

THE UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND news

Fortnightly newsletter for University staff | Volume 40 | Issue 2 | 12 February 2010

Eight elevated to professor



New professors (clockwise from top left): Christine Arkininstall, Stephen Davies, Michele Leggott, Fiona McQueen, Lesley McCowan, Louise Nicholson, Stuart Bradley, Shanthi Ameratunga.

Eight associate professors at the University have been promoted to professor in the promotions round which concluded just before Christmas. The new professors are from the Faculties of Arts, Medical and Health Sciences, and Science.

Announcing the promotions, Vice-Chancellor Professor Stuart McCutcheon said he was delighted to welcome eight colleagues to the most senior academic leadership positions in the University. "Promotion to professor is a mark of distinction, recognising professional and academic eminence at an international level", he said. "I look forward to the contributions our new professors will make to the development of the University."

Professor McCutcheon also noted that the University is making gains in its equity goals with respect to professorial promotions. "The promotions process is merit-based, with an important input from international referees. It is encouraging to note that over the last two years 12 of the 17 staff promoted to professor have been women. This will go some way to rectifying the current gender imbalance in the professoriate and no doubt reflects in part the mechanisms the

University has to support academic women."

Professor Shanthi Ameratunga (Epidemiology and Biostatistics, School of Population Health) has drawn on her experience in paediatrics and public health to establish a research programme focusing on preventing injuries and their consequences. Alongside several global health initiatives, she directs a project on road traffic injuries in the Pacific funded by the Wellcome Trust and the Health Research Council. She is Deputy Head of the School of Population Health and enjoys highly rewarding teaching and postgraduate supervision roles.

Professor Christine Arkininstall (School of European Languages and Literatures) specialises in Spanish literature and culture from the nineteenth century to the present day. The influences of gender and literary genre on the construction of national identities are a particular interest. She has worked extensively on the Spanish Civil War and the Franco dictatorship as well as twentieth-century Spanish women writers, and is producing a book on female intellectuals writing in the early twentieth-century Spanish radical press.

Professor Stuart Bradley (Department of

Key events

Historical crossroads

"Historical crossroads: Spain from the Second Republic to the twenty-first century", an interdisciplinary conference hosted by the Spanish Department, will be held from 18 to 20 February in the Faculty of Engineering. Day passes are available. For more information visit www.historicalcrossroads.auckland.ac.nz. Meanwhile, "Evocations of Spain", a free exhibition of paintings depicting Spain's trajectory from 1931 to the present day, by Jayne McKelvie, will be on show at the George Fraser Gallery, 25a Princes Street from 18 to 21 February between 10am and 4pm daily.

Cochrane symposium

Register early for the Menstrual Disorders and Subfertility Group's "Evidence on Trial" day symposium on 22 March. Here's an opportunity to listen to internationally renowned speakers discuss the evidence for healthcare for the prevention and treatment of menstrual disorders and subfertility. Visit www.evidenceontrial.co.nz

Lantern Festival

The ClockTower will be lit up in red and hundreds of Chinese lanterns will burn under the night sky in Albert Park at the Chinese Lantern Festival from 26 to 28 February. At this year's event – which marks the end of the 15-day Chinese New Year celebrations – the University will have a bigger presence than ever. Student "cultural ambassadors" from the Confucius Institute will don traditional Chinese costumes and mix and mingle with the public, telling them about courses at the University and the institute's work.

In this issue

- 3 | Goodfellow Postgraduate Professor
- 4 | Cricket venue
- 7 | Maidment lineup

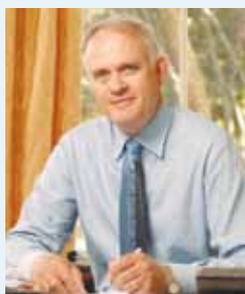
From the Vice-Chancellor

It is with pleasure that I welcome all staff and students back to the University at the start of 2010. I trust that you have had a relaxing break and that you return ready for what will undoubtedly be an interesting year. Let me particularly welcome new staff to the University. I look forward to the contributions you will make to Auckland and to meeting you as part of our staff orientation process.

Last year we were faced with the challenge of weathering the recession and, although commentators speak hopefully of "green shoots", it seems likely that some of those impacts will continue into this year. Certainly demand for places in the University remains strong, and our enrolment rate is again up on last year. This has been encouraged, no doubt, by improvements in some of our practices – this year, students who met our guaranteed minimum entry scores received their NCEA results one morning and their offers of a place from the University the same afternoon! As well as encouraging excellent students to take a place at New Zealand's premier University, this also reflects very well on our new, highly professional and student-centred practices.

With luck, the recession will continue to exert downward pressure on construction costs, which will be important in what is probably the biggest construction (and IT systems development) year in the University's history. Notable among the construction projects will be the continued redevelopment of the Grafton Campus, the completion of the Institute for Innovation in Biotechnology and the new 442-bed hall of residence approved by Council in December last year for construction in the Elam precinct, with a target opening date in early 2012. Investment on this scale is a very clear signal of the confidence we have in the future of the University.

The New Year also brings with it a new Minister for Tertiary Education – our fifth in about four years. With responsibility for the tertiary sector as well as transport, ICT and (associate) finance and infrastructure, the Hon Steven Joyce will be vitally interested in how New Zealand can get the best possible outcomes from public investment. Recently published data show that rates of return from universities are commonly in the range 12-14 percent, and we will certainly be drawing this to the new Minister's attention.



Physics) is an authority on the physics of how sound interacts with turbulence in the atmosphere. He has designed instruments which measure winds and turbulence close to the surface and are useful in such fields as pollution modelling, hazard mitigation, wind energy, climate research and optical astrophysics. Since 2000 he has secured \$7.3 million in research funding and he currently has 21 active projects with Auckland UniServices Ltd, the University's applied research arm.

Professor Stephen Davies (Department of Philosophy) has made his name in research into aesthetics and the philosophy of art with an emphasis on music. He has also published in ethics and political philosophy; he has an ongoing interest in Balinese culture and art; and his current projects include art and evolution. His output includes six single-authored books, one edited book, two co-edited books and 55 refereed journal articles.

Professor Michele Leggott (Department of English) is an award-winning poet with several volumes of work to her name. She was New Zealand's inaugural Poet Laureate from 2008-2009 and is co-ordinator of the New Zealand Electronic Poetry Centre, an internationally acclaimed gateway to poetry resources in the Pacific region based at the University.

Professor Lesley McCowan (Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology) is the head of the Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology. She has an international reputation for her research in growth-restricted (small for gestational age)

pregnancies and is the principal investigator of the international SCOPE study in New Zealand. Other research interests include how to improve pregnancy and birth outcomes in obese women and also risk factors for stillbirth. She has had a leadership role in the education of midwives and obstetric specialists in New Zealand.

Professor Fiona McQueen (Department of Molecular Medicine and Pathology) has been involved in rheumatology research for more than 20 years. She specialises in the applications of MRI scanning to inflammatory arthritis, particularly rheumatoid and psoriatic arthritis. She continues to collaborate with other international experts in the development of scoring systems for MRI in arthritis, so that imaging can be used to help clinical decision-making. She heads the Auckland Radiology Imaging Group, a collaboration between academic rheumatologists and radiologists.

Professor Louise Nicholson (Department of Anatomy with Radiology) heads the Molecular Neuroanatomy Laboratory in the Centre for Brain Research which seeks to understand the triggers and mechanisms underlying neurodegenerative diseases of the brain. She has been a principal investigator on two prestigious Marsden Fund grants studying the role of gap junctions in epilepsy, and in spinal cord injury and repair. Other current research interests include neuroinflammation, neural differentiation, and detection and treatment of pre-natal brain injury.

Royal presence for mooters



The University of Auckland mooting team performed a demonstration moot at the opening of the Supreme Court building by Prince William in Wellington on 18 January.

Desley Horton and Ben Prewett, winners of the National Mooting Competition 2009, became the first advocates to speak in the new courtroom.

They were introduced by Advocacy course lecturer Simon Mount who explained that they will shortly represent New Zealand at the Jessup International Moot Court competition in Washington DC.

The team argued a claim to independence on behalf of a group of people from a fictional set of islands, presenting arguments to the International

Court of Justice. Desley and Ben each spoke for about ten minutes before being questioned by Justices McGrath and Wilson on issues of international law arising in the moot.

Following the moot, Desley, Ben and Simon were introduced to Prince William, the Prime Minister and the Chief Justice. The Prince was particularly interested to learn about the team's preparation for the Jessup moot, and to hear more about mooting in general.

As always the team, which includes Edward Fox and Eliza Prestidge-Oldfield, is grateful to the Law Foundation and Bell Gully for their support of the Jessup moot, and to co-coach Treasa Dunworth for her tireless support.

Chair combines GP and academic skills



Ask Dr Felicity Goodyear-Smith what makes an excellent GP and without a moment's hesitation she replies "good communication skills".

"One of the tools GPs have is time," says the newly appointed Goodfellow Postgraduate Chair in General Practice at the University. The best GPs are not only highly competent, but also adept at building relationships with patients and their families over time.

"You have to be able to identify and manage

just about everything. The boundaries of general practice are incredibly fuzzy. Almost anything can fall within primary care.

"You can't manage everything on your own. But you do have to be clear about what's going on and whether or not you need assistance from other health professionals."

Having started out in general practice in 1980, Felicity says she "fell into academia" ten years ago after studying for a distance learning masters degree in general practice and discovering a passion for research.

She was appointed to the Chair in December after a lengthy international search. Her predecessor, Professor Ross McCormick, stepped down in 2008.

The role of Goodfellow Postgraduate Chair calls for someone who is a primary care physician, an academic and an active researcher.

Felicity is all of the above. Since joining the University as a senior lecturer in 2000, she has continued practising medicine part time.

Currently, she divides her clinical time between GP locum work in Brown's Bay and at the Auckland City Mission. The mix gives her a good balance of affluent, suburban patients and vulnerable, high needs inner-city clients, she says.

Naturally enough, Felicity's University research focuses on general practice. She lists her areas of interest as lifestyle risk factors, mental health, domestic violence, sexual assault and

immunisation. "It may sound disparate, but, actually, it ties together," says Felicity.

She has, for example, developed a case-finding and help assessment tool, called CHAT, which allows patients to identify and prioritise lifestyle problems.

She also has a Health Research Council grant to look into ways to improve immunisation rates. A randomised controlled study is assessing whether welcoming newborn babies into their GP clinic with a letter to their families before their first immunisation is due can lift the overall rate of infants who receive their shots.

"The research I do is very much designed for simple implementation. If it can make a difference, then we put it into practice," says Felicity.

It's an approach that is mirrored in the work of the Goodfellow Unit itself. The postgraduate education centre for GPs and primary health practitioners is a world leader in primary health care research. "We do research that can be implemented quickly to improve the health of our communities."

As if she weren't busy enough, Felicity took on the editorship of the *NZ Family Physician* journal last year. She promptly retired that journal and launched *The Journal of Primary Health Care*. Not that she neglects her own health and well-being. Tramping is a favourite pastime – and she can recommend hiking in the mountains around the Nelson Lakes.

Riding for healthy hearts



From left: Dr Stephen Laurent (Auckland Hospital), Associate Professor Rob Doughty (Department of Medicine), Dr Malcolm Legget (Heart Group Auckland).

The Heart Foundation's Great Ride for Heart riders didn't miss a beat when they set off on their epic two-week cycle from Cape Reinga to Bluff earlier this month.

A core team of 24 sponsored cyclists – including University riders – planned to tough it out over the entire 2117 kilometres, finishing up in Bluff on the day that has hearts racing everywhere: Valentine's Day. Day riders joined them en route.

Every cent raised goes towards setting up a research hub for heart health research to be based at the University's Faculty of Medical and Health Sciences.

Riders from the University included: Lesley Doughty (School of Nursing); Rob Doughty (Department of Medicine); Max Ihaka (School of Medicine); Malcolm Legget (School of Medicine); Ralph Maddison (Clinical Trials Research Unit and School of Population Health); Paul Nolan (Faculty of Science); Clare Wall (School of Medical Sciences); Nigel Wilson (honorary lecturer, Auckland District Health Board).

Cardiovascular disease is still New Zealand's biggest killer – the primary cause of death in 40 percent of all deaths, says Great Ride for Heart rider, Paul Nolan (Senior Tutor, Health and Performance) who works in the Cardiac Clinic at the Tamaki Campus.

"There are several known risk factors and smoking is one of the big ones," he says.

Quitting smoking reduces a person's chances of developing heart disease significantly. The University became Smoke Free in January.

But while people know smoking is bad for them,

they often don't view physical inactivity in the same light, says Paul.

Ideally we should all do at least 30 minutes exercise per day – at around 80 to 85 per cent of our maximum heart rate. That means being a little out of breath while still being able to hold a conversation – "but not recite Shakespeare" says Paul.

A person's maximum heart rate is generally worked out on a simple formula of 220 beats per minute minus their age.

Alumni Awards dinner

The 2010 Distinguished Alumni Awards dinner is on Friday 5 March. The formal black-tie event honouring this year's distinguished alumni will be held in the Alumni Marquee on Old Government House lawn. Visit www.alumni.auckland.ac.nz for more information.

Staff survey highlights environmental responsibility

When the Senior Management Team pored over the 2009 staff survey results last year, they concluded the University should focus on three key areas which stood out as requiring greater improvement: leadership; innovation and empowerment; and image and reputation.

Dr Lesley Stone's areas of responsibility fell under the "image and reputation" section of the survey. She's the Sustainability and Environmental Coordinator. It's her job to make sure the University's commitment to sustainability and the environment translates into actions that really do make a difference.

The cynic might have wondered if asking staff to rate our environmental performance under a heading called "image and reputation" implied we were more concerned with appearances than doing the right thing. But quite the contrary.

"It has to be real. The University has always been clear on that. And I am too. I wouldn't be interested in doing this job if it were about spin," says Lesley.

Lesley's role was established in late 2006 when the University had had a dedicated energy manager for almost two decades. "Denis Agate was something of an unsung hero who did an extraordinary job in the field of operational energy management," she says.

He wasn't the only the only "hero", of course. What's more, the University had had an Environmental Policy since the late 1990s.

But when staff came to answer the first Staff Survey back in 2007, many didn't know what had been happening behind the scenes. Presented with the statement, "The University is an environmentally responsible organisation", 59 percent either responded negatively or didn't know. Just 41 percent agreed – well below the survey's international benchmark of 77 percent.

Since then, the focus on making the University more environmentally responsible has widened its sights and gathered a good deal more momentum.

Much of Lesley's role has been to engage more "heroes" from around the University and to help them get their ideas off the ground. Now thousands of individuals, including action teams, working groups and steering committees, are tackling everything from reducing rubbish and energy use to figuring out how the University can provide better support for teaching and research in the sustainability arena.

Not surprisingly, last year's Staff Survey showed a rise in the number of staff who agreed the University was an environmentally responsible organisation.

Overall, 51 percent responded positively – still 16 percent below last year's benchmark of 67 percent, but significantly better than two years ago.

Meanwhile, a quarter of respondents answered they didn't know. That result flagged to Lesley that despite a lot more effort having gone into communicating sustainability and environmental initiatives, more still needed to be done.

The survey also proved illuminating on another front. "When we broke down the results we found that every group above the median had implemented recycling – and every group below it hadn't."

Staff seemed to equate environmental responsibility with recycling. It's easy to see why. "We see rubbish. We smell it. It's so tangible.

"But we would like people's perception of our environmental responsibility to rest on more than that. Recycling by itself doesn't make us sustainable. We are doing a huge number of other things as well."

Having the Staff Survey results has given Lesley a clearer understanding of people's thinking. As for the results themselves, "I would like to get to the point where we are at least equivalent to the benchmark. But it would have to be based on real achievements – not image."

Ace venue for cricket



Colin Maiden Park, Auckland Cricket's new home at the Tamaki Campus, has been hosting bumper crowds since December.

Up to 3500 spectators have turned out to watch the Auckland Aces in action in their Twenty 20 matches for the HRV Cup.

At least 14 games – five Plunket Shield (four-day), four one dayers (50 over) and five Twenty 20 – have been scheduled for between December and early April.

Auckland Cricket has moved from Eden Park, where it normally used the outer oval, for two

seasons while the main stadium is redeveloped for the 2011 Rugby World Cup.

Colin Maiden Park, with its reputation for excellent wickets, is no stranger to top-level cricket, staging some first class games for three seasons up till 2002/2003. The Auckland University Cricket Club has been based there for the past 32 years.

Bringing a club ground and facilities on a university campus up to the standard needed for first class cricket presented some logistical challenges, says Auckland Cricket's chief

executive, Andrew Eade. These were overcome "with goodwill and hard work" he says.

Eden Park ground staff – "probably the best turf culture people in the country" – had to relay the entire outfield (encompassing three of the park's ten fields) and the cricket block. The changing rooms in the park clubrooms were upgraded, training wickets laid, and new sightscreens installed.

The playing area is considerably bigger than either ground at Eden Park. "The players appreciate the extra room which creates a slightly different atmosphere," says Andrew.

Spectators too like the space and the grassy embankments lacking at the outer oval. There is plenty of scope for food stalls and attractions for youngsters such as stilt walkers and a bouncy castle to enliven the Twenty 20 matches.

People driving to games can pay to use the carpark across the road on the eastern side of the Tamaki Campus.

Peter Fehl, the Director of Property Services, says the arrangement with Auckland Cricket has been "a win-win" for both parties. "It's a great use of the land during a relatively quiet period for the University while providing a nice setting to watch cricket."

The extra income gained by the University has been put towards covering any additional costs including cleaning, security and oversight, says Peter.

Details of forthcoming fixtures are at www.aucklandcricket.co.nz

Calling for Fulbright-Harkness Fellow

A new award giving emerging leaders from any field the opportunity to study or carry out research in the United States has just been unveiled.

The Fulbright-Harkness New Zealand Fellowship is to be awarded annually, and offers recipients NZ\$15,000 towards the costs of a fellowship in the US for a minimum of six weeks.

New Zealand alumni of the prestigious Harkness Fellowships exchange programme raised funds to launch the award.

The international Harkness Fellowships programme has been around for more than 50 years, but in the 1990s it was restricted to people from the health care field.

This new award restores Harkness exchange opportunities to emerging leaders from a wide range of disciplines – including business, politics, the creative arts and journalism – something which has long been an aim of the NZ Harkness Fellowship Trust.

The trust, chaired by Professor Richard Faull (Medical Sciences and the Centre for Brain Research), will offer the fellowships in partnership with Fulbright New Zealand.

Applications for the first fellowship close on 15 March. For further details visit www.fulbright.org.nz

Taxing issues

What should we do about tax? Nothing, for the moment.

The Tax Working Group (TWG) has delivered its final report with a list of things the Government might look at when making changes to our current tax system. The basis on which the TWG was set up was odd, but it did its best with the mandate, time and resources at its disposal. The trouble was that the Government gave it only some of the job that needed to be done and then firmly tied its hands.

The overall tax and welfare system is in bad shape and almost broken, administratively. The Inland Revenue has too many things to do and more and more of those have nothing to do with calculating and collecting tax. For example, the Family Tax Credit, In-work Tax Credit, Independent Earner Tax Credit, Student Loans, Student Allowances, KiwiSaver and Child Support payments have nothing to do with tax, even if some have “Tax” in their titles. They are really about welfare, tertiary education and retirement saving.

The only connection is that they are about or related to “income”.

The TWG’s report acknowledged the complexities created by the combined effect of tax and welfare benefits, but suggested that examining the social welfare system was “outside its brief”. That was unfortunate because the present interface between the two systems is a distortionary, unfair mess.

The Government should delay acting on any of the TWG’s recommendations until the combined effect of tax and welfare benefits is examined. It may be possible to design a single system for both and we should not pass up the opportunity to look at that.

There are other shortcomings with the tax system that the TWG did not look at. In a Retirement Policy and Research Centre (RPRC) Working Paper (forthcoming), we identify 11 different ways that a single Australian share can be owned by a New Zealander, and 13 different ways for an overseas bond to be owned, and most have different tax consequences for the investor. Although there is no surprise in investors using the most advantageous structures, we do wonder why there are so many possible structures from which they can choose for tax purposes.

The RPRC’s Working Paper will describe a new, principles-based approach to the calculation of an individual’s income for tax purposes. It suggests we use natural definitions of income from all sources and require the Inland Revenue to get back to collecting and calculating the final tax for income from all sources instead of, as now, partly devolving that responsibility to financial service providers and employers. The Working Paper’s so-called “gold standard” would allow the abolition of artificial concepts like Fringe Benefit Tax, Employer Superannuation Contribution Tax, Fund Withdrawal Tax, PIEs, Portfolio Investor Rates, and the Fair Dividend Rate treatment of overseas investments. It would also fix some of the interface problems with welfare.

There is a lot more wrong with the way we collect tax and pay welfare than the TWG noted. If we want a world-class tax system again, the TWG’s report needs to be seen as a starting point – unless the Government is only prepared to put sticking plasters on the currently illogical tax and welfare systems.

The Working Paper will be published on www.rprc.auckland.ac.nz in late February.

Michael Littlewood, Co-director, Retirement Policy and Research Centre

Clinton adviser confronts GM fears



Dr Nina Fedoroff, the Science and Technology Adviser for US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, challenged fears over genetic modification at a public lecture held at the University last month.

She told an audience of scientists, GE-Free NZ representatives, media and members of the public that in a climate change-affected world feeding the planet’s ballooning population would not only require a raft of new genetically modified (GM) crops and farming methods, but also public acceptance of GM.

She said GM had a good safety record and consumer fears about the crops were not supported by science.

Her lecture, “Rethinking agriculture in a changing climate”, began by highlighting the enormous challenges facing the planet in the midst of climate change.

While the world would have another three billion people by the middle of this century, its arable land mass was unlikely to increase

significantly, she said.

Furthermore, water shortages and rising temperatures would cut crop yields.

Therefore it was vitally important that countries lift productivity on existing arable land and at the same time reduce agriculture’s environmental impacts.

Dr Fedoroff, a microbiologist, said public fears about GM crops had led to reticence towards GM from the agricultural industry.

Feeding the world’s population called for the development of new GM species. “We will need new crops, new agricultural methods, and new agricultural systems in order to cope, and these will only come from science,” she said.

The Evan Pugh Professor of Biology and Willaman Professor of Life Science at Pennsylvania State University researches the molecular biology of plant genes, particularly the response of plants to stressful environments.

Her lecture was co-hosted by the Faculty of Science and Plant and Food Research.

Obituary

Professor Peter Black



Peter Nigel Black, Professor of Clinical Pharmacology, died suddenly on 10 January 2010. His unexpected passing has left his family, friends and colleagues mourning his loss.

Peter was the greatly loved husband of Bernadette Salmon FRACP, paediatrician, and proud father of Claire.

Born and raised in Auckland, Peter undertook his secondary education at Auckland Grammar School. At 16, he enrolled at The University of Auckland and completed his MBChB in 1980. He continued with his postgraduate medical training in New Zealand and five years later obtained his Fellowship of the Royal Australasian College of Physicians. That year, his academic talents were recognised through the awarding of a Medical Research Council Overseas Research Fellowship. This saw Peter move to Britain where he spent the next three years in the Department of Clinical Pharmacology, at Hammersmith Hospital, in London, under the mentorship of Professor Sir Colin Dollery, one of the founding fathers of the discipline of clinical pharmacology.

This period in London was seminal for Peter and sparked his long-standing interest in clinical pharmacology in general and in respiratory pharmacology specifically. His subsequent academic career was built upon these two strands, a path that saw him appointed to the Chair of Clinical Pharmacology in 2008.

It was also during his time in London that Peter

met his future wife, Bernadette, who was training to be a paediatrician.

Peter's research career was unusual in its breadth and its depth, covering the complete spectrum from basic research through to translational and clinical research in its many forms, including Cochrane database analysis and investigator-initiated clinical trials.

Furthermore, the research questions that he addressed were pivotal, especially in the field of chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD).

In addition, the epidemiological studies that he was involved in aimed to answer the critical questions on the role of diet, bacteria and vitamin D in the incidence of asthma and will provide important clinical information on this disease, which is particularly prevalent in New Zealand.

Peter published widely and, even with a career cut cruelly short, he had more than 90 peer-reviewed publications and book chapters, with papers in the highest-ranking general medical journals, such as *The Lancet* and *The New England Journal of Medicine*.

Similarly, Peter was very successful in obtaining grant funding from the major funding bodies such as the Health Research Council, Auckland Medical Research Foundation and others, including the National Heart Foundation and Child Health Research Foundation.

One of Peter's most significant contributions was to the "Quality and safety of medicines" initiatives where he made major efforts to improve prescribing nationwide. This is particularly critical at this time in medical practice when new and more complex medicines are becoming available, and where the patient population is ageing and often presenting with co-morbidities requiring treatment with multiple drugs.

His wide involvement in all aspects of medical research and clinical practice impacted very positively on Peter's teaching, both at undergraduate and postgraduate levels. He made enormous contributions to undergraduate medical teaching and received the best lecturer

award on three occasions (in 2003, 2005 and 2007) from the Medical Students' Association. His stature as a researcher was also demonstrated by numerous invited lectures at both national and international conferences.

Clinically, Peter was passionate not only about clinical pharmacology, but perhaps most significantly about the importance of medical generalists and general medicine. He undoubtedly championed general medicine at a time when the pressures for increasing sub-specialisation made this a difficult furrow to plough. Peter was a consummate diagnostician and loved nothing better than to debate diagnoses and patient management, and was increasingly interested in clinical reasoning.

As an individual, Peter, while a serious thinker and a dedicated clinician, had a keen sense of humour. He was fountain of knowledge, both medical and general, and his opinion was sought by a large variety of individuals and government bodies. For instance, he sat on a wide range of national committees, such as the Ministry of Health Medicines Assessment Advisory Committee and HRC's Standing Committee on Therapeutic Trials, to name just two. He brought energy, integrity and frankness to every activity with which he engaged.

Professor Peter Black was a true champion of the disciplines of clinical pharmacology and academic general medicine, and his sudden loss will be widely felt. He will be mourned by his colleagues, both academic and clinical, his students and trainees. Our thoughts and sympathies are with Bernadette, Claire and Peter's wider family.

Professor Iain Martin (Dean, Faculty of Medical and Health Sciences), Associate Professor Phillippa Poole (Department of Medicine), Professor Ian Reid (Deputy Dean, Faculty of Medical and Health Sciences) and Associate Professor James Paxton (Head of Department, Pharmacology and Clinical Pharmacology)

Hat-trick for Confucius Institute

The Confucius Institute Auckland has received the international Confucius Institute of the Year Award for the third year in a row.

The Auckland institute is one of more than 500 Confucius Institutes and Confucius classrooms scattered throughout 88 countries, says institute Director Nora Yao (School of Asian Studies).

She puts the institute's winning streak down to it having built "something quite special".

"We have very good relationships with local organisations and communities as well as very good support from the University and the community," says Nora who travelled to Beijing with the institute's General Manager, Gillian Eadie, to collect the award in December.

Having such close relationships has enabled the institute to customise its programmes to fit the many and varied needs of the different communities it works with, says Nora.

The institute, housed on the top floor of the Business School, is committed to helping New Zealanders capitalise on the opportunities emerging out of closer ties with China.

It is jointly funded by the University, Hanban (the Chinese government agency which fosters the teaching of Chinese as a foreign language) and Fudan University in Shanghai.

The institute's courses and programmes cater for all ages, abilities and interests, and suit everyone from individuals with just a passing interest in the language, culture and history of China, to business entrepreneurs and government officials.

It starts by working with primary-school aged children, setting up and supporting Chinese language and culture programmes in schools. "We put a big focus on the school level students, which in turn helps support the tertiary level in the longer term."

Working with the Ministry of Education, under the New Zealand-China Free Trade Agreement, the institute is bringing Mandarin language teaching assistants from China to New Zealand.

Six Chinese teaching assistants will be posted in New Zealand primary and secondary schools during 2010 under the new

programme, jointly supported by the New Zealand and Chinese governments.

"Helping students become more 'China literate' gives them more opportunities and competitiveness in today's global workforce."

The institute offers various scholarships for students, teachers, recent graduates and business people to study in China.

Back here at the University, starting in March the institute will again run its popular lunchtime classes in Chinese language and culture for staff.

It plays a big role in Chinese cultural events around Auckland too. Expect to see Confucius Institute staff and student volunteers out in force during the ever popular annual Chinese Lantern Festival. (See *Key events* on page 1)

As for Nora herself, she divides her time between directing the institute and teaching Chinese programmes in the School for Asian Studies, where she has taught for more than 20 years. Gillian Eadie is currently the Acting Director while Nora is on research and study leave.

Exciting 2010 lineup at Maidment

In spite of the recession and the scramble for the entertainment dollar, the Maidment Theatre enjoyed a boom year in 2009.

More than 61,000 people flocked to the Maidment to see a grand total of 332 events and performances last year.

The most popular productions included Auckland Theatre Company's *The Thirty Nine Steps* and *The Pohutukawa Tree*. Peach Theatre Company's *The History Boys* also enjoyed a sold-out season – with an astonishing 60 percent of the play's audiences attending the Maidment for the first time.

This year heralds yet another exciting programme, enthuses Maidment Director Paul Minifie. "Auckland Theatre Company anchors the 2010 programme with five great works," says Paul. "The main stage theatre opens the year with a wickedly revisionist satire, *Le Sud*, the latest work from Dave Armstrong."

An exceptional cast, led by Elizabeth Hawthorne as Lady Bracknell, relishes the irreverence of *The Importance of Being Earnest*.

A forgotten gem of kiwi comedy is offered in

Horseplay, a literary clash between two of New Zealand's most eccentric men of letters, James K. Baxter and Ronald Hugh Morrison.

And a contemporary take on Shakespeare's enduring *Romeo and Juliet* promises to be one to remember (see photo bottom right).

The ATC season concludes with a savagely funny and compelling indictment of where the American dream went wrong: *August: Osage County*, hailed an instant classic since its sensational Broadway season.

In June and July, Peach Theatre Company will present the large-scale musical, *Sweeney Todd*. This powerful Stephen Sondheim work is rarely performed and should not be missed.

Auckland writer Thomas Sainsbury directs his two most recent plays in the Musgrove Studio. *Dance Troupe Supreme*, featuring Jaquie Brown and Madeliene Sami, and *Bruise* promise all the bite and originality audiences have come to expect from Sainsbury.

Black Grace performs a Musgrove Studio season; there is Hip Hop by TriPLe8FuNk and the University Dancers; improvisation from the

Improv Bandits; productions by Stage 2 Productions, the campus drama club; a Winter Lecture Series; and cutting-edge satire in revues by engineering, medical and law students.

More than 350 performances are scheduled for this year. "We face 2010 with optimism, knowing that for many the theatre is a gateway to The University of Auckland campus," says Paul. For more information and bookings visit www.maidment.auckland.ac.nz



From the Collection



Len Lye (1901-1980), *Roundhead*, 1961

Kinetic sculpture: Steel, nylon and gold-plated copper ring on motorised base with music box

The University of Auckland Art Collection, image courtesy Len Lye Foundation

Artist Len Lye may have never visited The University of Auckland in his lifetime, but his dynamic presence now leaves a powerful impression on our campus.

A pioneer of experimental cinema techniques and kinetic sculpture, with a life-long interest in movement, Lye was born in Christchurch in 1901 and lived most of his life in London and New York.

Compared to his large steel sculptures that

violently whirl and crash, *Roundhead* is one of Lye's most delicate pieces, comprising four concentric circles that spin in space. It embodies big ideas of both massive and minute proportions. Initially named *Rings*, then temporarily titled *Orrery*, it became *Roundhead* in reference to the "Y" chromosome it resembled. It is driven like a torsion pendulum with the outer ring connected to a motor and the subsequent inner rings connected by nylon, swinging in alternate directions as they wind and unwind – a combination of engineering ingenuity and cosmic forces that typify Lye's work.

Accompanying *Roundhead's* syncopated motion is a modified music box that adds a sparse, ambient soundtrack due to pins being removed from the cylinder in a standard box. Lye had always intended *Roundhead* to be produced in an edition, even getting as far as numbering a set of bases. But when it came to recreating the music box, the Len Lye Foundation was faced with a mystery and needed to identify the original tune in the hope of locating additional boxes.

Foundation Director Evan Webb mapped the remaining and missing pins along a chart, much like dots of music along a staff. In consultation with a musical colleague, he established that the original piece of music (*Silent Night*) was not exactly obscure so further music boxes would not be hard to source.

The final component of *Roundhead* is the gold ring at the centre of the sculpture. Lye's wife Ann recalls leaving their home to go shopping when Lye yelled from the window that he needed something of hers for a work and asked for her wedding ring.

She agreed, replacing it with a \$2.98 ring from Woolworths. Their wedding ring remains at the heart of the *Roundhead* prototype to this day. Fortunately, subsequent versions, including the one purchased for the University Collection last year, do not require a wedding band.

After 45 years away from New Zealand, Lye visited in 1968, and again in 1977 for an exhibition at the Govett-Brewster Art Gallery. By then diagnosed with leukaemia, he established the Len Lye Foundation so his work could remain in New Zealand. Meanwhile, Wystan Curnow and Roger Horrocks had begun compiling a collection of Lye's writings. Horrocks, after meeting Lye in New York in 1980, soon found himself working as his full-time assistant.

Horrocks and Curnow's collection, *Figures of Motion*, was published by Auckland University Press in 1984, with subsequent collections of the artist's writings edited by Horrocks and published by Holloway Press in 2002 and 2009. Horrocks, founder of the Department of Film Television and Media Studies, also wrote *Len Lye: A Biography*, which remains a benchmark and reference point for all Lye scholarship.

Lye was an innovator who continues to fascinate researchers, as evidenced by last December's International Symposium on Performance Science, which was entertained by *Art That Moves: The work of Len Lye* currently at the Gus Fisher Gallery until 13 February, and by the Business School's enthusiastic sponsorship of that exhibition in recognition that Lye is an exemplar of Kiwi ingenuity.

Andrew Clifford

Spot the star?



This clever self-portrait of Kathryn Robinson in cheeky “apple of my eye” pose won the University’s Assistant Photographer (Centre for Academic Development) a place on a workshop with top international wedding photographer Jasmine Star. Kathryn used the star-shaped cores inside apples sliced in half for her “star” image. She attended the intensive branding workshop with Jasmine Star – voted one of America’s “Top 10” wedding photographers – in Christchurch last month.

What’s on

SATURDAY 13 FEBRUARY

Artist talk

Gregory Bennett on sound and motion.
1pm Gus Fisher Gallery.

TUESDAY 16 FEBRUARY

Department of Statistics seminar

Dr Mark Holmes, UoA: *Degenerate random environments*. 1.30-2.30pm, venue tba. This is part of a mini-workshop in probability and statistical physics. We discuss joint work with Prof Tom Salisbury on certain kinds of random graphs.

Department of Statistics seminar

Prof David Brydges, University of British Columbia: *What is quantum field theory?* 3-4pm Medium Chemistry Lecture Theatre, Chemistry Bldg, 23 Symonds St.

Bioengineering research seminar

Prof David Paterson, Dept of Physiology, Anatomy and Genetics, Oxford University: *Gene transfer strategy to couple the nervous system to the heart*. 4-5pm Fifth Floor Seminar Rm, 70 Symonds St.

WEDNESDAY 17 FEBRUARY

Orientation to doctoral education policy and process at UoA

9.30-11.30am CAD, Level 5, 76 Symonds St. Mandatory for all academic staff new to UoA. Please enrol through the website www.cad.auckland.ac.nz (Courses and Workshops page), or call CAD reception at ext 88140.

Applied Language Studies and Linguistics seminar

Dr Andreea S. Calude, FRST Research Fellow: *Language as a window into culture and history*. 12noon Rm 103, Fisher Bldg.

The art of graduate research supervision

1-4.30pm CAD, Level 5, 76 Symonds St. Mandatory for academic staff who have not supervised a doctoral student to completion before. Please enrol through the website www.cad.auckland.ac.nz or call CAD reception at ext 88140.

THURSDAY 18 FEBRUARY

International Conference on Infant, Toddler and Early Childhood Mental Health

9am-5pm Business School, UoA. Until 20 February. Invited international experts in the field of infant mental health will present cutting edge research,

and clinicians will present on the implementation of research in practice. Visit www.werrycentre.org.nz/?t=484

SUNDAY 21 FEBRUARY

4th Asia Pacific Nutrigenomics Conference: Genes, Diet and Gut Health

Until 26 February. Lecture Theatre 732-201, Tamaki Campus. The conference will address issues relevant to a wide range of interest groups including scientists, nutritionists, dieticians, food scientists and members of the food industry. View www.nutrigenomics.org.nz

MONDAY 22 FEBRUARY

Introduction to tutoring

10am-4.30pm CAD Seminar Rm, 5th Floor, 76 Symonds St. This full-day workshop is primarily designed for recently-appointed tutors who will be teaching for the first time this semester. Please enrol through the website www.cad.auckland.ac.nz or ext 88140.

Public lecture

Dr John Milner, National Cancer Institute: *Public health genomics: Translating nutrigenomics research into population health benefits*. 7pm-8pm, Owen G Glenn Bldg, 12 Grafton Rd. Followed by light refreshments. Part of the 4th Asia Pacific Nutrigenomics Conference.

WEDNESDAY 24 FEBRUARY

Pension Forum: NZ Superannuation and Overseas Pensions: Issues and Principles for Reform.

1-5pm Case Rm 3, Level 0, Owen G Glenn Bldg, 12 Grafton Rd. Presented by Retirement Policy and Research Centre and HRC. Queries to m.dale@auckland.ac.nz

Faculty of Education research forum and panel discussion

Taking parenting programmes to the people: Lessons learned from around the world. 5pm J1 McGhie Lecture Theatre, Faculty of Education, Epsom Campus (parking at Gate 3, 74 Epsom Ave). Four international researchers will discuss the challenges in making evidence-based parenting programmes widely available to parents. RSVP to tprg@auckland.ac.nz by 19 February.

Classifieds

ACCOMMODATION AVAILABLE

Apartments for rent. Call us for your rental requirements; we offer city apartments furnished/unfurnished, all

sizes and prices; great rental deals for long-term leases; call Chris or Mandy on 09 303 0601 at City Sales or email rentals@citysales.co.nz or log on to www.citysales.co.nz/rentals

Free housesit. Wanted someone to housesit large, four-bdrm Grey Lynn villa and resident aging dog from 23 March to 15 April. Housesit is free in exchange for feeding and regularly walking of dog. Phone Tess 373-7599, ext 84149.

Freeman’s Bay. Sunny furnished room, comfortable house, great location. Walk to city or one bus stage. \$250 pw includes power, water, gas and fast Broadband. Suit someone 30s + with healthy lifestyle to share with owner and pets. Short term possible. Contact Carolyn on (027) 478 4145 or walker.cd@xtra.co.nz to find out more.

Fully furnished studio apartment by High Court in sought-after Statesman Building. Full use of heated lap pool, spa pool and gym. Onsite manager and quality security. Easy walk to University, CBD, Britomart and Foodtown. Move in now! Lease six months then monthly. \$310 pw. Phone Helen (021) 579 222. No letting fees.

Major part of spacious fully furnished house with piano, TV/DVD and wireless Internet in Epsom. Both Grammar zones, walk to Newmarket. Central heating, two new bthrms, two bdrms, large living room and large eccentric eat in kitchen. Verandah, large gardens, double carport, laundry. Available March to 1 December. Phone (021) 044 4753.

Orakei sunny two-bedroom home available for 8 months starting 14 June. Owner going on leave until mid-February 2011. Off-street parking, large garden, sundeck. Close to shops and buses. Phone Nancy on (09) 521-6482 or txt (021) 025-72431 or email n.november@auckland.ac.nz

Sun Apartment, Unit 304, 47 Wakefield St, Auckland Central. One bedroom, ten minutes walk to University. \$240 pw fully-furnished includes electricity. Contact (021) 182 6910.

Waikeke executive house. Exceptional living on Oneroa clifftop, views both directions, three bedrooms plus self-contained studio, large living spaces and decks, Sky, Broadband. Walk to shops and beach, three-minute drive to ferry. Available mid-April until September 2010 (end date negotiable), \$650 pw. Car and/or city pad available, rates negotiable. Contact b.barton@auckland.ac.nz

MISCELLANEOUS

Carpenter/builder available. Over 30 years experience. Lots of renovations and historic places. References. Phone Chris on 270 0745.

Exotic holidays: Planning a trip to Asia or Middle-East? Contact us for a quote before you book elsewhere. Serving universities for over five years. Visit www.exoticholidays.co.nz for tour options or ask us to customise or tailor-make as you wish - from a night in Dubai or junk cruise in Halong Bay or luxurious palace on wheels. Bringing you the best of Asia and Middle East holiday options. Email us at info@exoticholidays.co.nz for our monthly ‘specials’ and attractive deals.

Māori Television and its influence on the construction of viewer identities.

Do you watch Māori Television? Would you be prepared to spend about an hour as part of a focus group to discuss this? Sue Abel, Senior Lecturer in the Māori Studies Department at UoA, is doing research into the influence that Māori Television has on the sense of identity of its viewers. I am setting up focus groups of Pakeha viewers, of Māori viewers, and of those who are of non-Māori and non-Pakeha descent. Participants need to be adults, and have no close connection to Māori Television. Each focus group will be made up of 4-6 people, and will take place where and when it suits those participating. If you would like to be involved, or to know more about the project, please contact s.abel@auckland.ac.nz or phone (09) 845 5291 or (021) 385 727.

Travel. I have 12 years experience in booking all aspects of personal travel for university staff and lecturers. I pride myself in ensuring that your travel plans are sourced at the lowest possible costs and are tailor-made to your requirements. Contact Karen on Karen.embleton@mondotravel.co.nz or 940 0064 (wk) or (021) 188 7781.

We are seeking a candidate to undertake a Master degree (ME) project on ‘Quantifying void and fibre architecture in fibre reinforced polymer composites’ at the Department of Mechanical Engineering, UoA. The successful candidate will be funded with a scholarship of \$20,000 (tax free) plus the tuition fee (at the domestic rate). Please contact Dr Xiaowen Yuan (xw.yuan@auckland.ac.nz) or Dr Mark Jones (mark.jones@auckland.ac.nz) for further information.

For a full list of The University of Auckland events see:
www.auckland.ac.nz/uoa/home/events

Please email classified ads to m.playfair@auckland.ac.nz nine days before publication. Cost \$20 (incl GST).