

INAUGURAL PROFESSORIAL ADDRESS

PUBLIC LECTURE SERIES 2019

AUT



PROFESSOR
VALERIE
WRIGHT-
ST CLAIR

What's age got to do with it? Older people's meaningful participation in inclusive communities

Older people who participate in social and productive activities are more likely to survive over the coming years and to retain better function.

Those who do solitary activities like crosswords, reading and woodwork are more likely to be happy and those who participate in stimulating leisure activities such as creative hobbies, at least twice a week, are significantly less likely to develop dementia. While there is no consensus on the underlying mechanisms, the evidence indicates the importance of understanding and promoting older people's participation in valued activities, or occupations.

This inaugural professorial address by Professor Valerie Wright-St Clair tracks the thread that binds together her occupational science and social gerontology research on older people's meaningful participation in inclusive communities. Valerie takes a glimpse across five generations of family, those who were, who are and will

be older people, to illustrate the gift the ageing population offers society, neighbourhoods and families. Her professorial address is a sampler of the research she has led or been part of that circle around an understanding of the relationship between older people's meaningful participation in inclusive communities and their health and wellness. Stories from her research will illustrate how extraordinary the ordinary is in older people's everyday participatory lives.

Valerie grew up in Hamilton and felt destined to enter a health profession, being strongly influenced by her father, a general practitioner, and her mother, a nurse. After graduating as an occupational therapist in 1984, Valerie practised at Waikato and Carrington Hospitals in New Zealand, and the Royal Edinburgh Hospital in Scotland. Professor Valerie Wright-St Clair is truly a citizen of the Auckland University of Technology, having joined as a lecturer for the new School of Occupational Therapy in October 1990. The rest, as they say, is history.

TUESDAY
16 JULY

4.30–5.30pm

WA Conference Centre
AUT City Campus
55 Wellesley Street East
Auckland 1010

To register for this event,
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Refreshments will be served after
the address.

