



TE WAHA NUI

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Brazen thieves target AUT labs

by Britton Broun

A daring series of burglaries of electronic gear from Auckland University of Technology's art and design building has cost around \$80,000 so far this year.

Two recent weekend raids by thieves who climbed along the building's parapets and got through a window netted seven Apple G5s worth \$35,000.

These losses bring the total computer thefts from the Wellesley Campus building to 14 in the last six months, along with various scanners and digital cameras.

"It's not just the school of art

and design, but we've been hit the hardest," says the school's computer technician Richard Beagley.

He would like to see more security guards and other measures like hidden cameras put in place.

An unofficial camera captured the image of a suspect now displayed on "wanted" posters around the block, one avenue of investigation for the police.

Design media and new technology lecturer Logan Austin says thefts have been going on since he began work at AUT four years ago, but this year is the worst.

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PHOTO: BEN CLARK

The game is Texas hold 'em — from Hollywood to your hood

by Duncan Greive

The rapid growth of Texas hold 'em poker has led to clandestine gambling dens appearing around Auckland.

Sky City spokesman Paul Gregory says the casino is not overly concerned about the underground poker clubs.

"If people want to play Texas hold 'em, then they'll play it. We just think we offer more of a complete experience than the gambling dens.

"The anti-smoking legislation has driven some people away, and if you want to smoke or play poker then you'll go to the dens. But we view our competitors more as Kelly Tarlton's or Rainbow's End."

Gregory says that while they do not offer any form of poker at present, the popularity of the game worldwide has seen them assess their options. Televised tournaments on ESPN are drawing high ratings.

"We're certainly looking into it, but the Department of Internal Affairs views the glamourisation of gambling in a very negative light."

Vince Cholewa, communications advisor to the Department of Internal Affairs, says that while there are no specific laws regarding glamour and gambling, any new games need to be approved before they are offered at a New Zealand casino.

"One of the purposes of the Gambling Act is to prevent harm, so all casino game rules

need to be gazetted. It really depends on how the game is promoted, but there are no specific rules regarding glamourising gambling."

While the World Series of Poker has been around since the early seventies, it has only really taken off in the last decade. Movies such as Rounders and celebrity players like Ben Affleck, George Clooney and Jennifer Tilly have all contributed to its unprecedented popularity.

World champions like the Unabomber and Chris Moneymaker (his real name) have now become celebrities in their own right.

One night out gambling — pages 12 & 13

PHOTO: SARAH KACI



COMPUTER THEFT: Technician Richard Beagley in the empty lab.

Tough to plug graduate loss, says Cullen

by Fiona Peat and Ben Clark

New Zealand has a long way to go to match Australia in luring graduates, says Finance Minister Michael Cullen.

Cullen told the AUT Breakfast Club this week that Australia offers greater economic prospects than New Zealand.

"It's a big issue and there is no immediate answer," he says.

He encouraged students to think long term.

In an effort to discourage new graduates burdened with student loans migrating to countries such as Australia, Labour has pledged interest-free student loans provided the graduates stay in New Zealand.

Cullen says inequality between the neighbouring countries began in the 1980s when privatisation resulted in higher production in Australia.

"Australia handled the process of economic restructuring better than we did. They didn't force feed it or go cold turkey."

But he says the Australian

export economy was "crude".

"They dig up the country and flog it off to Japan and China. You could drive a bulldozer east to Sydney and make millions."

In comparison Cullen says New Zealand's economy is more "sophisticated".

"If you tried to drive a bulldozer through New Zealand the farmers would get angry at you

going through their land, and anything of value you did find would be in a national park.

"We have to grow the grass, process it through the cow, and process the milk product."

Act leader Rodney Hide replied to Cullen's comments, saying: "Government should stay out of business and focus on the business of infrastructure."

