

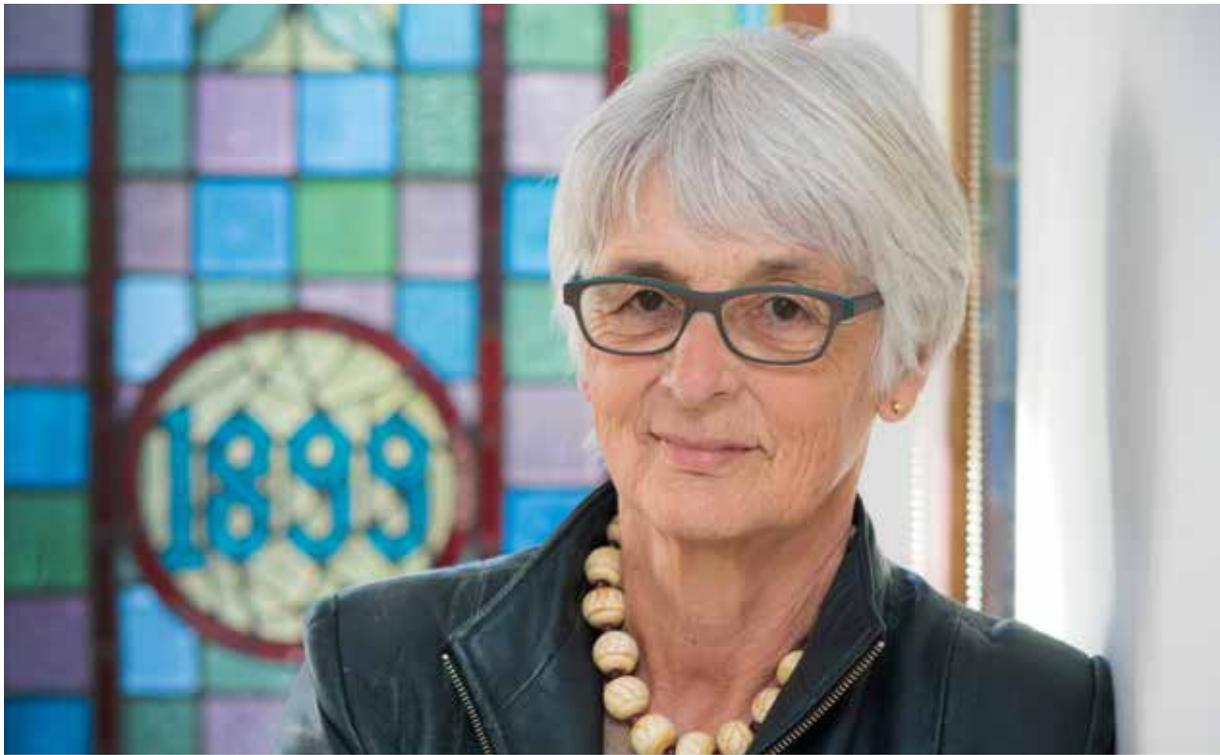
Issue 2, 2017



# VICTORIOUS



Lydia Wevers: The landscape ahead  
Advancing better government



## Hundreds of lives as a reader

Emeritus Professor Lydia Wevers reflects on her varied career in academia and shares what's next on her horizon.

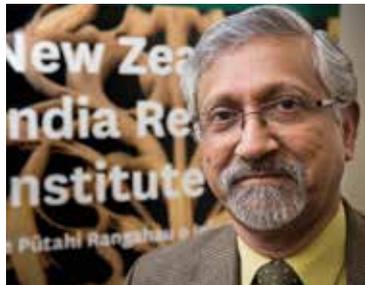
7

## Advancing better government



Parliamentary insights  
for Victoria interns

20



Building bridges  
to India

21



The verdict on  
jury reforms

22

- 3 Who rules the roost?
- 5 A boost for Biological Sciences
- 8 Medicine in the making
- 9 Indigenous cities
- 10 Amphorae in the modern age
- 12 Preserving authenticity
- 13 The truth of our youth

- 15 The sound of music in the central city
- 16 Ripple effect
- 18 Shining a light on the public sector
- 19 Embracing diversity in education
- 23 Blink of an eye
- 24 Shape up or ship out
- 30 Turning up the heat

- 33 Who's in my room?
- 34 From Beowulf to battle
- 35 More than child's play
- 36 Ninety years of rowing at Victoria
- 37 Extending the human body
- 39 Belgium remembers
- 40 Unearthing the secrets of the stone rows



## From the Vice-Chancellor

One of the time-honoured functions of universities around the world is their responsibility to speak truth to power. The freedom to undertake research and promulgate one's findings, unburdened by fear of repercussions from political, religious and commercial vested interests, is part of the reason universities have become such highly trusted institutions in our societies.

This belief in a university's role as the critic and conscience of society has been at the heart of Victoria University since our founding in 1897. It's a role that takes on particular importance in those fields that consider the exercise of power. Indeed, there is no institution in New Zealand better placed to perform this role than Victoria, given our close proximity to all three branches of government—the executive, legislature and judiciary—and our traditional strengths in law, political studies, international relations and policy analysis and development.

As such, we have identified our capacity to improve the quality of decision-making and the practice of government more broadly as one of the distinctive strengths that set us apart from other New Zealand universities, summarising our expertise in this area as Advancing Better Government. This issue of *Victorious* illustrates some of the work our staff and students are doing that is related to this theme, not only in the Faculty of Law and the School of Government but also in other faculties, schools, institutes and centres that you might not immediately associate with the question of good government.

By way of example, the Faculty of Education is looking at how well our education system accommodates the increasingly diverse backgrounds of young New Zealanders in training them to become active citizens. Professor Sekhar Bandyopadhyay, one of New Zealand's experts on India, works closely with government departments to provide a historical perspective on this important trading partner and growing world power. Meanwhile, researchers all around the University are thinking about the consequences of new technologies, such as social media, on the political process and whether social media's ubiquity enables civic engagement or increases the risk of 'fake news'.

In addition to our research and teaching relating to advancing better government, we are seeking to actively engage our communities on these issues. Noteworthy recent events include a visit to Victoria by the Chief Justice of the United States Supreme Court the Honourable John G. Roberts Jr to deliver a professional education course and for a public conversation with Pro-Vice-Chancellor and Dean of Law Professor Mark Hickford. In the lead-up to the recent general election, we also held Democracy Week—a series of lectures, debates and panel discussions about a range of issues facing democracy in New Zealand and around the world.

Working alongside the judiciary, the press and non-governmental organisations, Victoria is at the vanguard of protecting New Zealand's democracy. We are responsible for educating many of New Zealand's brightest young people—people who will go on to influence politics, government and the democratic process more generally in the future, both here and around the world.

Instilling respect for our democratic process cannot begin too early, and we are proud of the work we do to foster active, engaged citizens.

### Professor Grant Guilford

Vice-Chancellor

📧 @GrantGuilford

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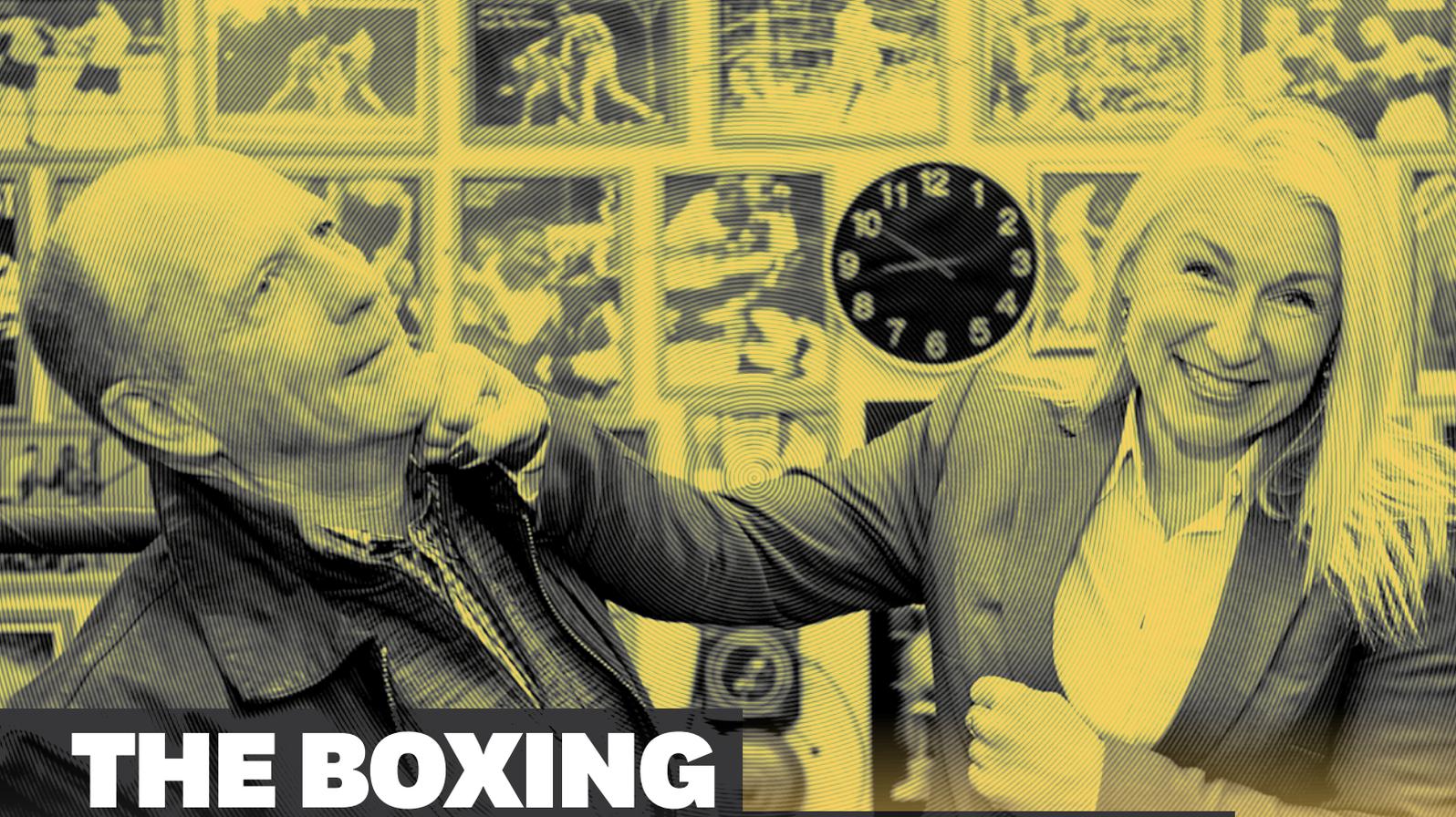
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# THE BOXING ACADEMY PUNCHING ABOVE ITS WEIGHT

Dr Barrie Gordon, Dr Jordan Alexander

## A VICTORIA ACADEMIC IS GETTING A RINGSIDE SEAT AT A BOXING GYM TO STUDY THE WAYS THE FACILITY IS TRANSFORMING THE LIVES OF YOUNG PEOPLE.

The Naenae Boxing Academy (NBA) was founded by former New Zealand and Australasian boxing champion Billy Graham. It provides a fitness-based development programme for at-risk youth, teaching boxing skills as well as helping young people reach their potential and make a valuable contribution to their communities.

The NBA has gyms in Naenae and Cannons Creek in Wellington, and the Canterbury town of Ashburton. It is planning to expand its operations even further, so has commissioned an independent study to evaluate the programmes.

Dr Barrie Gordon from Victoria's Faculty of Education is leading the study. His research interests include sport pedagogy, positive youth development and the ways sport and

physical education help teach personal and social responsibility.

"Anecdotally, the academy has an amazing reputation for helping boys and, increasingly, girls to build on their strengths to enable them to be more focused in their lives," Barrie says. "A lot of the kids who've been through the academy attribute their staying on the straight and narrow to the lessons they learnt there."

Barrie will be joined by two American academics—Professor Paul Wright from Northern Illinois University and Assistant Professor Michael Hemphill from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro—who have also extensively researched the ways personal and social responsibility are taught through sport and physical activity.

The panel will closely observe and evaluate teaching practices at the NBA, and interview young people and others with connections to the academy about its impact.

"A lot of people assume that if you play sport you'll develop good character," says Barrie. "But the value of it depends hugely on what happens during training and games. A lot of sporting clubs will tack

the word 'development' onto their programmes but not actually provide anything specifically focused on youth development.

"First and foremost, we want to establish what the idea of 'success' actually means for these young people and their families, and then to identify specifically what the NBA's practices are and the degree to which they are aligned with current best practice in positive youth development."

Dr Jordan Alexander is chair of the charitable trusts that operate the Naenae and Cannons Creek Boxing Academies and she says more than 2,200 young people have been through the boxing gyms to date.

"We get kids from all walks of life, including those at risk with gang- or drug-related issues. They spend a few years attending the boxing academy and come out the other side saying that we've changed their lives," she says.

"We know the formula is working in these communities, but to expand across New Zealand means we need to be certain the model is robust—that's why it's great to have the mana of an academic evaluation, led by Barrie."

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## Who rules the roost?

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After a century-long absence, kākā were successfully reintroduced in Wellington in 2002—but the restoration of the iconic native bird has ruffled a few feathers.

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Kākā are a delight, says Victoria Ecologist Associate Professor Wayne Linklater. “They’re wonderful birds to watch and listen to, and you watch kids’ faces light up around them.”

But, just like their cousins the kea, kākā are boisterous, brainy and also potentially problematic in urban areas.

An emerging challenge in Wellington’s suburbs is kākā damaging property—gouging into trees, roofs and buildings.

“Kākā are cavity nesters and, like most birds, attract in numbers where there is food,” explains Wayne. “They’re quite happy living in cities, where there are human-made cavities and food everywhere.”

This has led to neighbours arguing about whether people should be feeding kākā, says Wayne.

“Wellingtonians love feeding birds and connecting with wildlife—somewhere between 25 and 40 percent of residents at least occasionally feed birds in their backyard. It extends from throwing out some scrap food to placing large quantities in bird feeders.

“It could be that for many kākā their primary food source is people’s backyards, and this is driving them to gather in particularly large numbers in some neighbourhoods.”

Wayne and his research team are investigating the cause of, and potential solutions to, this emerging issue. This includes a group of postgraduate students surveying Wellington residents about the birds last summer.

“The results show people who feed kākā are very tolerant to damage, but non-feeders and neighbours of feeders weren’t as happy. As the damage by kākā in their neighbourhood increased, their positive attitude toward kākā declined.

“This suggests that you can have a few kākā and that’s fine for most people, but as their numbers and damage grow, it impacts people’s tolerance of, and support for, the species.”

The next step is working out the importance of nests and natural and artificial foods to kākā, and their choices about where to be in Wellington’s environment.

“We need to determine what kākā prefer, and their frequency relative to concentrations of feeding,” says Wayne. “A Master’s student will be working on a project to predict how many kākā Wellington can expect in the future and where they’ll live, given a variety of scenarios.”

Wayne says kākā pose a challenge for conservationists: about how to manage a valued species that damages people’s property and how to address the concerns of residents who have different values, priorities and expectations and disagree with each other about kākā.

“Is it realistic to stop Wellingtonians feeding birds? If we can’t, how do we modify what and how kākā are fed so that they do less damage? How might neighbours reach agreement about how they live with kākā?”

“The more we understand about what people want and need and how to mitigate conflicts over and with wildlife, the more likely we are to be able to have a positive relationship with wildlife.

There’s a bigger conversation to be had.”

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# Future focused

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“My vision for Victoria is that our staff and students understand what it means to be part of a truly global civic university at the heart of the capital city of New Zealand.”

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This is no small task for the University’s newly appointed Vice-Provost (Academic and Equity) Professor Linda Trenberth but one she is ready to take on.

“Even though we operate on a national and international scale, we need to appreciate the extent to which our location in the city of Wellington helps to form our unique identity and leverage that connection. We aim to get a student into every organisation in the city,” says Linda.

As an alumna and former staff member, Linda has been gradually making her way back to her alma mater by way of a series of senior positions at Birkbeck, University of London and Griffith University in South East Queensland.

Her highly respected expertise in academic policy and strategy, organisational psychology and human resource management has now positioned Linda at the forefront of a programme of work to achieve Victoria’s ambitious goals in learning, teaching and equity matters.



A recent survey of staff and students will inform her work on an updated Equity and Diversity Strategy. It will demonstrate the University’s commitment to providing staff and students with an inclusive environment for work and learning that provides equitable opportunities to fulfil potential and make a contribution.

Linda is also interested in exploring Victoria’s sense of purpose as a civic

university and how to better articulate not just what it is good at, but what it is good for.

“We need to enhance the great work Victoria already does in delivering benefits to individuals, organisations and to society as a whole—literally putting academic knowledge, creativity and expertise to work to come up with innovations and solutions that make a difference to the society we live in.

“It is part of my job to work with colleagues to put a framework over the opportunities we offer our students that not only enhance their employability but put the concept of giving back to the community at the forefront of their minds. Alongside that, we need to ensure our curriculum is equipping our students with the skills, attributes and development opportunities they need to meet the challenges of new technologies and global trends.”

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# Making an impact

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“Why is education valuable to people here? It’s not the same answer everywhere around the world.”

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That’s just one of the questions Professor Ian Williamson is trying to answer as Victoria Business School’s new Pro-Vice-Chancellor and Dean.

Ian started the new role in June and quickly forged a vision for the School’s future direction.

“We have to have a clear vision that the School is a mechanism of social impact. My view aligns with the University’s vision of being a globally minded capital-city university that engages with Wellington, New Zealand, the Asia-Pacific and beyond.

“The expertise of our staff allows us to have social impact—whether by helping shape innovation in government, by supporting the development of new businesses or enhancing skills of the workforce.”

By his own admission, the American professor with 17 years’ teaching,



researching and industry experience still has a lot to learn. “For the past eight years I was the founding director of the Asia Pacific Social Impact Centre at Melbourne Business School. The Centre develops partnerships with organisations to help address key economic and social issues throughout the Asia-Pacific region.

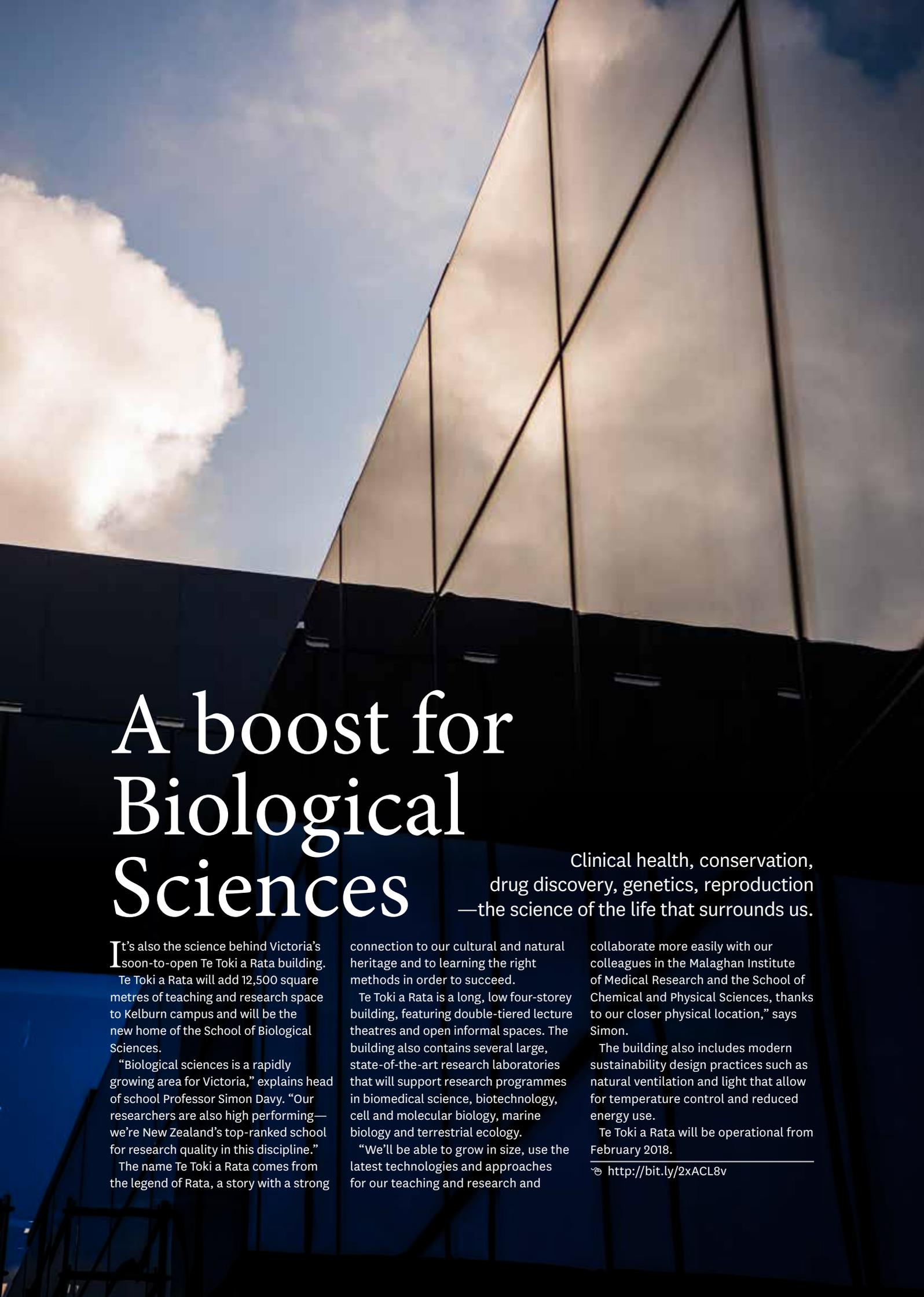
“Business schools operate in the environment they support. In Australia, the business environment was dominated by mining companies. Here, we’re surrounded by tech start-ups, Weta Digital, ICT programmes and central government. I’m excited by the change.”

Ian is a passionate educator and a globally recognised expert in human resource management. He says his research, which examines the impact of ‘talent pipelines’ on organisational and community outcomes, has taken a slightly different angle while he focuses on his new role.

“Earlier in my career, I’d get a rush from studying how organisations address complex problems. Now, the rush comes from leveraging these insights to help people in my organisation bring their ideas to fruition.”

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# A boost for Biological Sciences

Clinical health, conservation,  
drug discovery, genetics, reproduction  
—the science of the life that surrounds us.

It's also the science behind Victoria's soon-to-open Te Toki a Rata building. Te Toki a Rata will add 12,500 square metres of teaching and research space to Kelburn campus and will be the new home of the School of Biological Sciences.

"Biological sciences is a rapidly growing area for Victoria," explains head of school Professor Simon Davy. "Our researchers are also high performing—we're New Zealand's top-ranked school for research quality in this discipline."

The name Te Toki a Rata comes from the legend of Rata, a story with a strong

connection to our cultural and natural heritage and to learning the right methods in order to succeed.

Te Toki a Rata is a long, low four-storey building, featuring double-tiered lecture theatres and open informal spaces. The building also contains several large, state-of-the-art research laboratories that will support research programmes in biomedical science, biotechnology, cell and molecular biology, marine biology and terrestrial ecology.

"We'll be able to grow in size, use the latest technologies and approaches for our teaching and research and

collaborate more easily with our colleagues in the Malaghan Institute of Medical Research and the School of Chemical and Physical Sciences, thanks to our closer physical location," says Simon.

The building also includes modern sustainability design practices such as natural ventilation and light that allow for temperature control and reduced energy use.

Te Toki a Rata will be operational from February 2018.

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<http://bit.ly/2xACL8v>



# The hills have names

How does it shift your perspective if you see the landscape as the head of the fish  
—Te Ūpoko o Te Ika a Māui?

New Zealand Landscape as Culture, the latest massive open online course (MOOC) offered on Victoria's edX platform, is all about challenging perspectives. Māui enters the story early on and, with mātauranga Māori and te reo Māori layered throughout the course, writers and presenters Emeritus Professor Lydia Wevers and Dr Maria Bargh believe it is New Zealand's first bicultural MOOC and unique on the international stage.

"We want to expose students to Māori ideas and to disrupt any stereotypes they might have had from watching *Lord of the Rings* that somehow we are Middle Earth and that the landscape is neutral and wasn't populated, except with hobbits," says Maria.

Aware the audience will be largely international, they also want it to be about much more than beautiful scenery. "We want them to think about their own landscape and what culture might be embedded there that they haven't thought about. Landscape is never neutral—the hills have names and they mean something," says Lydia.

Lydia, just retired as the long-serving director of the Stout Research Centre, initially had the idea of a course on landscape and culture for first-year students. The concept—which showcases Victoria's Enriching National Culture academic theme—then grew into a MOOC. The first four-week course beginning in November this year is Islands—Ngā Motu, which will be followed in 2018 by Mountains—Ngā Maunga.

The course taps into expertise from across the University—Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Māori) Professor Rawinia Higgins tells one of the Māui stories, and Professor John Townend from the School of Geography, Environment and Earth Sciences picks up the thread when he looks at the geology of New Zealand. The course also utilises external expertise, including trips to Te Papa to look at artefacts such as pre-European fish hooks and waka, and dips into stories from other cultures, including perspectives on the film *Moana*.

The pair make light work of navigating a bicultural view of landscape. They have

worked together before, have a shared understanding of what they want to convey and they spark off each other.

Lydia says, "We are basically inventing an entire course—the subject and its content. You couldn't do it on your own."

Assistant Vice-Chancellor (Digital Futures) Professor Steven Warburton is director of Victoria's edX programme, which sits on the global edX platform alongside courses from top-ranked United States universities such as Harvard and MIT. "These MOOCs build on the research distinctiveness of Victoria and provide an opportunity for the world to join an educational experience with our outstanding academics."

Victoria ran its debut MOOC, Antarctica: From Geology to Human History, on the edX platform in April. It was presented by Dr Rebecca Priestley and Dr Cliff Atkins and attracted more than 5,000 enrolments. A return journey to Antarctica is planned, as is a series on restorative justice.

[victoria.ac.nz/edx-landscape-as-culture](http://victoria.ac.nz/edx-landscape-as-culture)



# Hundreds of lives as a reader

“My life’s a pretty open book, I think,” says Emeritus Professor Lydia Wevers when asked for something about herself that might surprise people.

Actually, the life of this voracious reader and recently retired director of Victoria University’s Stout Research Centre for New Zealand Studies is a lot of open books.

“Who wants to live only one boring little single life? Reading allows you to live hundreds of lives,” says Lydia.

“I read everything—unless it’s really badly written, in which case I can’t bear it. For work I read slowly and closely but for pleasure I just want to read a lot and quickly. When I was a child, there had to be a special rule for me at Masterton public library that said I could borrow 12 books at a time instead of the usual two.”

Lydia was director of the Stout from 2001 until the end of July this year, during which time she led its growth as a national hub for New Zealand-related research and thought-provoking events for academics, professionals and the general public.

“The Stout was started by historian Jock Phillips in 1985, with a brief to look at the society, history and culture of New Zealand—which in my interpretation means everything,” says Lydia. “There is

nothing about New Zealand that can’t be fitted under that umbrella. Which is one of the things that has been lovely about it.”

Lydia is proud of the Stout’s commitment to interdisciplinary study and a bicultural perspective, along with its close connections to other institutions, the wider research community and the city of Wellington.

Those connections are evident in the conferences, seminar series and other events the Centre has hosted.

“One of my favourite events was one we did with Victoria Business School on the research the University was doing into business practices in New Zealand. So we had one person talking about white-collar fraud and another about rugby clubs and the funding that goes into them.

“And we’ve done geology and botany. We’ve done everything we can think of, really. We’ve tried to feature topical things. That’s why we did an education series this year, and we did a big thing on the Christchurch earthquakes.

“We invited Labour politician Trevor Mallard to come and talk about migration some years ago and he got on the front

page of the paper when he said he was an indigenous New Zealander because he grew up in Wainuiomata.”

Lydia has been made an emeritus professor and will remain involved with a number of projects at Victoria, including co-producing the University’s massive open online course New Zealand Landscape as Culture for the edX platform.

And there is, of course, a book in the pipeline. This one as a writer: a book about books—about how those read in nineteenth-century New Zealand (particularly ones by Charles Dickens and Anthony Trollope) bled into the wider culture.

“It’s boring just to know *what* people read,” she says. “What you want to know is how did they think about that in the world in which they were living and acting?”

As for that something about herself that might surprise people, Lydia says “In a dream life I’ve always wanted to be a cowboy. I love horses. I’m not a particularly good rider but I can imagine myself living a happy life in a western.”

# Medicine in the making

In 1998, Professor Richard Furneaux was knocking on pharmaceutical companies' doors to tell them of his team's promising new chemical compound.



This year, the compound was approved in Japan as the active ingredient behind a new drug, Mundesine®, which is a treatment for patients with a specific type of non-Hodgkin lymphoma.

Richard's 20-year-long efforts earned him the top honour in the 2017 KiwiNet Research Commercialisation Awards, with the Victoria scientist taking home the BNZ Supreme Award and the Baldwins Researcher Entrepreneur Award.

The judges described Richard as "a world-class research entrepreneur", and his story as "one of enormous achievement".

Starting out as a synthetic chemist, today Richard leads a team of 40 scientists at Victoria's Ferrier Research Institute. Ferrier's innovative medical drug compounds have been licensed to international pharmaceutical and agrochemical companies, and have generated tens of millions of dollars of economic activity for New Zealand.

The Institute's most successful commercial deal, in conjunction with Albert Einstein College of Medicine in

New York, is its 16-year relationship with United States company BioCryst Pharmaceuticals, Inc.

This relationship has spawned four generations of novel compounds covered by over 160 granted patents, yielding six lead drug candidates with applications as diverse as cancer, gout, psoriasis, transplant rejection and malaria. Mundesine® was developed in the field of oncology by pharmaceutical company Mundipharma under licence from BioCryst.

Richard says he's thrilled with his team's successes. "It's a real honour to receive these awards for myself and our talented team of scientists, collaborators and commercial partners. I'm grateful for those who have persevered with me.

"At the Ferrier Institute we're always looking for areas where we can apply our chemistry in ways that differentiate us, and have future benefit for New Zealand."

Mundesine® is a registered trade mark (in Japan) of Mundipharma AG.

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# A growth in synthetic biology

The field of synthetic biology is making waves internationally, says Professor Emily Parker—and with the leading biochemist recently moving to Wellington, it's taking off at Victoria too.



Emily's research focuses on tapping into the power of natural molecules and assembling them to make new, more complex compounds.

"What unifies the work in my lab is how big and small molecules interact together. We look at how they work, how we can make them useful and how we can understand them as drug targets," she says.

"We're trying to harness the power of those molecules by assembling the genes that encode them together—and we've found a novel way of doing that. This enables microbial organisms like bacteria and fungi to readily produce bioactive natural products."

Emily's work has applications in crop protection and animal and human health. Her current projects have potential as treatments for tuberculosis and meningitis.

"The field of synthetic biology is evolving very quickly," says Emily. "I think we're at a level now where we understand

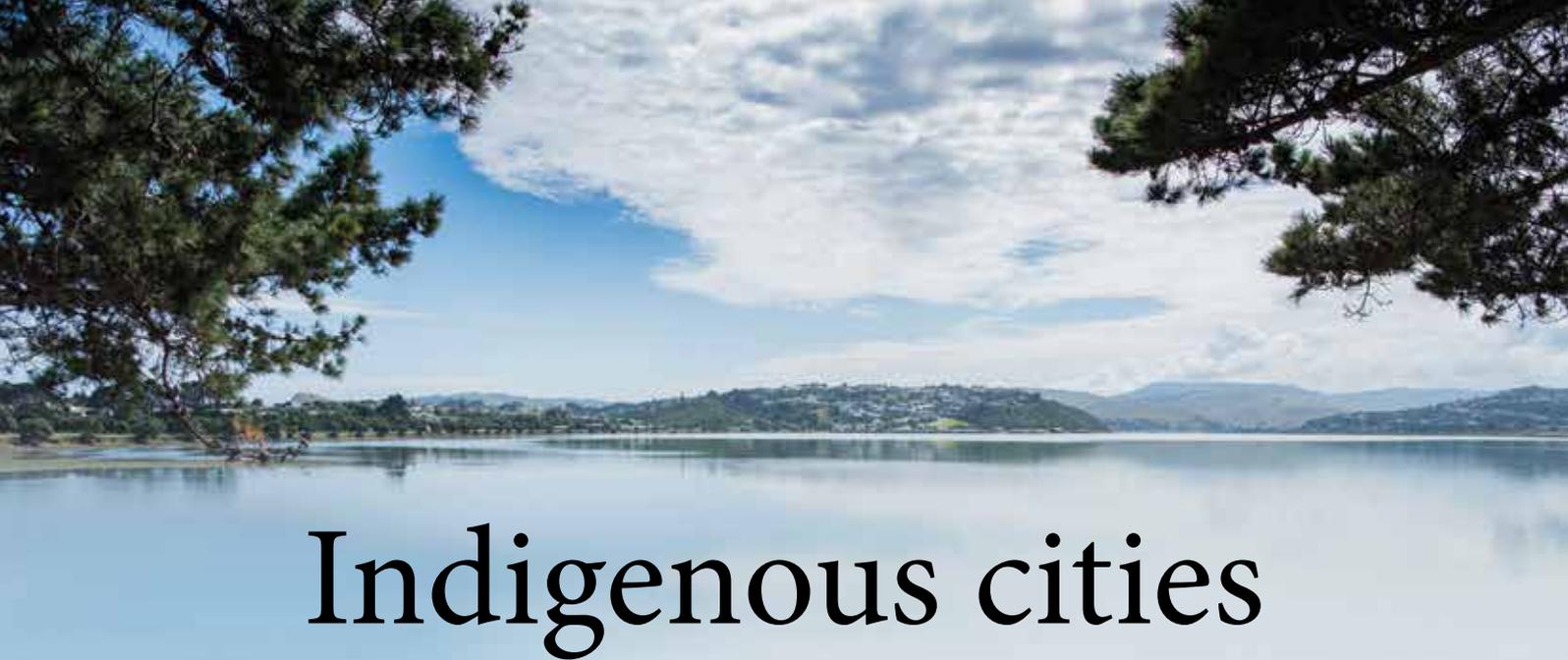
molecular function and genes much better, so it's a great time to be able to use that knowledge to make compounds that have value and are difficult to access naturally."

Emily shares her time between Victoria's Ferrier Research Institute and the School of Chemical and Physical Sciences, in a newly opened chemical biology laboratory fitted with specialised equipment.

Her research team is growing—she supervises a number of postdoctoral researchers, PhD and Master's students, as well as teaching first-year Chemistry courses. Emily won a national Tertiary Teaching Excellence Award from Ako Aotearoa in 2010 for her efforts.

"Universities are great places because there's a continuity of learning—we're constantly developing what we're teaching," she says. "It's important to give students an appreciation of what modern chemistry is about."

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# Indigenous cities

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A project involving Victoria researchers from different disciplines is encouraging people to think about the forces that have shaped their cities.

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Project leader Dr Rebecca Kiddle and Dr Amanda Thomas from the School of Geography, Environment and Earth Sciences joined forces with Dr Morten Gjerde and Derek Kawiti from the School of Architecture, Dr Mike Ross and Dr Ocean Mercier from the School of Māori Studies and Bianca Elkington, Jennie Smeaton and Jasmine Arthur from Ngāti Toa to convene a competition called *Imagining Decolonised Cities*.

Submissions were sought that reimagined sites in Porirua reflecting the values of local Ngāti Toa iwi and the region's rich indigenous history.

The sites included the entire shoreline of the Onepoto arm of Porirua Harbour and a papakāinga (housing development). Submissions could take a range of forms including artworks, plans, poetry, essays and short films.

The winners were announced earlier this year, with three teams sharing first place and receiving \$3,000 each. A group of students from Te Kura Kaupapa Māori o Ngā Mokopuna in Seatoun won the under-18 category.

Although the competition is over, Amanda says it has inspired researchers at other universities in New Zealand and around the world to explore ideas of indigeneity and decolonisation in urban spaces, and has also helped to deepen New Zealanders' understanding of the urban fabric they inhabit.

"Particularly for Pākehā, it's important to realise our cities are indigenous spaces, not just abstractions where we plonked down Union Jack-shaped towns," she says.

"The project also raised a broader discussion around what decolonisation is and isn't, particularly in relation to cities. It has the potential to

**"We wanted to get all those different perspectives and skills because you can't solve any problem from one discipline."**

change the way we think about urban governance."

Groups of students from local schools Mana College, Aotea College and Te Puna Mātauranga Education Programme took part in the competition. Porirua City Council has since expressed interest in working with students to develop a young people's reference group for the Porirua District Plan, which will give them an opportunity to implement skills they developed through the project.

Morten says the project has built capacity in local young people, enabling them to appraise and interrogate the spaces in which they live. Part of the competition was a three-day workshop that involved learning about historical sites and how to use tools such as 3D modelling.

"The digital session was really helpful because they quickly became able to communicate ideas in three-dimensional form," he says.

Rebecca says the interdisciplinary nature of the project allowed the team to make use of a range of skills and connections.

"The creation of space is a political act, it's not just about design—so the project involved mana whenua and academics from Te Kawa a Māui, Environmental Studies and Architecture.

"We wanted to get all those different perspectives and skills because you can't solve any problem from one discipline."

The competition concluded with a symposium at Takapūwāhia Marae in Porirua to engage members of the community in discussions on the city's future.

Rebecca says it's important to explore ways mana whenua and young people can play an active role in future urban planning.

"It's about building capacity so that people are better able to participate in the way their cities are shaped."

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# Amphorae in the modern age



The worlds of 3D printing and ancient Greek art are colliding at Victoria, giving students unique opportunities such as the chance to portray their personal history on an amphora.

Serafina Milbank, who is studying Arts and Law, is one of a group of first-year Classics students who were recently given an unusual assignment—designing a Greek amphora (storage jar). Their illustrations, which had to portray a scene of personal significance, were then transformed into amphorae using 3D printing.

For Serafina, this was a chance to explore how the 2009 Samoan earthquake and tsunami affected her understanding of natural disasters. Her amphora depicts the ancient Greek world in the midst of an earthquake on one side and the aftermath of a natural

disaster in a contemporary Samoan context on the other.

Serafina, who lived in Samoa until she was four and regularly visits her home country, says she was deeply affected by the disaster.

“I wanted the amphora to portray my connection with the Samoan earthquake and the way it’s impacted how I view other natural disasters.

“It’s quite easy to feel detached from natural disasters, the same way you might feel detached when looking back on the Greek world. I wanted to show that we’re all the same. We experience the same emotions when we go through

that kind of devastation, whether it’s back in Greek times or halfway around the world from there in modern times.”

The creation of the amphorae is one of a number of recent collaborations between the Classics and Design disciplines, which include a project in which some of the ancient objects in Victoria’s Classics Museum were replicated using 3D printing, giving students hands-on experience interacting with the art—without the potentially disastrous consequences mishandling might bring.

<http://bit.ly/2k2oKea>



# The Bachelor of Arts: Key to the future

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The future of work is currently a hot topic. The Labour Party's Future of Work Commission report predicted that 46 percent of Kiwi jobs are under threat of automation in the next 10 to 15 years and, globally, swathes of researchers speculate about the impact of a rapidly changing job market.

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What this will mean for the workforce is uncertain—will computers provide accountancy expertise and do much of the work of doctors? What is certain is that creativity and cognitive flexibility will be vital in navigating this unknown future.

Enter the Bachelor of Arts (BA). Arts graduates are coming into their own for the adaptability that their superior analytical, communication and creative thinking skills provide.

Victoria's BA has long been considered among the cream of the crop in New Zealand and the University has succeeded in seeing a broad range of humanities and social science subjects ranked number one in New Zealand for research quality in the Performance-Based Research Fund Quality Evaluation. Victoria is also the top university in New Zealand for arts and humanities in the latest Times Higher Education subject rankings.

Pro-Vice-Chancellor of Humanities and Social Sciences Professor Jennifer Windsor says, "We're committed to the

power of the BA for fostering engaged citizenship, which is very important in today's world. We want students to explore their passions through a range of subjects taught by outstanding scholars. We've listened to employers' perspectives and have created new learning opportunities for students to ensure they are career-ready—we're serious about preparing graduates for an unpredictable economic environment."

Bhavana Bhim, a BA(Hons) student, credits her choice of degree and university with giving her a real edge. She says the broad base of subjects offered in the Victoria BA has provided an excellent grounding and opened up options for her future.

"I majored in Classical Studies and Art History, and minored in English Literature. These were subjects I was passionate about but the exposure to these different perspectives also allowed me to develop skills such as visual analysis, critical thinking and verbal and written communication. These have

already been so invaluable in preparing me for the workplace."

Alongside these important professional skills, the Victoria BA provides a range of targeted curricular and extracurricular career-enhancing opportunities, including its BA internship programme and courses designed to prepare students for the changing workforce.

Bhavana interned at fashion magazine *Lucire*, where she learnt about the world of journalism and publishing. She says the internship prepared her to transition into the workforce.

"I thought it was important to get exposure to the workforce, and to be able to demonstrate to future employers that you can apply your study experience to the world of work. You benefit both from working and from learning how you can develop career-wise. It showed me that I could go in a different direction, and it also gave me assurance that I can apply what I've learnt to a professional role."

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[www.victoria.ac.nz/ba](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/ba)

# Preserving authenticity

A 'digital bookshelf' created at Victoria is helping New Zealand's Cook Islands community preserve its language and traditional stories.

The Hutt Valley Cook Islands Association is the latest group to contribute to the Rays of Sound website, an online language resource created by Victoria's Language Learning Centre. The Hutt Valley group contributed recordings of traditional songs, stories and hymns originally written by their ancestors and passed down through generations.

One of its members, Analiese Robertson, says this gives their community a meaningful connection with the stories they recorded for the website.

"The online resource has been quite significant, because they're not just English stories that have been translated into te reo Kūki 'Āirani.

They're authentic stories that are represented by the people here in Lower Hutt and, in some cases, the descendants of the authors of those stories have provided the recordings."

She says the community recognises the potential digital technology has for preserving the Cook Islands Māori language.

"We want this resource to be used by the future generations of New Zealand-born Cook Islanders who have been disconnected from our homeland and from our culture by their lack of access to their language."

The project is part of Victoria's commitment to celebrating and fostering community languages, and

draws on the University's wealth of expertise in languages and cultures.

The Cook Islands Māori recordings join the existing te reo Māori and Samoan recordings on the Rays of Sound website. Balint Koller from the Language Learning Centre, who led the project, says the free resources on the digital bookshelf are available for anyone to use.

"We would like all New Zealanders to try and engage with other languages, because there's a lot of value locked up in these languages, and if they're lost they're gone forever.

"We have a duty, if we can, to try and preserve as much of them as we can."

[www.raysofsound.org.nz](http://www.raysofsound.org.nz)

## Bedtime stories

Every month, a number of children around New Zealand receive the sound of their mother's voice in the mail.

The voice is captured on CD reading a bedtime story, helping the children to enjoy a simple nightly ritual that they don't have the opportunity to experience in full—because their mothers are in Arohata Prison.

The recordings are created by the Bedtime Stories team, with Clean Slate Press providing the books that accompany the CD, all free of charge.

The team is led by Kerry Palmer, a lecturer in Victoria's Theatre programme,

who says the project is all about maintaining connections with families.

"The theory behind it all is that if the women have ways to connect to their kids and grandkids while they're in prison, those relationships will be stronger when they get out.

"It's about keeping those connections strong, rather than having a long gap where there's no relationship-building at all.

"There's also the hope that it makes a difference for the kids. They know their mum's thinking about them."

Kerry says the team of volunteers, which includes Theatre students working as sound technicians, has watched the women grow over the course of the programme.

"It gives the women confidence in their own skills. Most of them are really good readers, and quite expressive. The women also listen to each other, and support each other through the readings. So that's really lovely to see."

The project, which was originally piloted by theatre practitioner Miranda Harcourt, was recently recognised with the Arts Access Corrections Community Award 2017.

In the future, Kerry would love to see the programme extended around the country—but for now, she's just happy to see her monthly visits to Arohata continue.

"I'll definitely continue it, as long as the books keep coming."

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## THE TRUTH OF OUR YOUTH

Why do some young people deliberately hurt themselves, but others never do?  
Why do some go on to chronically engage in self-injury, while others stop?

These are questions that Victoria's Youth Wellbeing Study has been investigating over the past five years, with support from the Health Research Council of New Zealand.

Addressing them has involved a longitudinal survey of thousands of young New Zealanders, focus hui with young people and their whānau, interviews and discussions with school guidance counsellors and collaborating with groups of young people to develop graphic novels themed around self-injury and help-seeking.

"Just under a third of the participants reported hurting

themselves by the end of the study, and the research confirmed that young people hurt themselves for a range of reasons. Managing emotions was the most common function of self-injury, followed by self-punishment and the desire to feel something," says lead researcher Professor Marc Wilson.

The longitudinal survey has been particularly important in investigating the way that self-injury develops over time. As expected, the findings show young people who are less well-equipped to understand and manage their emotions are more likely to manage their emotions through

self-injury.

"More importantly, young people's emotion regulation skills predicted future self-injury, and self-injury impaired future emotion regulation," says Marc. "Essentially, because self-injury provided relief for some young people, they may have come to rely on it rather than seeking out safer ways to manage their emotions."

The research team plans to explore the link between non-suicidal self-injury and suicide, and to develop an emotion regulation training programme for young people.

<http://bit.ly/2yDomGk>

## Paper dolls and exercise books

**"I like the way a writer's papers and rough drafts can return us to the idea of writing as making. You can learn a lot from seeing the author stumbling, mucking about, failing, doodling, reviving."**

Professor Damien Wilkins captures the purpose of the New Zealand Literary Archive perfectly. But then, you wouldn't expect anything less.

It is 25 years since the Archive was first established in the J.C. Beaglehole Room of Victoria's Library. Its founding contributors were Jenny Bornholdt, Patricia Grace, Witi Ihimaera and Alistair Te Ariki Campbell.

Set up to enable the Library to collect and preserve the literary papers of eminent New Zealand writers with a strong connection to Victoria, the original contributors are now joined by Elizabeth Knox, Emeritus Professor Vincent O'Sullivan, Professor Harry Ricketts and Damien Wilkins.

A virtual treasure trove of published and unpublished works, it was almost with a sense of relief that Elizabeth Knox contributed her early notebooks to the Archive.

"It is a collection of all the things of which no good facsimile can be made, like a many times folded sheet of cardboard that is the floor plan of a room where the paper dolls would meet and talk, the paper dolls representing some future

novelist's first characters ever.

"I write by hand. Everything that isn't published exists in only one copy. It's lovely to think I won't have to be responsible for all of it, like the paper dolls, and the exercise books full of stories about the people they became."

Selected by Victoria's Heritage and Special Collections Advisory Group, the four new contributors were welcomed to the Archive at a celebratory event in June, where they each read from their work.

"As the Archive grows it will become an increasingly valuable set of personal workshops. It will also trace New Zealand literature through a distinct period," says Damien.

<http://bit.ly/2ftDuBp>

# Leading in sustainable energy systems

Victoria is on track to being a leader in sustainable energy systems education and research in the Asia-Pacific region.



That goal has been boosted by the appointment of Professor Alan Brent as the inaugural holder of the new Chair of Sustainable Energy Systems in the School of Engineering and Computer Science.

The Chair is funded by Wellington developer Mark Dunajtschik, whose transformational donation has enabled the establishment of the sustainable energy systems academic programme. This is the first Chair at Victoria to be funded by a single donor.

Alan says the aim of the programme is to enable Victoria, in partnership with other universities and research institutions in New Zealand, to be recognised as the Asia-Pacific's leading, best-known and most productive education, research and development network in the field of sustainable energy systems.

Students will be given the opportunity to study sustainability systems as undergraduates, a specialisation not usually offered until postgraduate level. The approach will be transdisciplinary, giving students the opportunity to provide considerable breadth to their sustainability studies.

Some students will enter the programme through a Bachelor of

Science and, in addition to the core courses in sustainable energy systems, these students will be encouraged to take supporting courses in Law or Public Policy, Building Science, Environmental Studies or Māori Studies. This breadth of knowledge will be invaluable for students wishing to pursue a career as an energy or sustainability adviser to local iwi, councils, Pacific Island nations or forward-thinking communities.

Other students will enter the programme by studying towards a Bachelor of Engineering with Honours, where the emphasis is more on the technical challenges of creating an entire sustainable energy system. All programmes will emphasise the societal, environmental and climate change impacts of energy decisions.

Alan comes to Victoria from Stellenbosch University in South Africa. He holds Bachelor's degrees in chemical engineering and sustainable development, Master's degrees in environmental engineering, technology management and sustainable development and a PhD in engineering management.

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# Championing a sustainability agenda

Victoria this year signalled its commitment to begin implementing the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).



It became the first New Zealand University to sign a new international agreement known as the University Commitment to the SDGs, an Australasian/Pacific initiative to show that universities can be leaders in sustainability.

Agreed by all United Nations member countries in 2015, the 17 SDGs are broad-ranging goals aiming to tackle poverty, promote prosperity and wellbeing, protect the environment, address climate change and encourage good governance, peace and security.

At Victoria, the move is being championed by the Sustainability Office and Assistant Vice-Chancellor (Sustainability) Associate Professor Marjan van den Belt who, along with five Australian academics, is one of the authors of a guide to help universities begin implementing the SDGs.

"There is no one 'right' way to go about it but there is an urgent need to make a

start," she says.

"Signing the commitment makes it more explicit that we as an organisation want to engage with the SDGs. That is in line with some of the larger companies in New Zealand, such as Air New Zealand, Sanford and Meridian. They are all reviewing their strategies through an SDG lens and so are we."

Marjan says all schools and faculties at Victoria are contributing to the SDGs already, even if they are not aware of it.

"We've mapped it. Now we are making these contributions more visible and have a framework to discuss connections across the SDGs more deliberately for impact from research.

"I would love for each student to come out of university knowing the 17 goals and having the agility to problem-solve and generate meaningful solutions with the help of the SDG framework."

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# The sound of music in the central city

Imagine Wellington's Civic Square buzzing with music students, professional musicians and enthusiastic amateurs.

Imagine catching snippets of rehearsals on your way to work, popping into a student performance on your way home, browsing and listening to works in a first-class music library or joining a community musical event. Imagine the Wellington Town Hall reopened, revitalised and once again home to outstanding musical performances.

All these experiences could soon become a reality thanks to a collaboration between Victoria, the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra (NZSO) and Wellington City Council to create a national centre of musical excellence in the heart of the capital city.

Once completed, Victoria's New Zealand School of Music (NZSM) will take up residence, as will the NZSO, in a complex that features a restored and earthquake-strengthened Wellington Town Hall and redeveloped adjoining buildings.

The first stage, involving strengthening of the Town Hall, starts soon. Victoria

and the NZSO are jointly fundraising for \$30 million towards the project, which would create purpose-built facilities for the NZSM and NZSO and link them to the Town Hall and Civic Square.

Former Wellington mayor Kerry Prendergast is leading the fundraising campaign. "This is one of those rare opportunities that can truly inspire a community to create something magnificent. We're looking for support to achieve our vision for a world-class centre of music innovation in Wellington's Civic Square."

"This is a game changer for music at Victoria and our engagement with Wellington's creative communities and industries," says Professor Jennifer Windsor, Victoria's Pro-Vice-Chancellor and Dean of Humanities and Social Sciences.

"We're fortunate to offer the best and most comprehensive education for music in the country. Now we hope not only

to have the facilities to match that, but to be a committed partner in nurturing Wellington and New Zealand as a magnet for creative talent."

The new director of the NZSM, Professor Sally Jane Norman, is also upbeat. "Not only will the School have access to state-of-the-art educational and performance facilities, including the Town Hall's world-class acoustics, it will also benefit from shared teaching and research with the NZSO.

"No other university in this part of the world has the opportunity to co-locate their School of Music with a full-time professional symphony orchestra."

Victoria hopes to welcome its first students to the national music centre in 2022.

To find out more and get involved with the fundraising campaign, go to

[www.victoria.ac.nz/creative-quarter](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/creative-quarter)

<http://bit.ly/2k1hpMe>

## Wanted: Your memories of Wellington's grand old dame

Closed since earthquakes in Wellington in 2013, the Town Hall has always held a special place in the hearts of Wellingtonians.

The remarkable acoustics of its main auditorium have been rated among the world's best and, over the years,

the building has played host to events ranging from the exquisite to the wild.

From magnificent classical concerts to the pounding beats of dance parties, from debutante balls to the recording of the soundtracks for *The Lord of the Rings* and *The Hobbit* trilogies, the Town

Hall has provided the backdrop for our memories.

People are sharing these memories on the MyTownHall blog and we'd love to hear yours! Send your stories, images or videos to [stories@mytownhall.co.nz](mailto:stories@mytownhall.co.nz)

[www.mytownhall.co.nz](http://www.mytownhall.co.nz)



# RIPPLE EFFECT

For the past two decades, Victoria's New Zealand Sign Language (NZSL) programme has been helping to make more New Zealanders understood.

This is in no small part down to Drs Rachel and David McKee, who lead the programme at Victoria and are celebrating 20 years of the University's Certificate in Deaf Studies (Teaching NZSL). The programme is designed to train Deaf NZSL users to teach their own language. "We've had more than a hundred go through the course now and it's having a ripple effect in the learning and teaching of NZSL in the wider community," Rachel says.

Previously perceived as a peripheral language, New Zealanders are becoming increasingly familiar with NZSL. It became an official language of New Zealand in 2006 and today forms part of the school curriculum.

"Our Deaf students are fluent in NZSL when they begin the course, but they've often faced communication isolation within their family, school and wider community," says Rachel. "They come here to learn how to articulate the language to others. They study concepts about Deaf community and culture, what their identity is as NZSL users and then how to teach NZSL to others.

"The course is life changing for many students who come through the programme. Once they gain a clearer understanding of themselves as bilingual people, and learn practical skills for how to teach NZSL to hearing people, their opportunities open up. Most of the students leave school without expecting to attend university, and so the experience of being taught in their own language by our lecturers who are also

Deaf removes many barriers and is really empowering."

Between the 2006 and 2013 censuses, the total number of NZSL users decreased nationally, with the exception of a 37 percent increase in the Wellington region. Rachel says it is likely this can at least be attributed partly to the teaching and dissemination of NZSL awareness by the NZSL programme at Victoria.

This year, six additional government scholarships have enabled Māori Deaf students to take the Certificate in Deaf Studies. A significant proportion of the Deaf community is Māori and these scholarships recognise the official status of NZSL and that Māori Deaf are often doubly disadvantaged. To acknowledge the six Māori students in this year's cohort, the final module of this year's course began with a pōhiri at Victoria's Te Herenga Waka Marae, conducted in te reo Māori and NZSL.

"Our graduates have gone on to teaching roles in schools and higher education, supporting families with Deaf children, as well as advocacy roles with organisations such as Deaf Aotearoa New Zealand," says Rachel. "Now, with the benefit of the new scholarships we can strengthen NZSL teaching by Māori Deaf people in Māori contexts, whether it's through teaching their whānau or hapū, or in marae and wānanga. Communication is the primary thing that will connect Māori NZSL users with their heritage."

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🌐 <http://bit.ly/2y3Nt87>



# ADVANCING BETTER GOVERNMENT

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“Transparency, debate and thoughtful inquiry are vital to a healthy democracy. Victoria’s unique position as New Zealand’s capital city university gives it a strong and respected voice in the discussion on what constitutes good government—and how we can make it even better.”

—**Professor Mark Hickford**

Chair of Advancing Better Government,  
one of Victoria’s areas of academic distinctiveness



# SHINING A LIGHT ON THE PUBLIC SECTOR

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The New Zealand public sector lags behind its Australian counterparts when it comes to whistle-blowing practices. A Victoria academic is on a mission to help turn that around.

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A trans-Tasman survey—part of the three-year, \$1.7 million research project *Whistling While They Work 2*—compared the strengths and weaknesses of 65 of New Zealand’s public sector organisations and 634 Australian public, private and not-for-profit sector organisations.

The results were released earlier this year and found New Zealand’s public sector ranked eighth in the 10 jurisdictions, ahead of only government agencies in Tasmania and the Northern Territory.

The sole New Zealand academic involved in the project, the School of Government’s Associate Professor Michael Macaulay, says there is some positivity in New Zealand’s poor performance.

“It’s great to see such a high participation rate in the survey from our public sector. It confirms the importance public sector leaders are placing on whistle-blowing and integrity issues.

“However, the results indicate there are likely issues at an agency level,

possibly an inconsistent approach to dealing with misconduct issues.

“There may also be weaknesses with the system as a whole, particularly at legislative level. For example, it raises questions around the usability and the relevance of the New Zealand Protected Disclosures Act, which is designed to help agencies effectively and safely facilitate whistle-blowing in the workplace.”

The survey provided baseline information for the more detailed Workplace Experiences and Relationships Questionnaire (WERQ) that was distributed to employees of all types of organisations in both countries.

“This questionnaire explores in depth the problems organisations face, their current processes and outcomes and what innovations they’re using to respond to wrongdoing concerns from staff.

“The results will also highlight organisations’ ethical climate, leadership and psychological safety around whistle-blowing.”

The research team will use the WERQ

results to understand the adequacy of organisational responses to whistle-blowing.

“This will then give us the information we need to help strengthen processes around whistle-blowing and mitigate some of the problems.

“For example, it will allow us to formulate best practice recommendations for the workplace, and can assist with improving governance and regulation standards.”

The project’s lead, Professor A.J. Brown from Griffith University, says robust practices around workplace whistle-blowing are a fundamental part of good management for any type of organisation.

“It’s a vital part of a healthy workplace that people are able to voice their concerns and make suggestions, speak up and have management listen to them. It’s particularly vital to ensuring public integrity in our institutions.”

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🌐 <http://bit.ly/2wQlnwY>



*Dr Bronwyn Wood, Professor Carmen Dalli and Professor Miriam Meyerhoff*

# EMBRACING DIVERSITY IN EDUCATION

As New Zealand’s cultural diversity continues to grow, Victoria academics are asking how it will affect children and young people’s sense of belonging, participation and citizenship.

Professor Carmen Dalli from the School of Education is researching how children aged two to five years negotiate conflict to establish a sense of belonging and wellbeing in a multi-ethnic early childhood setting. Working with her are Professor Miriam Meyerhoff from the School of Linguistics and Applied Language Studies and postdoctoral fellow Dr Anna Strycharz-Banas.

Carmen will draw on video footage and discussions with teachers to understand how children deal with conflict, the way language and action are used together in conflict and how adults respond. She says that while conflict is often seen as anti-social, negotiation and problem-solving skills are essential to children’s development—and understanding the cultural implications of this is equally important.

“Since we are an increasingly multi-ethnic society, this reality needs to be factored into our education practice

much more than it has been in the past.”

Miriam and Anna will provide a sociolinguistic perspective on the research, looking at the way young children use language in conflict situations, and the impact different cultural backgrounds may have on interactions. “We are working to get a sense of how children blend communication from their home languages into New Zealand settings and how they negotiate what’s appropriate in terms of displays of affection

and emotion. You don’t want to be in a situation where people are being penalised for the cultural upbringing they’ve got—so teachers need to be aware of this diversity.

“These children are going to be creating the norms in regards to rights and obligations in multicultural New Zealand.”

Dr Bronwyn Wood from the School of Education will examine how young people living in New Zealand’s most diverse communities navigate daily encounters

with ‘difference’, forge their citizen identities and participate in civic life.

“The broad idea of civic participation is that everyone should feel they are entitled to be involved in a democratic process,” Bronwyn says. “However, with globalisation, we have young people who don’t affiliate to one nation—they affiliate to many, and in different ways. As a result, some may feel they are a citizen of many nations—or a citizen of none.

“New Zealand has an eclectic mix of people and if those people aren’t engaging democratically because they don’t feel like citizens, then the people in power aren’t representing them. It’s a very big issue for democracy to ensure that voices are heard, people feel valued and that they belong.

“My biggest motivation is to understand what citizenship in our changing world means to young people, and what factors make them feel that they do or don’t want to engage with civic participation.”

These two research projects are supported by the Royal Society of New Zealand’s Marsden Fund.

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**“These children are going to be creating the norms in regards to rights and obligations in multicultural New Zealand.”**



Elliot Isaacs, Sarah Pereira and Stephanie Taylor

# PARLIAMENTARY INSIGHTS FOR VICTORIA INTERNS

Numerous students have seen the inner workings of Parliament over the years, thanks to Victoria's Parliamentary Internship Programme.

Coordinated by Professor Stephen Levine from the School of History, Philosophy, Political Science and International Relations, the programme is in its eighteenth year and gives postgraduate students the chance to spend one day a week working in an MP's office.

While studying for his Master of Political Science, Elliot Isaacs interned for National MP Mark Mitchell and made such an impression that he was employed by the Minister as a private secretary after graduating.

Elliot was joined this year by Stephanie Taylor, who has interned in the Minister's office while studying for her Master of Strategic Studies.

Sarah Pereira interned for former Labour party leader David Shearer in 2016, and is now partway through an

18-month graduate programme at the Ministry for Primary Industries while also completing a Master of Strategic Studies.

All three interns agree the programme has given them invaluable insights into New Zealand's political process.

"My studies gave me the theoretical grounding in how our parliamentary system works but the internship made me realise how tough politics is," Elliot says.

"Most MPs would spend something like 80 to 90 percent of their time on the road, and some of their staff would regularly work 70-hour weeks to stay on top of everything."

Stephanie agrees. "For every policy announcement or comment on an issue of the day, there's a huge amount of preparation and coordination, which

the public doesn't see. Compare that against the often low public perception of politicians and you wonder why you'd want to subject yourself to that."

All three agreed New Zealand's democracy is reasonably healthy but felt more needed to be done to increase participation rates—particularly among young people—and to promote cross-party collaboration on legislation.

However, the tone of political debate in New Zealand is far better than in the United States, according to Sarah, who spent two months in Washington, DC, recently on a Mike Moore Scholarship to the United States Congress.

"Having said that, the current state of political discourse in Washington is pretty dire," Sarah jokes.



## BUILDING BRIDGES TO INDIA

New Zealand may be far from India on a world map, but Professor Sekhar Bandyopadhyay is ensuring his adopted home is firmly on the radar for Indian policymakers and academics.

Originally from Kolkata, Sekhar has taught at Victoria for more than 25 years and is one of New Zealand's leading experts on Indian history and foreign policy.

His historical perspective is sought after by government departments such as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, whose Indian strategy he recently consulted on.

India and New Zealand have a surprising amount in common, says Sekhar.

"We now have evidence that Indians were coming to New Zealand on ships as early as the 1760s, the same time as Captain Cook," he says. "We often hear about the captains, not the sailors."

Since 2012, Sekhar has worked to strengthen ties between the two countries in his role as director of the New Zealand India Research Institute (NZIRI), established by Victoria in partnership with six other New Zealand universities.

Among other functions, the NZIRI organises international conferences, facilitates diplomatic negotiations with non-governmental organisations and think tanks, and conducts research on topics such as India-China relations, healthcare and urbanisation.

The NZIRI's research informs New Zealand policymakers on issues

relating to India and the Institute has been successful in establishing the New Zealand brand in India. Earlier this year, the institute organised a conference in Kolkata that was attended by more than 100 Indian scholars.

Given that India will soon be the world's third largest economy with a huge middle class, the populous nation is clearly an important trading partner for New Zealand. Does Sekhar think we're close to a free trade agreement?

"There is certainly a willingness to engage with New Zealand," he says. "I think it is possible, provided both sides see the mutual benefit."

He says there are some points of contention, such as New Zealand's nuclear-free policy. "India is flanked by two nuclear powers, so it feels compelled to keep it nuclear."

However, he says the barriers are surmountable and there is significant goodwill on both sides. "The impression I get is that there is momentum and the free trade negotiations will move forward."

Education is another area where he can see the two countries cooperating more closely, but first New Zealand must promote the high-quality research being done at its universities, he says.

He recalls visiting New Delhi with Hon. Steven Joyce as part of an education delegation. At a reception, he was asked by academics whether New Zealand degrees were recognised internationally.

"I said, 'all New Zealand universities are ranked in the top 500 in the world! They had no idea. And that is what we can do through the NZIRI—let India know our strengths.'"

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🌐 <http://bit.ly/2hu3UUe>

## STAND UP AND BE COUNTED

New Zealand ranks third highest in the English-speaking world on the Gini coefficient, a key global measure of inequality. How do we give the most marginalised people in our society a voice?

This was one of the many questions raised at Victoria's first-ever Democracy Week in August, which provided a forum for students, staff, visiting experts and politicians to discuss some of the big issues facing contemporary democracy.

The issue of inequality surfaced in several sessions—including the under-representation of women in power and social inequality as a factor contributing to political disengagement.

In a panel called 'What's the worst that could happen?', Professor Simon Jackman from the University of Sydney said that governments have reduced inequality in the past and could do so again.

"The levers to deal with anything that ails New Zealand with respect to inequality ... are well within the reach of the existing political system," said Simon during the discussion.

Professor Jack Vowles from Victoria's School of History, Philosophy, Political Science and International Relations was one of the organisers of Democracy Week, which he says was an outstanding success.

Jack recently co-authored a book, *A Bark But No Bite*, which deals with the role inequality played in New Zealand's 2014 general election.

He says inequality and disengagement are pressing issues in New Zealand that must be addressed in order to make government truly representative.

"We know that people who are adversely affected by inequality, such as the young and those on low incomes, are less likely to vote than those who are older and more prosperous.

"If you don't vote, you don't count. If those who suffer from the effects of inequality were to stand up and be counted, politicians on all sides would be more likely to pay attention to their needs."

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🌐 <http://bit.ly/2y7amHP>



# THE VERDICT ON JURY REFORMS

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If, in the past 15 years, you have sat on a New Zealand jury for a criminal trial and appreciated the judge's guidance about how to reach your verdict, Associate Professor Yvette Tinsley is one of the people you can thank.

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**Y**vette, who is based in Victoria's Faculty of Law, was part of the team that in the late 1990s researched the country's criminal trial jury process.

A handful of judges were already giving written 'question trails' or 'decision trees' and, based on jurors' positive responses during the study, the research team recommended it be encouraged further.

"Now it would be a rare trial at district court level where the judge didn't give such guidance," says Yvette.

Working with Dr Warren Young, a fellow member of the original team, and Australian researchers Professor James Ogloff and Professor Jonathan Clough, Yvette is in the midst of a follow-up study into how helpful the guidance and other adopted recommendations have proven in practice, and whether they need fine-tuning.

The Australian arm of the study is reviewing the situation in the state of Victoria, with a view to whether similar methods might be used more often there.

"What we have tried to do is take the law out of the jury's decision-making to make them purely fact-finders," says Yvette.

"Some other jurisdictions do decision trees and things like that, but in New Zealand we aim to make it fact-based and for judges to integrate the questions they suggest into their summing up. This seems to make a big difference to juries' comprehension and the way their deliberations run."

The study is supported by the Australian Research Council and the New Zealand Law Foundation.

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🌐 <http://bit.ly/2i4gMk7>



# BLINK OF AN EYE

**D**r Simon Chapple, the newly appointed director of Victoria's Institute for Governance and Policy Studies (IGPS), first discovered his interest in government when he was just nine years old.

"The 1972 general election was on," he recalls. "We had an old valve radio, tone like honey—the family couldn't afford a TV. I became entranced, listening to the political debates carried live from the big city town halls on 1YA (now RNZ National) and hearing results coming in by electorate over the course of the night."

In July, Simon started as director of the IGPS, which aims to deliver independent, high-impact research that informs the policymaking process and influences policy implementation. Previously, he has

held senior roles at the Reserve Bank, the Department of Labour, the Ministry of Social Development and in the Social Policy Division of the OECD in Paris.

He says a highlight of his career to date was speaking to the Family Committee of the Polish Parliament in Warsaw about the implications for Poland of the OECD's first publication on child wellbeing, which he had coordinated.

Simon says he was attracted to his new role because it offers an opportunity to be centrally involved with public policy research and to make New Zealand a better place.

He's also aware of the challenges ahead.

"I think it's best to consider democracy fragile—democracy as we know it today

has existed for a blink of an eye in human history. Levels of political engagement are too low, especially among younger people. The processes of providing high-quality information to people on the activities of government are failing.

"I'd like to help place the IGPS on a firm long-term footing. We need to address the big issues of our time and build better environmental, social and economic outcomes for all. To successfully do so, we need to imaginatively engage with the public."

What does good government look like to Simon? "Open, participatory, fair and genuinely tolerant of all."

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## Advice to the advisers

Policy advising is an art, not a science, says Dr David Bromell, senior associate at the Institute for Governance and Policy Studies.

**D**avid has released a practical guide on the topic for policy advisers, their managers and students of the subject.

*The Art and Craft of Policy Advising* is based on 14 years' experience as a policy practitioner in central and local government.

"About half of New Zealand's policy

staff learn on the job. I wanted to contribute to the policy community and pass on what I have learnt.

"A key message is that effective policy advising is less about rational, linear processes—policy cycles, stages and steps—and more about relationships, integrity and communication.

"There's a strong focus on creating public value in the policy advice role. We can only do this by working with others, and it demands new and different skills from how we may have previously provided policy advice."

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🌐 <http://bit.ly/2fPxpw8>



# SHAPE UP OR SHIP OUT

Dr Bevan Marten's keen interest in maritime law is purely scholarly—although he admits his favourite Lego model as a child was a container ship.

A senior lecturer in Victoria's Faculty of Law, Bevan is one of the country's leading maritime law experts and the only lecturer on the subject in New Zealand. He says the appeal lies in the intersection of international law with commercial, environmental and humanitarian issues. "I don't have any trouble convincing students that it's an interesting area of law."

Last year, Bevan published an article on New Zealand's lack of engagement with international regulations on shipping emissions and its failure to ratify Annex VI of the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL).

Ratifying the convention would mean New Zealand ships have to use cleaner fuel and have more efficient engines in order to reduce harmful sulphur and nitrogen oxide emissions. "Since 1997, 88 countries have signed up. The only other OECD members who haven't ratified are Mexico, Israel and Iceland—so we're really behind," he says.

"At first, the Ministry of Transport wasn't looking at this issue—it was not on their agenda," says Bevan. After

his article was published, the Ministry announced it was investigating. "I'm not saying they wouldn't have looked into it—but the media attention probably helped."

The Ministry has announced it will provide advice to the Government by April 2018 on whether New Zealand should adopt the international agreement on air pollution, and Bevan will be involved as part of its stakeholder consultation.

Bevan welcomes this announcement, and says although New Zealand is a relatively small player in the global shipping industry, burying our head in the sand is not a wise option. "Even if New Zealand doesn't do anything, we're still going to have to send ships across the world from time to time for servicing—so they will need to comply."

From Bevan's perspective, the reasons to ratify are simple. "First, there's the human health angle—shipping has been recorded as the biggest contributor to sulphur emissions in Auckland."

He says it's also a matter of principle—New Zealand should

strive to be a good global citizen and promote high environmental standards.

But there's also a more strategic side to this argument, says Bevan. "There's a risk that if the international community decides we have to deal with shipping pollution by a distance-based tariff, New Zealand stands to suffer quite a lot because we're a long way away from everything. Ratifying MARPOL will give New Zealand a more credible voice in future negotiations."

Bevan will continue working with the Ministry of Transport and Maritime New Zealand to provide legal insight as they investigate the possibility of ratifying Annex VI of MARPOL.

He says Victoria's academics are uniquely placed to give expert and politically neutral advice to decision makers in Parliament, literally a stone's throw from his office. "The good thing about coming from the University is that you get to argue from a relatively impartial position. Politicians know that we're not grinding any particular axe."

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🌐 <http://bit.ly/2wi5XgF>



## Grant Fletcher

Director, Strategy, at Inland Revenue  
BA(Hons) MPM *Well*

### What have you been doing since graduating?

I've been in the public service most of my professional career, more recently in senior roles. I've been lucky enough to spend a number of years overseas experiencing different cultures and approaches, which I think have given me very different perspectives to bring to study and work. For example, I was in the United States when I carried out a comparative study of American and New Zealand transport systems as part of my Master's. Living in Washington, DC, and experiencing its public transport system really brought the study to life.

### What are the highlights of your career so far?

People. I've had a succession of leadership roles that have taught me the value of teamwork. Giving people the opportunity to grow and succeed in so many different settings has to be a highlight.

### Have you kept any connections with Victoria?

In my current role, I have regular contact with the School of Government and Victoria Business School and have been able to take on summer interns to work at Inland Revenue.

### How important do you see Victoria's role as a capital city university in terms of engaging with government and the public sector?

In my view, New Zealand does best when it adapts ideas to its unique environment, grows them and exports them to the world. Victoria has a key role in engaging with the public sector to help understand what works best, and then growing that in partnership across the rest of New Zealand.

### What was the most useful thing you learnt at Victoria?

How to be curious. Victoria gave me a thirst for knowledge about the world around me. It's taught me to ask questions and imagine different outcomes that continue to help me in my career.



## Lyn Provost CNZM

Former Controller and Auditor-General  
BCA *Well*

### What have you been doing since graduating?

I have worked for the Audit Office, Touche Ross in London, Pim Goldby in South Africa, the State Services Commission and Archives New Zealand. I have also been the Deputy Commissioner of Police and Controller and Auditor-General.

### What are the highlights of your career so far?

The pinnacle of my career was serving as the Controller and Auditor-General. This role has an overview of the whole public sector and can make a real difference to public management. Some of the highlights for me were signing the audit opinions on the financial statements of the Government; being involved in the establishment of Auckland Council; seeing improvements in auditing in the Pacific; and publishing a series of reflection reports on the future of service delivery, governance and accountability. I believe the eight elements of good governance laid out in these reports are useful for all New Zealand enterprise. As the Controller and Auditor-General, I also enjoyed seeing people and organisations develop and grow stronger.

### Describe your student experience at Victoria.

My student days were a game of two halves—the first half missing home and the second half enjoying the delights of Wellington and university life.

### Have you kept any connections with Victoria?

Over the years I have given lectures and presentations, and attended seminars and functions. Currently, I am chair of the advisory board for the Brian Picot Chair in Ethical Leadership.

### What sorts of opportunities did studying at Victoria open up for you?

A wonderful career, travel and good friends.

### What was the most useful thing you learnt at Victoria?

The importance of lifelong relationships and principled thinking.

# Rights ... and responsibilities

**DR NESSA LYNCH**, Senior Lecturer, Faculty of Law



It can be challenging to explain what exactly the academic role is. Most of these conversations go something like this: “What do you do?” “I’m an academic at the Law School at Victoria University of Wellington.” “So you teach students who want to be lawyers? I guess you get the summers and holidays off then?” “Well, teaching is just one part of my job. And not all my students go on to practise law. And around half my time is spent researching and writing about criminal law and criminal justice.” “So you write policy and reports for the Government and police and that kind of thing?” “Well ... sometimes.”

For me, the essence of what it is to be an academic in a public university is contained in section 162(4) (a) (v) of the Education Act 1989: that is to be “the critic and conscience of society”.

What does that mean for those of us working in this capital city university? Especially those of us privileged to have an office with a view of the Beehive and Bowen House, within a stone’s throw of the Supreme Court, Court of Appeal and High Court?

It means academics have the right (and the duty) to provide independent and informed analysis on the direction of law, policy and practice.

With rights come responsibilities, however. We must remember that much of our academic research, even on New Zealand issues, is published in overseas-based journals, inaccessible without an expensive subscription.

We have the responsibility of ensuring this scholarly work is translated and disseminated for our practitioner and professional audiences through involvement in policy and law reform and public engagement through the media and other channels. We must balance conceptual criticism with the sometimes more difficult task of proposing and contributing to the kind of substantive, principled, evidence-based alternatives a policymaker can pitch to their Minister.

Our ‘critic and conscience’ role must also extend to our students—not in leading students toward particular ideological or political standpoints, but rather teaching them to question assertions and evaluate evidence.

A highlight of my work last year was partnering with JustSpeak—a non-governmental organisation co-founded by Victoria’s law students—to provide evidence-based information to government and to the public on the proposal to include 17-year-olds in the youth justice jurisdiction for most offences. This has been passed into law and will come into force in 2019.

I’m particularly proud of our recent graduates and current students who are leading and fostering informed debate—on the direction of our criminal justice system and, particularly, the over-representation of Māori—and are putting into practice the responsibility of being ‘critic and conscience’ of society.

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# Better for whom?

**ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR KARL LÖFGREN**, School of Government



While politicians, decision makers and many academics seem to consider ‘success’ (and ‘failure’) in government business as something self-evident, there is reason to examine what we actually mean by ‘better’ government.

Let’s, for instance, look at what it might imply for a particular slice of government: the political part of the executive.

There is a growing literature in policy studies presenting a more nuanced and complex understanding of ‘better’. We can discern at least three different usages of how to discuss ‘good’ and ‘bad’ government in modern political language.

The first, and perhaps more obvious, use of ‘good’ government is to indicate that the Government has achieved what it set out to accomplish. It has reduced taxes, reduced the number of citizens on welfare benefits, increased the number of school-leavers with the required qualifications, and so on. Better government is here presented as fulfilling policy objectives, gratifying promises to the electorate or, to use modern managerial language, ‘delivering’. This is what we commonly think about when we hear that the Government has either succeeded or failed. It also reflects modern, measurable and transparent politics in which the performance is reported back to a group of constituents with a clear chain of accountability.

The second way of perceiving better government is to assess to what extent the process was successful or not.

This is by and large the internal criteria for success—did the Government or

public sector follow the constitutional conventions, democratic principles and ethical and integrity standards, and secure a fair, efficient and just process? While it is about meeting expectations from, for example, the electorate, the party memberships and professional bodies and other vested interests, it is also about demonstrating innovation and initiative to a broader group of constituents. In relation to the first usage, this is like the classical expression ‘The patient died, but the operation was successful.’

Finally, better government can be merited on whether it has been a political success or not. ‘Better’ here is about securing survival and reputation of those people working in, and for, the Government, and also pursuing certain ideological aims. Even inefficient political actions may be rendered successful, as they assure ideological steadfastness and government commitment to a political cause: ‘We stood our ground.’

It would be easy to say that advancing better government is about encompassing all three of these usages, by this means satisfying everyone. In practice, there is a trade-off and it is impossible to secure success in all three. We can do our best to conflate these different understandings, but it will never be completely attainable. We should always follow up any suggestions of better government with the counter-question ‘Better for whom?’

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🌐 <http://bit.ly/2gtsilJ>





## Renee Graham

Chief Executive, Ministry for Women  
BCA, MPP *Well*

### What have you been doing since graduating?

I graduated with a Bachelor of Commerce and Administration in 1993. I had worked at the Ministry for Social Development during the vacation period processing student applications and when I finished they offered me a job there. I said I would stay for three months until I got a 'real job'. It was a real job, and I stayed for 20 years! In 2017, I was appointed chief executive of the Ministry for Women.

### What are the highlights of your career so far?

I have enjoyed all of my roles and I have been really fortunate to work on policies that make a difference to New Zealanders. I am excited now about the new challenges in being a chief executive and leading advice on improving lives for New Zealand women and girls.

### Describe your student experience at Victoria.

I really enjoyed my student years at Victoria. I was the first in my family to attend university and, in a way, I had a lot of expectations placed on me but I relished learning as an adult and having control over my subjects and my learning. Studying for my Master of Public Policy as a 'mature' student was a completely different experience. I was juggling a full-time job and raising a family but I was also smarter and more confident. I had work experience behind me and I could easily see the connections between what I was studying and its applicability to my work. More importantly, I had an opinion and the confidence to share it.

### What was the most useful thing you learnt at Victoria?

Victoria gave me the confidence to participate in life and raised my expectations of what I could achieve. I made some lifelong friends and gained the skills and the discipline that has underpinned my career to date.



## David Woodnorth

Director, ComplyWith  
LLM *Well*

### What have you been doing since graduating?

After finishing my Master of Laws (LLM), I spent four years heading up legal teams in public sector organisations and then returned to the private sector to practise law as a barrister specialising in public law and employment litigation. During that time, I started ComplyWith as a project for a bunch of Crown organisations and, after a few years of that, gave up being a barrister altogether to focus on growing ComplyWith, which is now New Zealand's leading cloud-based legal compliance business.

### What are the highlights of your career so far?

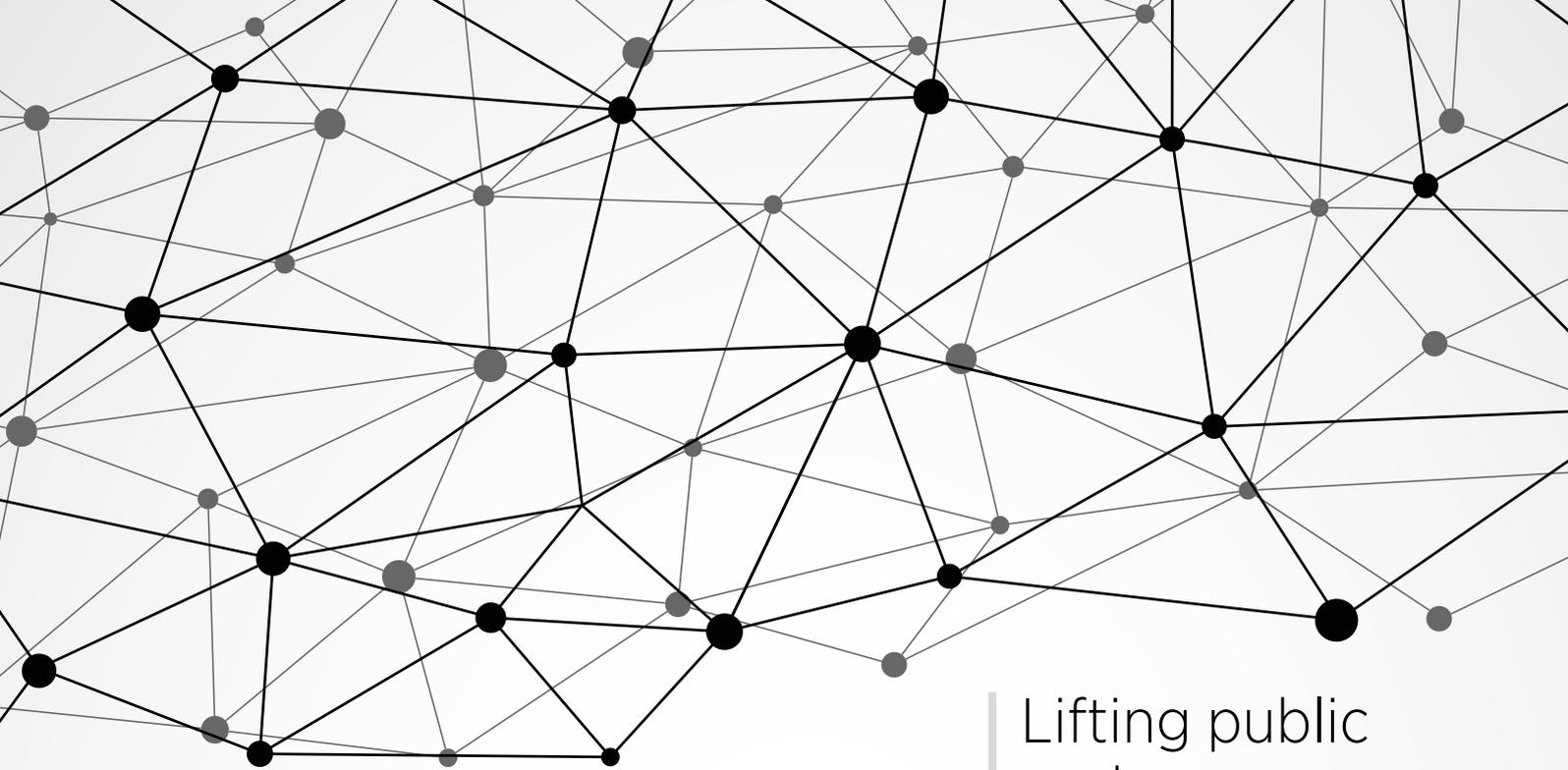
The biggest highlight has been starting a new business, and growing it into something that is now starting to explore international opportunities—all built around a mission to humanise the law for people in business. I'd always struggled with the elitism and expense of access to the law, and the way this is perpetuated by its institutionalised complexity. The law is one of the last areas of business to be disrupted by innovation and technology and it is well overdue.

### Describe your student experience at Victoria.

I enjoyed the constant stream of interesting guests attending the LLM classes—most with some kind of government connection. Probably the highlight was when we had Lord Cooke of Thorndon, unquestionably New Zealand's greatest-ever jurist, join us for a class. There we were, only about 12 of us in the group, having an intense but convivial two-way discussion about public law issues of the day with this absolute legend of the law—where else could you do that? That night, it felt like we were at the centre of the law-school universe!

### What was the most useful thing you learnt at Victoria?

Keep curious, keep learning—and that the effort to read a good paper or book on a topic can reward you many times over.



# THE POLITICAL TRADING YOU DON'T SEE

When Parliament passed the Organised Crime and Anti-corruption Legislation Bill in 2015, it created a new criminal offence—‘trading in influence’.

But, Institute for Governance and Policy Studies (IGPS) PhD student James Gluck says, influence trading is not clearly defined in the Bill and further investigation is required to elucidate what activities are influencing New Zealand’s politics, the impact they have and the subsequent implications in light of the Bill.

“Trading in influence is a form of corruption where people influence policy processes. It may take place through activities widely accepted as part of the political landscape such as lobbying, the honours system and other avenues that provide certain groups access to Ministers.”

His research aims to explore, describe and explain the context and behaviour of trading in influence that happens in New Zealand.

It’s not a straightforward task. “Access to politicians is easy to determine; what is less clear is the extent to which this may, or may not, lead to influence.”

His research includes interviewing politicians and those who draft policies,

analysing the discourse of public debates on the topic and investigating party donations against political outcomes.

“I focus on lobbying, party funding and political appointments, as these have close relations to internationally well-known examples of corrupt practice. Lobbying occurs all over the world and, particularly in the United States, it is seen as a real threat to democratic integrity.

“In the United Kingdom, there are significant concerns about ties between party donations and granted honours, and how these can translate into influence trading. New Zealand has many close parallels with these nations and so these two activities offer an interesting scope for investigation.

“We must take this issue seriously. The IGPS’s survey last year showed trust in politicians and government is incredibly low. Regardless of the legalities, it damages and degrades the public’s trust in our political institutions.”

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## Lifting public sector performance

In 2009, the State Services Commission (SSC) launched its Performance Improvement Framework (PIF) to help senior leaders improve state sector agencies’ performances.

Last year, the SSC commissioned Victoria’s School of Government to review the PIF’s progress.

Over several months, 10 Victoria researchers surveyed 430 public sector employees and interviewed key respondents from across 35 state sector agencies to assess the PIF’s value and impact.

Dr Barbara Allen, a senior lecturer in Public Management, was the lead author of the review, published earlier this year.

“Our research enabled us to give an independent assessment of how the PIF is contributing to the Government’s objectives. Against the backdrop of similar interventions overseas, we also provided some evidence of what works and recommended actions for further improvement.

“It’s been a major project for the School and it’s having real impact across the sector. The PIF is proven to be a successful and credible performance improvement tool, and this review will help make it even better.”

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# TURNING UP THE HEAT

The Alpine Fault is one of the world's major geological features and its tectonic movements have created the more than three-kilometre-high Southern Alps.

But it's a discovery just half a kilometre deep that has scientists stirring.

A collaboration by a team that drilled into the fault revealed water at 630 metres that was hot enough to boil. Similar geothermal temperatures are found normally at depths greater than three kilometres, or in association with active volcanoes.

"The conditions we've uncovered are extreme by global standards and comparable to those in major volcanic centres like Taupō—but there are no volcanoes in Westland," says Victoria's Professor Rupert Sutherland.

"Nobody on our team, or any of the scientists who reviewed our plans, predicted that it would be so hot down there."

Rupert worked with more than 100 scientists from 12 countries as part

of the Deep Fault Drilling Project, jointly led by Victoria, GNS Science and the University of Otago.

In 2014, the team drilled into the Alpine Fault at a site near Whataroa, a small township north of Franz Josef Glacier.

The team identified the Whataroa site as the best place in the world to understand what a fault looks, feels and sounds like just before an earthquake occurs. The Alpine Fault is known to rupture in magnitude 8 earthquakes approximately every 300 years and last ruptured in AD 1717.

Engineering challenges meant the project fell short of achieving all its technical goals, but the borehole continues to provide interesting data for scientists.

The team hadn't expected to find such extreme temperatures and the potential for large geothermal resources in the area.

"The geothermal environment is created by a combination of tectonic movement and groundwater flow. Slippage during earthquakes has uplifted hot rocks from about 30 kilometres deep, and the rocks are coming up so fast that they don't get a chance to cool properly," explains Rupert.

"Earthquakes fracture the rocks so extensively that water is able to infiltrate

deep beneath the mountains and heat becomes concentrated in upwelling geothermal fluids beneath valleys. River gravels that are flushed by abundant West Coast rain and snow dilute this geothermal activity before it reaches the surface.

"This geothermal activity may sound alarming but it is a wonderful scientific finding that could be commercially very significant for New Zealand."

Warren Gilbertson, chief operating officer of Development West Coast, says the discovery has the potential to transform the economy and resilience of Westland, and provide a significant and sustainable clean energy resource that could be developed using local people and equipment.

"The location of geothermal activity and its possible benefit and association to the dairy and tourism sectors provide real opportunities from an economic perspective."

It is still too early to say just how big and how hot the geothermal resource might be, adds Rupert, and further exploration and drilling will be needed to assess the economic potential.

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🌐 <http://bit.ly/2wT5RvG>





# Giving traditional energy retailers the flick

“There has to be a smarter way of buying energy.”

That’s what motivated Victoria University alumnus Steve O’Connor to set up Flick Electric in 2013.

The Wellington-based company has upended the retail energy market in New Zealand by allowing its customers to buy electricity on the spot market, rather than via the traditional energy retailers. This means customers can choose when to buy electricity to take advantage of lulls in the energy price over the course of the day and night.

“Our app allows customers to see when electricity is cheap, and they also get information about how that energy has been produced. So carbon conscious consumers can avoid buying their power at times when it’s most likely to have come from coal-fired power stations, and instead buy it at times when it’s produced from renewable energy sources,” says Steve.

He says this business model has saved Flick’s customers close to

\$8 million since 2013, and it’s paying off for Flick Electric as well, which has been New Zealand’s fastest growing retailer over the past two years and won both the Cyber Gold Award and the Supreme Award at the Wellington Gold Awards in July.

“One of the keys to our success is that we’re democratising the energy market by giving consumers more information about what they’re buying and the ability to make their own choices. Effectively, we’re cutting out the middlemen who don’t provide a lot of value for their customers.

“None of this stuff has been done before in New Zealand or overseas. No-one else is giving consumers direct access to the energy market or providing all this information about how much CO<sub>2</sub> has gone into producing every half hour’s worth of energy.

“So now we’ve got people coming to us and asking ‘Can you come and do this in telecommunications? Can you come and do this in banking?’ But our focus for the next little while at least is

on the energy sector and looking to take this model overseas.”

Steve completed undergraduate degrees in Science and Commerce at Victoria in the 1980s, and he says the training in critical and creative thinking from his Science degree, in particular, has been invaluable in his career.

“That was one of the most important things I got out of my time at Victoria: the ability to analyse a problem methodically, look at it from different angles, develop a set of possible solutions and then look at those through a business lens.

“I think that training in how to think and those soft skills in collaboration, teamwork, persistence and so on is what students are going to need most in future. We simply don’t know what sort of jobs are going to be around in 15 to 20 years’ time. So many sectors and traditional jobs are being disrupted in fundamental ways that students really need to build up their capability in those skills that can be applied to anything.”

[www.flickelectric.co.nz](http://www.flickelectric.co.nz)



# Who's in my room?

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Playwright and actress Emma Kinane revisits her former room in Helen Lowry Hall, where she reminisces about what's changed and what hasn't with current resident Xin Jin.

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Emma lived at Helen Lowry Hall for a year after moving to Wellington from London in 1986. After initially studying English Literature and History, she returned to Victoria in 2013 to complete a Master of Creative Writing at the International Institute of Modern Letters. Emma has starred in the iconic television series *Outrageous Fortune* and in September her new play *Anahera* premiered at Wellington's Circa Theatre starring Jacqueline Nairn and Neill Rea.

On a sunny Wellington morning, Emma returned to her former room to meet Xin, an international student from China who is doing postgraduate study in Engineering and Physics at Victoria. The pair bonded over living in foreign countries, making new friends and hall food.

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## Emma

**What's it like to be in your old room? Has it changed much?**

It's really lovely because I haven't been back here since 1986, but I feel like I've gone back in time—it looks exactly the same. I would have had Queen posters and theatre posters on the walls though.

**Was it your first time living away from home?**

Actually no—I'd lived in London on my own for two years, so I decided to go into a hall of residence because I didn't know anyone in Wellington. After two years in London, it felt really safe to come to a hall, being cooked for and looked after.

**What's your favourite memory of living here?**

I think I saw every single episode of *M\*A\*S\*H*. When I was a teenager we didn't have a television, but there was a TV here and people used to gather in the upstairs social common room. Dinner time was six o'clock, but every night we would gather from about five thirty to chat and watch *M\*A\*S\*H*. That's the strongest memory I have of this place—that lovely half hour before dinner.

**What was the food like when you lived here?**

It was still quite traditional—the most exotic thing we had would probably have been spaghetti bolognese. I do remember though that the food was good. There was always toast, tea and coffee available, so you never went hungry.

**What advice do you have for Xin?**

When I lived here I did a lot of stuff that was outside of Helen Lowry Hall, and the thing I might have done differently is spend more time doing activities with people here. I think you should just grab opportunities as they come because you never know where they'll lead—someone you'll meet or something you try that opens up a whole new path you might not have discovered.

## Xin

**Why did you choose Victoria University?**

I come from China and spent three years in Beijing. It's a very cold city, especially in winter. After graduation I wanted to live in a place with a friendlier climate. I looked at studying in the Southern Hemisphere and there are only two countries there with world-class universities—New Zealand and Australia. Wellington is a very lively city and I think it's good for me to improve my English communication skills here because there aren't as many other Chinese students as in Auckland or Australia.

**How are you adjusting to life in New Zealand?**

There are very distinct cultural and lifestyle differences between China and New Zealand. Our eating traditions are also very different—in New Zealand the cooking is more simple, but also healthier. The chef here at the hall made Peking-style roasted duck once and it tasted very similar to the roasted duck in Beijing.

**What's your experience of Helen Lowry Hall been like so far?**

It's a really lovely environment to live in. I remember when I arrived I kept getting lost—I didn't know how to get anywhere! But the hall assistant helped all of us to find our way around and guided us through the University. It's very friendly here and I like getting to know different people.

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▶ Watch the full story at <http://bit.ly/2wXB3tL>



# From Beowulf to battle



Old English Literature might seem an unlikely gateway to representative sport. For Victoria alumna Dayna Berghan-Wyman (Ngāti Kahu) however, her journey towards representing New Zealand at the International Medieval Combat Federation World Championships began with an Old English Literature course.

“It was an accident really. I only took the course because I couldn’t get into another one that I’d really wanted to take. But Old English turned out to be fascinating—full of fighting, drinking and people getting their heads cut off

and miraculously still being able to talk.

“I got interested in that entire world and soon after became involved with a medieval re-enactment society close to campus. One thing led to another and earlier this year I ended up competing in Denmark in the women’s poleaxe division. Unfortunately, I didn’t place but it was an amazing experience and I’ll be trialling again for New Zealand’s team for next year’s tournament.”

According to Dayna, people get involved in medieval combat societies for various reasons, including the camaraderie, the fun of dressing up and the appeal to the Kiwi instinct for DIY—necessary for making your own armour, weapons, banners and clothing.

Outside the arena, Dayna runs her own business and is involved in a range of projects, including the United Nations Women National Committee Aotearoa

New Zealand and Victoria University’s Alumni as Mentors programme.

“It’s been a thrill mentoring Victoria undergraduates. It’s a chance for them to get some advice and extra perspective on where their studies might take them and how to prepare themselves for their career.

“It’s particularly satisfying when I have female students to mentor because I get to take them along to board meetings of the UN Women National Committee. It’s likely to be their only experience of a board-level meeting made up entirely of women—all of whom have done amazing things in government, business, the arts and so on.

“The main thing I try to communicate to all of the mentees I work with is to remain open-minded about where their career might lead. You simply don’t know where those weird and wonderful interests could take you.”



# More than child's play

Have you ever wondered how a newborn baby's brain develops into a fully functioning adult mind?

**D**r Alia Martin is dedicating her career to answering questions about how babies and children think and learn. The Yale alumna moved to New Zealand and Victoria University early last year, and promptly set up the Victoria Infant and Child Cognition Lab.

**“At the lab, we study children and infants’ social and cognitive development—their journey from entering the world to adult mental states,” says Alia.**

“These basic questions of development are important for understanding how children develop new skills and ways of thinking, and how their social environment impacts their development. We want to figure out how the mind of a baby or child sees the world.

“Our findings so far show that babies and children often understand a lot more than we think they do.”

Based at Victoria’s Kelburn campus in the School of Psychology, Alia runs her lab with a full-time research assistant and a

team of postgraduate and undergraduate students.

“Many of our current studies focus on the development of communication and how babies and young children, who are immersed in a world of words, actions and thoughts, learn how social interactions work,” says Alia.

One study the team has been doing this year, funded by a Royal Society of New Zealand Marsden Fast-Start grant, is looking at how children aged three to six years use their perspective-taking skills when communicating.

“Can children put themselves into someone else’s shoes to understand what that person is trying to communicate to them?” says Alia. “Can they consider that someone else might see something different than they do? As adults, we consider each other’s perspectives all the time, without much effort. What are the origins and development of this ability?”

The research team invites families with babies or children to come to the University and participate in short studies that typically last only five to 15 minutes. The studies involve activities such as playing with toys or a game, watching

videos or answering questions, and are designed to be fun and engaging for specific age groups between birth and about age eight. Family members are welcome to watch and learn more about the research while their child participates.

Rather than assessing any individual child’s development or abilities, the research will instead help to understand what typical child development looks like and how children acquire the abilities they have.

Alia is eager to tell whānau about the results of the research and, once a study has been finished or is published, it’s shared with those who were involved.

So far, the response to Wellington’s first baby lab has been positive, says Alia.

“We’ve had strong interest in our research here and are so grateful to all the families who have participated. We hope that by doing this research and sharing our results with families, we can help to shed light on how these young humans think, even when they aren’t able to tell us yet with their words.”

✉ [babylab@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:babylab@vuw.ac.nz)

🌐 [www.vuwbabylab.com](http://www.vuwbabylab.com)



# Ninety years of rowing at Victoria

Established in 1927, the Victoria University Rowing Club celebrated its ninetieth anniversary in September with a regatta on Wellington harbour and an evening alumni reunion.

Rowing is strongly associated with university life and Victoria has produced its fair share of elite athletes over the years, including Olympians John Gibbons and Dick Joyce and New Zealand University representatives Kirsty Ferguson, Marianne Lupton, Sarah Nyberg, Michael Preston, Trevor Stade and Rees Ward.

According to current club president Connor MacLeod, the Club's achievements are all the more impressive, considering the conditions the rowers have to put up with.

"Racing skiffs are narrow and made for speed, so they're extremely unstable. That means you really need flat water with no wind—so Wellington is probably one of the worst places in the country to train. On the upside, between the time spent running

up Wellington's hills and time on the rowing machine, we are always one of the fittest university crews!"

There are currently about 50 members of the club, ranging from novices through to championship rowers. These members met former Victoria rowers at the anniversary celebrations, the highlight of which was an interfaculty regatta.

**The sport of rowing is THE sport and is an integral part of University life the world over. It has wonderful developing powers and not only does it make for quickness of eye and hand, but also for alertness and mental improvement.**

"Rowing Club Notes", SMAD [precursor of Salient magazine], 12 June 1931

A regular fixture of the University rowing season, the regatta pits Victoria faculties against each other for bragging rights as to which one produces the best rowers. For the record, the Henley-style

format—where two crews race each other in a knockout competition—eventually saw a composite crew made up of Law and Design alumni crowned champions.

<https://vicrowing.org.nz/>



## Know your audience

Dr James McKinnon, who this year won a prestigious Ako Aotearoa Tertiary Teaching Excellence Award, draws his teaching philosophy from an unlikely source.

"I've always enjoyed the part of teaching that's about getting to know people. My approach is teach the person, not the subject—to paraphrase the Canadian physician William Osler who famously said 'treat the patient, not the disease'."

James, who also hails from Canada, is a senior lecturer in Victoria's Theatre programme. He has been at Victoria since 2010 and has taught theatre for more than 15 years.

James says he was honoured to receive the award, one of 12 Sustained Excellence awards presented by Rt Hon. Bill English at a ceremony at Parliament.

He says he's grateful for the opportunities that have opened up to him since starting at Victoria.

"When I arrived here, the Faculty invested a lot of resources in making professional development opportunities available to me. To me it's a sign that Victoria is a university that's interested in helping its people grow."

[✉ james.mckinnon@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:james.mckinnon@vuw.ac.nz)

# EXTENDING THE HUMAN BODY

**WHEN ALUMNA DANI CLODE SAYS SHE'S "ALL THUMBS", SHE MEANS IT IN A GOOD WAY.**

The London-based industrial designer has invented the Third Thumb—a 3D printed prosthetic thumb that straps to your hand and is controlled by your feet.

There are various applications for the Third Thumb, but Dani says the most compelling opportunity lies in music.

"Musical instruments are products with unlimited interaction potential, so to add a third thumb into that interaction is only going to make it more interesting and dynamic," she says.

"More generally, it's about challenging the perception of prosthetics. When we reframe prosthetics as extensions rather than replacements, then we start to shift the focus from 'fixing' disability to extending human ability."

Dani became interested in this field when studying for her Bachelor of Design Innovation at Victoria.

"All of my early product design work seemed to revolve around the body and hand interaction. At Victoria, I created a 3D printed finger for the first time and I also explored the possibility of extending the human ear.

"Shortly after graduating, I worked with the School of Design's Dr Anne Galloway on a product called the Bone Knitter, which allows orthopaedic casts to be crafted from all natural materials and slowly knitted over broken bones. The Bone Knitter was displayed in the Vienna Biennale this year."

Dani has recently completed a Master of Product Design at London's Royal College of Art, and is applying her research to some new prosthetic designs.

"With The Alternative Limb Project, I've just finished a prosthetic arm design that's on display at the Kennedy Centre in Washington, DC, and I've got a couple of other, ambitious projects on the go too.

"I'm really excited to continue to collaborate with inspiring people, and continue to push the limits of prosthetics and design for the body."

[www.daniclodedesign.com](http://www.daniclodedesign.com)



# A REMARKABLE LIFE IN LETTERS

In 1956, when Barbara Francis first met Victoria alumna Agnes (Nessie) Moncrieff, she was deeply impressed by this remarkable woman and they soon became lifelong friends.



You Do Not Travel in  
China at the Full Moon

Agnes Moncrieff's letters  
from China 1930–1945

EDITED BY BARBARA FRANCIS



More than 60 years later, Barbara has published a selection of Nessie's letters, written while she was the

New Zealand YWCA's foreign secretary in China from 1930 until 1945. The letters describe living through extremely difficult and dramatic years in China, as Nessie's arrival there coincided with Japan's invasion, which escalated into the Sino-Japanese War and then World War II.

Typical of Nessie's letters is this detail from July 1938, when a raid alarm sounded while she waited for a train: "We dashed along a piece of half-submerged railway right down at the edge of the river and I have never leapt so nimbly from sleeper to sleeper ... We sheltered under a mat roof that would have knocked us silly if it had come down, but was not strong enough to protect us if anything heavy landed in our direction. It had housed

horses and was not very clean, but I lay with my face in the mud and was quite happy."

Barbara says that Nessie's effort to create opportunities for women was a lifelong mission. "Right from her early years as a student at Victoria University (1917–1921), she was elected to the Student Association Executive as treasurer and later women's vice-president, the highest office a woman could then hold. When she returned from China she was on the Council for Equal Pay and Opportunity."

In 2011, having heard Barbara had compiled the letters, Victoria University Press publisher Fergus Barrowman contacted her. "Fergus asked for a synopsis and a proposal, and then I was off. It's a dream come true getting Nessie's story out into the world."

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*You Do Not Travel in China at the Full Moon: Agnes Moncrieff's letters from China, 1930–1945*, edited by Barbara Francis, published by Victoria University Press, HB, \$60.

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<http://bit.ly/2yoKNOG>

## BAD BABY

A debut novel by Annaleese Jochems won the 2016 Adam Prize for best folio at Victoria University's International Institute of Modern Letters and has just been published by Victoria University Press.



*Baby* is set in the Bay of Islands and is centred around the chaotic Cynthia who steals money and

runs away with her fitness instructor Anahera to live on a boat named *Baby*.

Annaleese says she always loved the frankness of genre fiction, which is why *Baby* is a psychological thriller.

"I like art that is forthright about the way it wants me to feel. *Basic Instinct*, one of my favourite films, is about a very sexy lady novelist who kills men with ice picks. I think fiction writers are often too coy and clever to deliver the sort of fun I look for."

Cynthia is a contradictory character with a penchant for reality TV. Annaleese insists she is a moral actor, despite some of her malicious behaviour.

"I think Cynthia has a moral compass but like anyone she doles her empathy out in different measures to different people, depending on her position in relation to them. In the book she comes to feel that extreme action is required, and she's willing to take it."

Just 23 years of age, Annaleese grew up in rural Northland. Her mother was one of her early readers, giving her encouraging feedback.

"I decided I wanted to become a writer when I was about 14, because I was solitary and melancholic and I wanted those things to mean something."

*Baby* has attracted some favourable pre-reviews including one from Eleanor Catton who said "*Baby* blazes with intelligence and murderous black humour. *Heavenly Creatures* for a new generation."

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*Baby* by Annaleese Jochems (Victoria University Press), PB, \$30.

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<http://bit.ly/2wTHMoo>

# Belgium remembers

When New Zealanders think of World War I, the images that often come to mind are of heroic deeds and sacrifice on the battlefield rather than what was happening at home.

However, as two Museum and Heritage Studies students from Victoria helped discover during a work placement at the Ministry for Culture and Heritage, the hard graft and ingenuity of Kiwi women on the home front played an important role in the war—and even received royal acknowledgement.

Imelda Bargas, senior historian at the Ministry and a Victoria alumna, says she made an intriguing discovery about the wartime contribution of women while researching New Zealand's domestic experience of the war.

"I came across a group of women who had received the Queen Elisabeth Medal from the Queen of Belgium," says Imelda. The medal was given as a token of thanks to some of the women who contributed to Belgium's war effort.

New Zealanders sent clothing, bedding and food to the war-ravaged population of Belgium, and raised huge sums of money. "Women contributed by baking, sewing and knitting—but also by organising, fundraising and bringing people together."

Imelda says that immediately after the war, the Belgian Government did not have the resources to fund memorials to acknowledge the aid it received from its allies. "I had the idea—what if Belgium could do something now to further mark the service of these women?"

After finding the overgrown headstone of medal recipient Elizabeth Pinfeld (pictured) at Wellington's Karori Cemetery, Imelda turned to the Belgian Government to ask whether they were interested in restoring the women's graves.

Belgian officials liked the idea but said they needed more information about the women. "At that time, all we had were some old newspaper articles with their surnames, so it was really

difficult to know exactly who some of these women were."

The project was picked up by two students from Victoria's Museum and Heritage Studies programme, which has a component of 200 to 300 hours of industry experience.

Supported by Imelda, students Louise Weston and Sarah Byrne rose to the challenge. This included biographical research, writing articles for the New Zealand History website, finding historical images of the women and locating their headstones.

In total, they identified 33 women in New Zealand who received the medal. Their work informed a report that persuaded the Belgian Government to fund an extensive restoration project.

"Having the students was fantastic," says Imelda. "The project just wouldn't have progressed otherwise."

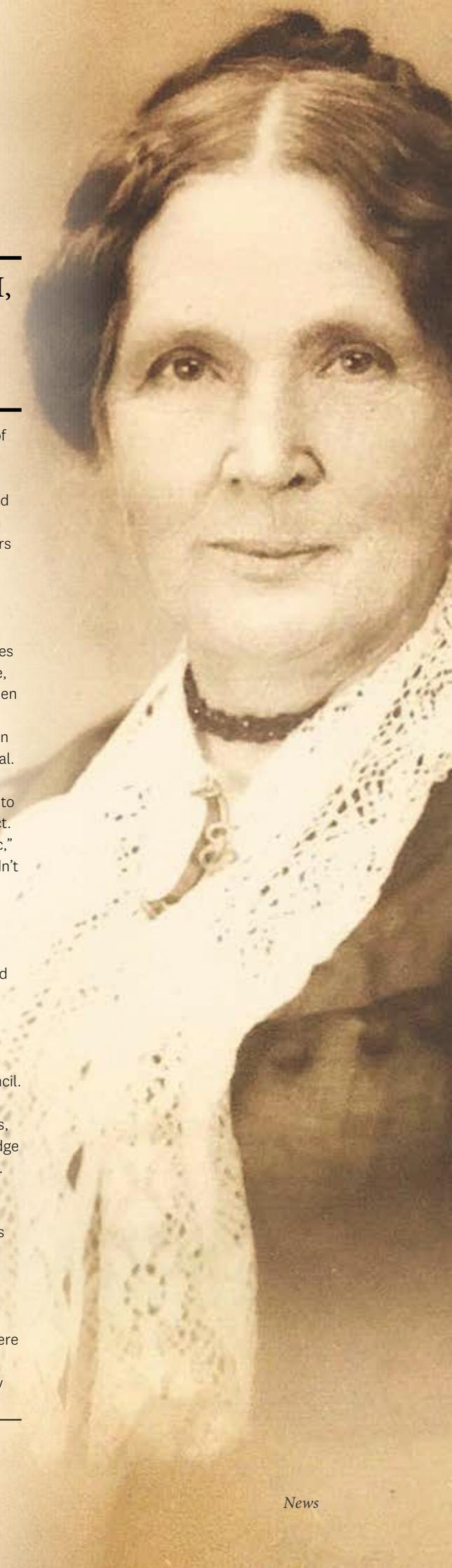
The Belgian Government worked in partnership with Wellington City Council to restore the grave of Elizabeth Pinfeld, which was unveiled by His Excellency the Ambassador of Belgium, Jen-Luc Bodson, in July. In October, the bulk of the restored graves were unveiled in Dunedin in cooperation with Dunedin City Council.

Both events were attended by descendants of the medal recipients, some of whom had no prior knowledge of their ancestors' wartime altruism.

Imelda says the project has shone a light on a less familiar, but no less important, chapter in New Zealand's World War I history.

"Unless they were nurses or prominent figures like Ettie Rout or Lady Liverpool, most of the women who contributed to the war effort were invisible. This project was a way to make their contribution more widely known."

<http://bit.ly/2xt7IAP>





# Unearthing the secrets of the stone rows

For years, archaeologist Dr Bruce McFadgen pondered the rows of stones that snake across farmland at right angles to the sea along the rugged Wairarapa coastline and elsewhere in coastal New Zealand.

**W**hat were they for? Why was there no evidence of the soil having been dug between the rows? Would new investigation techniques change or confirm the story from archaeological work in the 1970s that concluded they resulted from growing kumara between the rows?

So when Dr Matt Ryan from Victoria received a Skinner Fund grant from the Royal Society of New Zealand to explore the stone rows to shed light on early Māori agricultural practices, Bruce was on board. The pair had worked together before on a project on the East Coast. “I was blown away by the amount of information he got from two small samples. You can tell what crops were growing, what the weeds were,” says Bruce.

The rows, thought to have been formed about 600 years ago, look like long stone mounds in shallow trenches, with soil piled on top. Crops propagated on the rows would have had an extended growing season because of the concentrated warmth. One of the hypotheses they’re working on is that they may have been used for growing gourds, to use for containers as well as food.

“But we just don’t know,” Bruce says, “and it’s important we find out. It will tell us a lot about how Māori were using the area.”

The project team combines different skill sets and employs the latest technological methods, including drones and ground-penetrating radar. Matt’s specialty is palynology—the study of pollen. He will use filtering techniques to concentrate the pollen in the sediment and date it. It should provide more robust dating than charcoal drawn from the remains of trees, which may have been old when burnt.

They are joined by a Māori Studies student and by others from the School of Geography, Environment and

Earth Sciences, each bringing unique expertise to the examination of the macrofossil and microfossil remains of the stone rows. Local Māori are interested, and Te Papa is helping with a DNA analysis of the sediment.

The team visited the site north of Cape Palliser, taking samples from the rows in a process overseen by Heritage New Zealand. “In the past we had quite coarse methods. Now, we take only very small samples, but get maximum return,” Matt says.

Another mystery is that some rows are buried by sand, thought to be from a 15th or 16th century tsunami. Diatoms (algae) and novel dating techniques will help piece together the story—not just of the rows but also of the people who lived in the area. The team expects to publish findings in 2018.

“This is really going to be interesting—I just love the way it’s coming together,” Matt says. “We are tackling it with all we’ve got.”

Bruce agrees. “The techniques that Matt has got to apply to this are exciting. In the past few years, the action in this university is just incredible.”



The Duke of Wellington, stipple engraving based on a daguerreotype (1845).

## The haunting history of the photographic image

The 10 iterations of the Duke of Wellington's portrait, featuring in the Adam Art Gallery's *Apparitions* exhibition, show that the history of the photographic image is not a stable one.

Professor Geoffrey Batchen from the School of Art History, Classics and Religious Studies says the photographic image can take multiple forms and, like the Duke's portrait, can over time see an original daguerreotype reproduced as a painting, wood or steel engraving, lithograph or in a number of other media. This image is "a non-medium-specific phantom, tied to, but detached, from the photograph itself".

This journey is the central theme of *Apparitions*, curated by Geoffrey and his eight Honours students.

"As the show's title suggests, the photographic image is haunted because it's always been inhabited by the photographic process from which it has been derived. As a result, it's a rare opportunity for New Zealanders to see images across a range of media from photography's earliest decades."

Geoffrey has 25 years' academic experience in photographic history and says this type of exhibition "is seldom seen in this country and is a subject rarely engaged by scholars anywhere".

Among the collection of lithographs, engravings and photographs on display are daguerreotypes dating back to 1841, when these early types of photographic portrait captured on silver-plated copper were first produced. The exhibition also

includes a number of images created by the English inventor of the photograph, William Henry Fox Talbot, and engravings based on some of the first photographs produced in Africa and elsewhere.

The 85-piece exhibition is the culmination of a year-long Honours class. Each student has contributed an essay to the exhibition's illustrated catalogue—supported by a grant from the Ronald Woolf Endowment Trust—and a public presentation at the Gallery.

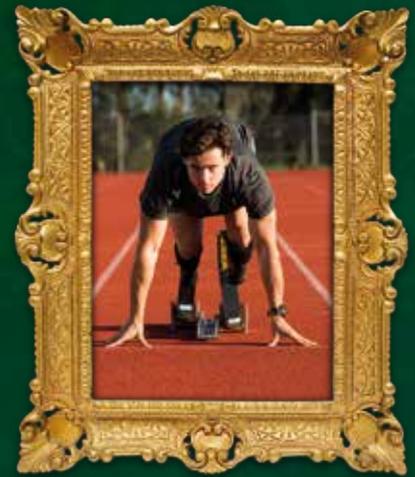
Student Millie Singh says co-curating the show has been a great opportunity. "As an Art History student, it's fantastic to see my research put to a practical use and to gain hands-on experience in planning an exhibition."

The exhibition is on until 21 December 2017.

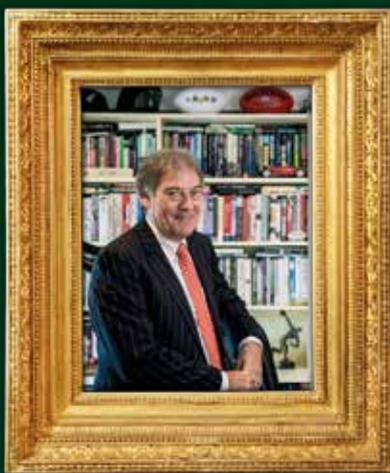
✉ [geoffrey.batchen@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:geoffrey.batchen@vuw.ac.nz)

🌐 [www.adamartgallery.org.nz](http://www.adamartgallery.org.nz)

# Congratulations to Victoria University's 2017 Distinguished Alumni Award recipients



Liam Malone  
BCom 2017



David Howman  
BA 1970, LLB(Hons) 1973



Ida Malosi  
BA 1985, LLB 1989



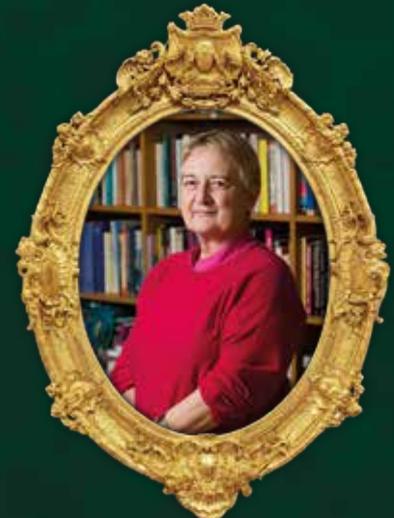
Stephanie McIntyre  
BA 1975



Danny Chan  
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Chris Moller  
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Marilyn Waring  
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