

Uni NEWS

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October 2022



UNIVERSITY OF
AUCKLAND
Waipapa Taumata Rau

MELINDA WEBBER

Inspiring stories to
change the narrative

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An insider's report on the Nuclear
Non-Proliferation Treaty talks in
New York

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QUEEN ON CAMPUS

A pictorial tribute to Her Majesty Queen
Elizabeth II during visits to the University of
Auckland

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LOVING LAW AGAIN

After private practice, lawyer Nikki
Chamberlain returned to study and
found her calling in academia

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A selection of Waipapa Taumata Rau, University of Auckland staff and student expert commentary in the media recently. Email: uninews@auckland.ac.nz



Caroline Crowther

DIAGNOSTIC SWEET SPOT

Professor Caroline Crowther (Liggins) talked to *Waatea News* about research that could improve the lives of hāpu māmā and pēpi. Caroline wants a change to Ministry of Health guidelines, to diagnose and treat milder gestational diabetes to improve outcomes for mothers and babies. Gestational diabetes, where pregnant women can't make enough insulin, is rising and is more common in Māori, Pacific and Asian mothers.

Link: tinyurl.com/Caroline-Crowther



Doug Wilson

ROADS GONE TO POT

Dr Doug Wilson (Engineering) told *Stuff* that simple economics explain why the country's state highways are potholed and parlous, subject to washouts and closures. "A couple of decades ago New Zealand decided that all state highways had to be sealed. That was a political decision ... so we saw many roads around the Coromandel, for example, sealed, and from an economic perspective they were very marginal. So we now have a sealed network that's probably larger than is economic, because New Zealand is a relatively low-traffic-volume country outside the main centres."

Link: tinyurl.com/Doug-Wilson-roads



Priyanka Dhopade

MAKE SPACE FOR WOMEN

Dr Priyanka Dhopade, an aerospace engineer and lecturer in mechanical engineering, told *The Spinoff* that Aotearoa's overwhelmingly male aerospace industry needs to care about diversity. "It's in their best interests. There are multiple concrete studies that show diversity is beneficial for innovation. This is not really a secret – and it's not rocket science."

Link: tinyurl.com/Priyanka-space



Deidre Brown

ROLE OF TAONGA

Professor Deidre Brown (Ngāpuhi, Ngāti Kahu), from the School of Architecture and Planning, talked to RNZ's Kim Hill about the relationship between Māori and early Christian missionaries. She spoke of the 19th-century Christian missions to New Zealand playing important roles in collecting, distributing and understanding taonga Māori in western Europe, and how taonga shaped European opinions about Māori art and society.

Link: tinyurl.com/RNZ-deidre-brown



Toni Bruce

UNEVEN PLAYING FIELD

Ahead of the Rugby World Cup, Professor Toni Bruce (Education and Social Work) gave her verdict to the *NZ Herald* on gender equality in sports coverage: "Media coverage of women's sport in this country sucks ... it's still terrible."

Link: tinyurl.com/toni-bruce-women-sport

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STAY IN THE LOOP

Your staff email newsletter *Whaimōhio The Loop* comes out every fortnight. If you have content or achievements to share, email: ruchita.bharbhari@auckland.ac.nz. Deadlines are on the intranet under News, Events and Notices, *The Loop*.

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TREE TRADITION ADDS TO LANDSCAPE

Vice-Chancellor Professor Dawn Freshwater added to Waipapa Taumata Rau’s stunning gardens when she kept with tradition and planted a native tree on 1 September, the first day of spring.

Helped by the University’s gardeners, she planted an evergreen coastal maire (*Nestegis apetala*). Trees by previous University of Auckland vice-chancellors include a titoki (Professor Colin Maiden) and a kauri (Professor Stuart McCutcheon). It’s an idea that germinated in the gardening services team, led by grounds manager Stanley Jones.

The tree planting took place in bright sunshine, on a grassed area to the rear of the University ClockTower. The Vice-Chancellor said she felt honoured to contribute to the planting of the University grounds.

“This is a lovely gift and it celebrates our natural environment.

“This tree and the many other trees and



Grounds manager Stanley Jones with the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Dawn Freshwater.

plants we are privileged to have in our grounds are an important part of the University’s work towards sustainability.”

Stanley says he chose the *Nestegis apetala* because it complements the space and is an evergreen native that doesn’t grow too tall, so won’t block out light at the back of the ClockTower.

He says there’s an oak tree nearby that’s approaching its end of life and it’s important to replant with an eye to the future.

“We want the trees we plant today to be here for the enjoyment of future generations, as we enjoy the trees planted by those who were here before us.”

Nestegis apetala is a smallish tree native to northern New Zealand. It has dark glossy leaves with small green and yellow flowers appearing from October through to January.



Professor Freshwater gets shovelling on the first day of spring. Photos: Jason Fell



Digital People created by Soul Machines.

FUNDING FOR DIGITAL PEOPLE

Researchers at the Auckland Bioengineering Institute (ABI) have received more than \$4 million to investigate how Soul Machines’ Digital People can be used to monitor health.

The funding is through MBIE’s Catalyst Strategic Investment Fund, in partnership with Soul Machines Ltd. Soul is a New Zealand AI company that spun out from the ABI to pioneer the creation of Digital People that interact with humans in real time and a lifelike manner.

Professor Merryn Tawhai from the ABI will use part of the funding to lead an international

consortium to explore how Digital People could be used to support the management of Type 2 diabetes and cardiovascular disease.

“Many patients struggle to understand their condition and how they should manage it, and very often don’t comply with treatment strategies recommended by their doctor,” Merryn says. “This is especially true of lifestyle changes needed to get the greatest improvements in health and quality of life. While we know intensive interventions with clinical and personal coaching are effective, their cost puts them out of the reach of most people.”

Another project is being run by Professor Mark Billingham, head of the Empathic Computing Lab at the ABI. He will use the funding to lead Tōku Hoa: A Personalised Agent for Mental Health. It’s a global collaboration with overseas universities that will explore how Digital People could provide long-term monitoring of mental well-being and, when appropriate, remote access to professional treatment.

A digital person will appear in a conversation-based app on a person’s phone or computer in response to changes in the user’s mood or when requested.

“The goal is for the digital person to become a trusted virtual companion,” says Mark.

■ Full story: auckland.ac.nz/digital-people-health

MARAE UPGRADE

Waipapa Marae has had a makeover.

It’s the first renovation since the marae opened in February 1988. The work began in June, and it reopened in September for staff to walk through and see the improvements (picture below). These include heated floors, a new lighting system in the whareniui, refurbished bathroom facilities, a paint job for the wharekai, new flooring, a new cleaning room and upgraded stairs.

Stage two will begin this month and will include further improvements in the whareniui and enhanced disability access. This means the marae remains closed for educational and ceremonial purposes until March 2023.

■ Full story: auckland.ac.nz/waipapa-marae-reno





Dr Ramari Stewart and supporters at the Fale in August.



Dr Ramari Stewart

LOVING LAW

After practising as a lawyer, it took a return to study to rekindle Nikki Chamberlain's love of the law.

In a theatre brimming with third-year law of torts students, senior lecturer Nikki Chamberlain's lecture is in full swing.

Lots of questions are posed but no pressure is applied to answer, resulting in conversation and constructive debate using a teaching style she describes as the "soft Socratic" method.

"I don't think putting people on the spot is helpful in a learning environment," says Nikki, who was honoured for her teaching with a Faculty of Law students' choice teaching award in 2021.

"If a person is anxious about being called on to speak in public, they're not going to be present in the room and learning and engaging with the topic; they're going to be stressed about being singled out."

US-born Nikki tries to foster a lecture environment that allows for informed debate, something the former commercial litigator and current Associate Dean of Equity says has suffered in the public domain in recent years.

"In the context of the United States, and being an American, I believe we have lost the ability to constructively debate issues in a measured way.

"There has to be a way for us to hear viewpoints that don't align with our own without the debate escalating. In these situations, we need to be open to listening to and learning from each other, even if we don't necessarily agree with a person's perspective."

In her teaching and day-to-day interactions, there's a contagious air of enthusiasm about Nikki that makes it easy to see why she took out a students' choice award.

But the learners who experience Nikki's classes are lucky their lecturer's childhood dreams of a career as a veterinarian were thwarted by her loathing chemistry. Debating and writing, however, came naturally and on leaving high school she pursued a conjoint Bachelor of Law and Arts, majoring in film, television and media studies at the University of Auckland.

"I thought I might want to be a reporter and to present a current affairs show, but I had some excellent teachers and a natural aptitude for law, so that was the path I embarked on."

While studying at Auckland, Nikki particularly enjoyed the engaging, interactive lectures presented by associate professors Paul Myburgh, Scott Optican and Bill Hodge, which would later inform her teaching style.

HONOUR FOR WHALE EXPERT

Ramari Stewart has been awarded an honorary doctorate in science by the University for a lifetime of research.

Ramari (Ngāti Awa) is renowned for her contribution to whale science practices, in particular the tohorā (southern right whale), and commitment to mātauranga Māori in research.

Ramari was presented the doctorate in August by Chancellor Cecilia Tarrant at a well-attended ceremony and celebration at the Fale Pasifika.

The honour comes on top of a newly discovered whale species being named after Ramari in 2021. After consultation with Ramari and kaumātua from Ngāi Tahu and Ngāti Awa, permission was given to name the new species 'Ramari's beaked whale'. Its scientific name is *Mesoplodon eueu*. In te reo Māori, the name 'Ramari' also means a rare event, a fitting nod to the elusive nature of most beaked whales.

Ramari has undertaken nearly 30 years of research alongside academics and is currently collaborating with Professor Rochelle Constantine from the Institute of Marine Science. They have worked on several whale and dolphin

projects over a few decades, most notably the description of Ramari's beaked whale.

"Ramari has been a valuable source of knowledge throughout my research career," says Rochelle. "Her understanding of stranded animals and the historical connection of whales to Aotearoa has enriched our work."

In 2020, Ramari was awarded the Queen's Service Medal for her work in mātauranga Māori, wildlife conservation and research. It was the first time a Queen's honour had been bestowed for mātauranga Māori, recognising the importance of cultural knowledge and how it can sit comfortably alongside Western science. "It's wonderful that Western science is starting to recognise that mātauranga Māori is equally as great as Western science and the two can work together," says Ramari.

"Rather than just taking knowledge from Indigenous practitioners, it is better that we both sit at the table."

Full story: auckland.ac.nz/Dr-Ramari-Stewart

BLUES AWARDS FOR ACHIEVERS

The University's Blues awards were presented at a celebratory dinner on 23 September.

All up, 113 Blues were presented to students who excelled in four categories: Arts and Cultural, Innovation, Service and Leadership, and Sport. The nine major awards went to: **Thomas Swinburn** (most meritorious performance, Arts and Cultural); **Frazer Tavener** (Sportsman of the Year); **Theresa Fitzpatrick** (Sportswoman of the Year); **Anna Steven** (Para-athlete Sportsperson of the Year); **Theresa Fitzpatrick** (most meritorious performance in Sport); **Nandini Singh** (most outstanding contribution in Service and Leadership); **Alonzo Nieves** (most meritorious performance in Innovation);

Emma Ormsby (major Māori award); and **Ruby Macomber** (major Pasifika award).

Chancellor Cecilia Tarrant said the Blues awards represent the wealth of talent in our student body. "Our Blues award winners are the innovators, leaders, sporting icons and cultural pioneers who are creating a brighter tomorrow."

Read more: auckland.ac.nz/bluesawards



Rugby Sevens star Theresa Fitzpatrick won two major Blues awards.



Senior lecturer Nikki Chamberlain was a practising lawyer who returned to the books. Photo: Elise Manahan

In 2006, in the penultimate year of her studies, Nikki scored a summer job as a clerk in the dispute resolution department at Minter Ellison Rudd Watts, a commercial law firm in the city.

It went well and she ended up working there for eight years, forming lasting friendships with colleagues and practising in a number of areas, including tort law, contract law, company law, insolvency law, relationship property litigation, trust and estate litigation.

In the end, she was a senior associate when she made a change. “I was looking at partnership and basically decided I wasn’t sure I wanted to continue on that track.

“I had an opportunity to get my masters degree at Vanderbilt University in Nashville and I thought that would give me a chance to pause and consider what I wanted to do with my career.”

Nikki, who was born in Miami and moved to Aotearoa New Zealand with her family when she was 12, says her experience at Vanderbilt reignited her love of law.

“It was phenomenal. I had lost some of my love for law during my time as a senior associate. When dealing with certain commercial and family law matters, the day-to-day grind of legal practice and the lack of a consistent work-life balance, you can lose some of the rigour and enthusiasm you might have had before.”

The passion for law returned and with it came opportunities and awards. As a masters student, she received a scholastic excellence award and was given a chance to teach the following year. Her experience at Vanderbilt made her consider a career in academia.

“Because of my litigation background and having appeared in the Court of Appeal, High Court, District Court and Family Court over my eight years as a lawyer, I wasn’t too worried when

I started teaching, although I had a few nerves, which I think is helpful as it gives you an edge.

“The experience helped me realise I would really like to teach, and when I reflected on what I enjoyed most about my job at Minter Ellison I thought about my experiences mentoring and training junior solicitors. That’s when I made the final decision to go into academia.”

“I don’t think putting people on the spot is helpful in a learning environment.”

– Nikki Chamberlain, senior lecturer, Faculty of Law

Now Nikki lectures in theatres of up to 500 students on tort law, complex litigation, family property law and privacy law.

Outside of teaching, she has a full schedule of research that has been both recognised and utilised. In relation to her research in complex litigation, Nikki was invited onto an expert panel advising the New Zealand Law Commission on its review of class actions and litigation funding. Class actions are also at the heart of her current PhD research, looking at how civil procedure affects legal outcomes for healthcare consumers taking medical device misadventure cases in different jurisdictions.

Nikki authored the first empirical study on class actions in New Zealand and, in 2021, was awarded a CABLE Research Impact Award (Creative Arts, Business, Economics, Law, Education and Social Work) for her work in the area.

She also co-edited *Privacy Law in New Zealand*, the third edition of which is due for release.

In a chapter in the book titled ‘Privacy and Children’ she delves into the country’s lack of safeguards amidst our changing social media landscape. She details the phenomenon of ‘sharenting’ – parents and caregivers sharing their children’s images on social media.

Nikki says this practice has proliferated through ‘mummy bloggers’ and the use of ‘child influencers’, culminating in ‘generation tagged’, but little thought is given to issues that may arise.

“A child has a distinct lack of control over how their image is used because the legal authority for decision-making primarily vests in the parents or legal guardians,” she writes.

There are few legal protections in place to prevent children’s images from being used by third parties in exploitative ways. Nikki says legislation is needed to expand the protection powers of the Privacy Commissioner, for example, in relation to the use of a child’s image on social media. “Privacy law protections are not keeping up with advancements in technology,” she says. “Children are particularly vulnerable in the social media sphere.”

Outside of academia, Nikki is an enthusiastic dog-mum to Monty but has no problems with sharing his image online. In fact, he played a starring role in a video in which Nikki appeared for ACC, talking about her recovery from a serious ankle injury in 2019.

She says that experience, and her rehabilitation, made her appreciate New Zealand’s healthcare system, compared to the US where without healthcare insurance most would struggle.

“If I tell my friends in the US my experience with ankle surgery and ACC, they’re just like, ‘when can we move to New Zealand?’”

■ Sophie Boladeras

REMEMBERING QUEEN ELIZABETH II: CAMPUS VISITS RECALLED

A collection of photos to remember Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II on her visits to the University of Auckland.

Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II made several visits to the University of Auckland during her reign.

The first was to stay in Government House in 1953 for several days during her royal visit with Prince Philip in 1953-1954. They arrived in the country on 23 December and left on 31 January, visiting 46 towns or cities as part of a six-month tour of the Commonwealth.

While Government House wasn't yet part of the University – that didn't happen until 1969 – it was an important visit. It was Elizabeth II's first trip away as Queen, and she delivered the Queen's message from the venue, six months after her coronation.

Two days earlier there had been a garden party, and she added to the University's gardens on 30 December 1953, by planting a rimu tree to the right of what is now Old Government House.

On 24 March 1970, the Queen officially opened the School of Medicine, unveiling a commemorative plaque and meeting with students and staff including the School's inaugural

dean, the late Professor Cecil Lewis. The school had opened its doors to students in 1968, and one of the highlights was a tour through a teaching laboratory, where students from the inaugural intake, now in their third year, had been briefed to act normal and not to look up from their microscopes as the Queen entered.

A report in the FMHS history blog has Professor Denys Boshier, from the Department of Anatomy, recalling what happened as she visited the lab and looked through one student's microscope: "The topic we were doing for that particular day was the human ovary. Of course, queens never look at ovaries.

"There was a picture in the *NZ Herald* a day or two afterwards with the caption: 'Queen looks at blood smear in University class.' I really don't know what the Queen might have thought when she found she was looking at a human ovary."

Not everyone was enamoured, of course. *Craccum* columnist and prominent protestor Tim Shadbolt, now mayor of Invercargill, wrote in the student magazine on 26 March that while the

Queen was "inoffensive", "the whole concept of the monarchy is basically pretty sick".

In February 2002, Queen Elizabeth II was involved in another event on campus, this time the official opening of the Liggins Institute, at Park Avenue in Grafton. Liggins had been in operation since the previous year as the University's first large-scale research institute.

The Queen was escorted by then Prime Minister Helen Clark, Vice-Chancellor Dr John Hood and Chancellor John Graham. Among those she met were Professor Sir Peter Gluckman who was the founding director of the Liggins Institute, the Institute's namesake Professor Sir Graham (Mont) Liggins, his wife Lady Celia, who was Auckland's first female obstetrician and gynaecologist, and Professor Dame Jane Harding who presented her research to the Queen, observed by a child called Bridget, one of many children to benefit from Professor Harding's research.

Queen Elizabeth II was the reigning monarch of all of New Zealand's universities in their current form, since the disestablishment of the University of New Zealand in 1962.

Her Majesty was Patron of the Association of Commonwealth Universities which champions higher education as a force for good and the role of universities in addressing global challenges and improving people's lives. The Queen Elizabeth Commonwealth Scholarships were named after her in 2019, as a tribute to her immense contribution as head of the Commonwealth and her dedication to education and youth.



1953 Queen Elizabeth and Prince Philip attend a garden party on 23 December 1953 at Government House.
Photos: Archives New Zealand Te Rua Mahara o te Kāwanatanga



Queen Elizabeth II delivers her 1953 Christmas message from Government House.

1970



Queen Elizabeth II at the opening of the School of Medicine in 1970.



The Queen unveils a plaque to officially open the School of Medicine.



Medical students were advised to keep working when the Queen visited their lab.



The Queen chats with students in the cafeteria.



From left: Philson Library's first librarian Harry Erlam, the late Professor Cecil Lewis, inaugural dean of the Medical School and Queen Elizabeth II, 24 March 1970.



A captive audience at the Med School.



The Queen with Professor Cecil Lewis, left, and Harry Erlam.

2002



With Vice-Chancellor John Hood, left, and late Chancellor Sir John Graham at Liggins Institute.



Auckland's first female obstetrician, the late Lady Celia Liggins, is introduced to Her Majesty, with late Sir Professor Graham (Mont) Liggins.



With Mont Liggins, the namesake of the Liggins Institute, and its founding director Sir Professor Peter Gluckman.



Professor Dame Jane Harding, obscured, displays her research to Prime Minister Helen Clark and the Queen.



The Queen unveils the podium for the official opening of the Liggins Institute, 26 February 2002.



With Professor Graham Liggins, left, and Professor Peter Gluckman.



The Queen at the Liggins Institute. In front, the little girl Bridget was one of the children to benefit from Professor Jane Harding's research.

MELINDA WEBBER

BUSTING STEREOTYPES

Professor Melinda Webber says negative stories about Māori ancestors have had a serious impact. She is determined to help counteract that by showcasing inspiring Māori tūpuna in a book.

Like her Ngāti Hine ancestor Hineāmaru, a leader of great mana who forged new ground in many ways, Melinda Webber is not afraid of a challenge and her sixth book was one she felt compelled to take up.

At the start of a Zoom chat with Professor Melinda Webber from her home in Laingholm, West Auckland, I admire the floor-to-ceiling bookshelves in the background.

“They’re great aren’t they? My partner made me a room downstairs for them all, and people think they’re a Zoom backdrop.”

In October she’ll be able to add two books to the library, *A Fire in the Belly of Hineāmaru* (Auckland University Press), 24 stories of Māori tūpuna (ancestors) from Te Hiku in the far north to Tāmaki Makaurau, co-authored with PhD Māori Studies student Te Kapua O’Connor (Ngāti Kuri). The book has been translated into te reo Māori by Te Tai Tokerau language expert Quinton Hita as *Ka Ngangana Tonu a Hineāmaru, He Kōrero Tuku Iho nō Te Tai Tokerau*. Both books have original cover illustrations by New Zealand artist Shane Cotton.

Melinda (Ngāti Kahu, Ngāti Hau, Ngāti Hine, Ngāpuhi, Ngāti Whakaue) is Te Tumu, Deputy Dean in the University’s Faculty of Education and Social Work. Her particular focus has been on Māori students’ success, concepts of giftedness for Māori and school improvement for Māori learners.

One of the key things she learned on her numerous trips around the north talking to schools about improving Māori achievement, was the need to reverse negative stereotypes.

“We grew up without positive narratives about ourselves; in the north in particular, although that’s been true across Aotearoa. The common narrative is that we were the first to be ‘missionised’ and Christianised, and we then became warmongers. That was the story we were taught of our ancestors.”

These stereotypes shape who young Māori think they can be, and whether they want to learn their own language and histories, she says.

“They can become self-fulfilling prophecies, so our young people really need counter-narratives which talk back to those ideas and remind them that they’re other people’s stories of us.”

There is no shortage of inspiring stories once you start looking, she says.

“The common narrative is that we were the first to be ‘missionised’ and Christianised, and we then became warmongers. That was the story we were taught of our ancestors.”

– Professor Melinda Webber,
Faculty of Education and Social Work

“When you visit a marae up north, for example, the kaumātua talk about your tūpuna as heroes. Yes, they went to war, but they were also peacemakers, caring fathers, strategists and philosophers.

“The rangatira Te Ruki Kāwiti, for example, built the Ruapekapeka Pā, a world-renowned site known for trench warfare. So we were just trying to capture those ideas in the book.”

A Fire in the Belly of Hineāmaru is a six-year project involving a group of talented people, most with strong whakapapa to Te Tai Tokerau, says Melinda. “It really feels like all sorts of things have come together. I remember writing in my application for the Marsden Grant that I was ‘the right person, at the right time’, to do this study. But I couldn’t have written this book on my own. It is a koha by, for and with Te Tai Tokerau.”

She says Ngāpuhi, the largest iwi in Aotearoa with more than 140,000 members, has a rich whakapapa of scholars, politicians, entrepreneurs and scientists.

And with the refreshed New Zealand history curriculum compulsory from 2023, the gap in educational resources was there to be filled.

“We knew a book like this was going to be gold for schools in the north, and in Auckland.”

So after a chat with her former masters student, Te Kapua O’Connor, who ended up becoming a co-author after three years of research, they started unearthing stories from all sorts of unlikely places.

“Beyond the 22 books I initially identified, we focused on manuscripts that had been written by people who lived in the north; they were in people’s homes, under their beds ... they were personal to them.”

They also found rich material in traditional songs, chants, prayers and incantations.

“For every idea, we wanted to triangulate it with different sources, because one of the things you’re mindful of when you’re writing whakapapa narratives like this is the iwi across the river will have a different narrative from the one you hold.

“So when somebody said it was a grandfather and another said it was an uncle, and someone else said it was a brother, we tried to reflect that in the story, and through footnotes.”

She says one of the interesting things, writing-wise, was their decision to use the passive voice to reflect the position of the environment as compared to humans.

“Instead of saying, ‘John chopped the tree down’ you might say, ‘The tree was chopped down by John’ which is not the usual way of writing something, but in a Māori worldview, the environment is our older sibling and further up in the hierarchy in the whakapapa; I think that comes through in the language of the stories – care of place.”



Professor Melinda Webber and PhD student Te Kapua O’Connor worked together on the book.



Professor Melinda Webber says the book will be 'gold' for schools in Northland and Auckland, in particular. Photos: Dean Carruthers

The eponymous story of Hineāmaru has a particularly personal connection, say Melinda, who is a direct descendant on her mother's side.

"My stepfather was a community leader and as kids we travelled to lots of different marae around the country where he would explain the meanings of carvings and the stories of the ancestors depicted in them.

"When we saw Hineāmaru in the north, he would tell the story of this incredibly determined woman who journeyed with her parents from the west coast to the east coast of the North Island, and who was an expert in growing kūmara.

"She was a scientist who understood about soil and all kinds of things, and it was so outside my worldview, I was just mesmerised by this woman who seemed so ferocious and spirited. As a kid, I drew a picture of her with a fire in her belly to represent her tenacity. Māori have always been taught that one's feelings rest in the belly as the centre of all emotion, so the book's title was a nod to that as well."

Once completed to draft, they sent the manuscript to AUP director Sam Elworthy, who had been in contact when Melinda first won the Marsden Grant to say he'd be keen to publish it.

"Sam was really taken with it and said there's not really a book like this in Aotearoa New Zealand. He suggested an illustrator as we wanted some good pictures."

And then, she says, came an almost unheard of confluence of interest, timing, skills and whakapapa, which saw both Shane Cotton and revered te reo Māori speaker and translator Quinton Hita come on board.

"None of us knew Shane personally, but I thought I'd email him because I really admire his

work, and just send him the book and say, 'This is what it's about and these are some of the stories'. He read it from cover to cover and was completely taken by it and inspired to do some paintings."

"There's something about reading the story of your own ancestors that just triggered in the contributors to this book a desire to be involved."

– Professor Melinda Webber,
co-author of *A Fire in the Belly of Hineāmaru*

Shane focused on the Hineāmaru story but also did a couple of different paintings inspired by stories from the book. And Quinton's translation was so crucial that it substantially affected the English version, making him, in effect, the third author. Then Christchurch mapmaker Tim Nolan joined the project to clarify the locations of various regions that readers might not otherwise recognise by their Māori names.

"Tim came back with the most beautiful maps that emphasise the topography of the land in ways that linked to the stories in the book and offered new knowledge; did you know for example, that the Māori name for Wellsford is Whakapirau?"

Whakapapa really matters on a project like this, she says.

"There's something about reading the story of your own ancestors that just triggers, or certainly triggered in the contributors to this book, a desire to be involved; to tautoko, to tell those stories with the skills they had."

Melinda feels incredibly proud of the book.

"None of my books have been as personal or as important; not just for academia and for contributing to theory, but for community and for young people, and also for teachers. I just think there are so many ways this book is needed in our communities."

■ Julianne Evans



A Fire in the Belly of Hineāmaru: A Collection of Narratives about Te Tai Tokerau Tūpuna, and in te reo Māori as Ka Ngangana Tonu a Hineāmaru, He Kōrero Tuku Iho nō Te Tai Tokerau. By Melinda Webber and Te Kapua O'Connor, Auckland University Press, out on 13 October



Paula Morris



2022 winners: In the back row, Maureen Lander is third from left and Paula Morris is second from right.

PAULA MORRIS HONOURED

Paula Morris has been named the 2022 Arts Foundation Te Tumu Toi Laureate for literature.

A novelist, short story writer and essayist, Paula Morris MNZM is an associate professor in the Faculty of Arts where she directs the Master of Creative Writing programme.

She can now add the 2022 Arts Foundation Te Tumu Toi Laureate Award for literature to her accolades, and is delighted with the honour.

“A laureateship means you’ve been selected by your peers rather than made an application, so it’s very special – and a huge surprise.

“To be part of a group of artists, from different media, offers a new community and new possibilities of collaboration. I’m really honoured, and grateful for the generous financial award as well. It’s taken a lot of stress out of my ambitious

travel and writing plans this semester, while I’m on leave.”

Paula (Ngāti Wai, Ngāti Manuhiri, Ngāti Whātua) is the founder of the Academy of New Zealand Literature and Wharerangi, the Māori literature hub, and co-edited the landmark anthologies *Ko Aotearoa Tātou* (2020) and *A Clear Dawn: New Asian Voices from Aotearoa New Zealand* (2021). She is working on an anthology of contemporary Māori short fiction.

This semester she is travelling in Asia and will also take up a writing residency in Kyoto, Japan.

Paula joins six other prominent New Zealand artists from diverse disciplines who are being recognised for their outstanding practice and significant impact. These include 2022 University of Auckland distinguished alumna Dr Maureen Lander, a multi-media weaver and installation artist who, aged 80, is still collaborating with students on campus to create works.

This year marks the 22nd year of the Arts Foundation Te Tumu Toi Laureate Awards, which recognise exceptional artists with a substantial financial gift funded entirely by arts supporters from around the country.

■ Julianne Evans

ROMAN REPLICAS THE REAL DEAL

An authentic set of ancient Roman armour, based on examples from Italy circa 400 BCE, has been recreated at the University.

It’s part of a project to explore larger questions about how war and weapons fit into Roman society. Military historian Jeremy Armstrong, an associate professor of classics and ancient history in the Faculty of Arts, says that while we know military equipment was incredibly important, we don’t really know other important things about it.

“Was it custom made? How hard was it to make? This is particularly true when it comes to ancient Italy.”

Unlike modern armies, soldiers of this time had to acquire their own armour and weapons and arrive for a campaign fully equipped.

“Rome conquered most of its empire [which expanded across Asia, Africa and most of Europe over 500 years] using an army of soldiers who supplied their own equipment.”

Possessing weapons was integral to the status of citizenship and manhood in these

early societies, he says. “For much of antiquity, around the Mediterranean, having military equipment was part of being a citizen. Fighting, and having the equipment to fight, was central to being part of the group as a man.

“With supplying your own equipment, it was a bit like the Met Gala, you wanted to show up in something distinctive and flashy that embodied who you were; a symbol of how you wanted to present yourself on the battlefield.”

Jeremy and staff at Redoubt Forge in Hamilton created the armour after investigating two major collections in Italy in 2019. They looked at around 35 pieces of ancient bronze equipment, to recreate ancient techniques and technology as accurately as possible. “We wanted to use the actual alloys we know they were using.”

The replica includes a helmet, cuirass (a piece of armour covering the upper body), a belt, and greaves – which protect the legs – along with two swords and several spears.

The whole project has taken about four years, with the help of Redoubt Forge’s Nic Harrison, who is known for his medieval replicas. The armour will be used for teaching purposes as well as being on display as part of the W.K.Lacey Antiquities Collection at the University.

Full story: auckland.ac.nz/roman-armour



The replica of a circa 400 BCE suit of Roman armour with weapons.

FRANTIC 48 HOURS WORTH IT WITH FINALS PLACE

Media Productions is once again in the running to be a winner, by reaching the Auckland final of the Vista Foundation 48 Hour Film Festival competition.

Competing as Missing Pixels, the team took up the challenge for the fifth time and have made the final 15 in the Auckland region. The contest sees groups creating a film in 48 hours, fulfilling various criteria such as key elements that must be included in the film. This year is the competition's 20th anniversary.

Missing Pixels met up on Friday 12 August at 7pm to be told the theme they'd been assigned and the elements to be used in the film.

"We were assigned 'supernatural', so had to do some quick brainstorming to make that theme fit the skeleton we'd kind of prepared as a template," says Folko Boermans, head of Media Productions.

The must-have elements were a whisper, a gatekeeper, an overhead shot and a sign.

"The team is never short on ideas, so before we knew it we had a whole whiteboard full of them."

By Friday 9.30pm the team was ready to start shooting, and that went on until the early hours of the morning.

Staff members Anna McCardle and Nic Cornea played a couple who spot each other at a birthday party. The film shows their imagined love affair taking a supernatural twist.

"The idea required lots of different scenes across Auckland so the shooting frenzy continued all through Saturday until very late."

Lorenz Gunawan edited the footage as soon as it came in and by Sunday morning they had a rough edit, but still scenes to shoot.

"Billy and Jethro just got on with that, and Anna and Nic managed to stay fresh looking and did a great acting job," says Folko.

Long-time creative director Richard Smith was roped in to record the opening and closing voiceover, and by lunchtime all the shooting was done so the finishing touches could be added.

"The film had to be digitally submitted by 7pm Sunday. By 6pm Sunday we had a finished film.

"It was a great team effort and the end result was an engaging and funny film. There were 176 teams entered and *Love You Stranger* made it through to the last 15 in the Auckland final."

■ The finalists' films will show at SkyCity Theatre on 5 October at 7pm. Read more at 48hours.co.nz/city-info/tamaki-makaurau-auckland/

Tickets on sale through EventFinda

Missing Pixels team

Actors: Anna McCardle, Nic Cornea,

Cameron King, Yulia Khimich, Grace Knell

Voiceover: Richard Smith

Crew: Elise Manahan, Natalie Martin, Stacia

Kitt-Wong, Cate Dillon

Producers: Jethro Martin, Folko Boermans

Cinematographers: Jethro Martin, Sa Li,

Billy Wong

Editor: Lorenz Gunawan

Assistant director: Cameron King

Directors: Billy Wong, Jethro Martin

Selling Britishness: Commodity Culture, the Dominions and Empire



Associate Professor Felicity Barnes is a senior lecturer in history at the University. Her latest book looks at how advertisers between the world wars constructed a shared British identity in Australia, Canada and New Zealand. It explores the role of commodity marketing in creating 'Britishness'.

Felicity Barnes, Auckland University Press, \$50

Wawata: Moon Dreaming, Daily Wisdom Guided by Hina, the Māori Moon

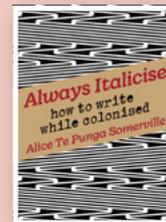


Alumna Dr Hinemoa Elder, author of *Aroha*, the top-selling non-fiction book in 2021, explains how to reclaim intimacy using the energies of Hina, the Māori moon goddess. Hina has 30 different faces to help illuminate life's

lessons – a different face and energy for each day of the month.

Hinemoa Elder, Penguin Random House, \$35, released 5 October

Always Italicise: How to Write While Colonised



'Always italicise foreign words', a friend of Māori scholar and poet Alice Te Punga Somerville was advised. In her first book of poetry, Alice does just that. In wit and anger, sadness and aroha, she reflects on

'how to write while colonised' – that is, how to write in English as a Māori writer.

Alice Te Punga Somerville, AUP, \$25

Vā: Stories by Women of the Moana



This book, edited by Law and Master of Creative Writing alumna Sisilia Etuati with Lani Wendt Young, was released in December 2021 but its official launch was delayed by Covid. It's a collection of writing by

50 Moana women writers including Gina Cole, Emmaline Pickering-Martin and Ria Masae, representing numerous countries in the Pacific.

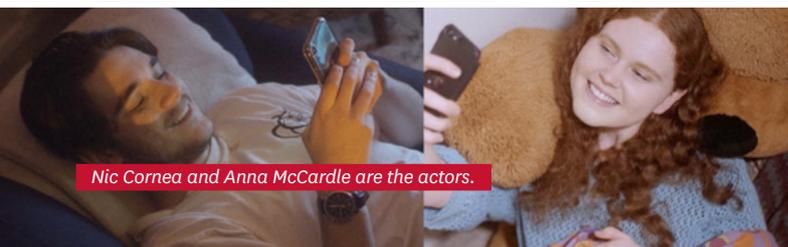
Editors Sisilia Etuati and Lani Wendt Young, Tatou Publishing, \$35, or online as a Kindle



Brainstorming the film



Billy Wong and Jethro Martin get the shots.



Nic Cornea and Anna McCardle are the actors.



“Those in favour of disarmament made valiant efforts to highlight that the current security threats meant that this was precisely the time to pursue disarmament.”

– Dr Anna Hood, Faculty of Law



Photo: Billy Wong

THWARTED NUCLEAR AGREEMENT

In the past few years, there has been a dramatic rise in the risk that nuclear weapons might be detonated and the prospect of a nuclear explosion has reached new heights in 2022, writes Dr Anna Hood.

With Russia threatening to use nuclear weapons in its war with Ukraine, nuclear weapon states continuing to modernise their weapons and ongoing concerns about both Iran and North Korea’s nuclear programmes, it has been widely acknowledged that the risk of the use of nuclear weapons is greater today than at any point since the Cold War.

Against this concerning backdrop, 190 countries met in August at the United Nations Headquarters for the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Review Conference. For the past five decades, the NPT has been one of the main international agreements governing matters relating to nuclear weapons. It is designed to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons, provide a path to nuclear disarmament, and facilitate the peaceful use of nuclear technology. NPT Review Conferences are times when the international community can come together to check whether states have been complying with the terms of the treaty, to develop initiatives to further the treaty’s aims and diminish the risk of a nuclear catastrophe.

Given the grave risk of nuclear weapons’ use and the fractious security environment, the stakes for the 2022 Review Conference were high and the negotiating conditions extremely challenging. I was the civil society participant on the New Zealand delegation so had a front-row

seat to the ins and outs of the month-long efforts to secure an agreement and a chance to take part in the formal negotiation sessions as well as some of the many meetings that took place amongst small groups of states in the backrooms of the UN and cafes of New York.

Like many of the other states in the world that do not have nuclear weapons, New Zealand went into the negotiations determined to secure some significant advances on the nuclear disarmament front. It has been many years since any progress was made towards a nuclear-free world and there was a strong sense that now was the moment when real action was needed.

Frustratingly, however, while the nuclear weapons states paid lip service to the importance of disarmament, it was apparent from the get-go that they were very reluctant to take substantial steps forward. Throughout the course of the Review Conference, they argued repeatedly that the current global security environment meant that the time was not right to take strong action on disarmament. Those in favour of disarmament made valiant efforts to highlight that the current security threats meant that this was precisely the time to pursue disarmament, but such arguments had little effect.

Despite the geopolitical tensions buffeting the Review Conference and the very different views on how to address the threat posed by nuclear weapons, on the last day of negotiations it appeared that an agreement was in sight. The final text on the table was far from perfect but did provide for modest steps forward on the disarmament front including the beginnings of a framework for measuring and monitoring the disarmament efforts of the nuclear weapon states. What is more, against the odds, the indications were that all of the countries at the Review Conference were prepared to sign on to it.

Very disappointingly, however, at the eleventh hour, Russia scuttled the agreement.

From day one, concerns about Russia’s threat to use nuclear weapons in Ukraine and its capture of Ukraine’s Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant dominated debates at the Review Conference. Many Western states demanded strong condemnation of Russia’s illegal actions in the final agreement while Russia refused to contemplate any suggestion that it was somehow in the wrong.

Despite strenuous efforts to accommodate the varying views on the conflict and some very careful drafting, the Russians refused to come on board. As the NPT Review Conference operates by consensus, this refusal jettisoned any hope of the agreement being adopted.

The failure of the Review Conference to produce an agreement is deeply concerning. It is four years until the next one is held, and countries will have another chance to try to reach an agreement on how we move forward and reduce the risk of nuclear catastrophe occurring.

This state of affairs raises big questions about the adequacy of the NPT regime and has led some to suggest that it’s time to abandon it and pursue other avenues for nuclear disarmament. One such avenue could be the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW), a treaty created in 2017 that completely prohibits nuclear weapons. The difficulty here though is that, so far, the nuclear weapons states and their allies have refused to engage with the TPNW. There are no easy answers – let’s hope that it doesn’t take a very serious nuclear crisis to force states to take the bold steps required.

■ Dr Anna Hood was a civil society participant on the New Zealand delegation to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference and is a senior lecturer in the Faculty of Law.

The views in this article reflect personal opinion and are not necessarily those of the University of Auckland.