

UNIVERSITY OF OTAGO MAGAZINE

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Science reaches out

PLUS:

What is the real value of a university education?
Discoveries at the “last frontier of fossil research”
2011 Rugby World Cup CEO Martin Snedden

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OTAGO



Te Whare Wānanga o Otāgo
NEW ZEALAND



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VICE-CHANCELLOR'S COMMENT



Meeting with Otago alumni has been one of the most rewarding aspects of my first year as Vice-Chancellor. Everywhere I go, whether it is an official alumni event, graduation, or even just walking around town, I encounter people who want to tell me about their Otago experience. These conversations typically start with a series of declarations, like “I’m an Otago graduate”, or “I have a BSc from Otago”, but they always end with one or two Scarfie stories. These stories include things like “I met my husband at Carrington”, or “I lived in an infamous flat on Castle Street”, or “My flatmates and I learned to cook baked beans and pasta” or “I was the star of the Selwyn Ballet”. Although graduates clearly value the education that they received at Otago, they equally value the big life lessons that they learned at this wonderful University.

Given this, it does not surprise me that alumni want the current generation of Otago students to have the same opportunities for personal growth that they enjoyed while studying here. Recently, some alumni have expressed concerns that Otago might be making changes that will destroy the Scarfie culture that is so near and dear to their hearts. Nothing could be further from the truth. I have spent many hours this year interacting with the current generation of Scarfies. Some of their experiences are very similar to your own – they are thriving in one of our outstanding residential colleges, they are learning to look after themselves in flats, they are trying out new sports or hobbies, and they are participating in the Capping Show or the Rowing Club. Most importantly, they are making friends that they will cherish for a lifetime.

From time-to-time, the current generation of Otago students will also

drink too much and many alumni say, “What’s the big deal? So did we”. But if you graduated from Otago more than a decade ago, the world has changed substantially since you were a Scarfie. Over the years, changes to laws regarding purchase and access to alcohol have contributed to a “perfect storm” for dangerous alcohol consumption. The Sale of Liquor Act removed controls on liquor outlet density which has led to a substantial increase in the number of licensed premises in Dunedin. It is now possible to purchase alcohol in more than 400 different places within walking distance of the University. In 1999, the purchase age for alcohol was lowered from 20 to 18 years of age; in the same year, supermarket sales of wine and beer were made possible on Sundays. In addition to these changes in the laws, electronic access to money via credit cards or eftpos means that most people in this country have almost unlimited, 24-hour access to alcohol. Students are no exception. What students drink has also changed – beer has been superseded by RTDs and spirits.

What this means is that even if you had a lot to drink when you were a student at Otago, by today’s standards, you would be a rookie. Like students at all other universities in New Zealand today (and, indeed, like many other young people who are not students), the level of drinking of the current cohort at Otago is sometimes dangerously high; it is often sufficient to cause short-term memory impairment, and increases the risk of alcohol addiction and of accidents that can lead to serious injury. Students’ excessive drinking also impacts on the wider Dunedin community. Severe alcohol intoxication, particularly when it occurs in the context of large groups

such as we see at Otago, is accompanied by fires, bottle throwing, litter, noise and fighting. Some nights, the fire service, police and the hospital are stretched beyond their limits.

Although none of these issues are unique to the University of Otago, as a residential university, we have made a special commitment to keeping students safe and healthy while, at the same time, maintaining the vibrant student culture that we all cherish. But, in doing so, some things will have to change. I have been working closely with students to find ways of moderating, not eliminating, their drinking. Since February, I have met personally with every student who has come to the attention of Campus Watch because he or she ended up in a dangerous situation due to alcohol. Without exception, these young people understand that they were very lucky to escape serious harm and they typically arrive in my office with a well-articulated plan about how to avoid similar situations in the future. I have also been working closely with OUSA to expand the range of activities that are available for students on and around campus. Our unofficial, collective motto has become “Half the alcohol, twice the fun”.

So the next time you see me at an alumni function or at graduation or on the street, please continue to share your Scarfie stories with me, but remember that the world has changed a bit since you were here. Together, we need to develop new initiatives that will allow the current generation of Scarfies to thrive and prosper.

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Harlene Hayne".

Professor Harlene Hayne
Vice-Chancellor, University of Otago

Reaching out

Otago's Division of Sciences is taking science into the community with an extended range of outreach programmes that provide opportunities and encouragement to a new generation of would-be scientists.

Students and science are both missing out because the subject isn't always getting a fair deal. Many school pupils who have never been exposed to real science discount it as being too hard, not much fun and for geeks only.

But they couldn't be more wrong, says Otago's Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Sciences) Professor Keith Hunter, who's seen the despair of new undergraduates when they realise they don't have the right science qualifications to take the courses they want.

"Science is different from many other academic subjects in that it is very hierarchical. You can't suddenly decide to study it later on – you need to have layers of knowledge to build on."

Despite the best efforts of even the most dedicated teachers, it's difficult for schools with limited resources to introduce pupils to the adventure that science can be. So the University of Otago is extending its long-running outreach programmes with new initiatives to introduce science into the community.

"What's really important is that we are trying to demystify science around the time when kids are at that vulnerable age when they are starting to have to

make choices about what they want to study," says Hunter.

Recently introduced programmes such as the Advanced School Sciences Academy and Science Wānanga are designed for schools, teachers and communities. They aim to encourage pupils and staff, make science more accessible to more people and make it more achievable for more students.

They build on decades of pioneering outreach initiated by Otago. The Portobello Aquarium's public education facility has been a favourite with schools and families ever since the University took it over in 1951. What is now the New Zealand Marine Studies Centre has a wide-ranging outreach that provides teacher resources, curriculum-linked science programmes for primary and secondary schools, and a facility where more than 30,000 annual visitors of all ages immerse themselves in science.

"Over 10,000 students from across the South Island are involved in programmes based at Portobello and in the Nelson region," says programme director Sally Carson. "Primary students may spend a couple of hours at the centre while Year-13 biology students are here for three days."

Residential events are held for students in Gifted and Talented programmes which, at Year-12 level, involve four days aboard the research vessel *Polaris II*. Although some aquarium visitors may never venture on to campus, they still experience science, says Carson.

"Embedding public education within a multidisciplinary tertiary research facility allows us to involve the visitors in the excitement of scientific discovery, recruit future scientists and break down barriers between the University and the wider community."

Another of Otago's long-running barrier breakers is Hands-On Science. Each summer, enthusiastic and inspirational science staff give up their research or vacation time to plant the seeds of science at a week-long residential school for interested pupils from all over the country.

Co-ordinator Rose Newburn says the week is a chance for kids keen on science to widen their horizons and get a glimpse of the breadth of potential careers open to them.

"It's also a place where it's safe to be interested in science and where they can participate in fieldwork, use expensive equipment and see researchers in action."

Long-standing organiser Professor John Tagg (Microbiology and Immunology) was one of the first demonstrators, more than 20 years ago.

"Right from the start, we wanted to promote the idea that science can be fun. Scientists are real people and enjoy



"The ultimate aim is to demystify science and humanise scientists in the eyes of young people, and show them that it's perfectly all right - even cool - to aspire to do science at university."

- Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Sciences)
Professor Keith Hunter

what they are doing. They also enjoy communicating science and get a buzz out of inspiring receptive, energetic students."

Pupils also get a chance to experience university life and around 40 per cent of them end up returning to Otago as undergraduates.

Several departments in the Division of Sciences run their own outreach programmes, as well as contributing to Hands-On Science and an on-campus Science Expo held in conjunction with the International Science Festival, sponsored by the University, every second year.

Professor Derek Holton (Mathematics and Statistics) initiated events for high and intermediate schools in the 1980s. Now the Junior Mathematics Competition still attracts more than 10,000 entries from some 250 schools a year, while Problem Challenge peaked in 2002 with 42,000 children entering from 728 schools.

Dr John Shanks and Dr John Curran run Problem Challenge, which emphasises a problem-solving approach to maths. The best entrants are invited to enter the advanced Final Challenge. Shanks says the competitions are still very well regarded and a measure of their

success is that they are recommended by the Education Review Office.

The Department of Chemistry has been opening its doors to schools, providing facilities, chemicals and space to help Year-13 pupils do NCEA research projects. Dr Dave Warren says students benefit from having two days of intense focus in an immersive environment. However, he says younger pupils are at risk of missing out.

"The National Education Monitoring Project says that kids can lose interest in science before Year 8. If you don't do science in primary school, by the time you get to high school you're less likely to pick it up."

So Warren is taking chemistry out to local primary pupils, using undergraduates, PhD and masters' students to work with teachers and deliver lessons that hit curriculum targets.

"A lot of kids have lost their sense of wonderment and sense of enquiry. We want to re-install questioning in them and generate some excitement for science.

"We commit to long-term projects in communities and are adopted by them. It's a win-win situation. The kids learn about science and our students

are gaining communication and organisational skills – extra-curricular skills you can't teach in a lab."

The initiative is currently being researched to evaluate its impact on not just schools, but the wider community.

Further outreach projects include the Healthy Harbour Watch, where Chemistry staff and students are working with Dunedin high school teachers, pupils and parents to sample and test the water in Otago Harbour for a long-term database to track its quality.

The Department of Physics also offers teacher development resources and programmes where senior and graduate students visit schools with a range of activities aimed at sparking interest in pupils in Years 5-8.

Co-ordinator Dr Esther Haines says it is important to give younger people a good impression of science at a time when they are still open to it, while the University students get a chance to teach what is obviously a non-technical audience – "and we think that is a really important skill for students to have".

Using students to teach science outreach programmes is key to promoting science at many levels, says



Sampling the mudflat: two of the 10,000 school students participating in New Zealand Marine Studies Centre programmes.

Hunter. With students being closer to the pupils' age, there's more likelihood of creating a spark in some kids so that they decide they want to do science. There are also surprising spin-offs for science.

"One of the by-products of our outreach programmes – one that was quite unexpected – is that some of the doctoral students going out to the schools have been sufficiently impressed by their experience that they have gone on to train to be teachers.

"If you can get teachers with postgraduate qualifications into schools they have real confidence to do things in the lab, so we are really pleased about that."

Science teachers are thin on the ground. "Some schools have huge difficulty attracting teachers, particularly in chemistry, physics and mathematics. If we can help steer young graduates into teaching, then that's a very good outcome for the country."

Hunter appreciates the problems faced by smaller schools with limited resources.

"It's particularly difficult for some schools such as those in rural areas where they find it hard to teach subjects

such as chemistry and physics. Either through lack of resources or experience, teachers have to teach from a book – but the real guts of science are not in a book. Science is what you do, mixing chemicals or growing plants or putting electronic components together to make a circuit."

To target Year-13 pupils who may not achieve their potential because of the schools they attend, the University has introduced the Advanced School Sciences Academy, which runs online science discussion and tuition in conjunction with two five-day residential camps.

The academy was launched in 2010 as a joint initiative between the University and the Ministry of Education, and is attended by a minimum of 50 talented pupils a year from small, rural or lower-decile schools.

"These kids can miss out if they don't have access to specialised tuition or facilities," says director Steve Broni. "We get them together with like-minded students where they can do real science with real scientists on projects linked to the curriculum, and then keep them on the boil with a virtual academy online."

The academy also offers professional development workshops for teachers

from participating schools that nominate pupils.

"Already the feedback we have had from students and teachers has been very positive. It's very heartening and we are confident that we can justify a case for it to continue beyond the first three years of funding."

Broni says that geography shouldn't limit the quest for knowledge and notes that science giant Ernest Rutherford came from a small town.

Māori students in rural and provincial communities in five regions in the country are getting encouragement from the University's Science Wānanga programme, which has been delivering science at marae and nearby schools since 2008.

Practical three-day science camps aim to ignite the enthusiasm and enhance the scientific understanding and skills of secondary school pupils, their teachers and their communities. Communities choose science topics relevant to their young people and, more often than not, it is now Māori scientists and postgraduate student mentors who lead the projects.

Kaituitui wānanga co-ordinator Davina Hunt says that the pupils describe



Te Wharekura o Arowhenua student Lauren Light explodes a hydrogen balloon demonstrating the chemistry of light during Science Wānanga at Murihiku Marae.

many positive ways in which the camps change their attitudes towards science. Many decide they want to continue in science at school and some consider that they could have a future career in science.

Visiting project leaders also learn from their exposure to tikanga/ protocol on the marae, develop skills in communicating science and gain a greater interest in possible research initiatives with Māori. And everyone learns from matauranga, traditional knowledge held by the kaumātua/elders.

“As a result of the wānanga we are seeing more collaboration between University scientists and Māori communities,” says Hunt. “It’s all part of building supportive partnerships between iwi, schools and the University, so we can increase the numbers of young Māori achieving in science and health sciences.”

The wānanga programme involves iwi with whom the University of Otago has existing relationships and its value continues well beyond the visit to the marae, says Hunter.

“Both pupils and parents get to see that scientists are human beings, too

– we’re not just the image of the white coats you see on TV – and our people get to understand Māori values better, which helps us to help them on campus.

“It’s critical for Māori students to adapt socially to campus life in the first semester and, if we understand where they are coming from, we can help them do that.”

Outreach is the focus of Otago’s Centre for Science Communication, which opened in 2008 to offer specialisations in filmmaking, writing and popularising science. Professor Jean Fleming heads the popularising science stream and says it can be difficult to get some complex, yet important, concepts across to the general public.

“Getting the public into thinking about science means it has to be accessible, fun, easy to understand and right.

“For a constructive interaction between science and society you can’t just tell people something – you have to talk with them. You can’t change their minds without a dialogue.”

The centre’s postgraduate courses emphasise good storytelling skills as a means of integrating science into society.

“Otago has been excellent at recognising the importance of science’s connections with the community,” says Fleming.

For Hunter, a university is not just to educate people and do research.

“We also have this role of critic and conscience of society, and we have this outreach role where we are expected to interact with communities. We may have paid lip service to that many years ago, but today it’s become part of our normal business.

“It’s a co-ordinated effort with a lot of different facets, but the ultimate aim is to demystify science and humanise scientists in the eyes of young people, and show them that it’s perfectly all right – even cool – to aspire to do science at university.

“Our outreach programmes are time-consuming and expensive, but they’re very rewarding and provide tremendous feedback for our staff because they feel they are making a difference.”

NIGEL ZEGA

Past lives

The serendipitous find of unusual fossilised bones more than 30 years ago has led to a career of discovery for Otago palaeontologist Professor Ewan Fordyce.

Walking along a sheep track in a North Otago paddock, Professor Ewan Fordyce kept his eyes on the uneven terrain, as one does. He spied, as one might, the tiny surface of a small piece of bone poking from the rock. Nothing special in that; this is farmland after all – there are bits of bone everywhere.

But Fordyce was arrested, as others might not be, by something about the bone's shape and texture. He got to his knees and looked closely, and realised he was looking at a tooth. Three days of hard slog revealed more, some like tusks, then a jawbone, a skull and a dawning realisation – this was no known beast. Fordyce was uncovering *Waipatia*, a never-before-described dolphin that had been extinct for around 25 million years.

Palaeontologists may feel lucky to uncover one previously unknown ancient creature in their entire careers. But the Otago Professor of Geology – who this year clocks up his third decade at the University, a mere blink of an historical eyelid – can count dozens, including whales, dolphins, a shark and two species of giant penguin. He has also described other creatures discovered by others, including a giant marine plesiosaur from the age of the dinosaurs. The thrill, he says, never wears off. But if he were to

admit to having a favourite, it would be elegant, curiously-featured *Waipatia*.

“What's great is that when you discover something, you get to name it. It's exciting to think that when people are studying these animals in hundreds of years, they will still know them by the names we have given them.”

To give fossils a distinctive southern flavour in the international world of palaeontology, Fordyce favours Māori names: *Waipatia* is named for Waipati, the nearby stream; *Kairuku*, a 1.3-metre-tall penguin with a long, slender beak and flippers, means “food-diver”. It's a way, he says, of permanently associating with New Zealand these fascinating creatures that roamed the southern oceans before coming to rest in our prehistoric islands' shallow, still estuaries.

For Fordyce, his growing catalogue of fossil finds has been a matter of some luck, much work and – with an interest in the species of the world over the past 50

million years – being in the right place at the right time.

Between the Universities of Otago and Canterbury – where Fordyce first entered the world of palaeontology as a hybrid geology-zoology PhD student – lie the sandstone and limestone basins of South Canterbury and North Otago.

Fifty million years ago, long before the Pacific and Australian continental plates began their relentless shoulder-barging that would form the Southern Alps, the area was made up of sheltered bays and inlets surrounding a shrinking continent.

“The conditions were perfect for fossils,” remarks Fordyce. “Animals might die in the bays or be washed into shore. Their bodies would settle on the fine sediments, where currents or scavengers might stir them up a bit, but not too traumatically.”

Over time, Fordyce explains, the sea floor built up around them, encasing and preserving their skeletal remains. Then, the central South Island was thrust upwards as the plate boundaries began to collide while, globally, sea levels also retreated. The ancient rock, exposed by erosion, would reveal a rich window into our distant history.

“New Zealand is something of a last frontier for fossil research. It's not only that we have such interesting and diverse species. It's also that we have so many complete specimens.”

“New Zealand is something of a last frontier for fossil research. It’s not only that we have such interesting and diverse species. It’s also that we have so many complete specimens. Often palaeontology involves extrapolating on the basis of very small fragments of evidence – estimating the size of an entire animal on the basis of a small piece of bone, for example. We are extremely fortunate in being able to paint a far more complete picture.”

It’s a picture which has seen the unassuming, intensely curious Fordyce become one of the world’s pre-eminent scholars on the evolution of dolphins and whales. His work has helped identify which marine mammals came to an evolutionary dead end and which have evolved into modern species. And, while his reconstructions of ancient vertebrates have contributed to an understanding of the physical world of the Oligocene period, they have posed further questions. “Why did *Waipatia* have tusks, for example? Does it suggest something about the underwater sedimentary setting or its prey? Or did they just look good to members of the opposite sex?”

Fordyce’s work was extensively funded by National Geographic in the 1990s,

enabling “a prolific period of discovery” and prompting a major feature on his work in the organisation’s magazine. He is now a research associate of the Smithsonian Institution in Washington DC.

And, all the while, he has been stalked by enormous penguins.

It all began during his doctoral studies in the late 1970s, a comprehensive re-evaluation of New Zealand’s whale and dolphin fossil record. During one of his field trips he happened upon a curious set of fossilised bones. They didn’t look like sea mammals, but as a lone PhD student Fordyce recalls, “I lacked the wherewithal to do anything about it”.

Four years later – his PhD and a few international postdoctoral posts under his belt, and recently employed as a lecturer at Otago – he returned to the site. “I couldn’t believe it when I found the bones were still there. By this time I had a better idea of what I was doing and a team to support me, so I extracted the block of sandstone, dragged it to the car and brought it back to the lab.”

When the fossils were finally prepared – painstakingly released from the sandstone – *Kairuku waitaki* was reborn.

This revealed the largest penguin ever described, standing at approximately 1.3 metres of solid build and with proportionately longer flippers and beak than today’s species. It would have been capable, believes Fordyce “of swimming far out to sea, diving deep and tackling large prey”.

Meanwhile, Fordyce and his team including postgraduate students had found another similar skeleton, *Kairuku grebneffi*, named after the skilled preparator Andrew Grebneff who died shortly after his work on the precious fossil. When the article describing the two species was published in the *Journal of Vertebrate Palaeontology* was announced, the *Kairuku* giant penguins received 10,000 Google news hits in a day: “It was a pleasant surprise to see that so many people are interested in this work,” he remarks. “One never really knows.”

This, in itself, feels like a triumph for Fordyce, who loves nothing more than to share with others the fascinating ancient wonderland on our doorstep. He has been a driving force behind Vanished World, enabling visitors to take free, self-guided tours around the geological and fossil sites of North Otago.



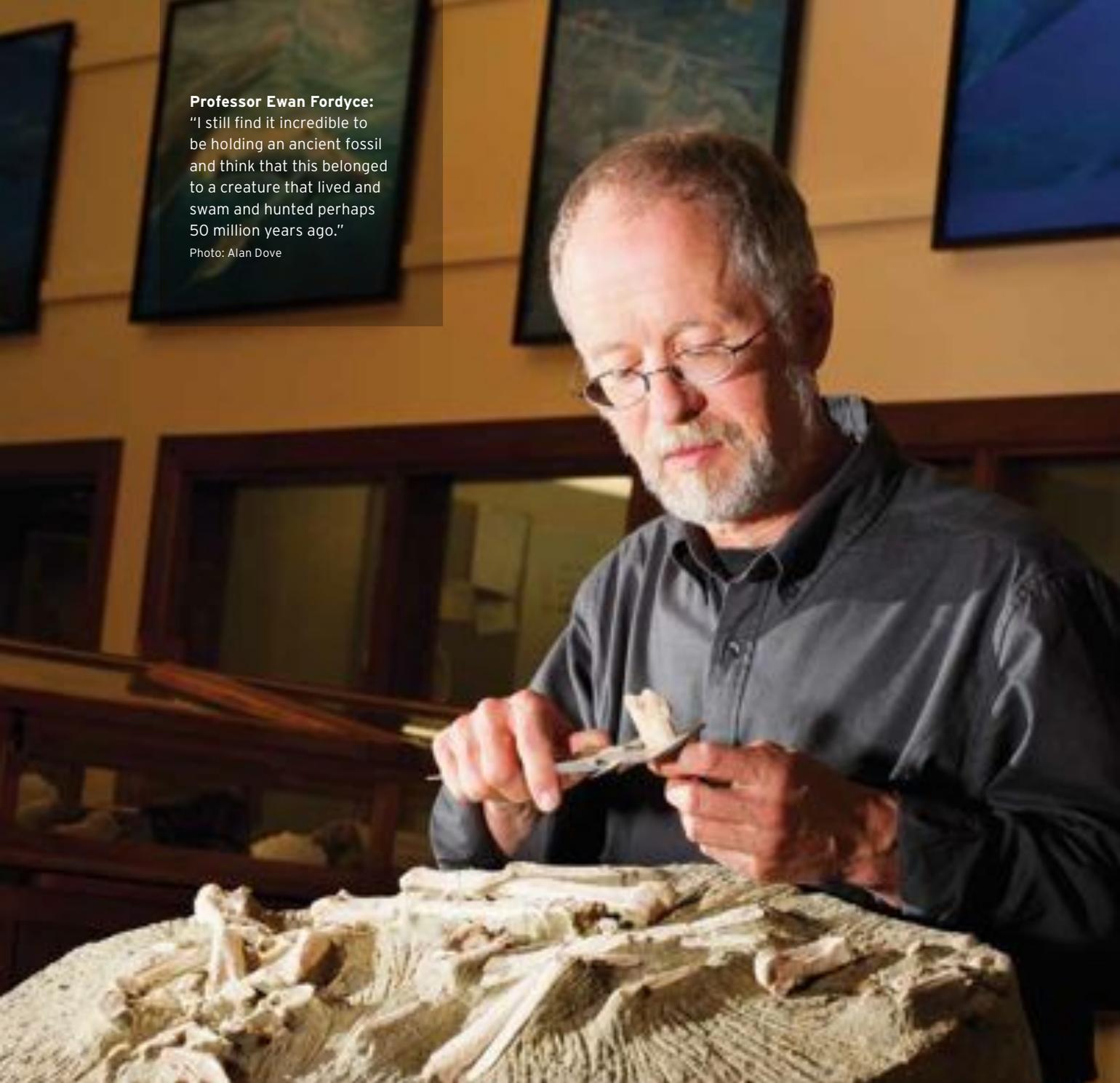
Two *Kairuku* penguins come ashore, passing a stranded *Waipatia* dolphin.

Artwork by Chris Gaskin.
Owner and copyright:
Geology Museum,
University of Otago,
New Zealand.
Used with permission.

Professor Ewan Fordyce:

"I still find it incredible to be holding an ancient fossil and think that this belonged to a creature that lived and swam and hunted perhaps 50 million years ago."

Photo: Alan Dove



While uncovering the past enables something of the world's vast history to be appreciated, it is a bittersweet endeavour. Fordyce feels keenly the brutal finality of extinction. A theme throughout his work explores how major shifts in the physical environment have led to mass-scale loss of animal life. He knows, perhaps more than most, what we stand to lose if the worst consequences of climate change are borne out.

"What's even more troubling," he comments, "is seeing humans as complicit in the loss of species, through the destruction of habitats and food sources." Seeing what we have lost makes him prize the present even more.

And, despite a career spent imagining the world as it was in the unfathomable depths of history, Fordyce admits he's never managed to get his head around geological time. "I still find it incredible

to be holding an ancient fossil and think that this belonged to a creature that lived and swam and hunted perhaps 50 million years ago. Forms most beautiful and wonderful have evolved."

NICOLA MUTCH

The fabric of history

Her work on the preservation of some of the United States' most significant national treasures - including the original Star Spangled Banner and draft Declaration of Independence - earned Otago alumna Dr Fenella France a finalist's place in last year's Service to America awards.

Seminal moments in our lifetimes are the events that have lasting impact and shape the direction of our lives.

In the lifetime of a nation, they are the watersheds that define the course of history and culture – the Battle of Hastings, the discovery of the “New World”, the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi, the day now imprinted on collective memory as 9/11.

Sometimes events of personal and national import coincide, as with New Zealander Dr Fenella France, for whom many personal milestones are inextricably linked to the defining moments of her adopted home, the United States of America. For her, images of the American flag, Declaration of Independence and the Ellis Island Immigration Station displayed at her citizenship ceremony had special resonance because, as a preservation scientist, she had personally worked with each of these national treasures.

In fact, France can measure much of her career – and much of her life – by the historic artefacts she has helped preserve and, occasionally, illuminate. It is work she describes as a “privilege” and which, in 2011, earned her a finalist's place in

the Service to America awards.

France's US career began in 1998 when she was shoulder-tapped by the National Museum of American History (part of the Smithsonian Institution museums) to assist with efforts to restore the original, but by then decaying, Star Spangled Banner – the 9 metre x 10 metre flag that flew over Fort McHenry in Baltimore during the war of 1812 and inspired the US national anthem.

France had completed a PhD in textile science at Otago and been a research fellow in the discipline before taking on a role as postgraduate research manager for the University. She was still actively involved in her own research in the area of fibre preservation and had undertaken a project for the Māori Research Council aimed at identifying the most appropriate conditions for preserving flax artefacts.

France's expertise in the area of fibre preservation – and, in particular, her experience working with wool – was recognised as vital to the American flag project. She was contracted for a year (to work on the white fibres) and ended up staying for three years (to work on the red and the blue).

“It was enormous,” France recalls, “and, when you looked at the significance of it, it was quite challenging to realise what was on your shoulders – saving one of America's treasures.”

The project culminated in the historic flag being re-displayed on a sloping, flat surface in a dimly lit, low-oxygen environment, to ensure it will be around for future generations of Americans.

Following the banner project, France moved to New York where she worked on preserving artefacts at Ellis Island, America's landmark immigrant processing station, and the New York Port Authority's World Trade Center 9/11 project. At the World Trade Center she helped stabilise a remnant of the destroyed complex, a 60-tonne steel column with many moving personal messages written on it – a poignant moment that tested her customarily professional detachment. If the move from working with textiles to metal seems remote, it's not; “a lot of man-made fibres are similar to other polymer materials”.

Then, in 2007, France moved to Washington DC to take up the position of lead preservation scientist at the Library of Congress, the largest library in the world and repository of many heritage documents and artefacts. Here, her knowledge of man-made and natural materials, research background in environmental impact and management skills have proven equally useful. France has spent time researching the preservation of United States' top

Dr Fenella France:

"... digitisation is access - it's not preservation. You can't get from digital versions what you can from the originals. It's all very well to look at something as an image, but everyone wants to get to the original because everyone feels that connection."



“Jefferson had at first used the word ‘subjects’ to refer to the American people, but then had made a very deliberate attempt to write over it and cover it with the word ‘citizens’.”

treasures and internationally significant items such as the 1320 Portolan Charts (early nautical maps) and the Magna Carta, which is housed at the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA). She discovered faded cartographic grid lines on the Waldseemüller 1507 Map, the first to use the word “America”.

In a process she helped to pioneer, much of France’s research involves hyperspectral imaging, a technique in which a document is scanned with ultraviolet and infrared light to reveal substances in and on the base material that would be otherwise invisible.

It was this technique that, in 2010, enabled France to reveal a telling revision in Thomas Jefferson’s handwritten draft of the American Declaration of Independence.

“Jefferson had at first used the word ‘subjects’ to refer to the American people, but then had made a very deliberate attempt to write over it and cover it with the word ‘citizens,’” says France. Her discovery brought to life the moment when Jefferson realised the import of the word he would use to describe members of a nascent nation in the act of rejecting monarchy for republicanism.

France also revealed previously unnoticed fingerprints on the Gettysburg Address, the speech given by US President Abraham Lincoln at the end of the Civil War. More recently, she was asked to investigate the pages of a notebook used by former White House Chief of Staff H R Haldeman when meeting with President Nixon, to look

for traces of writing from missing pages.

“It was like a CSI programme,” France recalls of this project. “[The archivist] arrived at the library with a briefcase padlocked to his wrist. I was in the lab for about 10 minutes with the notebook before he knocked on the door and asked if I was done!”

All this high-level, historic detective work is a long way from Hastings where France grew up, although the tenacious work ethic which equipped her to earn four degrees and forge a career as a world-leading preservation expert comes, she says, from her parents. The undergraduate degree she opted for, largely due to an interest in both fashion and science, led her to a master’s and then a PhD. Later, to round out her already impressive arsenal of competencies and build on the administrative skills she had developed in her early-career research management position, she completed via distance an MBA from Deakin University.

“Being a good scientist doesn’t necessarily mean you’ll be a good manager or administrator,” she says. “You see people with technical skills who move into management, but they don’t necessarily have management skills.”

Her CV gave her the perfect background for her appointment, in 2011, as chief of the Preservation Research and Testing Division at the Library. The promotion reduces her own research time, but increases the amount of influence she has on other people’s research and on developing others’ research careers.

“I knew it was going to take my time from the lab, but I also knew it needed someone who could take a broader view and support researchers individually. And I had the advantage of having a broad network of people with whom I could put others in contact.”

France also teaches at the Masters Forensic Science programme at George Washington University. Here, she has set up an intern system that enables students to earn course credit based on research assistant work at the Library. She even finds time to show school children around the Library and recounts how a recent group didn’t know what a card catalogue was. When she explained it to them, “they spent 20 or 30 minutes looking for their favourite authors”.

France is passionate about what we can learn from close analysis of historical documents.

“There’s so much information in some of these documents that we don’t know about. That’s why I always say that digitisation is access – it’s not preservation. You can’t get from digital versions what you can from the originals. It’s all very well to look at something as an image, but everyone wants to get to the original because everyone feels that connection. Preservation is necessary to try to explain to your kids what a document means in terms of what they’re allowed to do today and how they got the rights they have. They help us understand ourselves by putting ourselves in context.”

France hopes one day to bring her skills and technology to New Zealand to collaborate with local researchers on the Treaty of Waitangi and other seminal documents in Aotearoa. But, for now, her focus remains on the treasures of the land of the free and home of the brave.

REBECCA TANSLEY

Going global

After more than 10 years in Tanzania, where he developed a new research group of one into a major contributor in global health, Professor John Crump is back in Dunedin to take up the second endowed chair at the University of Otago's Centre for International Health.

A small town rural primary school might not seem like an obvious launching pad for a pioneering academic career. But when past students include Nobel Prize winner Ernest Rutherford and space scientist William Pickering, a young John Crump had his fair share of inspiring alumni.

“Even though Havelock School was small, it was a school with people to look up to and some very supportive teachers. It was a great foundation for someone who was interested in academic pursuits,” says Crump.

Like his illustrious childhood heroes, the inaugural Professor of Global Health at the University's Centre for International Health – a new chair established through the generosity of Dunedin couple Stuart and Marylyn McKinlay – went into medicine with plans for helping people beyond New Zealand's borders.

“I was primarily interested in medicine because I was interested in health issues in developing countries,” Crump says. “My grandfather always had *National Geographic* magazines and I loved reading those, plus we also had a copy of my great grandfather's journal from his

time working in New Britain in Papua New Guinea.

“At the time when I started at Otago, there weren't many role models for a career in that area, which made it hard to find a way forward. It wasn't until my elective in my final year when I was looking through the Christchurch Medical Library and found a dusty old edition of the textbook *Manson's Tropical Diseases*. The editor was based in London at the Hospital for Tropical Diseases, so I wanted to go there. Part of my elective was spent in London, and I also went to Kenya and realised it was possible to have a career in this field.”

By 1995, Crump was based in London completing a Diploma in Tropical Medicine and Hygiene and on the path to pursuing his dream career in global health. Since graduating from the University of Otago's Medical School, he has also completed postgraduate training in Christchurch, South Africa, Australia and the United States.

He is qualified as a specialist in both infectious diseases and medical microbiology, and has trained in field epidemiology with the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

Since 2002, Crump has been based at the Kilimanjaro Christian Medical Centre (KCMC) in Moshi, Tanzania, leading a major collaboration with Duke University, as well as working as a medical epidemiologist with the CDC.

“I was looking for a job in a low resource country,” Crump says. “Duke University was interested in having someone move to Tanzania to get a new collaborative programme going. There were also opportunities to work next door in Kenya with the CDC.

“It was at a time when a lot of focus was on HIV care and treatment programmes in low resource settings, so Duke and KCMC wanted to start out with an HIV focus.

“In international health, there are a few things you need to establish before you can compete with the ‘big kids’.

“You have to establish a track record of partnership between the two institutions that have a genuine interest in collaboration. You also need some basic infrastructure and appropriately trained personnel, and then some publications that prove you've actually done some things. All of these are hard to do without any money.

“We began with just me and, by the time we left, we were on the way to 70 staff.

“The first three or four years were spent getting to that point where we could legitimately compete for grants. We were lucky that there were generous individuals who donated resources and time that helped us to get initial projects



Professor John Crump:

"I'm looking to develop a new collaboration somewhere in South-East Asia, which is one of my main priorities for the next year or two."

Photo: Alan Dove

off the ground, so we were able to establish an early track record of success.”

Ten years later, Crump had taken the programme from strength to strength – building up an outstanding record of research and publications on many aspects of infectious diseases in resource-poor settings. Alongside HIV prevention, treatment and care, he also worked on the syndrome of fever and its causes in East Africa, animal-associated infections, laboratory services in resource-poor areas and he continues to be involved in two large projects in Tanzania.

But he was attracted on a number of levels to join McAuley Professor of International Health Professor Philip Hill at the Centre for International Health, established in 2008 through the Leading Thinkers Initiative and the Sisters of Mercy.

“The opportunity to help develop a centre that would provide a meaningful way for New Zealanders to be involved in international health academically was appealing, having not had that same opportunity when I was a student,” Crump says.

Since arriving in Dunedin several months ago, much of Crump’s time has been spent getting to grips with his new role. While his goal, ultimately, is to identify potential collaborators to work on projects within South-East Asia, he is realistic about what it takes to start again.

“The centre’s priority is the Asia-Pacific region. So, while I have ongoing projects in Tanzania, as Philip does in The Gambia, the goal is to support and develop collaborations in this part of the world.

“Already Philip has projects in Samoa and Indonesia. I’m looking to develop a new collaboration somewhere in South-East Asia, which is one of my main priorities for the next year or two. In a sense, it’s like beginning all over again.

“Having John Crump join us has made a big difference ... He ‘knows the business’ and the unique challenges we need to overcome to be successful.”

- Professor Philip Hill

We need to identify an engaged partner institution, and identify and support small seed projects to produce the track record needed to secure larger resources.”

Hill is excited about Crump’s addition to the centre’s team – which shows the University’s ongoing commitment to global health.

“In our first four years we have laid the physical and strategic foundations of the centre – a completely new initiative for Otago and New Zealand,” says Hill. “We have secured ongoing collaboration with the Medical Research Council Unit in The Gambia, built an international health component to the special relationship with the National University of Samoa, and established a completely new collaboration with the University of Padjadjaran in Bandung, Java, in tuberculosis research.

“We have also obtained funding for activities in each of these three collaborations, including from Mercy Hospital Dunedin, University of Otago, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the New Zealand Health Research Council, the Canadian Institutes of Health Research and NZAID.

“Having John Crump join us has made a big difference in what can be quite a lonely position in the institution. He ‘knows the business’ and the unique challenges we need to overcome to be successful.

“Because we have both been relatively successful on the ground in developing countries – in places where health

outcomes are some of the worst in the world – we have some credibility in knowing what we need to do to build a successful and sustainable Centre for International Health that we can later pass on to the next generation of international health researchers.”

And already the centre has established a strong track record in this area – enrolling postgraduate students from West Africa, Indonesia, Bangladesh, Zambia, Botswana, the US and New Zealand, and recently graduating the centre’s first PhD student.

“Identifying postgraduate students and working with them is a big part of what we do,” Crump says. “I believe that global health should be focused on places where the problems occur. The idea of supporting the development of indigenous researchers so that they can return to their own country is one of the big goals.

“From a centre like this, we can really contribute by creating the circumstances under which activities in developing countries can thrive. There is great value in supporting the training and career development of young people from low resource countries. They may return home to become health leaders and lifelong collaborators. Helping to develop the infrastructure and environment for them to thrive and underpin health improvements back home is really important.”

AMIE RICHARDSON

Can you trust your doctor?

Professor Mark Henaghan discusses the importance of trust between doctor and patient, trust between health-care practitioners, and what happens when trust breaks down.

When we are sick all we want is to get better as fast as possible. We rely on our doctor to tell us what is wrong and to give us the right treatment. We do not think of New Zealand's Code of Health and Disability Services Consumers' Rights (Code of Consumers' Rights). We put our trust in the doctor to do the right thing for us. As Judge Sylvia Cartwright said in the Report of the Cervical Cancer Inquiry 1988 (known as the Cartwright Report), "A patient who enters hospital for examination or treatment will usually be nervous and feel out of her depth. ... She will trust the medical, nursing and administrative staff to have one overriding goal: her health and welfare."ⁱ Anything that gets in the way of that trust puts both patient and health professional at risk.

Whilst giving a seminar to a group of anaesthetists at Dunedin Hospital, one of them described seeing an elderly male patient in significant pain that would best be alleviated by an epidural. The anaesthetist asked the patient if he knew what an epidural was. The patient said, "Yes, I have had one before, give me one now, I am in pain". The anaesthetist's medical instincts were to give the patient an epidural immediately; however, her fear was whether administering an epidural in these circumstances would align with the

informed consent provisions contained in the Code of Consumers' Rights. In actual fact, the anaesthetist could establish adequate informed consent under the code because the patient was in immediate pain, had previously had the treatment so knew about its consequences and was requesting it right away. Fortunately for the patient, the anaesthetist – despite her apprehension about the Code – administered the epidural. The patient trusted the anaesthetist and, ultimately, the anaesthetist trusted her own medical judgement. Both parties' trust could have been undermined by the perception that an external piece of paper, the code of Consumers' Rights, dictated a different outcome.

All of the health professionals at the medical seminar said they often felt anxious and unsure about how a particular legal guideline or hospital policy impacted on the decisions they make. One doctor said that if he passed the scene of an accident, he would think twice about stopping to help if something went wrong and he was held legally responsible.

What struck me was that these highly dedicated health professionals were anxious about exercising their own judgement because of a fear that some external agent may come and tell them

they got it wrong. But, as the Cambridge philosopher Onora O'Neill said in the BBC Reith Lectures, the "culture of accountability that we are relentlessly building for ourselves actually damages trust rather than supporting it".ⁱⁱ

As Enron has vividly shown, those who choose to act in a dishonest and unprofessional way will do so anyway, even if they are audited. In fact, audits give a false sense of security that everything must be all right because it has been audited. The only realistic check is our own judgement in each situation.

Who should we trust? Annette Baier, an Otago alumna who went on to be a Professor of Philosophy at the University of Pittsburgh, has thought about this. Baier says trust can only be measured on a case-by-case basis and that:ⁱⁱⁱ

... trust is appropriately placed in those who, for whatever motives, welcome the equalisation of power, who assist the less powerful and renounce eminence of power ...

In an emergency situation, where a patient is unconscious and needs urgent treatment, health professionals have to do the best they can with what is in front of them based on their training and judgement. There is an equalisation of power due to the circumstances and time pressures on the health professional. The common law has a tradition of forgiving health professionals who err in the pressure of an emergency situation despite their best efforts to act in the patient's best interests. We want health professionals to act in emergency

situations as they did in the Christchurch earthquake.

A graphic example from the Christchurch earthquake was the way a team of emergency and health-care professionals rescued an earthquake survivor by amputating both of his legs.^{iv} The patient was trapped in rubble after the 'quake and could not be extracted in any other way. In extreme circumstances, while aftershocks were still occurring, the health-care professionals successfully anaesthetised the patient and amputated both the patient's legs using a builder's hacksaw and a Leatherman pocketknife.^v If the health-care professionals had not intervened, he would have died. As one of the health-care professionals involved said:

The decision was made to remove the man's legs because he would have almost certainly died if we had delayed. He was continually bleeding, he would have bled to death. There was no way he was going to be extracted from the situation.

The history of medicine has not been about the equalisation of power. Jay Katz traces that history in his book *The Silent World of Doctor and Patient* and concludes that historically the emphasis was on the "patients' incapacities to apprehend the mysteries of medicine and, therefore, to share the burdens of decision with their doctors".^{vii} No doctor is all-knowing and, without listening to the patient, diagnosis is more likely that not to go astray.

In non-emergency situations when there is a breakdown of communication between a doctor and patient, then there is also a breakdown of trust. When things go wrong and a misdiagnosis happens, what patients want most to know is how did this happen? A full disclosure of what went wrong, as well as repentance and an apology, is likely to rebuild trust. Any

Professor Mark Henaghan:

"When things go wrong and a misdiagnosis happens, what patients want most to know is how did this happen? ... Any process that makes the consequences of a mistake too high a price to pay will lead to denial and cover up."

Photo: Alan Dove



“If care, empathy and respect are not internally embedded, then external moderation and auditing will make no difference. Compliance is not, and never could be, the same as choosing to treat others as one’s equal.”

process that makes the consequences of a mistake too high a price to pay will lead to denial and cover up. This does not help anyone. The chance of learning from what has gone wrong will diminish and trust in the health professional and the system is weakened.

Situations where parents refuse treatment for a sick child are much more likely to be ameliorated where the health professionals put themselves in the shoes of the parents and understand what is motivating the refusal. Such actions equalise power and build trust which paves the way to a solution. It can be all too easy to see such parents as unreasonable. This leads to a standoff with dire consequences for the children. Tovia Laufau’s parents took their 13-year-old son away from the hospital with a cancerous tumour in his leg because they felt their son might die and have his leg removed if he stayed at the hospital. Trust in the medical profession was lost at that moment. The parents preferred the power of their faith and never brought their son back to the hospital. A few months later Tovia died from the malicious cancer tumour. Once trust broke down, the line of communication closed and a young boy’s life was lost.

Trust is also important between health professionals. What has been described as a “turf war” between midwives and obstetricians has had dire consequences for some babies. The trial of a midwife at Dunedin Hospital, for the manslaughter of a newborn in her care

resulted in the midwife being acquitted. The case concerned a breech birth, which needed medical support. Such support was not sought and the child subsequently died. The trial transcript, however, shows that she, as a midwife, did not trust having an obstetrician involved in births because:^{viii}

... there was a lot of tension and there had been occasions when obstetricians had shouted at midwives and occasions, one specific occasion not long before that, where the obstetrician had overruled the woman’s wishes and barged into the room. And in the context of that, asking for advice became very complex.

Finally, a Commonwealth Fund study found that “when a country fails to meet the needs of the most vulnerable, it also fails to meet the needs of the average citizen”.^{ix} Associate Professor Robin Gauld, from the Department of Preventive and Social Medicine, and his medical trainee interns at the University of Otago carried out research into the New Zealand health-care system.^x Using national and international data the research found that “New Zealand scored highest in efficiency (81 per cent) and lowest in equality (58 per cent)”.^{xi} New Zealand’s low equality score was based on findings that there were “vast differences in health measures depending on both ethnicity and socio-economic factors”.^{xii} An unequal health-care system erodes trust on an individual level and in the system as a whole.

One person’s right is dependent on another’s responsibility. Patients have to trust health-care professionals to fulfil their professional duties on a daily basis. Health-care professionals have to trust their patients to give them accurate information about the patients’ health. Trust is most likely to thrive where there is a “welcoming of equalisation of power” between health-care professionals and their patients. Care, empathy and respect for each other, as equals, are the central ingredients of trust in any health-care system. These are internal attributes which, once embedded, do not require external moderation. If care, empathy and respect are not internally embedded, then external moderation and auditing will make no difference. Compliance is not, and never could be, the same as choosing to treat others as one’s equal.

Professor Mark Henaghan, Dean, Faculty of Law, has recently published a book, *Health Professionals and Trust: The Cure for Healthcare Law and Policy*, Routledge.

- i S Cartwright *The Report of the Cervical Cancer Inquiry 1988* (Government Printing Office, Auckland, 1988) at 127.
- ii O’Neill *A Question of Trust: The BBC Reith Lectures 2002* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2002) at 19.
- iii A Baier *Moral Prejudices: Essays on Ethics* (Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1994) at 180.
- iv M Johnston “Hacksaw Amputation ‘Just What You Do to Save a Life’, Says Doctor” *National, The New Zealand Herald* (online ed., 26 February 2011).
- v Ibid.
- vi Ibid.
- vii J Katz *The Silent World of Doctor and Patient* (reprinted ed., Johns Hopkins University Press, Maryland, 2002) at 28.
- viii R v *Crawshaw* HC Dunedin CRI-2005-012-001860, 6 March 2006 at 327.
- ix K Davis, C Schoen and K Stremikis *Mirror, Mirror on the Wall: How the Performance of the US Health Care System Compares Internationally* (The Commonwealth Fund, New York, 2010) at 18.
- x E Goodwin “NZ Health System Gets Tick” *News, Otago Daily Times* (online ed., 9 October 2010).
- xi Ibid.
- xii Ibid.

After the party

Otago law graduate, former New Zealand cricketer and 2011 Rugby World Cup CEO Martin Snedden talks to Nigel Zega.

No Otago alumnus has organised a bigger party than Martin Snedden.

As Chief Executive Officer of Rugby New Zealand 2011, Snedden was responsible for a 45-day sporting celebration for 20 international teams, 900 players and staff, 2,500 media representatives, four million New Zealanders and millions more spectators worldwide.

In a year already infamous for disasters, the Rugby World Cup was a welcome relief, and the All Black win was the fairytale ending to five years of hard graft for Snedden and his teams.

When he was shoulder-tapped for the hot seat in 2006 he knew that if things went wrong, it was his head on the block. He'd already survived a highly volatile period as Chief Executive Officer of New Zealand Cricket, handling hot topics from terrorist threats to player professionalism.

The Rugby World Cup was on a different scale again, but it was irresistible.

"Rugby is in our DNA," says Snedden. "The attraction was that there was never going to be a more high profile project."

The challenge was a long way from Snedden's early student days. With his grandfather, father and one of his three elder brothers all in law in Auckland, he found himself following in family

footsteps. Sadly for his studies, the family footsteps also included a passion for sport. His grandfather had captained the New Zealand cricket team and his father played for Auckland.

"In my late teens I was obsessed with cricket and rugby and my social life. I never got my head around being studious. For two years I was not a model student," he admits.

He transferred to Otago and things started to fall into place.

"I realised I'd better take things seriously. Although the social life at Otago was even better than it was in Auckland, I started to grow up.

"The beauty of Otago is that everything is in a small area. When you eliminate having to travel, you free up a lot of time. And the colder months are great for studying because the University buildings are always nice and warm."

Snedden's sporting career blossomed alongside his studies. In his fourth year at law school he made the New Zealand cricket team.

"I was lucky. Cricket was just moving into professionalism. It was a dream to be paid to be doing something that you love to do."

For 10 years Snedden travelled the world with the team, at a time when cricket briefly took over from rugby as the national sport.

"One of the most memorable events for me was the underarm game against Australia in 1981," he says. "It was a catalyst for the popularity of cricket, supported by the reaction to the Springbok tour later that year.

"We won tests against Australia and the West Indies, and the cricket culture exploded. Playing with people like Richard Hadlee and the Crowes, we had a great time in the '80s and accomplished a lot of firsts for New Zealand.

"There was a lot of personal enjoyment, but it was more about being part of a successful era."

On retiring from international cricket, Snedden concentrated on his legal career in his father's firm and on his growing family. However, in 2001 he was persuaded to take on the role of CEO of New Zealand Cricket, which eventually led to the Rugby World Cup role.

"I'd been doing a lot of event management involving international and domestic sport, so the Rugby World Cup position wasn't completely unfamiliar."

Although the new job didn't entail being in charge of teams or players, it held huge challenges.

"Rugby was popular, but not with everyone. We needed to invite all New Zealanders to join in with something much broader than just a rugby tournament," says Snedden. "We wanted it to be a genuine opportunity for the whole of New Zealand to get involved in a national celebration."

The relatively small size of New Zealand helped, he says. "The smaller a

Martin Snedden:

“It’s hard to think of a sporting event that has received such a positive international assessment and endorsement from both international media and visitors.”

Photo: Getty Images



host country, the easier it is to use the strengths of the country. We had the ability to gather the whole country in national support.

“France, with a population of 60 million, could only manage 20 per cent support in 2007 and England will face a similar struggle with the Olympics this year.”

Snedden is proud of his teams for achieving their goal of turning New Zealand into a stadium of four million, proving that it is even better to be a participant than a spectator.

“The thousands of volunteers were the most visible and critical part of the workforce. They were amazing ambassadors and had a huge positive impact.”

Snedden was even able to kick back and relax during the tournament – almost.

“By August I started to relax because we realised people were going to get into the spirit of it so, for the duration of the tournament, I just had a ball.

“The opening ceremony set such a really positive tone that, if we didn’t stuff up, the tournament would succeed regardless of what happened to the All Blacks.

“Although 37 days in, when it came to the semis and finals, what the All Blacks did became relevant again. The last two games were true sport – a real battle, especially the last moments of the final. You could see the emotion in what was happening off the field as much as on it. And it was the right result.

“It didn’t solve any problems, but in a terrible year it lifted morale and gave people some relief and something good to remember. It’s also hard to think of a sporting event that has received such a positive international assessment and endorsement from both international media and visitors.

“Visitor numbers were almost double our original projection and the tangible economic benefits are looking to be what we predicted. New Zealanders did such a great job it has to be good for the reputation of the country.”

The Rugby World Cup was also a catalyst for change. When Snedden started as CEO, it was obvious that New Zealand had limited facilities and infrastructure. Since then, Auckland improved its transport systems, despite teething problems, although quality hotel rooms are still in short supply, and Dunedin came up trumps with its new stadium.

“Carisbrook had been good, but was past it,” says Snedden. “Malcolm Farry and the [Dunedin City] Council were courageous in supporting the stadium, which has enormous potential for reinvigorating the city and the region.”

Snedden approves of the location and the decision to make it a covered stadium.

“It works and it’s had a fantastic start to its life. Just as it was being completed, Christchurch was taken out of commission for a while, making Dunedin the South Island capital of sport. Then the Elton John concert reinforced its multi-use aspects.

“I understand the argument of it being a big imposition on the city, but you have to look forwards. It’s a brilliant stadium that’s going to be a great legacy for Dunedin.”

Snedden admits to being incredibly influenced in life by his family and his

environment, and Otago has played its share.

“Living in Dunedin for three years made a big impact on me. Growing up in Auckland, I thought the world centred on the place.

“Dunedin taught me about life in New Zealand outside a big city and the way in which people think, because they think differently at the top of the North and the bottom of the South Islands.

“It’s important to respect the diversity that exists and I learned that at Otago, where I made friends I’ve still got all over the country. Dunedin was a real landmark time in my life. It’s where I grew up.”

Snedden also met his wife at law school and one of his daughters has been taught by a number of his old law lecturers. The Snedden family passion for sport has been passed on to all of his four children, but so far only one has entered law.

This month Snedden – now a Companion of the New Zealand Order of Merit – will take up a position as the new Chief Executive of the Tourism Industry Association. He has also taken time out to write the definitive book of what really happened behind the scenes of the Rugby World Cup. It’s due for publication in September.

“I think people would like to see the story captured by someone who knows more about it than most.

“I know that in 20 years people will look back and be proud of what we achieved as a country.”

“The opening ceremony set such a really positive tone that, if we didn’t stuff up, the tournament would succeed regardless of what happened to the All Blacks.”

Graduating impacts

What is the real value of a university education for graduates and wider society? The Graduate Longitudinal Study of New Zealand aims to find out.

On the surface, it may appear to be a statistical snapshot of New Zealand university graduates in 2011 but, in reality, the Graduate Longitudinal Study of New Zealand (GLSNZ) lays the basis for future research designed to evaluate the impact of university education on graduates' lives and on the country.

The study, involving a cohort of 8,719 graduates chosen to be representative of the approximately 40,000 students graduating from all New Zealand universities in 2011, is being undertaken using the expertise of the internationally-recognised National Centre for Lifecourse Research (NCLR) headquartered at the University of Otago.

NCLR co-director, Professor Richie Poulton, says the cohort will be re-assessed in two, five and 10 years, which will be something of a world first.

“Our study has been conceived as a broader, deeper – and by deeper, I mean more detailed – assessment of where people are at and the various attributes they have, than has traditionally occurred in studies like this. Most studies have been primarily focused on understanding how well graduates do in the employment market.”

Poulton says they want to know a lot more than just how people do economically.

“We want to test properly the idea that university prepares people for life, not just jobs; that they instil in people a set of values and attitudes that contribute in a positive way to society.

“I know that students themselves see that as a very important part of the university experience.”

Poulton says the team at the NCLR know how to study people well over time and answer questions about why life turns out well, or not so well.

“We now need to apply those skills to a particular segment of the population which is critical to New Zealand's future.

“I think the governments of today and tomorrow will look towards the tertiary sector as one way of improving New Zealand's economic and, I would hope, social situation.”

Data for the study were gathered through a 35–40 minute online survey involving graduates from the country's eight universities.

Poulton says more than 72 per cent of those approached to be part of the survey said yes, with over 65 per cent providing complete data – a result that was very pleasing, particularly as no special incentives were involved.

He expects there will be attrition from the cohort, but hopes this will be kept to a minimum so that, after 10 years, there will

still be 5,000–6,000 people participating, giving sufficient statistical power to answer all the questions required.

Poulton says interesting baseline statistics are emerging already, with about 75 per cent being happy about their university experience.

“Then you've got about 25 per cent who aren't so excited about the experience. That's a decent stack of people, so we'd like to understand more about that group.”

The growing number of international students is of interest also, with about 11 per cent of students coming from overseas.

“Apparently, it is the seventh largest export industry in New Zealand. The main flow of students is from Asia – broken down by China at number one, then India and Malaysia, with interest emerging now in Vietnam and Thailand,” he says.

“This study will also show how many people who come from overseas to study end up staying and what sort of contribution they make. Or, if those people return to their country of origin, what sorts of relationships they maintain with New Zealand which might be beneficial economically, or in other ways.”

Poulton says, in time, the longitudinal study will also allow the researchers to address the brain-drain issue by finding out how long New Zealand-born graduates go away for and what sort of valuable connections they bring back. “Who knows, it might be more accurate to call it brain circulation rather than brain drain.”



Professor Richie Poulton:

“We want to test properly the idea that university prepares people for life, not just jobs; that they instil in people a set of values and attitudes that contribute in a positive way to society.”

Photo: Bill Nichol

The study also has the ability to analyse the private benefit of attending university and the public benefit beyond just the taxes people pay.

“It has implications in lots of other ways. What is the right mix of funding? How much should the individual put in themselves versus how much of the tab should be picked up by the taxpayer?”

Poulton says, overall, there are two broad sets of questions that can

be answered. One is the very policy-relevant questions about how to spend the taxpayer dollar to greatest effect and, then, there are serious science questions about people’s pathways through life.

“One of the advantages we have as part of a national centre is that we can interrogate existing databases. We have plenty of information on the life trajectories of people who did not go to university to make comparisons.

“Ideally, you would do one of these every five years and have regular snapshots going forward in time so you could make policy changes and see what effect those changes have had.”

Initial funding for the study came from the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) with further funding from the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Women’s Affairs. The New Zealand Vice-Chancellors’ Committee has provided further funding for years two, five and 10.

MARK WRIGHT

THE STUDY SAMPLE

Approximately 60 per cent of the GLSNZ cohort sample are female, with 70 per cent of the overall sample aged under 30.

Ethnicity-wise, 61 per cent describe themselves as New Zealand European, with 7.2 per cent Māori, 11.3 per cent Chinese, 5.3 per cent Indian and 3.5 per cent Pasifika. A significant 21.6

per cent come from other ethnicities, underscoring the ethnic diversity among graduates.

The baseline figures show 59 per cent are studying for undergraduate degrees, 13 per cent are completing master’s-level study and 5 per cent are doctoral graduates. Humanities/Arts/Social Sciences (25.3 per cent) is the most common study domain, followed by Sciences/Engineering (20.3 per

cent), Commerce (20 per cent) and Health Sciences (9.8 per cent). More than one third of the graduates are studying part-time.

The three main reasons given for choosing a field of study are: a strong interest in the field (77.1 per cent), wanting to pursue a career in the field (71.4 per cent) and to increase their earning potential (34.5 per cent).

Rising star

In a few short years, young baritone Kawiti Waetford has made the transition from full immersion Māori language schooling to full immersion in the world of opera.

Singing and cultural performance have always been a part of the 21-year-old's family life and education, and a fundamental influence in his development.

"Although kapa haka is very different from opera, it still requires the same presence and stage command," he explains.

But, if there was a formative moment, it came at age seven when his mother and grandmother took him to see *Phantom of the Opera*. That whole experience – the singing, the drama, the set and lighting – left an indelible mark.

His desire to sing eventually led him to the door of Joan Kennaway, a leading light in the Whangarei-based Opera North.

"Joan is a most amazing lady. She was my first singing teacher and she really inspired the love of telling stories and poetry through singing. With her guidance, I began to cultivate the love of classical singing."

Waetford's performance talents extended to the world of Ngā Manu Kōrero or Māori oratory, where he won a national competition at just 15. He was also picked to go to the Globe Theatre in London to learn more about Shakespearean acting and stage craft.

By then he was well used to performing at conferences and dinners, with singing partner Shaan Antunovich, gaining experience and learning to hold an audience.

"I have always loved to tell stories and it's the feeling you get when you make an instant connection with the audience."

His talents were quickly spotted at the New Zealand National Singing School by

Professor Terence Dennis (Department of Music) who, as pianist, partners many prestigious artists in New Zealand and abroad, and has been official pianist for the finals of the Mobil and Lexus Song Quests since 1991.

"At that early stage I really thought Kawiti wanted to go into musical theatre where he would be such a natural stage talent. But he said no, he wanted to pursue classical singing training.

"He has been recognised already for his gifts on stage. He brings his intensity and acting ability, a beautiful instrument to develop, plus all the stage charisma."

After a year of study, Dennis, a trustee of the Kiri Te Kanawa Foundation and, in recent years, a regular recital partner of Dame Kiri, arranged for him to sing for her: she recommended her influential foundation should foster his development, an



Kawiti Waetford: “I have always loved to tell stories and it’s the feeling you get when you make an instant connection with the audience.”

Photo: Graham Warman

honour usually reserved for singers much further along in their career.

Now, in the third year of a four-year Bachelor of Music degree with Honours, Waetford is mentored by Dennis as he develops his repertoire, focusing on both music and languages.

“These are early days, but Kawiti has a tremendous natural instinct and a terrific ear for language – prerequisites for high professionalism.”

Isabel Cunningham (Professional Practice Fellow in Voice) describes her role in Kawiti’s training as predominantly voice building, a highly complex skill involving the mind, body and soul of the student.

“The solo voice has to be trained to project, without microphones, right across an orchestral pit and out into the auditorium, so the voice has to be built to withstand that. It is a very slow process involving systematic

vocal exercises and judicious choice of repertoire to bring a student to the next level without taking a big leap,” she explains. “Young singers must not be pushed so far that they cannot cope physically, mentally or emotionally.”

Cunningham says Waetford has an excellent work ethic, something that is vital for any of the 23 performance voice students if they want to succeed.

“The students have to take on board the concepts being taught in lessons, then practise assiduously between times, otherwise they will make no progress.”

Waetford is well aware of the support of others that has helped him make the transition to where he is now, including the huge input he has had from his mother, grandparents and aunt, and the support he has received from Dame Kiri and her foundation. That support has included attending the Solti-Te

Kanawa Accademia in Italy, performing with Dame Kiri and diva Frederica Von Stade, and singing with the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra at the Rugby World Cup Final concert.

“I’ve had so many opportunities – opportunities you can only get through having support of that calibre.”

Waetford says the other key components for him have been the support he receives through the prestigious Ngārimu VC & Māori Battalion Scholarship, and as a house tutor at Carrington College.

Looking ahead, he is a semi-finalist in next month’s Lexus Song Quest and there are whispers of postgraduate study, maybe in New York, but Waetford is taking it a step at a time.

“But it’s up to me – the choice is always mine. The help is incremental.”

MARK WRIGHT

Invention aids parasite diagnosis

Disease-causing parasites have developed resistance to broad-spectrum chemicals used in agriculture and medicine, so more specific targeting is needed to counter infections.

However, that requires accurate identification of parasites, which can be costly and time-consuming, and needs expert analysis.

Now Dr Stephen Sowerby, Director of Otago's Applied Science Programme, has invented and patented a device to aid detection and analysis of particles in fluids.

"It's a game-changing invention in the world of parasite diagnostics," says Sowerby, who developed the device with Greg Mirams, of Dunedin's Techion Group, and together with Otago Innovation Limited, have set up Menixis, a company to commercialise the product.

"We wanted to do away with the conventional use of microscopes in parasitology. Normal slides require the searching of a large area to find the eggs hidden among air bubbles, pollen and debris.

"We built a device that attracts parasite eggs to a single place so we can see them and easily capture their image in a single photographic record."

Sowerby is also working with Professor Philip Hill (Centre for International Health) to see how the new technology can be used

for human medicine in the developing world.

"Such devices should make it easier to collect important data in the field that can then be sent to experts for analysis for disease diagnosis and monitoring," says Sowerby.

"This is a clear example of applied scientists engaging with industry to address an unmet need, solve a technical problem, protect the solution through patent, commercialise the product and form new ventures that should be profitable."



Dr Stephen Sowerby: "This is a clear example of applied scientists engaging with industry to address an unmet need, solve a technical problem ... and form new ventures that should be profitable."

Understanding the wine-involved

New Zealand wine enthusiasts' varying commitment to the object of their desire should soon be better understood thanks to internationally-funded research by PhD candidate Sarah Becker (Tourism).

Becker has recently won a Great Wine Capitals (GWC) Global Network grant for her research and, as part of that, she will attend the group's AGM in Florence in November to deliver a 10,000-word paper. Titled *The Consumer Continuum: Understanding the Wine-Involved in New Zealand*, the paper will examine wine as a central leisure pursuit and the different activities stemming from that.

"In the past, wine has been looked at more from just the specific wine purchasing or wine tourism aspects, so that is where I fill in the gap."

Becker is interviewing people around the Otago/Southland area and hopes to obtain about 35 in-depth interviews probing their relationships with wine.

"My main interest is in looking at a continuum - from the novice to the connoisseur - and what the differences are in terms of behaviour, attitude, values and different types and levels of interest and involvement."

That involvement can range from a simple social obligation,

such as providing good wine, to moving to Central Otago to plant a vineyard. She will then be able to relate her findings back to academic literature in the areas of leisure, tourism and sociology.

"Several different theories have been used in terms of serious leisure, specialisation and involvement - so it is trying to round those out and come up with a unifying perspective for looking at wine."

GWC is a network of nine cities from internationally renowned wine regions.



PhD candidate **Sarah Becker:** Her research examines wine as a central leisure pursuit.

Albumin research offers huge potential

It has long been known that albumin is the most abundant protein in blood plasma, playing a vital role in transporting fatty acids, hormones and amino acids around the body.

But it is only recent research, co-authored by Professor Stephen Brennan from Otago's Christchurch campus, in association with colleagues in Norway and the UK, that has established exactly why and how albumin is so important.

In a paper published in *Nature Communications*, the researchers have shown that albumin molecules, instead of being absorbed by endothelial cells and dying, actually bind to a receptor in these cells which line blood vessels.

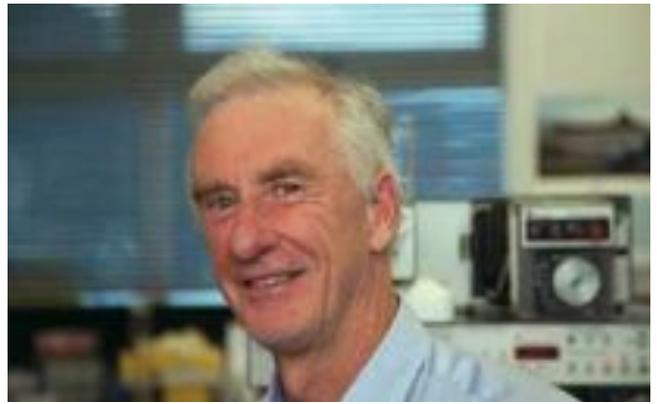
"We've established that when the pH inside the vesicles drops, then albumin binds to the neonatal Fc receptor in the cell, much like a magnet, and the albumin gets transported back to the surface of the cell, to be released again into the blood stream," Brennan explains.

He says the discovery of this cellular recycling process explains the vital high volume of serum albumin in the blood stream. Pharmaceutical companies have quickly picked up on the huge potential value of this finding for improved drug delivery to

patients, because many drugs also bind to albumin and are then transported through the blood stream.

"We have shown that it's possible to create albumin variants with a pre-determined half-life and this would allow drug companies to specifically tailor drug treatments to patients."

Brennan says this development will enable drugs to remain in the blood stream for different periods, thus avoiding unnecessary medication or poor patient compliance.



Professor Stephen Brennan: "... this would allow drug companies to specifically tailor drug treatments to patients."

Committed to the great outdoors

Hunters and anglers have been identified as New Zealand's most committed outdoor recreationalists, more so than trampers and mountaineers.

Dr Brent Lovelock and a team from the Centre for Recreation Research undertook an internet survey of 1,024 recreationalists. They examined key psychological drivers and constraints, then related these to how often people participated in outdoor recreation and their level of financial commitment.

"Hunters and anglers were particularly driven by the need for escape and the need to have an 'intimate' natural experience in a high-quality scenic environment. Mountaineers and trampers were still driven by some of those needs, but also by more social needs - doing it in a group."

Qualitative, in-depth interviews with 47 participants then examined why people remained committed to their outdoor recreation, or why they had lapsed.

That identified four key life phases: when they became teenagers and believed it was no longer "cool"; when they moved to a new location for work or study; when they began a family and had young children; and when they got older, with reduced physical mobility. Lovelock says schools with highly-motivated, inspiring teachers can make a difference, while outdoor clubs can

help by providing tailored activities for families, seniors and new arrivals. Families also perform a vital role in providing an early introduction to the outdoors.

"All of the highly committed outdoor recreationalists had a very early introduction to their activity. Some remember catching their first fish when they were four years old and they are still fishing now in their 80s."



Dr Brent Lovelock: "All of the highly committed outdoor recreationalists had a very early introduction to their activity."

Interpreter toolkit for GPs

Following research into the use of interpreters, Dr Ben Gray, Jo Hilder and Dr Maria Stubbe (Primary Health Care and General Practice, Wellington) have developed New Zealand's first toolkit for primary health-care professionals in this area of rapidly growing need.

"New Zealand is now a multicultural society and, increasingly, GPs and other health professionals are managing patients who have limited or very little English," Gray says.

"If they don't understand one another clearly, both doctor and patient are at risk in terms of best diagnosis and in meeting the requirements of the Health and Disability Code."

Gray worked at the Newtown Union Health Centre, in Wellington, treating patients from over 20 countries, where it was relatively common to use interpreters. But his research shows this is unusual and too many health professionals are still trying to "muddle through" in a changing cultural environment.

The comprehensive interpreter toolkit is supported by the Royal New Zealand College of General Practitioners. It sets out flow charts, scenarios and information boxes to improve communication with limited-English patients, and is available through the college.

"We're hoping this toolkit will be the start of a cultural change, where health professionals recognise that every consultation with limited-English patients requires clinical judgment on the quality of interpreting needed.

"To facilitate the use of interpreters it is also vital that District Health Boards, as is happening in Auckland, provide some funding for interpreter use for primary-care services and in areas such as Emergency Departments."



Dr Ben Gray: "If they don't understand one another clearly, both doctor and patient are at risk ..."

Lincoln's DNA clues

A *National Geographic* TV documentary investigating a theory that President Abraham Lincoln may have been dying from cancer before his assassination has turned to Otago expertise to find DNA evidence.

While at Stanford University, Dr Ann Horsburgh (Anatomy), an expert in ancient DNA, was approached by Dr John Sotos, a cardiologist with a strong interest in Lincoln. He is challenging the conventional belief that Lincoln's disproportionately long limbs and other unusual features were the result of Marfan Syndrome.

"He thinks that diagnosis is inaccurate and Lincoln actually had something called MEN2B which, among other things, causes devastating cancer," says Horsburgh.

The genetic mutation can trigger thyroid and adrenal cancers which could explain Lincoln's unusual proportions. Most die young and three of Lincoln's four offspring died as children - two, possibly, from MEN2B.

Horsburgh and colleague Dr Jo Stanton (Anatomy) have been trying to extract DNA from bloodied clothing to find out if Lincoln had the mutation, but DNA preservation is proving a problem.

"Typically, we work with bone and teeth samples which offer a measure of protection to the DNA, whereas blood on cloth is completely unprotected and temperature cycling in places like

attics will destroy DNA completely," explains Horsburgh.

Stanton says the provenance of Lincoln artefacts isn't always entirely clear.

"People hold these things in high reverence and, in a way, they don't really want to be shown that it may not be Lincoln."

Their next hope is to get DNA from a lock of Lincoln's hair.

Part of the documentary, *Lincoln's Secret Killer*, was shot at Otago.



Dr Ann Horsburgh and Dr Jo Stanton: They have been trying to extract DNA from bloodied clothing to find out if President Abraham Lincoln had the MEN2B mutation.

Weathertight processes under scrutiny

Dr Saskia Righarts and Professor Mark Henaghan (Law) are examining whether the tribunal process put in place under the Weathertight Homes Resolution Services Act 2006 has improved the way in which leaky homes claims are dealt with.

Previously, people had to either mediate through lawyers or go to court, with cases under \$200,000 heard in the District Court and those above \$200,000 in the High Court.

“Outcomes for those involved in mediation are confidential, but for those that went to court it was taking a very long time and immensely expensive, so the tribunal was set up to be more accessible and less costly.”

Righarts, who has a PhD in Psychology, is interested in understanding how people interact with the system after some concerns the Weathertight Tribunal was not meeting these aims.

“Not enough attention is paid to how people engage with the court system and what could be done to make it better for them.”

She hopes to complete about 40 in-depth interviews with complainants, respondents and council representatives to see how it is working and if there are better options.

Initial feedback suggests that the tribunal system is working,

but lawyers' fees are making the process less accessible for homeowners. In fact, some are accepting offers received in mediation simply because legal fees have been getting too high.

“It was really designed to be more user-friendly, so you could represent yourself, but as time has gone on more lawyers have got involved, making it much more like the High Court.”



Dr Saskia Righarts: “Not enough attention is paid to how people engage with the court system and what could be done to make it better for them.”

Folk music revival

Evidence of a third revival in folk music in a little over a century has been outlined in a book by Dr Robert Burns (Department of Music).

Burns, himself a former UK studio musician, was able to tap into his professional connections in the British folk music scene, as well as the recording industry to research his book *Transforming Folk: Innovation and Tradition in English Folk-Rock*.

There have been two previous revivals, according to Burns. The first came around the turn of the 20th century when Victorian and Edwardian song collectors felt that folk music in Britain was vanishing and ought to be saved. Folk music was also used as a morale booster in World War II, a second revival that carried into the late 1960s.

Burns says the latest revival seems to be built around the increased popularity of folk music performed at festivals such as Glastonbury, Cambridge, Sidmouth and Womad.

“One thing I noticed as a performer and a folk festival attendee was that audience numbers seemed to get bigger from the mid '90s onwards.

“There is also a new folk scene in the clubs in Britain, which is largely attended by a very young audience, with teenagers going along.”

Burns puts some of the appeal down to bands such as Fairport Convention, Steeleye Span and Bellowhead who are revitalising old English folk music.

“So much so that that whole amalgam of folk music with other musical styles in Britain - and not just rock music - has now given birth to the third folk revival.



Dr Robert Burns: “One thing I noticed as a performer and a folk festival attendee was that audience numbers seemed to get bigger from the mid '90s onwards.”

Hot properties

It's hot - and some parts of it are red hot. Horopito, New Zealand's native pepper tree, is known for its piquant properties, and collaborative research between the University of Otago, Plant & Food Research and Victoria University is shedding more light on why.

Dr Nigel Perry, a research chemist with both Plant & Food Research and the University, has been working with Wellington-based plant biologist Professor Kevin Gould over the past three years.

Gould, a former Otago staff member, had observed that horopito leaves go red in response to damage, and that younger leaves are redder and also have red margins. Meanwhile, Perry had been studying polygodial, a peppery compound found in especially high levels in the red parts of horopito leaves, which is known to act as an insect anti-feedant.

"We thought if it has this red colour developing and it has anti-feedant properties, does the red colouration act as a warning to insects? This hasn't been demonstrated in plants before so we thought if we can't show it in horopito then it probably can't be shown in anything," says Perry.

A series of experiments found that insects ate less of the red margined leaves but, when they ran the experiment in the dark, the insects were not as discriminating, suggesting the redness was an aposematic (warning) colouration.

Perry says the research has been an excellent collaboration between biologists and chemists, bringing together entomology, botany and Otago's expertise in natural products chemistry.



Dr Nigel Perry: "... if it has this red colour developing and it has anti-feedant properties, does the red colouration act as a warning to insects?"

Migration impacts measured

Each year more than four million people emigrate in search of a better life. The ideal way to calculate the impact of this decision on their lives would be to conduct an experiment where a random sample of individuals are selected in one country and then dropped into another.

This experiment may seem very difficult to implement but, in fact, New Zealand has an immigration policy that nearly does this. The Pacific Access Category allows an annual quota of Pacific Islanders to migrate to New Zealand. For Tonga, more applications are received than the quota allows, so a ballot is used to randomly select from amongst the registrations.

To take advantage of this natural experiment, Professor Steven Stillman (Economics) and colleagues designed the Marsden-funded ongoing Pacific Island-New Zealand Migration Survey, collecting data from Tongan emigrants who were successful in the ballot, as well as from several groups still living in Tonga, including individuals who were unsuccessful. By comparing the successful and unsuccessful applicants, they obtain the only known experimental measure of the impacts of migration.

Results show that migrants earned 263 per cent more after one year of living in New Zealand than they would have earned in Tonga. Migrants were also in better mental health. However, there

were positive and negative impacts on physical health. Young children of migrants were taller, but older children were more likely to be obese, with hypertension more prevalent among adult migrants.

As Tongan migrants are similar to developing-country migrants elsewhere in the world, Stillman believes these results may apply in other countries as well.

For further information please visit www.pacificmigration.ac.nz



Professor Steven Stillman: The results of Pacific Island-New Zealand Migration Survey may also apply in other countries.

Good health

After his research became instrumental in cleaning up New Zealand's chicken industry, Associate Professor Michael Baker has now turned his attention to the dramatic increase in infectious diseases in this country.

For Associate Professor Michael Baker the practice of public health is all about doing the “right thing” for New Zealanders, based on well-researched and clear epidemiological evidence.

Over the last two decades Baker, based in the Department of Public Health at the University of Otago, Wellington, has become one of the country's leading epidemiologists, whose research has the potential to make a real difference to the lives of thousands. He has played a major role in revealing New Zealand's successes and failures in health policy. He has also been at the forefront of the debate over whether or not New Zealand is progressing as a society that cares for the health of its people – and children, in particular.

“What motivated me to specialise in public health was taking time out from my job as a hospital doctor in Auckland to work as a ministerial health advisor in Wellington during the late 1980s,” he explains.

“During that time I helped guide new policies through parliament, such as establishing New Zealand's needle exchange programme, which has contributed to keeping HIV out of the injecting-drug-user population.”

Baker's time in central government convinced him that a career in public health would provide more opportunities to improve people's lives than continuing in clinical medicine. Since then, following significant studies published in both national and international journals, he has become a well-known media voice on public health issues.

This high profile comes not only from the quality of his collaborative research, but also because of his credible communication skills.

“It's very important to put our research findings into the public domain. In public health, there's limited value in just having your research printed in an academic journal,” he says.

Because of increased epidemiological research over recent decades, Baker believes there's been a significant shift in awareness of the role of public health in New Zealand. Other health professionals, such as GPs, now use this research to support their clinical experience at the frontline of health care.

In 2006 he published a paper that showed that New Zealand had a growing epidemic of campylobacteriosis, costing tens of millions of dollars a year in hospitalisations and lost productivity.

“The research showed we had by far the highest rates in the developed world with more than 380 cases per 100,000 people, three times higher than Australia and 30 times higher than in the United States, with an estimated 150,000 cases a year in the community,” he says.

This epidemic was firmly linked to the unhygienic processing of fresh chicken which, at the time, Baker controversially tagged the “cheap and dirty food of New Zealand”. The result was a wave of criticism from chicken processors and, even, chicken aficionados offended with this description of their favourite food.

“The ensuing publicity probably supported the New Zealand Food Safety Authority in introducing tougher regulations on fresh poultry,” says Baker. “Within three months there was an unprecedented 50 per cent fall in campylobacteriosis in the population and a similar drop in hospitalisations. This was one of the largest drops in disease incidence ever recorded for a national epidemic of this type.”

Baker has published further research this year showing that one form of paralysis, Guillain-Barré syndrome, has also fallen significantly as a result of this decline in campylobacteriosis from chicken.

“Many people forget that the then leader of the Green Party, Rod Donald, died in 2005 because of a complication from campylobacteriosis. So it can be much more serious than just a bad stomach upset.”



**Associate Professor
Michael Baker:** "From working
in public health for 20 years
I have learned that many of
the problems we regard as
intractable can be fixed through
the organised efforts of society."
Photo: Michael Roberts

However, Baker's work, and that of his colleagues' in the Department of Public Health, means that public health has moved a long way from just counting disease rates or numbers. The focus now is also on what drives disease in the community – and what can be done about it – as illustrated by a recent research paper on the burden of infectious diseases in New Zealand that has been published in *The Lancet*.

In what is a world first in one country, the study analysed five million hospital records to look at disease trends across socio-economic and ethnic groups. This showed a 51 per cent increase in hospital admissions caused by infectious diseases between 1989 and 2008. By contrast, non-infectious diseases increased by only seven per cent.

“Usually we just look at what's happening with single diseases. This is the first time we've investigated all infectious diseases in this way. The study found significant increases in respiratory, skin and gut infections, in particular.

“The results show the overwhelming effect that poverty has on health in New Zealand. This is particularly the case for Māori whose rates of infectious disease actually declined for those living in more affluent neighbourhoods, but almost doubled for those living in the poorest areas.”

The Lancet editorial accompanying the publication of this paper noted that the research has important implications beyond New Zealand to stimulate research and action, “where cultural or socio-economic inequalities may predispose to disparities in health outcomes”.

The editorial added: “Despite a small budget, New Zealand has set an example by measuring health disparities for several outcomes in its population. By doing so, such disparities have rightly

informed political debate and policy about health in vulnerable populations.”

Critically, according to Baker, these rises in infectious disease almost exactly mirror trends in income inequalities over the last two decades.

“Most of the rise in infectious diseases occurred in the 1990s. This was a period when this country restructured the economy, resulting in measurable increases in income and wealth inequalities.”

Baker concludes that infectious diseases are one of the most sensitive indicators of social and economic inequality – an early warning signal of whether a society is genuinely looking after its most vulnerable, or whether a significant proportion of people are “missing out”.

“What frustrates me is the huge human and economic cost of our current policies. We now have a situation where 60 per cent of hospital admissions for children are caused by infectious diseases, many of which are preventable.

“We're wasting huge amounts by treating illness at the ‘bottom of the cliff’ because of a failure to fix the social conditions that cause these infectious diseases. Basic things like affordable housing to reduce crowding, good nutrition policies in schools and free access to primary health care for children.

“From working in public health for 20 years I have learned that many of the

problems we regard as intractable can be fixed through the organised efforts of society.

“One inspiring example we have evaluated is Housing New Zealand's Healthy Housing Programme. This operated in South Auckland, Northland and Wellington until recently, and our evaluation showed it was able to reduce acute overnight hospitalisations in children by almost 30 per cent.”

Baker is also one of the directors of He Kainga Oranga, the Housing and Health Research Programme at the University of Otago, Wellington. This group has produced a string of research findings demonstrating the positive health benefits that come from housing improvements, including insulation and better heating.

Baker reflects on New Zealand's history of innovative and practical interventions in the public health field and hopes that tradition will continue in tackling our considerable public health challenges.

Some of these fixes are “relatively simple”, he says, like cleaning up our poultry industry, which produced immediate results. Others are tough, “wicked problems”, like improving the supply of good quality affordable and sustainable housing, which will take long-term co-ordinated effort by many parts of society to achieve.

AINSLIE TALBOT

Infectious diseases are one of the most sensitive indicators of social and economic inequality - an early warning signal of whether a society is genuinely looking after its most vulnerable, or whether a significant proportion of people are “missing out”.

University at the plaza

Earlier this year the University's newest building – located adjacent to Dunedin's new Forsyth Barr Stadium – was opened for use. University Plaza Building One, as it is known, is an impressive structure, incorporating innovative design, world-class recreation and academic facilities, and a strategic presence for the University.

Designed by Christchurch architects Warren and Mahoney, the 9,600 sq m building provides a new home for the

University's Foundation Year Programme and Language Centre, the Unipol Gymnasium and Recreation Centre, and the Plaza Café.

Faced with Oamaru stone – a material widely used on other campus buildings – the three-storey building is constructed to meet high standards of environmental sustainability, making maximum use of natural light and ventilation, and energy-efficient technologies. Internally, extensive use has been made of glass,

American white oak timber battens and boldly-coloured feature panels to create a light, bright and stimulating educational and recreational environment. It faces onto the large courtyard of University Plaza, which is jointly owned and managed by the University and the Dunedin City Council.

Unipol, previously located in somewhat tired facilities further along Anzac Avenue, now has 60 per cent more floor space, with two sports halls, three





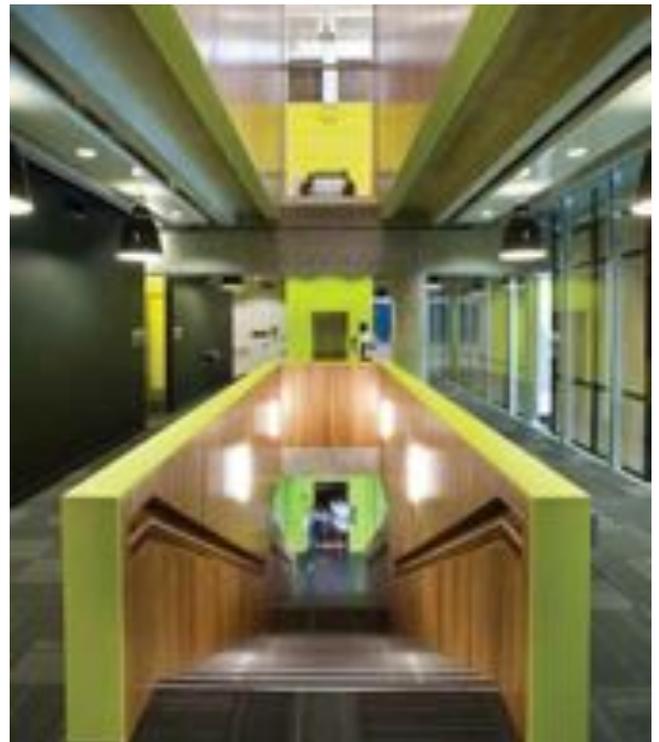
fully-equipped resistance training areas, a large 697 sq m cardio space and an additional multi-purpose area that can be used for a variety of other recreational activities.

The Plaza Café is open to the public, as well as University staff and students, and operates seven days a week, year-round. Families are welcome, with a purpose-built play area to help keep children entertained.

The building provides a key hub for the University on the boundary of the eastern precinct of campus, already extended by the merger with the Dunedin College of Education in 2007 and an area identified in the 2010 Campus Master Plan as offering future development opportunities. It is also close to the recreational facilities at Logan Park and built along the west wall of Dunedin's newest civic amenity,

the Forsyth Barr Stadium, the venue of this year's highly successful student orientation programme, Orientadium.

Chief Operating Officer John Patrick says the University Plaza Building One project has been a good one for the University. The building and its facilities are of the highest standard and the plaza has become a busy and vibrant area. Unipol alone attracts more than 750,000 visitors every year.



Orientadium at the adjacent Forsyth Barr Stadium, February 2012: the toga party (left) and Shihad concert (right).

School of Business maintains accreditation

The University's School of Business has maintained an international accreditation that has been earned by less than five per cent of the world's business schools.

The business accreditation by AACSB International - The Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business - is the hallmark of excellence in business education.

School of Business Dean Professor George Benwell says maintaining the AACSB accreditation, first gained by Otago in 2006, was an important achievement.

"This accreditation confirms our place as one of the leading business schools in the world and the commitment of our staff to making sure that we offer world-class business education and research."

To maintain accreditation, business schools must undergo a rigorous internal review every five years. The school must demonstrate its continued commitment to the 21 quality standards relating to faculty qualification, strategic management of resources, interactions of faculty and students, as well as a commitment to continuous improvement and achievement of learning goals in degree programmes.

Earthquake strengthening

The University is embarking on a seismic assessment and strengthening programme for buildings on its Dunedin campus.

Engineering assessments of University buildings are well underway and landlords of other buildings which the University lease will also be asked for engineering information.

Overall, \$50 million has been set aside in the Priority Development Plan to fund any required strengthening work by 2019, which is many years earlier than the

deadlines established by the Dunedin City Council.

The work will be carried out in accordance with the University's own seismic guidelines of 100 per cent new building strength (NBS) for new buildings, not less than 67 per cent for renovated/modified buildings and not less than 34 per cent for existing buildings.

Former Vice-Chancellor to head Royal Society

The University's previous Vice-Chancellor, Professor Sir David Skegg, will take up his new role as President of the Royal Society of New Zealand next month.



A distinguished cancer researcher who continues to undertake research at Otago, Sir David led the University for seven years until mid 2011.

The Royal Society of New Zealand is an independent national academy of science, technology and the humanities, and a federation of scientific and technological societies and individual members. It is an educational and research charity which operates under a Parliamentary Act for the advancement and promotion of science, technology and the humanities in New Zealand.

The Society represents nearly 20,000 scientists, scholars, technologists and technicians, enabling it to encompass a broad range of disciplines across the sciences, social sciences, humanities and technology.

Focus on veterans' health

The University and the New Zealand Defence Force have signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) which will see significantly increased research into the health of military veterans, serving personnel and their families.

A new research theme - titled Health of Veterans, Serving Personnel and their Families - has also been established by the University to increase support for and focus on this area.

The signing of the MOU formalises and expands existing research relationships with the New Zealand Defence Force. It mirrors an existing MOU the University of Otago has with the University of Queensland Centre for Military and Veterans' Health.

The MOU also covers a wide variety of other research across the University including security, peace and conflict studies, clothing and textiles, oceanography and international relations - reflecting international research and best practice in these areas.

The director of the new research theme is Associate Professor of Occupational Health, Dr **David McBride**, who has been serving as a reservist



Vice Chief of Defence Force Rear Admiral Jack Steer (left), and Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Enterprise) Professor Richard Blaikie.
Photo: New Zealand Defence Force.

medical officer in Afghanistan. McBride says health research is central to the MOU as military service involves a high level of physical and psychological demand which may have a profound impact upon the health of servicemen and women, their families and friends.

Health of Veterans, Serving Personnel and their Families is one of 15 research themes recently designated at the University. The others are:

- Aspire 2025 Research for a Tobacco Free Aotearoa
- Full Circle: Māori and Pacific Genetics of Health
- Gut Health Network
- New Zealand Ocean Acidification Research Cluster
- Arthritis Research Theme
- Comparative and Cross-Cultural Studies
- Polar and Cold Environments
- Formulation and Delivery of Bioactives
- Kidney in Health and Disease
- Otago Energy Research Centre
- Oxygen Theme
- Otago International Health Research Network
- Asian Migrations
- Early Modern Thought

Obituaries

Dr **Gordon Sleivert** (48). Formerly an exercise physiologist at the School of Physical Education (1994-2000), he was Director of the University's Human Performance Centre from 1997-2000. He then returned to Canada to continue his career as a leading sports scientist.

Emeritus Professor **Douglass Taylor** (89). An internationally respected respiratory physiologist and medical historian, Professor Taylor joined the Department of Physiology in 1962 and retired in 1987. His service to the University also included positions as Assistant and Associate Dean at the Medical School.



Members of the University and wider community attended an OUSA-led campus Anzac day service, the first of its kind to be held at the University in recent times.

Appointments

Professor **Hamish Spencer** (Zoology) has been selected as the new Director of the Allan Wilson Centre for Molecular Ecology and Evolution, a New Zealand Centre of Research Excellence hosted at Massey University. He



replaces current director Professor Charles Daugherty, of Victoria University, in August.

Awards

Associate Professor **Lisa Stamp** (Medicine, University of Otago, Christchurch) is the latest recipient of the University's Rowheath Trust Award and Carl Smith Medal, recognising outstanding research performance by an early-career staff member. She has made significant international contributions to improving the treatment of arthritis and gout.

Professor **Jean Fleming** (Anatomy/Centre for Science Communication) has been awarded a life

membership of the New Zealand International Science Festival in recognition of her outstanding services to the festival since its inception as an incorporated society in 1997.

Dr **Logan Walker** (Pathology, University of Otago, Christchurch) has been awarded a Sir Charles Hercus Health Research Fellowship to advance his research into the genetics of breast cancer. The Health Research Council Fellowship is valued at \$500,000 dollars over four years.

Dr **Sandra Richardson** (Centre for Postgraduate Nursing Studies, University of Otago, Christchurch) received a Distance Education Association of New Zealand DEANZ Award for her work following the Christchurch earthquake. Dr **Tim Cooper** (Theology and Religion) received a merit award for redesigning the department's undergraduate distance education programme.

Emeritus Professors

The following staff members have been granted the status of Professor Emeritus by the University Council: **Donald Evans** (Bioethics Centre) and **Anthony Moltano** (Ophthalmology).

In other words

Nature abhors a vacuum - and the same could perhaps be said of those looking for interesting things to read. Indeed, the story of small and alternative publishers in New Zealand is the filling of voids left by the mainstream literary industry.

So when Trevor Reeves offered to print and distribute a friend's poems in Dunedin in the early 1970s under the mast of Caveman Press, he was making his first steps into what he saw as a yawning hole in New Zealand's academia-centric, national-project-obsessed publishing scene.

In doing so, Caveman Press became a mouthpiece for emerging voices and perspectives for a decade. With an ear for talent and prescience for unfolding trends, Reeves produced *Private Gardens*, New Zealand's first anthology of women poets, and published Hone Tuwhare's first three volumes of work. James K Baxter, Peter Olds and Rachel McAlpine were among the many others whose work saw the light of day through Caveman Press and its associated literary journal, *Cave*. Reeves' horizons extended beyond New Zealand - an issue of *Cave* featured a contribution by Charles Bukowski. By the mid 1970s, Caveman Press was publishing half of all poetry books in New Zealand, works ranging from New Zealand architecture to abortion and gender politics and, as their first New Zealand distributor, the *Lonely Planet*.

Now, Reeves' scrupulous record-keeping enables an inside view of his efforts to enable an alternative literary voice in New Zealand. His recent donation of his papers to the Hocken Collections spans the Caveman years and his editing of the *Southern Ocean Review* from 1996 (when it became New Zealand's first online literary journal).

Meanwhile, the papers paint a picture of their colourful and cheerfully unorthodox driving force. It incorporates

the controversial treatise on the Bain murders Reeves wrote with his then wife Judith Wolfe; his participation in the Values Party (he was party secretary and ran as a candidate in the 1978 election); a brief foray into providing a gay and lesbian introduction service; and plenty of entertainingly fruity correspondence with Tuwhare and others.

Throughout run the interwoven threads of both frustration and pride at standing a step removed from New Zealand's official literary fraternity. A 1973 *New Zealand Herald* review remarks: "How and why a publishing venture of such obvious merit continues to survive without a literary grant is a mystery to its avid readers and no doubt to the press itself." Little would change: in 1999, the Press's omission from the Oxford Companion to New Zealand stung. Even an acknowledgement of *Private Gardens* failed to mention Caveman Press as its publisher - and Reeves' contribution to New Zealand writing, as with many others following alternative publishing paths, remains ambiguous.

NICOLA MUTCH



"Your comment about me 'opposing the establishment' back then is maybe not quite correct. I think we tried to show that there was more on 'the literary block' than just them and the narrow range of opinions they held."

- Trevor Reeves to Tony Beyer, 1999.

HOCKEN EXHIBITIONS

Hocken Gallery

Until 18 August

Ship Shape: Portraits of Ships from the Hocken Collections

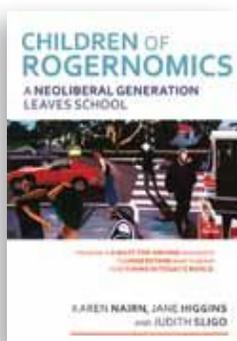
31 August - 10 November

Picture This: Recent acquisitions from Pictorial Collections

The Pah Homestead TSB Wallace Arts Centre (Auckland)

Until 1 July

Kushana Bush: All Things to all Men



Children of Rogernomics

A Neoliberal Generation Leaves School

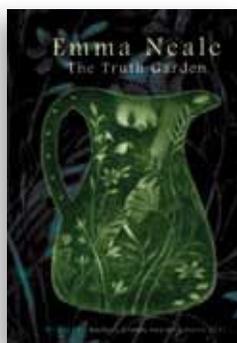
Karen Nairn, Jane Higgins and Judith Sligo, April 2012

Between 2003 and 2007, the authors (from Otago and Lincoln Universities) investigated what life was like for 93 young people coming to adulthood in the wake of Rogernomics. Participants were interviewed in their final year of high school and again 12-18 months later. This book is the result.

The lives of these young people are brought into sharp focus, revealing the powerful effects of neoliberal ideas. Their stories show how neoliberalism obscures the structural basis of inequalities and insists that failure to achieve a

straightforward transition from school to tertiary education to employment is the result of personal inadequacy. Institutions drawing on neoliberal ideas create additional barriers for the groups for whom inequality matters most - often young Pasifika and Māori, and young working-class women and men.

The stories are authentic and hard-hitting. Importantly, they also show how ordinary lives can be inspirational, as young people attempt to work and re-work the possibilities, opportunities and constraints of their times.



The Truth Garden

Emma Neale, July 2012

In 2011, Emma Neale received the news that she was to be the 2012 Robert Burns Fellow - and that she had won the Kathleen Grattan Award for a collection of poems. Administered by Otago University Press for *Landfall*, the award was established with a bequest by Jocelyn Grattan, in memory of her mother, who was a poet, journalist and editor, and includes publication of the collection. *The Truth Garden* is the fourth book in the series arising from the award.

Each book is produced with attention to the traditional qualities of fine book production, in typography, illustration, design, paper and

binding. This new book was illustrated by Kathryn Madill and designed by Fiona Moffat.

Kathleen Grattan Award judge Cilla McQueen wrote of the work:

The breath held or expelled in wonder, frustration or delight energises Emma Neale's writing. Poems in The Truth Garden take risks because they need to; in the clamour of family life they have required attention, collected thought and a spirited attitude. How else to "stockpile time, how hoard its shine", except in poems drawn from relationships, home and garden and cast in words that "spill like incandescence around your hands".



Your Unselfish Kindness

Robin Hyde's Autobiographical Writings

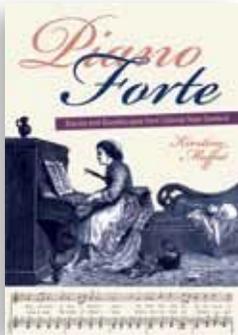
Edited by Mary Edmond-Paul, March 2012

Robin Hyde's extraordinary life (1906-39) included an early career as poet and parliamentary reporter. But she also struggled with drug addiction and depression, single motherhood and a lengthy period as a voluntary patient in a residential clinic attached to Auckland Mental Hospital. There she produced several novels and manuscripts of autobiographical writings. Her life culminated in brilliant reporting on the Sino/Japanese War in 1938.

Your Unselfish Kindness publishes the autobiographies for the first time. In 1937, fearing for her life in China, Hyde wrote to her mother asking that she "not let prejudice of any kind stop

the publication" of her work or of anything about her life, "if anybody should be interested in it ... Don't tear anything up *please*".

Publication of this book allows us to see Hyde's struggle with conventions and attitudes - the forms of sanity on offer in the New Zealand of the 1930s - and how the "unselfish kindness" of her doctor assisted her to recover from breakdown and become a significant writer. Mary Edmond-Paul's well-researched introduction brings many new insights to the study of New Zealand literature in her discussion of mental illness and therapeutic approaches to it in the early decades of the 20th century.



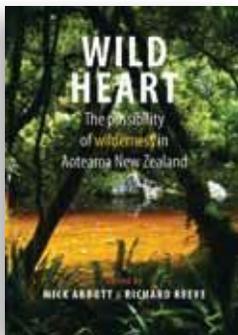
Piano Forte

Stories and Soundscapes from Colonial New Zealand
Kirstine Moffat, March 2012

"In 1827 the newly wed Elizabeth Mair arrived in Paihia, on board the mission schooner Herald. Her treasured Broadwood grand square piano accompanied her, almost certainly the first piano to arrive in New Zealand."

This instrument, and the thousands of other pianos that followed, provided European settlers with a reassuring sense of "home" and, at the same time, introduced Māori to a new sound world. For both, it offered opportunities for social and cultural activities and, as time went by, a possible career.

Piano Forte is composed of many voices as it draws on memoirs, diaries, letters, concert programmes, company records, fiction and visual images (some in colour). The stories end in 1930 when the increasing popularity of the phonograph, the radio and the introduction of "talkie" movies were beginning to have a profound impact on people's leisure activities. But, by 1930, the piano had thoroughly settled in, no longer a stranger, but a loved, essential part of New Zealand society.



Wild Heart

The Possibility of Wilderness in Aotearoa New Zealand
Edited by Mick Abbott and Richard Reeve, December 2011

Images of pristine forests, mountain ranges, untamed rivers and empty expanses of coastline are the key attraction in how Aotearoa New Zealand is promoted internationally. Such wildness is at this nation's psychological and physical core, but is frequently under threat.

This book searches for an understanding of "the wild", with 17 essays from trampers, scientists, conservationists, policymakers, photographers, historians and creative writers.

Fittingly for a university located in the southern region, both editors and many contributors are from the University of Otago. Together they examine many aspects of the idea of wilderness. What and where is New Zealand's wilderness? Is the wilderness something that we lock up, or not? How do Māori see wild places? And, looking forward, what could wilderness in Aotearoa New Zealand become and, consequently, what might we, its people, also become?

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

Books by Otago alumni

Four Sons of Skye: The History of the Tolmie Family from Skye, by G H McKay.

The Interactive Instructor, by Kris Tynan, Lighten Up, April 2011.

Bird North and Other Stories, by Breton Dukes, Victoria Press, October 2011.

Tales of the Tartan Mafia: Celebrating 150 years of Commerce in Otago, by Clive Copeland, Otago Chamber of Commerce, 2011.

Successful Educational Leadership in New Zealand: A Case Study of Schools and an Early Childhood Centre, edited by Ross Notman, New Zealand Council for Educational Research Press, December 2011.

The Solar System, by John Dickey, CreateSpace, 2011.

Quebradillas, by John Dickey, AuthorHouse, 2011.

Grey's Folly: A History of Howick, Pakuranga, Bucklands-Eastern Beaches, East Tamaki, Maraetai and Beachlands, by Alan La Roche, 2011.

The Financial Times Guide to Business Coaching, by Anne Scoular, 2011.

High Country Woman: My Life on Rees Valley Station, Iris Scott with Geraldine O'Sullivan Beere, Random House, April 2012.

Old New World, photographs by Mary Macpherson, Lopdell House Gallery, 2012.

All the Voices Cry, by Alice Petersen, Biblioasis Press, May 2012.

The Faceless, by Vanda Symon, Penguin New Zealand, 2012.

Alumni:

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



Alison Finigan:
Head of Alumni Relations

A word from the Head

Just before the Easter break I attended a series of events to welcome first-year students who gained University-funded scholarships to support their study in 2012. These scholarships recognise and reward academic excellence, sporting or cultural achievement, leadership and good citizenship – qualities that the University strives to foster in all of its students. It was a delight to have the opportunity to mix with this group of young people who have already shown themselves to be achievers in their fields, and we are looking forward to watching them fulfil their potential as they move through their years at Otago and beyond. Funding for 17 of these scholarships comes through donations from alumni in New Zealand and around the world, assisting deserving students with talent and ability from all over New Zealand to come to Otago to follow their dreams. Thanks to the generosity of Otago alumni, they are off to a flying start and we wish them all the best over the coming years.

The alumni reception schedule for 2012 kicked off in March with two most enjoyable evenings in New Plymouth and Taupo. At the time of writing there are still 9 to go before the end of the year, so check the list on page 47 to see if Otago is coming to a town near you. These events offer a great opportunity to catch up with friends and classmates and hear the Vice-Chancellor or Chancellor talk about the latest happenings at Otago.

Please remember to let us know if your contact details change so that you don't miss out on an invitation. And, if you happen to be travelling and would like to attend a reception in another centre, just let us know and we can

arrange for you to receive an invitation. We look forward to seeing as many of you as possible at a future reception.

The University was saddened to hear of the death last month of Neville Bain (MCom (Hons) 1968), an Otago alumnus who pursued a highly successful career as a businessman and corporate leader in the UK. He was also a good friend to the University, both as a philanthropist and for his long service to the UK and Europe Alumni Chapter and UK Trust. Neville was awarded an Honorary Doctor of Laws from Otago in 1994 and the Otago Medal for Outstanding Alumni Service in 2003.

Supporting Otago

Alumni Appeal 2011

Otago alumni have once again generously supported projects nominated for funding in the 2011 Alumni Appeal. Alumni fundraising projects supported by the Development and Alumni Relations Office in 2011 raised more than \$300,000. This figure includes grants for research and scholarships made by the Board of the Alumni of the University of Otago in America Inc and fundraising initiated by departments for specific projects.

University of Otago Alumni Disability Support Scholarships

The generous response to the Alumni Appeal means that more first-year scholarships will be available and, from 2013, two of these will be designated to support students with disabilities. The University of Otago Alumni Disability Support Scholarships were announced by the Vice-Chancellor in April to mark the 20th anniversary of the establishment of the Disability Information and Support Office at Otago. These scholarships, worth \$5,000 each, will provide significant assistance for students with disabilities for whom accessing the extra support needed to enable them to study adds to the already high cost of tertiary education.

For more information on research projects and scholarships supported by alumni donations, or to donate to the University, please visit www.alumni.otago.ac.nz/supportotago



Facing a bright future: 2012 Alumni scholars.

Otago's international networks

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

The Board of the Alumni of the University of Otago in America Inc has added substantially to the Endowment Fund approved late last year to establish an AUOA Scholarship to help deserving students to study at Otago. Several scholarships, each worth \$5,000, will be available in 2013 to first-year students with excellent academic records. The University thanks the Board for their



generous support.

Claudia Dong, from Palmerston North, is the recipient of the AUOA Scholarship for 2012. Claudia is enrolled in the Health Sciences First Year programme and is working hard to make the cut for second-year Medicine in 2013.

2012 AUOA scholar Claudia Dong: *"I was so happy to receive this scholarship because I know that without it I would not be here at the University of Otago, staying at the historic Selwyn College and studying Health Sciences First Year along with other amazing people. I must thank the Board of the Alumni of the University of Otago in America Inc for supporting this scholarship, which I am very honoured and grateful to have been awarded. I will try my best to fulfil my dream and enjoy my life here at the University of Otago."*

The Board continues to support the Otago Global Exchange Programme, funding travel grants for academically-able students to study at one of Otago's partner universities in the US. Board members living in the vicinity of the students' destinations have also

volunteered to be on-the-spot contact people, offering advice and support to students settling into their new environment.

The University and Board of the AUOA were saddened to hear of the death in December last year of Dr John MacGibbon (MB ChB 1948), a Christchurch-born alumnus and supporter of the University of Otago, who lived for more than 60 years in the United States after first travelling there on a Fulbright Scholarship in 1950. He spent much of his career on the staff of Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine, retiring at the age of 85 in 2007. Dr MacGibbon maintained strong connections with the University of Otago throughout his life and made significant contributions to the AUOA Board in support of a number of projects.

For more information on the AUOA Inc and its activities, please visit www.alumniuoa.com

Alumni who are US residents can also find information on how to support the University on this site.

The University of Otago Canadian Network

In April, Otago's International Office hosted a function to recognise the

support given to the Canadian Alumni Travel Awards by Toronto alumni Allan Portis and Brian Merrilees. Allan and Brian are the co-founders of the University of Otago Canadian Network and both spent some weeks in Dunedin over the summer. Hannah Harland, Shane Turner and Griegan Panckhurst, the three recipients of the award for 2012, were present, as well as Lena Schallenberg, a recipient in 2011 recently returned from her exchange at Dalhousie University in Halifax, Nova Scotia.

The Canadian network continues to promote the University and its activities to alumni resident in Canada. Allan and Brian are working with the Development and Alumni Relations Office to plan further activities as the year progresses.

Canadian alumni who wish to contribute to the Canadian Alumni Travel Award scheme are invited to visit the University's secure payment website <https://secure-www.otago.ac.nz/alumni/donations/>

For information please contact:

Brian Merrilees
brian.merrilees@utoronto.ca
416 489 4300

Allan Portis
allanportis@gmail.com
416 489 7721



Canadian Alumni Exchange Award winners Hannah Harland, Shane Turner and Griegan Panckhurst with 2011 winner Lena Schallenberg, and Allan and Santa Portis, Toronto supporters.

Priscilla Sandys Wunsch Scholarship

Over the past 11 years, the Priscilla Sandys Wunsch Trust has granted scholarships worth \$3 million to 165 students from Taranaki to attend the University of Otago.

The scholarship is named for New Plymouth resident Miss Priscilla Sandys Wunsch [BA 1946], who left her estate in trust in memory of her father, Donald

Frederick Sandys Wunsch, one of New Zealand's foremost chemical engineers. The scholarships support deserving students from Taranaki to study at the University of Otago for up to three years of an undergraduate degree and are directed to those who may otherwise not have the opportunity to come to Otago for tertiary study. Last year 24 new students were granted scholarships for

study in 2012. The trustees take a personal interest in recipients throughout their time at Otago. The University is grateful for their dedication in turning the vision of Priscilla Sandys Wunsch into a reality for the students they support.

For more information about these scholarships, please contact the careers advisor at your local high school or John Pickering, email spick@xtra.co.nz

Recent alumni events

New Plymouth, 22 March, Okurukuru Winery



Taupo, 23 March, Millennium Hotel and Resort



Melbourne, 2 May, University House, University of Melbourne



Alumni events 2012

Auckland	Thursday 21 June
Hong Kong	Tuesday 26 June
Singapore	Thursday 28 June
Kuala Lumpur	Friday 29 June
Wellington	Thursday 12 July
Sydney	Friday 17 August
Christchurch	Thursday 6 September
Washington	Saturday 3 November
London	Thursday 8 November

Upcoming celebrations and reunions

2012

Dominican Hall

6–7 October, Dunedin.

Contact functions.alumni@otago.ac.nz

BDS Class of 1962

16–18 October, Dunedin.

Contact Barbara Dallimore at pbdall@xtra.co.nz

MB ChB Class of 1997

19–21 October, Dunedin.

Contact Rochelle Phipps at rochelle.phipps@gmail.com

MB ChB Class of 1992

2–4 November, Dunedin.

Contact Ben Wilson at benkpw@ihug.co.nz or Hamish Leslie at hld@xtra.co.nz

Physiotherapy Class of 1960–1962

10–11 November, Dunedin.

Contact Molly Fulton at jimandmollyfulton@ihug.co.nz or Judy Wilson at judwil@kinect.co.nz

2013

University of Otago, Christchurch School of Medicine 40th anniversary

20–22 February, Christchurch. www.otago.ac.nz/christchurch/about/anniversary2012

Contact Virginia Irvine at 03 364 0038, virginia.irvine@otago.ac.nz

MB ChB Class of 1955

8–10 March, Christchurch.

Contact John Musgrove at john.musgrove31@gmail.com

MB ChB Class of 1963

15–18 March, Wellington.

Contact Peter Dukes at pmdukes@clear.net.nz

MB ChB Class of 1953 diamond jubilee

22–24 March, Napier.

Contact Bruce Ritchie at t.j.b@xnet.co.nz

BDS Class of 1968

22–25 March, Queenstown.

Contact Don Wallace at donwal@xtra.co.nz

School of Physiotherapy centenary and conference

3–6 April, Dunedin.

www.physio.otago.ac.nz

Contact database.alumni@otago.ac.nz

School of Pharmacy 50th jubilee

12–14 April. www.pharmacy.otago.ac.nz

Contact database.alumni@otago.ac.nz

Arana College 70th anniversary

Date tbc, Dunedin.

Contact database.alumni@otago.ac.nz

2014

MB ChB Class of 1974

Date to be confirmed. Contact Judy Bent at JudyB@adhb.govt.nz

2015

MB ChB class of 1964 reunion

8–11 April, Dunedin. Contact Colin

Fitzpatrick cbfitz@ihug.co.nz or Alex Dempster alex.dempster@sclabs.co.nz

Studholme College centenary celebrations and reunion

Date to be advised. Contact

database.alumni@otago.ac.nz

Further information can be found on the Alumni and Friends webpages at www.alumni.otago.ac.nz/events or contact us at functions.alumni@otago.ac.nz or phone 03 479 4516.

40 Years of Research and Teaching
1973-2013

UNIVERSITY OF OTAGO, CHRISTCHURCH

The 40th anniversary of the University of Otago, Christchurch will be held on 20-22 February 2013, later than initially planned due to earthquake damage to the University's Christchurch building.

As a precursor, the University's alumni reception will still be held in Christchurch on Thursday 6 September 2012.

These events will celebrate the past 40 years, recognise our bright future and acknowledge the impact of the Canterbury earthquakes on staff and students.

Wednesday 20 to Friday 22 February: Scientific Sessions

Friday 22 February: Academic Inauguration and Anniversary Dinner

For more information and to register: go to www.otago.ac.nz/christchurch or email virginia.irvine@otago.ac.nz

Alumni in the news

The inaugural MacDiarmid Medal was presented to Dr **Gary Evans** (BSc



(Hons) 1988) late last year. A chemist, now working at Industrial Research Limited, Dr Evans pioneered the design and synthesis of

new pharmaceuticals for the treatment of major diseases.

Dr Garth Carnaby, President of the Royal Society of New Zealand, said Dr Evans' world-leading research has resulted in clinical trials of pharmaceuticals for the treatment of gout, psoriasis and cancer of the immune system. "The success demonstrated to date in these trials is a testament to Dr Evans' ability to undertake excellent science, both personally and as the leader of a research team, and to implement this science for the benefit of human health."

To enable uptake of this research Dr Evans has developed strong relationships with key international research agencies and has worked on the preclinical development of drugs for treating malaria, bacterial infections and solid tumours.

The new medal is named after Professor Alan MacDiarmid, a New Zealander who won the Nobel Prize in Chemistry in 2000.

Text and photograph courtesy of the Royal Society of New Zealand.

Emeritus Professor **Michael Neill** [MA 1964] has recently been the subject of a special issue of the *Shakespearean International Yearbook*, ed. Jonathan Gil Harris (Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate, 2011). Volume 11, entitled "Placing Michael Neill: Issues of Place in Shakespeare and Early Modern Culture", has been produced as a Festschrift in honour of Professor Neill's outstanding contribution to Shakespearean scholarship throughout a long and distinguished career. The volume brings together essays by notable international scholars who use Professor Neill's writings on the concept of place to shed new light on recent research in Shakespearean and Renaissance studies.

In 1964, after completing an MA (Hons) in English at Otago, Professor Neill travelled to the UK on a Commonwealth Scholarship, where



he gained a PhD from the University of Cambridge. His working life has been spent mainly in the Department of English at the

University of Auckland, where he became a professor in 1995. He has published widely on Shakespearean subjects as well as related areas in Renaissance Studies.

In January Dr **Hamilton Russell Cowie** (BA 1952) was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) in the Australia Day Honours list 2012. The medal recognises Dr Cowie's service to the community as an historian, an educator and academic. After teaching



at Otago Boys' High School from 1954–56 and in London schools from 1957–1958, Dr Cowie embarked on an academic career at the University

of Queensland. He was co-founder of the History Teachers' Association of Queensland in 1963 and its patron. After retirement, he continued his teaching activities by running history courses for other retired people.

He has been the author of several history textbooks for senior secondary classes and founded the *Australian History Teacher* in the early 1970s, acting as its editor for nearly 20 years. With a lifelong interest in history, he has become a passionate advocate for the preservation of historic buildings and monuments, notably the St Paul's Presbyterian Church and the Gallipoli Fountain of Honour in Brisbane.

Earlier this year the School of Physical Education received an email from a 94-year-old former staff member, **Joe Wallace**, who taught in the school during the 1950s. Joe, who has lived in the UK since 1960, recently spent some time in hospital in Brighton after breaking his leg in a fall. As part of his physiotherapy regime, he was given a set of exercises to do that seemed familiar and was astounded when the occupational therapist told him that they came from the Otago exercise programme widely used by the hospital – the very same programme that he and Professor Philip Smithells developed in



School of Physical Education staff and students, 1950. Joe Wallace is seated next to Professor Smithells in the centre of the front row.

the 1950s for Otago students to use when working with children. A full circle story! Joe wonders if his exercises are still in use in other hospitals so, if any alumni

can help, please email Alison Finigan at alison.finigan@otago.ac.nz

Joe speaks of the years spent at Otago as some of the happiest of his

life and makes particular mention of the friendliness and helpfulness of the students. He would love to hear from staff or students from that era so, if you'd like to contact him, please email Alison at the forementioned address and she will pass on the message.

You can activate your own @otagoalumni.ac.nz email address by registering as a member of Your Otago Link. Visit the Alumni and Friends webpages at www.alumni.otago.ac.nz

A message for Law alumni

The Faculty of Law is always pleased to stay connected with graduates. The faculty publishes an e-copy of the summer and winter edition of *Otago Law*, featuring faculty news and events, and many interesting stories about Otago law graduates. If you would like to receive a copy please update your contact details at www.alumni.otago.ac.nz/law

THE UNIVERSITY OF OTAGO MAGAZINE IS AVAILABLE ONLINE AT

www.otago.ac.nz/news/otagomagazine/

and is sent - by post or email - to Otago alumni and friends wherever they are in the world.

Please email database.alumni@otago.ac.nz

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

KEEP IN TOUCH

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University of Otago
PO Box 56 Dunedin

Physical address

Alumni House
103 St David Street
Dunedin

Tel 64 3 479 4516

Email alumni@otago.ac.nz

Web www.alumni.otago.ac.nz

Alumni story

St Valentine at St Margaret's

In 1995 when I arrived as a first-year student at St Margaret's, the college was widely known on campus as Otago's Red Brick Chastity Belt. Coming all the way from Hastings and never having visited Dunedin before, I had chosen St Margaret's on the basis of its reputation for providing students with a sound, supportive study environment. If I'd been aware of its rather fearsome nickname I might have been scared off!

Along with all the other new arrivals that year, I remember listening attentively as Dr Peter Norris, the college warden, welcomed us to St Margaret's and warned us of the potential dangers to be encountered by students concurrently enrolled in Chemistry 101 and Romance 101.

I can't actually remember meeting Shaun for the first time. In the first few weeks of University I suppose we were swamped by new experiences, meeting dozens of new people every day, but by the time Easter rolled around I'd got to know the blond boy from Invercargill pretty well.

At the end of the year, Shaun received the dubious honour of winning the prize for St Margaret's Most Stressed Student of 1995. I received the prize for Best Stress Relief of 1995. Shaun's stress paid off and he gained entry to Medical School, while I pursued a History degree. In 1997 I was still living at St Margaret's as a welfare staff member and the whole college celebrated with us when we got engaged. We married at the start of 1998, with Dr Norris officiating.

One such story might be considered an exception, but four from one family?



Members of the Kerr family at Rosalind and Mat's wedding (from left): Daniel Kerr, Helena Kerr, Alison Kerr, Samuel Kerr, Chloe McLoughlin, Simon McLoughlin, Rosalind van Rij, Christopher Kerr, Mat van Rij, Susannah Grant, John Kerr, Isabella Grant, Shaun Grant, Beatrice Grant.

My twin brother Daniel was a first-year Law student at St Margaret's in 1995. He stayed on for a second year as a member of the student executive and it was then that he met first-year college resident and Music student Helena Scott. They married at the end of 1999 and Dr Norris, once again, officiated.

My sister Rosalind came to Otago to study Physiotherapy in 1999. Her bedroom at St Margaret's was two doors away from Health Sciences student Matthew van Rij. Rosie went on to work in New Zealand and overseas, and Mat to graduate as a doctor. Eventually the friendship they'd formed at St Margaret's re-sparked and they married in 2007.

My younger brother, Christopher, arrived at the college as a first-year

student in 2003. He studied Law and Political Studies. Hana Straight was also a first-year student at St Margaret's that year. She was enrolled in Law and Accounting. Despite distracted Law tutorials, they both made it into second-year Law and moved in together a couple of years later. They were married in September last year.

The year Shaun and I met at St Margaret's was also the year in which the college finished building the Valentine Common Room (named in honour of University Chancellor and long-time college council member Jim Valentine). Perhaps in future St Valentine should share associate status with St Margaret as the college's patron saint.

Susannah Grant (nee Kerr)

... lecture theatre desks?

Waste not, want not: the panelling of walls with timber from old lecture desks may well have appealed to the Presbyterian sentiments of the University's founders. However, these panels also serve as a memorial to long-gone lecture theatres and a reminder of the many hours spent there by Otago students over nearly 100 years.

The polished timber panels were removed from the University's oldest lecture theatres during renovations of the Clocktower and the Geology buildings, and now line a small bay at the rear of the Council Chamber. Mellow with the patina of age, the timbers also bear the signatures of students dating as far back as the 1880s.

Judging by the elaborate nature of these scribbblings, it would seem these students did, indeed, spend much time at these desks. Many signatures are deeply etched, indicating the work of more than one day.

One of the first was J H [John Harper] Moir dated at 1886-7, who graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in 1890 and later became headmaster of Dunedin's Normal School. Others were among the University's early medical graduates: A [Arthur] Hall 1900; E L [Eric Lachlan] Marchant 1906; J [John] Simcox 1910; J A [James Ayson] Marshall 1914 and F D [Francis Dewsbury] Pinfeld 1916.

Of particular note, are the signatures of the young P H Buck/Te Rangi Hiroa, later to become Sir Peter Buck, and Tutere Wi Repa, the University's first two Māori medical graduates. Buck, who was OUSA president in 1903, went on to pursue an extraordinary career as a Member of the New Zealand Parliament and an anthropologist of world renown.

Other OUSA presidents also left their mark: J W [James Watson] Shaw (MA, 1905) and H [Hugh] Short (MB ChB, 1914) who held this office in 1906 and 1912 respectively. And, not content with just one signature, G S [George Stuart] Thomson, who graduated with a BSc in 1918, carved the same desk twice.

More recent signings include B [Brian] Wilkins in 1944, who later graduated with a BSc and MSc and was a member of the New Zealand Alpine Club's 1954 Himalayan expedition lead by Sir Edmund Hillary; Barbara William who was obviously taking History II in 1957 and E [Eleanor] McIntyre in 1963.

Graffiti this may be, but within these scratchings and scribbblings can be found a story of this University.



Kia kaha, kia māia,
kia manawanui koutou
me piki ki runga i te
waka mātauranga

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Ngāti Awa, Taranaki, Ngāti Maru
studying Master of Arts in Māori Studies



Jack Keogh
Ngāpuhi, Tauranga Moana
studying Master of Entrepreneurship



Samantha Berry
Ngāi Tahu
studying Master of Entrepreneurship



Darnell Kennedy
Ngāti Māniapoto, Ngāti Maru ki Hauraki
studying PhD in Forensic Biology



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