

## New sculpture puts art at heart of campus

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*And the night shall be filled with . . . art; this image by Campus Watch member and avid photographer Ken Chilton shows how the recently installed "Pathways" sculpture enhances the Dunedin campus by night.*

**A central area of Otago's Dunedin campus has been transformed by sculptor Dr Paul Dibble's aptly named work "Pathways".**

Since their unveiling late last year the striking collection of five spectral bronze figures – which stand about 3.2m high – has become a focal point at the junction between the Union and Castle Walks near the Staff Club and Richardson Building.

The figures feature individual symbols to denote themes such as 'moving forward', 'looking ahead' and 'being resolute'.

The half-million-dollar artwork was commissioned and gifted to the University by the Stuart Residence Halls Council.

The work's stylistic elements are evocative of local flora and fauna, Celtic and Scottish history, and literary works relevant to the Council.

University of Otago Vice-Chancellor Professor Harlene Hayne says the gift of a work by a significant New Zealand artist is a very generous contribution, which fits with the University's strategic aim of providing outstanding campus environments, and recognising the contribution of the country's accomplished arts community.

Stuart Halls Council member Dr Margot Skinner says the bronze sculpture is "undoubtedly set to become a major cultural landmark at the University – one that students, staff and visitors can interact with every day."

The Council's vision was to donate a "statement piece" that would describe the Council's heritage and strong association with students, while also highlighting the University as an international centre of learning excellence.



*A detail and LED lighting at the work's base; sculptor Dr Paul Dibble; Council members unveil a figure.*

Dr Dibble says he particularly loved public commissions because they meant works were "going to be part of towns and cities, in places people can interact and move through the work".

This was very different to the historic concept of sculpture, "where it was as statuary on a plinth and inaccessible", he says.

The ability to walk through the sculptures at the University links the work to others Dr Dibble has created, including the New Zealand memorial Southern Stand in London's Hyde Park.

## **About the Stuart Residence Halls Council:**

The Stuart Residence Halls Council was formed in 1941 to develop accommodation for University students. It opened Stuart House in Cumberland Street in 1941, followed by Arana and Carrington.

In 1995, the University assumed responsibility for the financial management and day-to-day operation of Arana and Carrington, while the Council owned the buildings.

Because students' accommodation needs were obviously well catered for, the Council sold the buildings to the University in 2006, after deciding to focus on more general support for the University and students.

This support has included gifting \$1.6million to endow the Stuart Chair in Science Communication, which Professor Lloyd Davis now holds; the gift was matched by the Government in 2007, through the public-private Partners for Excellence investment fund programme Leading Thinkers.

The Council also gifted \$1.5million for the Stuart Chair in Scottish Studies. The inaugural chair is held by Professor Liam McIlvanney.

The Council has provided funding to support visiting speakers as well (for Science Communication, Scottish Studies, and the Centre for Theology and Public Issues), a range of grants for students, and has enhanced the environment at Arana and Carrington Colleges.