University honours Singaporean engineer
Welcome to the 2003 academic year. May I offer a special welcome to new students and staff and warmly welcome returning students to another semester or year of study. To staff returning from a welcome "break", I hope your holiday was restful and that you are looking forward to 2003.

This will be a very important year for the university. We are now in our 38th year of autonomous operation and have the most comprehensive range of academic programs outside of the capital cities. We service Australia's most populous regional communities, with responsibilities for higher education, research, research training and community service to nearly a million people in the Hunter and Central Coast, and in other regions to our north and west. We enjoy an outstanding research record -- consistently performing well in competitive research and research centre grant rounds -- and have a growing reputation in research training and coursework postgraduate education. We are also successful in servicing the research needs of local industry and community groups and in attracting international students. I am proud of this record on behalf of staff (past and present), students and alumni, who have contributed so much to the university since 1965, and previously during a period of development as a university.

The 2003 admissions round for undergraduate domestic places went very well for the university. This is a landmark year, with the university for the first time filling its quota of funded places within the main round, and increasing the University Admissions Index (UAI) for all but 11 of its degree programs compared with 2002. In addition, the minimum entry level UAI for the university is at an all-time high of 70, with several programs requiring a UAI of 90 plus, to qualify for an offer. The university has made 6,157 Main Round offers for 111 individually named degree programs. Preference demand has increased strongly for many programs, particularly in teaching, nursing, other health professions, business and the arts. Of importance to the Central Coast community, programs offered on the Ourimbah campus have completely filled, demonstrating the strong demand and popularity of these programs. Seventy seven percent of offers were made to Hunter and Central Coast residents, which reflects the special relationship that the university has with local schools and regions.

GraduateSchool.com, launched by the university in 2001, is a key development and a major flagship for the delivery of coursework postgraduate courses 'online'. Enrolments in GS.com continue to grow impressively, with a planned intake of more than 700 unit enrolments in semester one this year, and a full year intake exceeding 2500 unit enrolments, up by more than 60 percent on last year's intake. In partnership with Hartford, these programs are now delivered and supported from Singapore, Kuala Lumpur and Hong Kong, with 50 percent of enrolments from 28 overseas countries.

I am very optimistic about our university. We enjoy unparalleled support from our major regions, the Hunter and the Central Coast. We conduct rural health training programs in Tamworth and the New England region, as well as mental health training programs in Orange, to service the needs of rural NSW. We are working collaboratively with NSW TAFE North Coast Institute to plan articulation arrangements and the delivery of undergraduate programs for Hastings region residents. We are also meeting targets for growth and quality enhancement in key areas including:

- increased research support from government and private sources;
- increasing the number of research students (now more than 1150 students);
- improving the standard of students entering our undergraduate programs; and
- expanding our international and coursework postgraduate enrollments.

Moreover, we are successfully providing major educational and research training opportunities to indigenous people and have the most successful enabling programs in the country. May I wish all of you an enjoyable, successful and healthy 2003.

Roger S Holmes
Vice-Chancellor and President
Graduate School exports business programs

The Newcastle Graduate School of Business (NGSB) will offer two of its programs in Malaysia under an agreement signed this month.

Representatives from the Systematic Education Group International (SEGi) of Malaysia signed the agreement at the University that will allow the Doctor of Business Administration (DBA) and Master of International Business (MIB) to be offered offshore.

Vice-Chancellor, Professor Roger Holmes said the agreement represents a major investment in senior management education in Malaysia.

“This partnership is consistent with the commitment to the expansion of postgraduate enrolments across the University,” he said. “The NGSB is a key player in this expansion, having doubled student enrolments in 2001 and 2002 and it is expected to continue in a leading role, in terms of postgraduate coursework enrolments, into the future.”

Deputy Vice-Chancellor of Research and International, Professor Ron MacDonald, said it is a very exciting opportunity for both parties. He welcomed the initiative of the Faculty of Business and Law in developing this scheme.

Executive Director and CEO of SEGi, Mr Clement Hii Chii Kok and Director of Special Projects for SEGi, Dr Chow Yong Neng, said that their group is proud to be associated with the University and looks forward to a long and fruitful relationship.

“The introduction of the DBA and MIB programs to SEGi will provide many exciting opportunities for the University in Malaysia,” they said during their visit to Newcastle.

Demand for University places growing

Increasing demand by students for places at the University has seen the UAI entry level rise for many of its degree programs.

The University released 6,157 Main Round offers to HECS-liable undergraduate students in January. Over 47,904 Main Round Offers were made across NSW and ACT, from approximately 76,000 applicants.

Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Professor Brian English says the University recorded strong increases in first preference applications again this year, attracting over 11 percent of all first preferences to UAC.

“Due to this increased demand and the limited places available, offers into degree programs are very competitive,” he said. “It has been a tough year with UAI’s increasing everywhere. We have filled all our places with the Main Round offers.”

The increase in demand for entry into its degree programs demonstrates that the University has been a popular choice of study among this year’s students. “It is evidence of the University’s excellent research and teaching reputation,” Brian said.

Newcastle is offering 111 individually named programs in 2003, with the required University Admissions Indexes (UAI’s) for every degree program except 11 having increased from 2002. The following programs require a UAI of 90 plus: Physiotherapy, Psychology, Occupational Therapy, Medicine, Biomedical Science, Combined Law Degrees including Bachelor of Science (Forensic)/Bachelor of Laws, Speech Pathology and all combined degrees.

The University has increased preference demand for many programs including teaching, nursing, other health professions, business and the arts. Offers were made to 3,677 applicants in the Hunter mail region. This is 59.7 percent of the total offers. Central Coast mail region applicants received 1,066 offers, 17.3 percent of the total.

Offers to those who have completed a preparatory course at the University were made to 628 Open Foundation Course students, 124 Newstep students, and three to those who completed the Yapug program for Indigenous students.
People & Places

School prepares for future

Ric Herbert believes that the School of Design, Communication and Information Technology, of which he is Head, will foster the University's involvement in new areas of information technology.

Created as part of the University's restructure at the beginning of last year, the School brings together the disciplines of communications and media arts, design, wildlife illustration, information science and information technology (offered at Ourimbah). It is part of the Faculty of Science and Information Technology (IT).

"I was attracted to the challenge of this position because I believe the School has an exciting future," Ric said. "By bringing together these very different disciplines, the School is creating a congruence that is going to happen in the real world, which gives our students an opportunity to say how that will happen."

Ric, whose background is in IT, says that it is the combination of communication, design and more traditional IT skills that will prepare students to work in new areas such as digital entertainment. The School has introduced a new Bachelor of Information Technology (BIT) program that includes communication and design courses as core components.

"Creative people come up with creative solutions to all sorts of problems, including business problems," Ric said. "If we combine wonderful creative content, skilled design and back it up with solid IT knowledge, we will prepare our students for the future."

Ric sees productive research arising from the School in the future as communication, design and IT honours and research higher degree students get together to solve problems. All the School's disciplines have a strong industry and professional focus and the BIT is a problem-based learning (PBL) program. The University's design programs have used PBL techniques for some time and their expertise is being utilised in the new programs.

"We've had a very productive first year in the School," Ric says. "The Bachelor of Communication and Master of Information Technology were revamped as they were brought into the School, we developed the Bachelor of IT and the Master of Multimedia, and revamped the wildlife illustration program to create the new Bachelor of Illustration (Natural History), all while doing business and trying to get the School together."

The School attracts a lot of international students to its programs with design having strong links with Norway and students from all over the world studying the Master of Multimedia, which is offered exclusively on the web. Development work to prepare the IT degree to export internationally is currently underway.

Space is a major issue for the new School and Ric is eagerly anticipating the construction of an Information Communication Technologies building planned to begin this year above the carpark on the Callaghan campus.

Ric came to the University in 2000 to teach software development to students in the Bachelor of Applied IT, offered at Ourimbah. He enjoys teaching and will continue to take his classes and to supervise research higher degree students. He hopes his role as Head of School won't impinge too much on his own research, using computer-based modelling to solve real world problems in a range of areas including environmental, financial and economic.

"It is an interesting School with an incredible mix of people that crosses campuses," he said. "We are gradually working out its structure and developing ways of working, with the support of the Faculty.

"I see the School as adding a fascinating new focus to the University's strong IT areas in other Faculties."

Funding available for student equity projects

The Vice-President (University Services) is inviting submissions from faculty/school/program/unit and/or the equity goals and priorities of your Faculty/School! or with University-wide applicability. Submissions are to be linked to the University's Institutional Strategic Plan and/or the equity goals and priorities of your Faculty/School/Program/Unit.

Applications for HEEP funds should be based on student equity projects specific to your Faculty/School/Program/Unit, or with University-wide applicability. Applications should be lodged with the Equity and Diversity Unit by Friday 14 March 2003. For further information please contact the Equity and Diversity Unit, extension 16547 or email Glynnis.Wattus@newcastle.edu.au.

$1.5 million information technology funding

The University has received $1.5 million in Federal Capital Development Pool funding for its information technology infrastructure.

Vice-Chancellor, Professor Roger Holmes, said the funding will help the University keep pace with the explosive growth in demand for communications bandwidth and other online services.

"The University sees the potential to offer its programs throughout the Hunter, Central Coast and mid-north coast regions of NSW, through use of technology and to provide a basis for competing in the global higher education sector. The bulk of the funding will be channelled into development of its communications infrastructure."

The developments include the rollout of videoconferencing and video-streaming services and upgrades to campus networks and inter-campus links.

"Video communication and content management is an important capability for the ongoing development of the University's programs," the Vice-Chancellor said. "A component of the funding will be used to develop a website to meet the unique requirements of the Central Coast Campuses (which is a joint operation with TAFE NSW Hunter Institute)."

The funding will also be used to develop a series of Regional Training Facilities to support technology uptake and new approaches to teaching and learning. The facilities at the Callaghan and Ourimbah campuses will be used for staff development in the use of technology and for cross-sectoral training with the University's partners, primarily the TAFE NSW Hunter Institute.

"While the $1.5m in CDP funding is welcome, the University had originally sought $2.3m," Professor Holmes said. "Additional funding must be found to achieve, in full, the objectives proposed. Otherwise, some revision of the planned developments will be necessary."

Bandwidth development welcome

The University has welcomed news that the Federal Government will invest $42.5 million in bandwidth infrastructure for universities over the next two years.

Federal Minister for Education, Science and Training Dr Brendan Nelson, announced late last year that the Government would establish the Australian Research and Education Network (AREN) to significantly increase bandwidth connectivity to universities – particularly those in regional areas. Bandwidth refers to the amount of information that can be transmitted between two places.

Professor Bill Hogarth, Pro Vice-Chancellor for Science and Information Technology, says the outcome for the University is very good with $3.5 to $4 million earmarked for the provision of a gigabit communications link between Sydney and Brisbane, which will pick up both the Callaghan and Ourimbah campuses.

"The development of bandwidth infrastructure is vital to the operation of universities such as Newcastle, as we offer many of our programs on a wider basis," Bill said. "We have a well established campus on the Central Coast, the University Department of Rural Health in Tamworth and have recently agreed with Southern Cross University to work to provide tertiary education opportunities on the mid north coast. These arrangements require high quality communications."

Increased bandwidth infrastructure allows universities to offer video conferencing, links between researchers, lecturers and students in different centres, and control equipment in remote areas or at other campuses. The AREN will meet all higher education needs from highly reliable data and voice services to experimental networking for research.

University Club
under new management

The University Club has reopened with a new menu featuring gourmet burgers, fresh salads, seafood and pasta dishes, Club specials, delicious desserts and coffee. All prices under $15. Bookings and pre-orders accepted. Catering for luncheons, suppers, cocktail parties, and other functions is also available in the Club's restaurant and function room, for 20 to 150. EFTPOS, VISA, MASTERCARD accepted.

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Inza Catering
Collaborative project recognised with award

A collaborative industry partnership formed to commercialise innovative University research has been honourably mentioned in the 2002 Awards for Outstanding Achievement in Collaborative Research and Development.

Innova Soil Technology Pty Ltd is a spin-off company that resulted from research undertaken over the past six years. Managing Director of Innova and Senior Lecturer in chemical engineering at the University, Dr John Lucas, said the company grew from a concept to develop a process to clean contaminated soil.

"Throughout its development - from concept to design to implementation - we have considered the environmental and social implications, not just the technical development," he said. "Traditionally in Australia, industries grew on transport routes, with one of the main being waterways, so some of the nation's most beautiful sites including Sydney Harbour, Brisbane's river, Melbourne's docklands, and the Hunter River have been polluted with a variety of hazardous substances."

Currently, contaminated soils are dealt with by either a 'cap and contain' strategy, which encapsulates the contaminated soil in concrete and leaves it for a future generation to deal with; a 'dig and dump' method, which removes the contaminated material to a licensed containment depot for storage; or by technological means including thermal desorption, soil washing and stabilisation, which costs up to five times that of dumping.

Dr Lucas, who describes himself as a practical environmentalist, has been driving the development of a process that not only cleans contaminated soils effectively, but also does so economically and with fewer emissions.

"The Innova development is based on conventional thermal desorption but through our research, we have introduced innovative features such as a patented energy recovery system and rapid quenching of product gases, to ensure the process can clean contaminated land for less than the cost of dumping, with assurances of stringent emission control," Dr Lucas said. "The plant is mobile, so contaminated material doesn't need to be transported to localised facilities across public roads."

Local investors have funded the first commercial scale plant, which is capable of processing 1000 tonnes of soil per day. Eight separate trials have been successfully conducted using the plant on the former BHP steelworks site, including two under independent review. Recognised world expert in contaminated soil remediation, William Troxler from the USA, visited the site for two weeks to carry out a critical review of the process and called it 'world's best practice'.

"Proving the capabilities of the process is one thing," Dr Lucas said. "Establishing a viable commercial business is quite another. I'm quite optimistic that we will succeed and the implications it could have for cleaning up the world's polluted sites could be huge."

Pro Vice-Chancellor of the Faculty of Engineering and Built Environment Adrian Page says the Innova collaboration has developed a model for the University to adopt in future.

"This project clearly demonstrates the level of success and achievement that is possible if researchers work directly with major industry partners and companies to address important social and community issues," he said.

Apart from carrying out applied research, Dr Lucas has been a teacher in the discipline of chemical engineering and continues to use his experiences in developing the Innova process and taking it to the commercial stage to impart knowledge to his students.

"It is more and more important for young engineers to get advice about the business of environmental repair and sustainability," he said.

Partly owned by the University's commercial arm TUNRA, Innova, along with its industry partners MCM Manufacturing, which also holds shares in Innova, and Combustion Instrumentation, which has supplied the control systems to operate the plant, has been recognised with an honourable mention at the Collaborative R&D awards.

The Business Higher Education Round Table awards are sponsored by AusIndustry and the Industry Research and Development Board, an independent statutory body established to administer Federal Government programs in support of industry-based innovation. The Minister for Education, Science and Training, Dr Brendan Nelson, presented the awards in Melbourne in November.
Working for higher education on the mid-north coast

The University has agreed to cooperate with Southern Cross University and Hastings Council to seek Commonwealth support to extend university programs in the Hastings area.

They have formed the Hastings Higher Education Consultative Group to broaden the educational pathways available to Hastings residents.

Professor John Rickard, Vice-Chancellor of Southern Cross University, says communities on the mid-north coast have long been interested in expanding the higher education opportunities available to local residents.

"This is especially true if students are going to be able to study university programs in the Hastings area," he said.

Vice-Chancellor Roger Holmes says the group is seeking local advice on the higher education needs and aspirations of the Hastings community.

"We have invited several business and community people to be a part of this committee," he said.

"We are very pleased that these local people will be involved in the group's deliberations: Neil Black, Director of the North Coast Institute of TAFE, Janine Buesnel, General Manager, Regional Publishers and Frank Shaw, District Superintendent, Department of Education and Training."

Mayor of Hastings, Councillor Wayne Richards, says he welcomes the formation of the Consultative Group. "This is something we have been working towards for some time. We believe an enhanced university presence servicing the tertiary needs of the area is vital to our further development."

The Hastings Higher Education Consultative Group held its first meeting at Hastings Council Chambers in December.

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Research shows consumer debt increasing

An increasingly worrying aspect of modern life, consumer debt, continues to cause hardship despite widespread media coverage warning against it. University researchers have found.

A second report on research conducted jointly between the Financial Counsellors' Association of NSW Inc (FCAN) and Dr Margaret Griffiths and Mr Bill Renwick from the University's School of eBusiness and Management at the Ourimbah Campus, was launched at the end of last year by Manager of the Funding Programs Branch of the NSW Department of Fair Trading, Ms Catherine Weaver. It shows that the number of people seeking counselling over consumer debt and the amount of their debt are both on the rise.

Margaret and Bill, who lecture in marketing and accounting at Ourimbah, prepared the report with details from 2,682 financial counselling interviews conducted during 2001, which related to overcommitment. The interviews were conducted by members of FCAN working in 22 financial counselling services across 48 locations in NSW.

"The aim of the ongoing research is to enable financial counsellors to gain a broader understanding of their client group, and to raise community awareness of consumer financial over-commitment issues through the provision of statistical evidence," Margaret said. “Consumer credit debt is seen to be a problem, but previous evidence has been limited to case studies and isolated anecdotes.

“The report illustrates the advantage of looking behind aggregated data to better understand the state of the consumer credit market and consumers’ financial over-commitments.”

The research has highlighted the risks associated with borrowing into an unknown future. This is how many people get themselves into severe financial difficulties. However, what the researchers found with their second report is that the message isn't getting through.

“In this second stage we have also identified that there is an eight percent increase in people seeking financial counselling when we first reported our findings last year,” Margaret said.

The conclusions include:

- Over 68 percent of the group analysed live in single adult households.
- Over 18 percent of the counselling sessions for over-commitment problems analysed were conducted with clients who reported annual incomes in excess of $30,000 per annum.
- 54 percent of the client group studied relied on government benefits.
- Of the 2001 groups studied, 60 percent reside in rental accommodation and 15 percent reported home ownership.
- Financial counselling clients in 2001 reported higher levels of consumer credit debt than the previous year.
- Everyday living expenses were prominent in clients' other debts with the most common, apart from consumer credit, being telephone bills.
- Further analysis of a sub-group revealed that after paying rent and minimum monthly credit repayments, 50 percent of the group had $127.38 or less per week available to meet all other living expenses.

The recommendations include:

- Highlight the risks associated with borrowing and educate consumers in managing their financial affairs.
- Include credit and debt overcommitment in lower income groups as an issue when consumer advocates discuss financial disadvantage.
- Discourage the utilisation of credit as a replacement for regular income in the medium and longer terms.
- Investigate alternative sources of financing to assist lower income groups to manage cash flows.
- Encourage those extending credit to consumers to provide warnings concerning overcommitment and where to seek help if required.

Satellite boom successfully extended

The Australian microsatellite FedSat taking a University magnetometer into space was launched by the Japanese Space Agency NASA from the Tanegashima Space Centre in December.

The last critical operation for FedSat following successful launch and initial ground station contact is extension of a 2.5 metre boom with the NewMag magnetometer detector at its tip. The boom was successfully deployed at 12:28pm AESST on January 13 and the first data received by Adelaide ground station on the following FedSat overpass. NewMag is now operational and gathering data on the earth's magnetic field and its variability.

The University's Space Physics Group from the Faculty of Science and IT supplied the magnetometer, which is expected to provide valuable information on the state of the weather in space, to understand its possible effects on spacecraft, humans in space and its effect on communication systems.

The NewMag instrument was built jointly by the Space Physics Group at the University in collaboration with the Institute of Geophysics at UCLA. In particular NewMag will measure current structures above the auroral zones, ultra low frequency (ULF) plasma waves in the upper ionosphere, and generally monitor space weather.

The Space Physics Group under the leadership of Professor Brian Fraser has 20 years experience in studying the earth's magnetic field in space using ground based instruments in Australia, Antarctica and Scandinavia and data from NASA satellites.

Professor Fraser says, “FedSat provides a unique opportunity for the Group to develop its own space research program and through NewMag control its own satellite experiment.”
Remarkable career closes as former Dean retires

Professor John Ramsland officially ended a teaching career spanning 40 years when he retired in December, including 24 years at the University.

His remarkable career, that includes many milestones and achievements, began when he completed a two year course at Bathurst Teachers' College and began teaching at the age of 19. John says there were two mottos that influenced his teaching philosophy: Capimus Sed Tradimus ('We learn and we pass on the traditions of what we have learnt,) from his alma mater Manly Boys High School; and Doctus Dace (Having been taught, go out and teach) from Bathurst College.

"The mottos both imply intensity, passion of effort, erudition, conduct and character," John said. "Education is like climbing a tower to view a much wider vista - as knowledge grows, our horizons expand."

John taught in NSW secondary schools for 10 years, becoming the youngest subject master in the State when he was appointed as the head of English and History at Bulli High School at the age of 27. He gained a lot from secondary teaching, honing his skills as a teacher in an atmosphere of compulsory schooling.

"To be a good teacher, you need to have exquisite timing and a great interest in your students," he said. "At any level of teaching, it pays to pick out the most troublesome and difficult student and motivate them, build up their self-esteem. Once you have won them over, the rest will follow."

John stuck to his own philosophy by pursuing his own education as a part-time student, completing a Bachelor of Arts by correspondence from the University of New England, a Master of Education from the University of Sydney, a Master of Arts and PhD from the University of Newcastle. He completed his PhD in the same year he turned 40, while working as a lecturer at the University.

"I wasn't a refugee from the classroom when I came into the tertiary sphere," John stresses. "I was chosen in middle career as a demonstration teacher in history, English and creative writing, which all stood me in good stead with the University, which was looking for someone who could be an exemplar with students doing the Diploma of Education."

His early experience as an administrator at Bulli High gave John a taste for leadership and although he wasn't seeking it, he was appointed as Dean of the then Faculty of Education in 1987. It was to begin a continuous run of positions that stretched until his retirement and that in 2001 saw him claim the title as the longest serving current Dean in the humanities field of any Australian university.

"I underwent six different elections or appointments as Dean to four different types of faculties under various University structures," John said. "I never saw the position of Dean as a stepping stone but as a role that was interesting in itself, where I could find my own sense of achievement."

John saw himself as the sergeant major, in the front line with the troops while the high command were back in the chateau. He saw his role as satisfying the academic and social needs of students and staff in his faculty, while soldering them together with the needs of the central University. Beyond that, he tried to emphasise high quality teaching and learning, and to encourage innovation. He sees the establishment of HEAT literary magazine at the University and the development of inter-disciplinary conferences as two examples of success in introducing innovative enterprises.

"I had an external role to promote the interests of the faculty to the public, around Australia and overseas," he said. "Another very interesting part of the role was to support the promotion of academic staff who had shown outstanding achievement. If I could help the people who have been generous in heart and those with vision to get the recognition they deserve, I would feel a great sense of achievement."

John, who was made a Professor of the University in 1995 and was the first academic to be internally promoted by the University to become Professor of History in 1998, has had a distinguished research career and is the author of numerous books. He is looking forward to 'staying on' at the University to continue his research and is currently working on a book on Aboriginal history, which celebrates the lives of Aboriginal people who rose to prominence in the 1950s. He will also continue to supervise postgraduate students.

"I decided to resign from the University so that I could come back as an academic. Like an Australian cricket captain, I wanted to go out on top."
The University of Newcastle has contributed to the transformation of Singapore from a third world to a first world nation, according to Newcastle graduate Khaw Boon Wan, who was presented with an Honorary Doctorate by the University in Singapore in December.

Khaw Boon Wan received the Doctorate in Engineering at a ceremony held at Raffles Plaza to celebrate 50 years of engineering education at Newcastle and to launch the University’s Singapore Alumni Chapter.

Khaw was born in Malaysia in a village of farmers and fishermen in Penang. His family ran a cottage industry converting old newspapers into shopping bags and also farmed chickens and pigs.

In 1973 he applied for and won a Colombo Plan Scholarship from Singapore that allowed him to study at the University. He completed a combined degree in engineering and commerce in 1977 and was awarded the University Medal. He was offered citizenship and a position in the civil service in Singapore.

Khaw Boon Wan has worked in the Ministry of Health, drafting health care policies including the Medisave scheme, and restructuring public hospitals. He was the CEO for the National University Hospital, KK Hospital, and the Singapore General Hospital. In 1992 he became Principal Private Secretary to the current Prime Minister, then the Permanent Secretary of Trade.
“Singapore has graduated from third world to first world,” Khaw said. “Together with many Newcastle graduates, I am glad to have played a modest role in the transformation of Singapore. Through these graduates, the University has contributed, in a not insignificant way, to the Singapore miracle.”

The University has graduates represented in many sectors in Singapore including many in leadership positions in government, business, academia, media and the arts. Khaw said many of them were engineers. "I am particularly pleased that bilaterally, our two countries, Singapore and Australia, have drawn even closer,” Khaw said. “We are now connected at many levels, as large numbers of Australians and Singaporeans interact at a million points, as tourists, students, business partners, buyers and sellers. "It is little wonder that for us who are graduates of Australian universities, Australia will always occupy a special place in our hearts,” he said.

Khaw was presented with the Honorary Doctorate of Engineering by the University’s Chancellor Ric Charlton.

The Singapore function complemented celebrations held in Newcastle in October in recognition of 50 years of engineering education in Newcastle. It provided an opportunity for members the Faculty of Engineering and Built Environment to renew acquaintances with alumni and to highlight its recent successes and achievements.

The University function held in Singapore in December marked an important occasion for alumni with the signing of papers for the registration of the University of Newcastle Singapore Alumni Chapter.

The Chapter’s first President will be Dr William Tan (Kiang Meng), who is in the final year of his Bachelor of Medicine at the University. Dr Tan is Director of Wilcare Services and Consultancy Pty Ltd.

Commerce and Master of Business Administration graduate Mr Edwin Teng, who is accountant for FaAade Mastert Pty Ltd, will be Treasurer and Mr Hendrik Halim, Master of Applied Management graduate and Managing Director of Kingsford Education Pvt Ltd, the Open Polytechnic of New Zealand, will be Secretary. A number of key alumni members agreed to be Patrons of the Chapter, including prominent Singapore MP and businessman David Chew Heng Ching, who was a speaker on the evening.

David studied at the University under the Colombo Plan, graduating with first class honours in Industrial Engineering and a Bachelor of Arts in economics in 1974. He is the Executive Chairman of two Singapore companies and sits on the board of several others as well as being a Member of Parliament for the past 18 years.

Other patrons include Professor Chen Swee Eng, Faculty of Engineering and Built Environment, the University of Newcastle; Dr Tan Chin Nam, Ministry of Information, Communications and the Arts, Singapore Government; Mr Gary Quinlan, Australian High Commissioner to Singapore; and Dr Khaw Boon Wan, Ministry of Information, Communication and the Arts, Singapore Government.
Long service celebrated

Twenty three employees received medals to mark 25 years of service to the University at the end of last year, either at a joint ceremony in November or in individual morning/afternoon teas with the Vice-Chancellor.

The following is edited excerpts from a speech made by the Manager of Residential Facilities David Heggart on behalf of the recipients.

"On December 3rd last year the University celebrated its 50th anniversary and sitting here today are selected staff who have spent half that time having all that fun.

It's almost as if we have been passengers on board a luxury cruise which has taken us on a journey to meet significant University people, to visit interesting places, to view exciting technological changes and to participate in exciting events - all of which have forged together to shape the University into what it is today.

So please come aboard the SS Uni Star Line as we set sail for the last leg of our 25 year journey. The SS Uni Star Line has been in service for 50 years and during that time has seen direction under four giant shipping owners: Sir Alistair McMillin, Sir Bede Callaghan, The Hon. Justice Elizabeth Evatt and our current Chancellor, Mr Ric Charlton AM. At the helm have been five sterling ship's captains: Professor James Auchmuty, Professor Don George, Professor Keith Morgan, Professor Raoul Mortley and our current Vice Chancellor, Professor Roger Holmes.

Many other distinguished passengers have disembarked since those early days after giving their relevant ship captain valuable advice. The senior crew on board also had some interesting instructions of their own. Who could ever forget Chief Steward Lou Harris (aka the Bursar) who reminded us that "morning and afternoon teas are a concession, not a right" or "table, desk and bench tops are to be cleared before ceasing duty. If cupboard space is not available, please see the Accountant" or this gem, "supervisors are to ensure that staff are punctual and industrious".

During the past 50 years, the SS Uni Star Line has amassed an impressive collection of docks and ports comprising some 136 buildings on the Callaghan campus and Newcastle City precinct. In the past 25 years, 97 of those buildings (approx 71 percent) have been built or acquired. Add to this approximately 40 other buildings for which it is responsible on the Central Coast campus then we can see it's an impressive collection of docks and ports indeed.

Along the way, we passengers have paused to study the compass pointing to some significant events that have enhanced our journey. Here are a few:

1975: Professor Don George succeeds Foundation Vice-Chancellor James Auchmuty
1978: First intake of medical students takes place
1980: Dr Tim Roberts brings Supernova, a "hands on" science centre, to Newcastle
1983: Australia's first chair in Computer Engineering is created
1989: Amalgamation of the University, the Conservatorium of Music and the Hunter Institute of Higher Education.
1990: First medical students graduate under program for Aboriginal Studies
1991: The Chancellery opens
1993: Professor Raoul Mortley succeeds Keith Morgan as Vice-Chancellor
1994: Mr Ric Charlton appointed as Chancellor.
1995: Governor General Bill Hayden officially opens Central Coast Campus
1997: Professor Roger Holmes succeeds Raoul Mortley as Vice-Chancellor
2001: The University celebrates its 50th anniversary
2002: Professor Godfrey Tanner dies; the Birabahn Centre is opened.

Today our journey ends. As mentioned earlier, 25 years has been a fairly significant and exciting journey, and my travelling companions and I are pleased to disembark for the next generation of passengers who will be boarding the SS Uni Star Line for their destinations soon. No doubt some of you here today will be passengers tomorrow.

On behalf of my travelling companions and those unable to be present, we thank the University for this tangible expression of appreciation for our collective services rendered during these past 25 years.

Bon Voyage!"
The Australian Universities Quality Agency audit report has confirmed that the University is a well-established, research-intensive university that covers a wide range of disciplines and has strong community connections.

The University is among the first Australian universities to undergo the AUQA audit process, which was established in 2001. The process independently considers and reviews the procedures universities have in place to monitor and achieve their objectives in areas such as teaching, research and community service.

During their four-day visit to the Callaghan and Ourimbah campuses last September, the auditors met with around 200 people, including senior management, other academic and administrative staff, undergraduate and postgraduate students, members of the University Council and community members.

The report commends the University for, amongst other things:

- Its strong leadership in a number of research areas particularly engineering;
- Being at the forefront of Problem Based Learning and taking seriously its responsibility to Indigenous Education;
- The establishment of an innovative scholarship scheme that provides benefits to the University, local industries and students;
- The cooperation and collaboration between the student services across the Callaghan and Ourimbah campuses;
- Its proactive approach to environmental sustainability in developments on its campuses; and
- The establishment of an organisational structure that is conducive to embedding quality practices throughout the University.

The report also praised the University Council for demonstrating its leadership and commitment to quality assurance.

A number of recommendations were also made in the report, the majority of which had already been identified by the University's internal self review processes and these included:

- Review its systems for assisting students with problems and grievances;
- Increase support systems for staff with leadership responsibilities;
- Allocate additional resources so that the human resources area can implement reforms in a timely manner;
- Strengthen the capabilities of the Central Coast Campuses and establish a focus for research leadership in that location;
- Put in place a specific system for assuring the quality of all its programs delivered off-shore;
- Identify a source of leadership for providing overall co-ordination of the development of courses and programs online.

Vice-Chancellor, Professor Holmes said the University welcomed the AUQA audit and its detailed report.

"From the beginning, we have seen the review of our quality assurance processes and procedures by external auditors as an important element in meeting public accountability and in improving our performance. The University will now review the report in conjunction with its own reviews and develop a plan to tackle those areas which have been identified as in need of improvement."

The report endorses the re-structure of the University, which took effect on 1 January 2001 saying that it is well designed to aid systematic quality assurance in a complex organisation.

The Vice-Chancellor says that the AUQA report reinforces the positive outcomes that the University had achieved in recent times and assists in its planning for further improvements.

The table below shows that major milestones in the AUQA audit process:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Milestone</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<tr>
<td>Trial audit conducted</td>
<td>29 April to 3 May 2002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Submission of the University’s Performance Portfolio to AUQA</td>
<td>7 June 2002</td>
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<tr>
<td>Audit panel visit to the University</td>
<td>3-6 September 2002</td>
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<tr>
<td>Draft Audit Report available</td>
<td>29 November 2002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public release of the AUQA Audit Report</td>
<td>5 February 2003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University to submit an Action Plan to AUQA on how it will address the findings of the audit report</td>
<td>May 2003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Progress report provided to AUQA about actions taken in response to the audit report</td>
<td>Mid 2005</td>
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**Dinner in memory of Godfrey**

The Godfrey Tanner Memorial Convocation Dinner will be held on Friday 28 March 2003 at 7.00pm in the Brennan Room, Shorthand Union Building, Callaghan Campus. Graduates, guests and staff are welcome to attend. Invitations will be available in March.

At the dinner, the 2002 Convocation Medal for Professional Excellence will be presented to Professor Warren Pengilley, Faculty of Business and Law. Convocation prizes will be presented to outstanding students, including recipients of the Newton-John Memorial Music Prize and the Newton-John Memorial German Prize. The dinner will also be an occasion to pay tribute to Emeritus Professor Godfrey Tanner for his dedication and commitment to Convocation and alumni activities. For further enquiries, please contact Joanne Beveridge on 4921 6492.
Medical researchers move into new home

University and Hunter Area Health Service (HAHS) medical researchers are celebrating the opening of Stage 1 of the new Hunter Medical Research Institute (HMRI) Clinical Research Centre at John Hunter Hospital in December.

More than 60 researchers have moved into the refurbished space, valued at around $8 million, on level 3 of the Hospital. Research groups housed in the new facility include the Mothers and Babies Research Centre (MBRC), the Airways, Infection and Immunology Research Group (AII), the Newcastle Environmental Toxicology Research Unit (NETRU), the Children's Cancer Research Centre, the University's discipline of anatomical pathology, and a shared clinical trials unit.

Senior Research Officer and Laboratory Manager for the Mothers and Babies Research Centre, Dr John Fitter, said the new facility would improve opportunities for collaborative research.

"We are already collaborating with some of the groups but the move into this new area coalesces the research groups and allows for greater cross-pollination of ideas," John said. "There is a common tea room and lounge area that is a really important feature of the space because everybody gets to know who is doing what. You never know where discussions about research might lead."

John said the refurbished facility allowed researchers to share equipment, thereby saving costs and providing smaller groups the opportunity to access facilities they may not be able to afford.

Supporters – HMRI Chairman Geoffrey Leonard, Head of MBRC Roger Smith, Lord Mayor of Newcastle John Tate, NSW Minister for Hunter Development Richard Foss, Member for Wallsend John Mili, Member for Newcastle Bryce Goody, Chair of HMRI Foundation David Simoons and Vice-Chancellor Roger Holmes

The construction of a Clinical Research Centre at the John Hunter is a major goal of HMRI. The donation by HAHS of the space to establish Stage 1 is the first step. HMRI is continuing efforts to secure the construction of a new building that will be Stage 2 and 3 of the Clinical Research Centre. A total of $5 million has been secured from State funds and the University has promised $1 million as well as making the new building a top priority for fund raising by its University Foundation. Efforts are continuing to persuade the Commonwealth to contribute to the funding partnership.

Corporation helps to combat premature birth

The University's Mothers and Babies Research Centre (MBRC) has benefited from the donation of a $70,000 instrument by multi-national company Beckman Coulter.

The capillary electrophoresis (CE) machine allows researchers to separate bio-molecules using minimal amounts of sample materials and reagents.

Senior Research Officer and Laboratory Manager for MBRC, Dr John Fitter, says the CE machine will be used in a variety of projects being undertaken at the Centre.

"We are trying to understand the reasons for premature birth," John explained. "With the CE machine we can take a small sample of urine and produce a very discrete description of what is in the sample. Using measurements taken throughout a woman's pregnancy, we can measure hormones such as steroids and hormonal metabolites to see what role they play in triggering the birthing mechanism."

The MBRC uses a number of Beckman Coulter instruments in their laboratories and the CE is the second instrument that the company has donated to the Centre. They gave an ultra-centrifuge valued at around $90,000 to the MBRC in 2001. The CE instrument can also be used for measurements on nucleic acids, as well as other types of analysis depending on how it is set up.

NSW Minister for Hunter Development Richard Foss (left) and Dr John Fitter watch as research assistant Kathrin Kallianek demonstrates the CE machine.
HEAT magazine launches book imprint

HEAT, the literary journal published from the University's School of Language and Media, late last year published the first books in its newly established Giramondo imprint.

Giramondo, meaning globetrotter or world traveller in Italian, is the brainchild of senior researcher and editor of HEAT literary magazine Ivor Indyk. Ivor was an editor of Southerly magazine at the University of Sydney until the Demidenko literary fraud and differences with his fellow-editor caused him to resign and begin publication of HEAT in 1996.

“I was angry, not just at the ability of a deception to win literary prizes but also at the way some of my fellow academics handled the situation,” Ivor said. “That’s why I called the magazine HEAT – and also because I wanted it to be an active, provocative literary magazine – one that is both scholarly and appealing at the same time.”

Ivor also wanted to challenge the assumption that Australian literary magazines should confine themselves to Australian writing. He believes the opposite is true, that Australian readers have very cosmopolitan tastes, and that this is reflected in our literature.

“Australia’s population is drawn from all around the world, so there is a good chance that our writing will be informed by the culture of other places,” he said. “One of the ideals of HEAT, which also extends to the Giramondo imprint, is that the works selected for publication should be chosen on their merits, not on their subject matter. We encourage writing in a variety of fields and we publish overseas writing alongside Australian.”

Ivor did his undergraduate degree at the University of Sydney before doing a PhD at University College London. He taught for four years at the University of Geneva in Switzerland before returning to teach at the University of Sydney. He came to Newcastle in 2001, when the University offered him a three-year half-time position as a Senior Research Academic to develop a new series of HEAT and explore new kinds of literary publishing.

“The big publishers are publishing fewer literary titles because they don’t make a profit,” he said. “We have many good literary writers but their readership is relatively small, so it’s increasingly difficult for them to get published. Poets and academics find it even more difficult. My long-term goal is to publish more writing by academics – good non-fiction scholarly essays that are of interest to the general public.”

Giramondo’s first two titles are Summer Visit: Three Novellas by Antigone Kefala, and Anything the landlord touches, the new poetry collection by Emma Lew, who won the Age Poetry Book of the Year Award in 1997. A third book, Brian Castro’s new novel, Shanghai Dancing, will be published in March.

“Two of the three books published in our first release – Kefala’s Summer Visit, and Castro’s Shanghai Dancing – wouldn’t have been published if we hadn’t done it,” Ivor said. “This despite the fact that Kefala is one of Australia’s most distinguished poets and Castro has won five major fiction prizes for his previous novels.”

The second series of books will include a collection of essays by John Hughes, a distinguished graduate of the University who has written about his experiences growing up in Cessnock and Newcastle. Prize-winning poet Judith Beveridge, who taught in the School of Language and Media during second semester last year, will publish her new collection through Giramondo. A book of essays by dramatist Louis Nowra is also on Giramondo’s schedule.

HEAT and the Giramondo titles are both designed by multi-award winning designer Harry Williamson. The Literature Board of the Australia Council pays for subscriptions to HEAT and the NSW and Victorian Ministries of the Arts pay for subscriptions to regional libraries and editorial assistance.

“I particularly like the idea of publishing writing that is national or international in reach, from a regional centre,” Ivor said. “The combination is a powerful one, and you can draw support from the University and the community in a way that you cannot in a larger city. A good example of this in the UK is the impact that the University of East Anglia has had on recent writing from that country.”

The fifth issue in the new series of HEAT magazine will be published in April. Those interested in Giramondo can visit the website at www.giramondopublishing.com.

Graduate wins cycling title

Newcastle graduate and former University staff member Olivia Gollan recently won the Australian Women’s Road Racing cycling title.

Olivia, who worked in the Careers office at the University from 1997 until the end of 2000, won the road race and came second in the time trials at the national event held in Banninyong, Victoria in January. The former triathlete took up cycling about four years ago. She has an Australian Institute of Sport scholarship and spends seven months of each year based in Italy and competing in cycling races throughout Europe.

“I really want to ride in the Australian team at the Athens Olympics,” Olivia said. “That is my short term goal but in the longer term, I hope to be selected to ride on a professional cycling team in Europe.”

Olivia studied communications at the University, before completing a Diploma of Education in 2001. When in Australia, Olivia trains in the Forum Sports and Aquatic Centre’s gyms.
Researchers receive major Federal funding

Two leading researchers from the Faculty of Science and IT have been awarded grants for new Research Centres of Excellence announced last month by Brendan Nelson, the Minister for Education, Science and Training.

Professor John Aitken, from Biological Sciences is the lead researcher in the bid that won a $9.5 million grant to establish an Australian Research Council (ARC) Centre for Biotechnology and Development at the University.

He says the Centre’s goals will be to identify genes involved in testicular and childhood cancers, understand the mechanisms underlying male infertility, as well as develop new approaches to transgenic animal production and pest control.

“We expect to be able to develop practical outcomes from the research in several clinical fields including male contraception, testicular cancer, male infertility, environmental impacts on human health and gene farming,” he said.

The research centre will be a collaboration between the University of Newcastle, Monash University, the University of Queensland, the University of Melbourne, and the Australian National University.

The University’s Professor Raymond Rose has been working with lead researcher Professor Peter Gresshoff from the University of Queensland, to win a $10 million ARC Centre of Excellence grant.

His research involves legumes, which are essential to environmental stability and important for maintaining human health. Legumes such as chickpea, pea, lupin and soybean, provide nitrogen in soils, fundamental to sustainable pasture production.

“We are looking at the basic architecture of the plant to see if we can manipulate them to grow longer roots for drought resistance for instance,” Professor Rose said. “We are also looking at legumes bio-medical properties in the belief there could be major human health benefits.”

Pro Vice-Chancellor of the Faculty of Science and IT, Professor Bill Hogarth, says the ARC grants awarded to Newcastle endorse the quality of the research undertaken here.

“Our research is among the best in the world, and these grants will help lead to discoveries that will benefit both human health and the environment.”

The Australian Research Council Centres are awarded on the basis of the excellence of the participating researchers and are expected to be world-class research centres that develop the careers of Australia’s best young researchers and research leaders.

Award to Norwegian representatives

According to Alex, Scandinavians love to come to Newcastle because of its beach culture and easy lifestyle but their academic record shows they also select their courses carefully and take their study seriously.

“A reliable international representative who understands a university’s needs is vitally important, as we offer the University as a global competitor in higher education,” he said.

The International Education Centre started in a small office in Oslo with two staff members. They now have four offices in Norway, one in Germany and one in Finland.

The University recently implemented a rigorous agent management and approval process, which ensures that our overseas representatives are of the highest quality. IDS is responsible for the selection and contracting of all University agents and for the annual review of their performance.

IEC has not only demonstrated its capacity to provide high quality service on behalf of the University, but has also been its most successful recruiter over the 2002 academic year. This is the inaugural award to an overseas agent, with a similar review and presentation planned for this year to acknowledge the work our partners do.
Maddison lecturer weighs up evidence

Do clinicians make decisions based on evidence or intuition? This was the question addressed by Dr Les Barnsley, one of the first students to graduate from Medicine at the University, when he delivered the 2002 Maddison Lecture in November last year.

Dr Barnsley, who is an Associate Professor in the Department of Medicine at the University of Sydney and head of the Department of Rheumatology at Concord Hospital, said he considers evidence based medicine (EBM) to be one of the most fundamental shifts in thinking in medicine in recent times. He said that Newcastle was at the forefront in the teaching of scientific medicine in Australia and had taken a lead in the sphere of EBM.

Concerns about the subjective nature of clinicians’ decision-making have spawned the concept of evidence based medicine, which Dr Barnsley defined as ‘the conscientious, explicit and judicious use of current best evidence in making decisions about the care of individual patients’.

“This is generally taken to be evidence that is derived from scientific study, and particularly clinical trials,” he said.

Dr Barnsley argued that decisions based on clinical experience were liable to be based on a small number of cases and were subject to distortions of memory and individual bias. He said that another tool for determining the effectiveness of a treatment, the randomised control trial, also had limitations.

“Recognising the potential problems of both personal clinician recall and the limitations of clinical trials, some practitioners have sought alternative means of producing evidence,” Dr Barnsley said. “One of the most powerful techniques is the development of large clinical databases.”

He mentioned the Hunter Area Toxicology Database, known as Parecelsus, developed by Professor Ian Whyte at the Mater Hospital, that holds detailed information on over 10,000 self poisonings.

“The evidence derived from this dataset has cast new light on the dangers of certain medications in overdose, resulted in new treatment protocols and has undoubtedly saved many lives,” he said.

Dr Hensley said the University has had a profound effect on medical teaching in Australia with the new Sydney University course heavily based on the Newcastle curriculum and similar courses adopted in Adelaide, Melbourne and most recently Canberra. Academics from the University have been involved in the establishment of similar medical schools overseas and problem based learning has been applied to other areas of health care teaching such as dentistry, nursing and physiotherapy.

“These developments are a tribute to the foresight and courage of the foundation members of the Faculty, and the visionary leadership of David Maddison himself.

The culture of evidence based practice in Newcastle has been enhanced by the extraordinary support from local clinicians and the setting up of the Centre for Clinical Epidemiology and Biostatistics under Professor Richard Heller.

“At a personal level, it has made a huge difference to me, providing a framework and sound foundation for both my clinical and academic work. I consider evidence based practice to be one of the most fundamental shifts in thinking in medicine in recent times.”

Accreditation builds architecture program’s reputation

The University’s architecture program has received the highest level of professional accreditation possible in Australia.

The joint national visiting panel of the Royal Australian Institute of Architects and the Board of Architects granted full accreditation to the University for five years to December 2007.

Head of the School of Architecture and Built Environment Professor Michael Ostwald said the result demonstrates the University’s international standing as a leading centre for teaching and research into architectural design.

“This accreditation continues the high standards set in previous accreditation visits over the last 15 years which have seen the architecture program repeatedly described as one of the country’s best.”

The accreditation panel of national and international architects presented a strong vote of confidence in the program’s ability to continually re-develop its internationally regarded problem based learning education system and to remain a world leader in professional education.

“The problem based learning techniques used in the delivery of our architecture program have been so successful that our graduates are actively recruited by industry,” Michael said. “The 2001 Graduate Destination Survey found that Newcastle architecture graduates experience the highest employment rates in the sector with 93 percent of graduates gaining full-time employment within a few months of completing their studies.”
Business and Law weaves its web

More than 55 staff attended the launch of the Faculty of Business and Law's new website last month in the Auchmuty Library's audiovisual theatre.

In a video link-up with the Central Coast School of eBusiness and Management at the Ourimbah campus, the Director of Faculty Services for Business and Law Julie Kiem demonstrated the site's capabilities.

The site, developed by subsite coordinator Alison Roser, incorporates the former sites of the Faculty of Economics and Commerce, Faculty of Law, the Graduate School of Business, and the Central Coast's School of Business. Its design matches the visual identity established by designers Rhys Palmer and Sarah Quirk from Communication and Information Services for the Faculty's promotional materials.

Pro Vice-Chancellor Bernard Carey welcomed the new website, particularly the staff pages, which include a unique search facility, and the Faculty policy library.

"The Faculty has achieved some innovations with the site, including the ability to search for staff using titles and positions as well as names."

Professor Carey said that the Faculty intends seeking W3C accreditation from the World Wide Web Consortium for the website.

"In future, we are planning to implement a suggestion by the Sub-Dean for Undergraduate Students, John Dugas, to develop foreign language information pages that will be recognised by search engines and will allow potential international students to access information on the Faculty in their own languages."

To check out the new website go to http://webtest.newcastle.edu.au/faculty/bus-law/index.html

Summer book reading

The University community was encouraged to relax and read over the summer break, but they were all asked to read the same book!

Inspired by a recent program hosted by Brisbane City Council, the University initiated a Summertime Reading Program. Facilitator of the 'One summer, one book, one University' program, Katie Smith, says the idea is to create a common topic for conversation across the University.

"The summer period is when the University community traditionally disperses, or focuses on faculty research, so we hope this is one way we may develop a friendly and informative interaction during this time."

The book Babel by Emeritus Professor Barry Maitland was chosen for this summer's program. It is the latest novel by Barry, former Dean of Architecture at the University, who has become a notable writer of crime fiction.

"A Summer Reading Program can be adopted by any organisation," says Lynne Benton, Executive Director of Education Services, University Librarian and organiser of the program.

"It is something that can cut across all levels and divisions of a community, business or large organisation like the University."

The program began in mid December and ran until February 14. An official launch was held in December at the Auchmuty library where Barry discussed his book and signed copies. Vivienne Courtney, winner of the Summertime Reading Program Babel Trivia Competition, won a ticket to the program's wrap up dinner on February 14, as well as a bottle of champagne and a poster signed by Barry.

Sharing Christmas spirit

Three members of University staff were among 200 volunteers who took part in the Samaritans Deckup Lunch in the Park.

Student Enquiry Officer Troy Walker said more than 500 meals were served throughout Christmas day to those who may otherwise have missed out on sharing the joy of Christmas.

The Samaritans provided a two-course lunch of ham, chicken, salad and Christmas pudding, with most of the food and services provided free or at a reduced rate through the generosity of local businesses. There was also live music, face painting and a visit by Father Christmas with gifts for all.

"As a volunteer, it was great to be part of such a worthwhile event and to share Christmas day with the disadvantaged, homeless, and lonely," Troy said.
Graduates honoured in Australia Day awards

Two of the University's graduates were honoured with Australia Day awards last month. Alumni Medal winner, Professor William Caelli, was named an Officer of the Order of Australia for his service to the information technology industry and development of data security systems. Honorary degree recipient Dr. June Heinrich was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia for her services to aged care.

Professor Caelli has made an outstanding contribution to the information technology industry in Queensland. He founded, and was Technical Director of, ERACOM Pty Ltd for 20 years. The Gold Coast company specialises in manufacturing security products, especially in the financial area.

Since 1988, Professor Caelli has worked at Queensland University of Technology, where he is currently Head of the School of Software Engineering and Data Communications. In May this year, he became the first Australian to receive the prestigious Kristjan Beukman Award from the International Federation for Information Processing (IFIP), for his contributions to information security at an international level. It was only the seventh time the award had been made since it started in 1993.

The University presented Professor Caelli with an Alumni Award (Queensland) last year. The awards were established to recognise the outstanding contribution of graduates who, through their commitment, dedication and service to either the University, the community or their chosen profession, bring honour and distinction to the University of Newcastle.

June Heinrich was appointed Chief Executive Officer with the Baptist Community Services (BCS) for NSW and the ACT in 1994. The company manages 11 nursing homes, 15 hostels and 15 retirement villages and provides care to over 700 frail elderly clients living in the community. The organisation also operates a diverse range of community welfare programs.

Since 1997, BCS has more than tripled in the size and is considered an industry leader due to its innovative approach to the provision of aged care. BCS has also established a collaborative endeavour with the University, Aged Care Research and Education Services, which delivers a suite of educational programs via flexible delivery mode. The programs are designed to enhance critical, reflective and analytical skills in aged care.

June is a member of the Aged Care Working Group, which influences policy and financial planning for aged care in Australia and the National Advisory Committee, Accreditation and Standards Agency. Throughout her career, June has demonstrated a commitment to education and research-based practice as well as a thorough knowledge and understanding of the frail and aged in our community. She was presented with an honorary Doctor of Education degree by the University last year.

Piano maker Wayne Stuart, of Stuart and Sons, was also awarded a medal of the Order of Australia for his service in the design and building of an Australian concert grand piano. Stuart and Sons began in Newcastle under the patronage of the University's Conservatorium, as a division of TUNRA (The University of Newcastle Research Associates).

Samantha rewarded for business acumen

Manager of Newcastle University Sport (NUSport) Samantha Martin has won two awards for her outstanding business achievements - last year's NSW Alcatel Young Business Women's Award, a category of the NSW Telstra Business Women's Awards, and the 2002 Hunter Business Chamber Young Achiever of the Year Award.

Samantha has been an integral part of the recent restructure of the former Sports Union and the Forum Sports and Aquatic Centre to form NUSport, a unified body that oversees sport for the University's staff and students.

NUSport is a not for profit company with a turnover of $5 million annually and assets of over $30 million. The organisation employs approximately 110 staff in full-time, part-time and casual roles. In 2001, more than 75 percent of the University's students visited NUSport facilities at least once.

Samantha has a Bachelor of Business and a Master's in Industrial Relations/Human Resource Management from the University and is currently studying towards a Master's of Commercial Law. She was also a member of the Australian team that won gold at the 2000 World Professional Sport Aerobics Championships in Belgium, and silver in Morocco in 2001.

Samantha is a Board Director of the Hunter Business Chamber. She is currently working closely with the International Business Unit within the Chamber to organise pre-Olympic training for swim teams at the Forum. She is the Chairperson for the Cancer Council Relay for Life in Newcastle and works with the Salvation Army locally.
The University’s Conservatorium of Music will resound to the harmonious strains of a 150-year-old violin thanks to a generous donation by local orthoptist Patricia Dunlop.

The violin, made by Georges Chanot of Paris and donated to the Conservatorium in December, was bought in Dublin when Patricia was a schoolgirl, just before her family moved to London in 1946. Patricia joined the local Junior Philharmonic Orchestra near her home in Aylesbury and shared a desk in the 1st violins with Derek Klemperer (nephew of Otto). She studied orthoptics at Moorfields Eye Hospital, topping her final year, before marrying a postgraduate ophthalmology student, Donald Dunlop and moving to Australia with him.

It was Conservatorium violin teacher Elizabeth Holowell, a neighbour of Patricia’s, who suggested that the violin would deteriorate if it wasn’t regularly played and arranged for a promising student to use the rare French instrument.

“It is exciting to hear it,” she said, “especially when played in the acoustically wonderful Conservatorium Concert Hall.” Patricia presented the violin to Elizabeth and Dean of the Conservatorium, Professor Robert Constable, in December.