

Our History: 2011

As the polytechnic marked its 25th year, a new brand for Whitireia was unveiled and the two and a half decades were celebrated with a fun day at the Porirua campus.

Whitireia New Zealand

In March, Whitireia Community Polytechnic was rebranded as Whitireia New Zealand, with Tangerine Design giving the institution a contemporary new look. Tim Renner, then Whitireia Director of Communications and Marketing, stated that "The new brand talks about the collaborative, community roots that matter to the polytechnic as well as positioning us strongly in domestic and international markets."



Don Campbell and Stephen Tunley from Tangerine Design.

The brand drew on elements from previous incarnations of the polytechnic's identity, sensitively acknowledging the rich history that had been provided by the previous 25 years. The woven 'W' echoed the kete motif of the previous logo designed in 2004, while the refined colour palette drew on colourways that had been associated with the polytechnic from the very beginning. "It is quite fitting that we are officially launching our new brand this year," said chief executive Don Campbell. "It was 25 years ago that Whitireia was

established on the shores of the Porirua harbour – where it still is today. It was officially opened on 15 March 1986 as Parumoana Community College.”

A 25th birthday celebration

The 25 years since the opening of Whitireia were celebrated with a series of events, including a fun day to which the community were invited, and a staff morning tea attended by chief executive Don Campbell and his two predecessors, Deirdre Dale and Turoa Royal.



Turoa Royal and Don Campbell at the 25-year morning tea.

The Fun Day on 29 October saw the community invited to celebrate 25 years with performances throughout the afternoon by KIWA (Whitireia Performing Arts students and graduates), The Fource (a Barbershop Quartet from Aotea College), Soul Foundation and Ear Candy (Whitireia music students), and New Zealand’s favourite Samoan/Welsh comedian James Nokise. Council chair Hon Roger Sowry and council members Suzanne Snively and Aka Arthur cut a celebratory three-part birthday cake made by Whitireia cookery tutors John Hancock, Sonya Martin and Nick Huffman. Six hundred lucky people got a taste of this delightful Idaho Chocolate Potato Cake topped with ganache icing, which took 4kg of milk chocolate, 3 litres of cream and 150 grams of butter to make it.



Cutting the 25th birthday cakes at the Fun Day: council chair Hon Roger Sowry and council members Suzanne Snively and Aka Arthur.

Samoan Independence Day

In June, Whitireia marked Samoan Independence with a series of events held across the day. The celebration began with an early morning flag-raising ceremony, while later activities included a valu popo (coconut grating) competition, traditional song and siva with Samoa Idol, performances by year one Bachelor of Applied Arts (Performing Arts) students, and a traditional tauluga to close.



Year One Bachelor of Applied Arts (Performing Arts) students perform as part of the 2011 Samoan Independence Day celebrations.

A new campus for Kāpiti

In Kāpiti, work began on a new campus in the heart of Paraparaumu, which would open in 2012 and replace the Lindale campus which had been in operation since 1996.



Artist render of the proposed foyer on the ground floor of the Kāpiti campus.

In the news

Hopefuls get into the mix

Citylife Porirua News 23.03.2011, by Dani McDonald

The Whitireia DJ school has been attracting some overseas attention, despite it not being well known locally. The school has been running for eight years under the guidance of hip-hop artist DJ Raw. In the past two years, the school has been attracting more attention, DJ Raw says. "We usually take 16 but for the last two years, we've had double the intake. There was a large waiting list this year, there's just not enough room," he says.

The class is now taking on 20 students, rather than the 16-sized class, to compensate for the increase in applications. Forty people applied for this year's course, and 48 applied last year. DJ Raw says people are desperate to get their feet in the door. "I think it's just a lot of people know about the course now . . . there are quite a few guys out there that have graduated and are successful."



International DJ student Michael Smith with tutor DJ Raw.

The attention is mostly nationwide, with students coming from as far as Wanaka and Hamilton. Only two of the 20 are from Porirua. And one has ventured to Porirua from London. Michael Smith, 25, otherwise known as DJ Dougal, searched the internet for an appropriate DJ school from his London home. His choices were Sydney, Auckland, Melbourne, Auckland or Porirua's Whitireia. He says Whitireia was the only course that was appropriate - the other music institutes were either night classes, three-month courses, or weren't interested in his future.

Smith says he flew to New Zealand to find out about the Whitireia course and met with DJ Raw. After an hour and a half of DJ Raw's personal time, Smith decided to study DJing at Whitireia. "We talked about where I was going and what I wanted to achieve. I've met a lot of cool people, everyone is really friendly and the course is really good."

The Whitireia DJ course is male dominated. This year they had one female - but she pulled out. Last year the course had four female students, and the year before that had two female students who were the top students in the class. "It's a bit of a man's world but if they are confident then they do well. It's a confidence thing," he says.

From nurse to a top academic
The Dominion Post 18.09.2011

Margaret Southwick is a strong believer that education transforms lives. Having just clocked up 26 years' service at Whitireia Community Polytechnic in Porirua, Dr Southwick, dean of the health faculty, says furthering her own education opened doors career-wise. "Education transforms people's lives and I know this in my bones because it transformed mine," she says.

"I would never have believed 20 to 30 years ago that I would one day be dean of a faculty, that I would one day be chair of the [New Zealand] Nursing Council, or that I would be so passionate about education, nursing education in particular."

A trained nurse, Dr Southwick describes herself as a late bloomer when it comes to studying. Once her three children were school aged she decided to take up a bachelor of arts degree at Victoria University, while also working part-time in aged care. Dr Southwick finished her undergraduate degree, majoring in anthropology and sociology, four years later, just before Whitireia first opened its doors. Initially, Dr Southwick was involved in developing the curriculum for the diploma of nursing, now known as the Bachelor of Nursing. With her nursing background, she felt at home with the technical side of her job, but it was the tutoring side that took some getting used to.

Eight years later Dr Southwick got a more senior position - the head of nursing school, in what was her first stint in management. After four years in that role, Dr Southwick decided to take some time out to do her PhD, while at the same time looking after Whitireia's Pacific Health Research Centre as director and teaching Victoria University's postgraduate master's programme.

On her return to fulltime work at Whitireia three years later, Dr Southwick put her PhD findings into practice, developing two stand-alone programmes - the Bachelor of Nursing Pacific and more recently the Bachelor of Nursing Maori. Both programmes have been embraced not only by the Maori and Pacific communities but also by her professional colleagues.

"What is particularly pleasing is the enthusiasm and support received from clinical colleagues because they understand that if we are going to do anything about effectively changing the health experience of those two communities then we need to have a workforce that those two communities can relate to." What's more, the students enrolled in those programmes are now achieving the same completion and success rates as those on the original Bachelor of Nursing programme.

In fact, Dr Southwick's efforts were nationally recognised four years ago when she received the Queen's Service Medal for her contribution to Pacific communities.

Whitireia IT training opens doors ***Dominion Post Education Supplement 2011***

Like many school-leavers, Chanel Pilcher-Landgraf (21) wasn't sure what she wanted to do when she left Aotea College. She says while she had always enjoyed computing it was her student adviser at college that took the initiative, putting Chanel's name forward for a Secondary School Leavers Scholarship to study Information Technology (IT) at Whitireia New Zealand. Chanel was awarded the scholarship based on her academic achievement and personal qualities. But before taking it up, she researched qualifications at other universities to find out what they had to offer. She decided on Whitireia, feeling that the more practical

nature of the programme, would suit her best. "It was more hands-on, not just sitting in a lecture theatre, we were solving real on-the-job problems."

Chanel's scholarship paid for her first year of study towards the three-year Bachelor of Information Technology. She says the Porirua campus was very welcoming, making it easy for her to settle into a tertiary environment. And she was only five minutes' drive from home, the free parking was a welcome bonus!

Chanel can't speak highly enough of the tutors at Whitireia. She says they were very friendly and always there when she needed them. "If you needed help you could approach them and they would spend the time with you, helping you understand the things you didn't quite grasp." If students needed extra time working on the software, that wasn't a problem either. "We could just pop into the back of a class where there were spare PCs. The set-up is really great."

Now she's completed her degree, Chanel has moved easily into full-time employment as a service analyst for Bupa Care Services in Porirua. They employed her part-time while she was studying at Whitireia and expanded the role once her degree was complete. Getting a degree from Whitireia, she says, was definitely worthwhile. "It's given me the experience I need to get out there and go in the direction I want to go." Chanel's plans for the future will see her step to the next level, where she has her sights set on becoming a systems analyst or business analyst. "These were the strength areas of my study and where the areas of study that I really enjoyed."



Chanel Pilcher-Landgraf.

Our History: 2012

It was a year of significant changes in 2012, with the acquisition of the Film School and Computer Power Plus, and the arrival at Whitireia of future chief executive Chris Gosling.

Construction of Wikitoria Katene begins

The campus redevelopment plan at Porirua entered its next stage in January 2012 with construction beginning on what was then imaginatively called BP1. With a total footprint of around 3817 square metres and a cost of around \$16.5 million, the building would house the Faculty of Health administration, classrooms and conference facilities, with laboratories and simulation suites to provide state-of-the-art training to around 1000 nursing and paramedic students.



Wikitoria Katene concept. Perspective 01 - Main entry.

"This project has been a long time in the planning and seeing the work going on over the last few weeks and the blessing today shows the progress we are making," said chief executive Don Campbell. "We are about to embark on a building project that is going to create a campus of the future. We are replacing more than 40 prefabricated buildings with purpose-built buildings that will be connected through learning streets to provide a modern educational learning environment and be very community-focused."

"It is a significant build for Whitireia and for Porirua and a courageous decision by all involved to invest in building works of this nature at this time," said Roger Sowry, Whitireia council chair.



Don Campbell, Aka Arthur, Roger Sowry and Taku Parai at the groundbreaking for Wikitoria Katene, 20 January 2012.

New Kāpiti campus opens

Further north, work had completed on another significant development for Whitireia, and the new Kāpiti campus on the corner of Kapiti Road and Milne Drive was opened in February.

Based on the old Mitre 10 building on the corner of Milne Drive and Kapiti Road, the previously single-level, open-plan building with a footprint of 1085 square metres had been transformed into a state-of-the-art, 21st-century learning environment at a cost of \$3.5 million. Purpose-built facilities included a commercial kitchen, training restaurant, beauty salon, hairdressing salon, training cafe and bar, and outside, a climbing wall for outdoor adventure students. The new mezzanine floor housed the library, classrooms and computer suites.



Hon Roger Sowry, Don Campbell, Hon Hekia Parata, Taku Parai (obscured), Hon Nathan Guy, Ra Higgins, and Mayor Jenny Rowan cut the ribbon to open Kāpiti campus.

From Iti Rearea to Te Manawa

With the new health building taking up a significant area of land along the western edge of the Porirua campus, Te Wānanga Māori relocated from their building Iti Rearea to a new home in the Business and Computing Centre (E Block). The tomokanga from Iti Rearea was installed facing the Atrium, while James Molnar's series of large scale paintings, which had decorated its interior, were relocated to one of the classroom walls. Sliding glass partitions throughout the space were decorated with motifs also designed by James Molnar.

Called Te Manawa, the new space was blessed in June, with the tomokanga unveiled by James Molnar.

Changes to executive

Susan Cauchi stood down as deputy chief executive after four years in the role and a total of eleven years at Whitireia. She had been closely involved in a number of important developments at Whitireia, particularly around quality and academic systems, and the new External Evaluation and Review (EER) process in which Whitireia, as an early adopter, achieved top rankings. Susan Cauchi had also been prominent in the establishment of a Combined Academic Board with WelTec as part of the Students First strategic partnership developed during 2011.

In May, two deputy executive positions were filled with Chris Gosling appointed as Deputy Chief Executive (Operational) and Lawrence Arps as Deputy Chief Executive (Educational). Lawrence Arps had already been at Whitireia for 18 months, initially in an operational role and then with responsibility for faculties and educational delivery. Chris Gosling, on the other hand, had recently returned from Bahrain where he had acted as Chief Operating Officer in the establishment of a New Zealand-style polytechnic with responsibility for finance and administration, ICT services, facilities, student services and registry. As a chartered accountant, Chris Gosling brought strong finance and accounting skills to the executive team, which was seen as particularly useful in the tightening fiscal environment.



Pōwhiri for Chris Gosling in Te Manawa at the Porirua campus, May 2012.

25 Years of leading and illuminating

As a conclusion to the 25th birthday celebrations of the previous year, June saw the release of the book *25 Years: Leading and Illuminating*. Produced and written by Steele Roberts Publishers, the book and its contents were based on interviews and research completed by Rebekah Burgess with the assistance of staff and students who happily contributed their Whitireia stories.

The launch of the book coincided with the annual dawn commemoration of the signing of te Tiriti o Waitangi by Ngāti Toa which that year was held at Takapūwāhia Marae.



Whitireia staff and guests welcomed on to Takapūwāhia Marae.

Following the ceremony marking the signing of the te Tiriti o Waitangi, the three executives of Whitireia past and present signed copies of *25 Years: Leading and Illuminating*. "This book is a celebration of the last 25 years," said Don Campbell. "It celebrates the journey of Whitireia from its beginnings as Parumoana Community College in 1986. Through a combination of successful leadership, wonderful staff and a hugely supportive community Whitireia have, in this short quarter-century, grown to become one of this country's leading polytechnics with an impressive list of achievements."



Aka Arthur speaks after blessing copies of 25 Years: Leading and Illuminating.

A welcome for the Film School and Sima Urale

In July, Whitireia announced the acquisition of the New Zealand Film and Television School by Whitireia New Zealand Limited is an agreement that meant the Film School retained its brand and campus at 86 Vivian Street in Wellington City, as well as the one-year Certificate in Film and Television Production. Whitireia had a long history with film, offering occasional and usually short-lived programmes including Videotaping Skills for Women, with filmmaker Gaylene Preston in 1993, Toi Whakaata (a one-year introduction to television and video production for Māori and Pacific Island students run by tutor Tania Bristowe from Kāpiti in 1996), and the National Certificate in Film and Television, taught by Caroline McGrath from Prosser Street in the early 2000s.

Sima Urale was appointed head tutor and welcomed to the role by Whitireia and Film School staff and students at a cocktail function in September. A well-known and respected New Zealand filmmaker, she came with more than twenty years' experience in the film and theatre industry, bringing a wealth of practical and academic knowledge.



Sima Urale speaks at the Film School cocktail event.

In the news

Paramedic Students on the Front Line

Dominion Post Education supplement 09.2013

Anna Lovegrove may only be 20 but the third-year paramedic student at Whitireia has already seen more “nasty” things than most people her age. When she’s not studying at the Whitireia Porirua campus, she’s working as an intern for Wellington Free Ambulance. “I work four days on, and then on my four days off, I study. Sleep is a luxury, it’s pretty full-on, you’ve just got to be good at time management.”

Between the two there’s little time left for herself, family and friends, but she wouldn’t have it any other way. “I’ve wanted to be a paramedic since I was 11 or 12 years old, I’ve always known that and I’m willing to put in the hard yards to be the best paramedic I can be.”



Anna Lovegrove.

Miss Lovegrove enrolled in the Whitireia Bachelor of Health Science (Paramedic) programme straight from New Plymouth Girls' High School because it worked closely with Wellington Free Ambulance. Lecturers are all practising paramedics, medical professionals or science specialists.

During the three-year course, students work shifts with Wellington Free Ambulance and have the chance to become interns.

“Whitireia has been fantastic, the degree programme is brilliant and the amount of time that we’ve spent on student placements has been fantastic,” says Miss Lovegrove.

“It really gets you into the service quite quickly and you build up so much skill and so much knowledge in such a short time, so by the time you get to your final year, it all comes together, it’s a really positive thing.”

The Whitireia Bachelor of Health Science (Paramedic) is a three-year, full-time programme offered from the Porirua campus. It is delivered in partnership with Wellington Free Ambulance.

Our History: 2013

Opening of Wikitoria Katene

On March 20, the new Health education facility at the Porirua campus was officially opened by the Minister of Health, the Hon Tony Ryall. The new building was named Wikitoria Katene, the name gifted to the previous health building by Ngāti Toa in 2008. The opening event was attended by over 200 staff and invited guests, with speeches from Hon Tony Ryall, Whitireia council chair Hon Roger Sowry, chief executive Don Campbell, and Ngāti Toa kaumātua Taku Parai. Guests were treated to performances by Whitireia Performing Arts students.



Wikitoria Katene against a twilight sky soon after its opening.

Commemoration of te Tiriti o Waitangi

On 20 June, Matiu Rei, executive director of Ngāti Toa Rangatira, addressed more than 100 people at an early morning ceremony at the Porirua campus to commemorate the Ngāti Toa signing of te Tiriti o Waitangi. "Ngāti Toa's post-settlement - a vision for the future" was the theme of his address. Whitireia Council Chair Hon Roger Sowry OMZM commended Ngāti Toa on this vision, their business and people. "Your goals, vision and strategies will help significantly change New Zealand and make it a better country," he said.



Matiū Rei, executive director of Ngāti Toa Rangatira, speaking on the post-settlement vision for the future of the iwi.

In the news

Culture and dance a perfect fit

Capital Life 04.09.2013 by Cameron Massey

Performing arts graduates Nikki King, 32, and Te Hau Winitana, 23, are the brains and bodies behind Pacifit Fitness Hula Active. Samoan, Cook Islands and Māori cultures, with a touch of Tahitian and Hawaiian, have contributed to their aerobic fitness routines.

King and Winitana, both from Petone, have drawn on their Bachelor of Applied Arts from Whitireia Polytechnic. As students they travelled to France, Belgium, Holland and Malaysia showcasing the cultural differences through dance and performance. They drew inspiration from their studies, marrying aspects of Cook Island, Samoan and Maori cultures with contemporary dance. "Each culture has its own movements, using the same concepts with different execution," King says.

The women were involved in youth work last year and decided to develop a way of getting people fit and active. "We really want to share what we do, because it is so cool. And we really want our communities to get active, from young to old," King says. The hour-long classes start with a low-impact routine, then build to a higher tempo using the intense movements from each culture to get the heart rate up.

Stunning show to help students

Kapiti News 2.10.2013

Whitireia New Zealand turned the Kāpiti campus atrium into a high fashion runway on Thursday, September 12. The fashion show was held to raise money to assist the beauty and hairdressing students to pay for their City and Guilds International exam fees. Thirteen beauty and hairdressing students created amazing hairstyles and makeup for the runway models, who were showcasing local fashion houses' new season clothing by Paperdoll, Helen Ryan, Undercover Secrets, Hipster and shots by Super Minx.

"We worked really hard this year to achieve the high standards that were produced on the catwalk," says student Tiana Thompson-Reed.

Our History: 2014

In the news

Pacific dance residency

Kapi-Mana News 13.05.2014

Tuaine-Nurse Robati is the 2014 Pacific Dance artist in residence. The residency, which runs for two months, was made possible by a collaboration between Pacific Dance New Zealand, Dance Aotearoa NZ, Pataka and Creative New Zealand.

Tuaine is focusing his residency on teaching high school students from the Porirua area. He will mentor several young apprentices - Julien Lameka Nehemia (Meka), Te Hau Winitana and George Teinakore George, graduates of Whitireia and previously tutored by Tuaine.

Building the future

Northern Courier 25.06.2014

Whitireia carpentry students are putting the skills they learn to the test by building a house. Work on the residential dwelling on-site at the Elsdon campus in Porirua began earlier this month. The 131m² house is expected to take students about six months to finish with a November finish being the goal. Once complete, the house will be marketed for sale as a transportable home.

"Building an actual house is one of the best learning tools for students," said Noel Aunoa, Carpentry Tutor, Whitireia. "It provides the students with great practical experience; they gain a clear understanding of how things work on a building site."

The carpentry course, a shared programme with WelTec in Petone, is a one year course aimed at preparing students with the knowledge and practical skills needed to enter the construction industry.

One head to rule both polytechnics

Dominion Post 10.11.2014

A single chief executive will be appointed for Whitireia and WelTec polytechnics early next year, in a further merging of the two institutions. Petone-based WelTec and Whitireia, with campuses in Porirua and Wellington, have been governed by one council since 2012, and have a single academic board.

Whitireia chief executive is Don Campbell, while WelTec is led by Linda Sissons. The union has guided both polytechs through a challenging few years, council chair Roger Sowry said.

"A move to a single leadership model is appropriate while retaining the distinctive culture of each."

App boost to te reo Māori

Kapi-Mana News 25.11.2014

A first of its kind mobile application will teach New Zealand children te reo Māori while they have fun. Launched earlier this month to children at Ngāti Toa Puna Reo Whiri Atu Whiri Mae is a collaboration between the iwi and Whitireia Polytechnic.

The application was the brainchild of Bachelor of Information Technology second-year student, Gina Solomon, who has Ngāti Toa affiliation. "I was trying to find something for my niece and nephew in Australia. I was looking for an app to teach them te reo and I couldn't find one," she said.

Solomon began working on the app with three third-year students, who used it as their final project.

Our History: 2015

In 2015, Whitireia said farewell to chief executive Don Campbell, welcomed a new chief executive for both Whitireia and WelTec, and began the construction of a new central Wellington campus.

A farewell to Don Campbell

After nine years as chief executive of Whitireia, Don Campbell retired. Two farewells were held in Wikitoria Katene to mark his departure, the first with members of the wider community, and the second with all Whitireia staff. At both events, staff and guests spoke to the impact that Don Campbell had had on Whitireia, while Performing Arts students provided powerful performances.



Performing Arts students perform for Don Campbell and guests, including Turoa Royal (founding chief executive), Akapikirangi Arthur (former Whitireia council member), Janet Arthur (Ngāti Toa Rangatira), Jeanette Grace (dean of Te Wānanga Māori) and Karanga Metekingi (Ngāti Toa Rangatira).

At Don Campbell's appointment in 2006, then council chair Dennis Sharman had said "The tertiary sector will continue to undergo major change over the next few years. Don's appointment at Whitireia will ensure that we are well-positioned to provide an excellent vocational education for our students and to continue to make a significant contribution to the communities that we serve." This proved a prescient statement and under Don

Campbell's leadership the institution grew not just in size, but in quality and reputation as well. The Porirua campus experienced a significant increase in new buildings and site improvements, the Kāpiti and Wellington campuses were relocated, and the Auckland campus was completely refurbished. In addition, under his leadership, Whitireia had consistently rated at the top of national measures for educational success for Institutes of Technology and Polytechnics.



Don Campbell (centre) with members of Ngāti Toa Rangatira. From left: Karanga Metekingi, Roena Kaka, Jeanette Grace (dean of Te Wānanga Māori), Myra WiNeera, Janet Arthur, Te Akapikirangi Arthur and Te Taku Parai.

New Whitireia and WelTec chief executive Chris Gosling spoke of the impact that Don Campbell had had: "Whitireia went from strength to strength under Don's leadership. The Porirua campus was substantially transformed with modern fit-for-purpose facilities (including our outstanding nursing and health facilities) progressively replacing relocatable classrooms that dated back to the 1980s. Don was actively engaged in the growth of international students and represented the sector on a number of national bodies."



New chief executive Chris Gosling with founding chief executive Turoa Royal, and council chair Roger Sowry.

Reflecting on his time at Whitireia, Don Campbell noted that the polytechnic was a multi-cultural community institution that had become internationally and domestically recognised. "Over the last 10 years, it has been transformed into a highly regarded organisation. We've had growth in the quality of education offered, and are one of the best for students going on to further study. It's outstanding." He said it was great to see where Whitireia was today. "Starting from humble beginnings to now offering quality education has been a journey of transformation. Whitireia is a lighthouse, a beacon of success. We're a ray of light, leading the way for students."

Beginning of a new Wellington campus

A development agreement for a new Whitireia and WelTec combined creative industries campus on the corner of Cuba and Dixon Streets, Wellington City, was completed and construction work began. The contract for the fit-out of the centre was let to architects CGM+ Foster and fit-out design approved. After extensive consultation, the overall strategy for the centre was approved and was said to reflect a bold ambition for a world-class, industry-linked, community-engaged centre which would be truly unique in New Zealand.

A whakawatea blessing ceremony, led by Te Atiawa, was held on-site prior to the demolition of the existing building, while a groundbreaking ceremony was held on 17 August attended by Wellington's Deputy Mayor Justin Lester, along with members of the creative technologies and arts community, and central government representatives.



Groundbreaking for the creative campus in Wellington on 17 August.

Whitireia and WelTec in Auckland

In Auckland, another joint campus came into effect with WelTec staff and students relocating from premises in Wakefield Street to the much larger Whitireia campus at 450 Queen Street, with the former WelTec campus being retained for teaching overflow only.

In the news

Dancer skips into the perfect job ***Kapi-Mana News 24.03.2015***

These days it's rare to walk out of the study and into your dream job. But that's exactly what Mapihi Kelland did. The 24-year-old dancer was one of more than 300 students who graduated from Whitireia on Thursday. Before she had even finished her final exams, she had been offered a contract with New Zealand's leading contemporary dance group, Black Grace.

She said she was amazed to get in because her cultural dance background did not match the group's classical contemporary requirements. "I don't quite fit the criteria there," she said. "I couldn't believe it and I couldn't believe I was going overseas when I had just finished my course."

The Bachelor of Applied Arts student said she had always wanted to be a dancer, and the last three years of study had given her opportunities to do so.

American artists at Whitireia campus

Kapi-Mana News 23.06.2015

The Whitireia visual arts and design department are hosting two professors from Idaho's Boise State University as part of its artists in residence programme. Caroline Earley and Kate Walker arrived at the Whitireia campus in Porirua this month for a six-week residency, during which they will work with arts faculty staff and students to mentor and model arts-based practices. Whitireia has provided the artists with a studio, wall space and a kiln to make finished works.

Earley is a professor of ceramics and Walker is a professor of interdisciplinary art. Both have exhibited their work around the world, including in New Zealand.

"We've often talked about the similar social and political ideas associated with our work, in terms of art as a way of engaging with controversial ideas," Walker said. "The works in this project all relate to LGBTQ [lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer] conversations in a subtle way," Earley said the collaborative aspect was also a big part of the conversation. "You're making incursions into someone else's territory in a way. At first, I thought, 'You want to draw on my pieces?'. But once she did, I realised they were even better."

Walker said they would be holding an intensive workshop with students, at which they would discuss collaboration and the influence of location and place. Earley noted that while their project had a general framework, it could take a sharp turn at any time, based on something they saw or experienced. "This is the power of being connected to the local," she said.

The Americans' residency finishes on July 25

Our History: 2016

2016 marked thirty years since the founding of the institution that would become known as Whitireia.

Celebrating 30 years

As part of celebrating the three decades of its history, Whitireia held a morning tea to honour the service of staff members who had been with the institution for 25-30 years. One of the recipients was Wally Clay who, you may recall, had been at Whitireia the longest of all, helping build the initial prefabs in 1985.



Wally Clay and Chris Gosling at the staff celebration in 2016.

Other members of staff who were rewarded for their long service were Trish Brimblecombe, Nicki Keen and George Packard. Addressing the assembled staff, chief executive Chris Gosling spoke to the importance of people such as the recipients and staff at Whitireia in general, quoting a favourite whakatauaikī :

*He aha te mea nui o te ao
What is the most important thing in the world?
He tangata, he tangata, he tangata
It is the people, it is the people, it is the people*

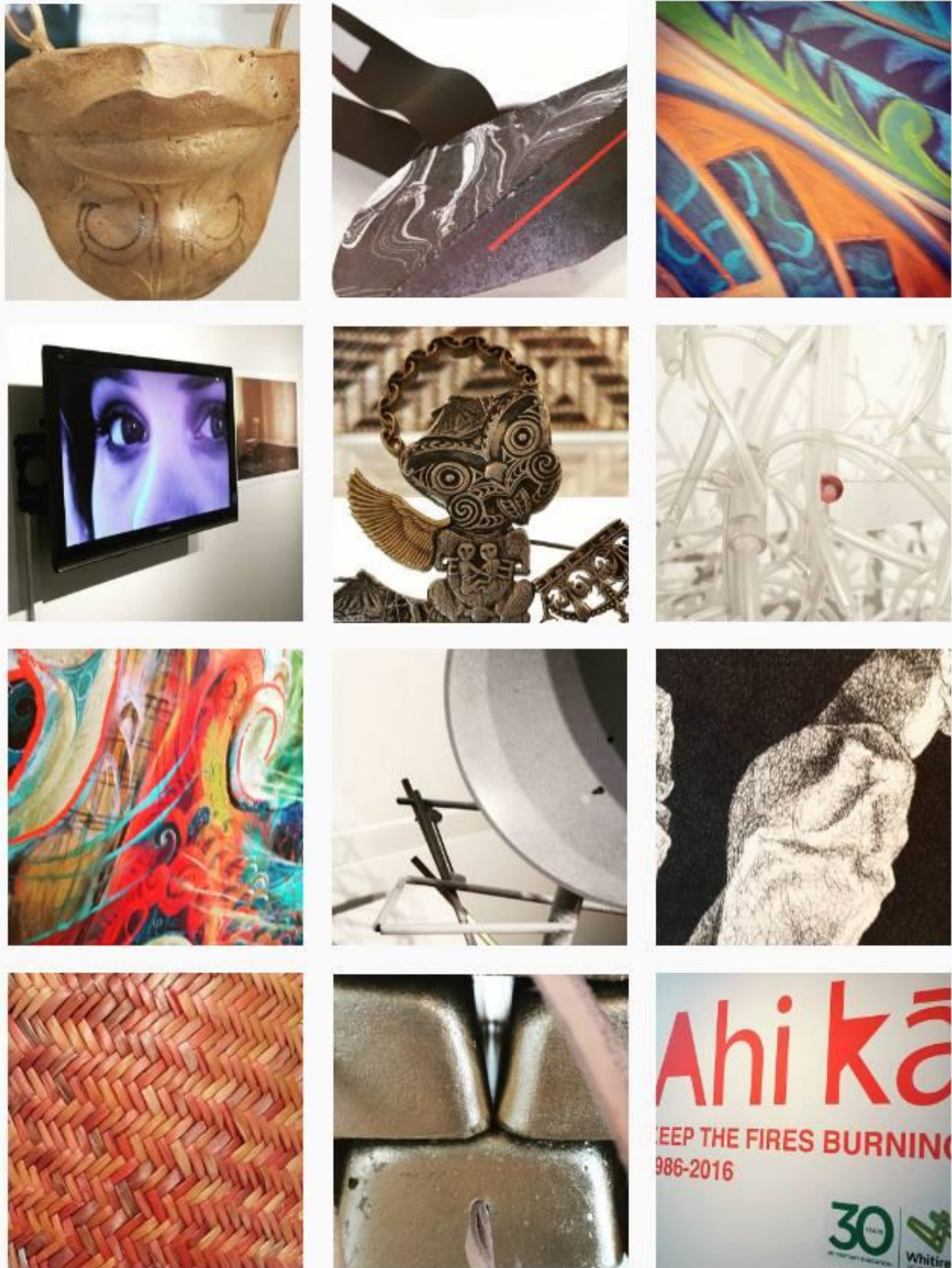
Keeping the fires burning

Visual Arts and Design marked 30 years of Whitireia with an exhibition at Pātaka Art + Museum called *Ahi Kā: Keep the Fires Burning*. Coinciding with the 2016 graduate exhibition *Toast*, *Ahi Kā* brought together work by Whitireia alumni from across three decades, with artists who had studied in the original National Diploma in Craft Design joined by more recent graduates of the Bachelor of Applied Arts (Visual Arts & Design) and the Graduate Diploma in Applied Arts.



One of the exhibiting alumni, Ellen Coup, as a student with tutor Peter Deckers in an image from the mid-1990s.

A quote in the [exhibition catalogue](#) spoke of the symbolism of the title *Ahi Kā*, highlighting its connection to Ngāti Toa, and to Te Puoho Katene, who had been kaumātua for the Visual Arts department in its early years. "Ahi Kā is the name of the kōwhaiwhai rafter pattern designed by Te Puoho Katene QSM, Ngāti Toa iwi, in the Takapūwāhia marae in Elsdon, Porirua. It is symbolised by the cooking fires of the kainga held in the hand. It also means those that stay behind to guard the fire. This symbol was first used at a tribal wānanga and was supported by the words: *Ahi mō te ao*. The mythological story of Maui securing fire for the world was the inspiration for this symbol."



A selection of work from Ahi Kā.

The artists represented in *Ahi Kā* were Dwain Ai olupotea, Ranea Aperahama, Vivien Atkinson, Becky Bliss, Ellen Coup, Sam Dollimore, Nik Hanton, James Harcourt, Reremoana Hilliard, Patrice Kaikilekofe, Ela To'omaga-Kaikilekofe, Jack Karifi, Jennifer Laracy, Hanne Eriksen Mapp, Owen Mapp, Neke Moa, Anya Mowll, James Molnar, Tracey Morgan, Kivani

Moriarty, Alison Murray, Eric Ngan, Lindsay Park, Amelia Pascoe, Mel Phillips, Sarah Read, Mieke Roy, Sandra Schmid, Moniek Schrijer, Clare Smith, Nadine Smith, Wi Taepa, Cleo Thorpe-Ngata, Matthew McIntyre Wilson, Maryjane Winiata and Keri-Mei Zagrobelna.

The opening of *Ahi Kā* provided a celebration of another kind with around 50 artists donating pieces of work to create a sumptuous instant private collection for their colleague/tutor/dear friend, the inspirational Vivien Atkinson. Vivien began her time with Whitireia as a student on the Bachelor of Applied Arts (Visual Arts & Design) in 2005 and upon graduating returned over the years as an artist in residence, fellow, and possibly other titles under which she selflessly contributed to the visual arts programme. The original invitation for contributions listed the ways in which she had had an influence at Whitireia, including developing and delivering lectures, sharing her extensive art knowledge in tutorials and seminars, providing relief coverage that enabled tutors to fulfil research requirements, participating in formatives and feedback sessions, one-to-one mentoring and student support, and providing a continuing source of inspiration through the pursuit of her own profound practice.



The Labour of Love revealed with Vanessa Arthur, Hilda Gascard, Kohai Grace, Kaye Jujnovich, Vivien Atkinson, Sarah Read and Matthew McIntyre Wilson.

A catalogue of the Labour of Love gifted to Vivien can be found online at labouroflove2.com. The artists who contributed were Vanessa Arthur, Renee Bevan, Becky Bliss, Tara Brady, Nadene Carr, Fran Carter, Fiona Cristeller, Karren Dale, Peter Deckers, Caitlin Devoy, Marie Enslin, Sharon Fitness, Hilda Gascard, Phillipa Gee, Nik Hanton, Jenny Hartley, Suni Hermon, Benjamin Lignel, Pravu Mazumdar, Kelly McDonald, Matthew McIntyre Wilson, Julia Middleton, Jhana Millers, Neke Moea, Birgit Moffatt, Amelia Pascoe, Renee Pearson, Grace Piper, Sarah Read, Spring Rees, Beverly

Rhodes, Sandra Schmid, Moniek Schrijer, Clare Smith, Nadine Smith, Chloe Rose Taylor, Caroline Thomas, Cleo Thorpe-Ngata, Nina Van Duynhoven, Bettina van Hulle, Sarah Walker-Holt, Raewyn Walsh, Molly Wright, Amy Wang, Jessica Winchcombe, Jun Xie, Kathryn Yeats and Keri-Mei Zagrobelna.



Kelly McDonald, Jhana Millers, Caroline Thomas, Vivien Atkinson, Peter Deckers, Hilda Gascard, Neke Moa, Sandra Schmid, Amelia Pascoe, Keri-Mei Zagrobelna, Vanessa Arthur, Nadine Smith, Sarah Read, Becky Bliss, Jennifer Laracy (image by Spring Rees).

Our History: 2017

Construction campus wins award

The Wellington Regional School of Construction building was recognised by the New Zealand Institute of Architects at the Wellington Architecture Awards. Its modern, sleek yet practical design allowed the building to receive the award in the education category.

Te Auaha nears completion

As the new Te Auaha creative complex neared completion, a ceremony was held in July which marked the laying of a mauri stone representing the life-force of Te Auaha. In September, Wellington Mayor Justin Lester turned the lights in the building on. A symbolic ceremony which saw the giant "A" (representing a Waharoa meaning The Gateway) lighting up the building and the surrounding Cuba/Dixon Street precinct. In November, as the building neared practical completion, a blessing ceremony was held prior to staff moving into the campus.



Māori and Pasifika Trades Training success

Māori and Pasifika Trades (MPTT) enjoyed another strong year. 2017 saw a total of 179 Maori and Pacific learners in pre-trades training. Whitireia and WelTec MPTT programmes extended across a variety of fields from mechanical engineering to hair and beauty, in which

Māori and Pacific learners were able to access cultural support. The success is such that the scheme is set to expand in 2018. Responding to demand from Iwi and industry, new programmes to be included for the following year include cookery, baking and barbering.

Our History: 2018

Te Auaha completed, ready to welcome students

2018 started with a bang for Whitireia and WelTec with the opening of the brand-new Te Auaha creative campus in February. Located on Dixon Street, right in the heart of the CBD, Te Auaha was officially opened by Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern. The purpose of Te Auaha is to bring together all the arts programmes Whitireia and WelTec offer. From creative spaces to music studios and labs, facilities at Te Auaha are world-class and will give all students the best possible resources to allow them to succeed in their studies. The site was runner-up for Innovative Design in Accessibility and was judged to be one of the top architecturally designed buildings in the 2018 Wellington New Zealand Institute of Architects awards, winning the education category.

New facilities providing quality learning spaces

The new construction and engineering training facilities at the Whitireia Porirua campus were opened in April by Porirua City Deputy Mayor Izzy Ford, along with Ngāti Toa, construction and engineering companies, Government agencies and local secondary schools. These new expanded facilities are an important asset to the community and are designed to improve the “work-ready” learning environment for our ākonga.



Our History: 2019

Vocational education sector reform

While twenty-nineteen began like any other year, talk quickly turned to the imminent government announcement on the decision made from the review into vocational education. However, what that meant no-one quite knew. In February minister Chris Hipkins announced an entire overhaul of vocational education. The biggest change in the sector for over 30 years. Amongst a raft of proposed changes, the one that would affect Whitireia and WelTec the most is the proposal to merge all polytechs and ITO's into one mega polytech. If the ministers proposal were to be accepted by the government, the merger would take place over a period of five years.

In the News

Whitireia artists-in-residents showcase work ahead of exhibition.

30.10.2019

Three artists were chosen to represent Tokelau at the Pacific Art & Culture in Hawaii event. The artists, Moses Viliamu, Zac Mateo and Jack Kirifi, who were Whitireia students in the mid-2000's showcased their work at the Porirua campus giving the community a look at their art before going on display in Hawaii.

The three Tokelau artists created an installation piece called "Cry of the Stolen People" which tells the story of Tokelau slavery. Moses says that Blackbirding is when Tokelau people were forced to work in sub-standard conditions, away from family and home. "Blackbirding is when people are coerced into working in very poor conditions for little or no pay and is usually far away from the homeland of the workers. It's a sad part of the history of the Pacific."

The installation was available over three nights in three stages. The first night showcased imagery portraying slavery projected onto three ship sails. The second, the masts will be burnt to the ground, symbolising the taking away of the Tokelau people as slaves. The third, the ashes of the burnt sail are used to create a mural to reflect healing and reconciliation of the Tokelau people.

Our History: 2020

Whitireia and WelTec pivot in response to pandemic

As Whitireia and WelTec began preparing for another year, the winds of change on a global scale were festering away. A newly discovered form of coronavirus was spreading like wildfire through China causing increasing worldwide concern. By the end of February Covid-19 had spread across the planet with a new and deadly pandemic. Aotearoa wasn't spared. March 25 signalled the start of a nationwide lockdown in an attempt to break the virus's chain of transmission. For six-weeks every New Zealander who wasn't an essential worker was required to stay home and isolate.

This sudden change in the global equilibrium meant Whitireia and WelTec had to quickly pivot to accommodate all its learners and provide its provision without sacrificing quality. The entire business from teaching staff to support teams and everyone in between went above and beyond, putting in a massive effort to manoeuvre all programmes to an online delivery. Allowing our students to carry on studying with minimal disruptions during what was a once in a lifetime experience.

Te Pūkenga comes into existence

While the pandemic raged across the world, closer to home the Te Pūkenga juggernaut was steaming ahead. On April 1, one week into lockdown, Te Pūkenga officially came into being as a business entity. As this happened all sixteen polytechs plus the ITO's became subsidiaries of Te Pūkenga, as the transition to one mega polytech began.

On the same day, Whitireia and WelTec welcomed new Chief Executive Mark Oldershaw to the post. In his previous role, Mark was deputy CE for Eastern Institute of Technology in Hawkes Bay. A role that was perfect in getting ready to take the reins of another polytech. With specialist knowledge of regional specialisation, Mark has what it takes to guide Whitireia and WelTec through this next period of change and delivery.



New Whitireia and WelTec CEO Mark Oldershaw.

Our History: 2021

Whitireia & WelTec sees huge increase in applications

2021 saw a marked shift in attitudes towards vocational education. As a result of the Covid-19 pandemic and the six-week lockdown, people all over Aotearoa took the time to think about life situations and re-thought goals and aspirations. While many people were made redundant, enforcing change, a large proportion of the population saw an opportunity to retrain and do something they really love. Helped by various government announcements around free study initiatives (names TTAF – Targeted Training Apprenticeship Fund) Whitireia and WelTec saw an upsurge in applications across the board, bucking the trend of previous years.

Graduation sees a celebration of student success

The 2021 Whitireia graduation ceremonies were extra special, as this was the first time graduands were able to come together and celebrate their success since 2019. Covid had put a stop to all ceremonies during 2020. As a result, these ceremonies celebrated graduates from the previous two years. Held at the Te Rauparaha arena in March, the event covered two ceremonies. It was such a special day, seeing the success of our ākonga, and watching them share that success and excitement with their fellow graduates, whānau, friends and staff.



Time capsule gives a glimpse into the past

In late May, Whitireia staff members from over the years gathered for one of the feel-good events of the year. The opening of the Whitireia time capsules.

The late autumn weather was particularly nasty with cold fronts moving across the region in the days prior. However, come the morning of the event, the sun had broken through and was streaming into the staffroom, bathing the space in a warm glow. A perfect setting for the days gathering.



Past and present staff of Whitireia gather to open the time capsule.

Whitireia staff members, both current and those working in 1999 were invited to attend the ceremony and the response to view collective history was well received. As guests mingled, sharing stories from times past a slideshow was playing through a wall mounted flat screen monitor flicking through photos of the day, much to the delight and hilarity of those in attendance.

After a traditional Māori welcome from local Iwi Ngāti Toa, current CEO Mark Oldershaw stood up for a few words. “After twenty-one years it’s now the perfect time to share a golden moment, have a laugh and open up some capsules.”

Mark then went on to say 1999 didn’t seem that long ago, but somehow time has flown, and twenty-one years has passed. However, after seeing a particularly humorous photo appear on the slideshow, he then quipped “Well actually, maybe ninety-nine was a long time ago.” Much to the raucous roomful of laughter. That moment perfectly encapsulated the entire event. People of the day coming together and enjoying a piece of shared history.

The time capsule project was the brainchild of the Whitireia team in the late nineties. Each part of the business was encouraged to collate some content and bundle it up as part of a

capsule. The capsules were then sealed off and placed on the staff room wall, to adorn lunch breaks for years to come.

Staff members came and went yet the time capsule remained. The plan was to open the capsules in at the end of 2020, just over twenty years since the capsules were stored away. However, the Covid-19 worldwide pandemic put pay to that plan and the event was put on ice until half-way through 2021.

The first capsule to be taken from the wall was for the Customer Services Team. The then CE Deirdre Dale, along with Mark Oldershaw and Taku Parai gave it to the 99 team, who were in attendance and given the opportunity to open the first capsule. The rest of the capsules were then taken off the wall and placed on tables adorned with handwoven harakeke mats made by Moana Hilliard. After Waiata and Karakia were performed, the rest of the capsules were opened for staff to enjoy.



Taku Parai, Mark Oldershaw and Deirdre Dale.

There was certainly a wide selection of content included in the capsules. Each team put forward what they thought would be a good contribution to the capsule. Some of the various items included old team photos, newspaper cutouts, equipment that was current in the late nineties and a whole lot more.

