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Vice-Chancellor’s Column

Coursework postgraduate education is one of our major strategic areas for development and we plan to have at least 10 percent of our student load studying these programs by 2002.

A number of actions have been taken to support this strategic direction:

• establishment of the Graduate School of Business within the Faculty of Economics and Commerce; the recent appointment of a new Director of GSB, Professor Tony Travers; and the major upgrade of University House within the Newcastle CBD to service this development;

• establishment of the Research Division under the leadership of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research), Professor Ron MacDonald, the formation of The University of Newcastle Graduate School (TUNG) within this Division, and the appointment of Professor Scott Holmes as Director of TUNG;

• establishment by Academic Senate of the Coursework Postgraduate Programs Committee, chaired by the President of Academic Senate, Professor Hilary Winchester, to serve as the major clearing house for the development of new programs by the faculties;

• establishment of the Master of Applied Management (MAM) concept, which shifts management education to a disciplinary context. The common MAM structure includes four management core subjects and four discipline-based subjects, in areas as diverse as nursing, aviation, environmental science, business administration, education and health;

• development of good articulation and credit transfer arrangements for graduate certificate, graduate diploma and coursework masters degrees;

• development of new and innovative programs, such as the Master of Common Law, which is delivered in China, Master of Engineering Management, Master of Engineering Practice, Master of Management Enterprise, and the Master of Information Technology;

• formation of partnerships with quality overseas institutions such as WIRA, based in Kuala Lumpur, in the delivery of our business PG programs offshore;

• increased recognition of the opportunities available in the flexible and distance based delivery of these programs, including provision for specific cohorts of students from developing countries, particularly in areas of quality health enhancement programs; and

• investment ($750,000 in 1999) in flexible/distance mode programs.

These actions have had a major impact with all faculties accepting the challenges involved in further developing this important area. At the beginning of 1999, our total coursework postgraduate load was 4.9 percent. I am pleased to advise you that this has now grown to 6.1 percent and, for the first time, we have over 2000 coursework postgraduate students, representing approximately 10 percent of students studying at the university.

It is apparent however that we have to take further strategic action if we are to achieve our goal of becoming a major player in this area and meet our targets by 2002.

GraduateSchool.com Pty Ltd

The University Council has approved the establishment of a company called GraduateSchool.com Pty Ltd, to be responsible for the marketing, branding, development and delivery of our coursework postgraduate online programs. This company is fully owned by the university and will provide a major vehicle for achieving our goals and objectives in the delivery of these programs. The company will offer online programs from 2001. A major promotional campaign will commence in Australia this month and a trimester based online program will start in January next year. Hong Kong and Malaysian student recruitment is also planned to commence early next year with the first intake of these countries in second semester. Recruitment of students in China and Taiwan is planned to begin during semester 2 next year, with the first intake of students in semester 1 2002. The programs will be subject to the usual approvals by the university, and the students will be students of this university.

The Council has approved and welcomed this initiative as a major step forward in addressing at least two of our key objectives – the enhancement of our standing as an international university, and the major role planned in coursework postgraduate education.

I hope that you all join with me in supporting this very important development, which has been led by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research), Professor Ron MacDonald, the Director of TUNG, Professor Scott Holmes, the Executive Director of Finance and Property, Mr Brian Penfold, Ms Sue Beach of the Vice-Chancellor’s Division, and with contributions from many of the faculties. I invite you to participate strongly in this new and exciting venture.

Roger S Holmes
Vice-Chancellor and President

October edition

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Cover pic: A great knight in the Great Hall - Sir Gustav Nossal, 2000 Australian of the Year, visited Newcastle to deliver the Hunter Lecture. For details see page 11. Photograph by Chris Patterson of Intervision Photography
Hard work rewarded

One of three PhD students who were granted scholarships to work on the university's Women's Health Australia project has won an award at a national conference.

Anne Young, who received her doctorate in May this year, won the EJG Pitman Prize for the most outstanding presentation by a young statistician at the Australian Statistical Conference held in Adelaide in July. She delivered two papers at the conference based on research work done as a result of the Australian Longitudinal Study on Women's Health.

The study, which began in 1995, involves academics from a range of disciplines including statistics, psychology, medicine, sociology and nutrition. It aims to explore the relationships between biological, psychological, social and lifestyle factors and women's physical health, emotional well-being, and their use of health care services.

Anne's research involved analysing survey data from the 40,000 randomly selected participants in the longitudinal study, linked with Medicare data for 20,000 of them.

"Being able to link our self-report survey results with Medicare records on such a large scale gave us a unique opportunity to compare what women thought about their use of health care services with the actual usage and their expenses," she said. "It has never been done on such a large scale in Australia."

Anne, a mother of four who did her Bachelor of Mathematics with first class honours (1978) and her Diploma of Medical Statistics (1983) at Newcastle, was working part-time in the Department of Statistics when the university won the Women's Health Australia contract in 1995.

"By 1995, I thought it was important to get back into research again," she said. "The youngest of my children was starting kindergarten in 1996 so they would all be at school."

Completing her PhD in three and a half years, Anne spent the last 18 months working every weekend as well as full-time during the week to finish analysing the vast amount of data. She says she got tremendous support from the Women's Health Australia team as well as from husband Kevin, himself a senior executive at Hunter Water, and her children.

"I decided that part of my scholarship money should be saved for a special family holiday when the thesis was completed," Anne said. Her family agreed as they enjoyed a holiday at Disneyland at the end of last year.

Forefront – a proactive approach

The Faculty of Science and Mathematics will take a proactive approach to boosting their research output when they hold Forefront – the first in a regular series of intra-faculty research forums – at the Industry Development Centre this month.

Dean, Professor David Finlay, said the forum would involve young academics from each of the faculty's eight disciplines introducing themselves and their research projects.

"The faculty is trying to build up its research effectiveness in as many ways as it can, and has opened the debate to find new approaches," he said.

As a result of discussions, an Early Researcher Group formed, meeting for the first time last October, to try and discover the barriers to research success in this group.

Dr Erica Wanless, a lecturer in chemistry, said that early career researchers constituted around 20 percent of the academic staff of the faculty.

"We found that although many of the young researchers had great skills, they were having difficulty in finding both funding and time to pursue their research," she said.

Members of the group, who are all within the first five years of their academic appointments, produced a paper for the Dean presenting six recommendations aimed at boosting their research participation. One of the recommendations is the idea of Forefront forums.

The forums, to be held twice a year, will provide the researchers with an opportunity to discuss their work and to explore possibilities for collaboration across the faculty.

"I will speak for Chemistry," Erica said. "I'll talk about what I do and where my research expertise lies, as well as highlighting areas in which I'm keen to find other members of the faculty who can help to fill the gaps and strengthen the research projects. With changes to the Australian Research Council granting procedures and with interdisciplinary cooperation becoming more popular, the forum provides an opportunity for us to establish connections across the faculty."

Forefront, to be held at the IDC on November 15, is targeted at academics across the Faculty of Science and Mathematics but is also open to PhD and Honours students.
Outstanding results rewarded with medals

One of three University Medalists to qualify for awards at the October 6 graduation ceremony, Shaun Thompson, said he had been "quite numb" when Chancellor Ric Charlton placed the medal around his neck.

"I got a letter telling me I'd won the medal and was pleased," the Bachelor of Mathematics (Honours) graduate said. "But it wasn't until the graduation ceremony that I realised just how prestigious it really was. When I saw there were only three of us receiving them, it just hit me all at once."

Shaun began a double science and mathematics degree at Newcastle after attending Merewether High School but dropped science to concentrate on maths. His Honours thesis was undertaken in the area of functional analysis, a strong research area in the university's Department of Mathematics.

"I have always been attracted to mathematics but it's not just about numbers," he said. "It is the method and rigour of maths that I love and there are no bounds to how much you can discover."

Shaun is now studying towards his PhD at the university and hopes to pursue an academic career.

Computer engineering medal winner Geoffrey Carlton earned more than a university medal in his honours year - he also earned about a year's salary for work undertaken on his final project. Geoff worked with Novatex Research, a private company run by Newcastle engineering graduate Scott Ellis, to develop a low-cost PATIX telephone system.

"I enjoyed studying economics, particularly microeconomics and econometrics," the former Rutherford High School student said, "I am interested in current economic events so my job is great."

Around 470 attended the two ceremonies on October 6. To be considered for the University Medal, the three graduates had to achieve an Honours Class 1 degree, record no failures in any subject, and achieve a certain standard of results. They are then nominated for consideration by a medals selection panel.

Geoff Carlton enjoys one of the greatest moments of his life at the graduation ceremony.

Exploring the use of alternative medicine

Research has shown that at 49 per cent, Australia is one of the highest users of complementary and alternative medicine in the industrialised world.

Australia's appetite for herbal remedies and alternative therapies has drawn a US health expert to the university to survey students on their use of alternative medicine.

Robert H. Feldman, Professor of Health Education at the University of Maryland, will spend three months examining the extent of students' use of complementary and alternative medicine and the conditions which persuade students to choose such therapies.

"When reviewing international research literature and medical journals, I found that Australia had a 49 per cent use of alternative therapies in comparison to 33 percent for France, 10 percent for Denmark and 42 percent for the United States," Robert said. "Traditional Chinese medical practices are widespread in Australia. While alternative medicine practice is rising, little is known about why different segments of the population are using or not using these therapies."

Students as generally early adopters of new health practices, and Robert believes that surveying their views will help him to understand future trends in the general population.

Professor Feldman is collaborating in his research with Professor Ron Laura of the Faculty of Education.
Australian cricket captain receives honorary doctorate

Belinda Clark, Captain of the Australian women's cricket team, received an Honorary Doctorate at the second of two graduation ceremonies on October 6.

The 30-year-old, who was born in Newcastle and played her first ever game of cricket at age 13 for the Hunter region in the Combined High Schools Championships, was presented with a Doctorate of Education honoris causa.

Belinda made her cricket test debut against India in 1991. She scored 104 runs and was named Player of the Test Series. She has captained the team since 1994, and in this time has led the Australian side to wins in 17 out of the past 19 matches, including the 1997 World Cup victory in India.

Belinda holds numerous records, including the world record test batting average of 87.33; the world record for the number of runs in a calendar year (970 runs in 1997); the Australian record for the highest number of runs in one-day international matches; the world record for the highest individual score and the first double century in a one-day international match, for a male or female player; and the record for the first Australian to surpass 2000 runs in one-day international matches.

In January 2000 Belinda was made a Member of the Order of Australia for service to cricket, and the promotion and development of the game.

Thesis a major breakthrough

A researcher whose thesis developing a new economic model of science has been described as the most important contemporary work in the field received his PhD at the October graduation ceremony.

Yanfei Shi, whose PhD thesis is to be submitted for the prestigious international Dorfman economic writing prize, was part of the Dynamic Systems Research Group in the Department of Philosophy in the Faculty of Arts and Social Science.

Head of Department and Shi's supervisor, Professor Cliff Hooker, said the research group viewed the world as a complex self-organising system characterised by dynamical interactions where patterns emerge. They specialise in the study of science. Shi had chosen to examine the economics of scientific knowledge, building on the study of institutional economics.

"When scientists carry out research they are taking a lot of risks, with failure perhaps damaging their reputation and their income prospects," Cliff explained. "If you think of them as venture capitalists or entrepreneurs, it was known that they indulge in risky investment behaviour but there was very little illumination by researchers beyond that until about 15 years ago when the economists began to look in detail at institutional economics."

The economists found that setting up a commercial research and development laboratory or a university department acted as a buffer against failure for scientists. One of the leading exponents of this line of economic analysis is James Wible, Professor of Economics from the University of New Hampshire in the US. It was Professor Wible, one of Shi's PhD examiners, who described his work as the most important in a decade and has recommended he prepare it for submission for the Dorfman international prize.

"What Shi was able to achieve in his research is to show that when you apply an institutional economic model to science, you can demonstrate that not only the social rules but the epistemic rules have evolved in response to economic factors," Cliff said. "It is a major breakthrough and shows that changes in institutional funding and support for research may have an impact on scientific ideas and the intelligence of scientific institutions."

Cliff said Shi had read so extensively in many areas of economics for his PhD research, as well as in philosophy, that he impressed his economic examiners. Shi is now working with the Department of Science, Industry and Technology in Canberra.
Recruiting safety soldiers

The new Manager of Health, Safety and Development, Tina Crawford, wants to see safety systems become an integral part of the core business of all staff at the university.

"In the past, the unit has played a reactive role but I want to take a more proactive approach to safety issues," Tina said. "I want health and safety to be part of everyone's strategic focus."

Toward this end, Tina and her staff have helped to develop a Health and Safety Policy for the university, which is strongly supported by the Vice-Chancellor and other senior staff. Released in August, the policy is a statement of the university's commitment to health and safety.

"The policy was drafted with the University Health and Safety Committee," she said. "It is critical that there is an organisational commitment to health and safety - all our other programs flow from that."

A key area that Tina and her team are concentrating on is ensuring that every faculty and division has its own Safety Committee and/or Coordinator to oversee its activities.

"I've been busy meeting all the deans and heads of divisions to enlist their support for the formation and activities for the committees and coordinators," she said. "We have a fantastic Health, Safety and Development team here in the Chancellery but unless we have key people putting the policies into action around the university, we can't achieve much."

Tina has arranged for a series of training sessions for faculty and division safety committee members and coordinators next month. The sessions will help reinforce a framework formulated to define the roles of these key people.

While admitting that accidents and poor safety practices force up insurance premiums and cost organisations a fortune in worker's compensation and court costs, Tina says her approach is to build strong health and safety systems in the first place rather than focus on saving insurance dollars.

"By putting an effective safety system into place, we can avoid the costly outcomes," she said. "I want people at the university to take ownership of the health and safety issues in their area and use our unit as a resource to help them."

Tina is certainly well prepared to ensure that the university's safety system is suited to it. She has had years of experience in the health and safety field and has toured the world to look at best practice. Much of her international experience came while working for multinational pharmaceutical company Procter and Gamble where she helped to set up their occupational health and safety programs in Australia.

"I was asked by P&G to work in Asia, and had responsibility for coordinating and supporting the health and safety programs of plants in China, Japan, Thailand, Malaysia, India, Korea, Vietnam, Philippines and Indonesia," Tina said. "P&G provided me with a fantastic legacy in the experience I gained."

While working for P&G, Tina worked in a wide range of plants from those with the most basic safety programs to superior sites in the US and Canada where she was sent to review and benchmark. She left the company when they went offshore and asked her to relocate to Singapore. With two small children, Gabrielle and Nicholas, and having seen 'ex-pat' Australians floating from assignment to assignment around Asia and seemingly unable to get back home, Tina and husband Paul decided it wasn't for them. After taking a few months off, Tina spent 12 months as a consultant for a joint venture between MMI Insurance and Australian Business, before joining with two other people to start her own OH&S consultancy business.

Tina, a former St Anne's High School student who was in the first intake of nursing students at the university, returned to study Occupational Health here. She worked for a couple of years in the mining industry before starting with P&G.

While the university has some specific health and safety issues due to its scientific and medical research programs, Tina says that slips, trips and falls still make up a large percentage of the accidents that happen each year. Technical Sub-Committees review radiation, bio-hazard and chemical safety issues but there are many other programs on the drawing board including documented risk analysis and tackling problems in areas such as manual handling and ergonomics that are prevalent at the university.

Tina plans to implement a health and safety management system specific to the university's needs and risks rather than go for an off-the-shelf system.

"There is so much to get done and even though I want it all done at once, I know that it takes time," she said. "There are a lot of people at the university committed to health and safety but it seems that it's always the same people who are the safety soldiers."

"My goal is to have everyone own safety and to incorporate it naturally into their job as part of their role."
Every four years I have watched fascinated, eyes glued to the television set, as the best athletes in the world come together to compete in the Olympics. Luckily enough, I was given the chance to experience the 2000 Games in Sydney first hand.

Being part of the production team, I had a small role in helping SOBO broadcast 3,200 hours of sports footage watched by millions all around the world. As a camera assistant I was paid to have the best view in the house; on the field of play. I could see the tears of joy and the sweat and determination on the athlete’s faces without ever having to pay a cent.

I was stationed at the State Sports Centre, home to the table tennis and tae kwon do. If like me, your knowledge of table tennis is restricted to the ping pong you played as a kid, then you are sadly misinformed. Table tennis is one of the fastest and most skillful games you will ever come across and one of the most watched sports of the games. It has a huge following in Asia and Europe with many of these athletes as popular as our Rafter and Philippoussis.

As a camera assistant I was the eyes and ears for the hand held cameraman who is prone to dart to and fro as he tries to film the action. Being on the field of play allowed me to witness first hand the world of competitive sport.

When Australia won gold in the women’s under 49kg division of tae kwon do, I was only inches away from the medal winners and Juan Antonio Samaranch. When they started playing Advance Australia Fair, I had to hold back the tears as I thought how proud I was – proud to be from the best country in the world and proud to be a part of the Games.

Experiencing the behind-the-scenes action was an unbelievable experience for me as a Communications student and helped me to better understand the world of production. I took away with me a truckload of pins, two kilograms extra in weight and the knowledge that the wonderful world of broadcasting is where I want to be.

*Christina is a final year student in the Bachelor of Arts (Communication Studies). She was one of 130 Newcastle students who worked for SOBO at the Games.*
The Central Coast Campus is no stranger to a culture of rapid growth, development and innovation, and plans for its future, which are just coming to fruition, will cap off what has been a busy year.

For a start the Central Coast Campus is now the Central Coast Campus following adoption of a recommendation made by the Regional Council of Adult and Community Education Inc, a Board Member of the Central Coast Career WorkKeys Inc and the Hunter Institute of Technology (TAFE NSW), and a member of the Australian College of Education.

Human Nutrition added to Central Coast menu

A degree in Human Nutrition will be offered at the Central Coast Campus in 2001. The Bachelor of Human Nutrition degree is available through the Faculty of the Central Coast and is a three-year full-time course. It has been designed to meet a strong market demand for professionals in the field of human nutrition, both in the commercial food industry and in the public health arena.

The new degree course would be a relevant addition to the school. The Campus has already established the Centre for Advancement of Food Technology and Nutrition, and the new Human Nutrition degree complements that perfectly, Steve said.

"Human Nutrition is a field of study for people who are interested in science, nutrition and foods, without a clinical component as for a course in dietetics," he said. "Nutritionists can be people-centred, laboratory based or in the fields of business and commerce."

Human Nutrition graduates can find employment in the food manufacturing industry and community health, consumer relations, nutrition education, technical sales, as nutrition consultants, in quality control and quality assurance, product development in food and pharmaceutical industries, food services management and research positions in universities. The course will produce graduates who can apply their nutrition knowledge to the human condition – the nutritional implications of food product composition and processing for consumers – and the complexity of current issues relating food to human health.

The course focuses on human nutrition while minor studies include clinical nutrition, nutritional biochemistry, nutrition education, food science, food technology, human biochemistry, physiology and nutrition research. There is an important practical component to the course with professional placements provided with approved industries, local government bodies or in community health and research centres.

It was made in a report known as the Grimshaw Report, which was tabled in July 1998. An interim Advisory Board was appointed in late 1999 and following a draft Memorandum of Agreement between the university and the Department of Education and Training NSW, the Minister advised in September this year that implementation was to proceed.

It is expected that the new structure will be fully operational by the start of the 2001 academic year.

Appointed to the position of Acting Director, Dr Barry McKnight has the task of guiding the multi-campus institution through this period of massive change. He sees it very positively.

"The new model has many strengths. It will allow improved regionally relevant cross-sectoral educational pathways, an ability to develop a comprehensive regional education and training profile and an ability to more effectively market all education and training programs. It will also stimulate higher course participation, stronger community/industry linking, encourage innovative courses and resource sharing (school and faculties)," Barry said.

Working groups will develop integration plans through November and December, and a Central Coast Campuses Board will be appointed early in 2001.

"As with all organisational change, there are elements that will be critically important," he said, "including increased consultation and development based on increasing and enhancing educational pathways."

Barry says the integration will encourage greater regional input into educational planning, which is important in such a rapidly growing population area.

Dr McKnight is highly respected for his executive role in the Hunter Institute of Technology. Most recently he was Faculty Director - Access and General Education and previously Acting Director of Studies and Acting Director of Educational Development.

Starting his working life as an exploration geophysicist, Barry turned his attention to teaching physics and mathematics within the TAFE system, then to the overall management of general education delivery for western Sydney and the Hunter Region.

He is Vice President of the Central Coast Regional Council of Adult and Community Education Inc, a Board Member of the Central Coast Career WorkKeys Inc and the Hunter Institute of Technology (TAFE NSW), and a member of the Australian College of Education.
Indigenous treaty not the whole answer

A treaty would not necessarily help Aboriginal people in their struggle for land rights and reconciliation in Australia, history professor Alan Ward said at a symposium held at Customs House last month.

Contract historian to the Waitangi Tribunal in New Zealand Alan, from the university's Department of History, said the Maori people had gained very little in the 100 years since they negotiated the Waitangi Treaty, which had been used as an instrument of subjugation.

Speaking at the Treaty and Constitutional Change: Representing Indigenous People in the Pacific symposium on October 13, he said that advances in Maori land rights and other areas in recent years had not been due to the treaty but to the skillful use of the judicial and political systems by modern Maori leaders.

"Unless it is used in a climate of discourse and with reasonable concurrence of the parties to it, a treaty is not much use," Alan said.

He quoted the NZ Maori Council statement of 1983, which said: "in the treatment and handling of Maori claims, the Treaty of Waitangi has been sadly denigrated... We have consistently pleaded on the basis of the treaty and consistently been denied... Settlement of Maori claims must be sought at a political level."

The consistent influence of political power by Maori people, who became major players in the NZ Parliament was more important than pursuing issues of sovereignty and constitutional law, Professor Ward concluded.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner Dr Bill Jonas, speaking at the symposium, said there are similarities between the current process of reconciliation and proposals for constitutional reform.

"Both require acceptance of the mainstream society for them to be successful," Bill said. The relationship between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people cannot be transformed unilaterally but requires the participation and agreement of all members of Australian society, he said.

"In my view, the most preferable approach is a two stage one, that is able to facilitate the full participation of Indigenous people in society," Bill explained.

The first stage is the introduction of framework agreements legislation, which provides legislative force to agreements with Indigenous organisations. The second stage is the amendment of the Constitution along the lines of the current section 105A, which provides that the Commonwealth may make agreements with the States with respect to their public debts and also that the federal Parliament has power to legislate any matter contained in the agreement.

"This has the benefit of being much simpler than a bill of rights," he said. "By approaching such reform in two stages, the mainstream society is able to come to a deeper appreciation of the need for such agreements and to have a more detailed understanding of the issues involved."

The one-day symposium, organised by the university's Laws, Societies and Cultures Research Group, addressed the difficulties of reconciling Indigenous cultures in Australia and Fiji with cultural assumptions about law and governance derived from the Anglo-American historical experience.

Other key speakers were Professor Brij Lal (of the ANU's Centre for the Contemporary Pacific) and Bryan Keon-Cohen QC (senior counsel specialising in Indigenous legal issues). Academics, lawyers, and community representatives discussed both the Aboriginal Australian community's campaign for a 'treaty' and the ongoing difficulties of representing the indigenous and Indian communities in Fiji within the constraints of a western-style constitution.

Free macadamias for trial volunteers

The Department of Nutrition and Dietetics is offering free macadamia nuts to volunteers taking part in a study on cholesterol and the health benefits of macadamias.

The department is looking for 30 to 40 volunteers aged between 35 and 70 to eat a handful of macadamia nuts (salted or unsalted) every day for four weeks. Chief researcher and Head of Department, Dr Manohar Garg, described the macadamia nut as "nature's gift to Australia" and said health professionals were just beginning to appreciate its qualities.

His research will look at the benefits of incorporating macadamia nuts as a regular part of the diet, and study their effect on cholesterol build-up.

Volunteers need to register a high blood cholesterol level in the 6.2-7.5 range, must not be taking drugs that lower cholesterol levels, must not be taking anti-oxidant supplements and must drink less than 10 standard alcoholic drinks a week.

Their blood will be sampled before and after the trial and they will be expected to keep records of their diet before, during and after the trial period.

"Macadamia nuts are packed with mono-unsaturated fats (such as the fats one finds in olive, sunola or canola oil), are believed to be rich in polyphenol compounds that act as anti-oxidants and contain high fibre and plant proteins," says Manohar, who is working on the project with Professor Ron Willis of the Central Coast Campus.

The study is being co-funded by the Horticultural Research and Development Corporation and the Australian Macadamia Society. Volunteers should call Dr Rudra or Robert Blake on 4921 5638.
A comment on the importance of art in promoting the ideal of the Olympic Games in the ancient world - made by Director of the Development Unit and classical scholar Dr Bernie Curran - helped to motivate a unique art exhibition shown at Maitland City Art Gallery in September and October.

Bernie, who was opening another exhibition at the Maitland gallery, explained that Greek artists had been fascinated by the Games since their inception. Gallery Director Margaret Sayer contacted Bernie after the event, saying that a number of artists who had heard him speak were interested in the connection between art and the Olympics and asking him to write his ideas down.

"Given that the ancient Olympics were a celebration of the whole man...is the Greek athletic hero a symbol of man's achievement of perfection, one that can only be depicted or captured in art, sculpture or literature?" his written text questioned.

Bernie's ideas on the ancient world formed part of a request to Hunter artists to consider issues relating to the Olympic Games in the year they were hosted by Sydney, including the cost, politics, history, indigenous affairs, nationalism, corruption, pride and drugs. They were asked to produce works of art to express their ideas on the Olympics.

Curator of the Olympic Theme - Pathways exhibition Paul Politi said that attitudes to the Sydney Olympics ranged from fanatical obsession to total disinterest to angry protest, creating several pathways generated by the event.

"The Hunter can be proud of both its sporting and artistic heritage and the promise of marrying these two disparate fields is exciting," he said.

The influence of the ancient Greek artists in defining the ideal of the Olympics was felt again when the Baron de Coubertin revived the ancient Games in 1896, Bernie said. "Around that time, archeologists were discovering many of the Greek relics depicting athletes and games," he said. "The famous Charioteer of Delphi, for instance, has been used in connection with the Olympics many times."

The Sydney Games coincided with an exhibition of Greek antiquities relating to the Olympics at the Powerhouse Museum, as well as the revival of an international Olympic art competition.

Thirty artworks were selected for the Pathways exhibition that ran from September 28 to October 22. The artists included the Head of the university's School of Fine Art, Professor Anne Graham, John Earle, Helen Dunkley, Ted Price, Kay Adlem and Paul Weis. The artworks will also tour schools in the region.
A great knight

People of the Hunter should be applauded for the way they are tackling the task of reconciliation. Deputy Chairman of the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation and 2000 Australian of the Year Sir Gustav Rossal said at the inaugural Hunter Lecture last month.

"You are an example to the nation," Sir Gustav told the large audience for the free public lecture held in the Great Hall on October 18.

There was national consensus about the broad thrust of Aboriginal reconciliation, he said, but there were areas of difference.

"The first is over the apology for the stolen generation... the government has said that it doesn’t believe that present Australians should be saddled with cross-generational guilt... I don’t expect this issue to be resolved in the near future.

"The second is over self determination and respect for referential customs and laws. Self-determination doesn’t mean a patting... it is clear that Aboriginal people want to be part of one nation. What they want is quite simple. Indigenous people are sick of being told how to live their lives by ‘white fellas’. This is hardly a radical proposal... we take it for granted that we will be involved in decisions that affect us.”

Sir Gustav said that there was a darker side to reconciliation - the remnants of entrenched racism. The main work of the Reconciliation Council would be to combat this and to highlight the positive achievements of Aboriginal people. He applauded the recent $20 million grant by the Howard Government to develop a program to attack the entrenched problems of alcohol and substance abuse, and violence that plagues many Indigenous communities.

"I would like to end with the young and education," Sir Gustav concluded. "As young people learn the truth of this country, they will learn to grieve, to apologise and to repair the damage done by previous generations."

A noted immunologist, Sir Gustav also spoke of the importance of immunising children against disease.
Why economics is failing us

The Federal Government should institute a job guarantee in Australia, according to the Head of Economics Professor Bill Mitchell. Bill, delivering his inaugural lecture as Director of the Centre of Full Employment and Equity (CoFFE) last month, said a job guarantee is the only way to maintain full employment, economic equity and price stability.

"There can be no return to equitable growth and sustained full employment unless the public sector becomes an employer of last resort," Bill said. "Australia has no proposal to ensure sustained price stability. It needs to resume the labour market rule it played in the immediate post-war period, providing jobs for people who cannot find work in the private sector."

The jobs may include urban renewal projects, environmental repair and personal assistance to pensioners, according to Bill, who said the current economic system is failing Australians.

"Even though the economy is growing strongly, the gap between rich and poor is increasing," he said. "Guided by economic rationalism, the Government has worked its way into a position where it can no longer provide a buffer between fluctuations in the private sector and the people. Costs of fluctuations in the economy are now borne by the unemployed and disadvantaged."

Providing full employment would only cost $7.5 billion a year and would be offset by substantial savings in the social benefits that resulted such as improved physical and psychological health and a reduction in crime, Bill said.

Bill delivered his lecture on October 4 at University House. It can be found on the web at el.newcastle.edu.au/economics/coffe.

Women rural GPs study

Women doctors in the bush are stressed, underpaid, unable to find suitable childcare and worried about their personal safety according to a pilot study into the needs of women rural GPs.

As a result of the study, the Commonwealth Department of Health and Aged Care has provided $80,000 in funding to the university to conduct a national project to investigate strategies to recruit and retain more women in rural practice. The initial pilot study was conducted jointly by the University of Newcastle together with the University of WA and Charles Sturt University.

Although women now make up almost half of medical graduates in Australia, they are under-represented in the bush.

"It is well documented and recognised that there is a medical workforce shortage in most rural areas of Australia," says one of the researchers, Dr Helen Tolhurst, a senior lecturer in Rural General Practice with the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences.

"The Department of Health study we are undertaking will not only identify strategies such as support groups and flexible child care, but will also investigate practice structures and work practices that are flexible and accommodate the ways in which women and younger doctors wish to work."

Women rural GPs study

Amateur video success

Mike O'Neill, Senior Electronics Officer in the discipline of Physics, won the documentary category at the recent National Amateur Video Awards (NAVA) held in Broadbeach Queensland last month.

In its 12th year, the NAVA competition this year attracted 60 entries from Australia, the UK and New Zealand. Mike's documentary "Live Steamers" is the story of Lake Macquarie Live Steam Locomotive Society, which has operated at an Edgeworth park for over 10 years. The park has been constructed entirely by club members and the video documents their move from land at Warners Bay in 1969 and the establishment of the Edgeworth park.

Amateur video success

The documentary also won awards for camera craft and sound in the Newcastle National Video Competition.

A second entry by Mike in the NAVA awards - a four minute visual representation of a poem he wrote - reached the finals of the creative category and was well received by the 200 strong audience at the October 21 award night.

"A Proud Australian Cockatoos is based on a poem that I wrote about a cockatoo who represents all Australians and calls for pride in his native land," Mike explained. A keen amateur film maker, Mike has occasionally produced educational and promotional videos for physics.

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Schizophrenia Research Register

Young people spend a lot of time in the gym making their bodies look good, but few give their mental health a workout says Carmel Loughland of the Schizophrenia Research Register.

"We don't know what causes schizophrenia, but we suspect some forms of behaviour may trigger mental health disorders."

A mental health workout would check that suspected triggers were being avoided. Triggers include insufficient rest, too much stress - particularly ongoing stress, experimental drug taking, not enough time alone as well as insufficient time in the social company of others, poor diet and lack of physical exercise.

"The Hunter's Schizophrenia Research Register, the only one of its kind in Australia, has a database of 400 volunteers who make themselves available to participate in research.

"Without a large pool of people willing to participate, we cannot hope to conduct large-scale research into this disorder," says Carmel. "Mental health disorders, particularly schizophrenia, can be tragic experiences if untreated..."

The register is kept at the Centre for Mental Health Studies in the Department of Psychiatry. People interested in joining the register or accessing the database for research can call 1800 660 395. For further information contact Carmel on 4924 6611.

UNINESS Page 13
Australian University Games 2000

Despite dismal weather conditions at the 2000 Australian University Games held in Ballarat last month, the university's women's tennis and men's touch teams won the Australian University Titles.

Newcastle's medal tally was boosted when our men's double scull team consisting of David Hanson and Stuart Mcleod won the bronze, the first medal since 1997 and only the second rowing medal in over 20 years. Nicole Williams continued her success at Australian University Games winning the bronze in the 1500 metres.

Ninety university athletes and five officials represented Newcastle at the Ballarat games, with 10 students being selected in the prestigious Australian University Green and Gold Merit teams. The Newcastle team placed 16th in a field of over 50, beating many of the larger universities.

The team spirit of the Newcastle athletes was exceptional. The whole Newcastle team were poolside to cheer Brooke Playford into her 6th placing in the final of the 50m breast stroke, for instance and athletes took the time to support fellow students in other sports all week.

Green and Gold selection

Men's Touch – Pete Sanders, Aaron Bolte, Toby Brown
Mixed Touch – Luke Wolfeden and Jarrod Wynn
Men's Soccer – Martin Smith and Kurt O'Brien
Men's Basketball – Matt Streatfield
Women's Tennis – Jenny-Anne Fetch and Kim Whitty

Tennis complex upgraded

Recently retired Sports Union (SU) Treasurer Hugh Floyer opened extensions to the tennis complex last month.

SU Executive Officer Adrian Lakin said Hugh, who had been with the Sports Union for 20 years, was a driving force behind the refurbishments.

"When the tennis pavilion was built in 1992, the then SU Executive deemed that the costs of building showers and toilets were prohibitive – they would have been 15 or 20 percent of the total project cost," Adrian explained.

"Hugh kept reminding the executive over the years that the facilities were incomplete."

The addition of male and female toilets and showers in the pavilion had become more affordable when the necessary infrastructure moved closer to the facility as the university grew, Adrian said.

As well as adding changing facilities, the recent work on the tennis complex included resurfacing the four synthetic grass courts and landscaping the surrounding grounds.

"We had some problems with dirt being washed onto courts from gravel carparks as well as stones being thrown onto them," Adrian said.

Following the Physical Planning and Estates project to surface adjacent carparks, the paths around the courts and leading to the pavilion were paved and contoured. The work has improved wheelchair access and the toilets and showers are also wheelchair accessible. The extensions, which cost around $45,000, were opened on October 17.
Securing the future of Upper Hunter farms

Upper Hunter dairy farmers hit by the de-regulation of the industry could follow the lead of a New Zealand group to make their properties financially sustainable, according to this year’s Harper Somers visiting fellow.

Professor George Benwell from the University of Otago at Dunedin, on New Zealand’s South Island, visited the Department of Civil, Surveying and Environmental Engineering last month under the annual scheme established by local surveyors Ian Harper and Matthew Somers to fund international visitors. Professor Benwell said the Crops for Southland and Topoclimate South projects in the Invercargill region are an example for Upper Hunter farmers to follow.

“What farmers in that region have done is initiate research into the type of soils on their properties, and what crops can be grown in those soils, given the climatic conditions of the region,” he explained. “My role has been to map this information into graphic forms, to display the results as readable maps.”

The New Zealand project started two years ago, when farmers saw little financial stability for the future unless they diversified, a problem currently faced by dairy and broad acre farmers in Muswellbrook, Singleton, Scone, Merriwa and Murrurundi.

Bev Adams, Chairperson of the Hunter Economic Development Corporation’s Agribusiness Taskforce, said plans are underway to conduct a similar program to the one in New Zealand. With the assistance of Merriwa Council and State and Regional Development, Wayne Hutchinson – Enterprise Development Coordinator of Southland District Council – and Gary Hutchinson – Project Manager, Topoclimate South – have visited the Upper Hunter.

“Public meetings have been held to explain the New Zealand experience to farmers in the Upper Hunter,” Bev said. “A committee has been formed which is at present in the final stages of developing a business plan. A project similar to the one that has been so successful in the South Island of New Zealand will hopefully receive Federal and State Government backing so that it can be developed for the Upper Hunter,” she concluded.

Professor Benwell was the seventh Harper Somers Fellow and visited the Faculty of Engineering from October 9 to 20.

Symposium to build a rewarding workplace

A symposium for all staff, both general and academic, titled “Towards a Challenging and Rewarding Work Environment” will be held from November 21 to November 23. This event is supported by the Staff Development Committee and will include presentations by invited speakers and university staff, as well as opportunities for staff discussion and input. Please register for sessions by completing the Staff Development online registration form at http://www.newcastle.edu.au/kil/training/
or contact Faye McMillan on extension 8634. Information about the sessions can be found on the Events page at the above web site.

Tale of Jimmy Governor told for reconciliation

Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Social Science Professor John Ramsland related the chilling history of Jimmy Governor to an audience at a commemoration of the 100th anniversary of Governor’s capture in the Manning Valley last month.

Jimmy and his brother Joe were captured at Soban Creek in the Upper Manning Valley on October 22 1900 after the greatest manhunt in Australian history up to that time. The brothers were on the run for twelve weeks following the murders of members of the Mawhey family at the Breealong homestead near Singleton.

Proctor's "The Chant of Jimmy Blacksmith" was a fictionalised version of the Governor story, which was later made into a well-regarded Australian film.

Many of the 180 people who gathered to commemorate the capture were descendants of Thomas Green, one of the capturing party, and others of the Mawhey family. The afternoon, organised by the Manning Valley Historical Society, included the unveiling of a commemorative plaque and a tree planting at the site of the capture.

Professor Ramsland spoke for 45 minutes on the history of the events from the night of July 20 1900, when the grisley murders took place, to the execution of Jimmy Governor in January 1901. He included an analysis of the trial, in which the defence presented a passionate case for manslaughter.

The Governor incident, which deeply affected Aboriginal/European relationships in the early 20th century, will form part of John’s book being sponsored by the Greater Taree City Council as a gesture of reconciliation. Custodians of the Soil: A History of Aboriginal-European Relations on the Manning Valley of New South Wales will be released in July next year.
Student Centre wins awards

The newly completed Student Services Centre has won two awards for excellence in building at the Newcastle Master Builders Association annual awards night.

Judged upon outstanding levels of skill, workmanship and technical standard, the awards were given for "Restoration and Adaptive Reuse" and "Construction of a Complex and Innovative Project".

Based on the restoration of the Hunter Gym, the project was driven by a clear appreciation of the building's original architecture. The preservation of Tasmanian Oak finishes, exposed concrete structure and glazed curtain walls has retained the original balance between warm finishes and tall, light-filled spaces. Environmental modeling saw the construction of simply styled sunscreens to achieve high levels of natural lighting and the management of heat loads on glazed external walls. Tinted with operable louvres and windows, the design of the building ensures that the use of air conditioning can be limited by ensuring greater levels of passive thermal control and comfort.

The largely column free structural system of the Gymnasium proved ideal to accommodate open plan office space and modifications for mezzanine floors. The post tensioned roof structure and limited ceiling space prevented building penetrations or concealment of mechanical services, so the air conditioning was installed using boldly exposed ductwork. The new centrally located lift now provides access to all levels, also assisting in the "one stop shop" approach to student services.

A high level of technical input and support from builders, architects and engineers has enhanced the success of the Student Services Centre, veiling a complex functional brief behind the building's overall simplicity. It seems appropriate that these efforts have been rewarded.

Female iron deficiency – call for volunteers

PhD researcher Allison Schmidt is looking for premenopausal women aged between 18 and 50 to help her with her studies into female iron deficiency.

Iron deficiency is estimated to affect about a third of Australian women, yet whether it is caused by inadequate iron-rich foods or excessive menstrual blood loss, is unknown.

Allison is researching the causes of women's iron deficiency at the Research Centre for Gender and Health.

She says it is important to try to track down the reason for iron deficiency because it has been linked with poor work performance, impaired social functioning, inability to regulate body temperature, reduced comprehension, low immunity and tiredness.

Allison is also looking at how iron in the diet is absorbed and how other foods and drinks such as vitamin C, alcohol, tea and dairy foods may enhance or inhibit the absorption of iron by the body. She wants as many volunteers as possible from the Newcastle/Lake Macquarie region.

Menstrual blood loss will be assessed and for 12 days they will be asked to provide a detailed account of not just their diet but how they combine food, drink and other dietary supplements. They will also have blood tests. Every volunteer will receive feedback on their iron status and their overall dietary intake.

"This type of research has never been attempted before in Australia. It is very important because lack of iron is one of the major nutritional deficiencies in women worldwide," says Allison.

Volunteers can contact Allison Schmidt on 4921 5506 or 4921 8699.
Discussions between two university staff members on the 100 bus to Newcastle has led to the sourcing of an ancient manuscript fragment acquired by the Archives, Rare Books and Special Collections (ARBSC) Unit in September.

The manuscript fragment, dating from the 13th to 15th centuries, was purchased at auction for just $66 and became the university’s oldest manuscript and most treasured ‘bargain’. The small fragment, inscribed on vellum in two columns with 18 lines remaining per column and marginalia, in another hand, was of European origin and was recovered from a binding.

Mystery surrounded the provenance of the manuscript, and the author and title of the work from which it was taken. Dr Rhona Beare of the Department of Classics, who examined the fragment following its arrival on October 11, said it was from a theological work on angelology and demonology, concerning the nature of angels and whether they can sin.

With the assistance of Professor Harold Tarrant, Head of Classics, and Emeritus Professor Godfrey Tanner, Rhona began a careful analysis of the fragment, and prepared a transcription and translation.

It was Giorni di Gravio, Senior Clerk at the ARBSC Unit, however who successfully sourced the fragment after a number of afternoon ‘angelic’ discussions with Rhona on the 100 bus. It came from a work by the 12th century scholastic theologian Peter Lombard (ca.1100—ca.1160) entitled Libri Quattuor Sententiarum. The fragment is from Book 2 (Distinction VII), where Lombard dedicated ten sections of the Sententiae (or sentences) to the subject of good and evil spirits, which involved a discussion concerning angels, demons, the Fall, grace and sin, the peculiarity of angels and the relation of demons to the magical arts.

Peter Lombard was an Italian theologian and bishop of Paris, whose Libri Quattuor Sententiarum (Four Books of Sentences) became the standard theological work of the Middle Ages. The work’s popularity was such that by 1338, the Library of the Sorbonne possessed 50 copies of it and 118 volumes of commentaries upon its contents.

The Four Books of Sentences was probably composed between 1147 and 1150, and earned for him the title Magister Sententiarum or “Master of the Sentences". It was a compilation of the teachings of the Fathers of the Church and opinions of earlier theologians, and remained the chief theological textbook in European universities up until the 16th century. Many of the greatest western philosophers and theologians, such as Albertus Magnus, Thomas Aquinas, Thomas de Strasbourg, Duns Scotus and Bonaventure lectured and wrote commentaries on it.

"This fragment comes to us from a very important germinal period in the intellectual history of the West,” Giorni said. "It is with great pleasure that we welcome this small fragment to the rare book collection of the university and present the first ever translation of it and its source from Book 2 Distinction VII.”

The English translation, prepared by Rhona Beare, and other details of the manuscript and its author can be viewed by clicking on 'recent news and events' on the library’s website at www.library.newcastle.edu.au/archives/archives.html.

Chronic illness need not be a barrier to physical exercise, says Beth Fuller, a PhD student who is researching what motivates physical activity in older people suffering from heart and lung diseases.

Beth, who is from the Discipline of Behavioural Science in Relation to Medicine and who works in health policy and planning with the Mid-North Coast Area Health Service, is gathering information on older people’s attitudes to physical exercise to create strategies that will encourage them to increase their level of exercise. She hopes to hold a series of focus groups in the Taree area in November and December.

“The study will build on earlier work which looked at what older people see as being important for healthy living. In that study we examined what motivates people to be active, what acts as barriers to physical activity and what sort of exercise older people prefer.”

Barriers to physical activity included lack of social support, poor facilities and concerns about safety. Interestingly the participants were keen on the idea of campaigns to encourage older people to be active because they found many existing health messages confusing.

“We also found that people who incorporated physical activity into their daily routines and approached it as part of their lifestyle were more likely to adhere to levels of activity that gave them a health benefit,” Beth said. "In contrast the all-or-bust approach is pretty well doomed."

For information contact Beth Fuller on 02 6551 0870.
For Sale
56 Lawson Street Hamilton – 3 bedroom Federation house, fully renovated, no off street parking. 2 minutes walk from Beaumont St, $242,000. Contact Olivier ext 5098, email: gopher@tng.newcastle.edu.au.

Long Ball / Formal Dress, Size 12 – burgundy chiffon with shoulder wrap, fully lined with shoe string straps and crossover bodice, slim fitting, kicking out around the hemline. Worn once, has been dry cleaned. Cost $160 sold $90. Phone Susan 6501.

Toshiba Satellite 2520 CTX Laptop, with AMD 2X 333MHz processor, 4.1GB hard disk memory capacity, 64MB cache memory, software included Windows 98, Corel, excel, powerpoint, access, realplayer, media player, outlook, outlook express, internet explorer. Other features include internal CD player and floppy disk drive. One year old with new hard disk. $2000 or ono, open to negotiations. Contact Jamie Mackee on 04217453 or email: Jamie.mackee@newcastle.edu.au.

Bodytech Exercise Walking machine in excellent condition $90.00, chest of drawers with laminate top 45mm wide x 64mm high, good condition - suit child's bedroom $30.00 – telephone Annette on 49335006.

Three Bedroom California brick bungalow; polished wood floors, feature ceilings, cottage garden, close to Mitchell station and shops in quiet street, a country retreat that is an easy commute to Uni. Asking $175,000. Call ext 5006.


Executive Residence in Charlestown with great city and coastline views ($346,000) Lovely large north facing home featuring a huge 4-car garage with remote-controlled doors as well as an extra carport, rumpus room, family room, sunroom, 4 large bedrooms (all with built-ins) and a study or fifth bedroom, large solar-heated inground pool, great city and coast line views, main bedroom has an ultra-modern ensuite with a spa bath, five-zone ducted air conditioners plus much more. For more information, please contact Professor Hai-Sui Yu on ext 5295 or 0420 690610.

Tender 06/00
The following item is available for sale by tender.

Item 1: Computer: Macintosh Powerbook 5300C with software Serial Number SG5450AW65R, Asset No. 1211008.

Item 2: Photocopier: Konica Model 1112 - Very good working condition. Serviced by Complete Bus Supplies - Toner x 5 also supplied, Serial Number 386001779, Asset No. 120031-0

Item 3: Facsimile: Canon 1600 - Very good condition, regular service. Serial Number H12013, Asset No. 1202790.

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 November 24 at 11:30am and should be forwarded to: The Tender Box, Supply Section, The University of Newcastle, University Drive, Callaghan 2308. Please mark clearly on the sealed envelope “TENDER 06/00”.

New management
United Campus Bookshops has taken over running the bookstore in the Shortland Union. Manager Margaret Lockwood welcomes staff and students. The store has a new telephone number (0460 3045) and fax (0460 3038) and the internal number will remain ext.6009.

Concerts at the Con
November 13
Piano Recital and Presentation Ceremony – the presentation of the Jean Bogan Composition Award for Piano by Laurie Bogan, followed by a piano recital by Stephen Savage from the Queensland Conservatorium. 7.30pm – free admission.

November 14
Conservatorium concert presented by young university musicians. 7pm; adult $6, conc. $5, child $4.

November 17
Musica Viva – The Shostakovich String Quartet – the internationally acclaimed Russian ensemble presents music by Tchaikovsky. 8pm, enquiries at Ticketek 4920 1977.

November 19
Afternoon concert – 2NUR Fundraising Concert featuring the Lake Macquarie Ladies Choir with conductor Alan Thrift, After 5 Vocal Ensemble and piano duets – a grand variety concert from 2pm. Adult $11.

December 3
Christmas Festivities – Christmas at the Con annual Christmas concert featuring the Concert Band, Stuart Piano, harp, children’s choir, carols and lots of festive spirit! 3pm and 7pm - adult $12, conc. $10.

December 8, 9 and 10
Australian Guitar Competition – guitar concerts, workshops and exhibitions – guests include Karin Schuapp and Christopher Lawrence. For more information collect a brochure from the Conservatorium office. To be put on the Conservatorium Concert mailing list, leave your name and address at the main office, fax, phone or email us, ph 4921 8905, email: concerts@newcastle.edu.au.

November 15 and 16
Information Sessions for the School of Fine Arts. Students considering enrolling in the Bachelor of Fine Arts courses in 2001 are invited to attend an information session which will provide an explanation of the subjects offered, a tour of the facilities, meeting specialist staff, information on international exchange opportunities and an opportunity to ask questions. 12.30pm – VA25 Lecture Theatre in the Visual Arts building, Callaghan Campus. For more information please contact Melita Robertson on ext 5678.

November 19
Forum Sports Competition begins. Join as an individual or get a team together for Mixed Netball (Sunday night), Mixed, Mens or Ladies Basketball (Monday night), Ladies Netball (Tuesday night), Mixed Volleyball (Friday night). Contact Mel Everett on 6877.

November 30
Farewell Ceremony for International students.

December 4-6
The University of Newcastle and the University of Wollongong present a conference on Social Transformation in the Asia Pacific Region from 4th – 6th December at the University of Wollongong. Jointly convened by the Centre for Asian Pacific Social Transformation Studies (CAPTRANS) and the UNESCO-MOST (Management of Social Transformations) Program. For further information please contact: Pauline Winter, Uni. of Newcastle, email: pauli@nw.ukn.edu.au. For more information see the conference website: http://www.wwow.edu.au/research/groups/captrans/conference.html, email: captrans@nw.edu.au or phone: (02) 4921 5012.
Health, Safety and Development

Electrical equipment - making sure its safe

There is a huge array of electrical equipment used in the University’s activities.

The University is committed to providing the highest levels of health and safety for everyone involved in its activities. For electrical equipment, this level is defined, in part, by AS3760 In-service safety inspection and testing of electrical equipment. This standard calls for the periodic inspection and testing of any equipment that plugs into a standard power outlet, especially where there is the potential for damage to the plugs, flex, or casing. Faults can develop in service, so equipment will be inspected at intervals that depend on its nature and use. For example, equipment in a workshop should be re-inspected at six-monthly intervals, whilst that in an office might only need to be re-inspected every five years.

The task of inspection and testing falls to a number of groups. Finance and Estates arrange testing at the Central Coast Campus, whilst Medicine and Health Sciences test and tag equipment within their Faculty. At Callaghan, PPES’s Maintenance group, and in particular James Christian, carry the responsibility.

In-service inspection requires both a visual check and a set of electrical tests. Since the Callaghan testing program started in 1995, James has carried out inspections on over 8000 items, ranging from the humble extension lead, to sophisticated instruments. While inspections require the equipment to be unplugged, James always tries to make sure that any inconvenience is kept to a minimum, and ensures that the equipment will not be affected by the procedure.

The result of each inspection is maintained in an electronic database, so that every item of electrical equipment on campus has a test history. Finding a specific item for re-inspection is, however, proving to be a challenge, because equipment tends to move around. Each work unit can assist by maintaining an updated list of their electrical equipment and locations, saving James considerable time when he retests. James can provide the initial list.

Faults found include exposed wires and damaged plugs and flexes - for example, over 300 items failed their initial inspection because the plugs were not properly secured to the lead. All of these faults need to be rectified before the appliance can be put back into service. Quick and easy modifications are done on the spot, but work that is more involved is left to the individual department to arrange. It is important to realise that testing is designed for equipment in service - things that are regularly used, not kept in a cupboard in case they might be used one day. Testing should of course be carried out on equipment immediately before it goes back into service.

Despite the number of tests that need to be done, James’ job does bring some variety. A fault is always an interesting, though rare, find and he has probably met more people and seen more places on campus than many of us ever will. The testing program needs your cooperation through:

- making equipment available for inspection - know what you’ve got and make sure it’s accessible;
- keeping track of the location of equipment you are responsible for;
- maintaining your equipment - if a plug is loose or faulty, don’t keep using it, have it repaired!

Experience has shown that most faults can be found by visual inspection.

Tags are placed on equipment to verify that, at the time of inspection, it is considered safe to use. Your help is vital to making sure that your equipment is safe.

Next month: Summer safety tips

Students and Sustainability Conference 2001
The university will host the National Students & Sustainability (S&S) Conference in July next year. S&S is the peak environmental forum for students in Australia and will see around 700 students from universities across Australia converge on the Callaghan Campus for five days. It aims to inspire ecologically sustainable practices and create networks of environmentally-minded people. 2001 will be the tenth anniversary of the Students & Sustainability Conference and the first year it has been hosted by the University of Newcastle. The S&S organising collective want to hear from academics, staff, postgraduate and undergraduate students who are keen to get involved in the conference via workshops, field trips, skill sharing, seminars, plenaries, etc or by helping organise. Contact us via email at s-and-s@anzealfire.com.

Art for Christmas
Don’t forget the School of Fine Art Gallery shop for Christmas gifts – with a range of gifts from inexpensive ceramic brooches to one off works in bronze. The shop is open from Wednesday to Friday and on Sunday from 2-5pm or by appointment by calling Melita on ext 0578.

Telephone Speed Dial Number Changes
Due to a clash with existing telephone numbers and a new indial number range allocated to the studio accommodation building, the university has been forced to change the following Speed Dial Numbers:

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The old numbers will continue to work until the 12 Nov 2000.
The Open Foundation Course Reunion Dinner for this year was held on September 27 in the Brennan Room of the Shortland Union. OFC celebrated the achievements of its students over more than 25 years.

The Bogside Artists, famous for their murals in the area of Derry, Northern Ireland, known as Free Derry Corner held an exhibition at the Fine Art Gallery from October 11.

Peter Cooper, Managing Director of Advanced Dynamics (NZ) was the guest speaker at the Management Thinking seminar held at the Graduate School of Business on October 24. Peter, who has worked with a number of NZ government agencies, discussed some of the organisational dynamics that restrict performance in the public sector.

Eighteen nursing students received merit awards for excellent performance and scholarship certificates at the John Hunter Hospital on October 26. It is the first time the Faculty of Nursing has held its award ceremony at the hospital.

Occupational Therapy celebrated their 10th anniversary with a dinner at Newcastle City Hall on October 27. Entertainment was provided by the Shuffle Kings and guest speaker was Margaret Henry of the Newcastle Green Party.

Horizon the West, the second in a series of photographic exhibitions by Alan Chawner, Senior Lecturer in Photomedia in the School of Fine Art, was opened by the Lord Mayor at the Lovett Gallery in September. The third in the series, called "Horizon", will open in the School of Fine Art Gallery in May next year.

The Faculty of Education and NIER hosted a mini conference to examine how to improve the future of research and education on October 27. International speakers included James Austin, Professor of Music Education at the University of Colorado, Walter Vispoel from the Division of Measure Statistics and Educational Psychology at the University of Iowa, and visiting scholar Professor Richard Reynolds.