

UNIVERSITY OF OTAGO

# MAGAZINE

JUNE 2013

35

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## Inaugural Professor of Neurosurgery looks ahead

PLUS:

New focus on arthritis research  
Surveying's 50th anniversary  
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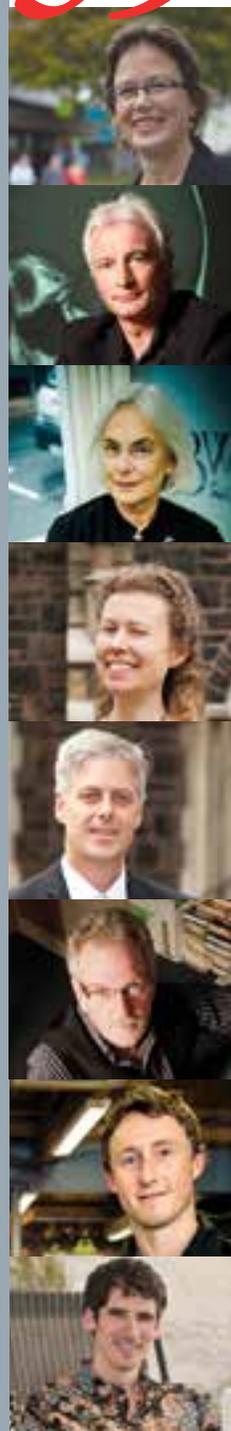
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Late last year a worldwide movement forced universities around the world to stand up and take notice. This movement involved something called Massive Open Online Courses, or MOOCs for short. These online courses combine brief talks by world experts with interactive coursework, online assignments, quizzes and games. Discussion groups and blogs link students from around the world.

Although online learning is not especially new, what is new about MOOCs is the size and scale of their operation. The three largest MOOC providers (Udacity, Coursera and edX) boast enrolments that range from 350,000 to 1.4 million. What is also new is the reputation of the biggest players – Stanford, Harvard and MIT. The key question is, do these MOOCs herald the demise of the traditional campus-based university education?

The University of Otago has considered the issue of MOOCs very carefully. Over this past January, I personally studied everything that I could lay my hands on about the subject. I sought specialist advice on the issue from international experts in distance education and online learning. I discussed the matter extensively with my counterparts in New Zealand and overseas. The conclusion from all of these quarters is that, although there may be a handful of opportunities in this space, the concept of the MOOC will not displace the traditional university experience and the business case for the future of MOOCs actually hangs by a thread.

Although the current enrolment in MOOCs is extremely high, completion of any given course is very low. In most instances, more than 90 per cent of the students who sign up for a course, never complete it. Given this, we have to ask ourselves two questions. First, why do so many sign up? That one is easy – the courses are currently free. Once this aspect of the MOOC system changes (and it will have to change if anyone is going to make any money), then I suspect that enrolments will plummet. Second, why do so many students fail to complete? There are probably many reasons, but the most parsimonious one is that the courses quickly get boring. Even when you place the best speaker in the world on the internet, the experience pales in comparison to face-to-face interaction.

In addition to low completion rates, there are at least three other fundamental problems with MOOCs. First, a university education is about much more than knowledge transfer. Universities obviously educate doctors, lawyers, accountants,



teachers, etc. but, more importantly, they nurture the next generation of citizens. Through their university education, students learn tolerance and compassion, they develop teamwork, oral communication and critical thinking skills, and they also learn the values of the world in which they live. All of this requires high-level human contact on a day-to-day basis. When we survey the businesses that employ our graduates, they tell us that what they value most is what students learn in the context of the larger university environment in which they live. These residential learning opportunities cannot be replicated over the internet.

Second, in a world that depends more and more on science and technology, it is vitally important that university students have more, not less, laboratory-based experience. Mastering chemistry is much more than memorising the periodic table or learning to balance chemical equations. It is more than hearing a world expert talk about the effect of carbon on climate change. Mastering chemistry (and any other scientific discipline) is about getting your hands dirty in a lab or in the real world (e.g., in the ocean, or on a drilling site); it is about making mistakes and learning from them. World-class universities are defined by the quality of their scientific facilities and by the opportunities that students have to spend time, hands-on, with passionate scientific experts.

Finally, a MOOC is only about inputs, not about outputs. At present, the work that students produce in MOOCs is marked by peers or computers, not by professors. Students receive no feedback whatsoever from the world-class leaders who appear in the videos. If you want to pick one thing that New Zealand does better than perhaps anywhere else in the world, it is to put its best, brightest and most productive researchers (in all disciplines) in front of undergraduate classes. Unlike many of our highly-ranked peer universities overseas, students in New Zealand universities are actually taught and marked by senior academic staff – and this is particularly true at Otago.

So what does all of this mean for the future of the University of Otago? Clearly, we should keep abreast of all advances in education techniques. We remain committed to online education and distance learning in situations where it makes sense for us to do so. We will continue to enhance the technology available to students at Otago and we will encourage them to learn from a wide variety of sources, including online materials. But we will also stick to our core values. As the only truly residential university in New Zealand, we will continue to deploy our resources, including our human capital, to ensure

that current and future generations of Otago students have the opportunity to learn directly from teachers and directly from peers. We will also continue to enhance the other opportunities that also shape the young people who study with us – sporting, social, cultural and musical activities are vitally important to their growth and development.

In conclusion, much of the popular interest in MOOCs was generated by an article in *Time Magazine* that was published late last year. The article began with the compelling story of an 11-year-old Pakistani girl, Khadijah Niazi, who was studying university-level physics through a MOOC. In an attempt to stop anti-Muslim sentiment in a movie trailer that was inciting local riot, the Pakistani government shut down access to YouTube. As luck would have it, the shutdown occurred while Khadijah was in the middle of her final exam. When she posted her plight on an internet bulletin board, the entire online world came to her rescue. Eventually, a professor in Portugal managed to download all of the relevant material and then upload it on an unblocked site. The next day, using this internet workaround, Khadijah managed to pass the final exam with the highest distinction.

On the heels of this experience, Khadijah quickly became the poster child for the opportunities that MOOCs afford, but her own views on the issue were also very clear. When asked if in the future she would pursue a MOOC option, she said: “I would still want to go to Oxford or Stanford. I would love to really meet my teachers in person and learn with the whole class and make friends – instead of just being there in spirit.”

At the University of Otago, we applaud the wise counsel of an 11-year-old girl from Pakistan. We understand the irreplaceable value of learning and living with your peers under the guidance of world-class experts in your area of study. Our only hope is that when Khadijah Niazi is old enough to attend university, she chooses to study in New Zealand rather than in the United States or Britain. We are pretty sure that we have many things to teach her, but we are equally sure that she has many things to teach us, too.

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

**Professor Harlene Hayne**  
Vice-Chancellor, University of Otago

# Crippling costs

**It is estimated that arthritis costs the New Zealand health-care system more than \$700 million each year. The University's Arthritis Research Theme is bringing together researchers to help find ways to improve the lives of the growing number of New Zealanders affected by this condition.**

Imagine not being able to dress yourself or to turn on a tap to brush your teeth. Imagine waking daily to debilitating pain.

This is what life is like for many people affected by arthritis.

More than half-a-million New Zealanders suffer from one of a wide range of conditions covered by the term "arthritis", including osteoarthritis, gout and ankylosing spondylitis.

While not all arthritis sufferers are elderly, as our population ages the number of sufferers is increasing – as is the cost to society. An economic study commissioned in 2010 by Arthritis New Zealand found that the annual health-care costs for arthritis conditions totalled almost \$700 million.

The prevalence of arthritis and its financial impact were two reasons the University of Otago set up the

Arthritis Research Theme in 2011. Other compelling reasons included an impressive group of researchers already working on arthritis-related issues and a commitment by the University to support research with impact. A University of Otago Research Theme signals developing, or potential, research excellence in areas of strength within the University.

Director, Christchurch-based Professor Lisa Stamp, says the establishment

of the Arthritis Research Theme is a constructive and practical development for people with arthritis. "It not only highlights the significant amount of internationally-recognised research being done across the University into all forms of arthritis, but also encourages further clinical research in an area that affects so many New Zealanders and millions more worldwide."

Researchers are working on providing answers to some of the key challenges faced by doctors treating patients with arthritis. Their work spans genetic studies, assessing the risk of developing rheumatic diseases such as rheumatoid arthritis, gout and spondyloarthritis; pharmacogenomic studies, predicting responses to different drugs; through to basic science laboratory studies of the pathophysiology of inflammatory arthritis. There are also a number of clinical studies including the development of outcome measures and therapeutic clinical trials.

Stamp says the ultimate aim of Theme members is to improve outcomes for those living with the painful and crippling condition.

"There is no cure for arthritis so a lot of our work focuses on how to best treat people and ways to minimise their suffering."

Stamp's own research interests include how to tailor drug treatments for rheumatic conditions such as gout and rheumatoid arthritis (RA) for individual patients. One of her findings – that doses of the standard gout drug, Allopurinol, could be safely lifted above existing clinical guidelines to effectively manage the disease in some patients – has had a significant impact on clinical practice. Another – showing that measuring blood levels of the commonly-used drug Methotrexate in RA patients is not useful in telling how well the disease

is being controlled – has also been internationally influential.

Practical research outputs such as these are likely to increase as the Theme matures. Stamp cites a study on smoking as an example of hands-on work already being undertaken.

"A laboratory-based project examining the effects of cigarette smoking on the inflammation in the joints of RA patients has now been extended to a clinical study funded by the Health Research Council, investigating why RA patients find it difficult to stop smoking. In collaboration with Arthritis New Zealand, we are piloting a smoke-stop programme developed specifically for people with RA. The laboratory study indicated that an increase in some inflammatory genes in the joint tissue of smokers returned to normal after the patient stopped smoking, suggesting there may be direct benefits to quitting."

Other projects include:

- the genetics of rheumatic diseases, involving patients from Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch and Hamilton
- the success of folic acid supplementation in patients with rheumatoid arthritis
- high rates of Wegener's granulomatosis in Canterbury, compared to rates in the Northern Hemisphere
- the effect of vitamin C on gout.

Dunedin-based Associate Professor Tony Merriman, whose work revolves around the genetics of arthritis, believes one of the biggest benefits of the Theme is bringing together researchers with different areas of expertise.

"A lot of the work by Theme members focuses on how to make life better for people with arthritis. The genetics

research is understanding what is causing it. Both these things are important and complement each other perfectly.

"Gene researchers have found that 60 to 70 per cent of the reason people either get rheumatoid arthritis, or not, is due to their genes. One example is the CTLA4 gene, which has been found to be a factor in rheumatoid arthritis. This gene is being targeted with a drug called Abatacept to prevent or alleviate the condition. Genetics just gives us more information about what's going on in the body."

Another benefit, says Merriman, is regular meetings, bringing together researchers from University of Otago centres around the country.

"I'm involved in an international study on the relatively rare condition of giant cell arteritis. There've been very few genetic studies done on it and, for gene studies, you need thousands of people. I did a presentation on this study at a Theme meeting and lots of people there put their hands up and said 'I'll get involved'. Because of that buy-in, New Zealand is now going to provide 500 of the 2,000 samples from Australasia."

Merriman says he and Theme colleagues, including Stamp, are also involved in work on more common arthritic conditions, such as gout.

"In one gout study we are looking at how genes and the environment work together in that condition. Sugary drinks and alcohol raise uric acid levels which lead to painful attacks. We've found that a particular gene is important in helping the kidney get rid of uric acid.

"There are two versions of this gene, one good at getting rid of the acid and the other which is not. Interestingly, we've found that if people have the good version of the gene but drink more than a litre of sugary drink a day, they can reverse the effect of the good gene

**Professor Lisa Stamp:**  
“[The Theme] not only highlights the significant amount of internationally-recognised research being done across the University into all forms of arthritis, but also encourages further clinical research in an area that affects so many New Zealanders and millions more worldwide.”

Photo: Ross Coombes



version. It's very practical stuff, as well as improving our understanding.”

Merriman is a mid-career researcher who is getting recognition on the world stage for his work. Likewise, Stamp has hit her career stride and has many years of productive work in front of her, but there are researchers at all career stages involved in the Theme.

“Professor John Highton is a very senior researcher who has driven rheumatology research at the University since the mid-'70s and has trained a number of the other Theme members,” says Stamp.

“Rheumatology research at the University of Otago, and in New Zealand generally, has been greatly strengthened in recent years by enthusiastic and productive mid- and early-career researchers. These researchers are providing a foundation for the Theme to increase research collaborations across departments and faculties within the University, including the strong support of postgraduate student study.”

Supporting early-career researchers is also a key focus, Stamp says. “Students are an integral part of Theme activities. We have a number of students pursuing

PhD and master's thesis research. Bachelor of Medical Science students are also involved. In addition, the Theme completed its first year by sponsoring two summer students who undertook a 10-week arthritis-related research project.

“Student involvement is critical to the ongoing success of the Theme. They are the next generation of researchers and we need to stimulate interest and energy for them to continue in finding answers to important questions about rheumatology.”

**KIM THOMAS**

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**“A lot of the work by Theme members focuses on how to make life better for people with arthritis. The genetics research is understanding what is causing it. Both these things are important and complement each other perfectly.”**

- Associate Professor Tony Merriman

# “Exciting times ahead”

**New Zealand’s first Professor of Neurosurgery, Dirk De Ridder, is well underway with plans to make the University of Otago a world-leading academic neurosurgery unit.**

For leading Belgian neurosurgeon and brain researcher Dirk De Ridder, the road to medicine was fairly straightforward. Unlike his four-year-old peers who were investigating careers as super heroes and racing-car drivers, a young Dirk announced to his parents that he would be a doctor like his father. And he never looked back.

“I always wanted to do medicine so, after primary and secondary school and a year in the US as an exchange student, I came back and started studying medicine,” says De Ridder.

“Neurosurgery was by far the area that attracted me the most – because I wanted to do something incredibly challenging that would make a real difference.”

De Ridder, who began his five-year tenure as Otago’s inaugural Neurological Foundation Professor of Neurosurgery in January, says he was “lucky” to be chosen in his year group to study neurosurgery.

“At that time you could still put your training programme together yourself essentially and, for me, this was ideal. In this way, I was able to look at different neurosurgical centres and put together a programme that permitted me to get a very intense, but wonderfully exciting, training.”

Interested in skull-based surgery and trauma, an eager De Ridder took up

several stints in hospitals in Belgium and South Africa while a resident neurosurgeon, after gaining his medical qualifications from the University of Ghent in Belgium in 1992. While he believes there was probably a “genetic pathology” (both his father and mother are professors) that would have inevitably led him into academic research, it was the months spent in South Africa where his interest in science began.

“In South Africa, theoretical knowledge was a lot higher than in Belgium, where surgical technique is key. I remember being on a ward round with a huge group, the professor kept calling me up to ask me questions about each patient. By the end of it, I realised I needed to do a whole lot more study.”

De Ridder says he returned from South Africa a “stranger” – passionate about “reading and writing” and finding out the knowledge behind the conditions he was treating. From there, after a short time in private practice, he got a place at one of Belgium’s leading hospitals in 2000, Antwerp University Hospital. He gained his PhD in 2005 and became a Professor of Neuromodulation and Neurosurgery, founder and director of a brain research centre and a tinnitus research initiative in Antwerp.

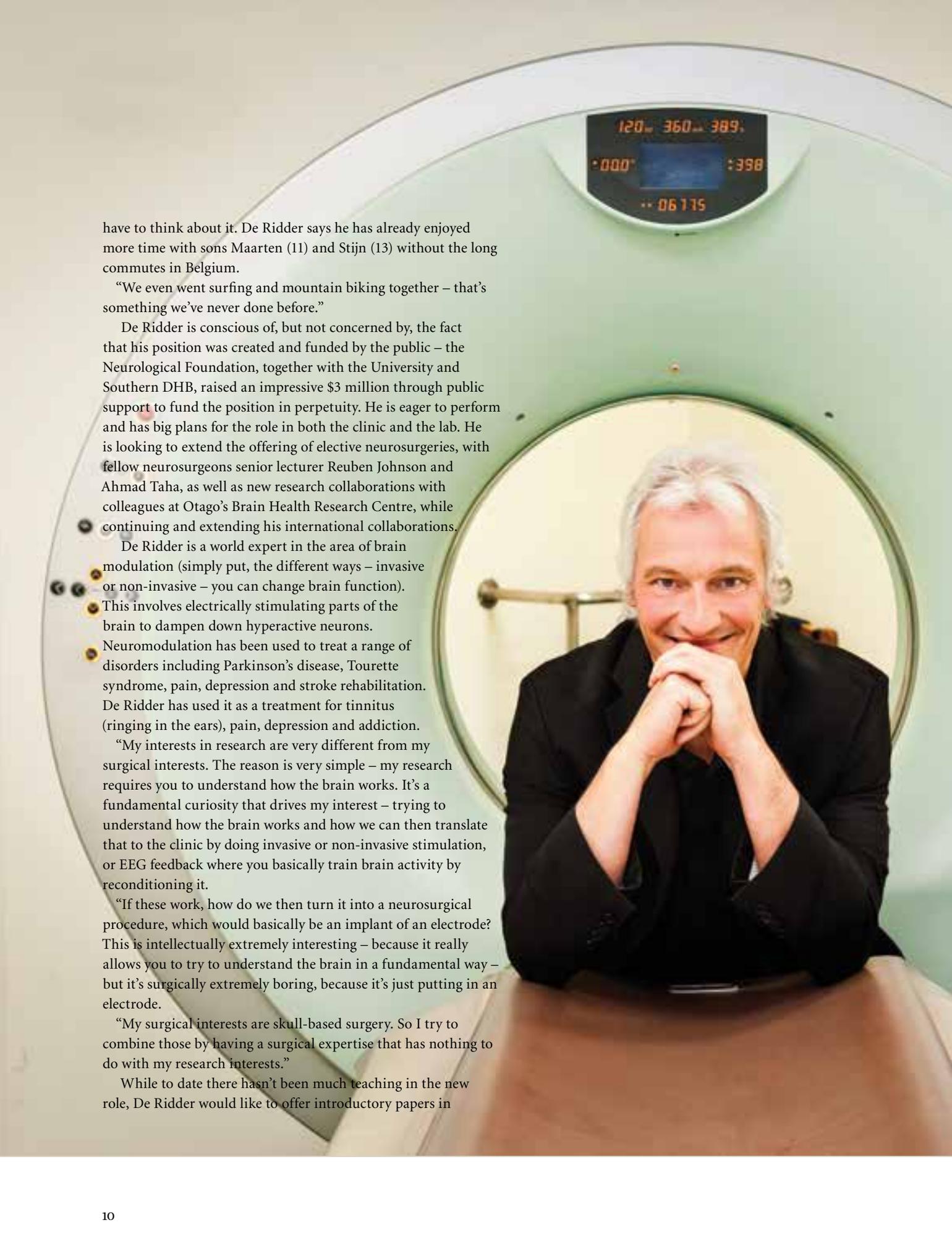
The lure of Otago – where he heads

the country’s first academic neurosurgery unit, spending half his time on research and teaching at the University, and half as a neurosurgeon at Dunedin Hospital – was two-fold.

“I love it here. Because there are so many people of really high quality in the basic neuroscience unit, it’s very interesting. This afternoon I will talk to [Associate Professor] John Reynolds about how the brain tells you it’s getting a reward, because how I look at it is different to how the scientists look at it. Next week I will meet with [Professor] Cliff Abraham [Director of Otago’s Brain Health Research Centre] about how we can use what I have been doing to help people with early-stage Alzheimer’s.

“That is what is unique about this location – because you’re somewhat isolated here, it actually forces you to collaborate. There has been a recent paper that shows that the amount of real collaboration is directly related to the physical distance between the collaborators. I’m just across the road from people I want to collaborate with. It’s incredibly unique.”

Since arriving in Dunedin in January, De Ridder has also enjoyed a renewed quality of life – another aspect that attracted him to the job. De Ridder and his wife Karin Ongena (a general surgeon specialising in breast surgery) travelled around New Zealand in 1998 and they both liked the country. His brother, Koen, a paediatric orthopaedic surgeon, now lives in Wellington, so when the opportunity came up, the family didn’t



have to think about it. De Ridder says he has already enjoyed more time with sons Maarten (11) and Stijn (13) without the long commutes in Belgium.

“We even went surfing and mountain biking together – that’s something we’ve never done before.”

De Ridder is conscious of, but not concerned by, the fact that his position was created and funded by the public – the Neurological Foundation, together with the University and Southern DHB, raised an impressive \$3 million through public support to fund the position in perpetuity. He is eager to perform and has big plans for the role in both the clinic and the lab. He is looking to extend the offering of elective neurosurgeries, with fellow neurosurgeons senior lecturer Reuben Johnson and Ahmad Taha, as well as new research collaborations with colleagues at Otago’s Brain Health Research Centre, while continuing and extending his international collaborations.

De Ridder is a world expert in the area of brain modulation (simply put, the different ways – invasive or non-invasive – you can change brain function). This involves electrically stimulating parts of the brain to dampen down hyperactive neurons.

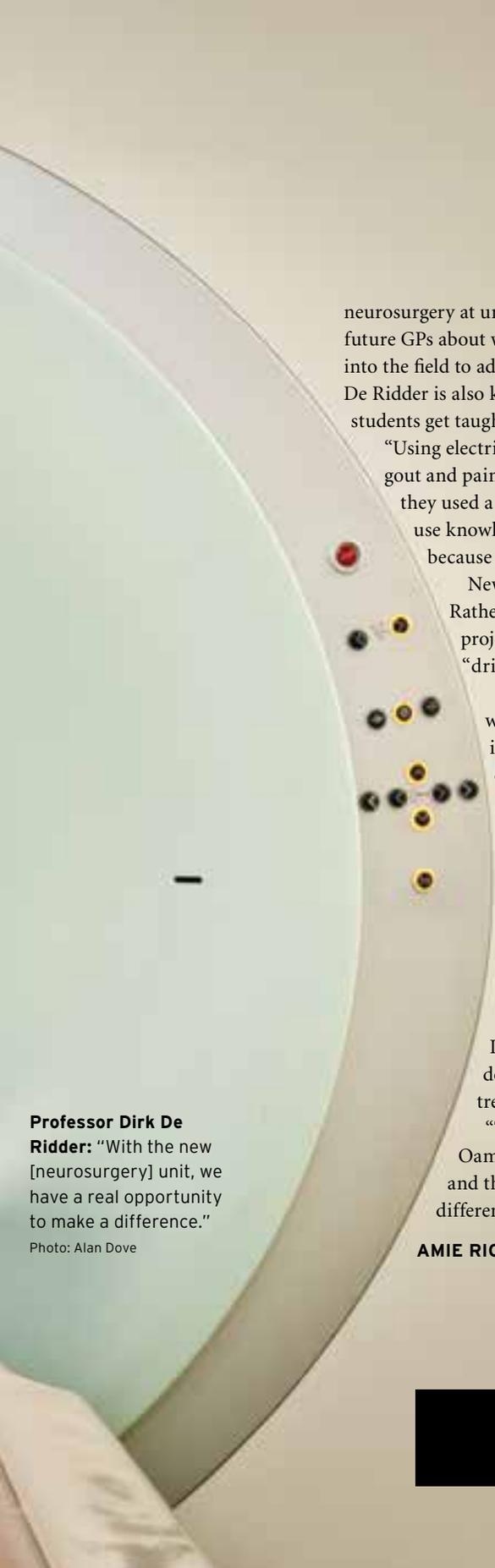
Neuromodulation has been used to treat a range of disorders including Parkinson’s disease, Tourette syndrome, pain, depression and stroke rehabilitation. De Ridder has used it as a treatment for tinnitus (ringing in the ears), pain, depression and addiction.

“My interests in research are very different from my surgical interests. The reason is very simple – my research requires you to understand how the brain works. It’s a fundamental curiosity that drives my interest – trying to understand how the brain works and how we can then translate that to the clinic by doing invasive or non-invasive stimulation, or EEG feedback where you basically train brain activity by reconditioning it.

“If these work, how do we then turn it into a neurosurgical procedure, which would basically be an implant of an electrode? This is intellectually extremely interesting – because it really allows you to try to understand the brain in a fundamental way – but it’s surgically extremely boring, because it’s just putting in an electrode.

“My surgical interests are skull-based surgery. So I try to combine those by having a surgical expertise that has nothing to do with my research interests.”

While to date there hasn’t been much teaching in the new role, De Ridder would like to offer introductory papers in



neurosurgery at undergraduate level in order to “demystify” the role. This would serve to educate future GPs about what neurosurgeons can offer their patients and, he hopes, attract more students into the field to address the “scary” figure of just several Kiwi neurosurgeons currently in practice. De Ridder is also keen to offer an introductory course on neuromodulation as an add-on to what students get taught in neuroscience and neurology.

“Using electricity to treat conditions is very old – the Egyptians used electrical fish to treat gout and pain and, depending on how much current they wanted to use to suppress the pain, they used a bigger or smaller fish. It was trial and error, but what’s new is that now you can use knowledge to go and target the disease – and the knowledge has only become available because of the new technology; primarily, functional brain imaging.”

Newer still are De Ridder’s international collaborations using “burst stimulation”. Rather than “blocking” neuron activity and hoping good will come of it, his latest projects involve simultaneously stimulating brain activity in two areas in order to “drive” brain function, specifically, to treat tinnitus.

Aside from his research, De Ridder is also keen to collaborate more in the clinic with fellow neurosurgeons based in Christchurch and Wellington in order to introduce regional sub-specialisation – something necessary to keep New Zealand competing on a world stage, with an extra benefit of attracting more postgraduate students.

“I think that’s critically important if we want to stay at the same level of expertise as the rest of the world. The time of the general neurosurgeon is over, not that you don’t have to be able to do everything. The first stage is for us all to meet and voice our main interests and draw up a map to see how it can be practically organised.

“I come from a unit where trauma was less than 10 per cent of what we did. We were doing mostly elective surgeries.

“Currently in Dunedin, the major work is still too much based on emergencies. I hope to change this in the future to a more elective pathology, but you can only do that if there are enough neurosurgeons and if people know what we can offer as treatments.

“That’s why I propose to hold clinics, not just in Invercargill, but also Dunstan and Oamaru and Timaru, and, when we go, we do a teaching session about neurosurgeons and the pathology we cover. With the new unit, we have a real opportunity to make a difference. It’s an exciting time ahead.”

#### **AMIE RICHARDSON**

**Professor Dirk De Ridder:** “With the new [neurosurgery] unit, we have a real opportunity to make a difference.”

Photo: Alan Dove

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# Minding the gap

**With a “useful” degree in English from the University of Otago and a belief in the importance of “good” history, publisher Bridget Williams remains courageously committed to the importance of serious non-fiction.**

Exploring the spaces in between is one of the things Bridget Williams – arguably New Zealand’s leading publisher of “serious” non-fiction – does exceedingly well.

Throughout her career she has bravely published works that tackle the subjects she and her authors think matter. In particular, since 1990 as founder and owner of Bridget Williams Books (BWB), she has taken significant works on New Zealand history and biography out to a wide readership, allowing voices from many parts of our society to be heard.

To do so on a commercial basis in a country the size of New Zealand is courageous enough, but to continue to do so amidst the rapidly changing pressures of the digital age surely amounts to an act of faith. Yet Williams has proven she has the instinctive gift with which great publishers are blessed: the ability to recognise a “gap” – however unlikely – in New Zealand’s collective knowledge and then respond to it with a book, often an extraordinary book.

Many BWB titles, such as Claudia Orange’s *The Treaty of Waitangi* and Judith Binney’s *Encircled Lands*, have surprised even their publisher with their reception, and have gone on to become landmarks in the intellectual

landscape. Others, such as *The Story of Suzanne Aubert* and poet Lauris Edmond’s three volume autobiography have, on publication, elicited a response exponentially related to the softly-spoken accounts held within their pages.

“The vision has always been good books – books with a strong heart – that sell,” says Williams. “I want a book to say something that’s worth saying. The topic can be small – or it may seem small but it must have real significance.”

## **An education**

It’s not surprising that Williams grew up in a household in which books were ever-present – at birthdays, Christmas and on weekly visits to the public library – and that she developed an enduring love of literature. Encouraged by her scientist father, who was shortly afterwards appointed Vice-Chancellor of the University of Otago, to study economics and mathematics, she made an appointment at 5.30am one morning to ask him for permission to study arts.

“He asked me why I wanted to study English literature,” Williams recalls. “And my reply went along the lines of ‘studying that which is not useful’. He wasn’t best pleased, but the answer was true to his own approach – that books,

words and ideas were always important.”

Eventually the young Bridget was to prove herself wrong, for her arts degree was to be very useful indeed. Under the tutelage of Professors Margaret Dalziel and Alan Horsman at the University of Otago, she came to know and love the great 19th century novelists – Dickens, Hardy, George Eliot. She realised how the imaginative lens of fiction can reveal historical context and began to discover an interest in the history that had been absent from her school education.

In 1969 Williams travelled to join a fellow student, then studying for a PhD in Latin American economics at Oxford. Marriage soon followed, but work was needed and little was on offer.

“I was meeting people who were thinking and writing about political issues across the world. It was a time of radical challenge. Some of our student friends had escaped repressive regimes, others were American or British radicals. Tariq Ali and Terry Eagleton were giving seminars. Feminist ideas were evolving fast; one couldn’t NOT engage with them. Primarily I participated in this world as the wife of a student and, well, wives were wives – that’s how it was. But this was also a world in which one was expected to think – and being intelligent was simply a given.”

Fortunately William had intelligence – and a *useful* degree in English. She learned to type and secured a job as research assistant to Professor Dame Helen Gardner, editor of *The New Oxford Book of English Verse* and, for the next



**Bridget Williams:** “Doing what you are really interested in will take you much further, and to more interesting places, than doing what seems to be ‘useful’ in career terms.”

Photo: Michael Roberts

few years, received her very own Oxford education researching poems, typing them up and discussing them with “the Dame”. She later worked for Professor Richard Ellmann, the biographer of James Joyce, Oscar Wilde and William Butler Yeats.

“From Dame Helen I learned to write letters,” recalls Williams, “and from Richard Ellmann I learned the art of a good footnote.” Williams’s career with words had begun.

### **Good books, strong heart**

In 1976, after a period as an editor with Oxford University Press (OUP) in England, Williams returned to New Zealand where she continued to work with OUP. It was here she commissioned *The Oxford History of New Zealand*, the country’s first major general history to be published in more than 20 years.

Like most industries, publishing was a male-dominated world but, by the 1980s, women were starting to reach senior management roles in the New Zealand branches of international publishing houses. In 1981 Williams left OUP to establish the independent publishing company Port Nicholson Press with designer Lindsay Missen and bookseller Roy Parsons. Four years later, she sold the small press to Allen & Unwin Australia, and Williams became managing director of Allen & Unwin (A & U) New Zealand.

During her time at A & U, Williams published the authoritative, multi-volume *Dictionary of New Zealand Biography*, with the Māori biographies simultaneously published in te reo as *Ngā Tāngata Taumata Rau*. She was one of a handful of influential women in the local book trade who founded and ran the nationwide *Listener Women’s Book Festival* (LWBF) for a number of years.

“Our purpose was to remove some of the barriers to women’s books that then existed, we felt, in bookshops around the country,” says Williams. “As one of our British colleagues said, about their national festival: ‘If you put the women’s books together at the front of the shop, they race out the door’.

“I say this to make the point that we weren’t giving a hand up to an area of publishing that needed support, but rather facilitating the connection between an eager readership and a lively output. And we succeeded. Over the years, mainstream bookshops in rural areas were competing to be the LWBF bookshop in their region when, at the beginning, they’d been turning up their noses at the very idea.”

Women’s writing remains one of the key planks of Williams’s list, which she has been careful to retain as she has moved publishing houses. In 1990, when A & U New Zealand’s parent company

was sold in the UK, Williams bought the publishing list she had built under the A & U imprint and established Bridget Williams Books.

Since then (including a short association with Auckland University Press), the independent company has steadily contributed to – and pushed the boundaries of – the canon of scholarly New Zealand history. Titles of particular note include *The Book of New Zealand Women*, *Redemption Songs*, *The Dictionary of New Zealand Sign Language*, *The Cartwright Papers*, a number of books relating to the Treaty of Waitangi, and works by Pauline O’Regan, Lloyd Geering, Marilyn Waring, Jane Kelsey, Colin James, Charlotte Macdonald and many other notable New Zealand writers, commentators and historians.

Williams’s success is also based on the strong publisher-author bonds she maintains. Citing, in particular, her long working relationship with Judith Binney, she talks of the way that good books and new ideas flow from such relationships of trust. She describes her publishing ethos as being “good books that matter and, beyond that, a commitment to New Zealand, the significance of history, the place of the ‘marginal’ in the mainstream, the hidden voices of history finding their place in the present”.

“Is this interesting?” she asks herself

– and the hardworking team at BWB. “Is it making a contribution to new thinking? Is it pushing boundaries, as a publisher should? It’s about a respect for knowledge, for ideas, for debate, for original, critical thinking as well as received opinions. This kind of principle – and practice – lies at the heart of my publishing.

“I would also say now that my publishing ethos involves a commitment to publishing effectively about Māori experience, whether historical or current. But then, that is simply an obligation we all have, a commitment we must all meet, isn’t it?”

Williams’s long-time colleague and peer Geoff Walker, formerly publishing director at Penguin Books New Zealand, describes her approach to publishing as “brave and uncompromising” – probably why she was awarded an MBE in 1996 and ONZM in 2012 for services to publishing.

“It’s absolutely typical,” says Walker, “that two of the most important works of New Zealand history planned for the coming year – *Inequality: a New Zealand Crisis* and *Tangata Whenua: An Illustrated History* – will come from BWB. They’re big books, multi-authored – which adds to their complexity – and they aim at very high standards. Bridget publishes these books from the precarious position of an independent publisher, but she aims high and she’s courageous.”

### **History that happened**

Courage is a helpful characteristic for independent publishers operating in a small market. Non-fiction books are more expensive to produce than fiction and the digital era presents further challenges. Williams has, for some time, spoken publicly about the pressing need for better state-funded support for serious non-fiction publishing, given

its contribution to the nation’s cultural heritage – comments she says have “fallen on remarkably deaf ears”.

For BWB, the answer has been found in the Bridget Williams Books Publishing Trust (BWBPT), established in 2006. As the trust website [www.bwbpublishingtrust.org.nz](http://www.bwbpublishingtrust.org.nz) says:

*“For over three decades, books published by Bridget Williams have contributed to critical scholarship in New Zealand; they have told our stories, and deepened our understanding of what it is to inhabit these islands. The BWB Publishing Trust was established in 2006 to ensure that this work continues.”*

This initiative, which seeks grants-based support from private trusts and benefactors, has helped to sustain BWB’s publishing in recent years.

“While the BWB Publishing Trust exists specifically to support BWB’s publishing of good non-fiction for New Zealand,” says Williams, “the trustees see the overall purpose as a broader one. If we are to continue to have a vigorous writing and publishing industry here, the production of good non-fiction for New Zealand will need funding support. Contributing to this broader purpose is one of the long-term goals of the BWBPT.”

Alongside this initiative, BWB has also embraced digital publishing, led by Tom Rennie. From now on, all new BWB books will be simultaneously released as eBooks and the company is slowly re-releasing many of its backlist titles in this format. At the cutting edge of digital publishing is another BWB initiative – BWB Texts. These small eBooks promise some good reading and sharp analysis in the years ahead.

Despite an abiding passion for fiction, Williams does not hanker to publish it. Nor is she a fan of “creative non-

fiction”, remaining committed to robust, research-based, historical analysis.

“History is about what happened,” she says, “but really good history takes you imaginatively into a world. It presents the evidence and shows us how we can see it from one side and then how we can look at it from another angle to see something counterfactual. That tells us something different. Your own imagination can work with the gap that exists between those two points of view, but they still need to be grounded on evidence.”

Williams agrees her own education, principally in the world of the fictitious imagination, nonetheless helped to equip her for what has been – and continues to be – a remarkable career in factual realities.

“I absolutely believe in the value of a broad education in the arts – whether English literature, te reo Māori, French language, philosophy or a number of other subjects.

“In fact, I believe that in New Zealand we need a much stronger education in history and politics, as well as literature. It’s hard to believe that ‘educated adults’ enter the workforce today without a sound knowledge of where we come from, of New Zealand history and at least a smattering of world history. Career training in law, economics, accounting is obviously part of a university education, but only part – in my view.

“I would present that case strongly for today’s students. Doing what you are really interested in will take you much further, and to more interesting places, than doing what seems to be ‘useful’ in career terms. It may not make you so much money, of course, but as long as you have enough to live – well, an interesting life is worth a lot.”

**REBECCA TANSLEY**

# Surveying the past ... and the future

Otago's School of Surveying is about to celebrate its 50th anniversary.

Delve into the history of any of the University of Otago's specialist schools and you are likely to find they owe much to a central figure who, through a mixture of providence and sheer force of personality, played a key role in bringing it to fruition.

This year the School of Surveying marks its 50th anniversary and any discussion of its history inevitably revolves around the late Professor John Mackie.

A local, he was educated at Maori Hill School and then Otago Boys' High School, before gaining an MSc with first-class honours in geology at the Otago School of Mines, and an AOSM and BE in mining.

After graduating in 1935 he headed for Malaya, working in the prospecting business and then became an inspector of mines within the Colonial Service. War soon intervened and Mackie, who held the rank of captain, was captured in Singapore and ended up a prisoner of war.

In 1946 Mackie returned to Otago, becoming a lecturer in mine surveying at the School of Mines within the Faculty of Technology.

By the early 1960s the faculty was being dismembered and Mackie found himself involved in shaping the fate of surveying. Otago and Auckland were vying to host the discipline and, when Otago prevailed, Mackie was appointed

head of the new Department of Surveying which was to open in 1963.

A three-year diploma course was launched to replace the cadetship scheme under which surveyors learned on the job. The intake was small initially, while the old cadetship system wound down, but by 1968 first-year student numbers had reached 30, taught by a staff of six.

In 1969 a BSc in Surveying was offered alongside the DipSurv, the degree requiring two additional maths papers.

About this time the school moved into new premises in a converted bakery on the corner of Union and Great King Streets, a site it would occupy until 1993 when it moved to Castle Street.

A four-year Bachelor of Surveying (BSurv) degree, introduced in 1975, was something of a legacy from Mackie who retired the following year, although he

**Professor John Mackie**  
(centre) with students Mike Elrick and Dave Scott, 1966.



maintained an active interest in the profession.

Mackie was replaced by Basil Jones who also went on to enjoy a distinguished career with the school, before being appointed Assistant Vice-Chancellor in charge of Sciences in the 1990s.

Professor John Hannah was the next to take over the school, retiring only last year. His association with Surveying started in 1968, completing his intermediate year before gaining entry to the three-year degree. In 1971 he, along with Bill van den Berg, now a practising surveyor in Christchurch, became only the second and third surveying students to pursue postgraduate study.

A taste of professional practice followed from 1972-76, before postgraduate study overseas. He returned to Otago in September 1993 and was head of department until the end of 2004 when he stepped aside to concentrate on PBRF-related research and to allow the University to begin the process of recruiting a new dean who would lead the school into the next phase of its development.

He was in charge during a period of marked change for the school in terms of teaching, technology and students, and it was during that period that Surveying made the transition from being a department to being a school in 2000.

In terms of technological changes, Hannah highlights the development of GPS, which has gone from a powerful research tool – used only by specialists – to something in everyday use.

“We have always said that the GPS system was a solution looking for a problem and, as the years have gone on, we have found more and more problems its positioning capabilities can help us address.”

Another big change during his time was the increasing number of young women pursuing a surveying career.

“I think the first female to graduate was in 1975. Now 10 to 20 per cent of the class is female,” he says.

“I think the basic reasons for people studying surveying remain the same. Typically they want an indoor/outdoor job, they want variety in what they do, they want to be well paid and they are all-rounders – that is, they can handle the English and the mathematics together. The best surveyors are very good all-rounders and that hasn’t changed.”

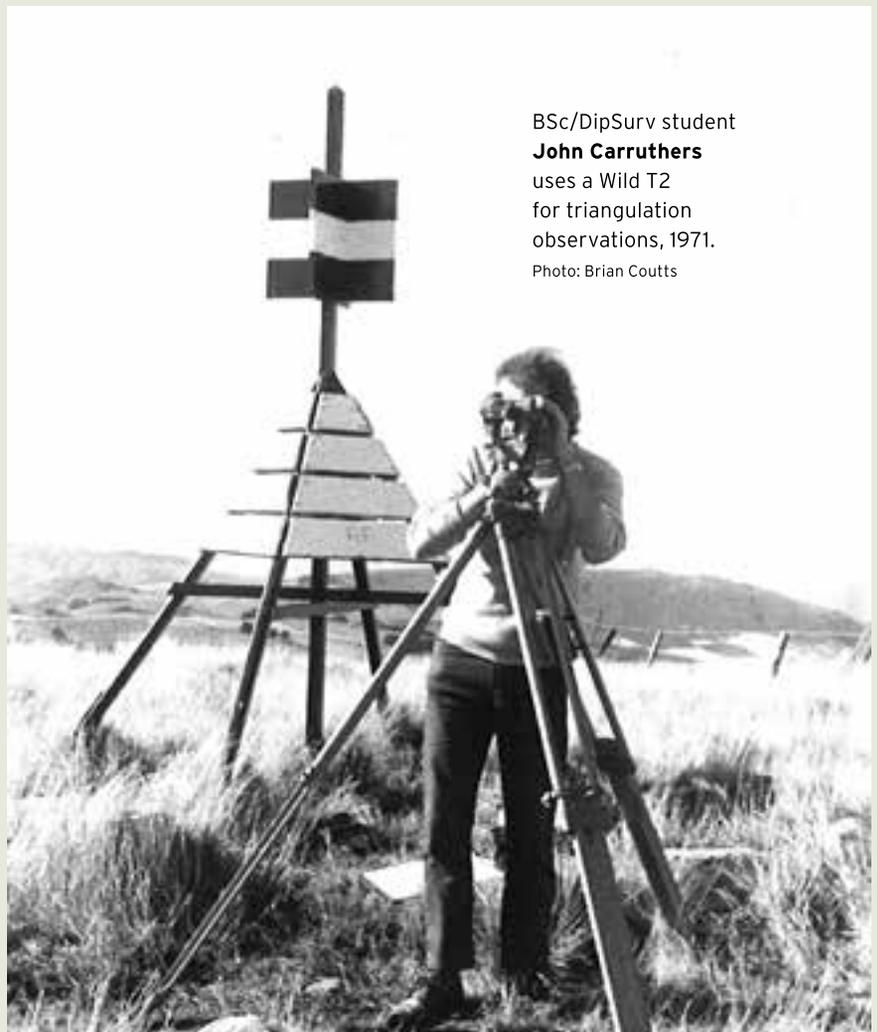
Hannah says the school gets around 70 per cent of its students from just 30

per cent of the population pool. Only about 30 per cent of students come from the larger centres such as Auckland, Hamilton, Tauranga, Palmerston North, Wellington, Christchurch and Dunedin. The rest come from semi-rural areas.

“Youngsters who come off farms or from rural areas like the outdoor career option.”

### **Time to celebrate**

Long-serving senior lecturer Dr Mick Strack is involved in planning for a conference and reunion in August to mark the school’s 50th anniversary, as



BSc/DipSurv student  
**John Carruthers**  
uses a Wild T2  
for triangulation  
observations, 1971.  
Photo: Brian Coultts

**Professor Christina Hulbe:**

“Thinking carefully about how cities function matters in this century and the School of Surveying has a role to play in that.”

Photo: Alan Dove



well as to celebrate the 125th anniversary of the Institute of Surveyors.

Strack, who is preparing a book for the anniversary, says the school has produced approximately 1,500 graduates and nowadays has a yearly intake which is limited to 60 students taught by 14 academic staff, with three technical officers who look after the equipment, practicals and field camps.

“In the last 10 to 15 years we have been able to claim full employment for our graduates – there has been big demand for them, in spite of the downturn.”

He attributes this to the fact that the school has always run a practical, field-based programme, although much has been added to it. “For example, I teach land law, property rights and planning, so there is a lot more focus on legal, planning and design aspects as well as the technological aspects.”

Staff expertise has also broadened with the addition of remote-sensing experts, who work with satellite and aerial imagery, interpreting aspects such as glacial retreat, snow cover, water cover and soil-water content.

Strack says the way that Otago has maintained its professional course approach differs from many departments around the world – who now call themselves departments of geomatics – to try to show the spatial and scientific aspects to the discipline.

“Survey departments in Australia that have changed to geomatics have not

flourished and are not producing the numbers of surveyors required. That’s why our graduates are in huge demand. Even our third-year students are being plucked up for summer jobs in Australia.”

#### Looking ahead

New dean Professor Christina Hulbe, who began her leadership of the school early this year, says the school’s effort to find a balance between research and undergraduate teaching differentiates it from others.

“I think it’s a tricky balance to maintain both, especially in a world where research is increasingly the measure we use to evaluate how a department is performing,” she says.

“Research is important because, in part, it does improve teaching and it does improve opportunities for students. Universities are in the knowledge business and knowledge is always changing, so we’re also in the transformation business. You need the research part to illuminate the future and point the way to what’s going to be happening next in the discipline.”

Hulbe says geospatial analysis, for example, is only going to become more important in the years ahead. People doing research in this area are developing new tools and new ways of thinking.

“I think we have a good programme in that area now, but it is smaller than it could be and it is certainly a priority to see it grow. That will benefit students

because, increasingly, they need spatial analysis skills in the workplace. It is also a good direction for research – developing new ways of using geospatial information. All of the Prime Minister’s new National Science Challenges, for example, have a geospatial context.

“It is important for students to see and do geospatial analysis while they are in school because their future in either the public or private sector will, in some way, be defined by that.”

Hulbe says geospatial analysis is a tool that can be used to address many earth science and social science questions, including those around urban planning and design, and the sustainability and resilience challenges of the 21st century.

“It’s not just megacities – it’s Dunedin-sized cities too. Half the world’s population lives in cities like this. Thinking carefully about how cities function matters in this century and the School of Surveying has a role to play in that.”

One of the things that has drawn her back to Otago, after being here on sabbatical in 2009, is the University’s commitment to real, live teaching and the connection between research and teaching.

“Students are better off for that synthesis. It’s what a university is supposed to be.”

**MARK WRIGHT**

# PBRF success

## The latest Performance-Based Research Fund (PBRF) quality assessment has confirmed the University of Otago as the leading research institution in New Zealand.

The PBRF assessment was introduced by the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) in 2003 to measure the quality of research being undertaken within New Zealand's tertiary sector. Further evaluations were undertaken in 2006 and, most recently, in 2012.

The results of this latest evaluation have been welcomed by University of Otago's Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Enterprise), Professor Richard Blaikie. "When you look across all four measures of the PBRF's quality assessment, the University of Otago has the strongest result. Within universities, the calibre of research is a defining feature of institutional quality. These results reaffirm our position as the leading research institution in New Zealand."

Otago was the only university to be ranked in the top four in all average quality score (AQS) measures and Otago improved its 2006 performance in all of them. The University was ranked first for research quality weighted by its postgraduate roll, second for quality relative to enrolments at degree-level and higher, third for the quality of research by staff who submitted portfolios for assessment, and fourth for the measure across all academic staff.

Otago was ranked first or second in 17 subject areas, including first in four of the 10 top-ranked subject areas: law, pharmacy, philosophy and pure and applied mathematics. In addition, the Department of Psychology received the highest score (6.9) for any nominated academic unit at any institution across the country.

Of the 1,318 Otago staff who participated in the evaluation, 735 were ranked as either "A" or "B" for the quality of their research. "A"-graded staff are recognised as having high international standing in their respective fields and "B"-graded staff as enjoying high national standing.

Since 2006, the number of Otago's "A" graded staff has increased from 144 to 189, and "B" graded staff has risen from 473 to 546.

Blaikie says these results reflect not only excellent performances by staff, but also the University's deep commitment to supporting staff to achieve research excellence at national and international levels. And, uniquely in New Zealand, Otago's senior academic staff have led by example with "perfect 10-out-of-10 scores": Blaikie, Vice-Chancellor Professor Harlene Hayne and Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic and International)



**Professor Richard Blaikie:**

"When you look across all four measures of the PBRF's quality assessment, the University of Otago has the strongest result. These results reaffirm our position as the leading research institution in New Zealand."

Professor Vernon Squire have continued their work as active researchers and all gained "A" rankings. This Otago tradition of "lead from the front" is not new: former Vice-Chancellor Professor Sir David Skegg and former Deputy Vice-Chancellors Professor Gareth Jones and Professor Geoff White also led with "A" rankings of their own in the earlier PBRF assessments.

Equally encouraging were the results achieved by Otago's younger, up-and-coming researchers. Of the 275 new and emerging researchers who were assessed, 53 received "B" grades and two were

recognised as “A” grade, a result of which Blaikie is “very proud”.

“The PBRF process is not just about recognising current research stars, but also identifying and growing research stars of the future. These excellent results bode very well for Otago’s long-term status as a leading research institution. The calibre of these early-career staff suggests many are well-placed to become our research leaders of tomorrow.”

He is also particularly proud of the staff at the University of Otago, Christchurch who have been significantly, and adversely, affected by the earthquakes that have rocked that city over recent years. In an environment that was very trying, the campus more than doubled its numbers of “A”-graded staff since 2006, to 29, reaffirming its position as the leading medical school in the country.

In monetary terms, the University of Otago has done well from the PBRF assessment, winning around 20 per cent of the total funding pool. This translates to an estimated \$53 million in funding this year, potentially rising to around \$60 million by 2016.

“Between Otago and the University of Auckland – which gained around 30 per cent of the pool – half of the funding

pool is going to just two universities, one in the North Island and the other in the South,” says Blaikie. “This clearly shows where the research strengths lie in New Zealand universities and keeps us at the forefront of research investment in this country.”

While Blaikie is pleased with the results, he says the University cannot afford to be complacent. “The importance of attracting funding to support top quality research needs to be an ongoing priority.”

Quality evaluations make up only 60 per cent of the PBRF assessment, with research degree completions and external research income comprising 25 per cent and 15 per cent of the evaluation respectively. These two measures are assessed annually and provide an opportunity for further growth.

“However, as access to financial support for postgraduate students has been tightened, we now have to look to other means to support this important component of our activity. We will increasingly need to look to our stakeholders, business and community connections, and alumni to help us in these crucial areas.”

**KAREN HOGG**

## **LEADING POSTGRADUATE POSITION CONFIRMED**

The PBRF evaluation has confirmed Otago’s position as New Zealand’s leading postgraduate research university.

Otago was ranked first in the measure of research quality weighted by its postgraduate roll, which shows the extent to which research, teaching and learning at postgraduate-degree level and above is underpinned by the quality of research.

Access to research-informed teaching and supervision by acknowledged leaders in their fields is vital for postgraduate students: this ranking shows that Otago offers the best in the country.

Otago postgraduate students enjoy a 3:1 ratio to research-active staff and a 5:1 ratio to “A”- or “B”-rated research staff - that is, research staff whose work is nationally and/or internationally recognised.

Contextual analysis of the previous PBRF evaluations shows that Otago led the postgraduate ranking in both 2003 and 2006, and has been able to hold this position.

“The emphasis on postgraduate research is about quality,” says Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research and Enterprise Professor Richard Blaikie. “While we have grown our numbers of postgraduate students since the last evaluation, we have strongly grown our number of high quality research staff at the same time.”

### **Otago was ranked first or second in the following subject areas:**

- Anthropology and Archaeology
- Chemistry
- Clinical Medicine
- Dentistry
- Earth Sciences
- Education
- Engineering and Technology
- History, Art History and Classics
- Law
- Pharmacy
- Philosophy
- Psychology
- Public Health
- Pure and Applied Mathematics
- Sociology, Gender and Social Work
- Sport and Exercise Science
- Theology and Religious Studies

# Literary detective

**How would JRR Tolkien have chosen to illustrate *The Lord of the Rings*? Letters discovered by the Department of English's Dr Paul Tankard now give us an insight.**

Not every English scholar can say they've unearthed new primary material on a major author. Dr Paul Tankard has done it twice in recent years – tracking down the transcript of a unique and unknown television interview with CS Lewis, and bringing to light a chain of correspondence between JRR Tolkien and a would-be illustrator for *The Lord of the Rings*.

Tankard's essays about both of his discoveries have been published in the prestigious and widely circulating *Times Literary Supplement*, with the story of Tolkien and English artist Mary Fairburn featuring on the cover.

"Many of the major authors of the past have been well worked-over by scholars – so we explore ever more obscure angles on them, or find increasingly minor authors to write about," says Tankard.

"I am pleased to think that, in finding new material about important writers, I have been able to contribute more meaningfully to literary history. The Tolkien letters and Mary's paintings and illustrations were real discoveries. Tolkien actually saw her pictures and said they were the best illustrations of his fantasy epic that he'd seen."

In 2010, Tankard was visiting relatives in Victoria, Australia, when he was told about a local artist claiming to have done work

for Tolkien in the 1960s. He was initially skeptical but, when they eventually met, she was able to produce four letters written by Tolkien to her in 1968.

"It was very exciting to see Mary's letters from Tolkien – his handwriting is very distinctive and instantly recognisable. I knew then that her story was verifiable and was clearly something more than just an anecdote."

In May 1968, Fairburn submitted at least three paintings to Tolkien in the hope he would use them as illustrations. These included a pen-and-ink illustration of Gandalf and a small sketch of Gollum. Tolkien's response was a letter in which he said the pictures were "*splendid. They are better pictures in themselves and also show far more attention to the text than any that have yet been submitted to me.*"

Tolkien was not, in general, enthusiastic about the idea of his books being illustrated. His letters to Fairburn showed that he was very impressed with her work and might even have had a change of heart, beginning to "*think an illustrated edition might be a good thing*".

Sadly for Fairburn, the correspondence ended without success, despite Tolkien requesting and receiving further illustrations. This was due, in part, to upheaval and injury in Tolkien's life as

well as the publisher's fear of how much an illustrated edition would cost.

When it came to publishing Fairburn's story, Tankard knew he would have to seek permission from the Tolkien estate to use Tolkien's letters, as the copyright for unpublished letters lies with the author.

"I was slightly nervous about this. Most of my scholarly work has been on writers who have been safely dead for over 200 years and literary estates can be awkward to deal with."

At that time, he had no expectations that the estate would still have Fairburn's letters. Other researchers had published detailed findings from Tolkien's correspondence, but none had apparently seen or understood the significance of the letters, or heard of Mary Fairburn.

"I was very surprised when the estate sent me copies of Mary's letters and pleased that they trusted me. Having both sides of the correspondence enabled me to tell a much fuller version of the story. Mary was astonished to see her own letters to Tolkien again after over 40 years."

The importance of the letters lies in the unique insight they offer into Tolkien's own vision of his books, Tankard says. They showed that he had seen and approved of Fairburn's work, not just as good paintings, but as illustrations that were in tune with his own vision of his imaginary world and which he might have used if circumstances had been different.

Tankard's work on Tolkien and Fairburn took only 18 months from first steps to publication. In stark contrast, his

**Dr Paul Tankard:** "I am pleased to think that, in finding new material about important writers, I have been able to contribute more meaningfully to literary history."

Photo: Alan Dove

search for a television interview with CS Lewis was a "long slog" and called for dogged persistence. "I tugged on the thread on and off for 10 years," he says.

Tankard, who has a background in journalism and teaching, began his search in the early 1990s after reading an article on theatre critic Kenneth Tynan in which he mentioned a television interview with Lewis.

"I pricked up my ears. I knew that it had never elsewhere been mentioned that he'd been interviewed on TV and wondered what, if anything, I'd find if I went looking. It took time and many dead ends, but everything slowly fell into place."

Tankard discovered the programme was *Tempo* – an arts show that aired in 1961-62 on Britain's ITV each fortnight on a Sunday afternoon. The episode including Lewis was filmed, but never aired because the theme, "Eros in the Arts", was deemed unsuitable for the time slot.

Among his many enquiries, Tankard contacted Tynan's bibliographer who gave him the contact details for Tynan's daughter. She, in turn, gave him a copy of her father's engagement book.

"That was very exciting, as it clearly indicated he had interviewed Lewis not once, but twice, and pointed to the heavy involvement of Wayland Young [Lord Kennet] in that particular episode.

"He wrote to Lord Kennet – then in his 80s – and got a handwritten letter back saying he recalled the interview and would be looking through his archives soon. A couple of months later a copy of the transcript of the interview arrived unexpectedly in the post.

"It was like holding the Holy Grail," says Tankard. "I wasn't sure I was ever going to get there."

In the interview, Lewis was "on his mettle" and spoke frankly in a way that was consistent with his known views.



“It’s very satisfying to do something which, however small ... will be part of the scholarship of those writers so long as literature is read and studied.”

“Lewis was brought in to represent a stuffily conservative religious perspective. Instead, he baffled the interviewer by saying that he objected to the use of ‘four-letter words’ in literature, not because they were too erotic or inflammatory, but because they were not erotic enough.”

Tankard’s interest in Lewis and Tolkien extends to an Otago Summer School paper he teaches (English 251 Fantasy Worlds) in which students

examine the novels of major fantasy writers and the film adaptations. He also teaches papers on essay and feature writing.

His current research involves 18th-century essayist and lexicographer Samuel Johnson and his biographer James Boswell, which Tankard doubts will yield such “dramatic discoveries”.

“They are much older authors, so their papers have been worked through by generations of archivists and editors.”

In contrast, Tolkien’s and Lewis’ reputations are established, but not set in stone, he says.

“It’s very satisfying to do something which, however small – and unlike even the most profound critical work – will be part of the scholarship of those writers so long as literature is read and studied.

“These discoveries contribute to a fuller picture of both writers and can’t now be overlooked.”

**LAURA HEWSON**

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# Imagine if ...

## Otago graduate - and CEO of the Inspiring Stories Trust - Guy Ryan is helping young New Zealanders change the world.

Young people are often full of revolutionary ideas about how to change the world for the better.

However, most of them get a lot older before they feel they are in a position to turn those ideas into reality. And, by then, mortgages and family commitments tend to decrease the appetite for the risks involved with trying to save the planet.

Guy Ryan understands the problem and has come up with a solution. He's motivating young people to act on their ideas while they are still passionate about causes and unhampered by the fear of taking risks.

Ryan has done just that. Still in his 20s, he's rapidly acquiring a national reputation as an inspirational leader who gets things done.

While studying at Otago, he and fellow students produced award-winning short films, started a film production company and ran large community festivals.

Now he's founder and CEO of the Inspiring Stories Trust, which helps other young people to act on their dreams and celebrates their leading of positive change.

It's not a bad record for a laid-back surfer who grew up in a small settlement on the West Coast, with the beach at the backyard and the bush across the road.

Moving to attend Buller High School in Westport – the big smoke by comparison – didn't make a lot of difference to Ryan's early academic aspirations. "I was more interested in surfing, going to the beach and partying."

Surfing was one of the attractions of moving to Dunedin and joining friends already at Otago, where Ryan ended up studying design and marketing.

"I tried computer science, but couldn't see myself coding on a computer all day. I saw marketing as a way to getting into the commercial world and, as I'd always been interested in doing creative things, design seemed right."

Design also gave Ryan access to cameras and the technology to make films about skateboarding and surfing. When the five-minute surfing movie *First Light* won an award for best New Zealand film at the New Zealand Mountain Film Festival, Ryan enrolled for a Master of Science Communication degree.

"What I loved about the master's was the amazing group of talented people it brought together, and the mandate to explore how science and creativity can better inform decision-making and action," says Ryan.

In Ryan's final year he was inspired by a talk by visiting climate change campaigner Bill McKibben, who co-founded the 350.org movement with

Dr James Hansen of NASA, one of the first scientists to raise broad awareness of the global warming issue.

As a response to McKibben's visit, Ryan and his friends launched two festivals to highlight things that affect our future and what can be done about them.

In Dunedin they ran a Spring Food Festival and, on the West Coast, their "A Day at the Beach" adventure festival involved school students and communities working together to plant 5,000 native trees and remove six tonnes of rubbish from the local beaches.

"My social life became compulsive networking and figuring out how to make crazy ideas possible," says Ryan.

"At Otago I had no idea what the future held. I was just following my passion. If you do what you love, and pair that with a purpose bigger than you, things seem to fall into place."

For Ryan, the pivot point where things started to fall into place was the 25-minute film he and fellow student Nick Holmes made for their master's degree.

*Carving the Future*, which tells stories of motivated young people acting on their ideas for improving the world, started winning international awards. When it reached the finals for the BBC's Best Newcomer Award in the prestigious European Wildscreen film festival, Ryan was on his way to the UK to support it. After his first OE, his life was never going to be the same again.

"The festival was an amazing experience. I met filmmakers young and

old, and got more intrigued by the power of film as a tool of change, but, to be honest, I found the industry scene a little depressing. I thought things could be done differently and came back to New Zealand full of ideas and energy.”

On Ryan’s return, he learned he had won a World of Difference Scholarship from Vodafone to launch a new youth-focused project under the Inspiring Stories Trust organisation that he had recently founded.

He had a year and \$80,000 to make a difference. “This was a mandate to dream and set up youth initiatives without having to worry about funding.”

The vision was to “imagine if every young New Zealander unleashed their potential to change the world and, if the stories of those young Kiwis could inspire others”, so it was a natural progression to run filmmaking workshops, a national film competition and screenings across the country.

Ryan realised that filmmaking and public narrative were just the beginning. “There was a need for something else as well, so we came up with the Festival for the Future, looking for innovative young people and giving them a platform to share their passion, projects and vision for New Zealand.

“If young New Zealanders had ideas about how they might change the world, we wanted to help them take those ideas to the next level, so we brought in high-end industry expertise to run workshops in unpacking social change, entrepreneurship, start-ups, 21st century organising, marketing and much more.”

The first festival ran in Wellington in 2011 and 120 attendees aged between 16 and 30 came from all over the country. “The prototype festival was funded with the Vodafone scholarship and was a huge success, so we decided to make it an annual event,” says Ryan.

“The second festival in 2012 attracted major partners and publicity and sold out, with 320 people taking part at Te Papa.”

The event was supported by a long list of organisations, including the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment; Leadership New Zealand; Wellington City Council; Careers New Zealand and the Ministry of Youth Development.

Now launching into year three as CEO of the Inspiring Stories Trust, Ryan and his team have developed a suite of self-reinforcing initiatives to increase the visibility, capability and confidence of young New Zealanders making a difference. They work with thousands of people each year and engage a global audience of millions through marketing and communications.

“It’s crazy to think how far it’s come. It’s all well and good dreaming up crazy ideas, but you have to figure out how to resource them.

“We spent years networking and now people are starting to come to us. It’s a big change when they say ‘we love what you are doing, how can we work together?’ It’s really exciting.”

Ryan’s still using techniques and skills he learned at Otago. “Design and marketing give you the skills to get ideas off the ground, give them a visual presence and build some momentum around them.”

One of Ryan’s old lecturers was a founding board member for the Inspiring Stories Trust.

“Being a charity still has value,” says Ryan. “You can still generate revenue – it just means it’s reinvested into social impact rather than the pockets of shareholders. But being a charity is also a dangerous place to be because it’s a very competitive landscape and you’re



largely at the mercy of public funding grants. You have to think like a business.

“The business landscape is changing too. If you are not adding social value to the community, then people are likely to spend their dollars elsewhere. The boundaries between business and charity are being increasingly blurred by the need to do good in the world.

“I’m really interested in social entrepreneurship and social enterprise. It’s a big movement overseas, but only just emerging in New Zealand. I think

**Guy Ryan:** "If you do what you love, and pair that with a purpose bigger than you, things seem to fall into place."

Photo: Michael Roberts



we could be doing a lot more to support this here, especially among young people.

"When you're young with no family or mortgage, your ability to take risk is much higher. As a country, we need to find smarter ways to support young people, especially to align passion, purpose and risk-taking. New Zealand and the world will be better off for it."

**NIGEL ZEGA**

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"If you are not adding social value to the community, then people are likely to spend their dollars elsewhere. The boundaries between business and charity are being increasingly blurred by the need to do good in the world."

# Are holidays good for us?

## Research secrets to vacation happiness

Many of us invest valuable time, energy and money planning our vacation experiences, organising new travel adventures.

We do this because we instinctively know that going on vacations must be good for us. Research proves this feeling without a doubt. Regular vacations are associated with greater happiness levels, help us perform better at work, help us improve our sleep quality and cushion us against depression.

There is even research that shows that failing to vacation regularly can be a contributing factor to early death. And yet, despite these real and perceived benefits, many of us return home with a feeling that our last vacation was OK – but not great.

How do we change this? A trip that looks good on paper may not deliver us what we truly need. We worry about tactical issues such as how to find a good flight deal, how to get from A to B, or which destinations to add or subtract from our itinerary. These issues may seem important, but can, in fact, be secondary to a successful vacation. Our psychological state of mind is far more important.

A classic mistake for vacation planners is attempting to maximise value for money by planning trips that have too many components. Perhaps you're planning a trip to Europe, seven cities in 10 days, and you realise it will cost only a little more to add two more destinations to the list. Sounds fine in theory, but hopping from one place

to the next hardly gives an opportunity to experience what psychologists call mindfulness – time to take in our new surroundings, time to be present and absorb our travel experiences.

Instead, you should love where you're at – and stay engaged in what's going on around you. You should also do less, enjoy more – don't add stress to your life with a complicated travel plan; you will take in more by doing less.

Together with co-author Rod Cuthbert, I have developed an eBook called *Vacation Rules* ([www.vacation-rules.com](http://www.vacation-rules.com)) for maximising vacation well-being. The rules are simple, but grounded in science. The book draws directly on research into leisure travel, positive psychology and effects on well-being, health, relationships and work performance. It contains 36 easy to follow rules for travellers and we have made them accessible to the general public.

Here are some of my top rules:

**Who you go with matters more than where you go.** Choose your travel companions wisely. Nothing enhances a trip more than the right companions.

**Don't visit champagne destinations on a beer budget.** Spending vacation time in a place where everything is too expensive will quickly kill your positive mood.

**Shop for meanings, not just things.** Shop wisely. Meaningful experiences provide more long-term happiness than physical possessions.



**Kindness pays.** Perform random acts of kindness for locals and other travellers to boost your positive emotions.

**Your guidebook is your friend, not your master.** A truly happy vacation is one where you feel in control and see yourself in a positive light. Guidebooks can help with the former, but may get in the way of the latter. Don't let your guidebook completely dictate what you "must see" at your destination.

**And be optimistic.** Remaining optimistic about your vacation in the face of unexpected glitches, like flight delays, really matters. Optimists live longer and achieve more than pessimists.

These rules are based on the PERMA well-being model developed by psychologist Dr Martin Seligman. PERMA stands for positive emotions (P), engagement (E), relationships (R), meaning (M) and achievement (A). These elements are equally important to our vacation happiness – and there is little evidence that you have to travel far or go on an expensive cruise to get these benefits.

A Cheat Sheet at the back of the book includes key rules under each PERMA well-being element. Check out the Cheat Sheet before your next holiday!

Dr Sebastian Filep is a lecturer in the University of Otago's Department of Tourism. He is also Honorary Research Fellow at Victoria University, Melbourne, Australia. Dr Filep specialises in tourist behaviour, positive psychology and well-being research. In addition to *Vacation Rules*, his major works are: *Tourist Experience and Fulfilment: Insights from Positive Psychology* (Routledge, 2013), and *Tourists, Tourism and the Good Life* (Routledge, 2011).

Photo: Alan Dove

# Igniting solutions

**A group of University of Otago student consultants are transforming Dunedin's not-for-profit sector by providing fresh ideas, knowledge and skills - for free.**

Take a team of highly motivated, altruistic students armed with an intrinsic knowledge of the latest in social media, fresh ideas for marketing and fundraising, and a passion for improving the community they live in – and you've got a winning formula. And that's the idea behind Ignite Consultants.

With an impressive portfolio of not-for-profits already under their belt, including the Cancer Society, Presbyterian Support, Habitat for Humanity, the Prostate Cancer Foundation, the Sophie Elliott Foundation and Dog Rescue Dunedin, Ignite is a charitable organisation started by Otago University students in 2010, aiming to assist Dunedin's charities by building strategic partnerships and offering expertise.

Each semester 15 talented and motivated student consultants (mainly undergraduates, with several postgraduate students) are recruited by Ignite (via a rigorous selection process) to work on three key projects for the city's not-for-profit organisations.

"Ignite was formed to create more of an interface between profit on the one hand and charities on the other. Rather than just looking at generating more income for the charities involved, we seek to help the organisations better utilise what they have," says strategist and founding member Jordan Campbell.

"Generally speaking, most organisations come to us with similar problems – marketing and funding. We look at creative solutions. For some, that's putting together funding packages so that an organisation can go out to potential funders and say this is what we do, and this is what we need. For another, it might be reassessing their entire business model and plan. It depends on what any given organisation needs."

Project rounds happen twice a year – and are selected based on their level of need and their fit with the Ignite model. While, in the beginning, Ignite went in search of community projects, now the group have a choice of "worthy, quality" applications.

"We're lucky enough to be in a position now where people have heard about us and they're coming to us with their project ideas," says executive director Victoria Watt.

"We do have a lot of choice now and that's probably the hardest part. They are all so worthy."

This semester, the group's lucky three are a strategic direction for the Dunedin branch of the Hearing Association, fundraising and marketing opportunities for Camp Quality and exploring long-term funding options for Dunedin's ChatBus Trust – a free mobile counselling service for lower-decile primary and intermediate schools.

"The idea was that we wanted to be able to work with anyone. Some organisations might be just one person trying to do something for the community. We really want to be able to help those people, too, if the project is right," says Campbell.

The executive team can list a catalogue of successes for every project, but are particularly proud of the work they have done for the Sophie Elliott Foundation and Habitat for Humanity, where many of their recommendations are now being implemented at national level.

"It's the ability to take a complete step back: not just say 'how can we function better within this model', but go right back to the beginning and ask questions like 'what is it that you're trying to do?' 'How can you most effectively do that?'" says projects director Anna Charles-Jones.

"It's amazing what five driven and dedicated people can do over eight weeks."

This was recognised last month when Ignite won the Education and Child/Youth Development category of the TrustPower Dunedin Community Awards.

The Ignite model is a win-win for both parties. Not only do the client organisations get quality, free consultancy, which includes a strategic report and formal presentation to the board produced over eight weeks, but the student consultants also gain vital work experience – and the guidance of a mentor from the private or not-for-profit sector – needed to score that first job.

Consultants come from every faculty – student doctors, lawyers, scientists, IT experts, arts and commerce students – all looking for an opportunity to learn more

through the specialised training sessions the group run, and apply what they have learnt in their university study to the real world.

“It’s a practical way of using their degrees,” says Watt.

“We take students from all different departments because they all have something very different to offer. We need a lot of big thinkers who look at problems holistically – and then we’ve got a lot of students who really get down to the details. We put our teams together based on their strengths, but every degree becomes useful in each group.

“We give students the opportunity to use what they learn at university in a real-world setting, while giving back to the community and providing innovative solutions to not-for-profit organisations who haven’t got access to those resources themselves.”

And in a competitive post-university world, experience always counts. Despite its relatively short history, many of the Ignite alumni have gone on to jobs in high-profile consultancy firms, marketing companies and not-for-profit organisations. All credit their experience with Ignite as giving them the necessary tools, skills and knowledge to help them secure their first real jobs.

While the organisation is independent of the University – and the work the students do remains voluntary and does not count towards their academic courses – Ignite is supported by the Business School, which provides their office space (including internet and power) and helps out with printing costs. In all other ways, Ignite operates like any other grass-roots charitable trust, fundraising with pub quizzes and looking at long-term

sustainability issues. But the future looks bright.

“This semester, we had quadruple the number of applicants we needed and double the number in our ‘yes’ pile. We’ve also got more organisations coming to us, so we are definitely looking at expanding,” says Charles-Jones.

“The great thing about our model is that it’s relatively easy to expand and take on another project.

“We’ve had an incredible number of high-calibre people through Ignite and what we hope our consultants will get out of their time is a passion for social causes and to actually take that through into their career in a really meaningful way.”

**AMIE RICHARDSON**



Ignite executive director **Victoria Watt** (right) and projects director **Anna Charles-Jones**, with the ChatBus, one of group’s latest consultation projects.

Photo: Alan Dove

## Dig reveals life of first Pākehās

Archaeological excavations in a remote area of the Bay of Islands have provided a closer look at Aotearoa's first planned permanent settlement by Europeans.

Associate Professor Ian Smith (Anthropology) and his team, including research assistant Jessie Garland, have been painstakingly examining the Hohi (Oihi) Mission Station, perhaps better known as the Marsden Cross Reserve - where the first New Zealand sermon was preached in 1814.

The enclave of about 25 Europeans included three missionary families, servants and tradesmen, including a blacksmith who made many of the goods Māori desired, such as nails and axes.

"They came essentially at the invitation of local Māori who wanted access to European goods, technology and education, especially for their children," says Smith.

There is little interpretive information about the site and, with the settlement's bicentenary next year, DOC wanted to find out more.

Excavations last year helped identification of the school building and the remains of writing slates and toys, trinkets and fish hooks used to bribe the Māori children to attend.

This summer's dig identified two mission houses, including that of Thomas Kendall that was torn down and paved over after

he was ejected from the Missionary Society in 1823 after having a relationship with a young Māori woman.

Smith says such excavations uncover much about the material culture of early Europeans living in the Māori world and beginning the process of adaptation to becoming Pākehā.

The settlement lasted until 1832, by which time other areas of the Bay of Islands had become more popular.



**Associate Professor Ian Smith and Jessie Garland:** Their excavations uncover much about the material culture of early Europeans living in the Māori world.

## Targeting tele tots

Any parent with a pre-schooler who watches commercial television will be all too familiar with whiny versions of phrases such as, "I want that!" A senior lecturer in marketing, Dr Leah Watkins, is researching how influential television advertising directed at under-fives really is.

"My interest is in consumer socialisation - how do very young children learn consumption habits - and, in particular, how do their materialistic orientations and brand knowledge develop early on. There's quite a lot of literature looking at older children, but very little looking at under-fives who are being increasingly targeted as consumers."

With the support of a University of Otago research grant, she is surveying parents through Dunedin pre-schools and kindergartens on whether their children being exposed to television advertising is a concern and what strategies they have in place to try to limit advertising exposure. She will then interview the children and parents of 40 local families with pre-schoolers who watch commercial TV and 40 families with under-fives whose viewing is restricted.

Watkins has a personal as well as a professional interest in the outcome of the research. The mother of three young children,

including a pre-schooler, doesn't allow her children to view commercial television, but lets them watch pre-recorded non-commercial programmes and DVDs.

"Even though my children have never watched commercial television I don't know that their brand knowledge is any different from children who do. They are still incredibly aware - they still talk about McDonalds - in a way that you think, 'where does that come from?'"



**Dr Leah Watkins** and her three-year-old son, William, watching a DVD: "There's quite a lot of literature looking at older children, but very little looking at under-fives, who are being increasingly targeted as consumers."

## A fair go for disabled students

**Disabled students' right to education is being clearly compromised, according to a senior lecturer in disability studies and education.**

Dr Gill Rutherford (College of Education) says that, unfortunately, it is not uncommon for disabled students to be taught by untrained, unqualified, unsupervised teacher aides. She likens it to going to the doctor to be treated for a significant medical condition by the practice receptionist.

"The fundamental injustice is that we sometimes assign those who are least qualified and experienced to the care of those who, through no fault of their own, may have the most complex learning characteristics. Now that's not fair. We wouldn't do that to any other student."

Rutherford says this seems to be one of the consequences of simplistically sorting students into categories of "special needs" and "normal" and making assumptions about the capacity of each kind of student.

"We need to recognise that every student can learn, has a right to learn, and does so in different ways, regardless of impairment.

"We know that teachers working in partnership with teacher aides to support all students' learning is the optimum way of

serving students and there are wonderful examples of this happening in schools throughout New Zealand. This way of working needs to become standard practice in all schools, so that education becomes less of a lottery for disabled students."

Rutherford completed her PhD in 2008 on disabled students' and teacher aides' experiences of schools and has since had several articles published on the subject.



**Dr Gill Rutherford:** "The fundamental injustice is that we sometimes assign those who are least qualified and experienced to the care of those who ... may have the most complex learning characteristics."

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## Quinoa's year in the sun

**First cultivated about 3,000 years ago, quinoa (pronounced *kinwa*) was held sacred by the Incas who viewed it as the mother crop, alongside potatoes – the father crop.**

Associate Professor Paul Guy (Botany) does not give the hardy weed-like plant – with its tiny white, red and black seeds – the same sort of spiritual status. In fact, for him, it is a sort of botanic lab rat.

"We have a range of plant species from different families that we inoculate with viruses and use as a diagnostic tool to help identify the virus."

For example, he has a major interest in clover species and some of the viruses in white clover infect quinoa. So, if he gets a clover plant that appears infected, he can rub ground-up clover on quinoa and other indicator species to see which ones are affected.

It is a simple but proven approach, demonstrated by the fact that a few years ago it was used to identify five new daffodil viruses in two months.

This year is International Year of Quinoa and Guy is happy to see the plant being recognised.

It is high in the essential amino acid lycine, Guy explains. "It is good for vegetarians and helps them get a more balanced diet."

It can be cooked like rice or cous cous and used in salads and, with prices 10 times that of wheat, he wonders why it isn't being grown more as a crop in New Zealand. "With increasing world problems with food security, it is a golden opportunity."



**Associate Professor Paul Guy:** "We have a range of plant species from different families that we inoculate with viruses and use as a diagnostic tool to help identify the virus."

## Advising UK law

**Landmark English research evaluating the effectiveness of community treatment orders (CTOs) for psychiatric patients under outpatient care has had significant input from Professor John Dawson (Faculty of Law).**

“Use of compulsion in outpatient care has been the pre-eminent issue for mental health law in the past three decades as many countries have closed their psychiatric hospitals.”

New Zealand introduced a CTO regime in 1992 and Dawson’s research on this resulted in him develop a relationship with Oxford’s Professor Tom Burns who was advising the UK Parliament leading up to the introduction of its CTO regime in 2008.

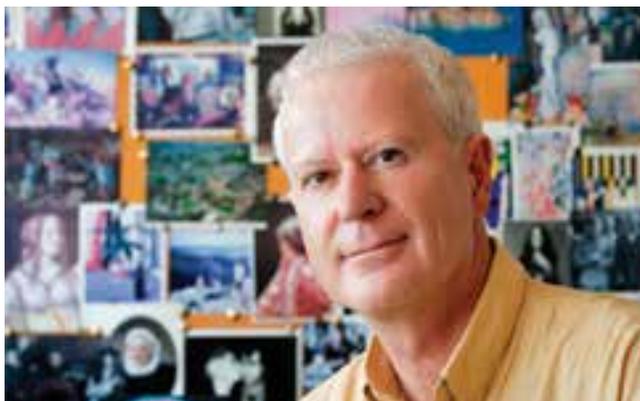
When it was decided to research that regime, Dawson became involved as an advisor and wrote an opinion convincing the English ethics committee that the proposed randomised controlled trial was lawful.

This trial compared the outcomes for 167 people placed under a CTO, for an average of roughly six months, with 169 others placed under a “leave” regime, with equivalent powers, that was used on average for only a few weeks. That allowed them to compare the results of longer versus shorter compulsory outpatient care, finding longer care did not reduce

rehospitalisation rates. The results were published in *The Lancet* (March 2013).

“The trial was rigorously conducted and found no difference in rates of readmission to hospital between the two randomly allocated groups, and no differences overall in their psychiatric symptoms or social functioning, quite contrary to our expectations,” says Dawson.

He plans to return to Oxford to continue the work in 2014.



**Professor John Dawson:** He wrote an opinion convincing the English ethics committee that a proposed trial of community treatment orders was lawful.

## Managing diabetes

**Every day 50 New Zealanders are newly diagnosed with diabetes. This is an epidemic which is expected to grow.**

Despite this grim outlook, diabetes is one chronic disease where effective self-management can make a real difference to the prognosis of the condition.

Understanding how to engage and work with people living with diabetes and their families is a key research focus for Christchurch’s Centre for Postgraduate Nursing Studies.

Centre director Associate Professor Lisa Whitehead says a recently completed study compared the effectiveness of two educational interventions, versus normal care for those with diabetes and blood glucose levels outside the recommended range.

One intervention involved nurses delivering an education package to small groups of patients, a total of seven hours of education about diabetes, such as recognising hypo- and hyperglycaemic states, exercise and diet.

The second intervention included three hours of the same education content, plus acceptance and commitment therapy, a form of cognitive behavioural therapy. One aspect of this approach is “mindfulness”, which promotes moment-to-moment awareness of present events as well as techniques for remembering to be aware of something in the future.

Whitehead says those who experienced the education-

only intervention showed significant improvement in keeping their blood glucose within the normal range, up to six months after intervention. Further research is required to develop the intervention which offers potential for practice nurses.

Whitehead says other centre staff and students are exploring self-adjustment of insulin, sense of identity following diagnosis of diabetes, and the management of diabetes for those with intellectual disabilities.



**Associate Professor Lisa Whitehead:** Diabetes patients showed significant improvement in keeping their blood glucose within the normal range after an education-only intervention.

## Accounting for a crisis

**You'd be hard pressed to come up with too many positives from the global financial crisis, but there's been at least one spin-off benefit - for the teaching of accounting.**

Professor Ralph Adler (Accountancy and Finance) has written a chapter for a forthcoming book in which he suggests that such a salient, high profile and highly topical event as the global financial crisis can have a positive effect on student learning and achievement.

Adler says students often find it difficult to relate to historical events. "The global financial crisis is perfect because we have all been touched in some ways by this huge financial bomb, and there have been some raw nerves perhaps that have even been struck because, when your father or mother loses a job, for example, those ramifications are quite significant."

Adler contends that students use this initial knowledge base as a platform from which they acquire and assess further knowledge. He argues that the significance and meaningfulness of the crisis enhances student motivation and performance. And he believes that the pervasive nature of the crisis lends itself to a holistic approach to learning rather than accounting topics being taught in isolation.

As one example, Adler describes the success he has had in incorporating issues and events from various financial crises into an advanced management accounting course he teaches at Otago.

The chapter, entitled 'The Impact of Financial Crises on Accounting Education', will appear in a 608-page prestige reference work, *The Routledge Companion to Accounting Education* (Oxford: Routledge, December 2013).



**Professor Ralph Adler:** "The global financial crisis is perfect because we have all been touched in some ways by this huge financial bomb..."

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## Lower salt intake achievable

**New Zealanders consume at least twice the recommended intake of salt for a healthy diet, increasing the risk of heart disease, stroke and stomach cancer.**

However, a study by the Department of Public Health (Wellington) has found it would be relatively easy to significantly reduce salt intake for men and women.

Lead author, Associate Professor Nick Wilson, says the target is achievable at under \$9 a day for a range of diets - some with familiar New Zealand meal components. He says it is important for people and Government to take notice as high-salt diets rank 11<sup>th</sup> as a risk factor for disease.

"The key is not only to reduce the amount of salt used in cooking and with meals, but particularly the amount of processed food people eat," Wilson explains.

"Processed food is often very high in salt and, restricting this, means one can reach the 'ideal' average salt intake of under four grams, or two thirds of a teaspoon, a day relatively easily."

Wilson says that the healthiest low salt diets in the study were Mediterranean and Asian diets, providing the latter excluded high-salt sauces such as standard soy sauce. These two diets use fresh, unprocessed vegetables and fruit.

Wilson says that although individuals can reduce their salt intake themselves, it would be more effective if Government did more by, for example, setting upper limits for salt in foods such as bread, processed meat and sauces, and considering junk-food taxes on processed foods that are high in salt, sugar and saturated fat.



**Associate Professor Nick Wilson:** "The key is not only to reduce the amount of salt used in cooking and with meals, but particularly the amount of processed food people eat."

## GPs and maternity care

Getting GPs involved in maternity care again will require review of the current lead maternity carer (LMC) model, according to research by Drs Dawn Miller and Zara Mason (Women's and Children's Health) and Associate Professor Chrys Jaye (General Practice and Rural Health).

They found that both current and former GP obstetricians (GPOs) believe the current model is incompatible with general practice.

In 1990 the Nurses Amendment Act enabled independent midwifery practice. Then, in 1996, the LMC model introduced bulk funding for primary maternity care.

However, when developing this project in 2008, the research team could find only 38 GPs still registered as LMCs, says Jaye.

"The GPOs who staggered on and continued their GP practice do it at great cost. It is not a business decision."

Miller says key themes identified suggest that the model can isolate the practitioner (GPO or midwife), is inadequately funded for GPs, and shared care with a midwife is difficult. Reduced peer support and limited continuing medical education has compounded the problem.

But other research by Miller and Hanna Preston [as a medical student] suggests around 90 per cent of medical students are

interested in providing antenatal, postnatal or shared care as a GP, and 64 per cent in providing intrapartum care. Government is providing some funding for GPs to undertake the Diploma of Obstetrics and Medical Gynaecology to train or retrain in obstetric care.

"From the diploma point of view, we are keen to enhance that, but work needs to be done on these other aspects of the model if GPs are going to get into it again."



**Associate Professor Chrys Jaye and Dr Dawn Miller:** "Work needs to be done on ... the [lead maternity carer] model if GPs are going to get into it again."

## Marine metre monitoring

The University of Otago's New Zealand Marine Studies Centre has launched a nationwide "citizen science" project to bring scientists, schools and the wider community together to monitor the animals and plants found on the nation's rocky shores.

Marine Metre Squared encourages the public to pick a 1m x 1m patch of their local beach at low tide and, with the help of information on the website [www.mm2.net.nz](http://www.mm2.net.nz) and in the centre's *Rocky Shore Guide* pamphlets, regularly identify and count the marine life found there.

Centre director Sally Carson says the project enables participants to learn more about the plants and animals living on our shorelines, while also helping to collect scientific information that will provide a baseline and build a picture of biodiversity, distribution and abundance of seashore life, and monitor changes over time.

"Using the website, participants can fill out the survey forms, store, map and graph their own data for comparison between seasons, regions and species, and compare what is in their patch with other people's."

While the project has been aligned with several of the principles and values of the New Zealand schools' curriculum,

Carson stresses that this is a project that anyone can take part in. Launched in March, more than 150 people registered in the first month, more than 500 people have taken part in workshops and data is starting to "trickle in".

"This project is very much designed to make connections between scientists, educators, schools and community/iwi groups who care about their local seashore environment and want to look after it."



**Sally Carson:** The Marine Metre Squared project enables participants to learn more about the plants and animals living on our shorelines.

## New test for drug cheats

**University of Otago, Christchurch researchers are developing a new test to assist the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) uncover drug cheats in sport.**

Associate Professor Chris Pemberton and colleagues from the Christchurch Heart Institute recently won a WADA research contract to create a test to detect Erythropoietin (EPO) in athletes' blood samples.

EPO is a naturally-occurring hormone, produced by the kidneys, that stimulates the production of red blood cells. This hormone can also be manufactured and injected into the skin or directly into the blood stream.

The use of artificial EPO to increase athletic performance first emerged in the 1980s and, more recently, in high-profile scandals in professional cycling.

Pemberton says testing for EPO is difficult because athletes have sophisticated protocols for taking it and can time its use so benefits are gained long after levels in the blood return to normal. Synthetic EPO is indistinguishable from the natural protein.

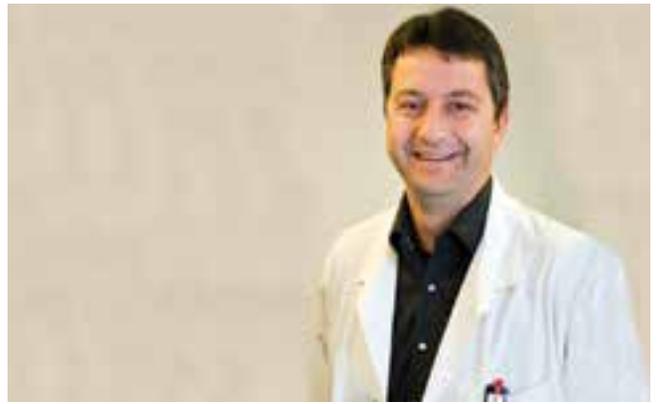
The new test will detect a part of EPO that has not previously been measured.

"Current tests can focus only on parts of the EPO protein that scientists know are essential for performance improvement.

However, we have discovered a part of the protein that was not thought to be in the blood.

"Now, thanks to the support of WADA, and the guidance of Professor Dave Gerrard [Dunedin School of Medicine], we will work to develop a test which can be used in trials on athletes.

"WADA encourages sportspeople to play fair - that's something we agree with and we are very excited to be able to help them promote that."



**Associate Professor Chris Pemberton:** He and his colleagues have won a WADA contract to develop a test to catch drug cheats in sport.

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## Sedimentary stories

**Geologists famously work on very long time scales, so Dr Chris Moy's work exploring climate through sediments from the last 12,000 years is mercurial by comparison.**

Moy has worked on sediments from Chile and, more recently, New Zealand, looking at lake sediment geochemistry to determine how the strength and position of the westerly wind belt has changed over time.

For the months of June and July, however, he will be taking part in an Integrated Ocean Drilling Program research expedition, exploring very different sediments: layers drilled from the ocean floor off the south coast of Alaska.

"We'll be looking at the distribution of iron into a nutrient-rich sea - the North Pacific - and how wind-blown material affects algal productivity," says Moy. "Some of the cores will be much older than my usual 12,000 years and I'm looking forward to that expansion of my research. It's a great opportunity to build new research collaboration links as well."

The international research team will investigate the interaction between tectonics, climate and sedimentation in the Gulf of Alaska. For example, how has the lifting of this mountain chain affected weather patterns and, therefore, the distribution and geochemistry of sediment? What can these sediments tell

us about climate, looking at biological material and isotopic signatures from land or algal sources?

Being on a ship in the North Pacific won't get in the way of his teaching however: Moy is Skyping his 200-level sedimentology class while he's away.

Keep track of the expedition online by visiting <http://joidesresolution.org/node/2742>



**Dr Chris Moy:** "We'll be looking at the distribution of iron into a nutrient-rich sea ... and how wind-blown material affects algal productivity,"

# Working together, learning together

## A new inter-professional health education programme for clinical students is breaking new ground.

For years, the University of Otago's clinical students have trained and learned their health disciplines in what have effectively been educational "silos", not knowing a great deal about what other health professionals actually do until they start working in multidisciplinary health care.

Now things are changing, with a very different learning approach known as inter-professional education, or IPE. The University of Otago, Wellington has been hosting and organising this new programme within six different health disciplines, in collaboration with the Eastern Institute of Technology, in the Tairāwhiti area around Gisborne.

It's funded by Health Workforce New Zealand in Tairāwhiti, and in Whakatane under the auspices of the University of Auckland, at a cost of \$2.5 million at each site over three years.

The aim is to assess how effective IPE is in training student health professionals to work together in clinical settings. This is especially so in the collaborative management of chronic conditions such as diabetes and asthma.

Director of the IPE programme, Associate Professor Sue Pullon (Department of Primary Health Care and General Practice, Wellington) says

the first year has been challenging, but has progressed well, with positive learning outcomes.

"We had 27 students go through the programme in 2012, in three five-week blocks. They successfully lived, worked and studied together and, from the feedback we're getting, they've found it very rewarding, both professionally and personally. We also know from formal assessments that it's made a difference to their understanding and practice of interdisciplinary teamwork and to chronic-care management," she says.

"They've learned a great deal about hauora Māori, or Māori health, as the population of Tairāwhiti is 50 per cent Māori, and they've also experienced working in a rural environment, the first time for most. Other important aims are to encourage young health professionals to work in rural areas."

After a successful first year, the Department of Primary Health Care and General Practice is now midway through running the second year of the IPE programme, with 60 students over five learning blocks.

These students come from six disciplines: physiotherapy, pharmacy, medicine, nursing, dietetics and dentistry. Some, like pharmacist Wil

Shen, have gone back to Gisborne Hospital this year for their intern year.

"I'm from Auckland and the IPE programme definitely made a big difference to my coming here this year. Most students don't really know what other health professionals do. A lot of my learning was informal, having conversations with other students about their work – that kind of thing.

"I also learnt a lot about other areas in more structured sessions; for instance, when we went to the physio gym and they put us through practical exercises. In Ruatoria I worked alongside medical students, observing what they did, and also went on a home visit to see a patient who wasn't taking his medication. All those experiences made a big difference to me as a pharmacist."

Others, like physiotherapy student Solveig Martis, say her IPE experience was one of the highlights of her four-year course. "Overall I absolutely loved it. I would definitely recommend it to anyone, it was just wonderful. I had a really good five weeks.

"I learnt so much more, and it was great living and working with people from other disciplines. We shared ideas and information, both in class and informally, and then I could see what this all meant through the interdisciplinary placements. You get a much better appreciation of your strengths and limits in relation to the whole health team with our case presentations."



Nursing student Samantha Cotton and Sophie Buddo (dietetics) share information about their respective health disciplines at Tui Te Ora Clinic, Gisborne Hospital.

Photos: Diana Dobson



Pharmacy student Gray Barnett talks to type 2 diabetes patient Malcolm Dobson at Muriwai Marae about changes to his glucose meter. As part of the programme, IPE students visit a local marae and have an opportunity to meet with members of the community.

Students also say it has given them a much better understanding of Māori health and the difficulties some Māori families may have in accessing health care.

Timaru house surgeon Dr Petronella Watson says: “Gisborne has a very strong and proud Māori culture and this was reflected in the IPE course. It was an honour to have the chance to spend some time in this community and I hope that it’s not only enhanced my own practical perspective, but the whole group’s.”

Pro-Vice Chancellor Health Sciences, Professor Peter Crampton, is optimistic about the new approach to the education of Otago’s health professionals. However, he says these programmes are much more complex to deliver than students just going on a short clinical placement within their own discipline.

Crampton should know, for over a decade he was involved in the Wellington

campus’s hosting of medical students on the East Coast, with ongoing support from the Tairāwhiti District Health Board, Ngāti Porou and local Māori health providers.

“However, this is a very different approach to health education,” he explains. “I believe IPE programmes will become important for Otago’s health science courses, but the evidence regarding the best way to achieve our objectives is still unfolding.

“It’s easy to do IPE in a superficial way, but we have to be seen to add real value; that is to say, demonstrably improved results for our students.”

Crampton is adamant that one of the vital components of a successful IPE programme is for students to see qualified health professionals working together in an interdisciplinary way, managing chronic conditions such as diabetes or asthma.

There’s no doubt that achieving these challenging educational outcomes in Tairāwhiti is complex. It has relied on a local administrator, a programme leader and a team of professional practice fellows from all six disciplines, and a multi-centred Educational Operations Group overseeing the whole IPE programme.

It has also meant significant and vital support from staff of the Tairāwhiti District Health Board, as well as Māori health providers in rural areas such as Tolaga Bay and Ruatoria.

Dr Patrick McHugh is the IPE programme leader in Tairāwhiti, assisted by administrator Rose Parsons. “Our assessment is that it has gone well, although it has been a steep learning curve organising five or six different health disciplines in one programme,” he says.

“However, IPE has a lot going for it. It’s recognised internationally that, if

“We also know from formal assessments that it’s made a difference to their understanding and practice of interdisciplinary teamwork and to chronic-care management.”

- Associate Professor Sue Pullon

students are working in a team, they must be much more aware of the clinical skills and demands on their colleagues.”

McHugh says one of the more important aspects of the new programme is students undertaking projects on health issues, such as rheumatic fever, which are then presented to community health providers. This has been much appreciated by Māori health providers as recognition of their support in mentoring and assisting students.

The professional practice fellow for hauora Māori, Maaka Tibble, agrees and says these projects have focused understanding on the health needs of the Māori community and impressed health providers.

“The big thing is that students are seeing, face to face, the difficulties in things such as access to medical care in rural areas. We also run case studies that get them thinking about the Māori perspectives on health. It all adds up and

has an impact on the future practice of these young people,” he says.

He hopes this new programme will also encourage more young New Zealanders to consider a career outside urban centres, helping to reduce health inequalities in rural areas.

**AINSLIE TALBOT**

## University of Otago Auckland Centre



The University of Otago Auckland Centre provides a teaching, marketing and research base for the University in the heart of the Auckland CBD.

It also offers a variety of facilities for use by University departments, visiting staff, students and alumni, including:

- Audiovisual equipment
- Teleconferencing facilities
- Seminar and meeting room space (80-person capacity)
- “Hot” office
- Free wi-fi

The University of Otago Auckland Centre is located at 385 Queen Street, close to public transport and easily accessible from Auckland Airport.

### FOR FURTHER INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT:

Cara Postlewaight 09 373 9700  
cara.postlewaight@otago.ac.nz or  
Graham Bateman 09 373 9705  
graham.bateman@otago.ac.nz





## Former Gardies now Marsh Study Centre

Since it opened earlier this year, the University's new Marsh Study Centre has proved a hit with students. Redeveloped from the former Gardens Tavern, the facility provides a well-appointed study area with over 830 square metres of space for up to 220 students, with wi-fi and great views of the Dunedin Botanic Garden.

Facilities include a café on the ground level and a sitting area facing the gardens furnished with indoor and outdoor tables, chairs and comfortable couches. Upstairs there is a large open study area with comfortable study booths, and a series of interconnected smaller rooms and spaces (pictured left).

The new centre is named after Dunedin's Marsh family who made a substantial donation towards the cost of the project.



## University's economic impact revealed

The University's Economic Impact Report for 2012 estimates that the overall direct impact of the institution to Dunedin and other centres in New Zealand rose to \$897 million last year. The report measures actual expenditure by the University, combined with estimated spending by its staff and students.

As in previous years, in 2012 the vast majority of this money flowed into the Dunedin economy, with total expenditure valued at \$800 million. Expenditure in Wellington was estimated at \$47.1million; in Christchurch, \$46.2million; Invercargill, \$3.5million; and Auckland, \$600,000.

Vice-Chancellor Professor Harlene Hayne says the report underscores the University's significant contribution



to the Dunedin economy and to the other cities in which it has a presence.

"This report highlights that the University is more than a facility to benefit students, staff and society through the very high standard of our teaching, research and graduates. It also plays a fundamental role in the ongoing vitality of Dunedin's economy, in particular.

The report further notes that the wider flow-on effects of the University's activities are even greater, noting that the impacts are far-reaching across many sectors of the economy, with the institution, its staff, students and visitors spending widely in local businesses.

After these flow-on or indirect downstream impacts were taken into account, it is estimated that the University's economic impact was worth \$1.662 billion overall in 2012.

### Otago in world rankings

The University featured among the top 100 institutions in the world in 12 subject areas in a recent international university rankings exercise.

The 2013 QS World University Rankings by Subject revealed that Otago has improved its 2012 ranking in 11 of the 30 subject areas under evaluation and is now among the top 50 institutions worldwide in four subjects. These four include psychology which, at 15th place, is the highest ranking of any subject area at a New Zealand university.

At 24th, Otago also ranked highest in New Zealand for history and archaeology. The University's other two top 50 subjects were law and legal studies (32nd) and English language and literature (45th).

The QS rankings involved the evaluation of 2,858 universities and ranking of 678 institutions in total. They take into account the opinion of academics and employers via a global survey and research-paper citation data.



### Plaza design wins award

The high-quality space provided by the University of Otago Plaza adjacent to Forsyth Barr Stadium was recognised in the latest New Zealand Institute of Landscape Architects Awards.

Architectural and design firm Jasmx won an Award of Excellence at the institute's annual Resene Pride of Place Awards for design work on the plaza area.

The award in the commercial-industrial-institutional design category recognises best practice and quality landscape architecture works in New Zealand.

The institute's lead judge for design said the plaza space provided many functional social areas for use by university students and a "high-quality space" had been developed.

### Debaters demonstrate prowess

Students in the Otago University Debating Society have shown they are truly world-class after placing highly in several international competitions.

In an extraordinary showing, one of the three Otago teams competing in January's World Universities Debating Championship in Berlin finished in the top four. All three teams made the top 48 among 400 teams, a feat that large universities such as Oxford, Cambridge and Sydney failed to match.

The two members of the Otago A team later competed in two elite debating tournaments hosted by liberal arts

universities in upstate New York. They were placed first out of around 60 teams in the Colgate Intervarsity tournament and fifth in the Hobart and William Smith Round Robin, an elite invitational tournament. In the latter tournament, BA/LLB (Hons) student Alec Dawson and medical student Kieran Bunn were ranked among the top 10 best speakers. The pair was up against teams from Oxford, Yale, Cornell, Harvard, and a number of Asian and South African universities.

Otago Business School students have also recently shown their competitive prowess, with an Otago team beating out around a dozen others from Europe, Asia and the Americas to win the Scotiabank 24th International Business Case Competition, held in Canada.

### Appointments

**Karl Lyons** to the University's Chair in Restorative Dentistry in the Department of Oral Rehabilitation. Professor Lyons is a long-standing member of staff at the Faculty of Dentistry and was chosen from a strong field of international applicants.

**Rachel Scott** as the Publisher of Otago University Press. Ms Scott comes to Otago from a similar role at Canterbury University Press and succeeds Wendy Harrex, who recently retired after 20 years in the position.

Vice-Chancellor Professor **Harlene Hayne** as one of the three new non-executive members of the New Zealand Treasury Board appointed this year. She

was also recently re-appointed to the Board of Fulbright New Zealand by the US Ambassador to New Zealand.

## Awards/Achievements

Professor **Rosalind Gibson** (Human Nutrition) was awarded the 2013 Kellogg International Prize in Nutrition by the American Society of Nutrition (ASN). The honour recognises her work in micronutrient nutrition, delivering advanced nutritional assessment courses in Africa and South-East Asia, and her authoritative text *Principles of Nutritional Assessment*.

Professor **Tony Binns** (Geography) received the New Zealand Geographical Society's top award, the Distinguished New Zealand Geographer Medal in recognition of his "outstanding and sustained contributions and service" to geography and society.

School of Physiotherapy Deputy Dean Dr **Margot Skinner** has become the first person in the past 10 years to be awarded an honorary fellowship by Physiotherapy New Zealand. She was recognised for "outstanding" contributions in research, advocacy and academic fields, and in advancing both the physiotherapy profession and "population health internationally".

Three Otago researchers recently received grants from the Health Research Council of New Zealand. Mr **Joseph Antoun** (Oral Sciences) and Dr **Suetonia Palmer** (Medicine, Christchurch) gained Emerging Researcher First Grants while Professor **Michael Eccles** (Pathology) gained an Explorer Grant to investigate a new optical method of measuring aggressiveness in cancer cells.

## Emeritus Professors

**Geoff Kearsley** (Media, Film and Communication) has been granted the status of Professor Emeritus by the University Council.

## Obituaries

Former Otago Vice-Chancellor Dr **Robert (Robin) Williams** (93). Dr Williams took up the role of Vice-Chancellor at the University in 1967 and served until 1973. He was an eminent mathematician, physicist and public servant.

Emeritus Professor **John Loutit** (87). A pioneering, internationally respected microbiology researcher and an influential scientific teacher, Professor Loutit headed the Department of Microbiology for more than 10 years and served as Faculty of Science dean from 1973-75.

## Honorary Doctorates

Noted botanical artist and conservationist **Audrey Eagle** and internationally leading physician and researcher Professor **Helen Heslop** (MB ChB 1980) had the honorary degree of Doctor of Science conferred upon them at graduation ceremonies in May.

The  
University of  
Otago Magazine  
now has its own  
website

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

If you would prefer to read  
the magazine online  
and no longer receive a hard copy,  
please email  
[database.alumni@otago.ac.nz](mailto:database.alumni@otago.ac.nz)



**Alison Finigan:**  
Head of Alumni Relations

## A word from the Head

Readers may have noticed the story in the last issue of the *Otago Magazine* that referred to the UK *Telegraph* citing the University of Otago as one of the 16 most beautiful campuses in the world. While it was gratifying to see our campus warmly praised by outsiders in such a public way, alumni and friends of Otago have always recognised the precious legacy of beauty as well as the fine tradition of scholarship that the University's founders envisaged when they laid the first stone of what is now the Registry building 144 years ago.

The next six years will be busy ones as the University community gears up for what will be a massive celebration of the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of New Zealand's oldest university in 2019. Many schools and departments will be celebrating their own special anniversaries over this time, as will graduating classes and residential college communities. It will be a time to reflect on all that has been achieved by the University in the past century and a half, and to look forward to what the future holds. For alumni it will be a time to reflect on the part that Otago played in shaping their lives and paving the way to future success. Some may wish to recognise the benefits of their education by giving back to Otago, to ensure that future generations can enjoy the same opportunities.

Look out for more information about the celebrations planned in future issues of the *Otago Magazine*.

## Supporting Otago

### Alumni Appeal 2013

Alumni and friends have generously supported the 11th Annual Appeal and funds raised to date will allow us to award a number of scholarships in 2014.

The MRI fund has also been a popular choice and support is building for the Chair in Earthquake Science.

We are now reaching out to Otago people living in Australia and other parts of the world to help the University achieve its goals. If you are in a position to give back, you could consider supporting one of the following projects:

**University of Otago Scholarships:** assisting high-achieving, deserving young people to study at Otago.

**Chair in Earthquake Science:** to complement a multidisciplinary centre facilitating world-leading research into the fundamental understanding of faults and earthquakes.

**MRI Scanner:** for research and clinical use that will enable Otago to continue world-leading research into brain health and body function.

**To make a gift to any of these projects, please visit:** <http://alumni.otago.ac.nz>

If you are not in a position to donate to Otago at this time, there are other ways you can support your University: by joining or creating a local network, attending one of our Otago alumni events (see the Otago alumni website <http://alumni.otago.ac.nz> for details), or simply passing on your *Otago Magazine* to a friend.

### 2013 scholars

Twenty-seven first-year students were awarded Alumni, Disabilities and Performance Scholarships in 2013, thanks to generous donations made by alumni and friends in last year's Annual Appeal. All the recipients are grateful for the opportunity to study at Otago and are determined to do their best to succeed in their crucial first year.



## Otago's international networks

### The University of Otago Canadian Alumni Network

Otago's Canadian network has, for the past three years, provided funding to help Otago students to study at partner universities in Canada. Hannah Harland, a third-year Ecology student who spent a semester at Dalhousie University in Halifax, Nova Scotia, sent the following report:

*I was lucky enough to be accepted on the summer school course a field study of marine mammals. [...] I learnt so much and enjoyed every minute of it. [...] We were lucky enough to see hundreds of different marine mammals, including humpback whales, North Atlantic right whales, minke whales, fin whales, white-sided dolphins, harbour porpoises, and grey and harbour seals. [...] This exchange has been one of the most wonderful experiences of my life, and I really want to thank you all for helping to get me there!*

The Canadian Alumni network offers alumni opportunities to meet students from Dunedin who come to Canada to study. Being available to assist students on exchange is one of the most valuable (and enjoyable) ways that alumni can support their University. If you live overseas and are interested in supporting a student in your area, please contact Kaitlin Wolf, [kaitlin.wolf@otago.ac.nz](mailto:kaitlin.wolf@otago.ac.nz)

The location of the University's exchange partners can be found on the

Otago International Office website at [www.otago.ac.nz/study/studentexchange/index.html](http://www.otago.ac.nz/study/studentexchange/index.html)

For more information on the University of Otago Canadian Alumni network please visit <http://alumni.otago.ac.nz/Canada>

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

A key goal for the AUOA Board in 2013 is to set up regional groups across the country to allow more alumni to get together for social and professional networking.

The first of these groups has been established in the Mid-West as an initiative spearheaded by alumnus Rohan McKenzie, who organised a gathering for a small group in a downtown Chicago bar on 4 May. Alumni from the region enjoyed a convivial couple of hours sharing Otago memories and discussing the recent performance of our sports teams! They also made plans for another gathering in late August/early September and are keen to hear from others who might want to be involved. If you're interested, email Rohan at [usamidwest.alumni@otago.ac.nz](mailto:usamidwest.alumni@otago.ac.nz)

Further regional network events are planned for late June/early July, when Alison Finigan, Head of Alumni Relations, will be visiting the US. Centres and dates are:

**San Francisco:** Saturday, 22 June.  
Organiser: Geoff Nichol  
[geoffnichol@msn.com](mailto:geoffnichol@msn.com)

**Washington:** Monday, 24 June.  
Organiser: Alison Finigan  
[alison.finigan@otago.ac.nz](mailto:alison.finigan@otago.ac.nz)

**New Orleans:** Saturday, 29 June.  
Organiser: Andy King  
[aking@suhs.edu](mailto:aking@suhs.edu)

**Los Angeles:** Wednesday 3 July.  
Organiser: Alison Finigan  
[alison.finigan@otago.ac.nz](mailto:alison.finigan@otago.ac.nz)

If you live in the vicinity of these centres, or anywhere else in the US, and you're interested in finding out more about alumni in your area and how to network with them, we'd love to hear from you. Email Geoff, Andy or Alison at the addresses above.

For more information on AUOA please visit [www.alumniuoa.com](http://www.alumniuoa.com)

### The University of Otago Foundation for Malaysia

For the past three years the University of Otago Foundation for Malaysia has generously funded an award that recognises the contribution of an outstanding student from Malaysia to the student community. This year's winner is third-year medical student Eric Lim, who has shown an extraordinary commitment to his fellow students through his work as vice-president (2012) and president (2013) of the Otago Malaysian Students' Association



Otago alumni get together in Chicago.

Left: Alumni Scholars 2013 (left to right): Morgan Jones, Finn Williams, Brittany Stewart, Kauthar Al-Bahr, Ropafadozo Kadewere, Bridget Moral, Sana Basharati, Zarina Millar, Kasey Dillon, Lea Reihana, Jane Wei, Ashley Cronin, Daniel Smit, Shaun Markham, Greer Mahoney. Absent: Melissa Giddens, Megna Jeram, Clarissa Whitney-Morrison.

(OMSA). Eric was the prime mover in the Malam Malaysia performance last year, showcasing Malaysian culture to Dunedin audiences. Eric also networks to provide opportunities for Malaysian students in the areas of volunteering, internships and career counselling. He is leading the way this year as OMSA prepares to celebrate its 50th anniversary in September. All alumni who participated in OMSA activities over the past half century are warmly invited to return to Dunedin for the festivities.

For more information on OMSA and its activities, visit <http://omsa.org.nz>

The Foundation for Malaysia is proud to assist students like Eric and is keen to see this support extended. Tan Sri Datuk Amar Leo Moggie, a director of the Foundation, is leading a campaign to raise awareness among Malaysian alumni about how they can help. The aim is to build a significant fund that can be used for awards, scholarships and other key projects within the University. The Foundation has already secured a notable tax advantage on donations from Malaysia that will make it much easier to give to these worthwhile endeavours. Tan Sri Leo encourages alumni to join him in supporting this great opportunity for current and future students, their families and their country.

To make a donation please contact Ms Ong Suan Yi at 60-3-21611000 or [ong@malaysiaaccountant.com](mailto:ong@malaysiaaccountant.com)

Donations can be made by direct credit to the University of Otago Foundation for Malaysia account:  
**Name of Bank:** Public Bank Berhad  
**Address of Bank:** KL City Main Office, Ground Floor, Menara Public Bank, 146 Jalan Ampang, 50450 Kuala Lumpur  
**Current Account (MYR) No:** 311-859-6401  
**Swift Code:** PBBEMYKL

Cheques may be made out to the University of Otago Foundation for Malaysia and mailed to:

University of Otago Foundation for Malaysia  
 C/- O & M Management Consultants Sdn. Bhd. (38053 M)  
 Unit C-6-5, 6th Floor, Block C,  
 Megan Avenue II,  
 No. 12, Jalan Yap Kwan Seng,  
 50450 Kuala Lumpur.

Donors will receive an official receipt from the Foundation for tax purposes.

## Upcoming events, reunions and University celebrations

### Alumni events 2013

#### June

Thursday 13 Wellington  
 Māori alumni event

#### September

Thursday 5 Wanaka  
 Friday 6 Queenstown  
 Saturday 21 Dunedin  
 Wednesday 25 London

#### November

Saturday 2 US - New York City  
 Tuesday 5 US - Dallas  
 Saturday 9 US - San Francisco  
 Date TBC Toronto Network

Some dates are being confirmed. Please visit the Alumni website for the updates:

<http://alumni.otago.ac.nz/NewsEvents>

## Reunions

### 2013

#### National School of Surveying 50th anniversary celebration

30 August, Dunedin

Contact [surveying@otago.ac.nz](mailto:surveying@otago.ac.nz)

#### MB ChB class of 1983 reunion

10-13 October, Melbourne, Australia

Contact Michael Dally  
[mdally3779@gmail.com](mailto:mdally3779@gmail.com)

#### Medical class of 1973 reunion

25-27 October, Napier

Contact [karen@attend.net.nz](mailto:karen@attend.net.nz)

06 833 7440

[www.regonline.co.nz/classof73survey](http://www.regonline.co.nz/classof73survey)

### MB ChB class of 1993 reunion

1-2 November, Dunedin

Contact [hlad@xtra.co.nz](mailto:hlad@xtra.co.nz) or

[james.letts@southernhdb.govt.nz](mailto:james.letts@southernhdb.govt.nz)

### Arana College 70th anniversary

22-24 November, Dunedin

Contact [info@arana.ac.nz](mailto:info@arana.ac.nz)

### 2014

#### MB ChB class of 1994 reunion

14-16 November, Dunedin

Contact Miriam Webster

[miriam.martin@kiwisstat.com](mailto:miriam.martin@kiwisstat.com)

#### MB ChB class of 1974 reunion

Date tbc.

Contact Judy Bent at [JudyB@adhb.govt.nz](mailto:JudyB@adhb.govt.nz)

### 2015

#### MB ChB class of 1964 reunion

8-11 April, Dunedin and Central Otago

Contact Colin Fitzpatrick

[cbfitz@ihug.co.nz](mailto:cbfitz@ihug.co.nz) or Alex Dempster

[alex.dempster@sclabs.co.nz](mailto:alex.dempster@sclabs.co.nz)

#### Studholme College centenary celebrations and reunion

27-29 November, Dunedin

Contact the Master of Studholme, Ziggy

Lesa [ziggy.lesa@otago.ac.nz](mailto:ziggy.lesa@otago.ac.nz)

03 479 5505

#### Carrington College 70th anniversary reunion

Date tbc.

### 2016

#### MB ChB class of 1966 reunion

Dunedin. Date tbc.

Further information about all upcoming events, reunions and celebrations, including RSVP details, can be found on the Alumni and Friends webpages at [alumni.otago.ac.nz/events](http://alumni.otago.ac.nz/events) Alternatively contact [functions.alumni@otago.ac.nz](mailto:functions.alumni@otago.ac.nz) or phone 03 479 4516.

## Recent alumni events

Singapore, 6 March, New Zealand High Commissioner's Residence



Sydney, 13 April, Justice and Police Museum



Brisbane, 16 April, Breakfast Creek Hotel



Melbourne, 18 April, University House, Melbourne University



### Centenary of Allen Hall Theatre

The grand old dame of theatre at Otago turns 100 in 2014. The University is planning a celebration to befit this occasion and the hall that has nurtured so many wonderful theatrical talents over the years. A programme of exciting events is being planned for September 2014 for all those who participated in productions as part of their Otago degree, with OUDS, or as a member of other companies and groups who performed at Allen Hall. We are setting up a mailing list, but our records are sketchy prior to 1993, when Theatre Studies was established as a major subject. If you studied drama, or performed at Allen Hall prior to this time, we would love to hear from you. Please email [database.alumni@otago.ac.nz](mailto:database.alumni@otago.ac.nz)

### Alumni news 50 years of chaplaincy services

On Wednesday 27 November this year and again in August next year the Otago Tertiary Chaplaincy Trust Board plans to celebrate 50 years of chaplaincy services provided for the students and staff of the University of Otago, Otago Polytechnic and the Dunedin College of Education. Celebrations begin with a dinner on 27 November, timed to coincide with the annual New Zealand Tertiary

### BE ACTIVE, BE SOCIAL!

The Development and Alumni Relations Office is re-launching its website, with the theme "Be active, be social". Now features include:

- Where in the World Are You? an overview of where Otago graduates are living
- A section to keep you up to date with news and events

- A revamp of Your Otago Link: update your alumni profile to gain access to services offered by the University.

We have many other features and website competitions planned, but we won't reveal them until a later date.

Check us out at [www.alumni.otago.ac.nz](http://www.alumni.otago.ac.nz)

Chaplains' Association Conference at Salmond College.

The Chaplaincy Board was formed in April 1963 following an approach from the Otago Branch of the National Council of Churches to the University Council promoting the appointment of a University chaplain and assuring financial support. By October an ecumenical Chaplaincy Committee was formed to manage the formation of a flexible and non-denominational chaplaincy to serve the needs of students from the University and Teachers' College. In June 1964 Rev J L Lowery was appointed as the first and sole Chaplain. He began his duties on 31 August 1964.

Since that time the Chaplaincy has grown remarkably in numbers and responsibilities. The Chaplaincy team now has eight members: Rev Greg Hughson and Mr Mike Wright are full-time ecumenical chaplains and Father Mark Chamberlain is the Catholic University chaplain, with five other team members

helping provide pastoral care and spiritual support for students and staff.

Today, key Chaplaincy roles and activities include: responding compassionately and effectively to critical incidents, sickness and death; supporting academic staff to cope with the effects of restructuring and displacement; attending graduation and other ceremonies; supporting heads of residential colleges and students in our colleges; providing booklets for students on homesickness, grief and prayer; and maintaining friendly and robust relationships with other tertiary institutions and faith communities in New Zealand and around the world.

The Otago Tertiary Chaplaincy Trust Board looks forward to commemorating the 50th anniversary and hopes that alumni will join in the celebrations. Further information will be provided later in the year via [www.otago.ac.nz/chaplain](http://www.otago.ac.nz/chaplain)

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

Please email [database.alumni@otago.ac.nz](mailto: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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## Alumni story

### An Otago Tradition: Dr Harry Love and the Classics Department play

In 1992 Gail Tatum of the Otago Department of Classics produced Euripides' *Medea* in Allen Hall. This play, involving students, staff and a professional actor, with original music by Anthony Ritchie, proved to be the foundation of a sequence of classical dramas that has continued to the present. In the 21 years since that time, the Department of Classics has produced 18 plays. The 19th, Euripides' *Trojan Women*, will appear in Allen Hall from 10–13 July this year.

Most of these plays – 16 including the current production – have been directed by Dr Harry Love from his own translations and adaptations. His association with the Department of Classics dates back to student days in the 1960s and, after a time tutoring in English and the School of Business, was resumed as an actor in *The Frogs* (1993).

This association has proved fruitful, leading to the distribution of videos of the plays to schools and universities

throughout New Zealand, Australia, Canada, US and UK, and to a number of publications. It also led to an Honorary Fellowship in Classics in 2003 and a return to teaching things that matter most to Harry.

His background in theatre is of long-standing, beginning with an association with Patric Carey at the Globe from 1965–69 and culminating, academically, in a PhD on dramatic texts from the University of Keele in 1977. But it's the old Greeks who have taught Love what he knows about theatre, as it was and as it is today. They, he says, discovered irony and found ways to penetrate, on the one hand, the depths and meanings of emotion and, on the other, the pretensions of human institutions and our need to laugh at them from time to time.

There have been many milestones on the journey from his first production of *Oedipus the King* in Castle Theatre in 1994. Deciding to bring the cast back after the run to film the play over a

weekend was a leap of faith for Love, but proved to be a crucial first step that led to the filming of two more productions in subsequent years.

With three productions in the bag, Love took his work to Classroom Video, a Sydney educational distributor, where staff were impressed enough to take them up and send them around the world – this was milestone number one. By 2002 there were eight plays on the books and, in 2006, milestone number two was achieved with the publication of two volumes of essays and translations of Sophocles and Euripides by Cambridge Scholars Press in the UK.

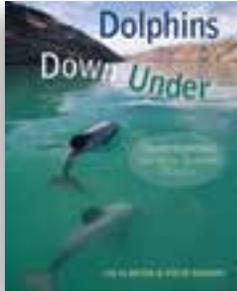
Number three came in 2009 with the appearance of the *Hurai*, an audacious adaptation of Euripides' *Bacchae* refigured as an examination of the cultural clash of Māori and missionaries in early New Zealand. The text was published by Steele Roberts in Wellington in 2011.

In one sense, this year's production of *Trojan Women* completes a 20-year circle; Marilyn Parker, Jocasta in the 1994 *Oedipus*, plays Hecuba. She joins a high calibre cast who, backed by Corwin Newall's exquisite music, promise to show you just how up to date Euripides is. The experience will knock your socks off.



John Watson as Williams in the *Hurai*, 2009.

Photo: Gerard O'Brien



## Dolphins Down Under

*Understanding the New Zealand Dolphin*

By Liz Slooten and Steve Dawson, April 2013

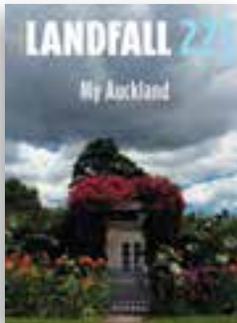
**New Zealand dolphins, also known as Hector's dolphins, are fascinating and beautiful animals. Found only in New Zealand waters, they are as "kiwi" as the kiwi, but their numbers are under threat - especially from human fishing activities. This book introduces the dolphin to readers of all ages.**

Liz Slooten and Steve Dawson began their study in 1984 and, in the 1990s, they sold their house to buy a catamaran to carry out a dolphin survey. They were determined to make the latest

information about these creatures accessible to a general public.

"There is a lot of literature on New Zealand dolphins, but most of it is in scientific journals," says Slooten. "This book 'translates' all of this information into a format that is user-friendly, interesting and exciting."

The last section of the book provides suggestions for effective dolphin protection measures and encourages readers to get actively involved. The authors' passion for science - and for the New Zealand dolphin - is obvious and contagious.



## Landfall 225

Edited by David Eggleton, May 2013

**Verbal and visual snapshots of Auckland open this exuberant Landfall issue and a strong Auckland strand runs through to the review section. It goes to Bethells with Paula Green and Anna Jackson, Otara with Daren Kamali, Glen Eden with Murray Edmond, visits St Lukes with Stephanie Christie, explores Remuera's northern slopes with John Horrocks and Greenlane with Michael Morrissey, and Martin Edmond's "Akarana Triptych" takes in three streets in old Ponsonby.**

The issue is essay-rich and includes Landfall Essay Competition 2012 runner-up Majella Cullinane. There are also poems or fiction from Peter Bland, Riemke Ensing, Cilla McQueen, Owen Marshall, Emma Neale, among others; photography portfolios from Harvey Bengé and emerging artist Greta Anderson, and back-page graphic art by Samantha Michell.

The Landfall Review features a number of recent books, including a poetry collection by German refugee Karl Wolfskehl, which has been published by Holloway Press.

For further information and more books: Otago University Press  
Email [university.press@otago.ac.nz](mailto:university.press@otago.ac.nz) or visit [www.otago.ac.nz/press](http://www.otago.ac.nz/press)

## Books by Otago alumni

**Recent Developments in the Study of Recrystallization**, edited by PW Wilson, Intech Publications, February 2013.

**Ecosystems Services in Agriculture and Urban Landscapes**, edited by Ross Cullen, Stephen Wratten, Harpinder Sandhu and Robert Costanza, Wiley-Blackwell, March 2013.

**High Towers**, by Ralph Britten.

**New Zealand Firearms: An Exploration into Firearm Possession, Use and Misuse in New Zealand**, by Chaz Forsyth.

**Between Rivers - the Manawatu**, by Bettina Anderson and David Lupton, HauNui Press, 2012.

**A Small Book of Kick-Arse Poetry**, by Lissa Judd, 2012.

**Old Hat: A Book of Triolets**, by Mark Pirie, HeadworX Publishers, Wellington, 2012.

**King Willow: Selected Poems**, by Robert J Pope, edited by Mark Pirie, HeadworX Publishers, Wellington, 2012.

**Expressing Love: Poems**, by Janet Carrington, Kererū Press, 2012.

**Grandma Viola and her Imagination**, by Phil Palmer, Fraser Books, Masterton, September 2012.

**How to Sell Toothpaste**, by Leonie Thorpe, HarperCollins NZ, 2012.

**Creating a New Zealand Prayer Book: A Personal Reminiscence of a 25-year Odyssey 1964-89**, by Brian Carrell, Theology House, Christchurch.

**In the Beginning: A History of the Medical Unit at Auckland Hospital and the Formative Years of the Department of Medicine**, the University of Auckland, by David E Richmond, Thomas E Miller and Judy Murphy.

**Without Compromise: A Brief History of the New Zealand Women's Christian Temperance Union**, by Ian Dougherty, New Zealand Women's Christian Temperance Union, May 2013.

## Alumni:

If you have recently published a book email the editor at [mag.editor@otago.ac.nz](mailto:mag.editor@otago.ac.nz)



Els Noordhof (1924-2013), *Portrait of Olivia Spencer Bower*, 1973, oil on board: 393 x 494mm, Hocken Collections Uare Taoka o Hākēna, accession: 2011/25



Els Noordhof (1924-2013), *Lady in Red (Annie Baird)*, n.d., acrylic on board: 888 x 692mm, Hocken Collections Uare Taoka o Hākēna, accession: 2011/21

## An artist's gift

Els Noordhof was an influential figure in the Dunedin art scene who gained national recognition as an illustrator and, particularly, for her portraiture. She has also made a significant contribution to the Hocken Collections.

Els (Elisabeth Johanna) Noordhof was born in Bloemendaal, Holland, in 1924 and, despite the difficulties of living in a Nazi-occupied territory, graduated from the Rijksmuseum Academy with a Master of Fine Arts in 1945 - and a life-long appreciation of the concepts of freedom and light.

Noordhof considered herself a citizen of the world: she'd lived in war-torn Europe, Bertrand Russell's Cambridge (her etching of him was gifted to the Hocken in 1996 as part of the Arthouse Print Portfolio, 1995), Dylan Thomas' London, the United States during the years of McCarthyism and the Vietnam War, and, finally, New Zealand where she was delighted to find another land of light never far from the sea.

Over the decades, she became an important and well-known member of the New Zealand art community, working both as a tutor and a practising artist.

She held countless solo exhibitions around the country and was widely collected. In 1974 and, again in 1976, she won the Kelliher Art Award for portraits, followed by the IBM Art Award at the New Zealand Academy of Fine Arts, Wellington, in 1986.

Working in a variety of media, her art remained "an individual creative journey, and often a very private one". She claimed that this left her free to choose her own directions "without regard to the tyranny of trends". She also claimed to have been mainly interested in people, "not as symbols, but as humans in their multifarious moods and passions".

In addition to her portraiture, she was a highly-regarded book illustrator, and worked on a number of projects undertaken by the University of Otago Library's Bibliography Room. She was also an instructor, with Doris Lusk and Colin McCahon, at the University's Summer School in Kurow. The portrait of Olivia Spencer Bower (above) was probably painted there.

Towards the end of her life Els Noordhof gifted seven portraits to the Hocken, adding to the five of her works

already held. Among them are portraits of writers and artists - Bower, Ken Downie, Hardwicke Knight, Eion Stevens, Annie Baird and others.

This is a significant gift to the Hocken, not only because of the quality of the works and the important place Noordhof held in the Dunedin art community, but also for the way these paintings interact with the rest of the collections. Hocken Librarian Sharon Dell: "This gift has research value for future scholars, it relates well to other collections we hold, it illustrates her creative partnerships and it is evidence of Els' influence as a teacher."

## HOCKEN EXHIBITION

**A Micronaut in the Wide World:**  
The Imaginative Life and Times of Graham Percy  
Toured by Exhibition Services  
15 June - 11 August

## ... the cricket team that never played?



Members of the University of Otago Cricket team that never played, pictured during their recent reunion. Back row (from left): Murray Parker, Murray Webb, Alan McDougall, Russell Stewart, Murray Leach, Keith Lees. Front row (from left): Rick Ellis, Ray Hutchison, Chas Recordon, Gary Murphy.

Photos: Sharron Bennett

It was not until they clambered to the top side of a crippled and badly listing *Wahine* that Russell Stewart and team mate Stu Hunt fully realised they were in a life-or-death situation.

They and nine other members of the University of Otago cricket team had been heading to Palmerston North for Easter Tournament when the ferry came to a shuddering halt, driven on to Barrett's Reef by one of the worst storms in decades.

"It was only when I got outside onto the high side of the deck and saw all these people bobbing around in the water in their lifejackets that I realised this was the real thing."

Although they got into a lifeboat, it was later capsized when a tugboat attempted to assist it, leaving passengers clinging to ropes on the upturned hull and struggling to cope with huge waves.

"Several times we were washed 20 or 30 metres away and had to swim back to the lifeboat. That was the only time I really started to get scared.

"Each time we went back to this upturned lifeboat there seemed to be fewer and fewer people clinging on to it."

After about an hour in the water they were rescued, taken to the Seatoun wharf, then on to Wellington Railway Station where Stewart ran into Pauline Gordon, a friend of a friend from Otago. As all their possessions had gone down with the ship, she insisted that Stewart and another team mate, Alan McDougall, come home to stay at her parents' place. Her father happened to be Peter Gordon, the then Minister of Transport, who soon took them down

to the DIC department store for some replacement clothing.

It was some days before Stewart knew that none of the team was among the 51 people who perished. "It's amazing how much fate, or luck, was involved for a lot of us in where we ended up in the harbour and how we got out of it."

Fate also seemed to intervene in providing a catalyst for their recent reunion, 45 years after the 1968 sinking of the *Wahine*. Stewart met writer Ron Cardwell during a chance conversation at the University Oval at last year's South Africa-New Zealand cricket test.

"He said he had flown over from Sydney and I said: 'You must be a real cricket enthusiast'. He said, 'yes I am, but I am actually here to do some research for a book I'm going to write on the University team that was on the *Wahine*.' When I said: 'I was on it,' well that just about blew him away."

From there the association began and Stewart began the task of tracing all his team mates whom he found scattered around New Zealand, with one in London.

It was decided to hold a reunion along with the launch of the book, *The Team That Never Played*. This was planned to coincide with this year's cricket test match against England in Dunedin. It was a genuine success, with a full turn out, culminating in a dinner at the Dunedin Club.

Stewart reflects that it really was time they did something. "We all just came back from the ordeal, put our heads down, got our degrees. Eventually, there were only three of us left in Dunedin. The rest either went back to their home towns or did their OE."

The side's youngest member, Murray Parker, who would later represent New Zealand at cricket, says they never got together afterwards as a team.

"There were actually guys I didn't even know. The team was selected and if they weren't from the 'A' side I hadn't met them – and we never played together. Even those I did know, I hadn't seen for 30 years."

The Timaru-based Parker says the reunion was amazing. "It was absolutely unbelievable – it was quite special and I think everyone felt that."

In the book, he tells of ending up in a lifeboat with team captain Ray Hutchison and one of the ship's engineers. They hauled dozens of people out of the water, often by their hair.

There was naturally some discussion of the sinking, although because everyone's account of that day was in the book they didn't need to ask. "I think we were more interested in what people had been doing for the last 45 years, catching up on family and that type of thing."

He is looking forward to doing it again in 2018 when a 50-year reunion is planned for Wellington. "Once these sorts of things happen, the guys enjoy each other's company and want to do it again."

Parker says one of the more poignant moments for him came when the book's co-author Bill Francis got up and said to them how they are very much part of New Zealand history. "It sometimes takes other people to point that out. To us we were just on the *Wahine*."

The team was: Ray Hutchison (Captain), Richard Ellis, Stu Hunt, Murray Leach, Keith Lees, Alan McDougall, Gary Murphy, Chas Recordon, Murray Parker, Russell Stewart and Murray Webb. Sandy Ross was also named, but had to pull out due to eligibility criteria.

**MARK WRIGHT**

## Russell Stewart's glove

About a month after the sinking Russell Stewart had a phone call from the Otago Sports Depot telling him one of his batting gloves had been washed up. Someone had found it and spotted the Otago Sports Depot logo and posted it down to Dunedin.

"The manager, who was a cricketer, saw the initials and worked out that it belonged to me and called me up. Ron Cardwell says that as far as he is aware it is the only piece of cricket memorabilia retrieved from the *Wahine*."

Another piece of luck.





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