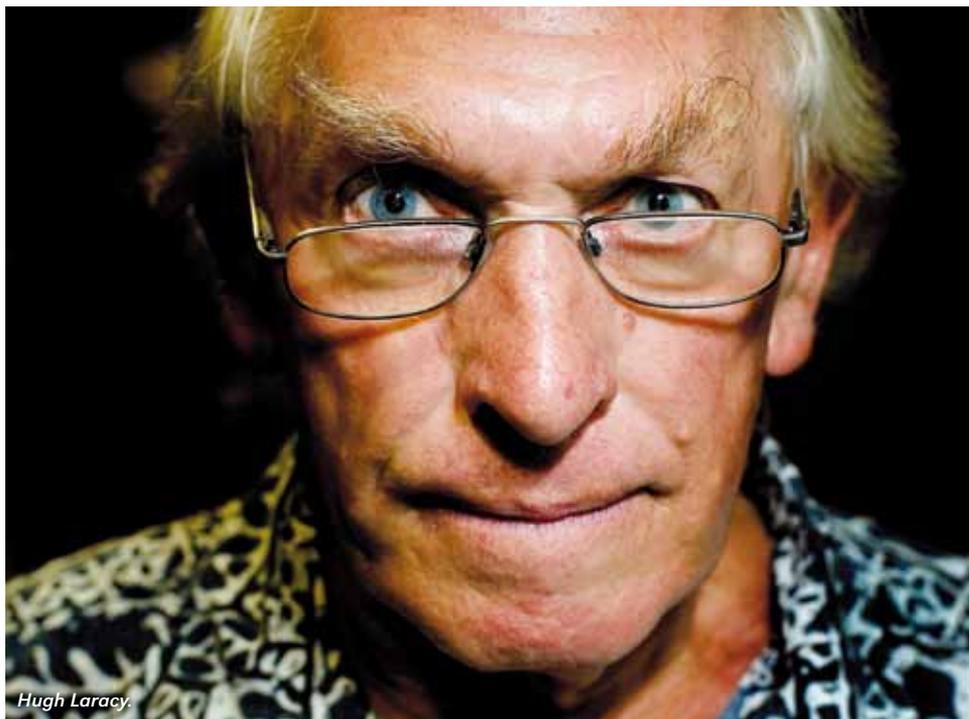


# THE UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND news

Fortnightly newsletter for University staff | Volume 40 | Issue 3 | 26 February 2010

## 'The biggest thing since Beaglehole'



Hugh Laracy.

COURTESY OF NZ LISTENER MAGAZINE/DAVID WHITE

Associate Professor Hugh Laracy (History) declares them the single biggest contribution to Pacific history since J C Beaglehole's *The Journals of Captain James Cook* published half a century ago.

*Letters received from Oceania 1836-1854* (*Lettres reçues d'Océanie 1836-1854*) – a collection of nearly 1400 letters written by scores of French missionaries in the Pacific during pre-colonial times – adds a wealth of new detail to the history of New Zealand and the south west Pacific, he says.

Hugh spoke at the official hand-over of a bound set of the letters – the originals are held in Rome – gifted to the Auckland City Libraries earlier this month by the Society of Mary (Marists).

The faded, torn and worn originals – all written in French – were transcribed and collated by the Reverend Charles Girard, a Catholic priest based in the United States. Hugh, an expert in Pacific Islands history who has a special interest in the French Catholic missions, was an adviser to the Reverend Girard during the mammoth 12-year-long project.

Girard didn't claim to be an historian. But he

did have a doctorate in medieval French literature. "So he could handle the language perfectly," explains Hugh.

Besides compiling the mass of letters into ten hefty volumes, Girard also set about explaining them. "The indexes and the annotations are extraordinary," says Hugh.

And that's good news for the amateur genealogist or historian who doesn't understand French. Find a reference to a person or a place in the index and you can turn straight to the relevant letter. You'll just need someone to translate it for you.

For the professional historian, the letters represent the richest mine of new material about the pre-colonial Pacific unearthed in more than half a century. "The significance of these letters," says Hugh, "is that if you now want to say anything about New Zealand during the period 1836 to 1854, you need to refer to them as sources. This is new material and first-hand accounts. The letters add immense detail to what we already know."

story continues on page 7

## Key events

### Alumni present

Register for a fascinating and free series of public presentations by the 2010 Distinguished Alumni Award winners at [www.alumni.auckland.ac.nz](http://www.alumni.auckland.ac.nz). The presentations are happening between 10.30am and 2.30pm on Saturday 6 March in the Owen G Glenn Building, 12 Grafton Road. Dr Nguyen Van Thanh, CEO and President of United States company NVT Technologies, will talk about "Indexing human development". Dancer and choreographer Michael Parmenter presents "Gestures of aliveness". Huntington's disease researcher Dr Jessie Jacobsen speaks on "Hope and 'dignity: Huntington's disease research". Principal of Te Rau Kahikatea St John's College, Dr Jennifer Plane Te Paa, addresses "The Anglican Church – an ailing anachronism or an abiding establishment? Just what in the world is currently going on?" And hear Emeritus Professor Richard Sibson speaking "On the uses of earthquakes". Principal Youth Court Judge Andrew Becroft will present on turning the troubled child into an alumnus of "the university of crime".

### Ocean acidification

Professor Gretchen Hofmann of the University of California, Santa Barbara, presents a free public lecture, "Ocean acidification: What is it and what can we expect for our marine ecosystems of the future?" on Tuesday 9 March, at 7-8pm at the Fisher & Paykel Appliances Auditorium, in the Owen G Glenn Building, 12 Grafton Rd.

Ocean acidification – whereby the absorption of carbon dioxide into seawaters reduces their pH – is predicted to dramatically affect marine ecosystems in the coming decades. Professor Hofmann studies the ecological physiology of marine organisms, in particular kelp, invertebrates and perciform fishes.

### Dream of an Elder

Featuring at the Documentary Edge Festival at the Rialto cinema, *He Wawata Whaea: The Dream of an Elder* tells the life story of Māori writer and teacher Merimeri Penfold, the University's first teacher of spoken te reo. Showing on 4 and 14 March.

For more information visit [www.docnz.org.nz](http://www.docnz.org.nz)

## In this issue

- 3 | General Staff Conference
- 5 | Humanities Fellows
- 6 | Urban forum



## From the Vice-Chancellor

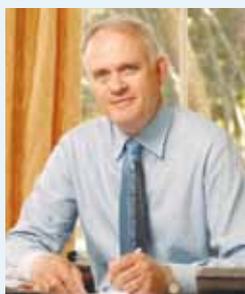
One of the University's key tasks for 2010 will be to begin to prepare in earnest for the Performance Based Research Fund (PBRF) 2012 Quality Evaluation assessment round.

Managed by the Tertiary Education Commission, the PBRF assesses the research performance of participating tertiary education institutions, and then funds them on the basis of that performance. There are three components to the PBRF assessment: a Quality Evaluation of eligible, research-active staff, assessed every six years; the annual total of completed research degrees; and the amount of external research income earned annually.

The PBRF is very significant to the University for two reasons. Firstly, an excellent performance in the PBRF will help to ensure the best possible levels of research funding for the six years following the assessment. We currently receive about \$70 million of PBRF revenue per annum, \$48 million of which supports the cost of research-based teaching, while the balance goes towards initiatives aimed at enhancing research quality. Given that our average staff cost is in the order of \$100,000 (salary and overheads), the PBRF supports some 700 positions throughout the University – jobs that would not exist without that funding.

Secondly, the PBRF assessment directly impacts the reputation of the University. Each participating institution's performance in the PBRF Quality Evaluation is published in a publicly available report. The report includes the overall results, as well as scores attained by each discipline and academic unit. A key point here – and one missed by many commentators – is that the average quality score is essentially the ratio of A, B and C-rated researchers to total eligible staff. It is thus influenced strongly by the number of research-inactive (R graded) staff in each institution, whereas those staff have no impact on the revenue generated by the Quality Evaluation component of the funding index.

We are now focused on improving our PBRF performance in the 2012 round, and I appreciate your efforts in completing the internal PBRF census in September 2009. The census provided us with a much better understanding of our likely current PBRF profile but also revealed that we have a lot of work to do to achieve our goal of a much-enhanced PBRF ratio. Faculty PBRF initiatives are now in place to support researchers to achieve this, so I encourage you to work with your faculty as we prepare for the 2012 PBRF round.



## Enhancing postgrad recruitment



*Left to right (back row) Mark Cleary, Val Simpson, (middle) Michelle Staff, Claire Philipson, Abi Davies, (front) Shona Sangster, Saphron Hastie and Joanna Browne.*

**A number of recommendations from a new pilot study looking to improve the recruitment of postgraduate students have already been implemented.**

The Postgraduate Recruitment and Marketing (PGRM) pilot now underway in five faculties is surveying postgraduate recruitment processes from the initial inquiry stage through to student enrolment.

"The aim," says Mark Cleary, Director of Student and Information Services, "is to improve the

throughput of postgraduate applications, while maintaining the highest standards.

"To be able to secure our position as the preferred university for postgraduate studies and to grow numbers across all faculties, we have to move quickly with offers to talented students – or we risk losing them to our competitors."

Among the processes introduced as a result of the ongoing study is a system for speeding up the early stages of the application process. "We're achieving a two-day turnaround for the assessment of admissions, meaning we can pass applications onto the faculties quickly," says Joanna Browne, Director of Academic Services.

Findings from the study so far have revealed that the processes for inquiry, application and enrolment differ markedly between the faculties surveyed (Arts, Business and Economics, Engineering, Medical and Health Sciences, and Science).

Developing greater consistency across departments wherever feasible is one of the study's chief goals. "We're coming across examples of departmental processes which are best practice," says Mark. "We're seeing what we can learn from them and what we can share with other departments and we're making recommendations to improve the overall student experience."

Two working groups are currently engaged in working through the study: the Faculty Working Group, chaired by Mark, and the Central Services Working Group, chaired by Joanna.

The first phase of the study has been underway since December and concludes at the end of March, when the results will be presented at a postgraduate summit.

## Leadership for women

**For Hana Mata'u (Science Student Centre) it yielded links with some "great women" and plenty of new ideas to take back to her role.**

For Professor Ngaire Kerse (School of Population Health) it helped her define the future direction of her career.

Both women have attended New Zealand Women in Leadership (NZWIL) programmes. And both are very glad they did.

Every year the University sends four women – two academics and two general staff – to the prestigious NZWIL programmes held in Wellington.

Applications for the two 2010 programmes close on 26 March.

Hana, the Faculty of Science Student Services Manager and Academic Adviser, attended one of the five-day programmes last year. "I met some great women in similar roles to mine who were at similar times and places in their careers," she says. "With things as busy as they are in universities, it isn't often you're able to take time to think about where you want to go with your career. It was encouraging to hear successful women talk about their careers and how they got there – it's never a straight road."

NZWIL was set up to grow women's leadership

capabilities and influence within New Zealand universities. It is funded by the Kate Edger Educational Charitable Trust and sponsored by the NZ Vice-Chancellors' Committee.

Ngaire, a professor in the Department of General Practice and Primary Health Care, says of her experience on the programme: "I especially learned skills in enabling the people I lead to rise to challenges and contribute to their own development."

The academic staff programme is designed for women in middle- to upper-level academic positions who either aspire to be in or are already in senior-level academic roles, such as academic heads or associate deans. It is also aimed at principal investigators working on major research projects.

The general staff programme is directed at women who are either in or aspiring to senior roles. These roles are likely to include responsibility for budgets, people or University- or faculty-wide services.

For more information see the story on the Staff Intranet. Applications require a letter of support from an applicant's dean or director. For more information, contact Julie Batters, on ext 87779 or email [j.batters@auckland.ac.nz](mailto:j.batters@auckland.ac.nz)

# Helen Clark's achievements saluted



Chancellor Roger France with Helen Clark.

The Rt Hon Helen Clark has received a supreme accolade from The University of Auckland where she spent 14 years as a student and academic.

An honorary Doctor of Laws degree was bestowed on her on 17 February at an early evening ceremony at the Fale Pasifika attended by nearly 200: family, friends, political colleagues and University staff.

Earlier in the day she had been invested with her country's highest honour, membership of the Order of New Zealand, at Government House in Epsom.

In his welcome the Chancellor, Roger France, described Helen Clark as one of the University's most illustrious graduates who had had a huge impact on New Zealand life and continued to contribute in a major way on the world stage as Head of the United Nations Development Programme.

"The University takes enormous pride in acknowledging Helen Clark's achievements as a graduate, as a politician, a stateswoman of international stature and as a great New Zealander."

Praising Helen Clark's political achievements, the Public Orator, Professor Vivienne Gray, noted that she was the first woman elected to the office of Prime Minister in New Zealand. "This puts her in the company of other distinguished women leaders who were the first in their own countries, such as Indira Gandhi, Mrs Bandaranaike and Benazir Bhutto, Margaret Thatcher, Mary Robinson and Gro Brundtland, Dame Eugenia Charles, Corazon Aquino and Violeta Chamorro.

"She punched a clear hole in the glass ceiling. It may still have sharp edges that can cut, but the sky has not yet fallen in, and we salute the struggle that we know it was for her to shatter it. She represents a generation in which qualified and talented women reached high office in New Zealand as Chief Justice, Governor-General, and Speaker of the House, as well as Prime Minister."

The University honoured Helen Clark for her personal contribution to its success and that of her government too, said Professor Gray. Throughout her political life she had had a strong personal presence at the University, attending book launches, presenting awards and opening major buildings (the Fale Pasifika among them) and institutes.

She had acknowledged the need for educated and skilled people to enhance the prosperity of New Zealand and universities' role in producing them in her support for the Knowledge Wave conferences in 2001 and 2003. Her government had given this role formal substance in creating

the "Partnerships for Excellence" designed to promote co-operation between universities and business and industry.

"Her government promoted excellence in teaching when it established the Tertiary Teaching Excellence Awards in 2002 and excellence in research when it introduced Performance Based Research Funding in 2003," said Professor Gray. "The University of Auckland has benefited from these innovations; they have stimulated a change in the culture, particularly in research."

In response Helen Clark said it was "a signal honour to be recognised in this way by one's own university".

She looked back on her years as a student and then a teacher "as certainly among the happiest of my life". Long hours spent in the University Library and later researching and updating lectures "could not have been a better preparation for what was to follow – a very tough political career which required tremendous self-discipline and rigour".

A university education had, for her, been "a transformational experience", said Helen Clark. "A major motivation for me in public life was to strive to make that experience available to everyone with the potential to benefit from it. Opportunity denied because of cost of access is a tragedy for the individual and for our country."

Helen Clark concluded by thanking "all of those in this university community, past and present, including my husband Peter, who have offered me so much support, personal and professional, along the way and always taken an incredible interest in my career.

"It is an honour for me to accept this honorary degree tonight, particularly in Laws, given the responsibility I had for passing so many of them."

## Conference for general staff coming soon



GSC organising committee, left to right (back row) David Jenkinson, Hayley Schnell, Kerryn Patten, Julie Batters, Graeme Roberts, (front row) Lynley Pritchard, Judy Wilford, Melanie Moorcroft and Margot Spraggon. Absent: Jenni Tupu and Darren Levy.

Take note all general staff – mark 14 and 15 April in your calendars.

You won't want to miss the 2010 General Staff

Conference, "ASPIRE: your vision, your future" in the Owen G Glenn Building.

Two fascinating keynote speakers are lined up to

present. Wade Jackson, "Improv Warrior", trainer, writer, actor, producer and storyteller, will inform and entertain conference-goers with a talk on two of his favourite subjects: creativity and innovation. And the dynamic Dr Di McCarthy, Chief Executive of the Royal Society of New Zealand and the former Pro Vice-Chancellor (Equal Opportunities), will elaborate on the conference theme, "Your vision, your future".

Around 20 speakers will give presentations and run workshops, says Melanie Moorcroft, Staff Development Manager (HR-SODU).

ASPIRE is an acronym for the conference's sub-themes. "A for attitude; S for success; P for professionalism; I for inspiration; R for resilience and E for enjoyment," says Melanie.

Staff can elect to come along for one day or the full two days.

When the last General Staff Conference was held in 2008 it attracted more than 400 staff and was very well received.

Registrations for the 2010 conference will be taken from 10 March (visit [www.uoaaspire2010.co.nz](http://www.uoaaspire2010.co.nz)).

# New associate professors

In the first of a series of profiles on newly appointed associate professors, a few of them tell us about themselves.



**Dr Andy Wearn**  
(Director, Undergraduate Clinical Skills Centre)

You're probably wondering why a clinical academic is wearing a hard hat, a fluoro jacket and a grin? Well, I'm standing in a construction site

which is rapidly morphing into a simulated ward space. This will be part of an expanded Clinical Skills Centre on the Grafton Campus. But I'd better give you the start of the story.

I began my academic career whilst GP-training in Birmingham, UK, going on to work as a GP partner and clinical lecturer. The move to New Zealand came in 2001, when I was appointed to set up a clinical skills centre for the FMHS. Globally, medical curricula had been evolving to include formal early skills learning, earlier clinical exposure and the use of simulated environments; Auckland is now contributing to the evidence.

I've helped to develop a philosophy of skills learning, designed and delivered new learning within medicine, nursing and pharmacy, and drawn in a small dedicated staff. I've also outgrown the current space!

I'm also involved in "teaching the teachers" as part of the faculty's Clinical Education programme. As befits a generalist, I have an eclectic mix of publications in education and primary care.

My family enjoys living over the bridge and taking advantage of the landscape and climate. I'm involved in governance of an education association and a local church, enjoy cooking and growing veggies, painting in acrylics and getting into water as often as possible. However, my attempts at learning to surf suggest that some skills are better learnt on the right side of forty!



**Dr Malcolm Tingle**  
(Pharmacology and Clinical Pharmacology)

Coming from three generations of pharmacists I was always fascinated by

how drugs worked, but rather than continue the family tradition I studied biochemistry with pharmacology at the University of Southampton. After that, in 1988 I completed a PhD in the Department of Pharmacology and Therapeutics at the University of Liverpool on immunologically-induced adverse drug reactions. This led to a postdoctoral position investigating the liver

toxicity of a drug that had entered phase one clinical trials and hence an enduring desire to understand why existing in-vitro and in-vivo models can fail to predict human toxicity. Since moving to Auckland in 1997, I have continued to work with various research groups trying to understand both inter-species as well as inter-individual differences in metabolism-dependent toxicity of drugs and their analogues. Along the way I have developed an active interest in the ethical use of animals for scientific research. I also have a parallel interest in testing fundamental toxicology concepts such as the Arndt-Schulz rule for acute ethanol consumption plus hormesis for chronic consumption, and particularly enjoy tutorials with students in the old Grafton Library. Outside of work, I love inflicting the wilds on my family: Nuala, Phillip and Elizabeth.



**Dr Merryn Tawhai**  
(Auckland Bioengineering Institute)

I graduated with a PhD (Engineering Science) from the University of

Auckland in 2001. Since then I have worked in the Auckland Bioengineering Institute, establishing a research programme studying the physiology and pathophysiology of the lung using patient-specific anatomically structured mathematical models. I also hold an adjunct appointment at the University of Iowa.

Being awarded a Marsden grant and the inaugural Maurice Paykel Postdoctoral Fellowship (from the Woolf Fisher Trust) early in my career enabled me to establish the fundamental basis for my current research, and led to several major grants from the United States National Institutes of Health and National Science Foundation, and more recently from the Health Research Council. My current research includes developing a model of the dynamic balance of forces in the lung tissue and airways to study airway hyper-responsiveness in asthma, development of multi-scale methods to predict inhaled particle distribution, and understanding the development of pulmonary hypertension during pulmonary embolism. I thoroughly enjoy the multi-disciplinary collaborations that are essential for my work. At home I am fortunate to have a very understanding husband and daughters.

**Dr Rachel Fewster** (Statistics)

I'm originally from Durham, in Britain; studied Maths at Cambridge, and did my PhD in Statistics at the University of St Andrews in Scotland. I came to Auckland in 1999 for a postdoctoral fellowship, intending to stay for a two-year research position. To my surprise, I quickly got hooked on the joys of teaching, as well as on New Zealand's natural environment and lifestyle. My research is in applications of statistics to problems in ecology and animal behaviour. I enjoy working on a spectrum of



projects, ranging from applied to theoretical. On the applied side, I've been leading a Marsden-funded project using statistical genetics to investigate how swimming rodents invade sanctuary islands. On the theoretical side, I develop ways of estimating population size and its uncertainty – how many whales there are in the ocean, or penguins in the Antarctic.

I've always enjoyed the interplay between teaching and research, and gained a National Tertiary Teaching Excellence Award in 2009. In my spare time, I love tramping with my husband David, exploring New Zealand's forests and mountains, and listening out for native birds in out-of-the-way places.



**Dr Sally Merry**  
(Department of Psychological Medicine)

I am a child and adolescent psychiatrist. In 1985, with Professor John Werry's support, I was awarded the Maurice and Phyllis Paykel Teaching Fellowship which

proved pivotal in my career choice. I discovered the allure of research and went on to do a fellowship funded by the Health Research Council. Highlights in my career have been three HRC project grants; obtaining funding to establish the national Werry Centre for Child and Adolescent Mental Health; and being awarded Dean's Honours for my MD. The most exciting research project to date is underway – the creation and evaluation of SPARX, a computerised intervention to increase access to treatment for young people with depression. I am also involved in establishing a new clinical service for very young children at Counties Manukau. Working cross-culturally has been a particular interest and I have had support in this from a wonderful kaumatua, Rawiri Wharemate, and a number of other colleagues. I am a mother of three "children", now all adults. One of the biggest challenges and greatest joys for me has been to prioritise the family while also pursuing a career. Working part-time, having a supportive HOD in Professor Rob Kydd and having a particularly supportive husband made that possible.

## Global warming – why can't scientists agree?

The *New Zealand Herald's* weather analyst, Philip Duncan, recently voiced concern that public information on climate change is confusing.

"What is really happening out there?" he asked. He implored scientists to speak up more and speculated that those who lobby against climate change have a far louder voice in this country – and that louder doesn't mean more accurate.

He was right to raise these concerns. The question "What is really happening out there?" is actually relatively easy to answer.

It is now beyond reasonable doubt that the world is warming and that human activities are important contributors. As a result, it is prudent for governments to do what they can to reduce the threat posed to civilisation and to the environment by global warming.

It is more difficult to answer why, in the face of broad scientific consensus about global warming, the public remains confused.

This disconnection between scientific knowledge and public opinion is not restricted to global warming. There is broad scientific consensus on a number of issues where public opinion is far more divided. Scientists generally agree, for example, that genetically modified food does not pose a food-safety risk; the application of 1080 poison helps protect native flora and fauna; and that vaccinations are

important for the health of our children.

The explanation for the common disconnect between scientific consensus and public opinion is complex.

Certainly, there is plenty of room for scientists to communicate better with the public.

But another explanation is that journalists, in their quest for objectivity, strive to report "both sides of the story". Unfortunately, this admirable ethos results in a systematic over-reporting of dissenting views. It can be very difficult for the media to determine whether a dissenting opinion is specious and should be ignored or is a legitimate challenge to orthodoxy that should be reported. As a result, there is a tendency to report both "sides", leaving it to the public to draw their own conclusions.

Regrettably, with the decline in interest in science education, the public is increasingly less well equipped to make such judgments. What's more, confusion is inevitable when political, cultural and commercial perspectives are added to the mix.

But why is it seemingly so easy for the media to find dissenting scientific views? The answer to this question lies in the culture and practice of science. Scientists are trained to be sceptical of their own and each others' data and conclusions. The sceptical and, at times, adversarial nature of

scientific debate is the way observations and explanations are tested and consensus is eventually reached. Healthy scepticism improves the precision and dependability of the new knowledge on which society depends.

But consensus is not the same as unanimity. And it is usually possible for a reporter to find a dissenter prepared to fight a rearguard action against the mainstream views of his or her colleagues. The scientific community, for its part, gives sceptics a good hearing for as long as their evidence withstands expert scrutiny but, unlike the media, not beyond that point.

At times I feel the public expects the same from scientific debates as from the more familiar, and usually more definitive, legal process.

In contrast to the courtroom, new evidence continually arrives during the conduct of scientific debates. For complex issues, such as global warming, there are large numbers of possible "perpetrators on trial" and there is little or no agreement over which "judge or jury" has the authority to declare a verdict. Consensus is reached only when the debate leads to a generally accepted common view.

Where science and law do agree, however, is that when a verdict is "beyond reasonable doubt", such as with global warming, it is time to act.  
Grant Guilford (Dean of Science)

## Humanities Fellows welcomed into RSNZ



Professor Linda Bryder (right) and Dr Di McCarthy (rear).

A dozen Humanities Fellows from the University were formally welcomed into the Fellowship of the Royal Society of New Zealand earlier this month.

Under a new memorandum of agreement between Te Whāinga Aronui Council for the Humanities, the council has become a committee of the Royal Society of NZ and its fellows have joined the ranks of the Academy of the Royal

Society of New Zealand.

The agreement, which took effect in January, means disciplines such as English, history, languages, religion, philosophy, literature and law now also come under the Royal Society of New Zealand banner.

The move marks a new chapter in the history of the RSNZ. For the first time, says the society's president, Dr Garth Carnaby, New Zealand has an organisation which promotes excellence in research and scholarship across all the disciplines. "We are now a true academy of scholars."

Humanities Fellows from the University who have now been conferred as RSNZ Fellows are:

- Professor Maureen Baker (Sociology), who has had remarkable career in the field of social and family policy
- Distinguished Professor Brian Boyd (English), world-leading expert on twentieth-century novelist Vladimir Nabokov
- Professor Linda Bryder (History), leading international contributor to the social history of medicine
- Professor Emeritus Brian Coote (Law) a pre-eminent figure in legal education and scholarship who has influenced contract law throughout the Commonwealth
- Professor Stephen Davies (Philosophy), a top world scholar in philosophical aesthetics and

the philosophy of music

- Professor Manying Ip (Asian Studies), who has embedded the Chinese influence into the history of New Zealand
- Professor Emeritus Mac Jackson, a world-leading textual scholar of early modern drama
- Professor Emeritus Michael Neill (English), a top international scholar and critic of Shakespeare
- Professor Robert Nola (Philosophy), esteemed for his writing on everything from Greek philosophy to the sociology of science
- Professor Nick Perry (Film, Television and Media Studies), who has a significant international profile
- Professor Raylene Ramsay (European Languages and Literatures), a distinguished authority on French culture
- The late Professor Mike Taggart, who was New Zealand's leading academic in public law, was awarded a Posthumous Fellowship

# Taking sustainability research to Brazil



The delegates to the UN-HABITAT World Urban Forum 5 from left to right: (back row) David Grinlinton, Rosangela Tenorio, Claire Speedy, Yvonne Underhill-Sem, Yardena Tankel; (front row) Anna Blackwell, Kathryn Scott, Alexandra JaYeun Lee, Alexandra MacMillan. Absent: Anita Lacey, Dory Reeves, Merata Kawharu and Ward Friesen

The twenty-first century is an urban century. Half of humanity now lives in cities. And within two decades nearly 60 percent of the world's population will count themselves urbanites.

Meanwhile, in the developing world cities gain an average of five million residents every month.

So says the United Nations agency for human settlement, UN-HABITAT. These sobering statistics hammer home the monumental scale of the challenge that is sustainable urban development.

Next month staff and postgraduate students from five faculties will travel to Rio de Janeiro in Brazil intent on tackling that challenge from their corner of research.

A delegation of nine staff and four postgraduate students will represent the University at the UN-HABITAT World

Urban Forum 5 (WUF5), "The right to the city: Bridging the urban divide". It is expected to draw 10,000 people.

Our delegation will staff The University of Auckland exhibition stand at the week-long forum – showcasing our sustainability research themes to the international community.

This is the first time the University has sent a delegation to the forum, which attracts government leaders, academics and grass-roots organisations from around the world.

The University joined the Habitat Partner University (HPU) network last year.

HPU was set up by the UN to tap into the vast knowledge that resides within universities in the field of sustainable urban development. The aim is to beef up the scale and the scope of the

international response to rapid urbanisation.

Professor Dory Reeves (NICAI) and Dr Yvonne Underhill-Sem, Director of the Centre for Development Studies, will co-chair the HPU roundtable at WUF5.

The cross-faculty team of researchers attending the forum will network with other institutions "with a view to developing collaborative research proposals in areas such as indigenous peoples, livelihoods, health, shelter, gender and environmental law", says Dory.

The University's involvement with UN-HABITAT "is a very smart way of engaging in development within our region", points out Yvonne. "We have as our neighbours the whole of the Pacific region. And we are indicating through our membership of the network that we want to take an interest in the region and to do so in partnership with UN agencies."

By taking part in the roundtable discussions, the delegates have opportunities to influence international policy development and sustainability practice, says Claire Speedy (International Development Manager, NICAI)

Delegates were selected on the basis of their research themes' relevance to the forum and their involvement in sustainability initiatives.

The delegation's exhibition stand has been created with support from Auckland International and the School of Architecture and Planning.

The Vice-Chancellor's Strategic Development Fund is fully funding the postgraduate students and partially funding the staff attending.

## Science kit for schools showcases research



Left to right Associate Professor Malcolm Tingle (Animal Ethics Committee), Dr Kathy Mountjoy (Physiology), University Animal Welfare Officer Justine Stewart and Professor Laura Bennet (Physiology)

A new science DVD kit for Year 9-11 students examines the responsible and ethical scientific use of animals in research and showcases the investigation of four leading University scientists.

Narrated by Distinguished Alumna Dr Jessie Jacobson, the teaching resources are free to secondary schools and distributed by ANZCCART, the Australian and New Zealand Council for the Care of Animals in Research and Teaching, a

committee of the Royal Society of New Zealand.

The kit's purpose is to encourage debate among secondary students about science's use of animals in research, says Sally Birdsall, the Senior Lecturer in the School of Science, Maths and Technology at the Faculty of Education who drove the development of the resource with assistance from Senior Tutor Carolyn Haslam and local science teachers.

The DVD features scientists working on six important research projects around the country.

"It's good for school students to see a range of science. And we wanted to make it accessible, which is why we have interviewed top scientists on the job in a variety of situations – not just in their labs," says Sally.

The DVD introduces viewers to several University researchers. Professor Jane Harding, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research), for example, explains how sheep are treated humanely during research into the effects of maternal nutrition on lambs. And Senior Research Fellow Dr Kathy Mountjoy shows how research on animals is helping to isolate the genetic causes of obesity. Dr Jessie Jacobson, whose research into the brain disorder Huntington's disease won her the MacDiarmid Young Scientist of the Year in 2007, explains why animals are used in research and the ethical and the legal guidelines governing their welfare. Society owes a "huge debt to animals", says Jessie. It would be impossible to develop new drug treatments without using animals at some stage of clinical trials.

The DVD was produced under the supervision of ANZCCART, and launched at the Faculty of Education earlier this month. Sally is an education representative on the New Zealand board.

## From the Collection



Chiara Corbelletto (b.1956), *Twins*, 2003. The University of Auckland Art Collection

Chiara Corbelletto's work sits somewhere between the worlds of art, design, architecture and mathematics, which is not surprising considering she completed degrees in Fine Arts then Architecture in Italy before emigrating to New Zealand in 1981. She was born in the Northern Italian city of Biella, and the ornately decorated surfaces of the classical architecture she grew up with have influenced her rhythmic assemblages of abstract patterns.

One of her other prominent public works, a large bronze completed in 2005 and situated in the Auckland Domain, is titled *Numbers are the*

*language of nature*. Typically, it is an exploration of repetition and form, comprising a "flat" wall of 20 bulbous and gently touching triangular shapes. Art History Professor Elizabeth Rankin has said that the work's "repeated modular elements remind us that all organisms have an underlying geometry that is part of the universal laws of nature", noting that the "curvilinear contours and surfaces of the shapes suggest the vibrancy of living forms".

Although she started out working in stone, Chiara's works explore a range of contemporary materials, from moulded cardboard pulp to PVC

and polypropylene, working with a range of experts to help fabricate pieces at a range of scales, from permanent large sculptures to modular room dividers and inflatable wall hangings. She says: "I like to investigate commercial processes then turn them into art. My work is motivated by two main sources of investigation: space definition through enclosing and layering the experience of space; and perception of repetition by following the logic of visual patterns into the many issues of tessellation and symmetries."

Like all her works, *Twins* starts with a basic shape, which becomes more complex through the way it intersects and overlaps, creating new shapes and spaces. Using reflecting and rotating geometry, it comprises an equilateral triangle that has had each side substituted with a double curve, creating "undulations of concave and convex surfaces".

Situated on the court between the Recreation Centre, the Science Centre and student facilities, *Twins* was commissioned as part of the Kate Edger Information Commons' development and is placed as a link to the existing campus buildings. Chiara describes the sculpture as "an embrace of two over-sized objects with a biological presence, acquiring at this scale a fluid and visually enfolding presence". Of the way the two elements are nested together, she says: "They convey ideas about duality and coexistence, bonding and belonging in a complementary balance."

Andrew Clifford

## Tea up for peace

A new documentary which pays tribute to two 90-year-old peace activists co-directed and co-produced by Claudia Pond Eyley (Architecture and Planning) is a finalist in the Documentary Edge film festival.

*Kit & Maynie: tea, scones and nuclear disarmament*, charts the peace activism and enduring friendship of two Waiheke Island women, Kit Nelson and Maynie Thompson.

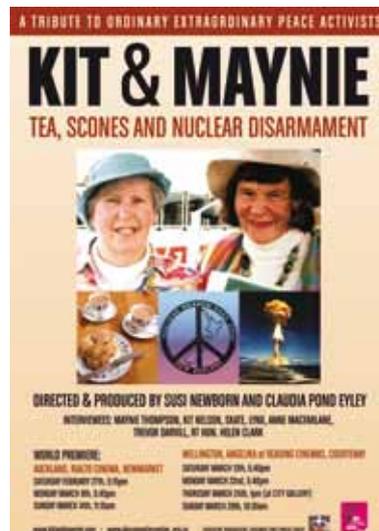
Kit and Maynie joined the anti-nuclear movement back in the early 1980s and together sold cups of tea and home-made scones at Waiheke's Saturday Market to raise money for their local peace group.

The film – which includes present-day interviews with the women and archival footage of the anti-nuclear movement as it gathered momentum – had its world premiere on 27 February at the Rialto cinema and will show on 8 and 14 March.

The two friends stepped out in the name of peace during the 1980s. In the early 1980s Maynie walked from Auckland to Parliament in Wellington to present an anti-nuclear petition to the Government. Later, in 1986, she trekked across the United States on the Great Peace

March for Nuclear Disarmament. The pair camped out at the Greenham Common Women's Peace Camp in England.

Claudia, a Senior Lecturer in freehand drawing, and Susi Newborn made the 45-minute film as a 90th birthday present to the women with money from community trusts.



"Lettres" ... continued from front page

"And the letters put New Zealand history into a larger context."

Translating the letters into English remains an unfinished task for future researchers. But those already translated give non-French speakers a taste of their contents. Take this excerpt from a letter written by Father Jean-Baptiste Petit Jean, in Whangaroa in 1841:

*"I have some rather rancid fat left over at the bottom of a jar that I carefully save in case I must welcome a stranger or an important chief. In this case our dear Brother will quickly improvise some fritters. Out in the tribes my meals consist of ordinary potatoes or sweet potatoes, called koumara, and sometimes fish. Yet our natives do not have much of this food in abundance; they sell a large portion of their harvest to buy clothes..."*

Most Christian missionaries despatched to the Pacific were English speakers. *The Lettres reçues d'Océanie* shed a brighter light on the Pacific's French connection, with their tales from the Marist fathers and brothers on a quest for, as one wrote, "the salvation of these poor people".

The University Library will have a set of the ten volumes available for viewing on request.

# What's on

## FRIDAY 26 FEBRUARY

### Exhibition: Felix Kelly: A Kiwi at Brideshead

Gus Fisher Gallery, 74 Shortland St. Until 10 April. Auckland-born, Felix Kelly (1914-1994) fled New Zealand as a young man for the bright lights of London. He never returned, but, unlike other NZ expatriate painters who quickly removed their homeland from their subject matter, Kelly kept painting an increasingly misremembered NZ which with each new work became a more and more fantastical place. Curated by Dr Don Bassett. View [www.gusfishergallery.auckland.ac.nz](http://www.gusfishergallery.auckland.ac.nz)

### Thinkwell seminars for postgraduate students

Lecture Theatre OGGB4, Owen G. Glenn Bldg, 12 Grafton Rd.

1) *The 7 habits of highly successful research degree students*. 10.30am-1pm. To register send your name and email address to [k.vanbeek@auckland.ac.nz](mailto:k.vanbeek@auckland.ac.nz) with the subject line '7 habits'.

2) *Defeating self-sabotage*. 2-4.30pm. To register send your name and email address to [k.vanbeek@auckland.ac.nz](mailto:k.vanbeek@auckland.ac.nz) with the subject line 'self-sabotage'. Start the year off with a bang - get some fantastic free advice on how to maximise your time at University. The PGSA Party will be held at Strata following the second workshop.

## SATURDAY 27 FEBRUARY

### Exhibition talk

Eric Riddler: *Felix Kelly and the Sydney Charm School*. 1pm Gus Fisher Gallery, 74 Shortland St.

Eric Riddler, researcher with the Art Gallery of New South Wales, considers the shared influences and aesthetic connections between the work of Felix Kelly and the Sydney 'Charm School' painters of Kelly's generation.

## TUESDAY 2 MARCH

### Bioengineering research seminar

Prof Bruce Caswell, Division of Engineering, Brown University, Providence, Rhode Island: *Dissipative particle dynamics modelling of red blood cells*. 4-5pm 5th Floor Seminar Room, 20 Symonds St.

## WEDNESDAY 3 MARCH

### Exhibition opening

Denys Watkins: *I'll Never Forget What's isname* 5.30pm, projectspace B43 1, Ground floor, 20 Whitaker Place. Until 13 March.

An exhibition of drawings by Elam Senior Lecturer Denys Watkins. The drawings, completed over the last two decades, range from ideas jotted in sketchbooks to activities expanded on through the process of drawing. Visit [www.projectspaceB431.auckland.ac.nz](http://www.projectspaceB431.auckland.ac.nz)

## THURSDAY 4 MARCH

### Excel intermediate

1-4pm, CAD, Level 4, 76 Symonds St.

Enrol at [www.cad.auckland.ac.nz/](http://www.cad.auckland.ac.nz/) workshops or phone 373 7599 ext 88140 with queries.

## SATURDAY 6 MARCH

### Distinguished Alumni Speaker Day

10.30am-2.30pm Owen G Glenn Bldg, 12 Grafton Rd.

The UoA proudly presents the 2010 Distinguished Alumni Award Winners in a series of interesting and informative presentations which are open to all and free to attend.

Session one: 10.30-11.30am.

1) Dr Nguyen Van Thanh, CEO/ President NVT Technologies, United States: *Indexing human development*.  
2) Judge Andrew Becroft, Principal Youth Court Judge: *How to turn a troubled child into a distinguished alumnus of the University of Crime*.

Session two: 12-1pm.

1) Michael Parmenter, leading dancer and choreographer: *Gestures of aliveness*.

2) Dr Jessie Jacobsen, leading researcher for Huntington's disease and postdoctoral research fellow at Massachusetts General Hospital and Harvard Medical School: *'Hope' and 'dignity': Huntington's disease research*.  
Session three: 1.30-2.30pm.

1) Dr Jennifer Plane Te Paa, first lay, indigenous and single woman ever to be appointed as head of an Anglican theological college throughout the Anglican Communion: *The Anglican Church - an ailing anachronism or an abiding establishment? Just what in the world is currently going on?*

2) Emeritus Professor Richard Sibson, internationally recognised geologist and Fellow of the Royal Society, London: *On the uses of earthquakes*.

### Felix Kelly: Curator talk

1pm, Gus Fisher Gallery, 74 Shortland St. Dr Don Bassett, author of the book *Fix: The Art and Life of Felix Kelly* and curator of the exhibition, provides an introduction to the strangely familiar world of Auckland-born expatriate painter Felix Kelly, including his connections to both the Prince of Wales and Evelyn Waugh's novel *Brideshead Revisited*, his association with leading critic of the day, Herbert Read.

## SUNDAY 7 MARCH

### 95bFM Summer Series

Presented by UoA. 12noon-7pm Albert Park. A line of of NZ bands, including the Mint Chicks, will be playing and all staff and students of UoA can access the VIP area with their University ID card. This is a free event and a great opportunity to get a group of University staff and/or students together for an afternoon of entertainment. For more information visit [www.95bFM.com](http://www.95bFM.com)

## TUESDAY 9 MARCH

### School of Music research seminar

Sue Court: *The relevance to early opera performance of architect Alfonso Parigi's 1628 etchings*. 1-2pm Music Theatre, School of Music, 6 Symonds St. Queries to [concerts@creative.auckland.ac.nz](mailto:concerts@creative.auckland.ac.nz)

### Public lecture

Prof Gretchen Hofmann, University of California, Santa Barbara: *Ocean acidification: What is it and what can we expect for our marine ecosystems of the future?* 7-8pm Fisher & Paykel Appliances Auditorium, Owen G. Glenn Bldg, 12 Grafton Rd.

## THURSDAY 11 MARCH

### Access introduction

1-4pm, CAD, Level 4, 76 Symonds St. Enrol at [www.cad.auckland.ac.nz/](http://www.cad.auckland.ac.nz/) workshops or call 373 7599 ext 88140 with queries.

### Movie screening

*A Sea Change* (2009). 7-9pm Fisher & Paykel Appliances Auditorium, Owen G. Glenn Bldg, 12 Grafton Rd. Professor Gretchen Hofmann will present this free public screening. Directed by Barbara Ettinger, it is the first film about ocean acidification. The 90-minute movie will be followed by an opportunity for questions and discussion. Visit [www.aseachange.net](http://www.aseachange.net)

# 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](mailto:rentals@citysales.co.nz) or log on to [www.citysales.co.nz/rentals](http://www.citysales.co.nz/rentals)  
**Flatmate wanted, Grey Lynn.** Room available in sunny two-bedroom apartment, close to shops, cafes, parks, transport. \$150 pw, strictly non-smoking. Phone Yuki (021) 343 8949 or Jenny (09) 428 2367.

**Fully furnished double bedroom available for rent** in a three-bedroom apartment. Would suit a visiting academic or possibly couple. Located in Madison Apartments, 160 Symonds St, near the Khyber Pass corner. Near new condition. Ten minutes easy walk to University. \$190 pw + share of services. Secure garaging available. Contact Steve on (021) 995 389 or [s.hodgkinson@auckland.ac.nz](mailto:s.hodgkinson@auckland.ac.nz)

**Furnished house for rent.** Beautiful fully-furnished three-bdrm classic villa, with patio, gardens, veranda and OSP. Superbly located in quiet Mt Eden cul-de-sac, available for ~3 months from end of April-July 2010 (negotiable). Air-conditioning, great public transport links and close to city. Sky TV and Broadband connections. \$650 pw. Contact Dave/Di on +64 9 6315207.

## ACCOMMODATION REQUIRED

**Short-term housesit/rental.** New professor at UoA looking for short-term housesit/rental, preferably furnished three-four bdrm in the Auckland City area, from mid-late March. We also have a small dog (Welsh terrier). Contact [s.may@auckland.ac.nz](mailto:s.may@auckland.ac.nz) or phone (021) 192 2207.

### Two Finnish linguistics professors

on sabbatical leave are looking for accommodation in Auckland during April and May. We hope to find a furnished flat with two or more rooms at a location within reach of public transport. Please contact us at [stefan.werner@uef.fi](mailto:stefan.werner@uef.fi) or [pirkko.muikku-werner@uef.fi](mailto:pirkko.muikku-werner@uef.fi)

## OVERSEAS ACCOMMODATION

**Dreaming of Italy?** Stay At 'Casa Mila' while exploring Tuscany and Umbria.

Casa Mila has two self-catering apartments and a B&B with a delightful garden in the heart of this Renaissance walled town. Easy access to the historic towns of central Italy by train, car and bus. Enjoy the food, the wine, the art - the essence of Italy. Contact Val and Colin Stevens, [www.casamila.it](http://www.casamila.it) or [info@casamila.it](mailto:info@casamila.it) or phone/fax Italy (39) +0575 733 477.

## MISCELLANEOUS

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

**Do you have hot flashes?** If you experience hot flashes, you may be eligible to participate in a research study of an investigational oral medication. You may qualify for this study if you:

- Are a postmenopausal woman between 35 and 60 years of age,
- Have 50 moderate-to-severe hot flashes per week.

If you qualify, you will receive study-related care and study medication at no charge. If you have questions or are interested in obtaining additional information on how to qualify for this study, please contact the study coordinator Jo Morris, phone (09) 524-3342 or 021-178-7083 or contact Dr Helen Robers, [h.roberts@auckland.ac.nz](mailto:h.roberts@auckland.ac.nz)  
**Rajasthan and Pushkar Fair Group:** Experience of a lifetime, visit Pushkar Fair and Rajasthan, land of Maharajas in Nov 2010. Visit our website for more details [www.exoticholidays.co.nz](http://www.exoticholidays.co.nz) or email us on [info@exoticholidays.co.nz](mailto:info@exoticholidays.co.nz) for tour options or ask us to customise or tailor-make for you. Planning a trip to Asia or the Middle-East? Contact us for a quote before you book elsewhere. Serving universities for over five years. Bringing you the best of Asia and Middle-East holiday options.

**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](mailto:Karen.embleton@mondotravel.co.nz) or 940 0064 (wk) or (021) 188 7781.

**Two energetic young cats looking for a good home!** Two attractive one-year-old cats are looking for a new home. Millie is a pretty calico cat (white and ginger) and Louie is a full tabby. Both are house-trained and have lots of energy! Currently residing in the Howick area. Please contact Karen on 373 7599 ext 87467 or [ke.jackson@auckland.ac.nz](mailto:ke.jackson@auckland.ac.nz)

For a full list of The University of Auckland events see: [www.auckland.ac.nz/uoa/home/events](http://www.auckland.ac.nz/uoa/home/events)

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