CONFERRING OF DEGREES

The Chancellor of the University of Sydney (Mr. H. D. Black), the Vice-Chancellor and the Chancellor at the Graduation Day ceremony.

Town Hall Ceremony

Approximately 370 people who had completed the University's requirements for admission to degrees took out their degrees at Newcastle City Hall on 19th March. A further 60 were awarded diplomas.

Two Graduation Ceremonies were held, degrees in the Faculties of Applied Science, Architecture, Engineering and Science being conferred in the morning and degrees in the Faculties of Arts and Economics and Commerce in the afternoon.

Professor J. A. Allen, Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Professor of Chemistry, who has left the university to take up duties as Executive Officer of the C.S.I.R.O. in Canberra, delivered the occasional address at the morning ceremony. Mr. Hermann D. Black, Chancellor of the University of Sydney, addressed the afternoon ceremony and an Honorary Doctorate of Literature was conferred on him. Tea was served in the Supper Room at the City Hall after both ceremonies. Convocation conducted the Graduation Ball in the City Hall on the night of the conferring of degrees ceremonies. A meeting of people who took out their degrees was held in the new Common Room at the Union on 18th March. This was followed by a reception given by the Chancellor and members of the University Council.

Ever-present Building Sounds

Occasional address delivered by Emeritus Professor J. A. Allen at the Graduation Ceremony at which degrees in the Faculties of Applied Science, Architecture, Engineering and Science were conferred:

The task of delivering the occasional address at this ceremony is one usually undertaken by the Vice-Chancellor himself. In inviting me to speak in his stead on the occasion of my last Graduation Day, he has conferred upon me an honour beyond my just deserts. For this, I thank him most sincerely. My only regret is that you will be denied an annual treat of rollicking wit and Shavian phrase, which is the heritage of those born and raised in John Bull's Other Island. This I could not hope to match, for my origins are more tropical and prosaic.

My first task is to congratulate our new graduates, to welcome them as permanent members of the University, and to wish them well in their future endeavours, wherever these may lead.

In accepting full membership of the University of Newcastle, today's graduates are also charged with important responsibilities. The founders of this University have sought assiduously to achieve a set of academic standards recognized and valued both in this country and abroad. Your predecessors have contributed much to establishing this state of affairs. I hope that each of you, by your work and your example, will sustain and enhance the reputation of the University and broaden the base of its acceptance. In this way you will keep faith with those who have gone before, benefit those who will follow, and secure the personal investment you have each made in obtaining your degree.

This personal investment is not one to be assessed in quantitative terms alone. Even less is it to be reduced to a financial sum, discounted or otherwise. Rather, I would hope that your experiences within the University and the system of intellectual and social values which ideally these experiences should have generated will enrich the quality of life for each of you in the years ahead.

On this public occasion, it is customary for the Vice-Chancellor to deliver the "State of the Union" message. This supplements the University's official annual report to the Parliament of New South Wales by a less formal, direct report to the immediate community. In the ultimate analysis, the University depends upon the community at large not only for most of its operating resources but, perhaps more importantly, for its goodwill, and its understanding and for the final defence of its autonomy.

In the British tradition, the relationship between governments and the universities is a subtle and dynamic thing, often better appreciated by many who hold political power than by some elements within the universities themselves. University autonomy, in my judgment, is not a right but a privilege, to be earned and continuously renewed. I have no sympathy for the converse view, whether expounded by ivory tower academics or by young bulls in china shops whose sagacity and idealism seem incapable of expression except in four-letter words.

It is twelve years since I first came to join the staff of Newcastle University College. Though at the time, the academic morale was rather low, the financial resources ridiculously small, and the future prospects uncertain, there was the unmistakable and compelling sense of a pioneering venture. To accept a personal share of this task was a challenge not to be denied.

The years which followed were full and often exciting. Each step of progress patiently and sometimes painfully achieved was a spur to the next. Each failure or reverse
and there were many — was a disappointing frustration, fortunately relieved by a seemingly inexhaustible supply of Irish optimism. Until at last the University of Newcastle emerged with a brand new Act, but grave, foreboding resource had been brought about during the last two decades, the second that they have invariably been sited at the junction of two major transport routes. The battle of distinctiveness to which I refer will undoubtedly be fought within the framework of the larger community, and more likely than not, at the junctions between disciplines.

Let it be thought that these are unattainable goals, let me suggest some immediately available objectives for such an enterprise. Historically, the University of Newcastle and its predecessors have built up a long and valuable experience in part-time tutorial studies, especially in science and technology. Initially, these were set against the social, commercial, and industrial needs of the community. The first study for princes, permanent secretaries, politicians, and for many plain ordinary people. This line of thought prompts me to ask whether we have been sufficiently supported some in the more generalised courses we have offered, and whether, for example, might achieve in the latter part of this century the outstanding quality that the Oxford PPE degree has in earlier times. This is a challenge which cannot be ignored if the present dispersal of so many talents continues. I now turn to my third challenge. The challenge of diversity. Distinctiveness was, and remains intrinsically to universities and usually refer to locations of special quality in particular fields. But the need for such distinctiveness is acquired by outright purchase primarily of people and facilities of the character of professional football; others, more desirably in my view, germinate spontaneously. The climate is not a danger that research will become an "educated science", suitable for the role of centres of excellence is one feature and never has been a distinguishing feature of this distinctiveness are just beginning to emerge. They are as yet small and tender shoots. They will respond to enlightened cultivation, but can be easily destroyed by the constraints of a traditional organization and by the inculcation of academic selfishness and conservatism. Distinctiveness also implies a release from detention of organizations which concentrate on form, rigidly on a single discipline, and encourage governments and others to singular policies for all universities, all universities of the same general public or objectives. Diversity is not and never has been a desirable feature of the Australian universities. Distinctiveness involves a substantial willing acknowledgement. A willingness for a long-term objectives. This is always distinguished from the feature of the University of Newcastle and its communities.

A second objective to which I wish to refer is the need for the future University to be national and the less specifically, to be national. In this context, I would like to illustrate my thinking by saying something about the changing territory of my own subject. Chemistry, not because it needs any public relations, but because it is a discipline it needs any public relations, but because it is a discipline it needs any public relations, but because it is a discipline. The sound of hammers, the reek of tobacco, to ordinary human effort a direction and sense of purpose. The natural world, the realm of the chemical man engaged in the first stages of construction. I have worked amid the clack of chain... The labur of generations of architects echo seems to bear a message of mystery.
“...it is to be feared that the social body as a whole, so far as the health of its public life is concerned, is in the midst of a process of secular illiteracy...”

This quotation is from a speech by Sir Graham John Ritchie, the Chancellor of the University of Newcastle, delivered on the occasion of the University's 50th anniversary in September 1971. The speech reflects on the role of universities in society and the challenges they face in the modern world. Ritchie draws on the work of figures such as John Stuart Mill and William James, among others, to argue for a commitment to education and research as critical for the development of society. The speech is a thoughtful reflection on the responsibilities of universities and the importance of their role in fostering a well-informed and engaged citizenry.

The Australian Institute of Steel Construction Prize in Structural Engineering: Christopher Curnow, in Structural Engineering: Ashley H. Pepper.


McCallum Foundation Prize in Legal Applications: John G. Van Stanten, in Legal Applications: Ashley H. Pepper.

The Australian Institute of Steel Construction Prize in Structural Engineering: Christopher Curnow, in Structural Engineering: Ashley H. Pepper.

Great Hall

Work on the construction of the University's Great Hall is continuing and the contract is expected to be discharged in mid 1972.

The foundation stone was laid by the Lord Mayor of Newcastle, Ald. D. G. McDonnell, C.B.E., and A1. F. E. Perdue, Chairman of the Great Hall Appeal Committee, at a ceremony on 28th May, 1971, attended by about 500 people. The gathering comprised members of the University Council, academic and teaching staff and citizens who subscribed to the appeal fund.

Ald. Perdue, who is a member of the University Council, said that the Appeal for funds for the Great Hall was being continued owing to the steep escalation in building costs during the last few years.

The construction cost of $1 million could be met from money in hand, but a further $100,000 was needed to furnish the hall.

He hoped that the donors to the Appeal would agree to make contributions for an extra year.

Live-in Accommodation

Work is well in hand at the University on the construction of a Hall of Residence to provide single rooms for 173 students and accommodation for seven tutors. As well as providing a useful centre of student life, the residential college will help to ameliorate the pronounced shortage of living accommodation for students whose homes are located outside Newcastle.

Stage A of the project (two residential blocks and a dining hall) will cost an estimated $1.1 million. The students' rooms will be furnished with beds, study benches and wardrobes and every room will have natural light. On every floor of the two residential blocks a common room and a tutorial room will be provided. The dining hall will consist of a dining room, with an ultimate capacity for 400 people, and a large kitchen. The target completion date for Stage A is early 1972.

Social Sciences Building

Work has started on the construction of a Social Sciences building, within which the departments of Economics, Commerce and Geography, and part of the Department of Psychology, will be housed. Completion of the new building will help to remedy the overtaxed accommodation position at the university. As well as providing greater teaching and research areas for the four departments now functioning in the Arts Administration building, the new building will allow the departments remaining in the main building to expand into the vacated space.

Library

When construction of Stage IIA of the University Library is completed next year existing seating will have been increased by 100 per cent. The amount of book shelving will have been enlarged by 66 per cent.

The extensions will mean the raising of the number of seats in the Library from 500 to 1,000, and the expansion of book shelving from space for 180,000 volumes to space for 300,000 volumes.

The University Librarian (Mr. E. Flow- ers) estimated that Stage IIA would meet requirements as regards reader places and book shelfing for about the next five years. The Library contract is valued at $703,523 and the target completion date is May, 1972.

Recent Appointments

Emeritus Professor Allen

The University has conferred the title of Emeritus Professor on only one previous occasion. Dr. K. H. Hartley, a former Head of the Department of French, was a recipient in 1969 when he retired. Professor Aschenby said that Professor Allen had contributed substantially, not merely to his academic life at the University, but also to its organizations and principles of development.

He was an officer of the Planning Committee which produced the recent submission to the Australian Universities Commission.

In all that he had done for the university he had shown a mastery of detail, associated with a wealth of vision, which had been a great advantage in the period of development.

New Deputy Vice-Chancellor

Professor Hall is one of the university's two Deputy Vice-Chancellors (Professor B. Newton-John, the Vice-Principal, is the other). In 1939, Professor Hall began duties as Head of the Division of Applied Science at Newcastle University College. He was made a full Professor in 1963, when he was appointed to fill the foundation Chair in Metallurgy. Professor Hall worked actively on preparing Newcastle University College for reconstitution as the autonomous University of Newcastle and was a member of the University's Interim Council in 1964 and 1965.

When autonomy was granted he became Dean of the Faculty of Applied Science. He was Deputy Chairman of Senate in 1969 and 1970.

As Deputy Vice-Chancellor he will be responsible for many tasks relating to the preparation of the university's submissions to the Australian Universities Commission. He will also be Chairman of both the Research Committee of TUNRA and the Computer Users' Advisory Committee.

Second Emeritus Professor

In recognition of the major contribution made by Dr. A. J. Allen to teaching and organization at the University since 1939, the Council conferred the title of Emeritus Professor on him. Dr. Allen was Professor in Chemistry from 1963, Deputy Chairman of Senate in 1967 and 1968 and a Deputy Vice-Chancellor from 1969.

He received an O.B.E. to join the C.S.I.R.O.

The Council also appointed Professor E. O. Hall a Deputy Vice-Chancellor to succeed Dr. Allen.
Mr. M. M. Davies has been appointed Demonstrator in Psychology. Mrs. Davies was graduated in Arts in 1969 and a Tutor at the University of Melbourne in 1970. She graduated from the University of Newcastle with University Honours in 1970.

Mr. D. A. Shortle has begun her appointment as Tutor in English. Miss Stuart has been a Tutor in English at Macquarie University for a second year. She was graduated in Arts in the University of Newcastle in 1969.

Mrs. M. M. Davies has been appointed Senior Tutor in Mechanical Engineering. Mrs. Davies has been a Teacher at Cornell University and a Tutor in English. She was a Lecturer at Loyola University, Chicago. From 1962 to 1969 she was a Lecturer at San Fernando Valley State College. She was graduated in Arts in the University of Newcastle in 1969.

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More than 100 students participated in the 1971 Inter-Faculty and Inter-Tertiary Regatta at Raymond Terrace on 1st August. One of the most exciting races was the Inter-Faculty Trophy, rowed over 1,000 metres. Commerce No. 2 was in opposition to three Engineering crews. The very close finish saw Engineering No. 3 just half a canvas ahead of Commerce. A foot behind, in third place, was Engineers No. 1. In the Invitation Eights race, The University Inter-Varsity crew proved too good for the Taree Eight. However, Taree beat the Newcastle four in the James King Challenge Cup. These faculties were represented in the Regatta: Arts, Commerce, Engineering, Science and Applied Science. The Vice-Chancellor presented the trophies to the winners.

Sporting teams from the University took part in Intervarsity competitions in the May vacation. Newcastle was host for Orienteering Contest. Teams travelled to the following locations: Athletics, A.N.U., Canberra; Badminton and Women's Hockey, Queensland University; Netball and Rugby Union, Adelaide University; Rugby League, Sydney University; Men's Rowing, Brisbane; Women's Rowing, Sydney; Soccer and Surfing, Melbourne; Table Tennis, Monash University. Newcastle won the Surfing, Orienteering and Rugby Union (second division) competitions.

Inter-Faculty Cricket competition conducted in December and January at University Oval. Matches played resulted in Economics and Commerce/Architecture defeating Administration II, Arts drawing with Science, Administration II defeating Engineering, Economics and Commerce/Architecture drawing with Engineering, Administration I defeating Arts and, in the final, Administration I defeating Economics and Commerce/Architecture. The Vice-Chancellor presented Administration I with the trophy.

The 1971 Inter-Faculty Winter Sporting Competition ended with Engineering defeating Architecture in Hockey. The win gave Engineering the Kleeman-Hall Trophy. Arts won the Soccer division of the competition by beating Engineering. In Rugby Union, Engineering defeated Commerce in the final and was awarded the Brian O'Shea Trophy. Engineering took out the overall competition by accruing a total of 39 points. Next was Arts (37) and then Architecture (27) and Commerce (25).

A touring team from Combined Indian Universities played the University of Newcastle in hockey at University Oval on 10th July. Although the overseas side won 4-0, Newcastle held the visitors to their second lowest score of the tour.