"First edition for the New Year”

Welcome morning tea! We will have a morning tea at 10.30 on Tuesday 29th to welcome new academic staff members David Collings and Ximena Nelson. We also have Anthony Poole joining us for three years on sabbatical leave from Stockholm University.

The Comparative Animal Physiology appointment has now been confirmed and Chris Glover will take up his position with us on the 10th March.

We started the year with the news that the tender for Stage I of the building programme has been let to C Lund and Son Ltd. We have also started the year with the news of a very successful post graduate Scholarship round and look forward to welcoming new postgraduates as the year progresses. A list of successful applicants and those who received our own prizes is given below.

A good number of people hit the ground running and submitted applications to the Marsden Fund and also to the College of Science funding round. A number are also engaged in FRST and NERF bids at the moment. And some members of the public think we are all still on holiday!!

Welcome back and may 2008 be an enjoyable and successful year for staff and students alike.

Paula

Department administration news

Photo competition winners displayed
You may have noticed on your travels around the school that the noticeboards look a lot more colourful these days. This is due to the sublime work from Penny who has gathered together entries from the scientific photo competition, which is now held annually. Go for a walkabout and see the stunning images for yourself!

Scholarships and Prizes

Ari Kornfeld was awarded the Roper Scholarship in Science. This prestigious scholarship is awarded annually for study toward a PhD in the Faculty of Science at the University of Canterbury and is offered to the first ranked candidate on the Faculty of Science list of
candidates who had applied for for a University of Canterbury Doctoral Scholarship. Ari is supervised by Matthew Turnbull.

Sol Heber (Hazel Chapman), Kristy Hogsden (Jon Harding) and Stephanie Searle (Matthew Turnbull) were awarded International Doctoral Scholarships. Katharina Doehring (Angus McIntosh) was awarded a International Masters Scholarship.

Muhunthan Rajaratnam (Paula Jameson) was awarded a Domestic Canterbury Scholarship.

Nicholas Magon was awarded a Domestic Doctoral Scholarship.

Scholarships are offered twice a year for study towards a PhD degree (Doctoral) or for the thesis year of a Masters degree (Masters Part II). Competition is very high: applicants must have gained a first class honours degree or the equivalent.

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University Prizes
Alison McKellar
Merodie Beavon
Michael Hunter
Nick Magon

Senior Scholarships
Rebecca Brown
Fiona Agmen
Belinda Bei Bo Guo
Sarah Coxon
Elzie Williams
Elizabeth Wiltshire

Biology Prizes
Dr. Tom Anderson Memorial Trust Prize in Health and Exercise:
Ingrid Miller

Bill Makepeace Prize in Biological Sciences:
Merodie Beavon

Percival Prizes in Biological Sciences:
Rebecca Brown
Fiona Agmen
Recent publications


and now for something completely different.....

I went to the hardware store and bought some used paint. It was in the shape of a house. I also bought some batteries, but they weren't included.

I went to the museum where they had all the heads and arms from the statues that are in all the other museums.

It's a small world, but I wouldn't want to have to paint it.
Right now I'm having amnesia and deja vu at the same time.
What's another word for Thesaurus?
A newsletter opening from me this week as Paula is away in sick leave. We wish her a speedy recovery.

An old Chinese curse (or maybe it just came from a Terry Pratchett Discworld book) is “may you live in interesting times” and 2008 will certainly be an interesting year. Let’s hope all of the interesting bits are good.

We start the year with much academic staff activity. Several of our staff have moved onto part time appointments (see newsletter number 34) while we have three new people arriving – David Collings (plant cell development), Ximena Nelson (behaviour) and Chris Glover (animal physiology) – see Newsletter 36. In addition we have interviews very soon for a microbiologist and shortly after that, hopefully interviews for the curator of the Botanic Gardens. Five new staff in one year represents a major turnaround in our staff complement (a sixth) and the School will be a very different place. As we move through the year we will be losing several staff, and hopefully gaining even more new ones, but more on this as it happens.

The obvious big event of the year will be the start of construction of the new research building next week. We will lose half of the car park, so now is the time to make that New Year resolution and dust off the walking shoes or pump up the bicycle tyres – parking charges going up again are a further incentive. We have survived major building projects in the past (Commerce, the C lecture block) and at least this time we reap the benefits.

We have changed quite a bit of our curriculum this year, particularly in the areas of genetics, evolution and ecology and my prediction is that we will be looking at more changes in the near future. We are entering the era of endorsed undergraduate degrees. Environmental Science is up and running this year and I will submit paperwork for Biosecurity next week. Biotechnology has faltered a bit as we rationalise things between the School, Chemistry and Engineering, but it should not be too far behind.

We are only a fortnight away from the new teaching year. Enrolments are looking good, with especially a big upturn in 3rd year ecology courses.

Bill

Building Update

We are about to see the start of the new building, with the contractors moving onto site next week. Initial work will concentrate on keeping the building compliant, with work on such things as disabled
access ramps. This will be closely followed by demolition work as we lose the compound, the
dangerous goods store and the concrete bits up the side of Zoology (they have a name but I can’t
remember it). Shortly the contractors will fence off the construction site. Please take note that the
fenced off area is strictly out of bounds to everybody. Facilities management have indicated that there
have been problems with other projects, with staff wanting a closer look at progress with “their”
building and assuming they have right of access.

New Publishing Date for the Newsletter Linked to Building Update

Traditionally this newsletter has been published on Friday. This is about to change to Monday. The
new building has the potential to cause disruption to our teaching and our research and we need to
know what will be happening. For example Geological Sciences has a piece of equipment that is
extremely sensitive to vibrations. We plan to have Monday morning site meetings with the contractors
where they will tell us what will happen through the week, and we can tell them what we are doing,
and advise them of any specific important times. We will report the coming week’s activities in this
newsletter.

The contractors are willing to work with us to make sure disruptions are kept to a minimum. If you
have a specific time when you do not want lots of noise or vibrations then let us know (via Gavin), but
please give us plenty of lead in time.

Scholarships and Prizes

Error: In the last newsletter (No.36) the nominees who were up for the University Prizes and Senior
Scholarships were included amongst the students who were actually awarded.

University Prizes were unfortunately not awarded to any Biological Sciences students.

The Senior Scholarships were awarded to Belinda Bei Bo Guo and Sarah Coxon.

Apologies to nominees listed and any confusion this may have caused.

Recent publications

diketopimelic acid analogues as inhibitors of dihydrodipicolinate synthase. Bioorganic and Medicinal
Chemistry Letters 18: 460-463.
and now for something completely different.....

When I get real bored, I like to drive downtown and get a great parking spot, then sit in my car and count how many people ask me if I'm leaving.

You can't have everything. Where would you put it?

A lot of people are afraid of heights. Not me, I'm afraid of widths.

If you were going to shoot a mime, would you use a silencer?
It’s Friday afternoon and I am looking out at a very soggy landscape. Someone has been much too enthusiastic with their performance of the rain dance. This last week has seen an impressive amount of rain falling, at least in Canterbury terms. Let’s hope enough has sunk into the ground to end the drought. While this rain has been good for the grass, spare a thought for those people doing freshwater stream work. I have not had too much feedback so far, but I imagine quite a few experiments have been washed away.

Term is almost upon us and enrolments are looking very good. Most courses are at, or above last year’s numbers even with a week before the first lecture. I’ll publish a list of enrolments in next week’s newsletter.

You may have seen the Vice Chancellor’s e-mail announcing the removal of half of the Zoology car park. By the time this newsletter comes out, the contractor’s fence should be in place. It’s interesting that of all the processes to date involving the evolution of the new building, the one area that has caused much animated discussion has been car parking, and shows how wedded Kiwis are to their motor vehicles. The new parking arrangements are going to take some getting used to, but remember that at the end of it all we get a nice new building, while our neighbours get the inconvenience and the noise and nothing else.

Don’t forget the micro interviews all this week.

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**Building Update**

Site work is commencing this morning with basic setup. Webcam will be installed momentarily, watch this space.

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**Recent publications**


Latest theses entered into the school library

(These were submitted late last year)


Taylor, J. S. (2006). The effect of pyrethroid compounds on the expression of estrogen receptors in


and now for something completely different.....

From The Guardian concerning a sign seen in a Police canteen in Christchurch New Zealand: 'Will the person who took a slice of cake from the Commissioner's Office Return it immediately. It is needed as evidence in a poisoning case.'

I planted some bird seed. A bird came up. Now I don't know what to feed it.

My aunt gave me a walkie-talkie for my birthday. She says if I'm good, she'll give me the other one next year.

I went to the bank and asked to borrow a cup of money. They said, "What for?" I said, "I'm going to buy some sugar."

I eat swiss cheese from the inside out.
A big welcome to all our new and continuing students and our best wishes for an exciting and successful year.

Building Update

Lift. The lift work is coming along well. Hopefully most of the concrete removal has now happened and things will be a bit quieter.

New Building. The fence went up last week. It's amazing the number of people who simply ignore the boundaries and walk through the contractor's site. It is not fully fenced off but it is still out of bounds! There is a bit of a hiatus at the moment because we are still waiting for consents to allow the work to proceed.

5th Floor Physics. Our new temporary 70-seater lab is now complete. It is looking very impressive and quite smart. It is complete with three data projectors and a document reader which are supplied from AV. The first lab will run the week of 3rd March.

The smaller 30-seater lab is fully serviced. It is available for short term use (meetings, lab groups) until the 214 courses begins (term 2). See Gavin Robinson in the first instance for bookings.

HoS information: As most of you will have noticed I was back at work (more-or-less) last week and I would like to take this opportunity to thank the many of you for your concern and best wishes. Also very many thanks to Bill for acting in my stead during my leave.

Last week was a busy week with good enrolments and great presentations from applicants for the Molecular Microbiology position. These continue this week so please do continue to come to the remaining research seminar and other meetings.

Resignation: It is with regret that I announce that I have accepted Joanne Burke's resignation as of the 20th March. I'm sure the School joins me in wishing her well in her future endeavours. Details of a farewell function will be given later.

College of Science Research Fund. Congratulations to the following who were successful in obtaining funds or scholarships:

David Collings, $6,000 for his topic on Transient Proteins.
Crystal Lenky, PhD candidate, for her project on Biomarkers and Seals, supervised by Gateway and SBS (Bryan Storey/Juliet Gerrard/Victoria Metcalf).

Samuel Osinubi, PhD candidate, for his project on Habitat Quality and Heredity, supervised by Hazel Chapman/Jim Briskie.

Cecilia Romo, PhD candidate, for her project on Herbivory and Natural Enemies, supervised by Jason Tylianakis.

~ Paula ~

**Little People**

Neil and Tamsin and now the proud parents of Callan Gemmell-Braisher. Callan was born at 20:47 on Friday 22/02/08 NZST after a trouble free labour. Weighing in at a commendable 8lb 2oz, Callan is feeding and sleeping well, much to the delight of both mother and father.

**Latest theses entered into the school library**


and now for something completely different.....

Scientific Phrase Translations

- It has been long known: I haven't bothered to check the references
- It is known: I believe
- It is believed: I think
- It is generally believed: My colleagues and I think
- There has been some discussion: Nobody agrees with me
- It can be shown: Take my word for it
- It is proven: It agrees with something mathematical
- Of great theoretical importance: I find it interesting
- Of great practical importance: This justifies my employment
- Of great historical importance: This ought to make me famous
- Some samples were chosen for study: The others didn't make sense
- Typical results are shown: The best results are shown
- Correct within order of magnitude: Wrong
- The values were obtained empirically: The values were obtained by accident
- The results are inconclusive: The results seem to disprove my hypothesis
- Additional work is required: Someone else can work out the details
- It might be argued that: I have a good answer to this objection
- The investigations proved rewarding: My grant has been renewed
- Thanks to Joe Blow for expert technical assistance and Jane Doe for valuable discussion: Thanks to Joe Blow for doing all the work and Jane Doe for telling me what it meant.
- While it has not been possible to provide definite answers to these questions: The experiments didn't work out, but I figured I could at least get a publication out of it.
- Presumably at longer times: I didn't take the time to find out.
I suspect everyone has wondered where last week went to. Enquiries, enrolments, the giving or taking of new lectures, as well as interviews and seminars from applicants for the Molecular Microbiology position, filled the week to overflowing!

Below we have details of an exciting Symposium in honour of Dr Josephine Ward who will retire at the beginning of April.

Currently Lyn is working with Jo Ward's ex-students at Landcare Research in organising a symposium and farewell afternoon tea. SBS will organise the afternoon tea (with speeches and a presentation to Jo) from 3.30 pm till 5.00 pm. Those registered for the symposium will then head off to an evening dinner venue. So, SBS staff should diary in 15 April 2008 at 3.30 pm in the Coppertop for Jo Ward's afternoon tea retirement send off. A collection and card will be organised in a week or two.

Paula

Building Update

Nothing to report. Although a green digger just ripped out a couple of trees, mortified is one word to describe this...

Department administration news

The School has had confirmation from the Vice-Chancellor of three new Adjunct positions.

Adjunct Professor Scott Wissinger (Allegheny College, USA) and Adjunct Associate Professors Colin McLay and Larry Field. Wissinger has recently been an Erskine Visitor to the School with ongoing linkages/research with the Freshwater Ecology Group.

Funding

Matthew Turnbull (co-PI with Kevin Griffin, Columbia University and Owen Atkin, ANU) has recently been successful in receiving funding ($512,000) from the US National Science Foundation (NSF) to support a grant entitled - Autotrophic respiration in a changing Arctic climate: Mechanistic responses and ecosystem consequences.
Visitors

We now have six new tarantulas in the spiderlab: two Goliath bird-eaters (Theraphosa blondi) can grow to dinner plate size...no birds needed! Our two young ones (ca 8cm including legs) are really fast and keen on consuming..... unfortunately for me, this means I have to reach into the cockroach cage more frequently than I would prefer! Thanks to Rennie we should have crickets available soon... much nicer to handle! I'd like to put them into a terrarium, as they are hard to see in their present enclosures.

Then there are two Peruvian pink-toed (Avicularia urticans) both which have spent most of their time here sitting effortlessly on the side of their terrarium, as do the two Mexican red-kneed (Brachypelma smithi) which is quite impressive, as they have plump little bodies compared with their spindley legs. Both these species are noticeably calmer than the goliaths.... more attractive too!

In a month or so we'll shift one of each species to Canterbury Museum to put on display, along with a Brazilian striped-leg. In the mean time, some these spiders are constructing wierd enclosures with the sphagnum moss substrate we've offered them.

Recent publications


and now for something completely different.....

I xeroxed my watch. Now I have time to spare.

What did the priest say when he saw his chapel on fire?
Holy smoke

New Words for 2008
* TESTICULATING
Waving your arms around and talking bollocks.
* BLAMESTORMING
Sitting round in a group, discussing why a deadline was missed or a project failed, and who was responsible.

What did the biochemist do with his twins? He baptised one and saved the other for a control.

We just hired a molecular biologist. Man, is he small.


Botany is the science in which plants are known by their aliases.

Peptide: The result of the moon pulling on the Pepsi.

Why is the mushroom always asked to a party? Because he's a fungi.

"Science has proof without any certainty. Creationists have certainty without any proof."


Culture Shock: A biologist Disease.
Building Update
von Haast lift programmed for completion by the 18 April.
Shortly to be two ramps constructed, one on the west side of von Haast building and the other between Biology and Commerce buildings to ensure compliance access.

Still not much happening on the building front. As you will be aware, a digger was busy last week destroying the ecosystem. Because so many people (mainly engineering students) were simply climbing over the felled trees, the fence was resited and the contractor's yard has now been sealed off.

As the contractors are not yet on site we have not yet had any site meetings. There is a Project Control Group meeting on Tuesday (11th) so perhaps more information will be available for next week's newsletter.

Vehicles
Now that car parking is in short supply we have had a few very pointed comments about poor parking of School vehicles, in particular those research vehicles not allocated a reserved space. Vehicles need to be parked sensibly between the white lines, not across the lines such that they effectively take up two parking spaces. Mainly comments have been about the big 4 x 4 vehicles, though last week there was a comment about the Honda Jazz.

Recent publications


and now for something completely different.....
If people concentrated on the really important things in life, there'd be a shortage of fishing poles. Yes, time flies. And where did it leave you? Old too soon... smart too late.
At work, the authority of a person is inversely proportional to the number of pens that person is carrying.
Paula is away, so an introduction from me today. Last week's collection of meetings seemed to bring home to me just how much time and money we spend now on compliance issues. The money bit was highlighted in the budget discussion at the Staff Meeting. There are the obvious things like the big lab inspection we had last week and the thousands of dollars we pay MAFBNZ every year, but there are lots of little things that have to happen to keep this place running and these seem to be trying to take up all available time. These tend to take place in the background and in the main people are not aware of them. The University of Otago recently ran an article (I think it was in their alumnus magazine) on their new dedicated team of 14 people who look after compliance matters. Rumour has it that they are probably more of a hindrance than a help, complete with lots of paperwork. Here at Canterbury we do it the Canterbury Way with Nicole, plus a little bit of help from me. As long as things go smoothly, then we can probably manage, but recently I have noticed an increase in small infringements that collectively add up to quite a bit of work. Please think about what you are doing before you do it!

On a positive note, enrolments look good for first semester courses and for the first time this year, I have opened up my Agenda box in Jade and it is empty.

A short working week this week as Easter is almost upon us. Have a good break and return refreshed for the last 1.5 weeks of term.

~ Bill ~

**Building Update**

You will notice that the builder’s site is still remarkably quiet. There is a simple reason for this hiatus – consents. The newsletter introduction commented on the world of compliance that we live in and this has affected our building. The problem appears to be ECan and the fact that they are taking an incredibly long time to approve consents – all consents, not just ours. The applications were lodged with ECan some time ago with the hope that approvals would be granted before the tender was let. Unfortunately this didn’t happen, and people (architects, builders, Facilities Management) are starting to become concerned. In last week’s PCG meeting, the architects cited an example of a consent that took 2.5 years for ECan to approve. Let’s hope this doesn’t apply to ours. You will know when the consents have been granted because machinery will appear on the site. In the meantime all we can do it sit with our fingers crossed.
Josephine Ward Symposium

A botanical symposium to celebrate Josephine Ward's career and contributions to New Zealand botany will be held Tuesday 15th April 2008.

Full details and registration for Josephine Ward Symposium

Recent publications


Latest theses entered into the school library


and now for something completely different.....

Why is it that people say they "slept like a baby" when babies wake up every two hours.

If corn oil is made from corn, and vegetable oil is made from vegetables, then what is baby oil made from??

If electricity comes from electrons, does morality come from morons??
Hopefully everyone has had a well deserved break over Easter and now just 1½ weeks left of term 1.

Congratulations to those involved in two successful TEC bids! (1) GIPI II: Partnering for innovation in technology-based business (with Lincoln and Otago: $3 million); (2) Increasing postgraduate study and research relevant to the seafood sector (with Otago: $200,000).

And congratulations to Rebecca Neumegen on the Award of a Top Achiever’s Doctoral Scholarship.

Invitrogen Merit Award

The Invitrogen Merit Award this year is awarded to Belinda Guo with a personal scholarship of $1,000 and an equivalent sum to spend on Invitrogen. This award is given to the highest grade point average 4th year. Congratulations Belinda!

~ Paula ~

Building Update

Still waiting on consents before the building progresses…

and now for something completely different…..

Bob was in trouble. He forgot his wedding anniversary. His wife was really pissed.

She told him "Tomorrow morning, I expect to find a gift in the driveway that goes from 0 to 200 in 6 seconds AND IT BETTER BE THERE !!"

The next morning he got up early and left for work. When his wife woke up, she looked out the window and sure enough there was a box gift-wrapped in the middle of the driveway.

Confused, the wife put on her robe and ran out to the driveway, brought the box back in the house.
She opened it and found a brand new bathroom scale.
Bob has been missing since Friday.
A very short week last week leading into the last week of Term 1 this week. This morning I ventured into S2 for the first time in some 30 years - and there are still blackboards there!! [I'll be giving five lectures to BIOL113 starting tomorrow].

Ian Shaw will be presenting to a College Forum tomorrow - April 1st (after midday!). I suggest you all try to attend - and likewise Faculty on Wednesday which Bill has already emailed about.

Paula

Building Update

Still waiting on consents before the building progresses…

People

Bruce Robertson is leaving us after 7 years in SBS. He is off in June to start a Senior Lectureship at Otago University in the Zoology Department where he’ll be co-coordinating the Diploma and Masters of Wildlife Management Programs. We wish him and his family well in the future.

Funding

Research funding awarded

Dr. Jon Harding, has been awarded funding of $24,500 from Solid Energy NZ to study the factors limiting ecological recovery in streams impacted by coal mining.

Associate Professor Jim Briskie has been awarded funding of $12,910 from the Brian Mason Scientific & Technical Trust for a project “Reproductive failures within endangered bird species.” The objective of this project is to examine the function and morphology of sperm in a variety if species of endangered native birds that have passed through small population sizes of varying severity.

Dr. Jon Harding has been successful in gaining research funding of $253,000 from the Public Utilities Board of Singapore. These funds will be used to develop a biotic index for assessing biological health in Singapore rivers and canals.

Professor Matthew Turnbull (AI with Patrick Meir (Edinburgh U), Jon Lloyd (U of Leeds), Owen Atkin (ANU) and Norma Salinas (U Nacional de Cusco)) has been successful in receiving research funding
($1,514,000 over 3 years) from the National Environmental Research Council (NERC), UK to support a grant entitled - Nutrient controls on the terrestrial carbon cycle: how does phosphorus deficiency influence plant respiration?

**Recent publications**


**Latest theses entered into the school library**


**and now for something completely different.....**

The owner of the pharmacy walks in to find a guy leaning heavily against a wall.

The owner asks the blonde sales girl: "What's with the guy over there by the wall?"

The blonde responds: "Well, he came in here this morning to get something for his cough. I couldn't find the cough syrup, so I gave him an entire bottle of laxative"

The owner, wide-eyed and excited shouts: "You idiot! You can't treat a cough with a bottle of laxatives!"

The blonde calmly responds: "Of course you can!, Look at him, he's afraid to cough."
There's still a large sector of the public that believes that when the undergraduate lecture sessions stop that the lecturers also down tools and have a holiday. Well we all could sleep in for an extra hour this morning, but that is as far as a holiday goes for most of the staff. In between prepping for next terms lectures and labs, there's research - and the six-monthly masters progress reports are all due in which means formal meetings between students and supervisors - writing of papers and responding to referees reports on papers that were recently submitted, PD&R sessions (performance, development and appraisal) and copious administrative jobs. However, many of us with children at school will probably disappear during the 3rd week of the break (April 21-24). And for our international students the 25th April is ANZAC Day and is a public holiday.

~ Paula ~

Building Update

Still waiting on consents before the building progresses…

Funding

Ecological Education Grant
Pollinator-plant interactions under global environmental change

Dr Jason Tylianakis has been awarded an Early Career Project Grant of £17,475.00 by the British Ecological Society. The aim of this programme is to assist promising ecologists early in their careers who are intending to carry out innovative or important research of a pure or applied nature. Initiating or developing research programmes is becoming increasing difficult for ecologists during the early stages of their career, and this programme principally aims to provide an opportunity for ecologists recently appointed to academic posts to establish themselves.

Dr Steven Gieseg has been awarded a grant of $29,833 for his project on ‘The response of embryonic stem cells to oxidative stress’ from the Canterbury Medical Research Foundation.

Recent publications


**Latest theses entered into the school library**


**and now for something completely different.....**

A recent newsletter asked "if palm oil is made from palms what is baby oil made from?" On a similar note the pet food shop in Eastgate stocks hare mince, rabbit mince, duck mince, chicken mince and cat mince. Better not to ask....

Four people took a private flight one day. There was a doctor, a lawyer, a priest & a six year old boy.

Half way through the flights designated course, the plane began to beep and blink and make bad noises. So they all went to the planes cupboard and opened up to find the parachutes. Unfortunately, there were only three chutes left.

The doctor grabbed one and said "I'm a doctor, I save peoples lives" and jumped out the planes door to safety. The Lawyer said "I'm a lawyer. I'm the smartest man in the world". The Priest looked at the boy and handed him the last parachute kindly saying " it's alright, take this and save yourself, it's my turn to die". But the young boy gave him back the chute.

The Priest then asked "why did you just give it back? I thought that you wanted to live". The boy smiled and said " well the smartest man in the world just took my backpack".
Building Update

As you will be aware, there is a small amount of activity on the site, but nothing dramatic. The reason for the delay is still a lack of consents. The major one relates to dewatering of the site (once the contractors dig down) and discharge of that water into the Okeover stream. ECan passed the job of looking after the process to a private consultant who immediately consulted with our neighbours downstream of the discharge site. There are 11 of them and all need to agree to our proposal. We think we have 10 of them organised, but the last one is proving to be a problem. So what is happening? We are having discussions with the last person. If she signs next week, then we will see some activity very soon. If she does not, then the whole thing will go to a notified hearing and this will take several months. Keep watching this space in the newsletter for progress!

The lift in the von Haast building is almost finished, though we will not be able to use it immediately, as it needs to pass a variety of tests.

Outgoing Erskines

Academic staff should be aware of the availability of outgoing Erskine grants. These are the ones that allow you to head off overseas for a short period of time (1-3 months). Very few staff take advantage of this and there is quite a bit of money available. What is even better, is that they can be fitted around your study leave. If you need more information ask Matt, Bill or Juliet.

Health and Safety

We are doing very well in terms of our H & S record, with very few accident reports needing to be actioned. However, indicators are showing that we are becoming a bit lax and accidents, or near misses are on the increase. Please be vigilant and keep up the good lab and field practices.

Footwear

Too many people are wandering around the building in jandals, or even worse, bare feet. Hopefully the cooler weather will change this, but you need to be aware that this is not allowed. The signs are on all of the doors, so please take notice of them. It is worth pointing out that Geological Sciences has taken this H & S rule a step further (no pun intended) and allow only fully enclosed footwear - so no sandals or open toed shoes. Hopefully we will not need to try and enforce that rule.

~ Bill ~
Department administration news

You are invited...

Biology graduands and their families are invited to afternoon tea with staff of the School on the day before Science Graduation. The invitation is to all students graduating with major subjects in Biological Sciences, Biochemistry, Biotechnology, Cellular and Molecular Biology, Microbiology, Ecology, Animal Physiology, Plant Biology and Zoology.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time &amp; Date:</th>
<th>3.30pm, Thursday 17 April</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Venue:</td>
<td>Rm 444, Level 4, Biological Sciences</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Recent publications


and now for something completely different.....

101 ways to annoy people

1. Sing the Batman theme incessantly.
2. In the memo field of all your cheques, write "for sensual massage."
3. Specify that your drive-through order is "to go."
4. Learn Morse code, and have conversations with friends in public consisting entirely of "Beeep Bip Beeep Bip..."
5. NA

6-101 to be continued
This last week of the University vacation is the only overlap week with the school vacations so I will be on leave most of the week, probably appearing for Academic Board as our Biosecurity endorsement will be on the agenda. This is also the third week of field trips as many staff and students return from one trip and in many cases immediately turn around for another. This is another aspect of University training that the public is unaware of as we enjoy our 'holidays'!

Congratulations to all our new graduates. Graduation week has come and gone: many thanks to Penny and Islay and other behind the scenes helpers for a wonderful afternoon tea - the graduands and their supporters really appreciated the opportunity to come and meet the people who have had so much influence on their lives. Unfortunately the weather put paid to the procession in the morning - so we only got the briefest of glimpses of Bill formally carrying the mace in his role as beadle.

Last week we also had a Symposium in honour of Jo Ward's long and significant contributions to the inspiring and training of many of New Zealand's plant taxonomists. This was followed by an afternoon tea hosted by the School and a symposium dinner in the evening. The symposium itself was the idea of past students of Jo's and was sponsored by LandCare Research.

The School sponsored a student poster prize at the Entomological Conference also held last week. The winner was Manpreet Dhami from the University of Auckland.

~ Paula ~

Building Update

Next month we are starting detailed planning of Stage Two of the project which will mainly be focusing on re-furbishment of the Biology (Zoology) building and our initial focus will be on what contingencies will be necessary to maintain the continuity of the Teaching lab programme.

Department administration news

Conference success
At the recent New Zealand Entomological Society conference held at Canterbury University two of our Ph.D. candidates were awarded with prizes.

Ronny Groenteman won the best oral presentation along with Tara Murray (Lincoln University). Ronny's talk was on "Biological control and improving weed management using agents with a wide host range for multi-targeting of "sleeper" weeds". Contributing authors were Groenteman, Dave Kelly,
Simon Fowler (Landcare) and Graeme Bourdot (AgResearch).

**Michal Sarfati** won her prize for notable oral (or poster) presentation.

Congratulations to both!

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**Recent publications**


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**and now for something completely different.....**

**101 ways to annoy people**

1-5 In last issue

6. Amuse yourself for endless hours by hooking a camcorder to your TV and then pointing it at the screen.

7. Speak only in a "robot" voice.

8. Push all the flat Lego pieces together tightly.

9. Start each meal by conspicuously licking all your food, and announce that this is so no one will "swipe your grub".

10. Leave the copy machine set to reduce 200%, extra dark, 17 inch paper, 98 copies.

Don't you just love No.10...
Welcome to our new Terrestrial Ecology Technician!
We have been very fortunate to gain the services of Jenny Ladley as our Terrestrial Ecology Technician. Jenny started officially on the 21st of April, but the observant amongst you will have seen her assisting Linda with field trip preparations before this. She will be based in the same office Joanne occupied, room 472 von Haast.

Jenny will be responsible for the laboratory management of the Dave Kelly, Matthew Turnbull and Jason Tylianakis research areas as well as related teaching courses. Jenny brings a wealth of experience to the position as she has been a research technician within the School for many years. We wish her well in her new role.

~ Paula ~

Congratulations to Angus McIntosh, Jason Tylianakis, Juliet Gerrard, Raphael Didham and Victoria Metcalf (Fast-Start) who have been called up to complete full Marsden applications. Commissions (but thanks) to those that applied and who didn't get through.

Academic Board
The Biosecurity endorsement to the BSc (Biological Sciences) passed through Academic Board without challenge. After Council it makes its way to CUAP. Many thanks especially to Jon & Bill who've seen it to this stage.

Building Update

drrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrr.....

Recent publications

and now for something completely different.....

101 ways to annoy people
6-10 In last issue

11. Stomp on little plastic ketchup packets.
12. Sniffle incessantly.
13. Leave your turn signal on for fifty miles.
14. Name your dog "Dog."
15. Insist on keeping your car windshield wipers running in all weather conditions "to keep them tuned up."
Building Update

Not a lot happening today....

Department administration news

Cass seed trapping?
Recently at Cass Dave Kelly found what seems to be a disused seed trap in Middle Bush (see photo). There seem to be a few other similar ones scattered around. Does anyone know who put it there, what it was used for, and whether it is now surplus to requirements? Dave would be interested in any data that came from whatever study this was part of, and also perhaps interested in re-using the traps elsewhere if now not needed.

Recent publications


**Latest theses in school**


**and now for something completely different.....**

Botanist Beware: your unethical behaviour is soon coming to an end

For decades now researchers working with animals have had to account for the effect that their work has on the health and welfare of their animals. Proposed experiments must be vetted by those qualified to judge the pain that will be caused and whether the number of animals used is unnecessarily large.

Botanists and microbiologists gleefully watch their colleagues manage this extra dimension in their daily research lives, happy for this (and probably additional reasons) that they did not choose to be zoologists. But the time of gloating is over, at least for botanists in Switzerland. The 24 April issue of Nature reports on a Swiss law that recognises the dignity of plants. “The Gene Technology Law, which came into effect in 2004, stipulates that ‘the dignity of creatures’ should be considered in any research.”

**101 ways to annoy people**

16. Reply to everything someone says with "that's what YOU think."
17. Claim that you must always wear a bicycle helmet as part of your "astronaut training."
18. Declare your flat an independent nation, and sue your neighbours upstairs for "violating your airspace".
19. Forget the punchline to a long joke, but assure the listener it was a "real hoot."
20. Follow a few paces behind someone, spraying everything they touch with Lysol.
Term 2 is well underway, the new lift is almost finished but we still await resource consents before the real building gets underway.

Last week, Invitrogen presented their award to the top 3rd year student from 2007 who is currently doing a 4th year project using molecular products. Congratulations to Belinda Guo who is this year's recipient!

Peter Molony spoke to College Executive last Thursday and indicated that the long overdue overhaul of the Science Lecture Theatre block may begin by the end of 2009. There will be a call for input and ideas.

Isobel Philips advised that a review of post grad diplomas, Honours and MSc will begin this year now that the BSc programme has been reviewed. - Paula

Recent publications


and now for something completely different.....

It must be Monday...

'You know, somebody actually complimented me on my driving today. They left a little note on the windscreen. It said, 'Parking Fine.' So that was nice.'

"At the recent big consumer electronics show, in Las Vegas, Apple unveiled their first combination ipod and cell phone. They say their goal is to create the most annoying person ever to sit behind you in a movie theater." --Jay Leno

101 ways to annoy people

21. Practice making fax and modem noises.
22. Highlight irrelevant information in scientific papers and "cc:" them to your boss.
23. Make beeping noises when a large person backs up.
24. Invent nonsense computer jargon in conversations, and see if people play along to avoid the appearance of ignorance.
25. Erect an elaborate network of ropes in your backyard, and tell the neighbours you are a "spider person."
The term seems to be disappearing at a great rate - probably because I am lecturing and the number of organised lectures is rapidly diminishing and the time to prepare the remainder similar!
Thank you to those that assisted last week with welcoming a delegation from RMUT, Thailand. While Food Processing and Food Technology were their major interests we hoped that we might encourage one or two people to look our way.

~ Paula ~

Building Update
Nothing new to report.

Recent publications


Latest theses in school


and now for something completely different.....

101 ways to annoy people

26. Finish all your sentences with the words "in accordance with the prophesy."
27. Wear a special hip holster for your remote control.
28. Do not add any inflection to the end of your sentences, producing awkward silences with the impression that you'll be saying more any moment.
29. Signal that a conversation is over by clamping your hands over your ears.
30. Disassemble your pen and "accidentally" flip the ink cartridge across the room.
4th year study space: at the east end of the ground floor of the Biology building we have a study space for 4th years as we had to take the previous area in the Rutherford building for laboratory space. I would like to request that staff and students only access or leave the building through this space if absolutely necessary to minimise disruption to our students. This to my mind doesn't include slipping through there on fine (or really even wet) days for coffee at 101.

Over the next couple of months there are a number of due dates merging in with exam marking. Academic Staff need to have sabbatical leave applications with me by Friday 21st June as I have to read each application and add supportive comments prior to their submission to the College. The academic promotions round is starting again. I would appreciate meeting with any staff considering applying to discuss their intentions and also so I can put together the School Promotions Committee without conflicts of interest. While the submission date to the College is not until the 17th July, I would like these applications on my desk during the week of 7th July as I need to check the documents and sign them off. I will be on leave the week of the 14th July.

~ Paula ~

Building Update

There is a new digger on the site. It is red. The yellow one went away.

Recent publications


and now for something completely different.....

101 ways to annoy people

32. Holler random numbers while someone is counting.
33. Adjust the tint on your TV so that all the people are green, and insist to others that you "like it that way."
34. Drum on every available surface.
35. Staple papers in the middle of the page.
Term 2 has all but ended - time flies when I’m teaching!

I have been a little dismayed at the seminar attendances at those sessions that I have attended. Our Erskine Fellows are eminent scientists in their field and, as a School of Biological Sciences, I would hope should attract interested scientists from all biological persuasions. There is an expectation that our 4th years and post graduate students will attend all seminars and embrace the breadth of biology. It would set a good example if staff were to do the same! I recognise that not everyone can attend every Thursday (I can’t as I attend College Executive meetings on Thursday afternoons once a month) but I would like to encourage a better effort - at the very least it will indicate to our seminar organiser (Andrew Muscroft-Taylor) that their efforts on our behalf are not in vein.

In between the sitting of exams and the marking of them I hope everyone finds time for a little bit of relaxation during the mid semester break.

~ Paula ~

Building Update

At some time next week there will be a total shutdown of power to the Biology (Zoology) building. Von Haast will be unaffected. This may be for a period of up to 6 hours.

Please advise Gavin Robinson if there is a day that is more inconvenient than any other day. At this stage we have the ability to stipulate which day of the week would be preferable.

Please advise me if you are aware of a practical exam or a test occurring in our buildings during the next few weeks so that I can ensure noise and disruption is kept to a minimum during this period.

People

Belated congratulations go out to Chris Glover who has received a prestigious Marsden Fund award for his work investigating how inanga (or whitebait) maintain their internal equilibrium during their transition through waters of differing salt levels.

Chris was awarded the $170,000 Fast-Start grant in the 2007 Marsden Fund round of awards.
Recent publications


Latest theses in school


and now for something completely different.....

When I got home from work last night, my wife demanded that I take her out to some place expensive....

So I took her to a petrol station !!!!!!!

101 ways to annoy people

36. Ask 1-800 operators for dates.
37. Produce a rental video consisting entirely of dire FBI copyright warnings.
38. Sew anti-theft detector strips into peoples backpacks.
40. Write the surprise ending to a novel on its first page.
Best wishes to all our students who will be starting exams this week. Please do remember that if you are affected by illness or other circumstance that may have impaired your performance in an exam you should go to Student Health and seek advice regarding appropriate forms to fill out. We can take circumstances into account IF, and only if, we have formal notification.

~ Paula ~

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**Building Update**

**BUILDING VIBRATIONS**
Just a brief message to inform you that beginning next week some time, Sheet Piling will begin.

This is the method of securing the walls of the building site prior to excavation. The sheet piles are interlocking metal casings which are vibrated into the ground for a depth of up to 12 metres on our site. There will be some intermittent transmitted vibration and noise experienced in both of our buildings.

**POWER OUTAGE POSTPONED**
Because of some difficulties getting cabling past the culvert pipes leading to the Okeover stream the power outage planned for this Thursday is now postponed for approximately three weeks. As soon as I hear I will forward a definite date for when this will now occur.

TELEPHONES will be temporarily disconnected to both the von Haast and Biology buildings this weekend.

DATA CABLES will be temporarily disconnected to both buildings the following weekend. Please inform me asap if you are aware of significant problems that may result from the above. - Gavin Robinson

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**and now for something completely different.....**

101 ways to annoy people

41. Set alarms for random times.
42. Order a side of pork rinds with your filet mignon.
43. Publicly investigate just how slowly you can make a "croaking" noise.
44. Honk and wave to strangers.
It's Tuesday already!
Along with lots of other academic staff I've been buried marking!

But one reminder: PLEASE fill out field work intentions forms when you go into the field. Then we'll have some idea of where you might be if you don't return!

~ Paula ~

**Building Update**

There are two, super duper red trucks on the site. One is digging into the earth and other has a most excellent green attachment. Real updates on the site will no doubt come through next week.

**University postcodes**

Because even I didn't know:
Sending mail to Private Bag 4800, the postcode is 8140.
Sending mail to the UC site, i.e., Kirkwood Avenue, the postcode is 8041.

**People**

**Visitor Profile:** Welcome **Ms Hannah Wood**
Hannah comes to us from the University of California at Berkeley (USA) and is being funded by the US National Science Foundation and the Royal Society of New Zealand as part of the East Asia and Pacific Summer Institutes (EASPI) programme.

While here she will be collecting and studying Assassin Spiders (Mecysmaucheniids) and will be collaborating with Dr Simon Pollard (Adjunct/Canterbury Museum) and assisted by Ms Aynsley Macnab.

The School will be hosting Hannah Wood from 20 June until 20 August 2008 and she will be housed in Professor Robert Jackson’s research area on level 3 of the Biology building. Anyone wishing to contact her should do so via Aynsley and she is likely to spend periods in the field.
Recent publications


Latest theses in school


and now for something completely different.....

My friend wanted a boat more than anything. His wife kept refusing, but he bought one anyway. "I'll tell you what," he told her. "In the spirit of compromise, why don't you name the boat?" Being a good sport, she accepted. When her husband went to the dock for his maiden voyage, this is the name he saw painted on the side: "For Sale."

A couple go for a meal at a Chinese restaurant and order the 'Chicken Surprise.' The waiter brings the meal, served in a lidded cast iron pot. Just as the wife is about to serve herself, the lid of the pot rises slightly and she briefly sees two beady little eyes looking around before the lid slams back down.

'Good grief, did you see that?' she asks her husband. He hasn't, so she asks him to look in the pot. He reaches for it and again the lid rises, and he sees two little eyes looking around before it slams down. Rather perturbed, he calls the waiter over, explains what is happening, and demands an explanation.

'Please sir,' says the waiter, 'what you did you order?' The husband replies, 'Chicken Surprise.' 'Ah! So solly,' says the waiter, 'I bring you Peeking Duck!'

101 ways to annoy people

45. Honk and wave to strangers.
46. Dress only in clothes colored Hunters Orange.
47. Change channels five minutes before the end of every show.
48. Tape pieces of "Sweating to the Oldies" over climactic parts of rental movies.
49. Wear your pants backwards.
50. Decline to be seated at a restaurant, and simply eat their complimentary mints by the cash register.
Retirement: Franz has asked that I let everyone know that after 22 years working for Zoology and more latterly the School that he will be retiring at the end of September. We will have a function to wish Franz well when he returns from his pre-retirement trip to Germany.

Last week I attended a presentation by Dr Jim Watson (ex-RSNZ President), concerning the National Science Panel’s recently released Science Manifesto. In November 2006, the Royal Society of New Zealand established the Panel, under Jim’s chairmanship, to critically examine the New Zealand science system. The Panel’s findings have been summarized in a statement known as a ‘Science Manifesto (a plan for the recovery of New Zealand science)’, which encourages discussion about this important subject. Interestingly the panel was dissolved by the RSNZ immediately the Manifesto was finished, but now Jim is touring the country alerting people to it. This is an important document and as your HOS I expect to sign a letter from the College of Science giving support to the panel's findings. It is critical that we improve the nations understanding of the role of science in our society. You can download a copy from [http://www.rsnz.org/](http://www.rsnz.org/).

~ Paula ~

Building Update

Not a lot new to report. Sheet piling will continue this week but noise and vibration are much less intrusive than expected. Well drilling will continue for removal of ground water. Construction of the tower crane will begin this week with the preparation of the base sight.

Recent publications


and now for something completely different.....

A man is walking along Wellington harbour when he sees a young woman standing looking sadly out across the water. He approaches her and asks what the matter is. She tells him how much she dislikes her life and wishes to get away from New Zealand. The man thinks for a moment and then tells the woman that he is a sailor and his ship is about to leave for England. He suggests he smuggles her on, “I could bring you food and keep you safe, in return you can...keep me happy.” The woman agrees this sounds like a fair deal, and that night the man smuggles the woman onto the ship. For weeks the woman hides in a store room near the bowels of the ship, every evening the man brings her food and spends the night. Three weeks into the trip, the captain of the ship finds the woman hiding. “What on earth is this?!” he yells. The woman explains, and tells the captain of her arrangement with the man. “I get safe passage and he gets something from the deal as well.” “He sure does, lady!” the captain exclaims, “this is the Picton ferry.”

101 ways to annoy people

51. Begin all your sentences with "oooh la la!"
52. ONLY TYPE IN UPPERCASE.
53. only type in lowercase.
54. dont use any punctuation either
55. Buy a large quantity of orange traffic cones and reroute whole streets.
Hot off the press: The applications submitted to the Brian Mason Scientific and Technical Trust by Angus McIntosh ($16,920), Jason Tylianakis ($10,534.45), Ximena Nelson ($13,567) and Dave Kelly ($11,500) have all been successful. The amount awarded is given in brackets.

I will be away tomorrow - heading up to the NZIAHS meeting which includes a Political Forum at which the science manifestos of the various parties are to be presented.

Last week we hosted two Year 13 Biology students for some last minute practice. Amanda Deacon and Cloe English are members of the New Zealand Team off to the Biology Olympiad in India. My thanks to Jackie Healy (gels), Jason Tylianakis and Jan McKenzie (locust dissections) and Paul Broady (orchid and rhododendron dissections).

Last week also was the AWIS meeting at which Juliet and I both spoke in the session titled "Issues in Science Teaching" - Juliet spoke brilliantly on undergraduate teaching and I followed with comments on being a postgraduate supervisor. Jean Fleming from Otago rounded the session off with her presentation on being a mentor. It’s been a long time since I was actively involved with AWIS but I would recommend all young women scientists become involved as a significant aspect of the organisation is around career development, support and mentoring.

~ Paula ~

Building Update

The ramp at the Commerce end of the Biology building will not be able to be used next week while alterations are made. This is to reduce the gradient to meet compliance regulations for disabled access. The work will involve putting in a return parallel to the Commerce building. The work is expected to take one week. If you foresee that you will need gas bottles it would pay to get them this week.

Concrete work will continue from time to time in the link area with minor noise occurring. Everything is going according to plan. Pipe work taking ground water away to current car park will not affect deliveries.
Department administration news

Scholarship Success
The following SBS students were successful in obtaining Scholarships in the mid-year doctoral scholarship round.

Successful NZ citizens/permanent residents
Canterbury Scholarship awarded to:
Tatiana SOARES DA COSTA [BCHM degree]

UC Scholarship awarded to:
Leonard FORGAN [ZOOL degree]

Successful international students were
Sara Mae KROSS [ZOOL degree]
Pragatheswari DHANDAPANI [PBIO degree]
Tristan STRINGER [ZOOL degree]
Lorna DEPPE [ECOL degree]

Congratulations and best wishes for your future doctoral studies.

Recent publications

and now for something completely different.....

Guess who owns the shoes and we might be able to rummage up a chocolate fish for the winner.

101 ways to annoy people

56. Pay for your dinner with 10 cent coins.
57. Tie jingle bells to all your clothes.
58. Repeat everything someone says, as a question.
59. Write "X - BURIED TREASURE" in random spots on all of someone's roadmaps.
60. Inform everyone you meet of your personal Kennedy assassination/UFO/ O.J Simpson conspiracy theories.
So a new term begins. We have the usual problems with Jade and enrolments going wrong, plus double booked lecture theatres etc etc, so life is suitably hectic. In particular, Jade does not seem to be sending us any Change of Enrolment details so there are probably quite a few students out there blissfully unaware that they are not enrolled. And just to help it all along, students don’t seem to have access to Jade this morning. Despite Jade, though, our 2nd semester enrolments look very impressive. Most of our courses are well above what we expect, which will keep the money people in the College happy. The large enrolments pose their own logistical problems. For example my BIOL210 course is too big for the lecture theatre and we didn’t order enough fish for this week’s labs. Field trips in August could be fun, with BIOL375 and SCIM101 at record numbers.

I have been away for a week and am impressed at how many e-mails I collected in that time, and how little seems to have happened on the building site. I am slowly working through the e-mails, so if I haven’t answered yours yet – I will get there eventually. Paula is away this week, so I am in the hot seat.

If you haven’t sorted your promotion form yet, then you have problems.

~ Bill ~

**Building Update**

Work will continue this week on construction of the tower crane. This will result in some temporary disruption to some car parks on Tuesday afternoon and Wednesday morning while equipment is brought on site prior to assembly.

The ground water consent process continues to cause concern with the process now awaiting a formal hearing.

Footnote: Did you notice how coordinated the workmen were? Matching red ensembles to enhance the red crane.

**Department administration news**

**Calling all Facebook Users**
The postgrads have put together an SBS group on Facebook. Join up to see some previously unpublished photos of staff members as you’ve never seen them before...
101 ways to annoy people

61. Repeat the following conversation a dozen times: "Do you hear that?" "What?" "Never mind, it's gone now."
62. Light road flares on a birthday cake.
63. Wander around a restaurant, asking other diners for their parsley.
64. Leave tips in Bolivian currency.
65. Demand that everyone address you as "Conquistador."
UNFORTUNATELY NO. 59 WAS DELETED.

Contact details

If you have items of news or interest that you would like included in this newsletter, contact the admin office before noon on Friday at bioladmin@canterbury.ac.nz or phone 6732.
My focus on a few lectures this week meant the time for a Newsletter introduction passed me by. Christchurch escaped relatively unscathed from last week's storm although a number of staff found it impossible to get here - Lyn's excuse was the best - the road wasn't flooded but all the cattle from the surrounding farms were crowded onto the road making it impassable!

I attended a MRST-led meeting last week where the Ministry launched the Government's Agenda for New Zealand RS&T - "From Strength to Strength". It has four platforms: 1. Sustain our Science Base; 2. Focus New Science; 3. Propel Business R&D; and 4. Connecting New Zealanders with Science. The Agenda can be found at: http://www.morst.govt.nz/Documents/publications/policy/Governments-Agenda-for-RST.pdf. It would appear that the messages regarding the lack of a secure career-base in science have been heard.

~ Paula ~

Building Update

For this update, I looked out the window and saw....there are lots of rusty pipes lying about on the ground. The sunshades on the biology building have more or less disappeared. The big yellow crane is in full swing and the little red men are busy welding and trodding through the mud.
Successful SBS Fifth Birthday Party

Over 70 people came together in the Staff Club on a rainy Wednesday (23 July) to celebrate five years formation as a School. Paula Jameson thanked all those who helped form the School, especially Ashley Sparrow, and his extraordinary numeracy skills. She paid tribute to our current staff. Ian Town then spoke on behalf of SMT and acknowledged SBS contribution, followed by Bryce Williamson’s recollections of his days sharing ideas and problems with Ashley and ultimately working in the new College structure. Then with balloons and poppers, Paula and Bill, jointly cut the cake! It was good to see our staff and students mingling with Heads of Science Departments, Outreach and College Office personnel, the Registrar and Research Office staff, all networking away. I was asked to make several introductions so this function had a dual purpose, not just to celebrate, but to reinforce our place in the greater university community. Appreciation goes to Professor Ian Shaw who, although he couldn’t attend, donated the complimentary sparkling wines. Positive feedback from participants was very satisfying - Cheers, Lyn
**Recent Awards**

**Dr. Raphael Didham** has been awarded funding of $45833.00 from University of Waikato for a project called "Restoring resilience of forest remnants." The aim is to develop a model to improve the resilience and biodiversity of forest remnants in production landscapes for national application.

**Dr. Jon Harding** has been awarded $40555.00 from NIWA. This funding is for a scholarship for **Troy Watson** who will be looking into cave aquatic ecosystems.

The Brian Mason Scientific and Technical Trust has awarded funding of $16920.00 to PhD student **Rebecca Neumegen** who is supervised by **Associate Professor Angus McIntosh**. Rebecca's objective is to determine the best predictors of community similarity and composition of aquatic invertebrates across multiple spatial scales and to construct a spatial model to predict community structure across stream networks.

**Professor Dave Kelly** has been awarded funding of $11500.00 for a project titled "Seed movement - NZ Frugivore dispersal - Highly fragmented forest" being undertaken by student **Sarah-Jane O’Connor**. This project will examine the movement of native seeds via avian frugivores by using genetic markers to match seeds with the maternal parent.

**NZ biologists bring home the medals**

The New Zealand International Biology Olympiad team have won a silver and three bronze medals at the Mumbai Olympiad this week.

The team of secondary school biologists; Amanda Deacon (Burnside High, Christchurch), Chloe English (Christchurch Girls’ High School), Jessica Shailer (Palmerston North Girls’ High School) and Ben Paterson (Kings’ College, Auckland) competed against the top students from 55 nations in a challenging competition testing their practical and theoretical biology knowledge.

The behaviour of Siamese fighting fish was analysed and paternity was tested using modern forensic techniques. These were just two of the many intriguing biological challenges that the students faced to triumph and win medals.

Team leaders; Drs Angela Sharples (Rotorua Girls’ High School) and Steve Chambers (Unitec Institute of Technology) were very proud of how our students performed in this demanding and prestigious international event. “the New Zealand team punched far above their weight in this competition, all of these students are outstanding!”.

Thanks to Jason, Paul, Jackie and Jan again for coaching on the locust, orchid and gels!
Recent publications


Latest theses in the school collection


and now for something completely different.....

101 ways to annoy people

71. Pretend your computer's mouse is a CB radio, and talk to it.
72. Try playing the William Tell Overture by tapping on the bottom of your chin. When nearly done, announce "no, wait, I messed it up," and repeat.
73. Drive half a block.
74. Inform others that they exist only in your imagination.
75. Ask people what gender they are.

Quasimodo goes to a doctor for his annual checkup.
"I think something is wrong with your back," the doctor says.
"What makes you say that?" Quasimodo asks.
"I don't know," the doctor replies. "It's just a hunch."
An era has passed with the death of Emeritus Professor Knox. George Knox (1919-2008) was first appointed as an Assistant Lecturer to Canterbury University College in 1949 and rose through the ranks to become Professor and Head of the Zoology Department (University of Canterbury) in 1959. During his academic career he held many important offices in SCAR and INTECOL and gained many prestigious awards some of which are noted here:

Fellow of the Royal Society of NZ (1963); The Hutton Medal (Royal Society of NZ) in 1979; Honorary Membership of SCAR (Scientific Committee for Antarctic Research) in 1982; 1983 Conservation Trophy by NZ Antarctic Society and in 1985 awarded an M.B.E. in the Queen's Birthday Honours list; The NZ Marine Sciences Society Award for outstanding contribution to marine science and the Sir Ernest Marsden Medal were awarded in 1985.

George retired from UC in 1983 and in 1984 became Professor Emeritus and had established himself as an environmental consultant and scientific writer. His two most notable recent publications were "Biology of the Southern Ocean" and "The Natural History of Canterbury".

Funeral information:
Wednesday August 13 at 2.00 pm, Lamb & Hayward - Westlake [ie Wairakei Road, airport end]

~ Paula ~

Building Update

The contractors are still waiting for Ecan permission to come through for water to be pumped into the Okeover stream. Testing of the pipes taking water for reinjection over by the Law building will start from Tuesday.

Scholarships

Top Achiever Doctoral Scholarships awarded
University of Canterbury students have scooped a quarter of the Top Achiever Doctoral Scholarships. The single largest scholarship went to Muhunthan Rajaratnam (PhD candidate) who has been awarded $98,679 to study cytokinin-regulatory genes and seed development of perennial ryegrass. Muhunthan is supervised by Prof Paula Jameson and Dr Jason Song. This research examines cytokinin-regulatory genes with a view to producing higher performance ryegrass yields and varieties.
Laura Young (PhD candidate) has been awarded $83,988 to study frugivory and seed dispersal by animals in fleshy-fruited alpine plants. Laura is supervised by Prof Dave Kelly. This research examines the seed dispersal relationships between alpine fruit-eating animals and the plants they feed on above the bushline in New Zealand.

Recent publications


and now for something completely different.....

101 ways to annoy people

76. Lick the filling out of all the Oreos, and place the cookie parts back.
77. Cultivate a Norwegian accent. If Norwegian, affect a Southern drawl.
78. Routinely handcuff yourself to furniture, informing the curious that you don't want to fall off "in case the big one comes".
79. Deliberately hum songs that will remain lodged in co-workers brains, such as "Feliz Navidad", the Archies "Sugar" or the Mr. Rogers theme song.
80. While making presentations, occasionally bob your head. Like a parakeet.
News from the Top

Spring must be just about upon us as everyone seems to be migrating offshore. Paula is currently away in Malaysia and China, so I’m in the hot seat. Thinking about spring, I was playing in the mountains at the weekend in some very deep snow. We have had an odd winter in terms of weather, and we are just about to enter a period (spring) where the weather traditionally is incredibly variable. If you are heading off to do field work please make sure to check the forecast and keep yourself safe ……and fill in the intentions form.

We have had some interesting times with biosecurity issues recently. Hopefully these are all behind us now, but everyone needs to be aware that compliance is the big word of this decade and whether it is DoC, ERMA, MAFBNZ, NZFSA or any other of those government departments with acronyms, we all need to be aware of the rules. Ignorance is never an excuse.

It’s the last week of term. I have no idea where the time slipped away to, but vacation is almost upon us. If you are heading away, whether on holiday or to a field trip, have a good relaxing time. - Bill

Building Update

If you notice anything suspicious or think something is missing from the site, please let Security know, as they have contact numbers for the construction crew.

They are still colour co-ordinated which is good to see……..

Science News

Grants

Dr Steven Gieseg in collaboration with Prof. Justin Roake of the Dept. of Surgery, Christchurch Hospital, have been awarded a New Zealand Heart Foundation Project Grant to study and model the biochemical process occuring with arteries during heart disease. The funds cover laboratory research costs for three years. The research builds on Steven's previous two project grants from the foundation.

and now for something completely different…..

Why didn't I make the Olympics?

I met this bloke with a dideridoo and he was playing Dancing Queen on it. I thought, 'That's Aboriginal.' This lorry full of tortoises collided with a van full of terrapins. It was a turtle disaster.
I told my boyfriend I had a job in a bowling alley. He said 'Tenpin?' I said, 'No, permanent.'
I bought some Armegeddon cheese today, and it said on the packet. 'Best before End.'
It is still raining, and seems to have been that way for the whole of winter, though having just said that, I did manage to get sunburnt in Wellington on Saturday, until the clouds rolled over again and it started to rain. At the moment the Kaikoura area is being hit hard as the photo further down the page shows. The gully has always been a problem in wet weather and I am old enough to remember when a postgraduate student’s car was completely submerged under small chunks of limestone. On seeing the photo, my immediate thought was how the creatures downstream on the shore were coping with the salinity change.

Faculty Board of Studies was “interesting” last Friday. The debate was about the Teaching and Learning plan, and the upcoming refurbishment of the Science lecture block (it will be closed for the whole of 2010). Lou Reinisch’s vision for the not-too-distant future is that we will not need lecture theatres because we will be recording our lectures and giving them to students in electronic format. Our contact time will be spent having exciting interactive tutorials. The Teaching and Learning plan was circulated just before the last School TLC meeting and is virtually unchanged since that time. The plan for the lecture theatre refurbishment was aired at the last Faculty meeting, with the current aim to close it in November 2009, reopening in March 2011. If you wish to comment on any of this, then see Lou soon. Plans for the lecture theatre are expected to be finalised in November this year.

~ Bill ~

Joint Board of Studies – Engineering Intermediate

This is a new committee with a major task to ensure that first year intermediate students have the ability to progress into either science or engineering, especially as we move (possibly) into 15 point courses. It means that students will take more chemistry, and possibly more physics which probably means no room for any biology.

Building Update

Nothing major to report. The testing for water removal from the site is continuing. We are still waiting for Ecan approval to begin the building construction.

The webcam is always interesting!
Recent publications


and now for something completely different.....

Good thing that Field Intentions Form was filled in....

Photo above: A view of the main road in front of the Edward Percival Field Station at Kaikoura. There is a culvert designed to take all of the water UNDER the road but it is currently under a large pile of limestone. Note that the stream’s new path is exactly where the public aquarium was – good thing we knocked it down first.

Deciphering academese

Common academic phrases

If Tommy Cooper were alive today

(get ready to groan....)

I went to buy a watch, and the man in the shop said 'Analogue.' I said 'No, just a watch.'

I met the bloke who invented crosswords today. I can't remember his name, its P something T something R.

I was reading this book today, The History of Glue. I couldn't put it down.

I phoned the local ramblers club today, but the bloke who answered just went on and on.

101 ways to annoy people

81. Lie obviously about trivial things such as the time of day.

82. Leave your Christmas lights up and lit until September.

83. Change your name to "AaJohn Aaaaasmith" for the great glory of being first in the phone book.

Claim it's a Hawaiian name, and demand that people pronounce each "a."

84. Sit in your front yard pointing a hair dryer at passing cars to see if they slow down.

85. Chew on pens that you've borrowed.
News from the top

Last week I was in Malaysia, initially Kuala Lumpur and then across to two cities in Sarawak - Kuching and Sibu. With a constant day time temperature of 33 C and high humidity it was truly a break from winter! I presented talks on UC, College of Science and Biological Sciences to various groups ranging from the Academy of Sciences in KL, UPM, placement agencies, and alumni gatherings in Malaysia and Singapore. Malaysia is a country of contrasts and significant potential, vast oil palm plantations but no longer self-sufficient in rice. Conservation and sustainability don't appear strongly on the radar.

As the Universities were on mid-term break I only got to visit one but am keen to return with a programme more targeted towards Science and Biological Sciences particularly. Advice is sought on all possible programmes so one needs to be well aware of UC's programmes - programmes as divergent as Early Childhood Education to, not surprisingly, commerce but also music. UC has a significant number of alumni throughout Malaysia but has lost impetus in attracting new students by not marketing strongly. Other universities (particularly Australia) are there marketing extremely aggressively. I would go back for the food alone!!

~ Paula ~

Building Update

We hope to have approval for the water discharge on Tuesday. We will then see some building activity begin with the excavation of our new basement area beginning on Wednesday. This should take approx 2 weeks. There will be an increased number of large trucks using our car park.

We also have been given notice of a two day power cut which will occur on the weekend of November 22nd/23rd. The University is organising generators to supply power through the normal power outlets during this outage. It will be a limited power supply but will be enough to power all of our fridges, -80's and essential constant temperature rooms etc. We will be turning off as much equipment as we can and suggest everyone avoids the place that weekend. Any problems, please contact either Gavin or Selwyn.

~ Selwyn ~

Photo Competition

The display and prizegiving will be held at 1pm on Monday 15th September in the Coppertop, with a display day open to the wider community on Tuesday 16th.
Staff who wish to submit images for display are welcome to send them to us over the next couple of weeks, we can arrange printing.

Drinks and nibbles are being sponsored by the College of Science.

Why does the Earth Move?
More...

Can Words Save the World?
More...

Research News

Dr Hema Nair was about to leave NZ for postdoctoral research when she received word that she has been granted a Foundation for Research, Science and Technology (FRST) Postdoctoral Fellowship.

The fellowship, worth $273,000 over three years, means she can stay at the University of Canterbury and continue her investigations into radiata pine.

WELL DONE HEMA

Recent publications


Latest theses in the school

The B.Sc. Hons projects have now been catalogued, thanks to Bill's son Tom! Projects from 2003 are now housed in file boxes in the resource room.

2005:


2006:


Tait, L. (2006). Effects of native vs. non-native natriuretic peptides on branchial vessels and the effects


2007:


and now for something completely different.....

**101 ways to annoy people**
86. Wear a LOT of cologne.
87. Listen to 33rpm records at 45rpm speed, and claim the faster speed is necessary because of your "superior mental processing."
88. Sing along at the opera.
89. Mow your lawn with scissors.
90. At a golf tournament, chant "swing-batabatabata-suhWING-batter!"
Monday’s always seem to come around so fast - and no doubt our 4th years have felt this particularly for today as they start their final 'tests'. We wish them well!

Over the next few months we will be going through the process of interviewing for four positions in the School. This is always demanding of people's time but I do encourage everyone to note the times for presentations and meetings when they appear and to take an active part in the selection of our new academic staff members.

~ Paula ~

**Building Update**

We are still waiting for the water discharge consent to be approved. Consent is expected early this week. Foundations for the new building will start to be constructed up against the Biology building. Excavation of the basement area will continue.

**Latest theses in the school**

The B.Sc. Hons projects have now been catalogued, thanks to Bill's son Tom! Projects from 2003 are now housed in file boxes in the resource room.

**2003:**


and now for something completely different.....

**101 ways to annoy people**

91. Ask the waitress for an extra seat for your "imaginary friend."
92. Go to a poetry recital and ask why each poem doesn't rhyme.
93. Ask your co-workers mysterious questions, and then scribble their answers in a notebook. Mutter something about "psychological profiles."
94. Stare at static on the TV and claim you can see a "magic picture."
95. Select the same song on the jukebox fifty times.
The 'Once Upon a Time' Imaging Competition winners were announced yesterday with nibbles and drinks, provided by the College Office. There were many wonderful entries this year and the judging was done by Mike Dickison, EOS - Ecology.

The winning entry was 'Road to Nowhere' by Sophie Walker and for her efforts she receives a Spotting Scope proudly sponsored by Photo and Video. Second place was 'Tikal' by Kristy Udy ($200 Champions Voucher), with third going to 'Travelling Sands', Andrew Barnes (Underwater Eden, book). Two honourable mentions 'Maintenance', Sunita Chamyuang (Book), and 'Odd Visitors', Rose Kean (Book).

There were spot prizes for competition entrants sponsored by the School.
The display is open today from 10am-2pm. Please pop along and have a look.

~ Paula ~

**Building Update**

The excavation should be completed by the end of the week.

**Latest theses in the school**


The B.Sc. Hons projects have now been catalogued, thanks to Bill's son Tom! Projects from 2003 are now housed in file boxes in the resource room.

2004:


---

and now for something completely different.....

101 ways to annoy people
96. Never make eye contact.
97. Never break eye contact.
98. Construct elaborate "crop circles" in your front lawn.
99. Construct your own pretend "tricorder," and "scan" people with it, announcing the results.
100. Make appointments for the 31st of September.
AND FINALLY....
101. Invite lots of people to other people's parties.
The College of Science are funding three Summer Scholarships in the School, in addition to the UC ones. Application forms will be available soon. These scholarships will be available to third and second year students who intend to continue with postgraduate degrees in the College of Science.

4th year final tests are just about over, spring really seems to have sprung and daylight saving starts end of the week. Also at the end of the week I will be heading to Tonga, returning to New Zealand on the 8th October. This is partly an educational and recruiting trip and partly holiday as my family are travelling with me. Bill Davison will be Acting HOS in my absence.

~ Paula ~

Building Update

Excavation have finished so those trucks will be replaced by ones bringing in foundation materials. Work on the building is beginning to gather pace. People have been reported breaking into the worksite, even climbing the crane. Sites like this apparently attract 'interesting individuals' so please remember to keep our buildings secure.

Recent publications


Looks like it could be a hectic week. Paula is away working on her suntan in Tonga, while I seem to have had a constant stream of people at my door seeking advice or telling me about the latest bit of equipment that has blown up. Tomorrow I have a whole afternoon at a HoD’s forum – I’m sure it will be riveting!

It’s the time of year for student presentations. Last week we had a couple of mornings of MSc talks. The standard of these talks was very impressive both in the amount of work that has been achieved and the presentations themselves. Well done everyone. In a couple of weeks or so we have the Honours talks, and shortly after that the ABCD day for our PhD students.

I was giving a lecture this morning on Antarctic invasions which got me thinking about just how important invasion biology seems to be at the moment. We have modified our 3rd year to include more invasion biology and next year we even have an undergraduate endorsement in Biosecurity. Of course the newspapers are currently full of stories about varroa mites, which is why I was surprised a couple of weeks ago to see a tiny comment in the Press about two mallard ducks in Invercargill that had died of bird flu. I wasn’t aware that we had it here in NZ, so it has certainly sneaked in under my radar.

~ Bill ~

Building Update

Lots of activity appears to be taking place these days. An additional set of yellow steps going down into the labyrinth makes for a different climb. The appearance of some steel rods could make the days ahead interesting viewing.

University administration news

Pegasus Files play

Jack Heinemann’s play, The Pegasus Files, was launched this term in schools and it was a great success. It will be staged for his BIOL116 class on Tuesday October 14th at 9.00 in A2. If you are interested please feel free to come along. CoS will have morning tea afterwards in room 207 of Old Maths.

Recent publications


and now for something completely different.....

Nicole’s three week old baby

Welcome to myscape 08, the University of Canterbury’s contribution to the SCAPE Biennial of art in a public space. The university has long been a strong supporter and collector of the arts, but myscape is by far the most ambitious and extravagant project to be funded yet. Click on the link below to check out the amazing images: http://myscape08.wordpress.com/
Friday 3rd. It seems to have been a week of meetings. Add to that my current teaching and I don’t seem to have been in my room at all this week and the paperwork is piling up!). The beginning of the week saw a number of poorly attended meetings to look at exam papers. It’s certainly a reminder that we are approaching the end of teaching for the year. Enrolment for 2009 starts next week – the joys of Jade mean we never get a break.

Wednesday afternoon was Faculty, another poorly attended meeting, so poor in fact that we conducted half of it without a quorum. Several important items were discussed at that meeting. Our graduating year review of the postgraduate Ecology majors was approved, so now heads to Academic Committee, then Academic Board, then CUAP. A common course size of 15 points took up some time. The important point here is that it was not a debate about whether we will move this way, but about the best way to implement it. We have a TLC discussion on 15 point courses later this month. We need to go into that discussion knowing that by 2011 all of our courses will be 15 points.

The big news from the Faculty meeting is that the Dean announced his resignation, as he has accepted an offer to head a physics department in Alabama. Anyone with aspirations to become the new Dean, details will be available soon. There are some obvious short-term flow-on effects from this announcement, such as next week when I will be juggling lots of hats – I have some major things to do with compliance issues, I’m acting HoS and acting Dean.

~ Bill ~

**Building Update**

Discussion at the last Project Control Group (PCG) meeting concentrated on the next phase and our need to get moving on planning for this. The current date for completion of Stage 1 (the research building) is June 2010, so at the moment we will be looking at the mid-winter break to move all of the research equipment into the new building. This is a vital move because everything else depends on emptying research space, particularly in the von Haast building. As part of the build-up to stage 2 (refurbishment of the Zoology building) we need to build a new teaching lab in Physics and modify all of the research space in von Haast into offices so that we can completely evacuate the Zoology building. There is an obvious domino effect in that we need to clear research areas in order to build temporary accommodation to allow stage 2 to begin. The PCG will be holding some major meetings at the end of October to try to get most of this sorted.
Planned completion dates for new building

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Recent publications


and now for something completely different.....

Following the problems in the sub-prime lending market in America and the run on HBOS in the UK, uncertainty has now hit Japan.

In the last 7 hours Origami Bank has folded, Sumo Bank has gone belly up and Bonsai Bank announced plans to cut some of its branches.

Yesterday, it was announced that Karaoke Bank is up for sale and will likely go for a song, while today shares in Kamikaze Bank were suspended after they nose-dived.

Samurai Bank is soldiering on following sharp cutbacks, Ninja Bank is reported to have taken a hit, but they remain in the black.
Furthermore, 500 staff at Karate Bank got the chop and analysts report that there is something fishy going on at Sushi Bank where it is feared that staff may get a raw deal.

A new employee calls the Help Desk to complain that there's something wrong with her password.

"The problem is that whenever I type the password, it just shows stars," she says.

"Those asterisks are to protect you," the Help Desk technician explains, "so if someone were standing behind you, they wouldn't be able to read your password."

"Yeah," she says, "but they show up even when there is no one standing behind me."

I had a dog named Minton who had an unfortunate habit of eating shuttlecocks.

Bad Minton!

Three disabled men, a blind man, an amputee, and a man in a wheelchair, are flying back with the USA team from the Paralympic games in the Middle East when their plane crashes in the Sahara Desert. The three disabled men, the only survivors, are now stranded and wait for someone to rescue them, but no one shows.

They start to get real thirsty, so they decide to seek out water. The amputee leads the way, with the blind man pushing the man in the wheelchair; eventually they find an oasis. The amputee leader goes into the water first, cools himself down, drinks a load of water, walks out the other side and lo and behold, he has a NEW LEG! He gets excited and encourages his friends to do the same.

The blind man offers to push the guy in the wheelchair, but he is refused. The man in the chair is skeptical and insists the blind man goes ahead first. So he goes into the water, cools himself down, drinks a load of water, walks out the other side and lo and behold, he can SEE!

Now the man in the wheelchair is getting really excited and starts pushing with all his might. He goes into the water, cools himself down, drinks a load of water, and wheels out the other side. Lo and behold ... NEW TIRES!
Two notable successes have occurred very recently: Congratulations to Angus McIntosh, Raph Didham and Jason Tylianakis who have been awarded full Marsden Grants. The titles of their projects are listed below. This is individually significant recognition of their research but also reflects well on the School and University.

"The dynamics of spatially compressed food web" - Angus McIntosh

"Riches to rags: does elevated productivity drive ecosystem decay in adjacent natural habitats?" - Raph Didham

"An unnatural nexus: do food webs merge at the interface between natural and managed habitats?" - Jason Tylianakis

Congratulations are also due to Brian Butterfield and his team for such a successful Alumni function. We had over 100 ex-Zoology and Botany graduates and staff pre-1968 attend, which was a quarter of the total University-wide attendees. Thanks are also due to a number of staff and students of the School who contributed time and expertise to assist in the smooth running of this event. These include Matt Walters (who was also on the main Alumni organising committee), Penny Moore, the people who cleaned up the corridors (Graeme Bull, Liz Fitzgerald and Laura Young), Dave Conder (plants in every corner) and transport, tour guides and afternoon tea from Jenny Ladley, Jan McKenzie, Dave Kelly, David Collings, Islay Marsden, Chris Glover, Sue Adkins, Murray Rajaratnam, David O’keefe, Thomas Evans, Laura Young.

Please all now keep those wonderful corridors clear!!

Best wishes to our undergraduates as they near the end of term and move into study for the final exams.

~ Paula ~

Successful applicants

Dr Jason Tylianakis has been successful with an application to Hellaby Trust. The $52,043 awarded will be used for a scholarship for Claudio de Sassi. Claudio will investigate the effects of two global environmental changes drivers, alone and in interacting combinations, on the Lepidoptera food web of seminatural, mid altitude tussock grasslands of New Zealand.
Associate Professor Angus McIntosh has been successful with an application to the Envirolink programme of FRST. The $5,000 awarded will be used to support the student research of Katharina Doehring in association with Nelson City Council. The project seeks to improve the knowledge of native fish distribution and passage constraints within the Nelson City Council area.

Dr Ximena Nelson has been awarded funding of $13,567 from the Brian Mason Scientific and Technical Trust. The objective of Ximena's project is to investigate the structure and function of kea vocalisations and how habitat type affects call structure.

Dr Hema Nair has been successful in gaining a New Zealand Science and Technology Postdoctoral Fellowship from the Foundation for Research Science and Technology. The $260,333 awarded will be used on a study of intra-ring checking and xylogenesis in Pinus radiata, which seeks to understand the effect of wind, gravity and hormones on compression wood formation in radiata pine.

Scholarships Awarded

Ari Kornfeld, PhD candidate, has been awarded a New Zealand International Doctoral Research Scholarship (NZIDRS) starting January 2009. Congratulations Ari!!

Recent publications


Latest theses in the school collection


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**and now for something completely different…..**

**The week that was according to Ryan...**

Monday: Get out of bed, go to uni, spend lots of money
Tuesday: Get out of bed, go to uni, spend lots of money
Wednesday: Get out of bed, go to uni, spend lots of money
Thursday: Get out of bed, go to uni, spend lots of money
Friday: Get out of bed, go to uni, spend lots of money
Teaching has now finished and I’m sure we are all having a well deserved week’s break before we get into the trials of exam marking. I seem to be busier than ever and the pile of ANTA101 tests and ANTA201 essays are glowering at me across my desk. I’m trying hard to ignore them while writing this, listening to a Margaret Urlich CD (who remembers her from Peking Man days?) and wading through applications for the Marine Ecology position. Who says men can’t multitask!

Wednesday is a major occasion for the School as we have the annual ABCD talks given by all of our hard working PhD students. This is a great way for you to find out what your colleagues have been working on so please make an effort to get over to the talks.

Enrolments have now started and Jade is handling this all marvellously. I have to say this as our new Vice Chancellor is currently the boss of Jade Corporation. It will be interesting to see how someone with lots of business experience but little academic experience will settle into the Canterbury Way. I notice that for the first time ever (I think) Canterbury has started advertising on TV, and this in the new era where universities are not competing for EFTS because we have a fixed Government income. I’m sure the new VC had nothing to do with this, but it does suggest that we are heading into an interesting phase.

To all of you reading this heading into exams – good luck to you.

~ Bill ~

**Building Update**

The baffle is now in place, and this week sees the foundations being poured.

Just had a look out the window and quite a few of the builders are working on their tans. Lucky guys.

**Scholarships Awarded**

Wait, there’s more!!

Both Crystal Lenky (supervised by Juliet Gerrard) and Etienne Laliberte (co-supervised by Jason Tylianakis), PhD candidates, have been awarded New Zealand International Doctoral Research Scholarships (NZIDRS). Congratulations to both!!
Recent publications


Latest theses in the school collection


and now for something completely different.....

Things to Ponder.....

If Fed Ex and UPS were to merge, would they call it Fed UP?

Why are there 5 syllables in the word "monosyllabic"?

Why do scientists call it research when looking for something new?

If vegetarians eat vegetables, what do humanitarians eat?

If a deaf person swears, does his mother wash his hands with soap?

Does pushing the elevator button more than once make it arrive faster?

How much deeper would the oceans be without sponges?

If a turtle loses his shell, is it naked or homeless?

If man evolved from monkeys and apes, why do we still have monkeys and apes?

Who was the first person to say "See that chicken there....I'm gonna eat the next thing that comes outta its butt."
I know it must be exam time because 1. it is fine and very warm, 2. Campus is full of students, 3. They look very worried, and 4. I have a lot of e-mails from these worried students. What they hope to achieve with only one day to go before the exam I'm not sure, but good luck to all of you who are reading this and taking exams. I also know it is exam time because I am feeling very confused about not having large numbers of packing crates outside my room, waiting to head South. It looks pretty grey at Scott Base today, but a balmy -15 degree C and not much wind from the north. I have no idea what I will do with myself over November (my first November here in 18 years) though I’m sure someone will find me some administration to do.

Speaking of administration, I noticed that Ian Shaw has released his advertisement for the Dean of Science position. If you are interested in this position I could probably give you some background as I seem to have been acting Dean quite a bit this year.

I got bowled over by a swarm of Papanui High School students this morning. It was a good reminder that teaching may have stopped, but the rest of the School’s work continues. These students are our next generation of Biology students so we need to look after them. Well done to Jan and all the others who are working away with outreach.

We had our first meeting today dedicated to moving to 15 point courses. Thank you to everyone who turned up – it was a very pleasing turnout. No doubt Juliet will produce copious minutes from the meeting. I thought it was very productive. We didn’t make any hard decisions, but people now have a much better feel in terms of what is needed, we are aware that it really isn’t possible to just call all of our existing courses 15 points and that we have to resist the temptation to allow incremental creep of points and lectures.

~ Bill ~

Congratulations to PhD student Faradina Merican and Asmadi on the birth of their son at 8.08 p.m. on Sunday 19 October. Faradina and her supervisor are both very relieved.

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Building Update

Comments from last PCG (Buildings) meeting

Despite looking as though not a lot is happening, construction is currently 11 days ahead of schedule. The floor of the basement is a major task and is expected to be completed by 15 November. Meanwhile, some of the precast concrete walls will start to arrive in about a week's time and this
should result in some obvious changes to the site. People breaking into the site, and especially climbing up the crane is still a problem and you will notice some extra security measures soon. There will be a big review of the project in early November. This is a review of the whole project, especially what will happen to stages two and three. The major power outage planned for all of Biology is still planned for 22/23 November, so make sure you have nothing important happening in the building then.

Be careful of the excess water out there...

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**Research Success**

Matthew Turnbull (co-PI with Owen Atkin (ANU), Patrick Meir (Edinburgh U), Jon Lloyd (U of Leeds), and Kevin Griffin (Columbia U, New York)) has been successful in receiving research funding ($588,000 over 3 years) from the Australian Research Council (ARC) to support a grant entitled - *Out of the darkness: predicting rates of respiration of illuminated leaves along nutrient gradients.*

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**Recent publications**


and now for something completely different.....

Q: What kind of bank has no money, does not present any form of transactions and is only visited during the summertime?

A: A riverbank.

Two antennas met on a roof, fell in love and got married. The ceremony wasn't much, but the reception was excellent.

A jumper cable walks into a bar. The bartender says, 'I'll serve you, but don't start anything.'

EXCERPTS FROM A DOG’S DIARY -


EXCERPTS FROM A CAT’S DIARY -

My captors continue to taunt me with bizarre little dangling objects. They dine on fresh meat, while I am forced to eat dry cereal. The only thing! that keeps me going is the hope of escape, and the mild satisfaction I get from ruining the occasional piece of furniture. Today my attempt to kill my captors by weaving around their feet while they were walking almost succeeded, must try this at the top of the stairs. In an attempt to disgust and repulse these vile oppressors, I once again induced myself to vomit on their favorite chair...must try this on their bed. Decapitated a mouse and brought them the headless body, in attempt to make them aware of what I am capable of, and to strike fear into their hearts. They only cooed about what a good little cat I was...Hmmm. Not working according to plan. Finally aware of how sadistic they are. Today I was chosen for water torture...It included a foamy chemical called "shampoo." What sick minds! My only consolation is the piece of thumb still stuck between my teeth. There was some sort of gathering and I was placed in solitary throughout the event. I could hear the noise and smell the foul odor of what they call "beer..” More importantly I overheard that my confinement was due to MY power of "allergies." Must investigate to use it to my advantage. I am convinced the other captives are flunkies -- and maybe snitches. The dog is routinely released and happily returns. He is obviously a half-wit. The bird on the other hand is an informant, and speaks with them regularly obviously reporting my every move. His current placement in the metal room assures his safety -- but it's only a matter of time...
This week and next week we are interviewing for the Plant Systematics position - please do take the time out to come to seminars and to meet the candidates.

Nik Etheridge will be working 4 day weeks, starting this week. Tues-Fri.

Best wishes to our new bunch of Part II MSc students as you complete proposals, sign off the Health and Safety policies and commence research. It should be an exciting time!

~ Paula ~

Building Update

Foundations continue to be poured and the first of the wall panels were delivered last week. A reminder that there is a power supply reduction/outages scheduled for Friday afternoon 21st November until early Monday the 24th of November. We will have a limited power supply for the buildings during that period so it would be best to try and limit activity within the School over that weekend. More details will be provided as they become available. Please see Gavin or Selwyn with any concerns.

and now for something completely different.....

Some more points to ponder

Why are they called 'stands' when they are made for sitting?

Why is the third hand on a watch called the second hand?

If one synchronized swimmer drowns, do the rest drown, too?

Why do they put braille on the drive-through bank machines?

Why did kamikaze pilots wear helmets?

Why do they sterlize the needles for lethal injections?
Welcome to School: Dr Dunladi Umar, a lecturer from Gombe State University in Nigeria, will be working with Jon Harding et al. on a fish project and will be staying in the School until February 2009. When not in the field, he can be found in the Visiting Erskine Room B508, ext 7029.

I guess the hot news is that it’s all change at the top. I suppose we should acknowledge that the Government has changed, but overall, one politician is about as good as the next, and neither National nor Labour are likely to do much for tertiary education in the near future. The real news, of course is that Ian Shaw has announced that he is stepping down as PVC Science, so we will start the New Year with a new Vice Chancellor, and with new PVCs in most of the Colleges. So new guidance within Science, and presumably an interesting time within the Senior Management team (SMT) as there will be little continuity between the current one and the new one. Ian is heading to Chemistry as a Professor in Biochemistry. This should see some exciting developments in biochemistry, especially as we are about to advertise for a new biochemist at the lecturer level. Looking a bit further ahead, we need to start thinking about our own School. More on that in a day or so.

It’s a short week this week as it’s Canterbury Anniversary day (aka The Show) on Friday. Chris is working away putting together a display for the show, but is still looking for some volunteers to help him on Weds, Thurs and Friday. If you can spare a few hours please contact Chris.

I had a call out at the weekend as yet another of our -80 degree C freezers fell over. It’s happening much too often, and it will be good when we get some new electrons into our electricity system (see buildings section). A big thank you to the person who contacted security about the freezer. At one point I was amazed at the number of people who just walked past the freezer, even though the alarm was sounding. If an alarm sounds anywhere in the building, please do something about it. During the day contact Selwyn; out of hours call security 6888 or 6111. It might not be important, but it might just save someone’s PhD.

And finally, we are just concluding the interviews for the plant systematics position. Great set of talks, and I now know much more about daisies, lancewoods and biogeography. Don’t forget to send in your feedback forms. We have a short break to get rid of all of the examiners’ meetings, then back into interviewing; this time for a marine ecologist. We will have four people for interview, between 4th and 15th December, just in time for me to panic that I haven’t bought the wife anything for Christmas. So please mark these times in your diaries and come along to the talks.

~ Bill ~
Building Update

A few more Lego bricks arrived today, so we can no longer see the swimming pool. The building work is tearing along and is well ahead of schedule. Let's hope the builders can keep this up. As mentioned in an earlier newsletter, there is a major review of Stages 2 and 3 planned. Unfortunately, this has had to be postponed until early in the New Year.

Don’t forget about the planned power outage on the weekend of 22/23 November. If we mention it enough in this newsletter, then hopefully people will realise it is happening, and experiments will not get ruined.

Summer Scholarship success

Congratulations to the School’s four students who gained College of Science-funded Summer Scholarships for 2008:

Anastasia Shchepetkina – “Pollinator-plant interactions under global environmental change” project with Drs Jason Tylianakis and Steven Gieseg.

Rosanne Homewood – “Immunological mediators of invasiveness in the house sparrow” project with Dr Jim Briskie.

Ellen Hume – “Spatial coupling of distinct host-herbivore communities by mobile natural enemies at habitat edges” project with Dr Raphael Didham.

Abigail Grassham - "Seed dispersal and seed predation by Tantalus monkeys (Chlorocebus tantalus) in Ngel Nyaki forest reserve, NE Nigeria: implications and management" project with Dr Hazel Chapman.

Each student obtained a $4,000 stipend for their 10 week project.
Cafe Euro lunch

"The three monkeys"

About 20 people went along to Cafe Euro in Avonhead and all enjoyed tasty bites to eat. This venue was suggested by local Avonheadite Penny. Suggestions are always welcome for new and interesting places to relax and unwind as these three personnel did above.

Watch this space for next event.

Recent publications


Latest theses in the school collection

Today the general staff will receive their official feedback from this process. Unfortunately we are not allowed to release the names of staff. However the School achieved a tremendous result with all the applications put forward being successful. It is pleasing to see the high standards which our General staff achieve being recognised within the College. Many thanks to the managers and Paula for progressing this process - another great outcome for the School. Anyone with queries re the above should contact their appropriate line manager in the first instance.

~ Selwyn ~

Welcome to Ms Lijun Jiang who will be working with Dr Jason Song in Paula’s lab until June next year. Lijun comes from Shandong Agricultural University, China.

I would also like to acknowledge the time and effort that Selwyn, Gavin, Linda and Lyn put into the GSSR process. It is a time consuming process but one that deserves this investement of time. Congratulations to all who received promotions and bonuses and my thansk to all the general staff for their efforts on behalf of the School this year.

As many of you know I’m off to Tonga for the rest of this week, this time with Russ Taylor, to complete assessing high school projects for 2008, to launch next year’s project booklet (many thanks to Russ and Penny for compiling this) and to interview students whose projects are particularly noteworthy and to encourage these students to apply for the 2009 College of Science Pacific Scholarship in the Biological Sciences.

This last week was extremely busy for the group of people who assisted Chris Glover at the A&P Show. The stand looked attractive, was interesting and, as expected, the aquarium attracted lots of hands-on attention. The challenge now is how to keep the interest of these youngsters alive so they are willing to become the next generation of scientists. Thanks especially go to Chris who organised the exhibit and was in attendance each day and also to Jan for helping get the aquarium set up each day so that the children had a live exhibit to play with!

~ Paula ~

Building Update

Work is gathering pace and we should expect the arrival next week of the machinery which will run the new building. These items will be offloaded directly into the new basement area. There will be a lot of truck movements around the site as the contractors start back filling against the basement walls.
Remember the power outage this weekend. Please turn off all non essential equipment but leave on all fridges, freezers, incubators etc which need to keep running over the weekend. Power should be restored early Monday morning.

**Teaching Development Grant success**

Jon Harding has been awarded a Teaching Development Grant worth $6,900 from the Teaching and Learning Committee for *Developing biology teaching resources for students with disabilities*.

**Recent publications**


**PhD Profile**

*When Genomes Clash – Or why the ducks in the park are an evolutionary experiment* - Wiebke Muller

Introduced species, are of course, a big problem for conservation. They eat endangered species or they eat their food, or the entire habitat. However, sometimes a foreign species can become a problem not by being hostile, but by being overly friendly. Hybridisation between introduced and native species is a surprisingly common, and surprisingly little studied, conservation issue. Just think of the
black stilt (*Himantopus novaeseelandiae*) or the Forbes’ parakeet (*Cyanoramphus forbesi*) for two New Zealand examples.

To help solve at least some of the puzzles surrounding hybridisation, I set out to study grey ducks (*Anas superciliosa*), mallards (*A. platyrhynchos*), and the hybrids that form between them here in New Zealand. Mallards were introduced mainly in the 1950s, and hybrids have been spotted increasingly since then. It soon turned out that I had a substantial problem: there were plenty of birds with a mallard phenotype, plenty of birds of varying hybrid phenotype, but those with a pure grey duck phenotype were hard to find. In fact, after three years, I have not held a single duck of a pure grey duck phenotype, either alive or dead. I have seen ducks, however, that appeared to have a pure phenotype from a distance. These were few and concentrated around the southern part of the West Coast, from the glaciers southwards. Even a pure phenotype does not guarantee a pure genotype – genetic analysis revealed that it is a rough indicator only and cryptic hybrids may be quite common. It is anybody's guess if there are still some pure grey ducks out there – but it is fairly certain that there won't be any before long.

For one, it turned out that, as far as I could tell with blood cell counts, immunoreactive tests, and parasite counts, hybrids do not suffer from low or profit from elevated health. And then it seem that while mating is assortative, it is so within hybrids as well as within parental populations. This is a crucial point: If hybrids mate with each other when possible, rather than crossing back into either parental population, the hybrid population grows quickly even if hybrids are quite rare to start with. This is exactly the pattern observed. A modelling approach also suggested that hybrids would at first increase slowly, to then take over rapidly – and this is predicted to happen in all scenarios considered reasonable. What does vary between scenarios is the proportion of grey duck genome in the final population.
It might be worthwhile keeping an eye on this human-induced, evolutionary experiment in progress. So next time you see the ducks in the park, have a close look, and just note how variable they are – it is often possible to recognise individuals by their plumage, something impossible in the average species. Such highly variable populations experience enormously fast rates of evolutionary change. What the final result of the mixing of these two genomes will be, nobody yet knows. My informed guess is that the final result will be quite mallard-like in appearance, but retain some distinct characters of the native grey duck, and for quite a while to come, a large variability.

Bottom line: The grey duck, one of the few native birds that coped well with human settlement and the recent drastic changes in landscape, is now disappearing into a hybrid swarm with an introduced species. It is still quite common in Australia, but mallards exist in Australia too, and hybrids are becoming a common sight. What the conservation value of such a mixed population is, is a partly scientific and partly ethical question that requires urgent attention.

and now for something completely different.....

Trivia
1. Who was the ancient Greek God of the sea?
2. Which park did Yogi Bear call home?
3. How much does a barrel of oil weigh?
4. Which two oceans are to the east and west of Australia?
5. In chemistry, what is a substance which cannot be split into simpler substances?

If you can answer all of the above we might be able to find a prize for you.
Jokes

Two peanuts walk into a bar, and one was a salted.

A dyslexic man walks into a bra.

A man walks into a bar with a slab of asphalt under his arm, and says: 'A beer please, and one for the road.'

The Top 10 Mad Scientists

No. 10

Johann Konrad Dippel

Born and raised in Germany's Castle Frankenstein, 17th-century alchemist Johann Dippel became noted as the inventor of Prussian Blue, one of the first synthetic chemical dyes, but most famous for his endless quest for elixirs of immortality. Rumors of his experiments on human corpses may have inspired Mary Shelley's legendary character that bore the castle's name.

No.9

Wernher von Braun

At the age of 12, an intrepid Wernher von Braun loaded his toy wagon with some firecrackers and shot off across a crowded German street. It was a sign of things to come. The brains behind Hitler's V-2 rocket program arrived in the United States as a prisoner of war and went on to be its champion of space and lunar exploration. While putting people on the moon, von Braun also mastered scuba diving and philosophy.
As many of you will know the School has been involved in research projects in Tonga over the past few years. I returned for a few days last week to Tonga with Russ Taylor to finish judging biology/environmental projects and to present prizes (all donated) to the winning students and Schools. Russ Taylor and I also interviewed students for the College of Science Pacific Scholarship. The Scholarship covers all costs of study and living expenses which have been provided for by the College of Science, Foundation Studies and Campus Living. We interviewed 16 students. The desire for further education was very evident. We were overwhelmed with the gratitude shown by the students for the opportunity that this Scholarship offers. Most we interviewed would have difficulty finding a few thousand dollars let alone the $40,000 needed per annum to study at UC as an international student.

As a contrast, Russ and I had the use of the Minister of Education's car and driver. The car was a left-hand drive Buick, manufactured in and donated by China for the recent coronation. As we were driven between schools the air conditioning was a welcome respite from the 95%-plus humidity.

~ Paula ~

Building Update

A huge THANK YOU to all who assisted with the power shutdown on Friday and during the weekend.

Teaching Development Grant success

Dave Kelly (with Matthew Turnbull and Angus McIntosh, and Kerry Ford of Landcare Research) worth $14,430 to develop an interactive computer key to some of the flora at Cass that students on BIOL270 meet on their field trips. Initially they are doing the ferns and gymnosperms, with hope to expand to other groups in later years if this is a success.

Recent publications

Latest theses in school collection


and now for something completely different.....

Jokes

Two cannibals are eating a clown. One says to the other: 'Does this taste funny to you?'

'Doc, I can't stop singing 'The Green, Green Grass of Home.' 'That sounds like Tom Jones Syndrome.'

'Is it common?' Well, 'It's Not Unusual.'

Two cows are standing next to each other in a field. Daisy says to Dolly, 'I was artificially inseminated this morning.' 'I don't believe you,' says Dolly. 'It's true; no bull!' exclaims Daisy.

The Top 10 Mad Scientists

No. 8

Robert Oppenheimer

The Manhattan Project's head honcho was never reserved about his sympathies for socialism and his conflicted feelings over dropping the atomic bombs, and was ultimately stripped of his academic and political power for it. Despite those controversies, he's also remembered as a man his grad students called "Oppie," who learned Dutch and Sanskrit just because, and quoted a Hindu holy text at the sight of the first atomic bomb test.

No.7

Freeman Dyson

Respected nuclear physicist and prolific writer Freeman Dyson moonlights as a science fiction writer's dream. In 1960, he touted the idea that in the future humans may need to construct an artificial shell, now called the Dyson Sphere, that would encircle the entire solar system and make maximum use of the sun's energy. Dyson wholeheartedly believes in extraterrestrial life and thinks we'll make contact within the next few decades.
Congratulations:

Academic promotions were announced on Friday, and I'm pleased to say that we have some well deserved and significant promotions.

Congratulations to Raph Didham for promotion to Associate Professor and to Jason Tylianakis for accelerated promotion to Senior Lecturer 02; an accelerated progression within the Associate Professor range was awarded to Angus McIntosh and within the tutor range to John Pirker. Progressions within their range were awarded to Jim Briskie, Juliet Gerrard, David Schiel and myself.

Vice-Chancellor General Staff Development Award: Congratulations to Maggie Tisch for gaining this award. I know it will be put to good use as she was attending the DNA Technology Workshop (for which she gained the award) while I was at a Seed Biology meeting up at Massey University, Palmerston North.

~ Paula ~

Building Update

The basement is having its roof fitted and this will continue until Xmas. There should be some excellent viewing next week when the long floor spans arrive. Activity will continue on the site until the 23rd December. They return on 12th of January. There will be some noise and vibration close to the Geology wing of the von Haast building as they commence to dig out a new service tunnel.

Grant success

Congratulations to Sara Kross (PhD student) who has been awarded a Canon environmental grant which was formally handed over to her by the Registrar yesterday. The $5,000 grant comes in the form of canon equipment and Sara has chosen high-powered binoculars, a digital video camera, small binoculars and point-and-shoot cameras for field assistants. Her project, under the supervision of Drs Jason Tylianakis and Ximena Nelson, is working on relocations of New Zealand falcon into the Wairau Valley with potential to decrease wine grape losses to pest bird species. Well done Sara and good luck with your research.
Recent publications


Latest theses in school collection


and now for something completely different.....

From The Guardian Weekly. In the Diversion section, readers are asked to send in answers to questions posed the previous week. The question?

If matter can neither be destroyed nor created, then how can money?

Among the witty replies was this one from kiwi David Sinclair of Warkworth:
While matter can neither be destroyed nor created, it can be transformed. In the case of money, bankers, financiers and share brokers, having sliced off a few percent of yours as it passes by, transform it into champagne, which, when consumed in vast quantities, is again transformed into one of the most cherished phenomena of neoliberal economics, the trickle down theory. New Zealand has just elected a former financier as prime minister, so there will be a lot of trickling down happening as our new Dark Age begins.

Jokes

An invisible man marries an invisible woman. The kids were nothing to look at either.

Deja Moo: The feeling that you've heard this bull before.

I went to buy some camouflage trousers the other day, but I couldn't find any.

The Top 10 Mad Scientists

No.6

Richard Feynman

Part of the Manhattan Project's team of geniuses that developed the atomic bomb, physicist Richard Feynman went on to become one of the most important scientists of the late 20th century. Far from the stuffy professor type, this free spirit explored music and nature, decoded Mayan hieroglyphics and picked locks in his spare time.

No.5

Jack Parsons

When Jack Parsons wasn't busy co-founding the Jet Propulsion Laboratory, he was practicing magic and calling himself the Antichrist. This mysterious bad boy of the space program had no formal education, yet still managed to develop a rocket fuel that would guide the United States through WWII and into space. Tragically yet appropriately dramatic, Parsons blew himself up during a lab experiment at his home in 1952.
We seem to be hurtling faster and faster towards year-end - and Liz' Christmas decorations certainly remind us that this is the case. Our students will have received their final grades and those that did well letters of congratulations from the School.

This week we continue with presentations and interviews of applicants for the Marine Biology position.

I am also pleased to announce that Dr Pieter Pelser has accepted the Plant Systematics position and will begin on the 15th July next year.
Don't forget the Christmas picnic at Cass on Sunday!

See you there.

~ Paula ~

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**Building Update**

The basement roof is looking most impressive with huge concrete slabs in place. An interesting track has also been dug out to the large entrance on the west side. I've been informed that this is the service tunnel.

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**Awards success**

**Dr Steven Gieseg** has been awarded a travel grant from the National Heart Foundation to assist him to travel to the 28th International Winter Workshop: Chemical and Biochemical Aspects of Pteridines. The workshop is being held in St Christoph/Arlberg, Austria early next year.

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**SBS Cass Christmas Picnic**

Don't forget this Sunday is your opportunity to see one of our research field stations up close. Walking guides will be available for those not familiar with the area and there will be fun and games for all ages and abilities. Come and enjoy a 'pot luck' picnic and enjoy the wonderful views.

RSVP to Liz (6071) - who can also arrange car sharing if you're not bringing a crowd.
Recent publications uploaded into school collection


Blast from the past


Latest theses in the school collection


and now for something completely different.....

Jokes

A man woke up in a hospital after a serious accident. He shouted, 'Doctor, doctor, I can't feel my legs!' The doctor replied, 'I know you can't - I've cut off your arms!'

I went to a seafood disco last week...and pulled a mussel.

What do you call a fish with no eyes? A fsh.

The Top 10 Mad Scientists

No.4

James Lovelock

This modern environmental scientist and inventor of the world-as-superorganism Gaia Hypothesis has been dispensing dire predictions about climate change and our world for decades now, many of which have come true. He's not shy about spreading one ultra-gloomy forecast; given the current ecological crisis, a massive die-off of about 80 percent of humans by 2100 is inevitable, he believes.

No.3

Nikola Tesla

This is the guy you picture pulling down a giant electric switch in a shower of fiery sparks. Tesla, who is credited with the invention of the wireless radio and the AC generator that kick-started the electrical age was even born, fittingly, during a violent lightning storm in 1856. He was also known as a manic genius that slept little and loved to put on a good show, often using his own body as a conductor in public demonstrations.
The last College of Science Executive Meeting for the year saw us farewelling both Ian Shaw as PVC and Lou Reinisch as Dean of Science. Ian will be taking up a position as a Professor in the Chemistry Department at the end of January, Jarg Pettinga, who is currently the Head of Geology, will be acting PVC, and Lou is moving to the USA. We welcome Peter Cottrell as the incoming Dean.

The College finances are in good shape and early career academic staff should keep an eager eye out for an invitation to apply for a small research grant - of up to $10K. The College will also offer a number of PhD Scholarships to those that just missed on the UC round. There may be a similar offer made after the July scholarship round. There is also a plan to fund more summer scholars over the 2009-10 season.

The silly season has definitely arrived judging by the number of breakfasts, morning teas, lunches, afternoon teas and dinners on people's schedules!

Cheers, Paula

**Building Update**

On Wednesday a large pour of concrete will occur as the 1st floor is poured over the concrete basement spans. For those interested it will be approximately 60mm deep. The workmen stop for the xmas break this Friday and return on the 12th January. At the moment work is ahead of schedule.

**UC Teaching Award**

Professor Bill Davison has been named as a recipient of a University of Canterbury Teaching Award for 2008. He will be presented the award at the April 2009 graduation ceremony.

**Best "groovy" hat competition**

Entries into the "groovy" hat competition need to be wearing their hat to get their photo taken at reception. Photos will be displayed in the tearoom.

Entries close Thursday 18th.

Winners announced at the Christmas afternoon tea on the 19th.

Voting paper/ballot in tearoom. You may vote as many times as you like.
Recent publications uploaded into school collection


and now for something completely different.....

Office Holiday Memo
To: All Employees
From: Management
Subject: Office conduct during the Christmas season

Effective immediately, employees should keep in mind the following guidelines in compliance with FROLIC (the Federal Revelry Office and Leisure Industry Council).

1. Running aluminum foil through the paper shredder to make tinsel is discouraged.
2. Playing Jingle Bells on the push-button phone is forbidden (it runs up an incredible long distance bill).
3. Work requests are not to be filed under "Bah humbug."
4. Company cars are not to be used to go over the river and through the woods to Grandma's house.
5. All fruitcake is to be eaten BEFORE July 25.
6. Egg nog will NOT be dispensed in vending machines.

In spite of all this, the staff is encouraged to have a Happy Holiday.

The Top 10 Mad Scientists

No.2
Leonardo da Vinci
Between painting the most revered masterpieces of Renaissance art, Leonardo da Vinci somehow still found time to tap into his inner eccentric. The Italian's scientific sketchbooks, most written in mirror-image cursive, are a fantasyland of oddball machines and brilliant designs, many which would never come to fruition and some that would be built many centuries later, like his rudimentary helicopter.

No.1
Albert Einstein
He's certainly got the mad scientist hair thing down. One of the last century's most celebrated scientists, Albert Einstein turned physics on its head with his theories of relativity, and made enormous contributions to the fields of gravitation and quantum theory. He also liked to take his sailboat out on the water on windless days, "just for the challenge."
Happy, happy (and safe) Christmas everyone.

~ Paula ~

Christmas picnic at Cass

(thanks to Theo de Groot for piccies)

Islay, Liz, Laura and Darragh enjoying the Cass mountain air
Christmas tree & company (and Jason's trench)

The Cass cricketers
Darragh, Dave and James showing their form

....and who caught the ball??
Graduation morning tea

"Dorothy" & Jackie

Some of our PhD graduates: Ange, Ronny, Marc, Sandy and Hamish with Ashley, Angus and Paula
Recent publications


Latest theses in the school collection


and now for something completely different.....

Here are ten useful phrases for responding to Christmas presents you would rather not have received:

1. Thanks a lot!
3. Well, well, well ...
4. If I hadn't put on so much weight recently it would have fitted me perfectly.
5. Gosh, I hope I never lose this. We're always losing things around here.
6. It's great; but I'm worried about the jealousy it may create.
7. Just my luck to get this, on the Christmas I promised to give all my gifts to charity.
8. Unfortunately, I am about to enter MI5's Witness Protection programme.
9. Frankly, I don't deserve this.
10. Really, you shouldn't have.
Do You Know Santa's True Profession??
Consider the following

1. You never actually see Santa, only his "assistants."
2. Santa keeps his job until he decides to retire.
3. Santa doesn't really do the work; he directs a bunch of helpers to do all his work for him, but he's the one who everybody credits with the work.
4. Santa doesn't work anywhere near a 40 hour week.
5. Santa travels a lot.

Santa is obviously a senior faculty member with tenure!