

**William Allan from Oxford University, UK – Semester 1 2018 (Oxford Fellow)**



*Bill and his daughter Iona at Glenorchy (near Queenstown)*

**Where you have come from and what do you teach?**

*I work at University College, Oxford, where I teach Greek and Latin languages and literature. My teaching spans a wide range of Classical literature, from Homer in the late eighth century BC down to Tacitus in the second century AD, so there's a nice variety to it. My particular research area is early Greek poetry, especially tragedy and epic, but I enjoy being able to teach Latin as well as Greek and later authors as well as early ones.*

**What interested you in the Erskine Programme/why did you want to come to UC?**

*The Erskine Programme is a great opportunity to meet and exchange ideas with fellow classicists at UC and to teach in a different setting. I first became aware of the strong Classics community in New Zealand at a conference about ten years ago, and have been keen to return ever since. My research interests overlap with the UC Head of Department, Dr Patrick O'Sullivan, which made an exchange here attractive. I hadn't had the chance to visit the South Island before, and the city of Christchurch and its beautiful setting were also a factor in wanting to come here.*

**What have you been doing at UC?**

*I've taught a six-week course on Greek tragedy at the summer school, which was really enjoyable. Since my Oxford teaching is mainly tutorials (usually with two students at a time), it was nice to engage with a larger group (around twenty students), since the seminar format allowed for more group discussion and feedback. I'm also giving a research talk in the Department on the Athenian statesman and poet Solon, and am taking part in a roundtable discussion with colleagues from Classics and History on 'Tyranny and Crises of Democracy: Lessons from Antiquity'. My wife is a classicist too and she's giving a public lecture at the Arts Centre on the ancient Greek poet Sappho.*

**What have you most enjoyed about your time here at UC/Christchurch?**

*It's hard to know where to begin. Spending time with UC Classics colleagues and the Arts Centre staff has been wonderful, and everyone has been extremely welcoming. I've enjoyed teaching in the Arts Centre and seeing the Teece Museum, and the students on my course have been a lot of fun. It's also fascinating to be in a city that's changing and regenerating. Our three-year-old daughter has enjoyed being able to go to the beach at weekends and we've found the city perfect for young families. She's even starting to pick up a Kiwi accent from her time at the University's Early Learning Centre. My wife and I have loved being able to walk in the Port Hills after classes – a great change from flat Oxford. All in all, it's been a brilliant three months and I'm really grateful to my host, Patrick O'Sullivan, for helping me to arrange the visit and for making us feel so welcome here, and to the Erskine Programme staff for all their kind support.*