

## MASSEY GEOMORPHOLOGIST BEQUESTS \$286,000 TO RESEARCH



John McArthur (L) and colleague Mike Shepherd on Mt Taranaki in the mid-1990s.

A \$286,000 bequest by trail-blazing Massey University academic and lecturer Dr John McArthur will support students furthering research in geography.

John lectured in geomorphology at Massey from 1970 to 1997, and moved to Nelson for his retirement. He passed away in July last year.

Russell Prince, Associate Professor of Human Geography at Massey, says the bequest will be used by the Foundation to fund a scholarship – likely to be worth about \$13,000 - each year for a Masters student researching an aspect of geography.

“We at the geography programme at Massey very much appreciate John’s generosity and hope that it will help encourage postgraduate study in geography.”

There are very few Masters-level geography scholarships available, he says. “In this current environment of increasing living costs, it’s great to be able to offer financial support to postgraduate students.”

Colleague and friend Dr Mike Shepherd says John’s impact on Massey’s geography programme is immeasurable.

During his 27 years there he pioneered a new first-year physical geography course, held down a demanding lecture workload at all levels, led countless field trips, worked tirelessly to support extramural students and assisted with timetabling and administration at the department.

“I don’t know how he managed it really.”

John had a superficially gruff demeanour and wasn’t afraid to speak his mind – no matter how undiplomatic his opinion was, Mike says. “My first experience of him was when he told me I

was over-qualified for the job I had taken on, and that he hadn’t supported my appointment.”

But John was also kind and helpful; “He became my best friend at Massey.”

John gained a Bachelor of Arts majoring in Geography at the University of Canterbury, and a Masters degree there for his investigation of the formation of Cass Basin landforms in the Southern Alps.

His doctorate study at the University of Sheffield challenged the established explanation for the evolution of the Pennine Hills landscape in the United Kingdom, positing instead that periglacial processes played a major role in its development, Mike says.

“His views ruffled a few British feathers at the time, but he’s since been proven at least partially correct.”

At Massey, John developed an introductory physical geography paper which incorporated the approach that landscapes are the result of interacting “Earth systems,” involving the solid earth, the atmosphere, hydrosphere and biosphere. “It was an advanced paper and, in New Zealand, ground-breaking for its time.”

Mike recalls escaping with John to Mt Ruapehu on several occasions after they had finished marking exams, to assess evidence for, and map, former glacial limits on the mountain – a subject on which they jointly published a research paper. “We were always relieved to be done with marking and we had a great time doing the fieldwork. Those are some of my best memories of John.”

Outside work, John enjoyed sailing – including with the Manawatu Marine Boating Club in Foxton, music, gardening, botany and architecture – retiring in a house he designed that was built on his parents’ section in Nelson.

He loved to cook and would share his culinary skills on student field trips to the Massey Alpine Club Hut on Mt Ruapehu and at Cass. “He was very particular with his cooking and especially proud of his ratatouille.”

## IMPORTANT DATES

### 2022 Alumni Appeal:

14th November to 16th December - watch out for it in your letter box

### Christmas thank-you functions:

Please join us at these meet-and-mix functions to thank our donors and supporters:

- 1st Dec KPMG, Viaduct Harbour Avenue, Auckland
- 7th Dec Refectory, Massey University, Palmerston North
- 15th Dec QT Wellington, 90 Cable Street, Wellington

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## MASSEY UNIVERSITY FOUNDATION NEWSLETTER NO.15

## GRANDDAUGHTER’S GIFT BOOSTS SCHOLARSHIP



Grahame and Rosemary Bolton are delighted to support agriculture and horticulture students.

A \$72,000 gift to a scholarship in honour of Harry Tolley will ensure the prominent businessman’s work to encourage agricultural and horticultural education continues.

The funding injection from Harry’s granddaughter Rosemary Bolton and her husband Grahame means the scholarship – which was briefly put on hold – is now more lucrative and will be re-offered from next year to assist Massey University students.

Harry Tolley was the co-founder of successful Palmerston North seed and stock business Hodder and Tolley, and the driving force behind the establishment of Feilding Agricultural High School.

His daughters, Merle Elliot and Joyce Boyce, along with Massey University, established the Harry Tolley and LJ Wild Scholarship in 1986 in memory of their father and Dr LJ Wild - the founding headmaster of Feilding Agricultural High School.

The scholarship, now worth \$5000, is awarded annually to an undergraduate agriculture and horticulture student – with a preference for those who attended the high school.

The scholarship was first awarded in 1987, but was put on hold last year in order to build up its capital fund – now \$100,000 following the Bolton’s gift.

Rosemary, a retired nurse who completed some postgraduate papers through Massey extramurally, says she and Grahame are delighted to support promising students at Massey in a field of huge interest to the family.

“We love the land and have owned an apple orchard and farmland in the past. We are so interested in evolving farming practices and innovations; we’re country people through and through.”

“We feel that we have benefited through my grandfather’s endeavours and we’re in a position that we can give something back, boost the scholarship and keep the tradition going. We are so pleased to be able to help.”

Foundation director Mitch Murdoch says the University is thrilled to be able to offer meaningful assistance to students through the scholarship.

“We are very grateful to the Boltons for their generosity and the genuine interest they have in supporting our agriculture and horticulture students.”

## UPDATE FROM THE DIRECTOR

Kia ora,

The last few months have flown by, and life seems to be edging ever closer to something that we might consider ‘post-pandemic normal’. It was certainly a relief to abandon our masks in September and to see students returning to campus in ever-increasing numbers.

Despite rising interest rates and a turbulent stock market, fundraising has remained surprisingly buoyant this year and I am humbled that our alumni and donors continue to have faith in our ability to invest and spend their donations well. Certainly, the last year was one of the toughest on record for the University. While the pandemic is fast becoming last year’s news; its impact is long reaching. Philanthropy has been something of a bright star in an otherwise gloomy year!

For Massey, it is likely to remain difficult for some time yet. Crucially, the return of international students to New Zealand was too late for 2022 enrolment, and it looks likely that it will be some time before New Zealand regains its market share of international students. This will almost certainly have an ongoing impact on the University’s finances.

All of this just reinforces the importance of the Foundation’s work. An endowment that can fund scholarships, staff salaries, equipment and buildings relieves a small degree of the financial pressure on the University in difficult times. We remain grateful to our alumni and friends who donate to the Foundation.

Excitingly, our 2022 Annual Alumni Appeal launched this month and this year it will reach the greatest number of alumni ever, with a postal appeal focused on securing scholarships to support our Bachelor of Nursing students. We want to encourage school leavers to join the profession and, equally, not to leave for subsidised training programmes in Australia! We have also opened our Advancement Fund for donations – this is used to support unanticipated opportunities at Massey that budgets don’t allow for. We hope that alumni will continue to support us when they are able. Certainly, now more than ever, Massey alumni are making a difference!

Finally, I hope to see many of you at our end-of-year donor functions held in Wellington, Palmerston North and Auckland. If you haven’t received a postal invitation please phone 06 9519394 to get details and confirm attendance. It has been a while since we have been able to host events, and the team and I are looking forward to seeing some old friends and colleagues at the functions. Please join us!

Ngā manaakitanga

Mitch Murdoch



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# A LIFELONG LOVE OF LEARNING

At almost 80 years-old, Michael Dally is preparing to tackle a Masters in Philosophy at Massey – 37 years after first enrolling at the University.

Michael has multiple qualifications, including a Bachelor of Arts and Graduate Diploma in Media Studies from Massey, and a Postgraduate Diploma in Teaching from the Palmerston North Teachers’ College, which merged with Massey in 1996.

His latest academic achievement is a Graduate Certificate in Arts, majoring in Philosophy, which he completed this year and for which he received a \$5000 Albert and Alexis Dennis Scholarship to cover course fees and materials.

Michael – who turns 80 next year - says the scholarship made covering the costs of the four-paper programme much easier.

“I am very appreciative of the support of the scholarship donors and the Massey University Foundation.

“Without it, I would have done one paper but then had to look around for the funding for another. I might have had to go mow some lawns.”

The programme has sparked a love of philosophy, and he plans to examine the philosophy of global justice for his Masters degree. “I am particularly interested in Aristotle and his views on justice. For example, what he would have said about the situation in Ukraine and whether we as a global community are obliged to help.”

Throughout his career, Michael worked as a chief reporter for Radio NZ in Palmerston North, in Antarctica as a sergeant for the Royal New Zealand Corps of Transport, a high-school teacher, a Massey University tutor and research assistant and as the manager of Literacy Aotearoa in Levin, where just last year he was teaching IT.

He credits his study – particularly of philosophy – with giving him a more considered and rational worldview and approach to problem-solving.

“It’s not just about collecting credits; it’s changed my life.”



Michael’s Masters degree will examine the philosophy of global justice, including that espoused by Aristotle.



Massey researchers will use new technology on farms to share findings from a \$26 million pasture research project.

## TECH UPGRADE FOR MASSEY FARMS

Massey University researchers are kitting farms out with technology to record video and audio, after alumni donated nearly \$40,000 to a major project studying pasture management practices.

The \$26 million, seven-year study – called Whenua Haumanu - in partnership with the Ministry for Primary Industries will investigate different pasture management systems on dairy, cattle and sheep farms, including conventional pastoral and regenerative farming practices.

Alumni gave \$38,338 through last year’s Alumni Appeal to Massey researchers, led by Professor Danny Donaghy from the School of Agriculture and Environment, to install “on-farm” cameras and fund a website and online content aimed at educating schools and the general public about the project’s findings and agriculture in general.

Research technician Eru Tait-Jamieson says the research team has purchased a range of technology including a drone, GoPro camera and audio recorders. Donations from alumni will also part-fund a wi-fi network covering the trial farms. “The goal is that we will be able to capture natural interactions between people, livestock and the land throughout the research... demonstrating how agriculture can be profound, beautiful and enrich the lives of the people and animals that work together.”

Danny says the University is grateful to alumni who supported the initiative. “There’s a growing interest in how safe, high-quality food ends up on the table; but at the same time there’s a lack of knowledge and disconnect between urban and rural populations. We hope to help bridge the gap.”

Whenua Haumanu will investigate the benefits of various pastures for grazing animals, and whether conventional pastoral practices already qualify as regenerative.

The results will inform best practice in New Zealand’s pastoral industries as well as the marketing of our agricultural products to an increasingly discerning international consumer base.

# PASTURE PIONEER’S TRUST GIVES \$400,000 TO MASSEY POSTGRAD STUDENTS



Back (L to R): Scholarship recipient Sam Wilson, Massey senior lecturer Dr James Millner, Professor Danny Donaghy. Middle (L to R): T.R. Ellett trustee Errol Thom, scholarship recipient Komahan Sivanandarajah, T.R. Ellett trustee Grant Wills. Front (L to R): Scholarship recipient Bia Oliveira, Head of School of Agriculture and Environment Paul Kenyon, scholarship recipient Firas Algharibeh.

Massey University postgraduate agriculture students will receive close to \$400,000 through a trust established by a Massey alumnus, lecturer and pioneer in pasture development.

Trevor Ellett graduated from Massey in 1945 with a Bachelor of Agricultural Science, and lectured at the University until 1951. He developed a deep interest in plant improvement, and played a pivotal role in the development of ryegrass in New Zealand.

The T.R. Ellett Agricultural Research Trust is supporting the postgraduate studies of five Massey students, who together will receive \$399,500 to fund their pasture research projects.

PhD student Komahan Sivanandarajah will receive \$122,500 over four years to fund research into the potential of plantain to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and soil nitrogen losses in pastoral dairy production systems.

The project is already yielding evidence that shows plantain can reduce nitrate leaching and nitrous oxide emission as well as increase pasture production, particularly in the dry summer months, he says.

“The scholarship has lightened my financial burden, which allows me to focus more on my studies and has really encouraged me to contribute more towards the New Zealand farming community.”

Bia Oliveira will receive \$102,000 through the trust for her PhD, which is investigating the use of complementary species in diverse pastures to optimise pasture resilience and grazing management.

The support of the trust made her research possible, she says. “I had been working part-time [to fund my study].When the trust accepted my application, I had no words.”

Rebekah Wood received \$45,000 through the trust for her Masters research into how different grazing management approaches impact the production and composition of diverse pastures.

The trust has also provided funding of \$60,000 for Sam Wilson’s PhD project into variables affecting the persistence of plantain and its efficacy in reducing nitrogen loss. From next year, it will also support the research of PhD student Firas Algharibeh, contributing \$70,000 to the project investigating nitrate leaching under a range of forage types with sheep grazing.

Professor Danny Donaghy, from the School of Agriculture and Environment, says the trust’s support has been crucial in enabling research that will improve pasture science and management in New Zealand.

Trevor approached horticultural seed producer and marketer Arthur Yates & Co Ltd in 1972 after noticing his ‘Mangere’ ryegrass produced pastures with superior growth and persistence than those sown with the preferred ryegrass of the time.

This was in part due to the presence in the freshly harvested ‘Mangere’ seed of the ryegrass endophyte, a hitherto undiscovered fungus that assists in insect control and promotes plant persistence in the upper North Island.

Yates agreed to develop and market seeds from the ‘Mangere’ ecotype, which dominated the seeds market in the 1980s and 1990s. Most importantly, their success prompted further research into the role of the ryegrass endophyte in viable pasture farming.

Royalties on seed sales through Yates were paid into what would become the T.R. Ellett Agricultural Research Trust, which has funded more than 50 research projects since 1979.