Newcastle Researcher in AIDS Breakthrough page 4
Vice-Chancellor’s Column

The tragic deaths of Mark Charles and Steve Rogers in a canyoning accident at Kanangra Boyd National Park over the Queens Birthday weekend have shaken the university, and have reminded all of us of the risks associated with some sporting activities.

Mark and Steve were outstanding graduates of the university who also performed a leadership role in the University of Newcastle Mountaineering Club. Steve Rogers was a first class honours graduate in environmental engineering, an employee of the Hunter Water Corporation and the Mountaineering Club President. Mark Charles graduated with a double degree in science and mathematics, gaining first class honours and the Dean’s Medal in 1998. At the time of his death, he was completing his PhD in engineering in the area of geomechanics.

At the memorial service held in the Griffith Duncan Theatre on 23 June, conducted by one of our University Chaplains, Pastor Andrew Dodd, warm tributes were provided to our mountaineers, and to the seven colleagues who participated in the canyoning expedition to the Kanangra Boyd National Park.

The Chancellor honoured the achievements of Mark and Steve both as distinguished graduates and important members of the University community. The Chancellor also paid tribute to the qualities demanded by the sport of mountaineering at the level of proficiency held by these men. These include self-reliance, physical and mental strength, and the capacity to support others. Mark and Steve also shared other fine qualities such as a willingness to take on and meet challenges, in their studies, at work, as well as in sport, the determination to achieve mastery of a difficult and daunting sport, and to be a valued friend and colleague to others.

Our deep condolences go to the families of Mark and Steve, and to their mountaineering colleagues, particularly the seven other participants in the expedition, who showed great strength and courage in their own experiences following the unfortunate accident.

All of us feel a profound sense of loss of these two lives, but will remember them as fine and successful young men who had achieved and experienced so much.

I am particularly grateful to everyone at the university who assisted with the important arrangements following the tragedy. May I especially mention members of the Mountaineering Club, the Sports Union, as well as Counsellors and Chaplains who provided great comfort during a difficult period. The President of the Sports Union, Dr Ian Webster, and our media staff are also commended for their professionalism.

I hope that our Mountaineering Club will continue to be one of the largest and most successful sporting organisations on Campus, and I wish them well in their future expeditions and adventures.

Letter to the Editor

“Over the past two weeks, and because of this tragedy, this university has been transformed from an institution into a community. I along with many others, have been amazed at the response, the rallying, the caring, the spontaneous and selfless goodwill, the love that has been demonstrated around these soulless corridors.”

These thoughts were expressed by Pastor Andrew Dodd at the memorial service held for Mark Charles and Steve Rogers.

July edition

Editorial enquiries and contributions should be directed to the Editor, Uninews, Marketing and Media Services, phone: 4956 1899 or 0412 128 727, email: prrh@alinga.newcastle.edu.au

Publisher: Fran Flavel
Editor: Kim Britton
Writers: Kim Britton, Katie Porritt, Cae Paterson
Photography: John Freund
Designers: Chris Paterson, Tim Burns

Enquiries regarding display advertisements and design services – Jacely Kitcher, phone: ext 5594.

Classified advertisements and other contributions for Etcetera should be sent to Rose Roohan, phone: ext 6463, email: prrh@alinga.newcastle.edu.au.

Cover: Newcastle researcher Alistair Ramsay is a major contributor to a national team that has developed a preventive HIV vaccine, which will begin human trials within three years. See p4. Our cover shot was taken by Chris Paterson of Intervision.
Memorial to mountaineers

The large crowd gathered in the Griffith Duncan Theatre on June 23 were silent as friends and family of Mark Charles and Steve Rogers filed across the stage laying personal tributes of their lives onto two tables. Many of those carrying the odd assortment of objects—a green singlet of Steve’s, a packet of Rice-a-Riso for Mark—wore a length of mountaineering rope across their chests, as did many in the audience.

A photograph of each of the men stood behind their tables. Mark’s parents placed his trumpet with his rugby jumper, his Evatt House jumper and an academic paper. Steve’s table held a hard hat, a golf club, his Kung Fu uniform and a map of a favourite place. Between the two tables, a third table held the red helmet of the University Mountaineering Club and a hacky-sack—potent symbols of the bond that Mark and Steve shared, a love of mountaineering that was to cost them their lives. The two men died on an expedition with seven others from the mountaineering club to Kanangra Boyd National Park in the Blue Mountains on June 10.

Chancellor Ric Charlton said at the Memorial Service that Steve and Mark had been distinguished graduates, who had participated in the university community as role models by leading canyoning expeditions.

“Mountaineering is a sport which demands self-reliance, physical and mental strength and the capacity to support others. These are the fine qualities of Steve and Mark and characteristics which enrich our community,” he said.

Steve Rogers graduated with a Bachelor of Engineering (Environmental) with First Class Honours and was the recipient of the Frank Henderson Scholarship in Engineering in 1993. He was placed on the Dean’s Merit List in 1993, 1994, 1995, 1996 and 1997, and was employed with Hunter Water. He was President of the University Mountaineering Club at the time of his death.

David Francis, a close friend who studied with Steve at the university, remembered him as always prepared, controlled and very modest. “He was a lively character—his auburn hair symbolic of the flame that burned within him,” he said. “He was a unique and special person.”

Director of the Development Unit, Dr Bernie Curran, who knew Mark Charles through Evatt House and the university’s rugby club, said Mark’s death had sparked a bushfire of emails around Australia from those who had known him during the six years he lived at Evatt House. He read some of the memories of Mark as “a second row football player with the brains of Einstein”, “a hard person to get to know but an even harder person to forget”, and someone whose “passion and competitiveness towards his study and his football will be fondly remembered”.

Mark, who grew up in Young in western NSW, completed his Bachelor of Mathematics/Bachelor of Science in 1997 and his Bachelor of Mathematics with First Class Honours the following year. He was a recipient of an Undergraduate Summer Vacation Scholarship in 1996 and an Honours Scholarship in Mathematics in 1997 and won the Mathematics Prize in 300 Level Mathematics in 1996. In 1998 he won a Postgraduate Research Scholarship to undertake a Master of Engineering research degree and was permitted to transfer to Doctor of Philosophy candidature. He was working towards his PhD when he died.

Mark’s father Ian called on those at the memorial service to honour the seven mountaineers who had been with his son and Steve when they died. While describing the difficulty he and Mark’s mother Heather were having in trying to come to terms with his death, Ian said they couldn’t hope to grasp the excruciating heartache that must have been felt by the group who found their bodies and then had to hike out leaving them behind.

“We salute you for your courage, we love you and share your grief and pray that the God of all comfort will comfort you the way he has us,” Ian said. “The things you have shared with us have greatly helped to ease our grief.”

Former President of the Mountaineering Club Steve Fitius said it was impossible to explain the motives behind the sport, which was intimidating but at the same time irresistible to those who pursue it. “There is an overwhelming desire to challenge ourselves...in the ultimate arena...to experience one’s life with the greatest possible intensity.” He described the club as an extended family with a “seemingly limitless capacity to comfort” and said he was “intensely proud” of the remaining members of the group that shared the ill-fated trip on the long weekend in June for rescuing themselves. “The grief is being shared across broad collective shoulders.”
Human trials of HIV vaccine to begin

Human trials will begin within three years on a preventive HIV vaccine developed by a national team which includes a Newcastle researcher as a major contributor.

The clinical trials, in Sydney and a developing country, are being made possible with a AUD27 million contract from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) in the United States.

Professor Alistair Ramsay, from the School of Biomedical Sciences in the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences, worked with Professor Ian Ramshaw from the Australian National University (ANU) in Canberra to develop the vaccination technique.

"It involves two separate injections," said Alistair. "The first is a DNA injection while the second contains the DNA gene boosted with a genetically-engineered virus called Fowlpox, which stimulates the immune system," he explained.

"Initial experiments indicate this double immunisation produces a massive increase in the body's killer T cells, and we believe it is this response which may protect people from HIV infection. The program will first establish the safety of the vaccine for use in humans, then see if it produces the correct immune responses in the body, before making sure those responses protect the body," continued Alistair.

"My role in this program is to make the vaccine work at the sites when HIV is usually first encountered. Since infection is often sexually transmitted, I am looking at making the genital tract immune from infection," he said.

Melbourne-based biotechnology company Virax Holdings Pty Ltd will manufacture the vaccine.

HIV is a global emergency for which there is no effective vaccine. There are 16,000 new infections of HIV every day in the developing world and the great majority of these are fatal.

The partners in the NIH contract are the University of Newcastle, ANU, Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO), University of Melbourne, Australian Federation of AIDS Organisations, the National Centres in HIV Epidemiology and Clinical Research, and HIV Social Research at the University of New South Wales, and Virax Holdings Pty Ltd.

No Day But Today!

An evening of music theatre entitled "No Day But Today" will be presented in the concert hall of the Conservatorium of Music on 27th August to raise funds for the Newcastle branch of the AIDS Council.

The concert will feature the talents of vocalists and instrumentalists from the Conservatorium who are donating their services for the cause and will showcase songs from various stage musicals arranged by Christopher Moore, an Honours graduate and Dean's medallist from the Faculty of Music. Backing the singers will be a small ensemble of musicians and all the songs will be performed acoustically.

Concert coordinator Trevor Whittaker said the concert will be intimate and elegant. "The audience will feel as though they are a part of the performance," he said.

The program will include songs by Stephen Sondheim and Andrew Lloyd Webber.

"AIDS is still a huge, frightening issue," explains Trevor. "It hasn't gone away and won't until a cure is found. That's the impetus behind this concert."

No Day But Today will commence at 7pm on Sunday 27th August. All tickets cost $12 and are available from Peppermint Books and Coffee at 37 Bolton St, Newcastle or Showcase City Cinemas at 31 Wolfe St, Newcastle. Any inquiries may be directed to Phillip Sketchley on 4921 8905.

International culture comes to Newcastle

From modern Germany's foreign policy to witchcraft and family values, the 5th Annual Intercultural Studies Conference held at the university at the beginning of June explored aspects of international culture.

A Forum of Social Change and Cultural Diversity showcased fifteen speakers and provided an opportunity for the local community and international scholars to discuss a diverse range of cultural issues.

Conference convenor Dr Graham Squires from the Department of Modern Languages in the Faculty of Arts and Social Science said the conference had attracted some outstanding scholars to Newcastle.

"Inter-cultural studies is a useful concept in understanding many of the issues which confront contemporary Australians such as relations with Europe and Asia, and the formation of the new global civilisation symbolised by the Internet," he said.

Keynote speakers were:

- Gunter Minnerup from the University of Birmingham in the UK, whose paper From Cold War to Globalisation – German Politics in Transition highlighted key issues and controversies since the collapse of communism and the reunification of Germany;

- Dr Craig Freeman, Director of the Centre for Japanese Economic Studies at Macquarie University, who focussed on Japan's present economic problems and attempts to overcome them in his presentation, Overcoming Past Success – Japan's Economic Dilemma; and

- Dr Chryssi Sidiropoulos from the Department of Western Languages and Literatures at the Bogazici University in Istanbul, Turkey, who spoke about aspects of education and coexistence in 19th and 20th Century Istanbul.

The conference was held in the McMullin Building on June 5 and 6.
Succeeding in business

A Newcastle conference shed some light on How to Become a Successful Entrepreneur Among Tremendous Change in the Business World in June.

Hosted by the Marketing and Enterprise Group in the School of Management, the conference attracted researchers from around the world.

Dr Gerald E. Hills from the Institute of Enterprise Studies at the University of Illinois at Chicago, a leading figure in the world of marketing, delivered the keynote address on the way in which entrepreneurs recognise business opportunities. With the sustained economic growth during the 1990s related to the increase in the number of venture opportunities, his research focussed on the process of recognising those opportunities and capitalising on that recognition.

"One unique skill of entrepreneurs may be their ability to perceive opportunities that others do not see," Dr Hills said. "The processes by which entrepreneurs recognise opportunities may include the idea discovery, creative insight, concept development, and informal evaluation stages in the opportunity recognition framework."

Other key themes for the conference included new edge entrepreneurship/marketing interface; teaching innovations and replications studies in entrepreneurship and marketing.

Conference Chair Associate Professor Bill Merrilees delivered a paper on innovation processes in David Jones department store between 1906 and 1927, casting doubt on recent assertions that retailers are far from entrepreneurial.

"Retailers have introduced some significant and radically new formats including superstores in several categories, and e-retailing with or without traditional shopfront outlets, as in the case of greengrocer.com.au," Bill said.

"Our contention is that early retailers, especially those operating a hundred years ago, were also very entrepreneurial and innovative."

The conference, held at Noah's on the Beach on June 13 and 14, was sponsored by the Industry Development Centre (IDC), the Faculty of Economics and Commerce Research Committee, and the University Union.

DESIGNED FOR Party Animals!

Are you the kind of person who lives life to the fullest — always 'on the go' with little time to slow down? Would you prefer to embrace life with a little more vigour and stamina? From the wilds of the Amazon jungle has emerged a solution to your needs...

Guarana is a South American herb whose exceptional properties were first introduced to the rest of the world by the Guarani tribe who gave the plant its name and used it for stamina to survive in the jungle. Today, all over South America and indeed the world, many others use the seeds of this creeping vine for much the same reason, to help them increase stamina and stay alert and wide awake.

But you don't have to go to the Amazon to obtain the benefits of this exceptional herb. Nature's Own "Wild Life" Guarana combines a concentrated 1000mg of Guarana seed, with all the benefits of oriental herbs and amino acids. Nature's Own "Wild Life" Guarana features Korean Ginseng, a popular herb among athletes which promotes stamina and endurance. This potent formulation also contains the ancient Chinese herb, Ginkgo Biloba which assists with the maintenance of blood circulation, along with the amino acids L-Glutamine and L-Tyrosine to relieve stress and anxiety. Add some "Wild Life" to your daily schedule and survive the jungle of modern life with renewed vigour and energy!

Nature's Own™

Use only as directed. If symptoms persist see your healthcare professional.

Nature's Own is a trade mark of Bulbant's Natural Health Products Pty Ltd. www.NaturesOwn.com.au
Ancient languages lost

Professor of Classics Harold Tarrant considers himself a member of an endangered species—of those who make the Greek and Latin languages central to a pursuit of “the Classics.”

“There is widespread concern that my generation of mostly older scholars today will be the last that really has acquired the knowledge of the classical languages in the rigorous way necessary to continue our research,” the softly spoken Harold lamented. “We do our best to train new people but those who come to classics today are primarily attracted by a fascination for the ancient world, whereas 20 years ago it attracted those who were good linguists.”

Harold says that Classics has adapted a great deal to meet the interests of today’s students and now means something different to what it would have when he was first drawn to it.

“Classics is used to be linguistic researchers who spent time studying all aspects of a particular canon of ancient texts. Today, most people teaching classics have wider historical, philosophical and archaeological interests, which need to be pursued through language. There are very few specialist linguists either in Australia or around the world nowadays.”

The swing away from the rigorous knowledge of Greek and Latin has led Harold and other classicists to escalate their work on translating ancient texts. “We need to continue translating in order to fulfill the needs of a future generation of scholars, who may be able to work out what they need to do for their own research but wouldn’t think of reading anywhere near as widely in the language as my own generation. There will always be people who read Greek and Latin competently but there have been those who have read it almost like their native language.”

With classical research ranging from the 8th Century BC to the 9th Century AD or beyond, the task of keeping track of linguistic changes during this vast span is daunting, Harold admits, especially given the use of dialects and regional variations in both Latin and Greek. “To think that fluency in ordinary Latin or Greek prose from the classical period would give you access to something written in verse or dialogue from another period would be fairly naïve,” he said.

Harold’s own research interests lie in the study of ancient philosophy, particularly Plato and his ancient commentators and critics. He has recently published a book on Plato’s First Interpreters, looking at Plato in terms of how he was interpreted in the ancient world as compared to the way we look at him today.

“I believe it’s a salutary thing to look at the way the ancients interpreted any text from slightly before their own era, and it can have a controlling influence on our own reading. For instance if someone today comes up with a wonderful theory about how Platonic dialogues should be read that hadn’t occurred to the ancient commentators, it probably wouldn’t have occurred to Plato either.”

Harold has paid special attention to a Commentary on Plato’s Gorgias by Olympiodorus, who lived in the 6th Century AD in Alexandria. He contributed an introduction and the bulk of the notes to a translation of this work co-authored with a philosopher and another classicist (Kimon Lycos and Robin Jackson), which was published in 1998.

The swing away from the rigorous knowledge of Greek and Latin has led Harold to look at the way the ancients interpreted any text from slightly before their own era, and it can have a controlling influence on our own reading. For instance if someone today comes up with a wonderful theory about how Platonic dialogues should be read that hadn’t occurred to the ancient commentators, it probably wouldn’t have occurred to Plato either.”

Harold has paid special attention to a Commentary on Plato’s Gorgias by Olympiodorus, who lived in the 6th Century AD in Alexandria. He contributed an introduction and the bulk of the notes to a translation of this work co-authored with a philosopher and another classicist (Kimon Lycos and Robin Jackson), which was published in 1998.

Harold found he had a talent for languages while studying Latin, Greek, and French at Sir William Borlase’s School at Marlow near London. He won a scholarship to Cambridge where he read Classics, developing an interest in Greek philosophy. He did his doctorate at Durham University and spent a year teaching at the University of Manchester before coming to teach at the University of Sydney. He came to Newcastle at the end of 1993 as Professor of Classics.

“Latin and Greek language studies have always been seen as difficult and elitist subjects and Latin has been dying out in New South Wales state high schools,” Harold said. “Ancient history studies of Greece and Rome, however, are very popular in the schools and a lot of things that classicists are interested in find their way into the ancient history curriculum. Because of the popularity of ancient history, NSW universities have maintained the viability of their classics departments through students who wish to return to these studies.”

When not researching ancient philosophy, Harold plays chess and takes a keen interest in ornithology. He belongs to the Hunter Bird Observers Club, which meets at the Shortland Wetlands once a month, and has recently studied local movements of the Restless Flycatcher, a small insect-eater that spends its winters around his home near Maitland.

Harold tends not to worry about the future of classics, preferring to get on with what needs to be done in the present in the hopes it is useful to others.

“I’m not one for navel contemplation,” he explained. “Many bird species make a comeback by adapting to new conditions, so why shouldn’t academics?”
ADSA puts drama department on world stage

The Department of Drama in the Faculty of Arts and Social Science hosted the annual Australian Drama Studies Association (ADSA) Conference at the David Maddison Building in July.

Based on the theme Performance and Spectacle, the conference attracted speakers and delegates from around the world and was opened by renowned theatre director, Peter Sellars. Director of the 2002 Adelaide Festival, Sellars told the conference that he hoped to create a completely Southern Hemisphere festival that reflected local talent rather than importing expensive companies from overseas. He aims to foster a “utopian” festival that encourages relationships with those who have never worked together before in Australia and the South Pacific.

Head of the Department of Drama Professor Victor Emeljanow said it was great exposure for Newcastle and the department to attract speakers of the calibre of Sellars to the ADSA conference. “Sellars is one of the most desirable directors in the world today, particularly renowned for his controversial productions of contemporary opera,” Victor said. “He was the youngest director of any American theatre company when at 26 he was appointed director of the American National Theatre and is an extraordinary man in his own right.”

The department invited speakers from a wide cross-section of disciplines in order to look at the conference theme from different points of view, Victor said. Alan Tomlinson, a sociologist who is Professor of Sport and Leisure Studies at the University of Brighton UK, delivered a keynote address. Rebecca Schneider, Professor in the Department of Theatre, Film and Dance at Cornell University in the US spoke on use of the body in performance. Professor Baz Kershaw from the University of Bristol in the UK is a world authority on the place of performance and theatre in the processes of democracy and delivered an address entitled Curiosity or Contempt: On Spectacle and the Human. His 30-year career includes work as a writer, director, designer and consultant to many of the most significant community-based theatre ventures in Britain. Ping Chong, a distinguished theatre director, choreographer, video and installation artist, spoke about his life growing up in New York’s Chinatown and how he began to perform. He showed a video of his work, which has been presented at major museums, festivals and theatres throughout the Americas, Europe and Asia.

Victor paid tribute to drama lecturer Kerrie Schaefer, who had ensured the smooth running of the conference, and to students from the Department of Design, who had converted the “Fish Bowl!” at the David Maddison Building into an interesting and exciting environment for conference delegates. He said the department had deliberately placed the conference in the Newcastle CBD to encourage interaction with the local community and had offered breakfast to delegates each morning and a bar each evening. “There was a lot of space for people to get together and discuss things raised at the conference,” Victor said. “We attracted delegates from universities as far afield as Japan, Ulster and New York with a high percentage of overseas visitors being postgraduate students. We have had a fantastic response from those who attended.”

Delegates to the four-day conference were entertained with a reading in the university’s drama theatre of a new play by playwright Carl Caufield, The Firebird, which is based on the life of Fyodor Chaliapin, and a performance by the Steelworkers Choir. The ADSA conference was held in the David Maddison Building from Monday, July 3 to Friday, July 7.

Spectacle draws UK academic

Olympic games opening ceremonies have come to symbolise much more than sport since the Los Angeles games in 1984, a visiting UK sports authority told the audience at the ADSA Conference.

Alan Tomlinson, Professor of Sport and Leisure Studies at the University of Brighton, said that the LA Olympics represented a watershed in the staging of the mega-sports event, with the spectacular opening and closing ceremonies asserting the superiority of the capitalist, free-American way over the oppressive, communist, totalitarian Soviet way.

“Allying Hollywood flair with USA political rhetoric, the ceremonies set a standard and an expectation for spectacle that succeeding host nations have felt compelled to emulate,” Alan said. “LA also privatised the Olympics, marking a key transformation point for the economics of world sport. It changed the pitch of events from the small scale to huge television deals and elite sponsors that we see in world football and other sports today.”

Alan, a sociologist whose most recent book Great Balls of Fire examines the hijacking of world soccer by big business, was attracted to the conference theme, Performance and Spectacle, and delivered the keynote address. It was his first visit to Australia and to Newcastle, where he will spend eight weeks as a research visitor in the Department of Leisure and Tourism Studies before attending the opening ceremony of the Sydney Olympics.

“I was flattered and pleased to be invited to the conference and thought it was excellent in several ways. The first was the stimulating inter-disciplinary nature of drama studies symbolised by the attendance of Peter Sellars, the global superstar of inter-disciplinarity. The second was the celebratory and fruitful crossover between theory and practice with drama studies academics continuing as practitioners, like sports experts who continue as players and coaches, only more so with their constant creative reproduction. And the third strength was the tone of the conference, which was a good blend of collegiality and critique, of generosity with rigour.”

UNINEWS Page 7
Food is important to us all - we need it to survive, for enjoyment and social interaction, and to trade. One area of the university making an important contribution to the food industry is the School of Science and Technology at the Central Coast Campus. After several years of offering Food Technology at undergraduate and postgraduate level, the School is poised on the brink of major developments in teaching and research.

Deputy Dean of the Faculty of the Central Coast and former Head of the School of Science and Technology at the Central Coast Campus, Professor Ron Wills, said that exciting initiatives are being realised in both areas. The School will offer a new degree focussing on the importance of food and nutrients to the body, the Bachelor of Human Nutrition, next year. "Students in the new degree will benefit from infrastructure already existing for the Food Technology area and vice versa," Ron said. Another course initiative is in the area of herbal therapy, with the School taking over responsibility for the Southern Cross Herbal School, that has been operating in Newcastle and the Central Coast for the past 20 years. "Through TUNRA we will continue to offer the Herbal School's existing certificates and diplomas and plan to offer a university degree, the Bachelor of Herbal Therapies in 2002," Ron said. "I see it as a perfect complement to the research being conducted on herbal therapies within the School."

There is a lot of research being conducted within the School in both food technology and herbal therapies, Ron said. "One of the main programs is in post-harvest fruit and vegetables. We are looking to develop various technologies to help the horticulture industry maintain the quality of their products," he said.

The most successful work has been done with nitric oxide, which has the effect of 'tricking' plants to delay the ageing process. The process is not akin to genetic modification, Ron explains, as nitric oxide is a natural substance that binds to the enzyme that ethylene (the ageing chemical) acts on. "It blocks the ethylene degrading the tissues and slows down the rate at which water evaporates from the plants," he said. This work is in collaboration with Professor Ya'acov Leshem from the University of Bar-Ilan in Israel and is effective for fruit and vegetables, with possible benefits for the cut flower industry.

Another major area of research is in medicinal herbs. "Our research is directed towards maintaining the highest quality in the product sold to consumers," Ron said. "In our minds, the quality equates to the levels of active constituents and consequently the efficacy of the product. We are not in the business of saying whether herbal remedies work or not, but base our research on the quality and the technologies that preserve the constituents in them," he said.

Ron's is the only group in Australia carrying out this type of research. The Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation (RIRDC) has matched the group's research capacity to industry needs many times. The herbs under scrutiny are Echinacea, Skullcap, Ginseng, Valerian and St John's Wort (Hypericum).

Dr Bob Hosken's research program involves new products from grains and the development of soy products and is being conducted in conjunction with local food manufacturers such as Sanitarium. It focuses on nutritious products, viz low fat, high fibre wheat noodles, improved soy milk and the development of soy cheese. "An additional area of his research is low fat ice cream, in conjunction with another local food manufacturer, Sara Lee," Ron said. "The trick is to retain the texture and flavour that we traditionally identify with ice cream."

Another project is promoting inter-island trade between small South Pacific islands to reduce their dependence on imported produce, which is being undertaken by Dr Fa'ale Tumaali who is working in conjunction with the Faculty of Agriculture of the University of the South Pacific. Dr Tumaali is collaborating with the CSIRO Stored Grains Laboratory in Canberra to find safer ways to control insect infestation in stored grains and is also conducting research with local food company Sensational Foods into ways to improve the environmental conditions of commercial storage.

Dr Michelle Adams is working in the area of probiotics - the use of naturally occurring microorganisms for health benefits in foods. "It makes sense to use 'good' or 'friendly' bacteria to reduce the incidence of disease for the consumer," Ron said.

Daikon, or Asian white radish, a food staple that is eaten every day in some Asian countries, has been a research focus in collaboration with the NSW Department of Agriculture and the Hunter Valley Herb Farm at Merriwa. "We have been developing the technique to process the radish into a range of products specifically for the Asian markets, particularly Japan where there is a strong export market potential due to increasing urbanisation and population growth," Ron said. "At present we are involved in a pilot project at the Campus, refining the processing and packaging techniques to test in Japanese restaurants and Asian food stores before launching into the export market."

During his five years at the Campus, Ron has encouraged research as collaborative projects with industry groups. "We always have an industry partner in the research because when we make findings there is a better chance of it being introduced commercially. Too much research in public institutions stops too early and this is where the technology transfer fails. When no one takes responsibility for the technology transfer, the capacity for value adding to agriculture can be lost."

This is particularly relevant where researchers are asking people who have a production ethos to get involved in a secondary industry. "Our aim is to stay involved with the project until the production and market capacity is established so that they can take the project forward," Ron said.
Enhancing attention in young children

Getting children to do their homework or clean their rooms without constant reminders is almost impossible for some parents. Rather than sticking to the job, children tend to get sidetracked. This is because the frontal lobe of the brain—the part of the brain involved in control of attention—is not yet fully developed.

Researchers from the School of Behavioural Sciences in the Faculty of Science and Mathematics are studying the ability to control attention in young children, in an effort to understand how their attention can be enhanced, and what is disrupted in those children who have problems learning and concentrating.

Children complete a computer game which examines their ability to switch concentration between two tasks. The brain’s response to the task is monitored by simultaneously recording an electroencephalogram.

The research is being conducted by Dr Frini Karayanidou, a lecturer in psychology; Professor Philip Hazell, head of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry; Honours student Lynn Fox and Masters of Clinical Psychology student Lyn Jenkins.

"While the part of the brain which deals with concentration is not fully mature in primary school aged children, it is rapidly developing," explained Frini. "For example, when your child is in Year 1, you probably have to put their lunchbox in their bag so they don’t forget it. By Year 6, you might not even have to make their lunch because they’ve remembered," she continued.

"If we can determine how the frontal lobe of the brain develops in children as they progress through primary school, we will be able to help design educational programs to enhance attention and concentration. We will also be able to better understand the nature of disorders such as Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), where the control of attention is disrupted," she concluded.

The research is funded by the Australian Research Council and the John Hunter Children’s Health Research Fund. The researchers are seeking children of primary school age to participate in the study. For information contact Frini on ext 5457.

Psychology research rewarded

Two psychology researchers from the School of Behavioural Science have received awards at international conferences for their research.

Deborah Hodgson, Head of the Laboratory of Neuroimmunology, accepted an Advances in Science award at a conference of the International Society for Psycho-neuroimmunology held at Wilmington in the United States in May. She also received a citation in the neuroimmunology field for her research, which tests whether exposure to stressors, such as maternal separation or bacterial infection, during the early neonatal period can result in impaired wound healing and resistance to tumour colonization in adulthood.

Deborah said, "The research was carried out in rodents but has particular relevance to humans."

Maternal separation and bacterial infection are common occurrences in newborn babies and both result in an increase in corticosterone levels. A synthetic corticosterone (dexamethasone) is also commonly administered to premature infants to aid in lung development. "The long term implications of exposure to stress or neonatal dexamethasone treatment have not been fully investigated," Deborah said, "but the results from our laboratory clearly indicate that such interventions in the young infant may have significant long term health implications."

The second researcher to win an international award is Michael Allen, who received Best Junior Scholar paper award from the International Society for Political Psychology at their conference held in Seattle in the United States at the beginning of July.

His paper reports on research data Michael gathered while studying for his PhD at Victoria University in Wellington, New Zealand. The study explored the associations among income level, economic beliefs and party preference in terms of self-interest and ideological theories of political party preference. Results showed that people who have gained or lost the most from the implementation of neo-liberal policies form party preference mainly from economic self-interest, whereas middle income earners form preferences from ideological congruence.

Michael, a lecturer in the School of Behavioural Sciences, is originally from the United States. He said there had long been heated debate between those who believe self-interest is the main motivator for party preference and those who think sociological factors determine which way people vote.

His survey of 500 voters in Wellington tested people’s beliefs as well as their income levels and other indicators of self-interest.

"New Zealand at that time provided an opportunity to examine people’s views in the wake of neo-liberal changes in economic policies," he said. "The society moved very rapidly from a welfare state to a capitalist society. Although the political system is different here, Australia is moving in that direction as well.”

UNENEWS  Page 9
OF ARCHITECTURE

The Art of Architecture

The changing face of contemporary and historic architecture was discussed at a seminar held in the Faculty of Architecture at the University of Sydney. The event, attended by an international conference entitled "Re-framing Architecture,"

Thirty of the world's leading architects were involved in the seminar, discussing the potential of new materials and design in architecture. The conference, moderated by Michael O'Neal, was the first of its kind in Australia and the world.

"In architecture, there is an aesthetic and a functional dimension, there is a struggle between the forces of science and art," said O'Neal. "This dynamic reflects the conflict between political and social forces, and the power struggle between the forces of science and the subconscious.

The new millennium is a time to reassess the past and question the future of architecture and its possibilities," O'Neal said. The key ideas and architectural concepts of the future are expressed in the world today. The conference was held from 23rd to 25th June at the Customs House Hotel, Newcastle. The seminar was presented by Dr. Michael O'Neal and K. John Moore and was published by the University of Newcastle. The book, entitled "Re-framing Architecture: Theory, Science, and History," is available in the Coop Bookshop in a couple of weeks time.

"We have a very good school here with an international standard of expertise in architectural theory," he said. "The conference was the first to bring together people that don't necessarily talk together by necessity only and that is a unique success for us."
Fine art student Pearl Moon wasn't sure why she was so attracted to costume jewellery and trinkets until she discovered her passion for doll making - a passion that has led to a successful small business venture. “I've been a great collector all my life, haunting the garage sales and second hand shops looking for cast metal objects and beaded jewellery,” Pearl said. “Now I use them for my dolls.” Pearl, who trained as a pattern-maker in her native New Zealand, takes the inspiration from her unique cloth dolls from the colours and textures of fabrics. What began as a part-time supplement to Austudy while she was studying the Open Foundation Course at Newcastle in 1998 has become so pervasive that she has been forced to defer her art studies for twelve months to pursue opportunities to teach and make collectable dolls.

“Like most artistic people, I have to compromise,” Pearl said. “I'd love to make dolls all day but I have to feed myself and my son, so I had to develop the teaching side.” Now, two years later, she has been all over Australia teaching and has been invited to teach in the United States next year. “Fortunately, there's been a huge growth in cloth doll making as a hobby-leisure time activity, with the demand for teachers virtually doubling every year.”

An ancient art, cloth dolls have been around for thousands of years, being found in Egyptian pyramids. The art form was extensively developed in Japan and the Asian world but dolls have traditionally been regarded as toys and not art objects in the West. Pearl says that the last 10 to 15 years has seen a growth in galleries specialising in figurative art and that cloth dolls are beginning to be valued by collectors.

“People began by collecting antique porcelain dolls, which then evolved to an interest in modern porcelain dolls and now moved to cloth dolls,” she said. Beginning her university studies after her Sydney craft business failed, Pearl not only discovered a hidden talent for painting (in which she is majoring) but has also found her course enormously beneficial to her art practice.

“It's opened whole new worlds for me. I had very middle class views about art and its place in society and it's been a fantastic experience to learn about post-modernism and art theory.” Pearl also enjoys being part of a community of artists and learned some very practical skills, such as how to compile a portfolio and make a submission to a gallery that have helped her career. Another invaluable skill she learned as part of her studies was computer use, which put her in touch with an international network of doll enthusiasts and clubs. She has developed a doll making course that will be launched over the Internet in the United States in August.

“I'm absolutely thrilled about teaching online and I'm looking forward to the opportunity to be the first person to offer Internet based courses in Australia,” Pearl said.

She has also utilised her pattern-making experience to create patterns for her own creations, which she sells internationally.

“I look forward to doll-making becoming a more recognised art form. I believe that in the future, galleries and up-market craft shops will seek out doll makers because they recognise it as a significant art form.” Pearl's dolls, with beautifully hand moulded and painted faces and exquisitely crafted costumes, take between seven and ten days to create. Pearl can be contacted by telephoning 4960 8579 or email moondoll@primus.com.au.
School boys have their say

How can schools motivate, reward and respect boys? In an Australian first, boys from four secondary schools will present their solutions to the problem plaguing the country’s educators.

The forty-five boys from schools in Queensland and New South Wales will present “Boys Speak Up” to the Teaching Boys – Developing Fine Men national conference, being held in Brisbane next month.

Conference convenor Richard Fletcher says we are not used to asking boys for their views. “We assume they will be inarticulate or want the wrong things,” Richard said. “But if we are going to address the real dilemmas of boys’ poor academic performance and social skills we will have to start listening. Our jails, casualty stations and morgues are full of boys. So too are our remedial reading and detention classes. We can’t solve these problems by doing more to the boys, we have to start working with them, and that means listening to them.”

The boys from three of the schools will have been meeting to address four key questions centred on what schools can do to help boys achieve greater success, have more choices, develop a sense of belonging and gain respect. Boys from a fourth school, Brisbane State High School, will take part in an unrehearsed interview in front of the 350 conference delegates. They will be asked their views of boys’ and girls’ behaviour, good and bad teachers, and their hopes and aspirations for the school.

Boys from St Pius X in Newcastle will describe their initiative to improve their school. They will present their Year 9 boys’ list of suggestions, and describe how the staff, other students and parents have reacted to their “speaking up”.

Richard Fletcher manages the university’s Men and Boys Program and is a lecturer in the Family Action Centre and the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences. He has been assisting schools across Australia and New Zealand to improve boys’ learning and social skills.

“Engaging boys is the key,” he says. “It doesn’t matter how relevant the curriculum is, or what rewards and threats we promise, if the boys are not engaged, they won’t learn.”

The Teaching Boys – Developing Fine Men conference is the third national gathering to consider boys’ schooling and will be held in August.

With the completion of our series Spotlight on the Deans, Uninews will now present a series looking at the newly formed schools in the Faculties of Medicine and Health Sciences, and Science and Mathematics through the eyes of the Heads of Schools.

School of Biomedical Sciences
Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences
Head, Professor Peter Dunkley

Disciplines

Biomedical Sciences is the largest of the new schools in the faculty and includes the following disciplines: Anatomical Pathology, Anatomy, Human Physiology, Immunology and Microbiology, Medical Biochemistry (including the Cancer Research Unit and the Experimental Pharmacology Unit), and Medical Genetics.

Compatibility

Biomedical Sciences includes all the pre-clinical basic sciences and some of the clinical basic sciences. It comprises a group of disciplines that look at what humans are, how they normally function and how they respond when things go wrong. The school teaches all these basic sciences to nursing, all the health science courses and the Bachelor of Medicine. We have recently established the Bachelor of Biomedical Science, which has its first honours students now. This course differs from science based courses in that it is more clinically focussed and uses a problem based approach to learning.

Strengths

There are advantages from bringing these disciplines together. They are all laboratory-based, use similar equipment, and have...
similar ideals in relation to teaching and research. By forming a critical mass of numbers, we can achieve a lot of economies. For instance an ultra-centrifuge machine costs around $150,000 each and when we all move together, we won't need as many. There are many things we can do jointly including establishing a Centre for Life Sciences with the School of Biological and Chemical Sciences that will bring together all the university's basic scientists who have similar ideals. It also puts together a package that makes sense structurally and allows us to act as a single department for teaching and examination purposes.

Challenges

One of our biggest challenges is to physically rationalise the school. Most of us are in the Medical Sciences Building and the new Life Sciences Building. However, the discipline of Immunology and Microbiology is housed in the David Maddison Building, Genetics is at Waratah and the John Hunter Hospital along with Anatomical Pathology. Ken Beagley made more than 150 trips from the David Maddison building to Callaghan last year, for instance. If we are together, we have a critical mass for research, we have all the teachers together, we have new facilities and laboratories in the Life Sciences Building and we get all the advantages that come from sharing information with each other. When we are split into different places, we can never feel part of a whole.

I think there's another disadvantage in splitting the faculty into schools and that is the likelihood of disputes between schools over money, space and staffing. We need to retain a sense of the faculty and the importance of its overall aims. I see the potential for disruption and differences between the schools. Another potential disadvantage is the possibility that we will be distanced from the professional and clinical groupings that we are currently allied to, for instance nutrition and dietetics.

Head of School

I hate the work associated with being HOS. It is an enormous load, both in administration and emotionally in dealing with staff crises, etc. You tend to be caught between the Dean and the discipline heads. The university thinks the disciplines will disappear as entities but I don't see that and will not encourage that. The HOS position is very distracting from the responsibilities of teaching and research, from which there is no relief.

I have had a vision, however, since becoming a professor five or six years ago of having a school and an improved relationship with biology that has come about in the Centre for Life Sciences. I want to see that through. The world will be totally different in the future as a result of all the developments in genetics and molecular biology. People will benefit in health terms from advances in neuroscience, genetics and cancer biology, and infection and immunity. These are three research areas we'll be focusing on. When we form the Centre, we will be teaching and working with biological scientists and eventually we'll research together. That's the exciting part of my vision.

GST Seminars

The GST is now operational and impacts significantly on the university. During June a series of seminars were presented by senior staff from the Finance and Property Division which dealt with the general impact of the GST on the university. The seminars also covered specific action required of staff within faculties and divisions to ensure that the university is able to meet its statutory requirements and that GST paid is recovered.

While these seminars were well attended, it has become apparent that not all departments/units/grant holders were sufficiently represented. This has been evidenced by the number of basic enquiries being received by finance staff and the number of transaction coding errors.

Accordingly, two GST question and answer sessions will be held in early August which will allow those staff who could not attend previous sessions, or those who still have uncertainties regarding the GST, to raise any GST issues they may have.

Details of the seminar dates and venues are:

- Wednesday 2 August from 1:30pm to 2:30pm in RW1-49 (Richardson Wing)
- Thursday 3 August from 3:00pm to 4:00pm in CT202 (Computing and Information Science)

All staff who have not attended previously should take the opportunity to attend.

It is important to note that if staff within departments/units/grants do not take the correct action in relation to the coding of GST transactions that significant costs may be incurred by the university, which would directly impact on allocations/grants, etc. It is therefore crucial that staff who undertake financial transactions on behalf of the university have an understanding of the GST impact on transactions.

BRIAN ENGLISH
Deputy Vice-Chancellor

Home-Start rewarded

The university's highly acclaimed Home-Start program, which offers practical support to families with young children, has received two prestigious national awards in recent months. The program was highly commended in the inaugural National Child Abuse Prevention Awards presented by the National Child Protection Council and within weeks won a Merit Award from the National Institute of Criminology for the prevention of violence against women.

Home-Start trains volunteers to help families, with children aged from birth to five years, who are experiencing difficulties. Volunteers provide an extra pair of hands as well as friendship. Established in the UK in 1973, the program now runs in 356 locations around the world. Its popularity is growing in Australia, where new programs are being established through the Families First government initiative.

Michelle McDonnell from HomeStart said the program had built a reputation at a national and international level as a model of excellence in voluntary home visiting with families. "Receiving these awards is recognition of the standard of support that Home-Start offers to families in our community," she said.
Carolyn Jones, from the Faculty of Nursing, recently passed away after a short struggle with leukaemia. Carolyn had worked at the university for ten years beginning in the Finance Division. At her funeral service, many friends from across the university recalled their experiences with her as a colleague. She will be remembered as a person of enormous goodwill and integrity.

Carolyn was born in Broken Hill and in many ways demonstrated the "true grit" characteristics that many attribute to Australians who grow up in that remote environment. Her university colleagues remember a hardworking, committed person who "told it how it was". They said that Carolyn was a person who was prepared to grow professionally and accommodate change, a person who loved her work. Nevertheless it is with great humour that they also recall a "direct and straight talking individual". We remember with great fondness her capacity to say, "no, I simply can't do that!" in her dealings with colleagues and students with unreasonable expectations and timelines. She was however of enormous assistance to staff and students, both Australian and international.

One of her finest attributes was a capacity to forgive and move forward, always demonstrating sensitivity to the needs of others.

Most recently, Carolyn worked within the Centre for Nursing Research and Practice Development. During the last five years she contributed to changing the faculty profile by undertaking a support role in a number of research projects and consultancies. We have a lot of photographic evidence of her at work and these show her ever-changing array of hairstyles and colours. Some photographs show her personal displeasure about the unfortunate choice she had made on the day.

She managed to combine her work life with a passion for chocolate, which she kept close by at all times whilst re-committing herself daily to a diet regime. She was also passionate about the Swans AFL football team. Screen savers, mouse pads, scarves and other memorabilia adorned her workstation. During her illness, staff managed to secure a Swans jersey signed by Tony Lockett. This gave her great pleasure during times when she felt personally challenged.

Carolyn was devoted to her family. Following the death of her husband, a schoolteacher, Carolyn set about the task of raising her three children, Phillip, Mark and Kendy. She shared with us the obvious pleasure that she received from her immediate and extended family. We all miss her, not only because of her contribution to the university but because of the person who was truly connected to and concerned for people.

Vale Carolyn Jones

The following tribute is based upon the eulogy delivered at Jennifer's funeral by her friend, Dr Sooky Smith, CEO of The University of Newcastle Research Associates (TUNRA).

Jennifer was born in Lithgow 42 years ago this July...she was noticed early in life as the girl zooming around...in the green V-Dub and with that classic blonde bob, which became her trademark.

My friendship with Jen began when our daughters attended childcare together...we found we had a lot in common and a great bond formed which strengthened the longer we knew each other.

Her beloved brother Greg once described Jen as 'Very, Very'.

What an apt description...over the last fourteen years she had managed to design, build and/or renovate four homes, including beautifully landscaped gardens and pools, hold down her job and raise Clem and Maddy, all the while looking fabulous...I forgot to mention that she also spoke fluent Spanish...dabbled in Italian and Vietnamese, fashioned many of her own clothing creations, studied the flute through the Sydney Con, was an award-winning Scottish dancer, and knew how to mix concrete, lay pavers and wield a circular saw! I doffed my hat to her often...she was an amazing lady.

1999 saw her...take on a new senior role with Newcastle City Council, which she embraced wholeheartedly. In her short time at the Council, Jen established herself as a true professional and natural leader. It seems no coincidence that, earlier this year and for the first time ever, the Council won the State and National Finals of the annual Institute of Municipal Management competition, a skills-based contest involving teams from councils throughout Australia and New Zealand. Jen had led the team and fellow members dedicated the victories to her in recognition of her unparalleled contribution...Jennifer treated her life as a work of art. She loved beauty and order...She loved the good things in life: wine, gourmet food, opera, theatre, film, art, [and] travel...

Jennifer, you and your aura have touched each and everyone of us. You are in our hearts and thoughts, and your magic lives on vividly and completely in your beautiful children...
Auchmuty’s life examined

A biography by Emeritus Professor Ken Dutton examining the fascinating life of the university’s first vice-chancellor, James Auchmuty, has been released.

Auchmuty: The Life of James Johnston Auchmuty reveals Professor Auchmuty’s involvement with British intelligence during World War II in Ireland and in Alexandria, Egypt, where he was an academic at Farouk I University.

Professor Dutton claims that Auchmuty was expelled from Egypt in 1952 and came to Australia through his MI5 links.

“In January 1952, he lived in a big house in Alexandria but in the July he was living in a hut in the mud of a Sydney winter,” Professor Dutton told the Newcastle Herald.

Friends and colleagues of Jennifer, who was a lecturer in the Department of Finance and Accounting in the Faculty of Economics and Commerce for 12 years, have established an award in her memory. The Jennifer Roncek-Jones Award will be offered annually to the best student of sufficient merit in the Accounting and Finance Honours program, who will receive a medal and a financial sum. In order to establish the perpetual award, more than $5,000 will need to be raised. Donations to the university fund are tax deductible and a register of donations will be kept.

If you would like to contribute, cheques can be sent to Angela di Santo in the Department of Accounting and Finance. For information contact Associate Professor Jim Pears on ext 3048.

Auchmuty, with wife Margaret and their young family, lived in Bradfield Park Migrant Hostel before he took a post with the NSW University of Technology.

In the course of writing his biography, Professor Dutton modified the picture he had of Auchmuty. “I moved from seeing him as a conservative and came to view him as a small-l liberal, who in his younger days had come close to embracing socialism,” Ken explained. “I wanted to correct the prevailing view which sees his importance as lying solely in the establishment of the University of Newcastle. I tried to underline his national and international achievements, which I think had not been fully recognised.”

Justice Michael Kirby, who launched the book in Sydney last month, said, “James Auchmuty’s peculiarities, many of them admirable, make this biography by Kenneth Dutton immensely readable...This deft biography engages the attention and ultimate admiration of the reader.”

Emeritus Professor A.N. Jeffares, a specialist in Irish literature who wrote the Foreword, writes: “It is an excellent biography written with skill and sensitivity, a tour de force in every way: a model life indeed.”

Over 100 people attended a launch of the biography by Deputy Chancellor Trevor Waring at Pepperina’s bookshop in Newcastle on June 23 and Professor John Ramsland, Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Social Science launched the book on campus at a function at the Coop Bookshop on June 13.

“I depicted Auchmuty as I saw him - warts and all,” Ken said, “though I was conscious that not everyone would agree with my portrait of him.”

Ken recited the following variant of Bunthorne’s famous song from Gilbert and Sullivan’s “Patience” at the Pepperina launch, prefacing it by telling the audience that as he has retired as a French scholar, he no longer needs to keep up with fashionable French theories such as Postmodernism with which young scholars bore their hearers.

If you’re anxious for to shine in the academic line as an intellectual bore, you must do a good impression of Postmodernist expression — it’s the literary law.

Be eloquent in citing from unreadable French writing, using modern paradigms;

For the meaning doesn’t matter — all you need to do is chatter — in these existential times.

And everyone will say, As you deconstruct away, “If this Postmodernist young Prof’s too avant garde for me, Why, what a very singularly chic young Prof this chic young Prof must be.”

But when you’re getting old and your knees begin to fold, then Biography’s the thing:

You can dig up ancient stories and recall forgotten glories of a past to which you cling.

Though you’re suffering neuralgia you can call upon nostalgia and evoke the days of yore,

And you’ll find your reputation beats the younger generation as an intellectual bore.

And everyone will say, As you limp your creaking way, “If this old bald biographer’s not POSTmodern but PRE-,

Why, what a most exceptionally dull old Prof this dull old Prof must be.”
The former Hunter Gymnasium has been substantially redesigned for its new use as the Student Services Centre. The building was conceived as a "one stop shop" for most student service needs. It houses the Health Service, Careers, the Dean of Students and Student Administration functions including Student Enquiries, HECS and Fees, Examinations, Student Admissions and Student Support. The Cachiers and the Revenue section have also been relocated to the building providing a much more open and accessible student interface. There is a much larger enquiry counter and the large foyer space will shortly be equipped with several computer terminals for students to access online information.

The original Hunter Gymnasium was built in 1971 and remained in generally good condition, but had outlived its function with the advent of the new Forum complex and the Health and Physical Education building. The large open areas and void spaces were conducive to conversion to open office space, and its location near the Chancellery is close to the geographic centre of the campus. The conversion included the addition of 450m² of additional mezzanine floor space to the top level, with two large void spaces allowing daylight to penetrate to the level below via the roof level skylights. They also provide a path for natural ventilation between different levels in the building.

The building has been retrofitted with a lift for disabled access to each of the four staggered floor levels. A sophisticated air conditioning system has been installed, which has also been designed to allow excellent natural ventilation through the new operable external windows and high level louvres - when the outside conditions are appropriate. It is envisaged that the building would be naturally ventilated on mild days and revert to air conditioning only when required. This innovative mode design allows the occupants to have greater control over their immediate environment, reduces energy costs and provides more fresh air for the building's occupants. All aspects of the building's performance in terms of comfort levels and daylighting were modelled using advanced software technology, which also assisted in the design of the extensive sun shading for the glazed walls of the building, which still allows some winter sun to penetrate the building.

On the western side of the building, the former basketball courts are currently being landscaped to provide semi-private areas of seating for staff and students. Native species with flowers will be planted and it is intended to use some areas for the display of sculptural works by students of the School of Fine Art.

Parking immediately around the building is limited to disabled permit holders and short term parking spaces. The intent is to provide good pedestrian access to the building in line with the overall strategy of keeping vehicles to the perimeter of the campus and developing the core areas as pedestrian precincts. To the east, the road area is being paved as a shared pedestrian zone and through traffic to the ring road will be restricted.

The adaptive re-use of the Hunter Gymnasium has achieved extremely cost effective additional floor space for the university. At a total project cost of just over $3m, the 2,400m² of refurbished space cost approximately $1,100 per square metre, which compares very favourably with the cost of a new building of this nature.

The schematic design for the Centre was undertaken by architectural staff of PPE, led by Geoff Whitnall. The documentation of the project was undertaken by consultants Shaddock Smith. Where appropriate, the building's original finishes have been maintained, including the internal Tasmanian Oak wall linings and timber floors. The new Centre provides a pleasant and healthy environment for staff and a convenient service point for students, and is an attractive addition to the university's built assets.

Rural health visit

A group of students from rural and remote NSW high schools visited the university in July as part of a long-term strategy to solve the crisis in rural health.

The thirty five Year 10 students were participating in a five day residential Health Careers Workshop at three participating universities – New South Wales, Sydney and Newcastle. They toured the universities campuses, visited medical facilities and took part in hands on health sessions including activities such as plastering.

Kerrie Bissett from the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences, who coordinated the Newcastle leg of the visit, said the students all wanted to enter into a professional health degree when they finish school and the workshops provided them with motivation during the two years leading up to their HSC.

"The problem of providing health services in rural Australia is a serious concern," Kerrie said. "This program works with the health professionals of tomorrow as a strategy of recruiting and retaining them in rural and remote communities."

The workshop is organised as part of High Schools Health Careers Week, part of a wider project – The Rural High Schools Health Careers Project – coordinated by the NSW Rural Doctors Network and aimed at promoting multidisciplinary health professions to rural and remote high school students.

The students visited Newcastle on July 11 and 12, touring the John Hunter Hospital, attending information sessions in the Medical Sciences Building and visiting Wollotuka Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Centre and The Forum sports and aquatic centre.
The university continues to develop the fabric of its IT systems and services through its IT Infrastructure Plan. Due to the focus on the new student system (NUSTAR), this year is relatively quiet in terms of other major infrastructure development projects. Highlights of the projects currently in progress are provided below (as at June 2000):

**Corporate Information Systems**

With total expenditure expected to be around $5 million the new Student Information System (NUSTAR) is by far the most significant project to be funded through the Plan in 2000. The project is well under way and aiming to “go-live” in the first half of 2001. Consultants from Price Waterhouse Coopers are working with the university project team to assist the implementation of the Peoplesoft software.

The upgrade to version 9.2 of FinanceOne necessary because of the introduction of the GST was an involved process and will not be finalised until the BAS (Business Activity Statement) is fully tested and the first remit to the Australian Tax Office has been successfully completed during July. There were late changes to several of the software components and the interaction of these changes resulted in significant problems with the rollout of the upgrade.

Development of the Academic Workload System is nearing completion, with final delivery of software expected in July. The system has been custom developed for the university using the Java programming language.

The rollout of the GroupWise system (which provides integrated email, calendar, task lists and document management) is about 25 percent complete. There are currently over 300 users of the system, mostly from Medicine and Health Sciences and IESD, with final numbers being around 2000 users. The rollout will continue during the remainder of 2000 and into 2001 due to the number of staff to be trained.

Additional processing and storage capacity was required to support the university’s administrative computing systems, including NUSTAR. A combined package was negotiated with the supplier (Sun Microsystems) at substantial discount.

**Communications Infrastructure**

Essential PABX upgrades to support new buildings (Student Centre and Life Sciences Building), jointly funded through the Plan and the building projects, are complete.

Technical planning for the network upgrades in the Hunter Building and the Richardson Wing is complete and quotes have been received. The proposed design will utilise Gigabit high-speed technology. Completion is expected by December 2000.

**Infrastructure for Teaching and Research**

Replacement of the video/data projectors in the Basden, McMullin and CT202 lecture theatres was completed prior to the start of teaching in February and has provided a dramatic improvement in the images projected.

One hundred and seven PC workstations and associate peripherals were upgraded for start of semester 1, 2000 in centrally-managed IESD Computer Labs.

The hardware has been purchased and delivered for the upgrade of the student email server. The project is currently on hold pending the decommissioning of CC.

The software for the Millennium versions of Circulation (Phase 2) and Serials (Library Systems) has been received and is undergoing testing prior to implementation later in 2000. E-reserve (purchased as part of the Millennium package) will be piloted during 2nd Semester as well. Millennium Acquisitions and Advanced Searching should be in general release by the end of this year.

**Web Infrastructure**

Work on re-developing and enhancing faculty web-sites during 2000 has centred on Medicine and Health Sciences, Education, and Science and Maths.

An evaluation of flexible-delivery software packages for web-based (flexible) delivery has been undertaken by consultants from OTEN. The “Blackboard” product has been recommended. The implementation phase is now being fast-tracked to support on-line delivery of postgraduate programs in Semester 1, 2001.

---

**'Baby boom' women to struggle**

Many women born between 1946 and 1964 (the so-called baby boom generation) are likely to face loneliness and poverty in their old age, Deputy Vice-Chancellor Professor Brian English told a conference at the university last month.

Speaking at the 7th Annual Interdisciplinary Gender Studies Conference, Brian said baby boom women have missed out on significant superannuation benefits and won’t be eligible for a pension until 65. They will also face a user-pays world where health care, nursing homes and services taken for granted by today’s older women will be costly. While women will be income poor, however, many will be asset rich and Brian believes future governments will be unable to resist introducing an assets test on family homes.

"Women will not be allowed to sit in $1 million homes and get welfare," he said. "They will be made to sell their homes and invest their assets to get income."

In addition to being unprotected financially, the baby boom women are expected to face older age alone. The higher death rates for males, exacerbated by the fact that most of the baby boom women married older partners, coupled with high divorce rates for this group means that almost two million of them may be living alone in 20 years, double the present number of elderly single female households.

"Baby boom women have been characterised as the best-educated and rewarded generation in history and that’s essentially true," Brian said. "But many will be worse off than older women now because they won’t have the same protection."

The Interdisciplinary Gender Studies Conference is held every year by the university and brings together academics concerned with the study of gender across several disciplines. This year, 25 papers were presented to the conference from academics across Australia, covering the disciplines of history, sociology, law, economics and fine art.

Topics covered included images of female sports stars, women in engineering, child care policies and working parents, sexual diversity and employment discrimination, abusive behaviour in relationships, women in sport, older men and women in Australia’s labour force. The conference was held on June 30.
For sale

Baby capsule, bassinet, baby bath and various other baby products for sale. Price negotiable.

Contact Graham on 5362 or lggs@alinga.newcastle.edu.au

Snowboard Rossignol

"Nomad" 150 with Rossignol bindings 1999 model (unused - never been on the mountain!), $450; and snowboard boots Northwave to suit Ross board - Size: Ladies 7 - Mens 7 (only used 3 times), $100 [or will sell Ross board and Northwave boots for $500 - willing to negotiate]. Please call Paul Munro on 5278 or email bupnn@admin.

Accommodation

Adamstown: non smoker to share large modern furnished house, own bathroom, $100 per wk includes expenses and use of facilities. Ph: 4956 1329 (b) ext 6698 (w)

Printing reminder

Staff are reminded that Marketing and Media Services is responsible for all university promotional materials, in any medium, and all advertising. Please discuss your requirements with Jacky Kitcher on ext 5594 (promotional materials) and Dianne Taylor on ext 8641 (advertising). If the printing required is not promotional or for external distribution, users are able to obtain services directly from Lloyd Scott Printery without the need for further competitive quotation or tender. Lloyd Scott provides a regular pick up and delivery service and work for printing can be transmitted electronically. Contact Allan Dillingham, Sales Consultant at Lloyd Scott on ext 6698. Full contact details are listed in the internal telephone directory on p43.

2001 Fulbright Awards

Nominations are being sought for the 2001 Fulbright Awards for study, research and lecturing in the United States. The Fulbrights offer several awards including the

Postgraduate Student Awards (valued up to $54,000), the Senior Scholar Awards (up to $30,000) and the Postdoctoral Fellow Awards (up to $40,000). There are several related awards in various individual fields including finance, vocational education and business administration. The closing date is August 31. For information on the full range of Fulbright Awards go to http://sunsite.anu.edu.au/education/fulbright.

Coping with trauma

As you are aware the university community has recently experienced the tragic loss of two young men. When a community is involved in a traumatic incident many people experience some kind of emotional or physical reaction. Although each person's experience is unique, a number of common responses can arise. These are normal reactions to a traumatic and unexpected event. If you would like further information about coping with loss please contact the University Counselling Service for a handout on "Coping with Trauma". We are currently adding this document to our website. University Counselling Service, Room HA209 Hunter Building, ext 5801, http://www.newcastle.edu.au/services/coun/counhome.htm

June new starters

Kelly Bass - Research Branch
Mary Costello - Research Branch
Benjamin Curry - School of Biological and Chemical Sciences
Brendan Gregg - IT Infrastructure Program
Perry Hartfield - School of Biomedical Sciences
Rui Martins - Department of Building
Jennifer Roberts - Central Coast Campus
Rowan Tan - Residential Accommodation Unit
Simone Winchester - Research Branch

August 4

Why are there so few (or so many) frogs? Dr Graeme Pike, Australian Museum, Discipline of Biological Sciences Seminar Program, Life Sciences Lecture Theatre, 4-5pm

August 11

Protein phosphatases in cellular signalling: regulating the regulators, Alistair Sim, Discipline of Medical Biochemistry, Discipline of Biological Sciences Seminar Program, Life Sciences Lecture Theatre, 4-5pm

August 18

Biological applications of electrospray mass spectroscopy, A/Professor Eliaik Von Nagy-Felsobuki, Discipline of Chemistry, Discipline of Biological Sciences Seminar Program, Life Sciences Lecture Theatre, 4-5pm

August 25

Risky business: quarantine policy and biology, Digby Gascoigne, Director of Policy and International Division, Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service, Discipline of Biological Sciences Seminar Program, Life Sciences Lecture Theatre, 4-5pm

September 11

Consultation for all women staff with senior management of the university. A meeting will be held in Lecture Theatre RW149 from 12.30 to 2pm for women from both campuses to address issues for general and academic staff.

Transport from the Central Coast Campus and refreshments will be provided. RSVP to Jacqui Dawson, Equity and Diversity Unit, by September 7 on ext 6547 or email jdwson@mail.

November 9-10

The School of Management will be host an international Conference on "Trust In The Workplace" which seeks to offer a communication forum for practitioners and researchers interested in understanding the issue of trust within the workplace. Presentations and discussions are not strictly confined to this theme.

Keynote Speakers: Professor Richard Butler; Bradford Management Centre (United Kingdom); Professor Roy Payne: School of Psychology, Curtin University; Professor Stewart Clegg: School of Management, University of Technology, Sydney. Enquiries to Glenda Winsen ext 8985 or gwinsen@mail.newcastle.edu.au

Ditchley Foundation Conferences

The Australian National University has an arrangement to nominate Australians to attend conferences arranged by the Ditchley Foundation in the United Kingdom. The foundation hosts around 15 conferences a year in response to international challenges arising from issues of concern to democratic societies.

ANU has made funds available to assist with travel to the conferences and has developed procedures for considering applications. For information regarding the conference topics and details on how to apply for financial assistance, ANU has established an Internet home page linked to the Foundation's site in the UK. Go to http://www.anu.edu.au/cabs/general/ditchley.html.

Apology

Apologies to Phil Secombes, Howard Bridgeman and Ray Murdoch, and their sons Chris, Howard and Andrew for the jumbled caption on the photograph of academic fathers and their graduating sons in the June edition of Uninews.
Health, Safety and Development
Technical Sub-Committees

The university has a strong record of research achievement and over the coming years plans to strengthen this further. Research is obviously all about discovery – about testing or expanding our knowledge of the world. Research is also part of the work undertaken by staff and students and the university must ensure that it is carried out in an ethical and safe manner. The very nature of research work means that the health and safety hazards can be ill-defined or unfamiliar and in these circumstances it makes sense to get some advice.

In technical research areas the university provides a forum where just such advice can be obtained. There are three technical sub-committees of the OH&S Committee with expertise in biological, chemical and radiation safety. Sub-committee members are drawn from the active research community, and volunteer their time to help maintain and enhance safety standards within the university. The functions of the sub-committees include:

- providing support and advice on safe work practices and procedures, and developing associated policies;
- monitoring compliance with associated legislation, for example, the Radiation Control Act (NSW) 1990, or the Occupational Health and Safety (Hazardous Substances) Regulation 1995;
- inspection of the university’s laboratories – the Bio-Hazards Technical Sub-Committee, as the Institutional Bio-Safety Committee for the Hunter region, is required to inspect our biological containment facilities on an annual basis;
- reviewing the safety aspects of research grant applications, and providing safety approval prior to the work commencing. A number of granting bodies require institutional safety clearance before they release the grant funds.

Although there is an emphasis on research work, the sub-committees also provide advice relating to teaching activities.

Like all things to do with safety, everyone has a part to play in the functions of the sub-committees. If we take research grant applications as an example, the university relies on Chief Investigators to identify the hazards associated with their work. For some of these hazards their associated risks may be high unless adequate control measures are put in place. Alternatively, the risks may be hard to gauge, particularly when the work is new. In either case, the Chief Investigator should take advice from the relevant sub-committee(s) before the work begins. The sub-committee will recommend what needs to be put in place to comply with university or statutory requirements. It is then the Chief Investigator’s responsibility to ensure that these are put in place, and the research team needs to cooperate and follow the specified safety procedures.

Of course, the hazard identification and risk assessment process doesn’t stop at the grant application stage. As the work progresses and changes to protocols are made, these processes must continue. As the work leads to further grants, the processes benefit from the experience in the research team. The sub-committees provide ready access to expertise built up in just this manner. As well as providing safety advice, they can provide a useful link between research groups, and identify which have the best practices.

In the race to make new discoveries, stopping to think through the safety implications of the work often seems much less exciting. However, ensuring that standards are met can help guarantee both the safety of research personnel and the quality of the work itself and is therefore an important consideration.

The sub-committees are a valuable resource, each focussed on specific technical issues. They meet at least every two months or as required. If you have an issue that requires some expert advice, or you want to find out more about how the sub-committees can help with your teaching or research, contact Health, Safety and Development on 6542.

Next Month: Working towards a safer workplace

Greenhouse agreement

The signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Rocky Mountain Institute, Colorado, the University and Newcastle City Council will help Australia and the United States achieve greenhouse gas reductions in line with the international target set during the Kyoto Protocol in December 1998.

The MoU will see the parties design and implement a range of joint projects and distribute information to the community in an effort to achieve the target. The union will help develop Newcastle’s vision to become the South-East Asian centre for the sustainable energy industry, a target set in 1997. The Rocky Mountain Institute is considered to be the world authority on resource efficiency, assisting in the design of the Sydney 2000 solar village, and credited with “greening” the White House.

Meet the Bio-Hazards Technical Sub-Committee: (from left) Peter Lloyd, David Kay, Ray Rose (Chairperson), Darienne Scenes, Margaret Dunkley, Joan Brien, Tina Crawford, Hugh Dunstan and Liz Pilgrim. Members not available for the photograph are Glenn Bryant, Judith Scott, Philip Wilson, Darren Shafren and Debbie Spalding.

Anery Lovins (centre), co-founder of the Rocky Mountain Institute, joins Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) Ron MacDonald and Lord Mayor John Tate in signing the MoU at the City Hall on July 3.

UNINESS Page 19
Night and Day Newcastle Surfers Rule

Newcastle retained their national surfing championship when the Sports Union hosted this year’s Australian University Championship (AUC) for Surfing, held at Newcastle Beach in July. The five day competition saw some exciting events including a night surfing competition under spotlights held on July 5th.

Contest convener Chris Tola said the night surfing competition was a first for Newcastle and one of only three similar events worldwide. Five teams competed in a tag team format under powerful lights with competitors from NSW, Victoria and Queensland as well as international students taking part.

The AUC attracted 120 male and female surfers competing in five categories and despite inclement weather a large number of spectators were in attendance throughout the week.

“The Sports Union and the Surferder Club were keen to show what Newcastle has to offer and we were delighted that Newcastle retained their championship,” Chris said.

University sporting teams also did well at the Eastern Australian University Games held in Albury/Wodonga during the same week. More than 140 competitors from nine sports took part in the games, which are held annually with successful teams proceeding to the Australian University Games to be held in Ballarat in October.

Lisa Bradley from the Sports Union, who accompanied the teams to Albury, said that seven teams qualified for the Ballarat championships.

“The teams all did really well, with outstanding results from our men’s tennis team, which took gold, and men’s touch football, with a silver.”

Other results included:
- Women’s tennis – 4th
- Mixed touch football – 4th
- Women’s basketball – 3rd
- Men’s basketball – 5th
- Women’s rugby – 3rd
- Men’s soccer – 2nd

The $16 million Life Sciences Building supported itself for the first time at the end of June when the props surrounding it were removed by crane.