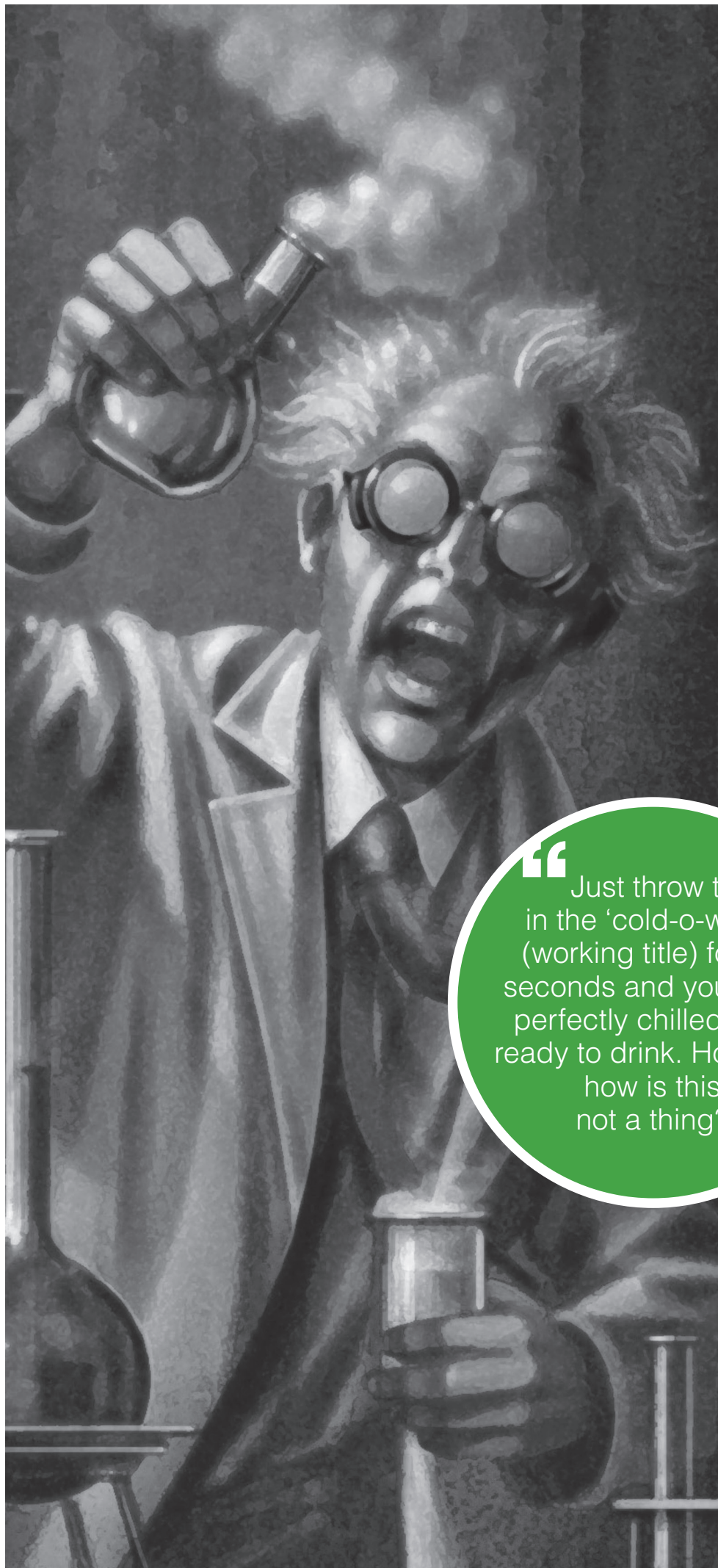


Let's get inventing



Glenn Dwight leads the way with some novel ideas for New Zealand's would-be innovators.

If the Olympics were currently happening, as a nation we'd be rolling out lines like "we're punching well above our weight" and "medals per capita, we're number one".

And when it comes to inventing, that's also our attitude, but Kiwi Bronze (fourth place) isn't where we should be aiming; why are we not number one?

We have been in the past; I use the electric fence and cheese roll as just two examples of our fine pioneering history, but we've taken our eye off the ball, and maybe even dropped it (luckily it went backwards out of the hand).

So come on New Zealand, it's time to get back on the inventing horse!

A few tips

Now I don't have the technical skills to actually invent anything, but like a sideline parent I can encourage and yell advice, welcome or not. So here are a few thoughts that just might ignite that innovative spark in New Zealand.

My first is rather obvious and might be more a frustration at the pace of development, but as a child who grew up thinking *Back to the Future* was like a portal into the future, hoverboard development appears to be far behind what Doc and Michael J Fox promised me.

I know there have been some developments and I have seen Tony Hawk awkwardly stand on one of these and move marginally left and right, but by now we should be skimming across fountains and avoiding traffic with a belligerence towards vehicles tethered to the ground.

We Kiwis love cars, utes and SUVs, so why are we not leading the way in automotive innovation? The Trekka was our last giant leap forward in the automotive game and if anything, this proved that we are bloody good at it. We love utes, we love swimming; why not combine the two and create a ute tray liner that converts your ute to a mobile pool?

This next invention has one or two glitches, I admit, but as a man, and I am sure there are woman who will agree with me, why can't we have a gift wrap spray can? Forget struggling with awkward corners and wrapping a bike at Christmas, just pull out your trusty can of 'Christmas wrap in a can' and hours of wrapping hell are over!

This next one is more an encouragement to the groundwork done by Sir Woolf Fisher and Maurice Paykel; these two gentlemen did a great job with the washing machine, but why did they stop? Why not keep on moving and create a washing, drying and folding machine. Even a hanging-up machine – I have been told from a young age that clothes don't magically hang themselves up, so why has this not been fixed?

While on the appliance tangent, where is the 'cold-o-wave' (working title)? Very similar to the microwave, but completely opposite. Your mates come over and you only have warm beers? Easy! Just throw them in the 'cold-o-wave' (working title) for 30 seconds and you have perfectly chilled beer ready to drink. Honestly, how is this not a thing? And sorry, "we don't have the science" is not an excuse.

Placing the innovation peg

Anyway, my point is that we are a country of great inventors and we can and should be leading the world. So while we sit here wondering how to fix the hole in the economy that was tourism, why not use a big innovation peg? Those of us who have watched *Apollo 13* know that it's possible to put a square peg into a round hole and make it safely back to Earth. ■

NZME Creative Director Glenn Dwight is currently working on a patent for 'Christmas wrap in a can' – watch this space.

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