Charting a course for 2000

March 2000
Welcome to a new academic year for the university's nearly 20,000 students, including 15,000 undergraduate students, 1700 Masters and other coursework postgraduate, nearly 1000 research Masters and PhD students, 1100 enabling program students, and 650 exchange, study abroad and other non-award students.

We, the university's staff, are conscious of the important role we play in teaching and learning, research and development, in community service, and in servicing your needs and aspirations as university students. The commencement ceremonies and associated induction and orientation programs were designed to warmly welcome our new students. I am aware that sometimes the queues are too long in the enrolment process, however you will be pleased to know that we are investing in a major information technology based system for student admission; timetabling of subjects and courses; student records and assessment; and in an electronically based and more flexible access system, which will be operational by mid-2001. In addition, a new student services centre is under construction (a major upgrade of the old Hunter gymnasium), which will act as a 'one-stop' shop for servicing the needs of students on the Callaghan Campus. The Central Coast Campus also continues to expand, and with the completion of the new administration building, the Information Resources Centre will have additional space and facilities for students.

We were pleased this year to welcome 610 commencing overseas students, including 200 study abroad students, 80 exchange students, and 330 degree program students. These students are from 33 countries around the world, principally from the United States; Sweden, Norway and Denmark; Botswana, Zimbabwe and other African countries; Samoa, Tonga and other Pacific nations; as well as the Philippines, Malaysia, Hong Kong, Singapore, Japan, Thailand and many other Asian countries. As many of you will be aware from your own travels, living in a new country is initially a daunting experience, particularly if there are difficulties with the local language. I therefore ask all of you to make our overseas students very welcome. Be inclusive in your conversations, teaching style, use of examples in curriculum, and in other academic and social activities, to make the initial and ongoing experiences of overseas students in Newcastle and the Central Coast an enjoyable and rewarding one.

On the national scene, Australia's first summit on innovation was held in Melbourne recently. This was coordinated by relevant Federal Ministries, including DETYA and the Department of Industry, Science and Resources, with major business, industry and university representation, as well as the ARC and FASTS. Our representatives reported that it was a useful forum for promoting goodwill and consensus among these disparate groups, although major enhancements in the development of Australian innovations must await consideration of issues such as increased funding on education and research, and increasing the R & D tax concession rate for business and industry. I hope that these summits continue and become more targeted in these key areas of funding and implementation.

All best wishes for a successful 2000 academic year.
Multi-million dollar student system

Implementation of the university's new multi-million dollar student administration system is underway, with representatives from enterprise application software company PeopleSoft meeting with Vice Chancellor Professor Roger Holmes and other university staff to discuss the system's capabilities.

A steering committee last year consulted widely around the university and sought expert advice from external consultants, and recommended the PeopleSoft Student Administration System replace NUSS, the system currently in use. The new system will be called NUSTAR (Newcastle University Student Administration and Records).

The decision received the enthusiastic support of Professor Roger Holmes.

"The current system does not meet our current and future needs. Several records are kept around the university and there is no central means of storing, maintaining and updating the information."

"This new system draws the information together, while allowing different departments to use the system and the information stored on it in a way that most suits them," Professor Holmes explained.

He said the system will provide a more effective means of tracking potential and current students and offering administrative support. The public face of the system enables students to access their personal and academic records via the university's website. They can also pay their fees on-line.

"The program has a good reputation for its versatility and reliability. Many other Australian universities use its software. These include the University of New South Wales, University of Adelaide, University of Queensland, Sydney University and RMIT."

"In the private sector, the Ford Motor Company, Boeing and Time, Inc are just a handful of its clients," he said.

The reason for this success, he said, is that the system is the result of many years of research and development, and the expertise of an international company that has committed many millions of dollars to this R&D.

PricewaterhouseCoopers have been selected as the implementation partner, using the ExpressPac implementation process and project management. They will ensure the software is correctly integrated into the areas in which it will be used and that staff will be trained to confidently use the system.

It is planned this initial implementation will take twelve months, with a view to the system being in use for the Semester 2 intake in 2001.

Photographic competition

Uninews will this year run a photographic competition. The competition is open to all full-time and part-time staff of the university who are not professional photographers and the best entry will win a weekend for two at Barrington Guest House.

Photographs may be in any format (including digital) and in black and white or colour but must relate in some way to the university. They may be recent or historical but must have been taken by a current member of staff.

Prints can be sent in the internal mail addressed to the Editor, Uninews at Marketing and Media Services and should include your name and contact details. Digital files should be saved as .jpeg or .tif files and sent via email to prklb@cc.newcastle.edu.au. For further information call Kim Britton on 4956 1869.

Entries will be published in Uninews each month, with submissions closing on November 30. The winner will be announced in the December edition.
Prestigious centre links with law

An internationally recognised legal education research centre has joined forces with the university’s Faculty of Law.

The Centre for Legal Education, established and operated by the Law Foundation of NSW, is Australia’s pre-eminent centre for legal education research and services.

Centre Director, Professor Chris Roper, says Newcastle is a very suitable home for the eight-year-old centre.

"From the beginning of the law school in Newcastle, they have had a strong interest in the process of legal education," Chris said. "The faculty has the most innovative law program in Australia."

The centre does several things to promote legal education including:

- conducting research relevant to legal education,
- acting as an information clearing house, producing the Legal Education Digest – a review of what is being written about legal education in English-language legal journals around the world, and the Australasian Legal Education Yearbook, which has pages and pages of statistics relating to legal education;
- supporting and facilitating other activities that promote legal education including the provision of secretariat services to the Council of Australian Law Deans, the Legal Education Review, and the Lawasia Legal Education Standing Committee;
- providing consultancy services throughout Australia and the world, including a current project advising the Institute of Judicial Studies in New Zealand on a scheme to support the establishment of training for new judges in East Timor.

"We’ve almost been swamped by the number of consultancies we’ve had, including projects in the Solomon Islands, New Zealand, Hong Kong, Canada, Vietnam, Cambodia and Malaysia," Chris says wearily. "I’m pretty exhausted."

He is keen to re-emphasise the centre’s research role and build up its research program at the university.

"From next year the research will have to pay for itself," he said. "I’ll hopefully be looking for people to assist me with consultancies and research projects."

The Centre for Legal Education is the only centre in the English-speaking world that carries out the full range of services related to legal education and training.

"It isn’t just university education but lifelong learning for lawyers and the judiciary that the centre is concerned with," Chris said. "I am confident that it will continue to thrive in its association with the university."

Dean of the Faculty of Law, Professor Anne Finlay, welcomed the agreement that brings the centre to Newcastle.

"I am delighted that the Law Foundation has agreed to a centre with such an outstanding national and international reputation moving to the University of Newcastle," she said. "The relocation of the centre marries our innovative law program with the centre’s research to promote a fair, accessible and efficient justice system. Professor Roper will be a valuable addition to our academic staff."

Starting young

Children as young as six will be donning the university’s sporting colours for the first time this year as the junior members of the University of Newcastle Basketball Club take to the court for the winter competition.

Senior men’s and women’s basketball has been played on campus since 1949, following the formation of the Teachers’ College. The sport gained popularity in the schools during the ’70s and in 1982 a competition developed that required clubs to involve juniors.

A few enthusiastic parents from the Newcastle College of Advanced Education began coaching juniors, with the club executive making their own playing gear, including dyed singlets and makeshift tops that were often borrowed from Broadmeadow Stadium.

This year, however, the junior teams from U/10s to U/20s boys and girls will all be wearing the maroon and silver university colours. The new uniforms have been subsidised for members by the club, with shorts only costing $10.

While presenting singlets to the newly recruited Under 10s at the Forum on February 14, President of the University Sports Union, Dr Ian Webster, said the basketball club was a “wonderful model” for other university clubs in the way that it developed juniors.

"The benefits of being associated with junior development are twofold," Ian said. "Firstly, the parents are able to contribute to the overall infrastructure of the club, providing experience and continuity sometimes lacking in student-based organisations. Secondly, if children begin their sporting career with a university club, they often end up playing with university as students and later as graduates."

Former Falcons player Butch Hayes was on hand at the Under 10 grading to help their coach and club Vice-President Frank Gallego give the young players a few tips.

For information call the club President and Junior Registrar Kim Hartley on 4943 2681 or Senior Registrar Robyn Connett on 4943 5869.
Bleak future for Australian coal industry

A delegate to an international Industrial Relations conference held in Newcastle last month is predicting the Hunter Valley will become home to coal "superpits", with remaining reserves to be sold off and smaller operations to close.

Dr Bradley Bowden says long term gains in the Australian coal industry are likely to be reaped by a small number of producers, competing at low world prices, as the industry continues to face overproduction and falling prices.

"The current crisis is due partly to an excess in Australian capacity," Bradley explained.

"Producers have dealt with this by reducing labour costs, rather than limiting production, a process helped by the Workplace Relations Act."

Research by Michael Barry at Victoria University of Wellington and Peter Waring from the university’s School of Management has echoed his findings.

The academics say employees and their productivity have been unfairly blamed for the industry’s apparent poor performance.

"There are a number of other factors, such as technology, geology, techniques and expenditure," said Peter Waring.

"Those who explain the industry’s declining performance purely in terms of labour productivity fail to understand the relationship between the market and industrial relations."

Statistics from the Joint Coal Board indicate that in the financial years of 1996/97 and 1997/98, employment in the New South Wales black coal industry declined by 2636 jobs, while saleable output per employee rose dramatically.

"But despite this massive increase in productivity, the New South Wales Minerals Council recorded an overall loss for the state’s coal industry of $186 million in 1997/98," Peter said.

Both Bradley and Peter say not enough consideration has been given to the contribution of non-labour variables on productivity performance.

"Policy debate must develop beyond its current narrow focus on increasing labour productivity if the Australian coal industry is to deliver employers high profits, retain current mines and provide existing mining communities with secure employment in the future," concluded Peter.

The academics spoke at the Annual Conference of the Association of Industrial Relations Academics of Australia and New Zealand, held at Noahs On The Beach in February.

Other topics discussed at the conference included the hidden costs of downsizing, the earnings gap between men and women, and a study into barriers preventing women from advancing into professional occupations and management.

Women slip through affirmative action net

Two Newcastle academics claim there are weaknesses with the design and implementation of affirmative action legislation in Australia.

Dr Glenda Strachan and Associate Professor John Burgess told a seminar on gender, workplace relations and affirmative action that the Affirmative Action Act needs strengthening, in the light of industrial relations restructuring leaving women workers vulnerable.

"The Affirmative Action Act compels all private sector organisations, higher education institutions, group training schemes, trade unions, community organisations and non-government schools with more than 100 employees to implement an affirmative action program,"

Glenda explained.

"However, the concentration of women working in businesses with fewer than 100 employees means the working lives of many women are conducted outside the legislation. Only 44 percent of private sector female employees were covered by the Affirmative Action Act in 1994/95."

"The situation is worse for casual employees, who accounted for around one third of all women employees in 1996," she continued.

"It is estimated that only a few of these workers are covered by the Act due to the concentration of casual employment in the small, private business sector. For these women, affirmative action is meaningless."

"Gender, Enterprise Bargaining and Workplace Change" was one of three seminars staged ahead of the three-day annual conference of the Association of Industrial Relations Academics of Australia and New Zealand.
An unusual professor

While Mark Jones, has spent a lot of time working in a lot of countries, he had never responded to any of them the way he did to Australia when he came here for the first time in 1998.

"When you've travelled a lot, you get a feel for a place quite quickly," Mark, the new professor at the Centre for Bulk Solids and Particulate Technologies, explained. "I hadn't visited Australia and when I came here for a conference, the first thing that really hit me was how much I liked the country."

Mark, who was Senior Lecturer with the Department of Physical Sciences at Glasgow Caledonian University in Scotland and Senior Consulting Engineer with their Centre for Industrial Bulk Solids Handling when he came to that fateful conference in 1998, made the decision to move when he heard about the Chair in Bulk Solids at Newcastle. He brings with him a wealth of international consulting experience.

The Key Centre for Bulk Solids and Particulate Technologies is a collaborative initiative between the University of Newcastle and the University of Wollongong. It provides teaching, research and industrial development and consulting in bulk solids handling and is supported by the Australian Research Council.

Mark's major research is in the transport of powdered and granular materials through pipelines. The pneumatic conveyor technology is used extensively as a method of transport for processing industries, moving everything from tea and coffee to coal, cement and pharmaceutical powders. He is expected to boost the centre's ability to generate income from consulting.

"I am an unusual professor in that sense," he said, "having spent a lot of time working with industry in China, Russia, Europe, the United States and South America. My particular interest in pneumatic conveying adds another dimension to the centre's research and expands its opportunities in terms of industrial income and contract consultancy."

Millions of tonnes of bulk solids are transported around the globe each year, with poorly managed plants adding substantially to operating costs. While the centre does a lot of work locally and nationally, it will also be looking to the international scene as well, Mark said.

Another important element of the centre is education and it provides continuing professional development to engineers in industry. Mark says the Master of Engineering Practice (Bulk Solids) is one of only two bulk solids masters degrees offered worldwide.

"It is already available on a short course basis and the next stage is to develop into distance learning, particularly development of electronic media," he said. "We will do it but if we are able to generate some funding, it will happen much more quickly."

The degree is offered jointly by Newcastle and Wollongong universities.

Mark is originally from Northern Wales and did his Bachelor of Mechanical Engineering at the University of Greenwich in London. After working in industry for a couple of years, he returned to Greenwich to complete a PhD study looking at the design of dense phase pneumatic conveyors, which was sponsored by the British Department of Trade and Industry. He moved to Glasgow in 1988 and was responsible for seven major research projects in India, the United States, France and Britain during his 11 years there.

In his spare time, Mark is a pilot and has joined the Royal Newcastle Aero Club since he began work here in October last year. He is looking forward to planning some trips with his wife and three children.

"I never tire of seeing the world from another perspective," Mark said. "When you are up there, the normal pressures of life seem to fade away."

Convocation Annual Awards Dinner

Convocation is delighted to announce the winners of the 1999 Annual Awards.

The 1999 Convocation Medal for Professional Excellence has been awarded to Mr Ian Harris.

The 1999 Newton-John Award for Innovation has been awarded to Mr Geoffrey Leonard.

The awards will be presented at the Annual Awards Dinner to be held on Friday 31 March at 7.00pm in the Brennan Room.

For tickets and further details please contact: Reah Kay, tel 49216459 or email convocation@newcastle.edu.au
Enabling programs popular

The Open Foundation Course (OFC) run by the Enabling Programs Unit has once again proved popular with students.

Open to people who are 20 or older and haven't completed their Higher School Certificate, the OFC sees around 1000 people a year studying a range of subjects. Successful completion of the course entitles students to apply for entry into any university in NSW through the Universities Admission Centre.

Course coordinator Dr Keryl Kavanagh said that a large percentage of the students who have completed the OFC since it began in 1974 have gone on to enrol in a university degree.

The course is offered on a part-time (two subjects spread over one year) or full-time (two subjects completed in second semester) basis. At least 25 percent of Open Foundation students are over the age of 30, proving that it's never too late to pursue a lifelong ambition or take a new career path.

"We have people who are trades-qualified but want to become degree-qualified because of downsizing in their current profession or new interests. At the opposite end of the spectrum we have people who, because of family commitments, have not been able to resume study until their mid-30's or older," Keryl said.

The benefits of the Open Foundation Course extend beyond gaining the necessary qualifications to apply to study for a degree, she said.

"Many students talk about how much confidence they have gained, but most of all it is taught in university style so many find it very easy to adjust to university life when they start studying."

OFC information sessions were held at both the Callaghan and Central Coast campuses in January.

Community Access Program launched

Ever wanted to learn about ancient Greece or medieval Europe? How about post-modern art or crime and punishment in Australia?

The Faculty of Arts and Social Science is offering people the opportunity to sample university-level subjects in a new Community Access Program (CAP).

"We are proud that for the first time the university is able to offer lectures typically available to undergraduate students to the general public," Dr Grant Rodwell, Director of the program said.

"No standard of education entry is required and the classes will appeal to adults eager to sample the smorgasbord of fascinating subjects being taught in the Faculty of Arts and Social Science."

Fifty-five subjects are available in such disciplines as Aboriginal studies, fine art, classics, history, languages, philosophy, and social welfare. Students are provided with access to lectures and printed lecture material. The subjects do not count towards formal qualifications.

"Whether CAP students choose to develop existing interests further or tackle new areas of knowledge, they are bound to find much that will stimulate, challenge and enlighten," Grant said.

For information on CAP courses, call Grant on ext 6377 or 1800 636 466.
The university’s 2000 academic year started in a blaze of sunshine at the Central Coast Campus. At a commencement ceremony held in the Building and Construction Studies Unit, several hundred new students listened to welcome speeches from the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Roger Holmes, the University Secretary and Registrar, Mrs Gem Cheong, President of the Central Coast Campus Student Union, Ms Shontelle Adams and Pro Vice-Chancellor and Director of the Central Coast Campus, Professor Les Eastcott.

The ceremony was part of an orientation program, which included tours and familiarisation sessions for different areas of the campus, social and sporting activities, bands and barbecues.

Professor Holmes outlined how Central Coast Campus students were part of the overall university structure and how they are very important within that structure. During her speech, Gem pointed out the various support services and facilities available to students and the benefits of these. She said there was no need for students to face difficulties with their studies when these excellent services were available to them.

In her remarks to incoming students Shontelle posed the question, what is the most important thing about student life? Is it attending lectures, is it keeping up with your reading, is it having a coffee with friends, is it meeting new friends, is it playing football, netball or tennis? While lectures and reading are important, she said they are only part of the whole university life. There are many activities on campus which play an important part in the education of a student. Life on campus is meant to be enjoyable as well as educationally and vocationally rewarding.

Professor Eastcott endorsed Shontelle’s view and encouraged the new students to enjoy themselves while at university, pursue their goals for their studies, but not forget that sound ethical and moral values add substance to an education. He said an education was pointless without having the knowledge to apply it positively.

Healthy enrolments

It is pleasing to report that university enrolments at the Central Coast Campus are well up on last year. Quotas in areas such as science have been exceeded even though science enrolments have been generally down across Australia. The Central Coast has seen a bigger intake of students this year than ever before without reducing entry scores as some other universities have had to do.

The new Bachelor of Applied Information Technology, offered through the School of Business, alone led to more than 50 additional offers of student places. While most commencing students are from the Central Coast region, there are a significant number from Sydney’s northern suburbs and from overseas.
Students capture migrant memories

In August 1949, 13-year-old Vitaly Lupish joined more than 1500 other “new Australians” at the rail of the Fairsea to catch his first glimpse of Newcastle. Vitaly, arriving with his brother and parents from the Republic of Belarus was among the first group of migrants to arrive in Newcastle and to make use of Greta Migrant Camp.

The images he saw of the ship, the people who arrived with him and life at the camp form part of a mural of photographs put together by graphic design students at the university and currently part of an exhibition at the Newcastle Regional Museum.

The 8.5 metre mural is one of two produced by Studio 4, the graphic design studio set up to provide fourth year graphics students with real world experience. The murals include more than 400 individual images, which were scanned into four G3 Macintosh computers and arranged using keywords and symbols by a team of 10 students in just 10 days.

Director of Studio 4 and Head of the Department of Design, Allan Morse, said he had taken on the task of producing the mural for the Ethnic Communities Council (ECC) as a community service.

“T wasn’t very popular with the students when I told them what I expected them to do,” Allan said. “But they worked at it for 12 to 18 hours on some days and basically brought home the bacon. They were all proud to have been involved on the project and some of them discovered images of their grandparents (and in the case of one student her mother) among the photographs.”

The impressive murals were produced for the price of printing and the cost of laminating. “Our involvement with the ECC project was very positive for the students and for me,” Allan said.

The exhibition, A Tourist’s Guide to Greta Camp, also includes a scale model designed by Vitaly from his memory and old plans of the camp and built with the aid of pupils from Greta Public School; a banner made by migrant women to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the ECC; a work called Migrant Memory Factory produced for the Ribbons of Steel exhibition held to mark the closure of BHP’s steel making plant last year; and Journey of Visions, a display of photographs and text following the lives of migrants and Aborigines produced as a Bicentenary project.

John Gebhardt, President of the ECC, said in opening the exhibition that it was a wonderful event that helped to make people aware of the contribution made by migrants to the region and the nation.

Joint nursing program a success

Sixty three people graduated from the newly formed aged care program being offered jointly by the university’s Faculty of Nursing and the Baptist Community Services (BCS) last month.

The first graduates to complete a course in palliative care joined the second cohort to graduate from the Graduate Certificate in Aged Care and the Graduate Certificate in Aged Care Management in ceremonies spread over a week in February.

Program director, Professor Irene Stein, said the response to the courses has been fantastic. “We got a favourable response when we carried out a needs analysis which suggested that aged care was a growth area but we weren’t sure what to expect,” Irene explained. “But the courses have proved to be very popular and numbers are increasing every year.”

This year’s intake into the jointily offered program is 150. The courses can be undertaken over one year full-time or two years part-time and are offered through various regional and urban centres using a combination of self-directed materials and workshops. “The partnership with the BCS demonstrates how effective outreach programs can be,” Irene said.
Greek goddess of memory Mnemosyne was evoked in a recent exhibition by Honours student in Fine Art, Cressida Rachel Goddard.

A sensuous exhibition depicting the themes of cloth and skin, contrasting with the virtual textures of digital imagery, mnemosyne was supported by a Pat Corrigan Artist Grant and was shown at Watt Space Gallery last month.

Pat Corrigan is a successful businessman with an interest in Australian contemporary art and craft. The grant, which is managed by the National Association for the Visual Arts with financial assistance from the Australia Council, provided $500 towards the costs associated with the exhibition.

Cressida, who also won a Summer Research Scholarship from the university, was attracted to the image of the goddess of memory because she was portrayed draped in layers of cloth.

"Cloth surrounds our skin almost constantly," she explained. "Skin and fabric merge together concealing and revealing us. Mnemosyne evokes the memories our skin has kept."

Cressida is majoring in photo media and teaching digital photography in the Department of Fine Art. She is exploring the use of digital images on fabric during her honours year.

In her professionally produced program, made possible by the Corrigan grant, Cressida quotes: "...To weave is also to write the visual; a fabric is at once expressed by numbers, and its elaboration is achieved through a system of knotwork."

At the crossroads of the digital and the analogical, it is that homely place, familiar from everyday life, the symbolic implications of which have been extremely powerful in civilisations other than our own," observes Remy Prin.

To which Patrice Hugues adds, "For a long time fabrics have been ready to receive assistance from the computer. They might be said to have been waiting for it...."


Her exhibition, which was opened by Head of the fine art department, Professor Anne Graham, ran at Watt Space from February 9 to 27.
Post-doctoral Research Associate Dr Pavlo Ponomarenko, and electronics engineer Andrew Bish, spent a week in January at the New Zealand-run Scott Base, which is adjacent to the US base at McMurdo Sound. The two are the latest members of the Space Physics Research Group to make the annual trip to calibrate experiments and maintain equipment. They flew to McMurdo from Christchurch NZ on a C-130 Hercules, a trip that took 10 hours.

The experiments at Scott Base are integrated into the USA National Science Foundation PENGUn program, which operates a network of unmanned automatic observatories deep in the polar cap and equipped with similar instrumentation. This region, where the aurora occur, is vital for monitoring space weather which will help scientists understand the "killer" electron and magnetic storm phenomena that affect satellite operations and global communication and navigation systems.

The most difficult job for Andrew and Pavlo was to carry out repairs to the all-sky camera, which had failed on a number of occasions last year. Andrew, who had previously wintered at the Australian Davis Base, said the summer temperatures at Scott Base in January ranged from minus two to minus 12 degrees.

"The temperatures weren't too bad but it was windy, with winds up to 30 knots," Andrew said. "It can go up to 100 knots in a blizzard." The two-man team was successful in repairing the optical imager and calibrating the magnetometer experiments and leaving them in good condition to record data over this year.
Growing interest in religious teachings

While there seems to be a rise in the number of Australians who do not follow any particular religious faith, the study of religion is experiencing a growing popularity amongst young people.

Dean of Education, Professor Terry Lovat, said the study of religion from a social studies perspective has become so popular that Studies of Religion is now the fastest growing HSC subject.

"The subject reflects the interest high school students have in the many religions that are now practised in Australia. They want to be more aware of the society they live in," Terry said. "This makes them vastly different from students of, say, ten years ago. This is because, in a very short time, Australia has seen an emergence of many non-Christian followings at the same time as it experienced a decline of people following Christian faiths," he said.

Census figures for the last century show a rise in the number of people who either describe themselves as not religious, or don't want to associate themselves with any structured faith. In 1901 only 2.5 percent of the respondents said they had no religion, or didn't state which religion they followed. In 1996 this figure rose to 25.6 percent of respondents.

Terry, who has spent much of his career studying different religions, has co-authored (with John McGrath) a book to be used in the state's high schools this year.

"The book, New Studies In Religion, allows students to study a number of religions predominant in Australia – Buddhism, Christianity, Judaism, Islam and Hinduism – as well as develop an understanding of Australia's religious past, and the categories and traditions of religion. It will support the revised HSC subject in the 'New HSC' brought about through the McGaw Report.

Head of the university's religious studies program, Dr Hilary Carey said that very few universities offer a full program in religious studies and this was partly the result of the historical exclusion of theological training from most Australian universities up until very recently. She said that the one-unit program in Studies of Religion was compulsory for HSC students in many of the State's Catholic high schools, which boosted its participation rates.

"It is a very interesting course that compares religions and well worth doing," Hilary said. "The first year program in religious studies at the University of Sydney is very popular but we don’t currently have a first year course at Newcastle."

The university offers a range of courses at 200/300 level that enable students to complete a major in inter-disciplinary religious studies and there have been a number of master and doctoral theses in the area.

"Religious studies is just one of a number of inter-disciplinary study areas including gender studies, cultural studies and film studies, that are very popular with students. They reflect the way that today's students want to learn and while we’re not seeing huge numbers, we do get a devoted group of students taking religious studies," Hilary said. "We hope to develop a first year subject soon."

For those who are interested in pursuing religious studies, the university is uniquely placed to provide resources, with its priceless collections of theological works.

Giovanni di Gravio, from Archives, Rare Books and Special Collections Unit, said the university has the largest and most comprehensive regional collection of Anglican and Catholic theological and philosophical works in Australia.

"We are fortunate to have the Bishops' Library Collection compiled by Catholic Bishops James Murray and Patrick Dwyer, as well as the Morpeth Collection compiled by Anglican Bishop William 'Tyrrell,'" Giovanni said.

The collections date back to 1544 and include many rare folio volumes, as well as parish registers, working papers and historical materials of the churches. The archives also house the work of many theological scholars.

"It is a wonderful resource that would be staggeringly expensive to reproduce today," Giovanni said. "And it is just sitting there waiting for students to use it."

The following address on the university's History Society site links to all religious studies programs in Australia and New Zealand:

Background

Although I would like to have done law when I left school, there was no law faculty at the University of Newcastle then, so I pursued my other interest – journalism. I began a Bachelor of Arts and when I was halfway through my first year, I was offered the first cadetship in journalism to be offered by NBN Television and completed my degree over the next three years while working full-time.

Later, after five years in public relations and media management, I enrolled to study economics at Newcastle and took some law subjects, including company law. I decided this was absolutely what I wanted to do, so I switched to a law degree, externally from Macquarie University, which I completed in 1985. I did this while taking some time out when my daughter was born and for the last 18 months of my degree I worked for local solicitors, Turnbull, Hill Partners as a researcher.

After a stint as Company Secretary and Legal Officer for Nuigini Television in PNG, which was set up by NBN and for which my husband was General Manager, I worked at the University of Southern Queensland, first as a research assistant and then as lecturer. When we decided to return to Newcastle in 1989, I lectured in Business Law at the Hunter Institute of Higher Education before joining the Faculty of Economics and Commerce in 1991. I was made Assistant Dean the day I joined them and two years later went to the law faculty, where I became Assistant Dean in 1994. I began as dean in January.

Strengths

The faculty’s strongest point is our professional program, which is very much the brainchild of the former dean, Professor Neil Rees. Law schools mushroomed in Australia in the ’90s and we are one of the handful who has made a mark, because of our unique clinical program. The program integrates theoretical learning with practical legal training and the necessary work experience to turn out very employable graduates. Of the 37 graduates from last year that were admitted to practise last month, all are employed, many with major Sydney firms.

The faculty’s Legal Centre is also a strength. It allows students to see the law as it operates in reality and not just in simulated exercises; it has given us the opportunity as a faculty to engage in community service; and it allows us to develop partnerships with the Legal Aid Commission and with the Aboriginal Legal Service, both of which operate out of the centre.

Challenges

The clinical program is very intensive both in staff time and resources, so it is challenging to maintain and to ensure we retain its relevance. The faculty is growing, with 147 students enrolling in first year this year and only around 60 a year being admitted to our professional program. As a result, some students will miss out and the challenge is to ensure that we give them as enriching an experience as the professional students.

Research is another challenge for the faculty. While some, especially the professoriate, receive grants and publish prolifically, we don’t have a strong research profile. This reflects what is happening nationally in law, with only 13 research higher degrees completed nationally in 1998, for instance. However, we have two new professors – Ted Wright, Director of the Justice Research Centre who takes up the Belle Wiese Chair of Legal Ethics, and Chris Roper who is the Director of the Centre for Legal Education – who will attract research and consultancy to the faculty.

Fitting in to the university’s aim of developing postgraduate coursework programs is a challenge because much of the local legal profession doesn’t see the need for an LLM, which is the obvious way to go.

Work

I have retained my position as Head of Department and will maintain the teaching load I had last year, taking a third year class in contracts. My recent research has been into company law and I don’t want to let that slip entirely, although I don’t think there will be much publication forthcoming this year. I find myself working many Sundays although I try to be home by seven most evenings. I take work home with me, but I always have – you can always improve on next week’s lecture.

Leisure

I play social tennis every Saturday – not very well but I have a lot of fun! I also like to read – good fiction or biographies – and I’m currently reading a biography of Keating. I like good food and wine and enjoy the opera, and I try to walk as often as I can.

Future

While I’m quite comfortable in the dean’s position, it’s too early to look beyond this current term. Because I had worked as Acting Dean a couple of times I found it fairly effortless to come into the position, as I already knew how the university and the faculty function. I sit on the Mental Health Review Tribunal and enjoy that. In the longer term, sitting on a tribunal would be appealing but I don’t see myself going into legal practice.

I love the contact with students that teaching makes possible – it is one of the strengths of the job.

UNINEWS Page 13
On the move

The re-fit of the former Hunter gymnasia to create a "one-stop shop" for student needs is progressing according to plan, with building work due for completion in April.

When the extensive re-building is complete, PPE will take over and fit the student centre out with fixtures and signage, and re-key the building. The surrounds will also be landscaped.

Senior Architect/Planner Philip Pollard said student services from enrolment and course advice to financial and medical services would all be found in the new Student Centre.

"The new offices will house student administration, the new student system development group, Unilink and student equity, the health service, international student support and services, examinations, cashiers and revenue staff," Philip said.

The Student Centre should be ready for occupation before June.

Life Sciences Building

Following delays to construction of the unique link building between the Auchmuty Library and Medical Sciences, the building is now making good progress and a new date for practical completion is currently being established.

"Delays were experienced due to wet weather and other causes," Philip said. "We are hopeful on present trends, however, that the building will be finished not too far into the New Year in 2001."

Ray Watt Oval Pavilion

Work is progressing well on the construction of a new pavilion at Ray Watt Oval. The previous building was demolished due to severe cracking caused by ground movement, so design for its replacement involved digging into the bank to begin on stable ground.

The new building will house a large meeting room, change rooms, first aid room, media room, storage space and a separate referees room. It is being built for the University Sports Union.

PPE is taking advantage of the halt to activities on the oval during the construction of the pavilion to undertake much needed drainage work on the field. The improvements to the oval are all on program.

New accommodation

A new residential complex is now under construction to the east of Edwards Hall, which will provide 96 self contained accommodation units. The units, which can provide either single or twin accommodation in a motel style layout, will provide another alternative for on-campus accommodation. The rooms are all equipped with air conditioning, telephone, television, computer access for two PC's and have an en-suite bathroom. Six disabled units are included, as well as common room and outdoor barbecue and recreation areas.

In common with other university developments, the building has been computer modelled to maximise thermal comfort and to minimise energy use. All hot water will be solar heated, and low energy plant and appliances are to be utilised. The project is due for completion late this year.

Driver sought

Public announcement

Would the driver of the car who hit an elderly lady at Garden City Shopping Centre at 10am on December 15, 1999, or any persons who witnessed the incident, please phone 4965 5446 as soon as possible.
Mass redundancy a health concern?

A study which tracks the health of BHP workers who were made redundant when the Newcastle steelworks closed last year could shed new light on the long-term medical impact of redundancy.

Chair of General Practice at the university, Associate Professor Dimity Pond, said the study involves 1500 former BHP workers and their partners. It is the first time such a study - which follows a large group of people who were made redundant on the same day - has been done in Australia.

"Specially trained community nurses are monitoring their cholesterol, blood pressure, weight and other health factors for the year following the steelworks closure on September 30," she explained.

Previous research shows that when workers are made redundant, their blood pressure, cholesterol and weight all rise, although the actual reasons for this have never been determined. It is hoped this study will shed more light on the matter.

The project involves the university, Hunter Urban Division of General Practice, and the Electrical Trades, Australian Metalworkers and Australian Workers' Unions.

"General practitioners are in the best position to monitor the health of people who are unemployed. We hope the study will result in a program that GPs can easily and successfully implement," Dimity said.

Executive Member of the Hunter Urban Division of General Practice, Dr Annette Carruthers, added: "Such a program will assist the GP of a person affected by redundancy to appropriately tackle the health issues that can arise as a result of unemployment. It will assist GPs to be more effective in helping their patients maintain good health, and should allow screening to be more specifically targeted, therefore being of greater benefit to the unemployed person."

Workers who are still employed in heavy industry will also be monitored as a control group, with plans to recruit workers from Tubemakers in the near future.

Answers to compulsive gambling

Measuring the blink of an eye could help identify people at risk of becoming compulsive gamblers according to a group of Hunter medical researchers.

Compulsive gambling is linked to Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD), a condition associated with low levels of serotonin in the brain. Serotonin is a naturally occurring chemical that helps nerve cells communicate with each other.

Chief Investigator of the study Ulrich Schall, will collaborate with researchers Pat Johnston and Vaughan Carr from the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences, and Frini Karayanidou from the Faculty of Science and Mathematics, to test whether compulsive gambling behaviour may occur in people who suffer from a mild form of OCD. They are conducting a study measuring blink eye responses to gauge the regulation of information entering the brain (sensorimotor gating).

"In this procedure, the eye blink response to a loud stimulus will be recorded electronically together with brain wave signals which are measured and then analysed," Ulrich Schal said. "Alterations to the eye blink response will be the measure of sensorimotor gating."

A unique feature of OCD is that people with the condition are aware that their behaviour is irrational, yet are still powerless to stop it. This research aims to measure the process of information going into and out of the brain in people with OCD, compulsive gamblers and people without either condition.

"Around 2.3 percent of adult Australians experience gambling problems so it's important to develop a lab test for OCD to assist with diagnosis and treatment," Ulrich said. "Current diagnosis is based on an assessment of a person's symptoms, which are characterised by obsessive thoughts and compulsive behaviours that interfere with normal life."

Comparing measurements in different people may help develop methods of identifying people at risk of developing OCD and compulsive gambling. It could also establish new treatments for people with these conditions to help overcome their compulsions.

Western Leagues Club has enabled the study to be undertaken with $16,000 sponsorship of a 32-channel neuroscan system as a way to record participants' eye blink responses and brain waves. The equipment will be used in the neurocognitive laboratory at the James Fletcher Hospital for similar mental health studies planned for the near future.
Carrying the torch

Dean of
Students and former
Director of the
University’s Special
Education Centre,
Professor Phil
Foreman, has been
selected as a
torchbearer in the
Olympic torch relay.
Phil will be one of
10,000
Australians to
participate in the
relay, which will
begin when the torch
is lit on 10 May
from a flame kindled
by the sun’s rays at a
special ceremony in
Olympia, Greece, home of the
original Olympic Games. He is
one of 5,000 community
torchbearers selected from around
40,000 nominations.
Phil’s nominator, Dorothy
Kallis, came into contact with him
when her son Tommy was taking
part in an early intervention
program run by the Centre.
“Many of the parents have no
idea how hard Phil and team
leader Anne Porter have worked
with their children,” Dorothy, who
was president of the parent body
for the Special Education Centre,
said.
“Both of them have done
fundraising for the Centre and
extra work with the parents on top
of what they’ve done for the
children.”

Dorothy nominated both
Anne and Phil and was delighted
that Phil will be taking part.
“The relay is a way of
showing the community the people
who are working hard for them
and who they might not otherwise
have known or heard of.”

Each torchbearer will run a
distance of between 500 metres
and a kilometer. Nominations for
the community participants were
assessed by 105 regional judging
panels under the supervision of the
National Australia Day Councils
and successful torchbearers were
announced on the eve of Australia
Day.

The relay will pass within
one hour’s drive of 85 percent of
the Australian population, travel
over 27,000 kilometres and is the
longest in Olympic history. During
its journey to Sydney, the Olympic
flame will travel on a surfboat at
Bondi Beach, on the Indian Pacific
train across the Nullarbor Plain,
on a Royal Flying Doctor Service
aircraft in the remote outback, and
by camel on Cable Beach at
Broome.

“I didn’t know I had been
minded for the relay,” Phil
explained. “When I got the letter
in November, it took me a while to
open it because I thought it must
be some sort of marketing letter.
When I got around to reading it, I
was thrilled.”

Michael Knight, the president
of the Sydney Organising
Committee for the Olympic Games
(SOCOG) said the relay is an
opportunity to spread the spirit of
the games to as many Australians
as possible and to link
communities across the nation.

“The Olympic flame will be
-carried through more than 1000
towns and suburbs between 8 June
and 15 September, and there will
be 188 lunch or evening
community celebrations,” said Mr
Knight. “Sixty-five per cent of the
torch’s travelling time will be
through rural areas, giving some of
the most remote Australian
communities a chance to see the
Olympic Torch Relay,” he said.
“The route the Olympic torch will
take around Australia means that
up to 15 million Australians will
be within one hour’s drive of its
journey.”

Mr Knight said that based on
the idea of an environmentally
friendly Games, the torch design
and fuel system showcased
benchmark technologies. The
design of the Torch includes three
layers, which are representative of
earth, fire and water. The inner
layer is polished stainless steel, the
middle layer is anodised
aluminium and the outer layer is
specially coated aluminium. The
inner combustion system is made
from copper, brass, aluminium and
stainless steel.

The Olympic flame will
spend one to four days in each
Australian capital city on its
journey around the nation. In
addition to the community
torchbearers, it will be carried by
5,000 high profile Australians
including entertainers, sports
people and former Olympians.
Phil will carry the torch
between a half and one kilometre
near Cliftonleigh, just outside
Maitland on August 30. He will
take advantage of the opportunity
to buy his torch for $352.

The image of the Olympic
torch was supplied by Susan
Tracey of the Olympic Torch
Relay media section, who finished
her Bachelor of Arts
(Communication Studies) at the
University last year.

Music for beginners

With international studies indicating that studying music in childhood develops skills
from spatial awareness to reasoning and memorisation, Hunter youngsters are benefitting
early by attending a range of courses offered by the Conservatorium of Music.
Coordinator of the program, Wendy Ireland from the Faculty of Music, said the
courses give children a head start both musically and in other important areas of their
development. “Besides developing aural skills, and learning to read and write music in a
holistic environment, we find that language skills and even self confidence are often
boosted,” Wendy said. “Another benefit to these classes is in the skills the children
develop in dealing cooperatively with others. While learning music children often become
better problem solvers and learn to express themselves creatively.”

Classes are offered in: Early Childhood Music for pre-schoolers aged 2-5 and for
infant school-aged children; Junior Instrumental Program for children from six years of
age; and Adult Music Appreciation at the Keyboard.

Small group tuition in some instruments and individual tuition in a wide range of
instruments and voice are also available for children, and a number of other courses and
an extensive range of ensembles are offered for adults.

For information call Shona d’Arbon on ext 8941.
A one-day workshop to assist Faculty Advisers and other staff who have dealings with international students, was attended by over fifty participants from all areas of the university. The workshop, held on 7th February, was sponsored by the External Relations Division and organised by Dr Anita van der Wal of IESD on behalf of the International Students Liaison Committee.

A highlight of the workshop was a session in which five students from different parts of the world answered questions from the audience about their arrival in Australia and their experiences at the university. Generally, they were very positive about their experiences and were grateful for the welcome that they had received. Accommodation was a problem for several of the students, who emphasised the importance of an orientation period of sufficient length to allow them to understand the accommodation system and be settled in before the semester begins. Professor Phil Foreman, Chair, International Students Liaison Committee. 

Y2K

Several university corporate systems were not Y2K compliant and many desktop workstations had potential problems with the date functions, which might have created havoc for the university after the date rollover occurred. These issues were addressed to ensure that disruptions were avoided. The current assessment of actual expenditure on the Y2K problem for the whole university is $1.8 million plus the estimated $2.7 million to implement the new Finance and HRM system.

IESD developed transition plans which covered the corporate information systems, network infrastructure, the telephone systems and the services to faculties and students. The plan was designed to ensure that IESD staff who manage critical systems were available to shutdown corporate systems and to backup data so that if there were any "catastrophes" the business systems could be reloaded once the event had passed. Many other IESD staff were on standby in case there were any unforeseen events that required them to be called in to assist with restoring services.

We have learned many important facts regarding our systems and business practices and the university has gained some significant benefits as a result of the work done at least in part because of the Year 2000 problem. These include the new Financial and Human Resources business systems. We have gained a greater awareness of risk management, risk exposures and business continuity. The university has begun a Business Continuity Planning process that will eventually result in the development of contingency plans for the whole organisation.

IESD (on behalf of the university) recently signed a Customised Campus Agreement with Microsoft which provides licences and upgrades for all university owned computers used in the university's main applications. The Vice-Chancellor approved funding this agreement from central sources.

The agreement covers such software as Office and Office Professional suites, Windows 32bit Upgrade, BackOffice Client Access Licence, Visual Studio and a number of electronic titles from Microsoft Press. These products not mentioned may still be purchased from University Software Sales. Any version of the above products may be run, and full-time staff members are also permitted to run the applications on their home computers for work related use only. Authorisation will be needed from your Head of Department to take advantage of this feature.

*Please Note - there are some applications which will not run on Windows 2000 at this time. These are Financial, GroupWise and Meeting Maker, others may surface as testing continues. Faculties and departments are not encouraged to move to the new products until a deployment plan has been put in place for their entire group. Advice and hardware recommendations should be sought from your support representative.

Further information can be obtained from Lyn Sinclair (6419) or Grant Collin (6421).
For sale
Mens 10 speed road bike $85 - ext 6698.

Porsche 944 1983, guards red, immaculate condition, 5 speed, air conditioned, power steering, power windows, long rego, $21,500, perfect for mid-life crisis. Ph: 49693801

336 Companion modem for Macintosh. All cables, and manuals plus MacComCenter Fax/ Voice software, $50. Bookcase, 6 shelf, 1.7 x 1 metres, made from recycled antique timber, $250.

Peugeot 306 XR, 04/97, red, manual 5-speed, 3-door, mags, airbag, climate air conditioning, keyless entry, immaculate, 80,500 kms, $18,500.

Call ext 5006 or 4934 5253.

Daihatsu Charade - 1992 manual SG sedan - power steering, air conditioned, rust-proofed, original owner (full service history), very good condition, low kms, white - $6950 ono, phone ext 5045.

Bicycles for the whole family - mother ($50), father ($50), daughter (16" Mountain bike - $90) and son (BMX - $80) - good condition - sell as a package for $250. Ph: 4956 1869 or 0412 128 727.

Upright mobile computer workstation, grey laminate, excellent condition, $50. Trimider exercise bike, $50, call Anne on ext 6444.

For sale by tender 01/00
The following items are available for sale by tender.

Item 1: Century Carpet Cleaning Machine - Plant Number 110888/000

Item 2: Photocopier; Ricoh FTS733 - Plant No. 118698/000

Item 3: Computer; Toshiba Laptop 400cdt - Plant No. 119537/000

For further information please contact Lorraine Alley ext 5202. The goods are sold in "as is" condition and the University reserves the right to reject any or all tenders. Tenders close on Wednesday, 31st March, 2000 at 3:30pm and should be forwarded to the Finance Officer - Assets, Financial Accounting, The University of Newcastle, University Drive, Callaghan 2308.

Please mark clearly on the envelope "TENDER 01/00".

Wanted to buy
Old valve type radios - Bakerlite Mantic Models or Timber Floor Models - buyer will call. Please ring 049 592319 (Mob) 0419765711

Music Lovers Club
The Music Lovers Club meets at the Conservatorium each second Tuesday of the month at 6.30pm till 9pm in Room 416 (4th Floor) for music and discussion.

Music Appreciation Group meets at the Conservatorium last Thursday of each month at 10.30am on the fourth floor in Room 416 for music and discussion.

For further information and a copy of "Program 2000" please contact John Allen on 4944 7421 or David Baker on 4968 1637.

Global photo competition
Students and staff are invited to enter a global photo competition to celebrate diversity. Prizes in the 'Snapshot of Global Diversity' competition include digital photographic equipment, with finalists to be acknowledged on radio and in newspapers as well as having their work exhibited in a public gallery and on the internet. Entry is free and photos should be lodged by 4pm on 30 June. For details call Gina Yarrow on (07) 4930 9142 or go to: www.cqua.edu.au/commrel/MCF/photocomp.html

Australian Red Cross Service Donormobile
The bus will be located adjacent of the Shorthland and Hunter unions from 9:30am to 4.30pm on the following dates:

Shorthland: March 7 - 9, August 1 - 3, October 10 - 12

Hunter: March 22 and August 10

March 7 - 21
"As You Like It" – production by the Department of Drama, directed by Victor Emeljanow in the University's Drama Theatre. For bookings and information call the Department on ext 5001.

April 21
University Choir presents Faure and Rutter Requiems conducted by Kim Sutherland and featuring soloists Christopher Allen and Anna Sandstrom – Great Hall. For information call Margaret Steinberger on 4969 5778.

April 27 - 28
"A Race for a Place: Eugenics, Darwinism and Social Thought and Practice in Australia" – sponsored by Dean's Unit, Faculty of Arts and Social Science. For information call Grant Rodwell, ext 6377.

July 30
University Choir presents a cappella music as well as works for piano and organ directed by Christopher Allen of Australian Opera – Conservatorium of Music Concert Hall. For information call Margaret Steinberger on 4969 5778.

November 4
University Choir presents Bach's Christmas Oratorio conducted by Peter Brock – Great Hall. For information call Margaret Steinberger on 4969 5778.
Health, Safety and Development

Mailroom news
Recent changes to sending parcels overseas have been introduced by Australia Post. If you are sending parcels overseas which contain only printed matter and which weigh less than 5kgs, you now only need to have PRINTED MATTER ONLY featured on the front and no longer require the green customs declaration sticker. For parcels with printed matter (or any other content) in excess of 5kgs, you will need to complete a special multi-leaf declaration form. For information call Mail Services Supervisor Michael Rye on ext 5732.

What is Workers’ Compensation?
If you are injured at work, you may be eligible to receive workers’ compensation benefits in relation to the injury under The Workplace Injury Management and Workers’ Compensation Act 1998, which provides a system of compensation for workplace injuries and assists injured workers to return to work.

Who is eligible to claim?
A person who is a “worker” or “deemed worker” under the Act, is eligible to lodge a compensation claim. Lodging a claim does not imply any commitment to the acceptance of the claim or of liability.

When to claim?
Benefits are payable when a worker suffers an injury or contracts a disease which arises out of, or in the course of, their employment where the employment is a substantial contributing factor. Workers’ compensation benefits may also be payable for injuries received on a normal journey to or from work (without significant interruption or diversion) or during an authorised absence, provided the worker did not expose themselves to any abnormal risk of injury.

How to claim?
If an accident or injury occurs, it is a university requirement that an Injury/Incident/Hazard Report be completed and submitted to the Health, Safety and Development Team within 24 hours of the accident or injury occurring. This report does not constitute a claim for workers’ compensation, but is part of the workers’ compensation process.

If medical treatment is required in relation to the injury, or the worker loses any time from work, the injured worker is eligible to lodge a claim for workers’ compensation. The injured worker will be contacted by the Workers’ Compensation Officer and invited to lodge a claim.

Workers’ Compensation claim
To commence a workers’ compensation claim, employees must consult a doctor (a registered medical practitioner). Injured workers should seek appropriate medical treatment as soon as possible after their injury. Employees have the right to choose their own treating doctor. The worker must advise the treating doctor that the injury is work related, and obtain a Workers’ Compensation Medical Certificate from the doctor. Further information can be obtained by calling 4969 5778. For details of the 2000 program see What's On (p19).

National Science Week will be celebrated around the country from Monday May 1 this year. An exciting schedule of activities including films, tours, exhibitions and demonstrations has been planned for Newcastle and the Hunter. The Faculty of Science and Mathematics will be putting on its SMART science shows in public libraries and the first of the “Sport? Fun Science!” shows will be seen in regional high schools. Keep an eye on What’s On for a detailed schedule or call Terry Burns on ext 5434, email asc@newcastle.edu.au.

Absence from work/lost time
It is a requirement that all absences be accounted for by an Application for Leave form. This will be processed against other leave credits such as sick leave, until liability is determined by the insurer. Should liability be accepted, the leave will be designated as “workers compensation”, and all other leave utilised will be recredited.

Ongoing treatment/other expenses
The injured employee should notify the Workers’ Compensation Claims Officer of any further medical consultations and other medical expenses e.g. specialists, radiographers, physiotherapists, pharmaceuticals, etc. Additional Workers’ Compensation Medical Certificates for consultations should also be submitted.

Acceptance of claims
Employees will be notified directly by the insurer if their claim has been accepted or denied. This is usually done within 21 days from the date of receipt of the claim. However, in the event that further information is required to assist in determining the claim, the process will take a little longer.

Rehabilitation assistance
If the injury results in five or more days absence, or the worker is unable to perform their usual duties or hours of duty, then the Rehabilitation Coordinator must be informed as this may legally oblige the university to prepare a Return to Work Rehabilitation program to assist them in their return. Further information about rehabilitation may be obtained from the Rehabilitation Officer on extension 8847.

Further information on workers’ compensation may be obtained from the Workers’ Compensation Claims Officer on extension 5263, or email sporens@mail.newcastle.edu.au.

Next Issue: Injury Management/Rehabilitation
Brain lab in coronary study