when he has a spare moment, he will pick up a book on history or politics, or perhaps a biography.

In between his various postings Gibson has been assigned to increasingly senior head-office positions. There was also one stint outside the ministry as chief executive of the Asia 2000 Foundation.

“It was one of the most valuable experiences of my life. I was also fortunate in that I believed in the mission of Asia 2000, which was essentially to bring knowledge and understanding to New Zealand of the countries of Asia, and what they mean for New Zealand.”

It is appropriate, then, that until September (when the Expo finishes), Gibson is reprising that role, but in a reciprocal manner: being our man in Aichi, presenting New Zealand to Asia at the 2005 World Expo. After that it’s back to his first love and abiding passion: diplomacy. There are moments, he says, when it can be both unpleasant – for instance, identifying bodies in a foreign morgue – and downright dangerous. He recalls being caught up in the Marcos ouster in the Philippines and having bullets come through the roof of his house one night and hitting his bed. But then there is the pay-off, the thrill that makes it all worthwhile.

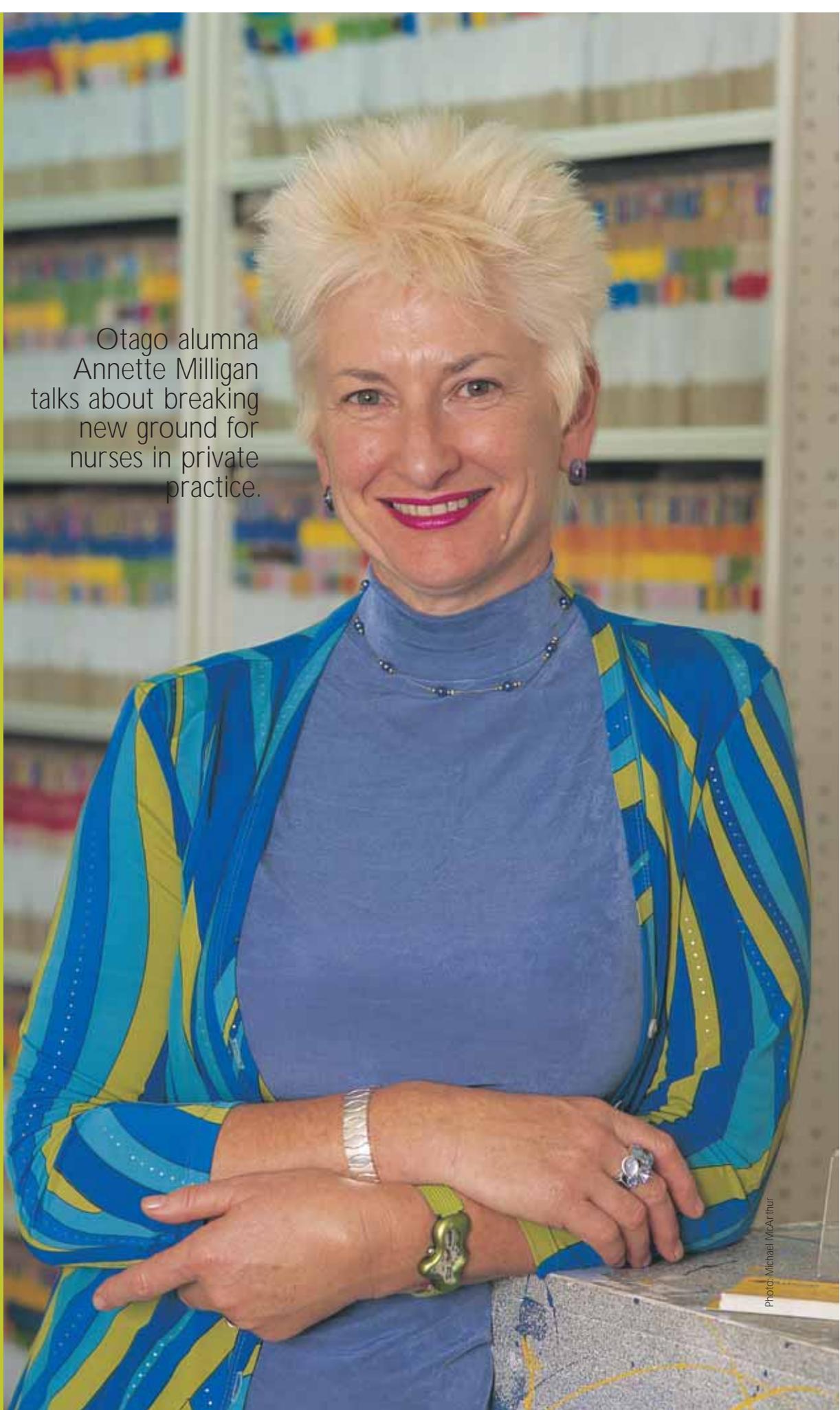
“People say, what’s the big thing about being a diplomat? Well, the biggest buzz is serving your country. I still have that same buzz today as I had 33 years ago.”

Simon Cunliffe

# WHHO CARES?

Otago alumna  
Annette Milligan  
talks about breaking  
new ground for  
nurses in private  
practice.

Annette Milligan:  
"We wanted to develop  
ways in which people  
could take pro-active  
steps for their own  
health needs."



MISCONCEPTIONS ARE NOTHING NEW TO ANNETTE Milligan. Getting young men to describe being tested for a sexually-transmitted infection is one way she has dealt with them. Succeeding in establishing the Independent Nursing Practice (INP), a nurse-led health service in Nelson, is another.

The Otago History graduate who went on to gain a teaching diploma and a nursing degree, and who once worked in quality assurance for British oil giant Chevron, counts back 16 years to the time she, together with two fellow nurses, opened the doors at INP.

It was a brave and unprecedented career move. Hers was one of the first private nursing clinics in the country and is now New Zealand's longest-established nursing practice. Milligan says she never intended to go into private enterprise. "It's just that there were no public funding avenues open to us at all."

Milligan's philosophy is that "nurses should be working at their maximum level of expertise, and so should doctors".

The response from the Nelson community has been definitive. The clinic – of which Milligan is now the sole owner and director – schedules 6,000 patient visits each year.

Passionate and articulate, this Invercargill-raised motorcycle enthusiast, who admits to having "an extremely low boredom threshold", can now count among her numerous awards being named the regional winner for the Clear Self-Employed Woman of the Year in 1996, gaining the Commonwealth Award for Excellence in Women's Health in 1997 and the Nurse Executives of New Zealand Innovation in Nurse-Led Initiative Award in 2001.

But while the opportunity to deliver patient-driven health care was one reason for establishing the clinic,

Milligan sees no contradiction in the fact she began her studies with a degree in History. Quite the opposite: this is where she learned that outcomes are rarely the result of a single cause, a principle that lies behind her holistic approach to health care.

Nonetheless, Milligan was convinced there was a place for a nurse-led clinic in the health-care landscape. It was 1989, the era of the National Women's Hospital inquiry and the Cartwright Report.

"The medical system was pretty patriarchal," she remembers. "And, as the details of the mishandling of cervical testing were reported on, it's impossible to overestimate the change of culture that occurred among health consumers.

"People were saying very clearly, 'We're a vital part of this equation'. The days of medical practitioners being able to declare they knew what was best for a patient were over."

And nurses, whose role was already based on supporting people through their health-care processes, were ideally placed to expand their scope of practice.

"Our clinic's fundamental philosophy was, and still is, that people are experts in their own lives. We don't make decisions for them. I can't make a woman have a smear if she doesn't want to, no matter how much I tell her all the reasons why she should. We give people information and support their choices, but at the end of the day we can't force them to do anything.

"At the time this was a reasonably radical position," says Milligan. And, while she acknowledges that the reality of "informed consent" is still a somewhat disputed issue, Milligan has observed the medical system move significantly in her direction.

Milligan says she still sees general practice as the cornerstone of community health and that she now enjoys good relationships with local doctors. Indeed, Milligan's clinic includes three doctors among its eight staff.

"The scope of a GP's practice is enormous. It doesn't make sense to have them spending time on areas that a nurse can perform quite competently."

Milligan's disillusionment as an orthopaedic nurse was equally compelling.

If there's one thing an orthopaedic department does not need, it's repeat business. And when Milligan noticed she was treating the same clutch of young men – "you patch them up, send them away, and they're back again" – she believed there were some fundamental questions that needed asking.

"What was causing this kind of self-destructive behaviour?"

Through the clinic, Milligan has been able to pursue her ideal of treating her patients as holistically as possible.

In addition to the clinic's specialist areas in family planning and sexual health, the nursing team launched a series of self-esteem and stress management seminars. They developed Lifescope, offering one-on-one life coaching and support, to help people address some fundamental questions in their lives.

INP has also joined forces with doctors, occupational therapists and other rehabilitation specialists to deliver workplace-based health programmes, covering matters from hearing testing and influenza vaccinations, to workplace design and return-to-work issues.

"We wanted to develop ways in which people could take pro-active steps for their own health needs."

And, making use of her three-pronged tertiary qualifications (in History, Nursing and Education), Milligan has taken her "look after yourself" message into the schools with a sexual health programme.

While the relevance of the nursing and teaching qualifications is self-evident, Milligan sees no contradiction in the fact she began her studies with a degree in History. Quite the opposite: this is where she learned that outcomes are rarely

the result of a single cause, a principle that lies behind her holistic approach to health care.

“And developing the sexual health programme from scratch,” Milligan adds, “I’ve had to be able to research, analyse material, think critically, arrange information logically and present an argument, and assess whether it has been successful. An arts education does such a good job of training your brain to think!”

Indeed, it was as a result of working through this critical process that the need arose to videotape a guy in an STI clinic.

“We were trying to work out why so few young men use STI clinics,” says Milligan. “And we discovered that it’s not because they don’t care about their health, but because they’re scared. They believe the test will be really painful, but these days they are often just required to give a urine sample. It was all about dispelling myths.”

The item appears as part of a very funky CD-ROM, *Sex Smart*, which is integral to the sexual health programme as delivered by INP.

“All the research points to the fact that adults are the people teenagers listen to least when it comes to talking about sexual health, and the people they listen to most are other teenagers.”

Milligan’s solution: get young people to deliver the right information. As well as covering issues about contraception and STIs, *Sex Smart* also addresses issues around relationships

and effective communication. While the health information imparted by the teenagers on the CD-ROM is carefully scripted, the discussions around interpersonal issues are the participants’ own thoughts.

“We want students to think critically about what people are saying to them, to actually consider whether decisions are good or bad. What we didn’t want to do was tell the students how they should think.”

The role of the CD-ROM is “so integral” to the success of the schools’ programme, it was worth suffering for. With no funding, Milligan and her partner, multimedia designer Tony Lilleby, worked on the project for four years.

“It was so frustrating. There were times we both just wanted to euthanase it, but fortunately Tony and I never both felt like that at the same time.”

Finally, in exasperation, Milligan sold her house to fund the project. Was it worth such a dramatic move?

“Yes. We both just felt it was too important to let go. We’d keep encountering situations in our personal lives, couples we knew who had broken up and who had clearly been unable to tell each other what was wrong in their relationship.

“And we kept saying to each other, ‘If only – if only someone had taught them something about communicating.’”

Nicola Mutch



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The 2004 Annual Appeal scholars: back row (from left) Alexander Latu, Yeshe Dawa, Andrew Tringham, David Ayre, Alana McCrossin, Niki Begg, Blake Lepper. Front row (from left) Grace Brown, Philip Drennan, Poppy Haynes, Andrew Haines.

# Investing in the future

Money raised by the University's 2004 Annual Appeal is being used to support 11 first-year scholarships, provide new resources for the library and fund a research project.

POPPY HAYNES HAS NO CHANCE OF BEING BORED. THE first-year student, studying Genetics and English, is also a writer for a student magazine and playing soccer.

"I love Uni! I've got some really great friends. My hall, Carrington, is a nice place to live and I'm really enjoying my papers. I've joined the debating club – it's the one thing I never did at school – and I'm a volunteer writer for *Critic*," she says.

Poppy, who comes from Wellington, is one of eleven 2004 Annual Appeal scholars and her energy and enthusiasm, as well as her academic ability, are typical of the group.

The Annual Appeal, started in 2003 as part of the University's Advancement campaign, is funding scholarships for first-year students as well as contributing to research and the library.

Head of Alumni and Development, Laura Black, says the appeal makes a difference in many ways.

"Just talking to the scholars shows what a difference the scholarships make to their first year at University. They don't have to worry about finding money for fees, which is an advantage.

“For the University, it means we’re attracting top scholars from all over New Zealand – and the standards are high. This year two of our scholars, Niki Begg from Christchurch and Blake Lepper from Alexandra, were both recognised with New Zealand Scholars Awards,” she says.

And the students don’t just bring academic excellence. Some are also active sportspeople, such as David Ayre, from Nelson, who is the South Island secondary school cycling champion. He’s enjoying the challenges the hills around Dunedin offer his sport.

Along with the rest of the student body, the scholarship students enjoy the results of the Annual Appeal in the additional library resources that are made available.

Black says alumni make it clear they like donations to be invested in the library and also research. These gifts allow the University to provide extra resources to staff and students that would otherwise not be possible.

“A lot of people like to specify the kind of research in which they’d like their donation invested. For example, we had a donation of \$50 tagged for Microbiology research. The money was used by the department for a magazine subscription they hadn’t been able to afford.”

Donations to the library enabled the purchase of a wide range of resources from the *Encyclopaedia of Protestantism*, *Comparative Embryology of Angiosperms*, and the *Sage Encyclopedia of Social Science Research Methods*, through to the *Greenwood Encyclopedia of Women’s Issues Worldwide*, and the *Encyclopedia of Energy*.

The Annual Appeal funds donated in 2004 for general research went to support the research project Investigating the Environment: influences on the physical activity patterns of young people, being led by Dr Noela Wilson, of the LINZ Research Unit, School of Physical Education.

“There is no doubt the Annual Appeal is helping the University sustain its position as a research-led university. The alumni are feeling involved and able to participate with the creation of an investment in the future of the University and the students coming through.

“We get feedback that indicates they enjoy the continuing contact with Otago, a place for which they have fond memories, and can continue to support it to maintain an international reputation of excellence,” Black says.

Claire Ramsay



Photo: Alan Dove

First-in-Family scholars Sarah Day and Sok Phou.

## Onwards and upwards

When Sok Phou and Sarah Day became First-in-Family scholars at the University of Otago last year, little did they realise how quickly Otago would become home. Sok, from Auckland, and Sarah, from Rotorua, are both back for year two and relishing the experiences Otago offers, both academically and extramurally.

For Sok, who is Cambodian-born and has been a New Zealand citizen for six years, the first year confirmed that Health Sciences is where he wants to work, but he has changed tack from heading towards being a doctor and will instead concentrate on research. He’s been invited to do honours in Chemistry and is aiming to do the same in Pharmacology. Just for good measure, he’s also studying towards a BCom, majoring in Finance.

Sarah started 2004 focused on Law and Geography. She, too, has changed track, recognising her passion is Geography, and is now working towards a master’s in resource planning.

“That’s another four years. The scholarship has helped so much. Covering full fees, books and my hall fees in my first year and this year’s sundry fees and uni fees is a huge contribution for me,” Sarah says.

Sok says the scholarship meant he could concentrate on studying and allowed him to achieve excellent results.

“I probably would have come to Otago anyway and the scholarship has just made it so much easier,” he says.



# Confronting cancer

Otago's Hugh Adam Cancer Epidemiology Unit is slowly and methodically h

LIKE DETECTIVES WORKING BACKWARDS FROM A CRIME scene, the researchers at the Hugh Adam Cancer Epidemiology Unit are hunting for clues about the causes of cancer.

"Most cancers grow in a very insidious form without symptoms for many, many years, often decades, prior to presenting with symptoms," explains unit director Dr Brian Cox.

Because of this, and the fact the disease predominantly leaves no traces of what triggered it, the victims themselves are usually the only line of inquiry. So, rather than chopping up tissue in the lab, the unit's research team interviews thousands

of cancer patients on their lifestyle, living environment and habits before "performing the art of turning data into information".

In doing so they are breaking new ground by finding or ruling out cancer causes, in the same way researchers decades ago worked backwards from the lung cancer epidemic and found tobacco was the smoking gun in the victims' pasts.

"The cellular mechanism by which exposure causes a cancer is usually worked out in a laboratory, later," Cox explains.

Slow and methodical the work may be – several thousand patients plus an equal number of random members of the



Photo: Alan Dove

*The Hugh Adam Cancer Epidemiology Unit team (from left): Sally Wood, Dr Brian Cox, Christina Benfell, Namomo Schaaf and Dr Mary Jane Sheyd. Their science is not performed in the lab, but is in the art of turning interview data into information.*

helping to uncover the causes of cancer.

public are interviewed in each project – but it can also make headlines, as it did several years ago when the unit published findings looking at whether the risk of prostate cancer was increased by vasectomy.

“We did a study of whether vasectomy increased risk of prostate cancer because the prevalence of vasectomy in New Zealand is the highest in the world.

“We try to capitalise on features of New Zealand that enable us to answer specific questions that have arisen in the international literature or that we think of ourselves,” Cox says.

Happily, the unit was able more or less to rule out a link

between vasectomy and prostate cancer. United States’ news networks picked up the story and family-planning agencies worldwide breathed a sigh of relief.

When Hugh Adam, an accountant at Speight’s Brewery, made a bequest to set up the unit, it was spiralling rates of cancer that sparked his decision. Now the unit is interested in other forms of the disease, including prostate cancer, bowel cancer and breast cancer.

“Wherever there are cells there’s always potential for them to become malignant. Some organs are far more prone to cellular aberration than others,” Cox says.

Why is this?

Nobody knows, so the work must go on.

“Cancer rates and the risk of cancer change over time. One of the tasks we have is to keep an eye on what is happening with various cancer rates. When changes occur, they don’t happen quickly. You sometimes have to look over 30 years to see the changes occurring in the population.”

At the moment the unit is working on three projects.

- **Prostate cancer survival:** Dr Mary Jane Sneyd is leading a follow-up of 3,760 men diagnosed with prostate cancer in 1996 and 1997 to assess the features of prostate cancer that influence survival after diagnosis in New Zealand.
- **Delay in the diagnosis of cancer in Pacific Islands men:** Namomo Schaaf has interviewed Pacific Islands men with cancer throughout New Zealand to assess the degree of delay in presenting to the doctor after symptoms develop, and the delay between presentation and diagnosis.
- **Follow-up of breast-screening pilot studies conducted in Otago-Southland and the Waikato:** the studies’ impact on breast cancer mortality is being assessed.

There is no shortage of avenues of inquiry for the six-person unit, which includes the director, a senior epidemiologist, a junior research fellow, two interviewers and a secretary. Funding is now being sought for studies into bowel cancer, the effect of new technology on cervical screening and the possible effects of low selenium intake on prostate cancer.

In addition, the unit is helping the International Agency for Research on Cancer to prepare a book describing the avoidable causes of cancer worldwide, and collaborating on two international projects and three further national projects.

“There’s plenty to be done. What we can do is determined by the funding we receive,” Cox says.

For the past 15 years the unit has had a stable source of funding for two senior positions from the Directors Cancer Research Trust, set up in 1967 and now administered by the Perpetual Trust. Perpetual client relationship manager Kevin O’Sullivan says the trust came about as a collaboration between Perpetual and the School of Medicine’s director of cancer research. Initially intended to fund extra equipment, it has grown to the point where it now holds about \$4 million,

the earnings from which are diverted to the Hugh Adam unit.

“When I joined Perpetual I can remember a couple of staff would be going to funerals around the city with a little box in which people could put donations for cancer research.”

That has continued, although today brochures highlighting the unit’s work have replaced the collection boxes.

“We can see the worthwhile benefit it has for the Medical School and the unit, and it’s something we promote through our clients,” O’Sullivan says.

Cox is grateful for the help. “It’s really important to have these two core academic staff to keep initiatives occurring.”

The upcoming bowel cancer study (fingers crossed on the funding) is the initiative that animates him most at the moment. Again, as in the vasectomy study, New Zealand provides a unique environment for his skilled interviewers and researchers to do their work as this country has the highest rates of bowel cancer in the world.

“Work we did 10 years ago quite clearly suggested the risk of bowel cancer is largely determined before you’re 30 years of age, so we want to try and establish why that should be the case.

“Very few studies have looked at exposure before the age of 30 ... so that would be novel and would, we think, make a major contribution to

our understanding of bowel cancer.”

In a curious occurrence, the incidence rates of bowel cancer are markedly different depending on when you were born.

“It’s quite clear that people born after about 1943 seem to have half the risk of developing bowel cancer than older generations.

“It’s been a major change in New Zealand. It won’t show up in overall rates until they get older. People born before then have much higher risk.

“It’s intriguing and hasn’t really been reported before. The unit is trying to establish why that might be the case because we think that may well unravel the cause of bowel cancer.”

That would be an extremely important outcome and in-line with the unit’s aims.

“The whole thrust of our work is to try to establish what can be done before the diagnosis to prevent the cancer or make treatment easier, and therefore improve the quality of life for people.”

Sean Flaherty

“It’s quite clear that people born after about 1943 seem to have half the risk of developing bowel cancer than older generations ...

It’s intriguing and hasn’t really been reported before. The unit is trying to establish why that might be the case because we think that may well unravel the cause of bowel cancer.”

# 'Til death us do part . . .

Associate Professor Nicola Peart: "How the potentially conflicting interests [between the surviving partner and others with an interest in the estate] should be ranked or balanced is a difficult question, especially in a society where multiple relationships are common."

IN OUR BOOK, *RELATIONSHIP PROPERTY ON DEATH*, MY colleagues and I explored the property rights of married and de facto couples whose relationship ends when one of the parties dies.

Those rights were radically changed in 2001 when Parliament adopted the Property (Relationships) Act. It amended the Matrimonial Property Act to include de facto couples and extended the equal sharing regime, applicable on separation, to relationships ending on death. The inclusion of de facto couples, particularly same-sex couples, in legislation designed for married couples was hotly debated in Parliament and the media. The new death provisions were barely discussed. Yet, those changes were far more significant because they affect everyone who dies leaving a partner.

Parliament's intention in changing the property rights of spouses and partners on death was laudable. The right to an equal share of matrimonial property, which has applied on separation since 1976, did not apply on death. The division of matrimonial property between the surviving spouse and the estate was at the court's discretion and often resulted in an unequal split. The aim of the Property (Relationships) Act was to give surviving spouses and partners the same rights on the death of their partner as on separation.

But death is not like a separation. On separation, the competition is between two living partners who have to rebuild their lives with the assets taken from the relationship. On the death of a partner, the competition is between the surviving partner and the people with an interest in the deceased partner's estate, usually the deceased's children and other relatives. How these potentially conflicting interests should be ranked or balanced is a difficult question, especially in a society where multiple relationships are common.

Parliament decided to rank the surviving partner ahead of those with an interest in the estate, giving only surviving partners the right to seek a division of relationship property, if they wish. The administrator of the estate cannot do so, except with leave from the court on proof that "serious injustice" would otherwise result. This is a major change from the past when both the surviving spouse and the estate had the right to apply for a share of the matrimonial property. The estate commonly did so to recover matrimonial assets from the surviving spouse to provide for the deceased's children from a former relationship, who would otherwise be disinherited.

Two cases have come to court since the new Act came into force. Both involved children from the deceased's former marriage who were disinherited in favour of a surviving step-parent. In the first case, the adult daughter had been deserted by the deceased soon after birth. In the second, the children were minors and financially dependent on the deceased. Should leave be granted in these cases? Would serious injustice otherwise result? The courts were divided and the matter is now before the Supreme Court.

The problem remains, however. The Act favours surviving partners over the estate, allowing deceased parents to avoid their responsibilities to their children. Only an amendment to the Act will resolve that problem.

Associate Professor Nicola Peart, Faculty of Law.

*Relationship Property on Death*, published by Brookers, Wellington, November 2004.

# Otago gains edge in pharmacogenomics

The new Carney Centre for Pharmacogenomics, officially opened last month, will enable the University to accelerate its research in this field, drawing together multidisciplinary expertise in a sustained manner.



Associate Professor Martin Kennedy: "... the Carney Centre will be analysing the relationship between genes and the effectiveness of particular medications for different conditions."

Photo: Ross Coombes

Pharmacogenomics is a relatively new and unfamiliar area of medical research, although the University of Otago is now at the cutting edge with the recent opening of the Carney Centre for Pharmacogenomics.

Pharmacogenomics essentially involves using knowledge gained through investigating our genetic make-up, especially after the mapping of the human genome in 2001, to make drug treatment more effective and safer.

The centre was officially opened in May by the Vice-Chancellor, Professor David Skegg, and is based within the Department of Pathology at the Christchurch School of Medicine and Health Sciences. It is an initiative of the University's *Leading Thinkers* Advancement Programme and

has been funded by the generous gift of \$500,000 from the Jim and Mary Carney Charitable Trust, which will be matched dollar-for-dollar by the Government under the Partnerships for Excellence scheme.

"This is a wonderful opportunity for the school and the University to really accelerate our research in pharmacogenomics," says director Associate Professor Martin Kennedy. "It means that with a dedicated staff and base funding we're in a much stronger position to concentrate and draw together multidisciplinary expertise in a sustained way."

However, it is not as though scientists and clinicians in Christchurch and Dunedin are starting from scratch in this relatively new area of medical research. They are

# Donor impressed

already well up to speed, with researchers in both centres using pharmacogenomic techniques. Kennedy is also co-ordinator of the University's Area of Research Strength in Pharmacogenetics and Pharmacogenomics.

"The problem with some medication is it can have toxic side-effects, or not work at all for some people. At times this can be extremely serious," explains Kennedy. "We know genes play a significant role in how the body handles drugs and in the risk of side-effects; the challenge is to find which are the important genes and how we can apply this knowledge clinically.

"If scientists and clinicians can identify which particular genes have a negative role in metabolising medication, they can then prescribe the right drug and dose more accurately. So the Carney Centre will be analysing the relationship between genes and the effectiveness of particular medications for different conditions."

Initially the centre will focus on extending collaborative research Kennedy and his colleagues have been doing with Clinical Pharmacology (Professor Evan Begg), Psychological Medicine (Professor Peter Joyce), Gastroenterology (Dr Murray Barclay) and Respiratory Research (Professor Robin Taylor).

"We have, for example, already carried out a lot of research with Psychological Medicine into genetic impacts on particular anti-depressants," he says.

This close clinical-scientific collaboration will identify which genes and enzymes affect response to particular drugs for conditions such as depression, inflammatory bowel disease or asthma. Already leukaemia patients in Christchurch are given a test to make sure they do not have a particular gene that can produce negative side-effects with certain medications.

"One of the great strengths of Christchurch is the close contact between scientists and excellent clinical researchers with patient volunteers. Added to this is our ability to carry out good genetics and pharmacology research as well," says Kennedy.

"It's important to understand we have to do basic research to achieve some of these clinical goals; we just can't take information from overseas and apply it to our patients. We're very interested in developing assays enabling clinicians to test if a patient is vulnerable to overdose or a negative reaction because of their genetic make-up."

The Carney Centre for Pharmacogenomics will add significant value to the University of Otago's research capacity by drawing together a number of groups already involved in this area. It will provide high quality postgraduate scientific and medical education, and disseminate information throughout the health system to improve clinical practice. A scientific advisory board will review progress of the centre in terms of research output on an annual basis.

Ainslie Talbot

JIM AND MARY CARNEY FIRST STARTED THINKING about a charitable trust four-and-a-half years ago, just before Jim died.

"We didn't have any immediate family and we felt that we'd like to leave some money to assist worthy projects in New Zealand, although not necessarily medical in nature," Mary explains.

It seems that Jim Carney wasn't directly interested or involved in medical research or medicine. Rather, he was a mechanical engineer who had built and managed the oil refinery at Marsden Point near Whangarei in the 1960s. However, Mary Carney is very familiar with health, having been a practice manager in a Whangarei general practice before her retirement. Her Edinburgh University-educated father was a Whangarei GP for many years, and her grandfather a surgeon.

With the formation of a Charitable Trust Advisory Board, including a local doctor as a trustee, they contacted the University of Otago regarding possible projects to support. Five research projects were suggested by the University, but Mary says that pharmacogenomics at the Christchurch School of Medicine and Health Sciences stood out.

"It really appealed to me, I just liked the sound of it," she says. "When we came down to Christchurch for the presentation, Associate Professor Martin Kennedy and his colleagues did such a great job explaining in layman's terms what they're doing that they certainly convinced us. It was really obvious that they are so keen and interested in their research."

Mary says that she is very pleased the first grant from the Jim and Mary Carney Charitable Trust can go towards research which will improve medical treatment in a very direct way.



Mary Carney

Photo: Cynthia Casey

## Wine trail traits



Photo: Alan Dove

Dr Richard Mitchell: his research shows that while women are less likely to buy wine at a winery, they are more likely to make a purchase later.

If you own a winery, it might be wise not to ignore your female customers.

Dr Richard Mitchell knows that to be true. His PhD in Tourism (the first nationwide survey of winery visitors anywhere in the world) examined people's behaviour in relation to wine-purchasing habits at three times – before a visit to a winery (pre-visit anticipation), on-site and post-visit.

While women are less likely to purchase on a visit to a winery, they're more likely to later purchase the wine they especially liked from the supermarket or local liquor outlet.

"Almost half of the respondents – mostly women – make a post-visit purchase, while there are moderately high levels of enduring satisfaction and high levels of word-of-mouth behaviour."

In terms of dollars spent, the median wine-spend among

winery visitors is around \$100 per month, with 60 per cent of visitors consuming more than six bottles a month.

Mitchell's latest research with an Australian psychologist explores the personality profiles of winery visitors and motivations to visit wine regions. Early results show that visitors have a high propensity to be "novelty seekers" and therefore are likely to be attracted by new or novel experiences.

Respondents also identify the characteristics that attract them to a wine region. These include visitor-friendly wineries, wine-knowledgeable staff, the opportunity to relax, the ability to expand their wine knowledge and the reputation of the region. Analysis continues to identify the connection between the personality traits and these characteristics, revealing exactly what it is that motivates these visitors.

## Multi-layered talent

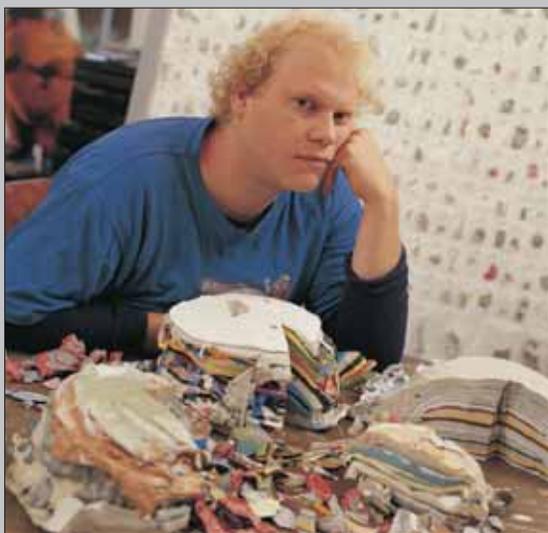


Photo: Alan Dove

Frances Hodgkins Fellow Rohan Wealleans: "I pretend to be a different kind of person every time I make art."

There is no chance artist Rohan Wealleans will tire of producing his multi-layered paintings. "I pretend to be a different kind of person every time I make art," he says.

The University's 2005 Frances Hodgkins Fellow has plenty of opportunity for chameleon-like changes this year as he prepares exhibitions for the Hamish McKay Gallery in Wellington and the Ivan Anthony Gallery in Auckland.

Later this year he will also exhibit at the Dunedin Public Art Gallery and the Hocken Collections.

Using simple Resene house paint, Wealleans layers up to 70 multi-coloured coats over a fibreglass-coated polystyrene sculpture. He then takes a curved craft knife to the finished product, leaving intricate carved insights into the receding paint layers.

An Elam School of Fine Arts graduate, he describes his works as other-worldly and influenced by horror genres. However, viewers will have to draw their own conclusions about what they might mean as Wealleans produces them purely for his enjoyment of the process.

"I'm not saying anything or trying to get anything across. My art is not about trying to convey messages."

His art is bold, vibrant and eye-catching and Wealleans has a definite flair for the unusual. His Sci-fi Noticeboard series features hundreds of tiny plastic bags filled with the by-products of his paint-carving career. The result resembles a scientist's specimen board with an artistic twist.

"The history of all my layer paintings are in these works."

## Tissue regeneration: why not?

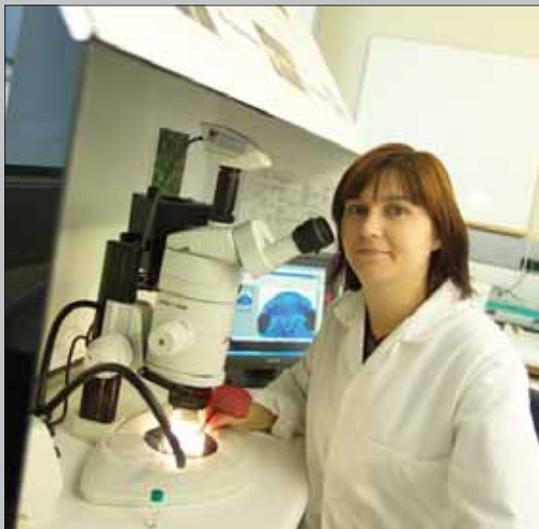


Photo: Bill Nichol

Dr Caroline Beck: "The big question is why can frogs switch these genes back on and humans can't?"

Frog tadpoles can regrow their tails, limbs and the lenses of their eyes but, in spite of sharing a lot of the same developmental genes as frogs, humans cannot regenerate tissue in this way.

With grants from the Marsden Fund and the University of Otago, Dr Caroline Beck, of the University's Department of Zoology, is setting out to find out why not.

Her work is based on the hypothesis that the same genes that trigger and control limb development in embryos are then "switched on" again to enable frogs to regenerate tissue when necessary. She has identified some of these genes and is now examining why, when and how they work.

"Our approach is to try to alter the way in which they work by changing the way they are

expressed, or switched on, to see if that affects regeneration.

"The big question is why can frogs switch these genes back on and humans can't?"

Beck is also looking at the way in which new blood vessels grow when new tissue develops.

While, in the short term, she will be happy to understand just how this regeneration works in frogs, ultimately there could be significant applications for humans.

"I don't think limb regeneration is a likely outcome especially as the genes have to be targeted very quickly, but there could be therapeutic benefits for wound repair. A pharmaceutical approach based on knowing how these genes are expressed could ultimately lead to scar-free healing, for example."

## End-of-life care priorities

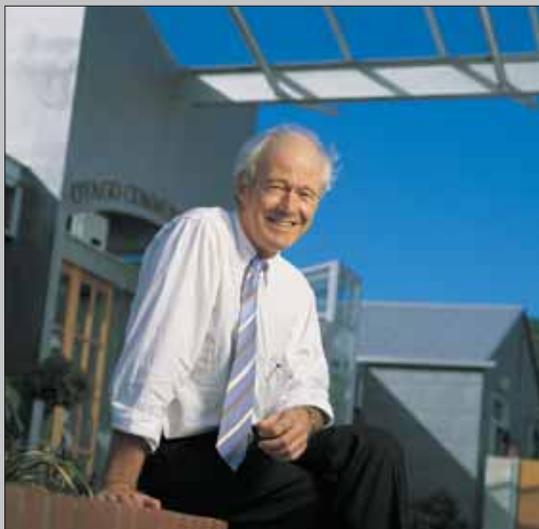


Photo: Alan Dove

Professor Rod MacLeod: "New Zealand palliative care is seriously underfunded ..."

We can't change the fact of death, but we can change how we care for people at the end of their lives, says Professor Rod MacLeod.

MacLeod, the South Link Health Professor in Palliative Care, has just returned from presenting papers at two conferences held in Korea.

In his role as clinical adviser to Hospice New Zealand, he reported to the second Global Summit for Palliative Care Organisations on care in this country, and supported the conference declaration urging all governments to take seriously the need for effective end-of-life care.

"Experts discussed such things as advocacy, research principles, educational needs and funding," says MacLeod. "We found similar situations all over the world, with a mix of delegates from such diverse places as Mongolia, Nigeria and downtown Boston."

The global conference will be held every two years from now on.

The following Asia-Pacific Hospice Conference, attended by some 1,200 delegates from 37 countries, covered areas such as family support, training, symptom management and educational facilities.

MacLeod, the only professor of palliative care in New Zealand, has been trying to build up research activities at the University of Otago, involving postgraduate students in looking at the use of health care by people who are dying, and surveying general practitioners on various aspects of end-of-life care.

He believes that there is still much to be done. "New Zealand palliative care is seriously underfunded, and there is nothing like enough time for it in the undergraduate curriculum."

## Freshwater rights?



Photo: Alan Dove

*Mick Strack: his research looks at the relationship of Māori to the Taieri River.*

How are indigenous customary rights to rivers and freshwater areas recognised in New Zealand and how should they be recognised?

These are the questions posed in research undertaken by Mick Strack, of the University's School of Surveying. His is a case study analysis comparing Canada's Siksika people and their relationship to the Bow River, and a local Māori relationship with the Taieri River to investigate how customary rights may be recognised.

A large body of legal precedents and legislation protects the Siksika's customary rights, although Strack suggests Canada's indigenous people are more marginalised than the Māori whose customary rights were recognised early in Otago's history. As part of the 1844 Otago Purchase Agreement, the Taieri Native Reserve was established. Over the years this has been broken up and, as the local Māori population has

declined, so has the significance of the reserve, and Ngāi Tahu's relationship with the river.

However, as the ownership and management of the seabed and foreshore has been a major political issue, customary rights to freshwater areas may also become of greater significance.

Strack says some claims to rivers have already been argued in the courts and before the Waitangi Tribunal, with the Tribunal's findings indicating there should be some recognition of ownership and control.

His study concludes that customary rights of indigenous people must be recognised in common law and, although it is unlikely that South Island Māori will be successfully able to claim significant ongoing rights to their rivers, there is still a symbolic relationship that should be acknowledged.

## Learning dispositions



Photo: Alan Dove

*From left, Kate Marshall, Professor Anne Smith and Dr Judith Duncan: their study examines children's resilience, reciprocity and imagination/connection.*

The responses of four- and five-year-old children form the basis for a three-year study undertaken by members of the University of Otago's Children's Issues Centre.

Professor Anne Smith, Dr Judith Duncan and Kate Marshall worked in conjunction with Professor Margaret Carr, Carolyn Jones and Wendy Lee of Waikato University's School of Education to collect and analyse comprehensive data about three learning dispositions.

The Dispositions to Learn in Social Context Study followed the learning experiences of 26 children from two North Island and three South Island early childhood centres into 19 different primary schools.

Resilience, reciprocity and imagination/connection exhibited in the children's behaviour was monitored by observation in their natural environment, photos, recorded conversations and interviews with the children,

parents and teachers.

"We are very interested in the immediate social and physical environment and how it shapes the children's dispositions," Smith says.

The collaborative nature of the study provided a greater multi-cultural range in the children and formed a valuable pool of knowledge among the six women.

A joint book is being written and the women hope that it will influence the way children's early learning stages are understood and supported.

"We are hoping the book will contribute to teachers' efforts to keep children engaged in learning and to give them a good start, so they love it and want to go on learning," says Smith.

Made possible by a grant from the Marsden Fund, the study will continue to follow the children through their primary schools if further funding is found.

## Political engagement: how, when, why?

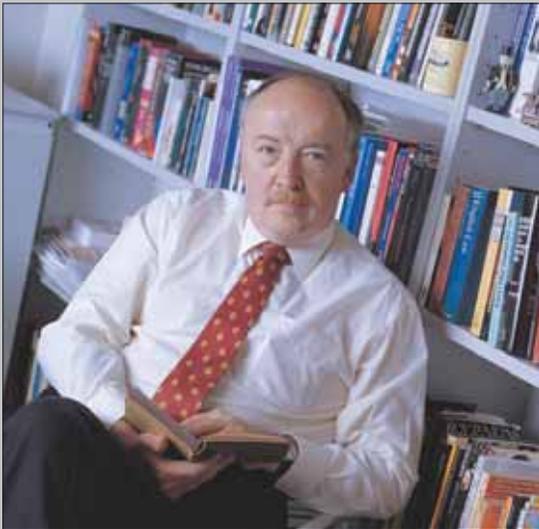


Photo: Alan Dove

Professor Phil Harris: "We're looking at ways of getting messages over . . . so . . . people feel actively engaged as citizens."

Willingly or unwillingly, we're all consumers of political services, but some of us engage less than others.

The University's Otago Polling Research Group is looking at the problem of how to get more people – particularly young people – into the political decision-making process.

The group – Professor Phil Harris and Mathew Parackal from the Department of Marketing, and Dr Chris Rudd from the Department of Political Studies – is looking at issues related to "marketing democracy".

Harris says there is no doubt that we don't want large numbers of people outside the political landscape.

"It's clear that amongst some of society's groups – for example, ethnic groups and single-parent families – there is an increasing level of disengagement. We're looking at ways of getting messages

over and of creating dialogue so that we make sure these people feel actively engaged as citizens."

In addition to an international focus (papers are being presented at conferences in Leeds and Dublin this year), the group has been working on the machinery of elections here in New Zealand, including surveying Dunedin residents' opinions of last year's local body election process. As part of the engagement/disengagement debate, they'll also study constituencies and core groups leading up to New Zealand's general election (linking into the wider issue of popular culture), and examine electronic voting methods, results forecasting, lobbying, and brands and marketing in politics.

"For example, the leading brand is Helen Clark but, as a brand, is Don Brash a suitable replacement?" says Harris.

## Clotting conundrum



Photo: Ross Coombes

Professor Stephen Brennan and PhD student Amy Dear: they found a rogue antibody that was preventing blood from clotting.

One of the biggest challenges Professor Stephen Brennan faced during the last year was to discover why a patient's blood was not clotting. It was a case which created an international conundrum for clinicians and medical scientists alike.

Brennan, who works in the Molecular Pathology lab at the Christchurch School of Medicine and Health Sciences, is an international authority on fibrinogen, the molecule which controls blood clotting.

In this case, the patient's blood had normal levels of the fibrinogen molecule, which links together to form a mesh to allow blood to clot, but this wasn't happening. Brennan and PhD student Amy Dear carried out the usual protein analysis and complex gene sequencing to check for abnormalities, but came up with a blank.

They checked another blood sample, but there was still nothing wrong with the fibrinogen molecule or its DNA.

"Finally we found an antibody was causing the problem, which was highly unusual. Half of an immunoglobulin antibody, known as the 'light chain', was blocking coagulation. It was very successfully recognising those sites which act as the link points between fibrin molecules and blocking them," he explains.

Why that was happening is still unclear and warrants further investigation.

This is the first time it has been shown that an antibody can block the coagulation of fibrinogen, and that half an antibody molecule can achieve this damaging result. The next step is to determine the genetic code of this maverick "light chain" to see if it could be useful as a future anti-coagulant therapy.

## Lifestyle solutions



Photo: Bill Nichol

*Dr Beverley Lawton: her study aims to increase physical activity and reduce risk factors for diabetes and heart disease among women.*

A Women's Lifestyle Study, conducted by principal investigator Dr Beverley Lawton, could result in the development of a nationwide programme if it is proved cost-effective.

Lawton and her five research colleagues at the Wellington School of Medicine and Health Sciences' Department of General Practice are carrying out a randomised controlled trial that aims to reduce risk factors for diabetes and heart disease. The study, funded by the National Heart Foundation, hopes to increase physical activity levels in around 1,000 mid-life and older women, using a lifestyle programme.

Recent research shows that diabetes can be prevented in some people by increasing physical activity and/or by dietary change. "This programme would therefore have the potential to reduce

the burden of diabetes in the community," Lawton says.

Eight hundred and eighty Wellington-based participants will be recruited from an existing cohort of women who joined an observational study of mid-life women between 1999 and 2003. A further 200 Māori and Pacific women will be recruited from the Hutt Valley into a parallel study funded by a Lottery Health Research Grant and the Hutt Valley District Health Board.

Six research nurses will assess patients' willingness and eligibility for the randomised trial and recruits will then be followed for two years.

Lawton received a \$318,000 grant from the Heart Foundation last year. "The Heart Foundation recognises how important these community studies are," Lawton says.

## Accounting for accountability



Photo: Alan Dove

*Dr Gregory Liyanarachchi: "Evidence shows that people make themselves accountable differently. Some people have a looser concept of how they are accountable, some a stricter one."*

Accountability: it's a word often heard in social, political and corporate debates. So how do those who are held accountable react to this responsibility?

Dr Gregory Liyanarachchi of the Department of Accountancy and Business Law is looking at the social and psychological aspects of accountability, and the impacts of being made accountable to others.

"Evidence shows that people make themselves accountable differently. Some people have a looser concept of how they are accountable, some a stricter one. How people perceive accountability may also relate to their conception of reality."

Liyanarachchi is also investigating how people react to decisions, and the behaviours they exhibit if they are held accountable. Generally, there are three patterns.

"Firstly, people sometimes gauge the most powerful views and align their accountability responsibilities

with these. Secondly, people rely on their talents and skills to make decisions. Thirdly, people opt for an overly defensive position and don't deviate from it, with the aim of putting themselves in a good light."

While Liyanarachchi's research is in accounting and auditing, he says it's likely that similar patterns of accountability behaviour occur in most decision settings.

"People aren't naive and mostly will anticipate the risks involved in being accountable. In some cases, this means they tell evaluators exactly what they want to hear. Also, people strive to alter the rules or standards to which their behaviour must conform, thus enabling them to easily discharge accountability. Many responses to accountability relate to preserving one's own welfare so it may not be a cure for all social ills."

## Commercial prospects for laser gas sensor



Photo: Alan Dove

*Dr Andrew Wilson: "We're using light to indicate the presence of gas, and what we propose offers an alternative or, in some cases, the only way of measuring things."*

Ever since canaries were used in coal mines, we've been looking for ways to detect the presence of gases. Now Dr Andrew Wilson, of the Department of Physics, has patented a new method of detection that could have lasting benefits for the University.

The system stems from departmental research with diode lasers, and uses light to indicate the presence of gases.

The laser gas sensor adapts existing techniques but uses fewer components, is more portable than current sensors and does not need to be calibrated.

"We're using light to indicate the presence of gas, and what we propose offers an alternative or, in some cases, the only way of measuring things," says Wilson.

Using lasers is not new, but older systems were expensive and bulky. The advent of small lasers such as

those used in CD and DVD players has changed things.

"We use these types of lasers in our basic research, studying how light interacts with matter," says Wilson. "It made sense to use the techniques we'd developed to work on a commercial project. We're now looking at which gases would be best to work with commercially."

The University's commercialisation company, Otago Innovation Ltd, has now formed Photonic Innovations in partnership with venture capitalist Endeavour Capital to develop and market the technology further.

"Of course our focus with this is making money, but a commercial programme that demonstrates the value of basic science and provides jobs for talented young New Zealanders is a key motivation for me."

## Goldfields dig yields new "treasure"



Photo: Bill Nichol

*Dr Richard Walter: the comprehensive collection of artefacts discovered gives an insight into everyday life in the Chinese camp.*

The archaeological exploration of the most significant Chinese camp in the Otago goldfields has turned up a virtual Pompeii.

The first significant archaeological dig in the Otago goldfields since the 1980s revealed more information than anyone expected, according to University of Otago team leader Dr Richard Walter.

"We discovered the remains of the settlement were well preserved under a very shallow cover of grass and top soil – ideal conditions for the recovery of high quality information.

"For example, the entire remains of a house belonging to one of the community leaders, Mr Sam Chew Lane, were able to be identified. The excellent conditions have allowed us a unique insight into the everyday life of an individual resident of this early New Zealand Chinese community," Walter says.

In addition, the archaeologists have discovered an excellent and comprehensive collection of artefacts including domestic items such as ceramics, as well as Chinese coins and gambling tokens.

Walter says there are valuable long-term research possibilities for the site. There are plans to continue the project over a number of years, giving the University and its partner, the New Zealand Historic Places Trust, the opportunity to contribute to a unique heritage development.

The Lawrence Chinese Camp Charitable Trust, led by Dr Jim Ng of Dunedin, has plans to restore the site and create a major visitor experience, including a hotel, on the site. The camp was formed in 1867 and was the largest Chinese settlement in the country.



Photo: Hocken Collections

Postcards such as this reveal something of the texture of early New Zealand social life.

## When Harry met Violet

FROM OUR SUPER-FAST, EMAIL-RIDDEN, TEXT MESSAGE-mad era, it's hard to imagine arranging social engagements by pigeon post. But when Harry Simmons and Violet Watson wanted to advance their courtship in the early 1900s, postcards – like the one pictured – were their cell phones.

New Zealand's first telephone was connected in 1881, but it took a while for telecommunications to take full hold. Though Harry (an employee at an agricultural machinery manufacturing firm in South Dunedin) and Violet (a Caversham maid) had some access to telephones, they made most of their arrangements on the back of postcards, sometimes writing nothing more than, "Dear Violet, I will meet you at the Octagon tomorrow night at 7pm. Ta ta, with love from Harry".

For the most part, their correspondence is all formality and restraint, as was typical of early twentieth century social discourse. But there is an occasional spilling over of emotion. Violet: "Dear Harry, Did you get my letter? Do hurry up and write to me. It is raining cats and dogs today. Do not think

I have fallen in love with any of the men down here...I am saving all the love for you when I get back to town."

There are postcards from others too. Harry's friend Alf sent him one with a cartoon on the front that read, "The Wife and How to Train Her". On the back, he wrote, "...I suppose you will soon be making a home for yourself. You want some body to keep you warm in the cold weather". What a fabulously oblique reference to Harry's growing ardour for Violet...and good sound advice on methods of keeping warm in Dunedin's invigorating climate.

These postcards (and some photographs of the couple's subsequent married life) fill two albums in the Hocken Pictorial Collections, although, sadly, there is no other information about the two lovers. While the deeds of celebrated New Zealanders form a vital part of our history, these smaller, quieter accounts of ordinary souls convey something of the texture of early New Zealand social life.

Claire Finlayson

### HOCKEN COLLECTIONS GALLERY EXHIBITIONS

Until 18 June 2005	Das Endeavour: sculptures by Evan Jones
Until 18 June 2005	The Artists of Captain Cook's Voyages
Until 18 June 2005	William Hodges' Waterfalls: fabric installation by Christine Hellyar
25 June - 27 August 2005	Dunedin and the Arts and Crafts Movement
2 September - 5 November 2005	The Terminus Project

### OTAGO'S 2005 ROLL INCREASES

Full-year and first-semester University of Otago enrolments are up 2.1 per cent on the same time the previous year.

As of the end of March, 16,904 equivalent full-time students were enrolled.

The number of students undertaking postgraduate research study was up 13.9 per cent on the previous year.

An anticipated drop in first year enrolments occurred, which was mainly due to a fall in the number of first-year international students.

A 2.2 per cent decline in domestic first-year students was attributed to a strong job market, with the tougher entrance requirements under the National Certificate of Educational Achievement system a secondary factor.

Although overall first-year numbers were down by around three per cent, the intake was still the University's third largest ever after 2004 and 2003's record intakes.

### UNIVERSITY'S ECONOMIC IMPACT OVER \$1 BILLION

The University injected an estimated \$1.1 billion into the economy last year, according to its latest economic impact report.

Direct expenditure by the University, staff and students came to \$596.5 million, up 11.6 per cent on 2003. The wider effects of this spending provided a total added value of \$547.2 million nationally, according to the report's estimates.

Activities associated with the Dunedin campus accounted for \$537 million of the direct expenditure, \$271.1 million of direct value added and \$487.7 million of total value added. Spending from activities through the other campus sites in Christchurch, Wellington and Auckland came to \$59.5 million.

The University's 3,259 full-time equivalent staff spent an estimated total of \$144.4 million in take-home pay, while total spending (excluding fees) by the University's 17,448 equivalent full-time students was estimated at \$269.1 million.

In 2004, students spent an estimated \$129.9 million on accommodation, food and other daily living expenses, and \$139.2 million on consumer items.

### PHILOSOPHY CHAIR A FIRST

The University is establishing New Zealand's first Chair in Early Modern Philosophy thanks to an anonymous million dollar gift.

The initiative will further Otago's research and teaching in a field which helped lay the foundations of modern liberal democracy.

Funded by "friends" of the Philosophy Department, the chair is an initiative under the University's \$50 million *Leading Thinkers* programme. The donation will be matched by the Government under its Partnerships for Excellence scheme.

In announcing the new chair, Vice-Chancellor Professor David Skegg said it would build upon and enhance the Philosophy Department's tradition of outstanding scholarship.

Philosophy Department Head Professor Alan Musgrave welcomed the new chair, saying that the department would be able to appoint an eminent scholar who could take full advantage of the University Library's de Beer collection, which contains significant archival material related to the field.

Professor Musgrave also said it was appropriate that the chair is being based in Dunedin, the "Edinburgh of the South".

"Three of the greatest of the early modern philosophers – David Hume, Adam Smith and Thomas Reid – were Scots associated with the 'Dunedin of the North'."

### BALI VICTIM'S MEMORY HONOURED

A scholarship in memory of a former Unicol resident who died in the Bali bombings was awarded for the first time earlier this year.

The inaugural Mark Parker Memorial Scholarship was presented to medical student Tim O'Brien at a college dinner attended by Mark's parents and Associate Minister of Education Hon David Benson-Pope.

The scholarship, worth \$5,000, aims to further the education of young New Zealanders who have demonstrated the potential to enhance New Zealand society. Mark spent a year at Unicol in 1994, an experience which had a marked influence on his life, according to his father Murray.

The memorial trust established soon after Mark's death decided that it would be fitting to offer scholarships to assist past residents of the college with further academic study at Otago.

### UNIVERSITY, COLLEGE PURSUE MERGER POSSIBILITY

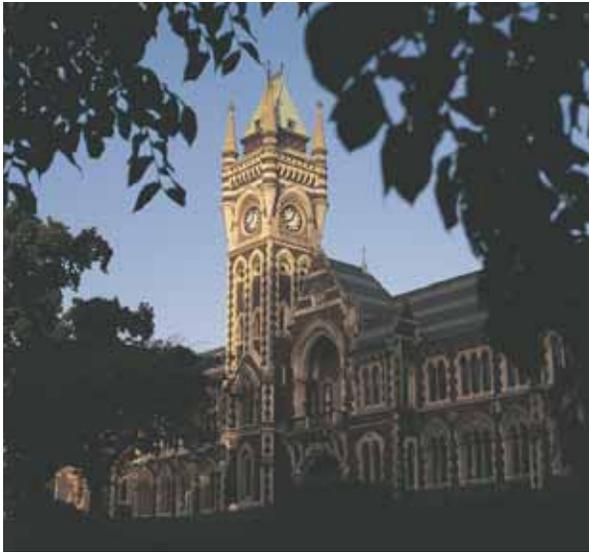
The Dunedin College of Education and the University of Otago are to pursue the possibility of a merger, aimed to take effect in 2007.

A working group established to consider the merger, made up of staff from both institutions, said the merger is "both desirable and feasible" and recommended that the institutions work together "with the aim of having a merger formally take effect from January 2007". A merger would require Cabinet approval. The working group made a series of recommendations and suggestions as a foundation from which to complete due diligence and develop a full business case during 2005.

Both Councils endorsed the report, with the proviso that a final decision will not be made until the completion of due diligence and the full business case has been considered.

Should it proceed, the new entity would merge the College with the University's Faculty of Education with the proposed title the University of Otago College of Education. It would be a professional school, based in the University's Division of Humanities. The new school would be located on the present College site and include the College's outlying campuses in Alexandra and Invercargill.

# UNIVERSITY *of* OTAGO



Leaving a legacy to Otago,  
through a will,  
is a powerful way of  
supporting the University  
at a level not possible  
during one's lifetime.

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For a copy of this brochure, please contact the Alumni and Development Office, University of Otago, PO Box 56, Dunedin, New Zealand, telephone 64 3 479 5246, fax 64 3 479 6522 or email [alumni@otago.ac.nz](mailto:alumni@otago.ac.nz)

## PHYSIOLOGY SCULPTURE UNVEILED



*This sculpture was unveiled during the Department of Physiology's centenary celebrations last month. By Don Hunter, the resin wave is filled with items used in physiological research and teaching over the past 100 years (see page 45).*

## BOTANY COMPLEX COMPLETED

A new \$1 million Botany building significantly enhancing the department's research capacity has just been completed.

Equipped with three main laboratories, the new complex doubles available research space and enjoys state-of-the-art facilities including a flume room. The room will be used for research into seaweed's reaction to water currents.

The complex is located behind the Otago Museum and replaces a Nissen hut which had been in use since 1957.

The project involved the University swapping some land with the museum, which is currently constructing a butterfly house and tropical habitat nearby.

In other construction work around campus, the addition of 169 beds at Arana Hall is on schedule to be completed for the 2006 academic year. A major extension for Te Tumu, The School of Māori, Pacific and Indigenous Studies, is also underway.

## NEW POSTGRADUATE NURSING CENTRE OPENED

New expanded premises for the Christchurch School of Medicine and Health Sciences' Centre for Postgraduate Nursing Studies were opened earlier this year.

At the opening Vice-Chancellor Professor David Skegg said he expected the centre to become a flagship institution for nursing with tremendous potential to advance the profession.

Centre director Mary Miles said one of the centre's strengths was that it is University-based, drawing on Otago's medical expertise and providing internationally-recognised qualifications.

## APPOINTMENTS

Professor **David Baxter** as the Dean of the School of Physiotherapy. Professor Baxter comes to Otago from the University of Ulster where he was Chair of Rehabilitation Sciences.

Dr **Charlotte Paul** (MB ChB 1971, DPH 1976, PhD 1992) as the new Professor of Preventive and Social Medicine at the University's Dunedin School of Medicine.

Professor **Helen May** as the University's new Professor of Education.

Mr **Kevin Seales** as the University's Director of Human Resources.

Mr **Grant McKenzie** (BCom 1991) as the University's Director of Financial Services.

Mr **Michael Harte** as Director of Information Technology Services at the University.

Health Sciences Pro-Vice-Chancellor Professor **Linda Holloway** to the Minister of Health's Doctors in Training Workforce Round Table.

Professor **John Hannah** (Surveying) was re-appointed to the Standards Council of New Zealand.

Hon Justice **J Bruce Robertson** (BA 1964, LLB 1967, HonLLD 1990) as a Judge of the Court of Appeal.

## OBITUARIES

**Rob Daly** (35). Mr Daly worked as a computer technician with the Botany Department from 1996 until his untimely death in January 2005.

**James Verney Cable** (MB ChB 1932, MD 1937) (97). A noted physician, Dr Cable undertook the first haemodialysis in Australasia in 1958 and founded the first renal unit at Wellington Hospital. He served as an assistant professor in the Department of Medicine at the Otago Medical School from 1941 to 1943.

**Barbara Angus** (BA 1944, MA 1945) (81). A distinguished diplomat, Miss Angus was New Zealand's first woman ambassador and only the third to be made a head of mission overseas.

Dr **Edward (Ted) Bassett** (OBE MB ChB 1953) (78). A noted rural GP, Dr Bassett is regarded as the father of Abbeyfield in New Zealand, a movement which provides community housing for the elderly.

**Paul Weaver** (BA 1947) (77). An internationally-recognised classicist, Professor Weaver was Chair of Classics at the University of Tasmania from 1966 until his retirement in 2001.

**Tom Esplin** (89). A gifted painter and influential teacher, Mr Esplin was senior lecturer in design at the University's School of Home Science from 1955 to 1978. He was associate professor from 1978 until his retirement in 1980, when he was granted an honorary professorship for 25 years of service.

**James Dakin** (96) (BA 1929, MA 1930). An adult educator, administrator, writer and humanist, Mr Dakin was the University's oldest surviving Rhodes scholar (1930).

## SCHOLARSHIPS/FELLOWSHIPS

**Beatrice Hudson** (BA (Hons) 2002) and **Katherine Schick** (BA (Hons) 2000) were awarded Commonwealth Scholarships to undertake postgraduate study at British universities.

**Fiona MacDonald** (BTour 2003) and **David Purdie** (BA 2000, BTour 2003) were recipients of the inaugural Tourism Research Scholarships which provide \$15,000 over three years to high calibre master's-level students.

Biochemistry PhD candidate **Peter Mace** (BSc (Hons) 2002) has been awarded the inaugural Elman Poole Travelling Fellowship, worth up to \$25,000, for study in Finland and the USA on proteins connected to sheep fertility.

Five Otago PhD students received Top Achiever Doctoral Scholarships, which provide an annual stipend of \$25,000 and pay fees for up to three years. They were **Joseph Lane** and **Cushla McGoverin** (both Chemistry), **Rebecca McLeod** (Marine Science), **Cynthia Winkworth** (Zoology) and **Vivienne Anderson** (Education).

**Helena McAnally** (BSc 1996, MSc 1999) has received an inaugural Orbit Corporate Travelling Scholarship to support public health doctoral studies using data from Dunedin Multidisciplinary Health and Development Research Unit study.

Humanities and Law student **Margaret Leo** won Statistics New Zealand's Pacific Peoples Scholarship, which provides \$3,500 a year over three years.

## ACHIEVEMENTS

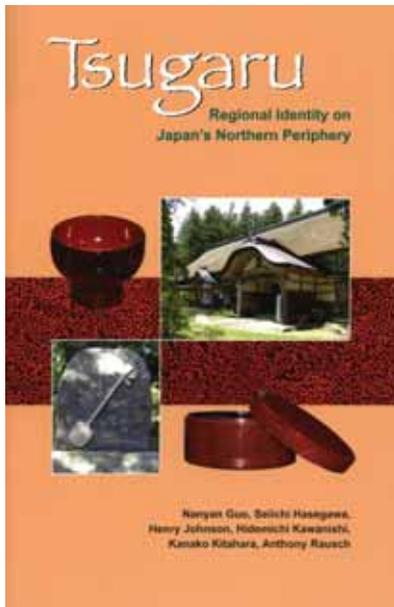
Dr **Mathew Zacharias** (Medical and Surgical Sciences) was awarded a study grant of \$A25,000 by the Australian and New Zealand College of Anaesthetists as part of a study into the effect of Paracetamol in molar surgery.

University of Otago design student **Fei Ma** beat out nearly 3,000 other entries to win the prestigious Designboom "Kitchen is the Heart of the Home" contest in Germany. His winning entry was a strikingly new dishwasher design.

Head of the University's Toroa International House, **Gretchen Kivell**, was made a Distinguished Fellow of The Institution of Professional Engineers New Zealand (IPENZ).

## HONORARY DOCTORATES

Recently retired High Commissioner to New Zealand and former Cook Islands Prime Minister Sir **Thomas Davis** (KBE, MB ChB 1945) was awarded an honorary Doctor of Laws (HonLLD).



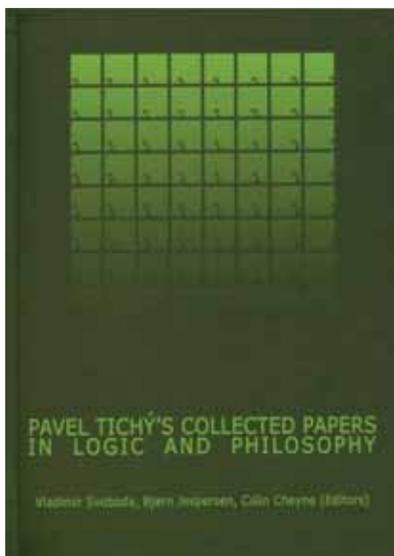
TSUGARU: REGIONAL IDENTITY ON JAPAN'S NORTHERN PERIPHERY  
by Nanyan Guo, Henry Johnson, Seiichi Hasegawa, Hidemichi Kawanishi, Kanako Kitahara, Anthony Rausch

Collaboration between University of Otago and prominent Japanese scholars has resulted in a unique publication on regionalism and identity in Japan. *Tsugaru: Regional Identity on Japan's Northern Periphery* is the first English-language book to look at the Tsugaru region, on the north-east of the island of Honshu. This book is published by the University of Otago Press with support from the Japan Foundation.

The book was initiated by Otago academic Nanyan Guo and made possible by a scholarly exchange programme that began between the University of Otago and Hirosaki University, Japan, in 2000. Collaborative research on Tsugaru's history and culture by the two universities started in 2001, with additional involvement from Jôetsu University of Education, also in Japan.

Tsugaru has a distinctive culture, influenced by close contact with the Ainu people in Hokkaido. With a rugged landscape and challenging weather, it was bypassed by industrial development after World War II and has remained relatively rustic, with its countryside dotted with rice paddies and apple orchards. Many aspects of Tsugaru life and culture are explored by the contributors: some history (establishment of the Tsugaru clan, arrival of Christian missionaries in the nineteenth century), issues surrounding modern Tsugaru identity, the "Tsugaru shamisen" (a folk instrument enjoying a revival in popular music), the region's distinctive lacquerware, sculpture, literature (looking at the work of writers Dazai Osamu and Osabe Hideo) and performing arts.

*Tsugaru* serves both as an introduction to the region and as an essay on regional identity in the modern state. While Japan is often perceived as being homogeneous, this study reveals rich and diverse cultures, dialects and identities.



PAVEL TICHÝ'S COLLECTED PAPERS IN LOGIC AND PHILOSOPHY  
edited by Vladimír Svoboda, Bjørn Jespersen, Colin Cheyne

Former Otago Philosophy lecturer Pavel Tichý left a logical and philosophical legacy that is among the most inspiring and controversial works of contemporary philosophical logic. His theory of logical semantics continues to attract passionate defenders as well as fierce opponents.

*Pavel Tichý's Collected Papers in Logic and Philosophy* brings together all of his published papers, totalling more than 40. It will enable readers who are interested in understanding, criticising or developing Tichý's ideas to have the sources and the objects of their study readily available.

Pavel Tichý was an original and gifted logician and philosopher of language. He came to the University of Otago as a senior lecturer in 1970, where he established the Department of Philosophy's logic programme. In 1978 he became an associate professor and in 1981 was awarded a Personal Chair in Logic at the University of Otago. He died tragically in 1994.

Funding for this publication was assisted by the Division of Humanities, University of Otago, and it is co-published by Filosofia, the Institute of Philosophy of the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic, and University of Otago Press.

OTHER RECENT UNIVERSITY OF OTAGO PRESS TITLES

*Tackling Rugby Myths: Rugby and New Zealand Society, 1854-2004*, edited by Greg Ryan

*Amongst Friends: Australian and New Zealand Voices from America*, edited by Patty O'Brien and Bruce Vaughn

*Restoring Kapiti: Nature's Second Chance*, edited by Kerry Brown

*Built for Us: The Work of Government and Colonial Architects, 1860s to 1960s*, by Lewis E. Martin

For further information  
email [university.press@otago.ac.nz](mailto:university.press@otago.ac.nz)

RECENTLY PUBLISHED BOOKS OF OTAGO ALUMNI

*Captain Poxys Doctor*, by Ron Vlietstra, Lee Shore Publications, North Carolina, 2004

*Bartok's Viola Concerto: the remarkable story of his swansong*, by Donald Maurice, Oxford University Press, 2004

*We Well People: a Celtic spirituality of the senses, of awe and wonder and delight*, by John Hunt, Caxton Press, 2004

*The Merino Princess: selected poems*, by Bernadette Hall, Victoria University Press, 2004

*The Excavation of Khok Phanom Di, a Prehistoric Site in Central Thailand Volume VI: the pottery, other ceramic materials and their cultural role*, by Brian Vincent, Antiquaries Society of London, 2004

*The People of God in the Apocalypse: discourse, structure and exegesis*, by Stephen Pattermore, Society for New Testament Study Monograph Series 128, Cambridge, CUP, 2004

*Growing Australian Red Cedar and other Meliaceae Species in Plantation*, by Fyfe L Bygrave and Patricia L Bygrave, Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation, Australia, 2005

*Live News and Other Stories*, by Maxine Alterio, Steele Roberts, 2005

*Heart Sounds*, by Sir David Hay, Steele Roberts, 2005

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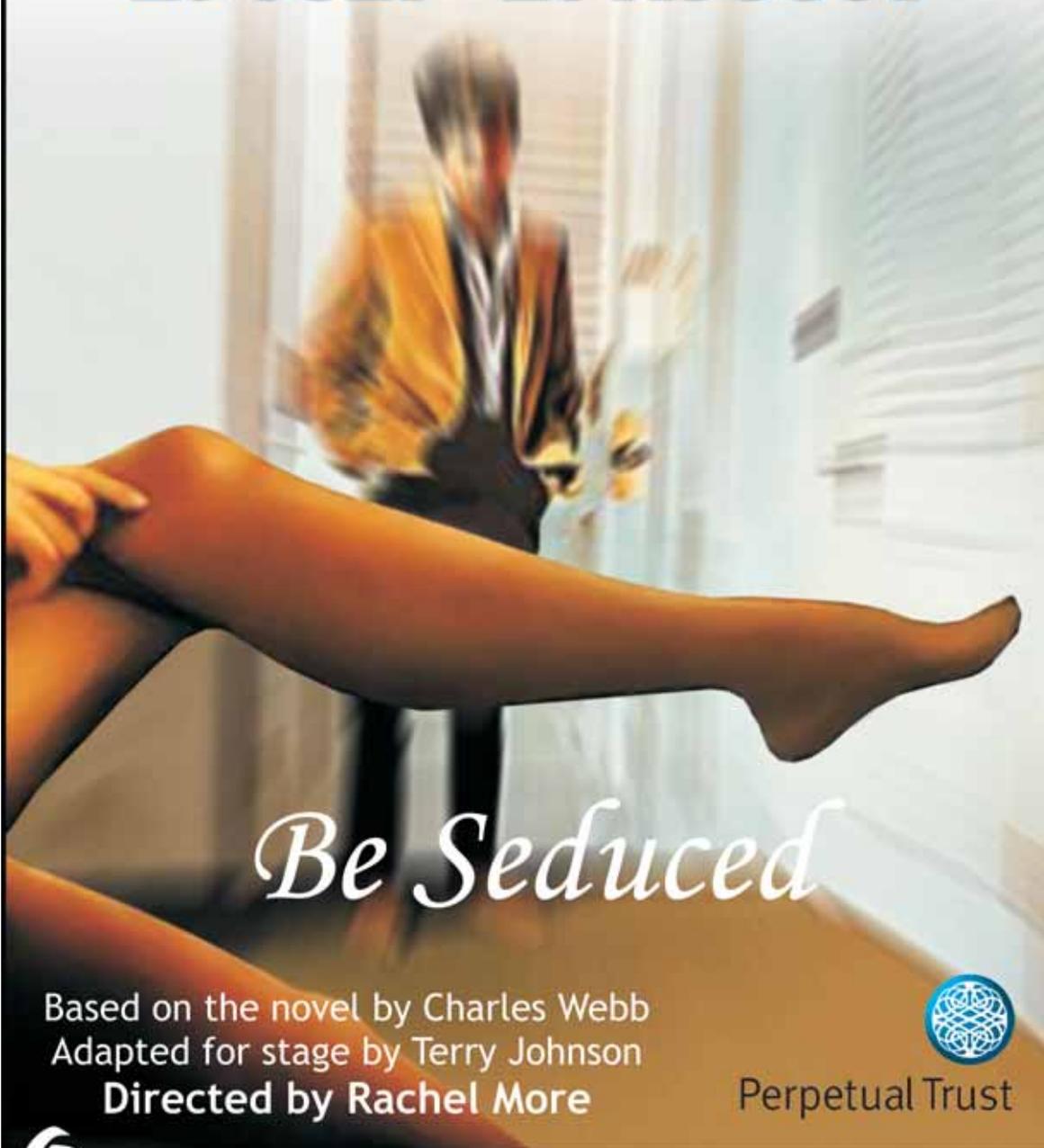
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**FORTUNE**

WORKING WITH OUR ALUMNI

ALUMNI COMPRISE THE LARGEST SINGLE GROUP WITHIN any university community and are often the most immediate experience the world at large has of it. With Otago, this is doubly so, as the overwhelming majority of our alumni, some 92 per cent, live outside Dunedin, and nearly 30 per cent are resident outside of New Zealand.

Alumni are important to Otago in a number of ways. We see your strong interest in the current and future reputation of the University; your passion for research developments in your area of work or curiosity; your concern that the University maintains its profile for excellent employees; your interest in re-establishing and sustaining contact with fellow classmates; and, on occasion, your personal legacy to the University, providing opportunities for future generations of students and researchers.

With your support the University has also benefited. The Annual Appeal has created a number of undergraduate scholarships, funded research activity and provided additional resources for the Library. Your celebration of Otago gives us a welcome visibility among prospective students. We have received support from a number of eminent alumni for key developments, taken your advice on the development of our Charter and Profile, taken three members of Council from the Court of Convocation (graduate alumni only), and received no end of inspiration and pleasure from the stories of your experiences, achievements and expression of the Otago spirit.

To support and extend the relationship between us, the University of Otago's Alumni and Development Office is devoted to a wide range of alumni activities. These include alumni events held in New Zealand and around the world; a contact service for alumni; *University of Otago Magazine* articles on alumni achievements and activities; technical and

information support for reunions and small appeals; advocacy for alumni involvement within the University; resources on the web site; the Annual Appeal; support for new alumni chapters and negotiating for alumni benefits.

This year the Alumni and Development Office is taking a close look at how we can provide more support to alumni, more opportunities for you to network and advance, greater access to information about our research developments, greater variety in the ways that you can get together, and how we can better support departments and divisions within the University to celebrate your history with us.

The first, and most important step for us, is to get more information from YOU about what you would like to see happen.

This, then, is an invitation to send an email (laura.black@stonebow.otago.ac.nz – please make the subject line suggestions), a postcard (Laura Black, Head Alumni and Development, University of Otago, PO Box 56, Dunedin), or pop in if you're passing Alumni House (next to the St David Street footbridge) and let us know what you'd like done more, better, differently, the same.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Laura Black  
Head  
Alumni and Development Office



THE GRADUATE: FREE TICKETS FOR OTAGO GRADUATES

In a word, plastics. That's the famous career advice given to the young Benjamin Braddock, the graduate of the 1960's book-film-play who got a bit distracted by the somewhat livelier charms of Mrs Robinson.

From late July through August, the Fortune Theatre is bringing Benjamin and Mrs Robinson to New Zealand's most famous university city (Dunedin, of course), under the direction of Otago Theatre Studies graduate, Rachel More. Now based in Wellington, More is one of several Otago theatre majors who have gone on to professional stage careers and is one of New Zealand's rising young directors.

Thanks to the Fortune and season sponsors the Perpetual Trust, the University of Otago is delighted to be able to offer a special performance of *The Graduate* to its own graduates.

There are 200 free tickets available on a first-come, first-served basis for the Otago alumni night, Monday 8 August.

If you'd like to join the audience, please contact the Alumni and Development Office, telephone 03 479 5649, or come into Alumni House to pick your preferred seats and collect your tickets. Seats are limited so it's two tickets per (Otago) graduate; tickets booked but not collected by Thursday 4 July will be reallocated.

The Otago performance has been generously donated by the Perpetual Trust to recognise and promote the links between the University of Otago and the Perpetual Trust-supported Directors Cancer Research Fund. The Vice-Chancellor, Professor David Skegg, who will welcome alumni to the performance, currently chairs this fund.

## ALUMNI

### ALUMNI EVENTS

THE 2005 PROGRAMME OF ACTIVITIES FOR OTAGO ALUMNI was launched with a range of small events.

In March, members of the Melbourne chapter picnicked on the banks of the Yarra. In Los Angeles, the expats who gathered at the Wilshire Country Club provided a warm welcome to the Vice-Chancellor, Professor David Skegg, and Laura Black, head of the Alumni and Development Office. The Vice-Chancellor's update and anecdotes about the University attracted many questions and reminiscences.

Two weeks later, the Vice-Chancellor and Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Humanities, Professor Alistair Fox attended a reception at the Merrion Hotel, Dublin. This was the first such event to be held in Ireland. Professors Skegg and Fox spoke about the new opportunities for international links arising from

Otago's recently launched Eamon Cleary Chair in Irish Studies.

In Wanaka on 26 April the alumni team acknowledged the University's involvement with the WildSouth Film Festival by rounding up some of our alumni to come along and support Otago's efforts there. Otago night featured scarves and sofas, a film by medical graduate Dr Paul Trotman, and supper attended by staff and students as well.

In May, the Christchurch alumni reception was held at The Chateau On The Park. It was preceded by the launch of the Carney Centre for Pharmacogenomics (see pages 28-29). There was a good turnout of medics as well as those from other disciplines, and St Margaret's and Selwyn Colleges sent along their wardens and members of their alumni networks to meet with their former residents.

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## REUNIONS

### PHYSIOLOGY CENTENARY

Otago's first lecture in Physiology was given in the Otago Medical School on 1 May 1905 by Professor John Malcolm; one century later some 100 people came from near and far to celebrate the milestone.

The official opening for the weekend of celebrations included the unveiling of a commemorative sculpture in the departmental foyer (see page 38). Don Hunter's resin wave is filled with items used in physiological research and teaching over the century, mostly sourced from a basement storeroom now being converted to a laboratory. It includes a memory card that captures an archive of the first hundred years.

Important figures in the department's history attending the celebrations included Emeritus Professor Douglass Taylor, who gave a talk on John Malcolm, the first Wolf Harris Professor of Physiology, who led the department for 38 years. He also played a major role in the establishment of a national funding body for medical research in New Zealand.

Physiology's alumni and friends enjoyed a tour of the department, an afternoon of talks and a visit to the Portobello Marine Laboratory where some of the department's earlier research was performed, particularly that of Nobel laureate Sir John Eccles who chaired the department from 1944 to 1951.

1992 MEDICAL CLASS REUNION – FEBRUARY 2006

Contact Nicola McKendrey: nicolamck@xtra.co.nz

MB ChB 1959-60

Nearly 120 classmates (and spouses) gathered in February for the reunion of the 1959 and 1960 MB ChB graduating classes. This weekend of reminiscing and laughter can be seen online at [www.otago.ac.nz/alumni](http://www.otago.ac.nz/alumni)

### DEPARTMENT OF MICROBIOLOGY AND IMMUNOLOGY REUNION

The New Zealand Microbiological Society celebrates its 50th anniversary this year and is holding its annual conference in Dunedin. To coincide with this the Department of Microbiology and Immunology at Otago is hosting a reunion of graduates. The scientific conference will run from 22–25 November and the reunion will be held on 25–26 November. All past and present students and staff are welcome to attend.

For further information see <http://microbiology@otago.ac.nz/grad-reunion>, or contact michelle.mcconnell@stonebow.otago.ac.nz or john.tagg@stonebow.otago.ac.nz

1971 AND 1972 MEDICAL CLASSES REUNION – FEBRUARY 2006

Contact Ken Greer: [the.greers@xtra.co.nz](mailto:the.greers@xtra.co.nz)

1985 MEDICAL CLASS REUNION – JULY 2005

Contact Lynley Cook: [Lynley.Cook@xtra.co.nz](mailto:Lynley.Cook@xtra.co.nz) or 03 332-9260 or register online at [http://events.conference.canterbury.ac.nz/ei/getdemo.ei?id=26&s=\\_2500ZILD](http://events.conference.canterbury.ac.nz/ei/getdemo.ei?id=26&s=_2500ZILD)

### ALUMNI WEB WATCH: A PHOTO FINISH

Although graduation is one of the most formal and traditional of Otago occasions, making all graduations in some ways alike, each remains very distinctive, not least for those who are being capped, their parents and friends.

However, many remember very little about their own graduations, being (quite properly) most concerned with getting across the stage with appropriate decorum.

Now you can review your graduation online after the event. A new feature of the alumni web pages is an electronic record featuring photos, the content of the graduation programme, and the graduation addresses.

The new graduation web link also provides an opportunity to send some views of your graduation around the world to people who weren't able to share it with you. While we can't at this stage provide you with individual photos from your graduation, there's a link to the people who can, and the pictures we do include provide a sense of occasion.

[www.otago.ac.nz/alumni](http://www.otago.ac.nz/alumni)

### FUNCTIONS SCHEDULE 2005

29 June	Kuala Lumpur
21 July	Wellington: for pre-1990 graduates
22 July	Wellington: for graduates from 1990 onwards
8 August	Dunedin: <i>The Graduate</i> , Fortune Theatre
12 August	Sydney: annual pre-Bledisloe reception
22 September	Auckland: for pre-1990 graduates
23 September	Auckland: for graduates from 1990 onwards
21 October	Melbourne: annual chapter dinner

Confirmed dates are posted on the Otago alumni web pages at [www.otago.ac.nz/alumni](http://www.otago.ac.nz/alumni). Closer to the time invitations will be sent to those known to be within travelling distance of each event. Please keep us up to date as you move or, if you think you might be in these areas at the time, let us know at [alumni@otago.ac.nz](mailto:alumni@otago.ac.nz)

For information on any of these alumni functions, please email [functions.alumni@otago.ac.nz](mailto:functions.alumni@otago.ac.nz)

# the Capping Magazine

CHECK OUT THIS FOR INNOCENT BEGINNINGS. THE 1927 Capping Magazine opened: "This souvenir programme we dedicate to our good friends the public of Dunedin in the hope it will symbolise for them – as it has for us – the season of friendly and wholehearted enjoyment, of unbounded good humour and a renewal of the vigour and spontaneity of youth." The issue closed with the words, in Latin, to *Gaudeamus Igitur*.

Who would have known that such a publication would give rise to one of the bitterest splits OUSA has ever known?

First published in 1926, with the ostensible task of listing the year's graduands and providing a programme for the Capping Concert, the Capping Magazine was an opportunity for cartoons, jokes and satire. Early contributors included J L McIndoe and Gordon MacIntyre. Jokes were made at the expense of lecturers and odes were written to women's legs. The proceeds went to charity.

Increasingly, however, sexual innuendo graduated to smut, graduated to porn. By 1952 there were images of breasts on the cover, and beyond the 1960s, anything went, including full frontal nudity and jokes about lecturers having sex with female students – the sort of humour for which 1976 OUSA president

Alistair Broad offers the following justification: "It brought students into contact with the wider public."

He remembers hawking the publication in places like the Tunnel Bar in Port Chalmers. "People didn't read *Critic*, but they did read the Capping Mag. It was a bridge between student humour and pub humour."

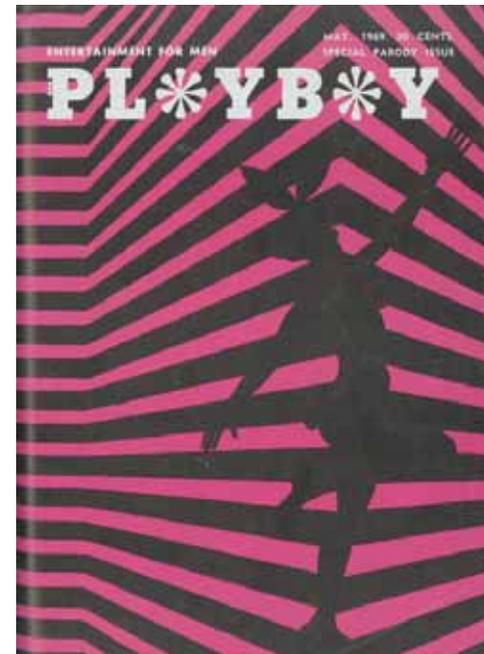
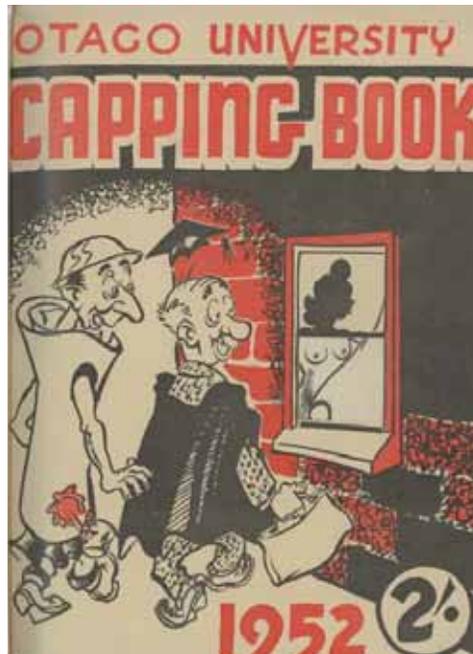
"For me," Broad continues, "it was all about the charities. It gave us the cover to behave inappropriately in the guise of raising money for charity. We all won. What could be better!"

Things came to a head with the 1981 issue, "Thrust", with a cover depicting a silhouette of a woman's legs with (have mercy) the University Clocktower positioned between them.

In 1983, Phyllis Comerford became the first female OUSA president, voted in on a platform of cleaning up capping.

In his 1990 history of OUSA<sup>1</sup>, Sam Elworthy describes Comerford as representing a "radical critique of capping" with her position that "we're not trying to destroy the festivities of capping... but I don't think a tradition is a justification for sexist and racist material".

The traditionalist camp, however, saw it differently. Said one SB Creagh: "Let's good old Otago pull together and put together a Capping Magazine in the old mould... If you really



sensitive feminists and pink-trousered faggots feel completely abused and humiliated, you can go and hide in the Women's Room."

Chris Trotter, the editor of *Critic* at the time of the "Thrust" issue, says it was simply a matter of time being up for the highly outrageous style of the Capping Magazine.

"It wasn't satirical, it was just ugly. Society had moved on."

Trotter points out that in the '60s – when the magazine was selling 30,000 copies – pornography was not easily available. "Once you could get *Playboy*, and *Harvard Lampoon*, which was a vastly better product, there just wasn't much point to the Capping Mag any more.

"Its appeal was in its novelty and shock value. Once that was gone, it just became a parody of itself."

Former OUSA activities coordinator Stephen Hall-Jones reckons it went through "quite a good patch" in the 80s, thanks to a few good editors and a return to its roots in satire.

And while it was less openly sexist, its mythologising of a certain kind of student experience continued. The 1988 issue, "Cram", declared itself "the magazine for people who sink lots of piss, play rugby and screw anything with two (sometimes four) legs".

But sales of the magazine had fallen to about 5,000 per year, and when Hall-Jones took over as editor in the later 1990s, he recast the magazine as a yearbook – "a memento for students when they graduated".

Its covers became highly designed, with arty photographs and subtle titles like "Exit". It was, as Hall-Jones wrote in his 1997 editorial, "humour laced with a more serious edge".

However, it became harder to attract a good editorial team and besides, says Hall-Jones, the times of capping being a singular and unifying university experience were over.

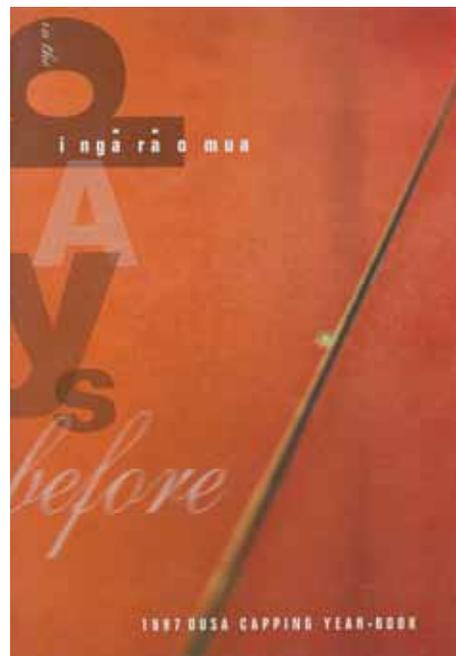
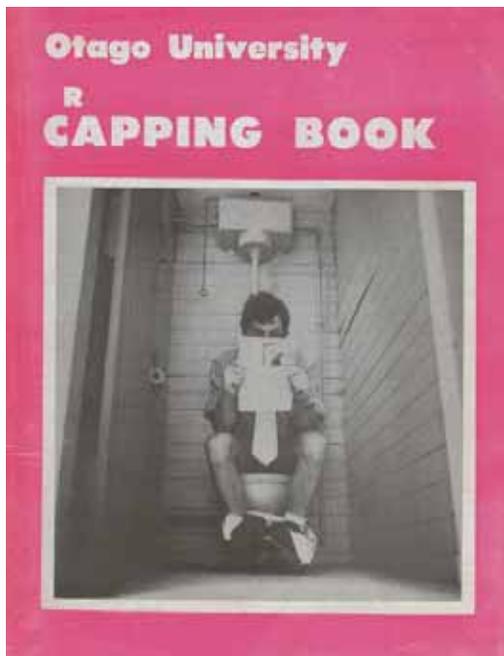
"There's no one capping any more, there are eight or nine," he says. "The same thing happened with the capping ball. People just sort of lost interest."

The last issue of the Capping Magazine was 1998.

Nicola Mutch

<sup>1</sup>*Ritual Songs of Defiance: A social history of students at the University of Otago*, by Sam Elworthy, published by the Otago University Students' Association, 1990.

Capping Magazine covers: Hocken Collections





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