Staff long service rewarded

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With the end of the year approaching, may I wish all staff and students of the University an enjoyable festive season and best wishes for 2001. I have found 2000 to have been an enjoyable, busy and challenging year personally; and one that contained many highlights that were of major significance to the University, to our Hunter and Central Coast regions, and internationally.

2000 will be remembered by most Australians as the year of the Sydney Olympic Games. We can now look back proudly on the achievements of all of those who contributed to the success of the Olympics. Sydney was well prepared and managed very well with the ‘flood’ of athletes and visitors. In addition, we were well represented by our athletes, who brought great credit to us as a nation. Our involvement as a university was relatively small, but still significant. Five of our staff members were amongst the 10,000 Australians who took part in the Olympic Torch Relay and several staff members were part of the army of volunteers and professional workers who ensured everything ran so smoothly in Sydney. We were represented by student athletes in both the Olympic and Paralympic Games with commerce student and swimmer Justin Norris winning a bronze medal in the men’s 200 metre butterfly and speech pathology student and paralympian Gemma Dashwood winning gold in her 400 metre freestyle swim.

The University was pleased to host some international teams—the outstanding success of the Dutch swimming team must have been assisted by the use of our excellent ‘Forum’ facilities. In addition, 130 students from communications and media arts or tourism were recruited and trained by the Sydney Olympic Broadcasting Organisation (SOBO) as camera and sound assistants, communication equipment operators, spotters and production liaison personnel.

As part of the ongoing quality agenda, a review was commissioned this year of the University’s organisational structures and administrative arrangements. The report of the review team (Professor Peter Coaldrake, Professor Judith Kinnear and Dr Roland Williams) will be discussed at the December Council meeting and at a University Retreat in February 2001, prior to consideration of any proposed changes by the March Council. This is obviously one of the most important reviews to be undertaken by this university over the last eight years. I invite full participation in the next stage of this process.

Warm congratulations to general staff members who were nominated and judged this year as providing excellent service and received the Vice-Chancellor’s Award for General Staff Excellence. These included Mrs Eleanor Huber, Ms Sosie Graf and Mrs Judy McHugh, who received individual awards, and to members of the Scholarships and Prizes Unit and University’s Cell for volunteers, who received Team Awards. Congratulations also to 30 academic colleagues who were promoted this year in recognition of their excellent performance in teaching, research and service. In addition, the University gave special recognition to 119 staff members who have served for 25 years or more. Collectively this service amounted to more than 30 centuries of work which is a telling statistic for any university.

Other matters of importance during 2000 were:

- the World Step Aerobic Team Championship won by the University of Newcastle Elite Step team on June 4 in Belgium;
- the openings of the Gibb Uni Learning and Development Centre (by Senator Helen Ridgway) on the Central Coast Campus, the Central Coast Area Health Service Library; and the Wetlands Pavilion;
- the establishment, in collaboration with the Newcastle City Council, of the Hunter Lecture, which was delivered by Sir Gustav Nossal (A Great Knight in...
Campus, jointly with the Hunter on April 14; and in Kuala Lumpur October the Great Hall on May 5; a celebration held on the University of Indonesia on August 10 for graduates in the Master in Quality Improvement in Health Care; 

honorary doctoral degrees to Tan Sri Dato' Dr K.B. Somasundram (Education), Archbishop Dr Peter Carney AO (Letters), Dr Helen Caldecott (Education), Dr Brian Satters (Architecture), Dr Valerie Bryant-Carroll OAM (Education), Dr Patricia Hamilton OAM (University) and Dr Belinda Clark (Education); 

Hunter Medical Research Institute (HMRI) awards to Professor Roger Smith (Spurke Helmore Prime TV Award) and Dr Jeanette Saloff (Pulse Young Medical Researcher of the Year); 

the allocation of major infrastructure funding ($2.85m over three years) to HMRI by NSW Health; 

- farewell to Professor Les Eastcott (now Vice-Chancellor of the University of Papua and New Guinea); Professor Dick Heller (former Director of the Centre for Clinical Epidemiology and Biostatistics); Professor Barry Maitland (former Dean of the Faculty of Architecture, Building and Design); Associate Professor Lauret Williams (formerly Director of Walla Walla); Professor Wayne McKenzie (former Dean of the Faculty of Art and Design); and Professor John Hamilton (former Dean of the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences); 

welcoming new senior staff members to the university: Professors Mike Calford (human physiology), Tony Tavaglione (Director, Graduate School of Business), and Tony Edson (Head, Department of Design), Ted Wright (Belle Wisse Chair, Faculty of Law), Ms Robyn Drake (Deputy University Secretary and Registrar) and Ms Rowan Tan (Head Event House); 

new professorial appointments to current academic staff members: Professors Jenny Gore (education), Phil Forrestan (education and Dean of Students) and Christina Lee (Director of the Institute for Gender and Health); 

welcoming a number of distinguished visitors to the university, including the Honourable Delia Domingo Albert (Ambassador of the Philippines to Australia), Professor Gordon Stanley (Chair, Board of Studies NSW); Nobel Prize winner, Professor Barry Smalley; Deputy Director, University Secretaty and Finance; Associate Professor Barry Maitland (Chair, Board of Studies), Associate Professor Lauret Williams (formerly Director of Walla Walla); Professor Wayne McKenzie (former Dean of the Faculty of Art and Design); and Professor John Hamilton (former Dean of the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences); 

attending Alumni Chapter functions in Canberra, Sydney, Brisbane and Kuala Lumpur (with more than 370 attendees), and the launch of the Newcastle Alumni Chapter; 

appointing Dr Barry McKnight as the acting Director of the Central Coast Campus, and the agreement with the NSW Department of Education and Training to establish the Central Coast Campuses, involving the Ourimbah, Gosford and Wyong campuses as a joint venture, in the delivery of post-secondary education on the Central Coast of NSW; 

the appointments of Associate Professor Lindsay Johnston as Dean of the Faculty of Architecture, Building and Design, and of Professor Ron Wills as the Dean of the Faculty of the Central Coast; 

the 2000 Convocation Dinner held on 10 March, and the awards of the Convocation Medal to Mr Ian Harris, and of the Newton-John Award to Mr Geoff Leonard; 

Emeritus Professor appointments: Annette Dobson; Dick Heller; and John Hamilton; 

the passing of a long standing supporter of the Conservatorium and Faculty of Music, Mr Vince Millington OAM; 

Reconciliation Week 2000; 

the establishment of GraduateSchool.com as a University company responsible for the marketing, development and delivery of online postgraduate courses in Australia and overseas; 

the Faculty of Music’s Chamber Choir tour of the UK; 

the development of a new electronic student administration system, NUSTAR, for implementation in mid-2001; and 

the 25th anniversary of TUNRA Bulk Solids, and the outstanding work of Professor Alan Roberts and his team in delivering academic and professional services to industry.

May I thank you for your contributions to the University during 2000, and wish you and your family best wishes for the Christmas/New Year period, and for a healthy and successful 2001.

Roger Holmes Vice-Chancellor and President

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Student applications grow

Figures released by the Universities Admissions Centre (UAC) show an increased number of applications to study undergraduate courses at the University in 2001.

The University received 7,525 first preference applications, an increase of almost one percent on last year's figures.

Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Professor Brian English, says the results defy the state trend. "The number of people applying to study at the 11 universities in New South Wales has fallen more than two percent over last year's admissions," he said. "I'm extremely happy that trends in applications for places at the University of Newcastle indicate that it is a popular choice for undergraduate students. Applications for places in several faculties show sizeable increases."

Key figures include: 

- first preferences for the Faculty of Science and Mathematics up 29 percent 
- first preferences for the Faculty of Economics and Commerce up 25 percent 
- Bachelor of Business applications up 29 percent on last year 
- Bachelor of Information Science applications up 24 percent 
- first preference applications for the Faculty of the Central Coast up almost 18 percent 
- a 21 percent increase in first preference applications to the Faculty of Music.

"I am particularly pleased that new courses, such as the Bachelor of Photonics offered by Science and Maths, are attracting first preference applications," Brian said. "In addition, the strong growth of interest in the Faculty of the Central Coast further cements the partnership at Ourimbah between the University, Central Coast Community College and the Hunter Institute of Technology."
Finding work for injured staff

Maxine Rennard

Injuries at work or elsewhere can prevent people from working in their previous jobs and can cost millions of dollars in compensation payouts and loss of productivity. There have been more than 180 staff injuries reported at the University this year, resulting in over 65 workers compensation claims. In more than 25 of these cases, injured staff members were having difficulty in returning to work.

Take the case of the manual worker whose injury meant he was no longer able to use his fingers for fine work. His own doctor questioned the ability of the University's Rehabilitation Coordinator Maxine Rennard to get him back to work. But Maxine was confident the University could accommodate his restrictions.

"We found him a position answering phones where he didn't have to use his fingers as much," Maxine recalls. "Finding suitable duties for injured workers is usually just a matter of rethinking what they do and looking at their transferable skills."

Workplace-based rehabilitation was introduced as an integral part of the workers compensation system in NSW in the Workers Compensation Act of 1987. A further act (proclaimed in 1998) extended injury management to include treatment, rehabilitation, retraining, claims management and employment management practices.

"It's important that people feel valued by their employer and that they are able to return to some sort of duties following an injury, whether the injury is work or non-work related," Maxine said. "Often a person's identity is closely tied to their employment and the sort of peer support that work provides is also very important."

Former messenger/driver Lyn says she injured the muscles behind her ribs 18 months ago in the mailroom. A subsequent groin injury signalled the end to her mailroom job. The injury has meant ongoing discomfort and pain for Lyn and affected her lifestyle. She can no longer drive a mailroom van.

"I loved my job – it was great to get out and meet people on and off the campus and the exercise kept me fit," Lyn said. "I wanted to stay in the mailroom but Maxine helped me come to terms with not being able to do what I wanted anymore. It took a lot of time and perseverance on her part."

With Maxine's encouragement and the support of her supervisor and supervisors of other divisions, Lyn tried out various jobs in Physical Planning and Estates, the Auchmuty Library, and the Finance and Property Division in between returning for stints in the mailroom. In July this year she was offered and accepted a full time position as a clerical assistant in the Supply and Payments Section.

"It's been a steep learning curve for me with my new duties involving more mental than physical activity," Lyn said. "The staff in Accounts have been wonderful – I wouldn't have been able to do it without them."

One of the most difficult tasks for Maxine in helping injured workers to return to work is encouraging managers to retain their staff by identifying suitable duties. A registered nurse, with postgraduate qualifications in Human Resource Management from Canberra University, she finds she needs all her training in counselling and mediation at times.

"If we have to move someone from their own department, that section is still responsible for paying their wage and another department is gaining the benefit of their skills for nothing," she said. "It is definitely to everyone's advantage to try and retain them in their previous position and this is often just a matter of re-thinking what they do and how they do it."

Many people put themselves at risk in the way that they approach their work, according to Maxine. "While people do warm ups and stretches before they play sport, they don't do anything to prepare for work, where they often put their bodies into positions they are not designed for (e.g. at a computer screen) and stay there for hours," she said. "We need to examine our work processes and modify what we do to protect ourselves from injury. Often when people are injured, we are able to adjust their practices to enable them to return to their position safely."

Maxine is responsible for liaising with injured workers and their supervisors to help them to return to work. She is part of the Health, Safety and Development team in Human Resource Management and works closely with the Workers' Compensation Claims Officer Shirley Sorensen. Maxine can be contacted by telephoning extension 8847.

Lyn's surname withheld at request.

Singapore first for building degree

Graduates of the Bachelor of Construction Management course now have professional recognition in the important international marketplace of Singapore.

The Bachelor of Construction Management (Building) course has become the first and only distance learning course to be accredited by the prestigious Singapore Institute of Surveyors and Valuers (SISV).

Professor Chen Swee-Eng, Head of the Department of Building in the Faculty of Architecture, Building and Design, says the accreditation is an important part of the Department's internationalisation.

"The course leads to two professional qualifications – construction management and construction economics," explained Chen. "In many countries the practice of these professions is regulated either by registration or membership of a local professional institution. Endorsement by the SISV means that the local professional institution has accepted our qualification as being sufficient for membership and that our graduates have a portable qualification which is recognised in Singapore and across the world."

The Newcastle course is the first to be endorsed by the SISV, which has indicated it will not endorse any other distance learning courses. About 50 students in Singapore and Malaysia are enrolled in the Bachelor of Construction Management via distance learning.
University partnership with new college

The University has entered into a partnership that will strengthen its links with local high schools.

The partnership grew out of a collaborative proposal by the University and the Department of Education and Training (Newcastle District Office), submitted to the Minister for Education in June this year. The proposal, involving three local high schools and TAFE, outlined a shared commitment to education for all students.

From the beginning of the school year in 2001, Jesmond University High School, Waratah Technology High School and Wallsend High School will become campuses of Callaghan College.

The schools will be known as Jesmond campus, Waratah Technology campus and Wallsend campus respectively. Jesmond campus has been targeted to become a senior school (Years 11 and 12) and the Waratah and Wallsend campuses will accommodate students from Years 7 to 10.

Deputy Vice-Chancellor Professor Brian English said the University has a strong commitment to working with the wider community to develop and enhance opportunities for people in the region. Broadening links with local schools is part of that commitment.

"The University already offers several programs for school students and 2000 saw the introduction of MathL21 being offered to HSC students on the University campus," he said.

"Through articulation links with schools and the Hunter Institute of Technology, we will continue to develop new ways to encourage lifelong learning in the local population."

The principals from the three high schools and members of their teacher, parent and student bodies were invited to attend a graduation ceremony at the University in October as a gesture of goodwill towards the new partnership.

"The University will continue to offer all its usual programs and opportunities for students of all schools in the Hunter region," Brian said. "However, we are negotiating with the Callaghan College schools specifically to increase opportunities for students from areas that have traditionally had lower numbers going on to tertiary education. We look forward to participating in the growing partnership."

Journey of celebration

The inspirational music created by the University of Newcastle Conservatorium Chamber Choir on their tour of the United Kingdom earlier this year has been captured on CD.

Conductor Philip Matthias said the two CD set, called Journey of Celebration, has almost five hours of music, including an intensive multimedia presentation.

"Twenty one singers went on the tour of England and Wales in April/May, most of them tertiary students," he said. "The CD is a compilation of the concerts, services and broadcasts of the tour."

The choir performed in Canterbury Cathedral, St Paul's in London, Liverpool Cathedral, Westminster College at Oxford, and St Asaph's Cathedral in Wales. They were also the first Australian choir to sing the BBC's daily service broadcasts in that program's 77-year history.

"The first disk includes in short form the choir's performance at the Guild of Church Musicians Millennium Service at Canterbury Cathedral and 12 pieces from the BBC broadcasts," Philip said. "The second disk has around 50 minutes of Australasian music. The interactive multimedia presentation contains over 2 hours of music."

It is available from the Conservatorium, Pepperinas Books in Bolton Street, and Michael's Music Room in Sydney's Town Hall Arcade for $28.
New Dean builds sustainable future

Associate Professor Lindsay Johnston and wife Su must have raised the eyebrows of a few real estate agents when they began to look for the block to build their award-winning sustainable home on. After all, it isn’t many couples that ask for land that is difficult, remote and without mains power! And there aren’t many areas within striking distance of Newcastle that can still provide such a block.

The Johnston’s found one, however. The 100-acre block on the edge of a 60 metre high cliff in the Watagan Forest on which they built their house was just what they were looking for.

Lindsay, who was recently appointed as Dean of the Faculty of Architecture, Building and Design from January 2001, specialises in low energy and environmentally sustainable building design.

“I was looking for an opportunity to develop my research interest – to put my money where my mouth is – by using my own finances to work on a design project,” he said. “Our house design is experimental and we have cut our energy consumption to one-third of the average NSW home.”

Not only did Lindsay’s house win the 1997 Royal Australian Institute of Architects (RAIA) Environment Award for its autonomous low energy design and permaculture garden, it created the momentum that has built a ‘green architecture’ research specialty at Newcastle.

“In 1993, as I was taking over as Head of the Department of Architecture, and having had an interest in environmental architecture for some time, I had a vision that it could form a research focus for Newcastle,” Lindsay said.

The environmental architecture research unit includes conjoint professors Richard Leplastrier, Peter Stuchbury and Dr Louis Whibberley. The unit has developed strategic partnerships with industry partners BHP (Research), Advanced Environmental Concepts and several leading architectural practices.

Lindsay has recently won two SPIRT (Strategic Partnership with Industry Research and Training) scholarships for postgraduate students. One is with BHP Environment (Newcastle) and involves researching the environmental life cycle design of residential buildings. The second is with leading architectural practice Bligh Voller Nield (who designed Stadium Australia) for a parallel study in environmentally sustainable non-residential design.

Lindsay and Su also applied for and received approval to build five tourist ‘eco-lodges’ on their cBB-top block. The Four Horizons Eco-Lodges (three of which have been built so far) won the 2000 RAIA NSW Premier’s Award from Bob Carr recently.

The eco-lodges which, along with the main house, were not only designed but also constructed by Lindsay (with help from his family), are self-catering, use solar power and rainwater and are dotted through the forest along the edge of the cliff. The bushland block is surrounded by National Park with the Great North Walk passing its gates.

Lindsay grew up in Dungannon in Northern Ireland and studied architecture in Dundee, Scotland. He worked in architectural practice in London and Dublin as well as four years with the Irish Government Construction and Planning Research Institute. He ran his own practice for 10 years in Dublin, was a Consultant with the World Bank in Saudi Arabia, and worked on low cost housing and agricultural projects for Malaysia. He emigrated to Australia with Su and his five children in 1986.

He believes he is well suited to the Dean’s position at Newcastle.

“T did my architectural training in an art college, so I developed a strong affinity with design and have done some furniture and industrial design work. I hold a builder’s licence and have worked as an architect on a range of projects in several countries. So I have an affinity with all three streams in the Faculty,” he said.

Lindsay plans to enhance the already high national reputation of the Faculty, which he says is particularly strong in undergraduate teaching, and to expand that reputation internationally. He also wants to develop postgraduate coursework programs within the Faculty and particularly to develop a stronger research profile.

“I am very involved in the development of the Master of Applied Management (Architecture) distance learning program and am currently organising a two week Master Class by internationally renowned Australian architect Glenn Murcutt to take place in July 2001,” he said.

“I’m very aware of the tremendous opportunities for industry funded research in our disciplines.”

With a possible four postgraduate research students in environmental architecture to supervise, as well as teaching in the environmental studies component of the undergraduate program and getting the MAM(Architecture) up and running, Lindsay will have a busy year next year. His mountain retreat provides both the joys of nature and the challenge of completing his building projects – not to mention a 55km drive to the university. He and Su make their own electricity, collect their own rainwater, produce their own eggs and grow their own vegetables.

“If I have a problem with working, it is the sheer amount of paper I have to deal with every day,” Lindsay says of his current position as Acting Dean. “But really I’ve got it made – I’m very happy.”
GraduateSchool.com leads online ascendancy

The formation of a new company – GraduateSchool.com Pty Ltd – puts the university at the forefront of online course delivery, according to the Dean of the University of Newcastle Graduate School (TUNGS) Professor Scott Holmes.

"British universities have just announced a consortium to launch online courses from 2002 and the 'Universitas 21' consortium won't launch before then either," Scott said. "By that time we hope to have 3000 students studying our courses online."

GraduateSchool.com Pty Ltd is a wholly owned subsidiary of the University of Newcastle set up to form an interface between the University and its marketplace. Established using a development loan from the University, the company will embark on an ambitious national advertising and marketing campaign for the web-based postgraduate programs that is unprecedented in the history of the University.

"The formation of TUNGS in 1999 gave a real focus to postgraduate coursework programs," Scott said. "We now have the most appropriate model for online course delivery in Australia or the world in Webleam."

Webleam was developed by the Information and Educational Services Division and involves a mixture of written course materials and Internet based support services.

"Now, if you are a mine manager in Moree, for instance, you won't have to worry about downloading huge texts from the Internet or trying to find textbooks – it will all be sent to you in hard copy," Scott explained. "We use the net for online feedback and assessment and for networking with other students, which is something students tell us is important."

Investment funding in the company is planned to allow the University to meet the ambitious marketing and advertising targets it has set. An office to administer the marketing of the programs in Asia will be set up next year with the courses being promoted in Hong Kong, Malaysia, China and Taiwan over the next two years.

"The development of these online courses and the company to market them have involved a major cultural shift at the University," Scott said. "We are ahead of the game in online delivery because the faculties and academic staff have embraced the shift and have supported this exciting development."

Home automation project on display

A low cost and user-friendly home automation system that is capable of monitoring and controlling aspects of a domestic household was among the final-year Electrical Engineering projects on display at the Faculty of Engineering Open Day last month.

The annual event showcases the final year projects of students undertaking the Bachelor degree programs in Electrical and Computer Engineering. Student Jonathon Smith displayed his automation device along with 25 other student projects on November 23.

"The automated functions may include lighting, audio, security and other appliances," Jonathon said. "The monitoring and control will be done with an easy to use interface that will interact with the appliances take inputs from sensors."

Other projects on display included an ultra low cost GPS system for automotive applications, an EEG analysis system to measure the depth of anaesthesia during surgery, and a flywheel based uninterruptible power supply for PCs.
Herbalism on offer

Among the many initiatives at the Central Coast recently, the association of the University with the well-known and respected Southern Cross Herbal School is particularly exciting.

The Herbal School, founded and operated by Denis and Ruth Stewart, has been responsible for the education of some of the most successful herbal medicine practitioners in Australia, New Zealand and Europe. Denis is regarded as a leading authority on herbalism, consulting to governments, industry and the "natural health" profession.

Recently the School established an association with the University through the University of Newcastle Research Associates (TUNRA) to offer a range of courses in 2001 at the Central Coast Campuses. The association has created many opportunities for both partners. Students of the Southern Cross Herbal School are now able to access many of the facilities offered by the University. It is envisioned that students will eventually be able to obtain qualifications from certificate level to a doctoral degree, all at the one location.

The University has been conducting research on medicinal herbs at the Ourimbah campus for many years. The research, led by Professor Ron Wills, has attracted more than half a million dollars in funding and currently has three postgraduate and one honours student completing research.

The Certificate of Herbalism would be appropriate for those interested in using natural remedies in the home, or for those who are in a retail position in a pharmacy or a health food store. It provides a basic knowledge of the history and practice of herbalism and herbal preparations and establishes the foundation of chemical constituents found in herbs.

Students can choose from a range of courses offerings including a Certificate of Herbalism, a Diploma of Botanic Medicine is a postgraduate qualification and is designed specifically for general practitioners and pharmacists who wish to augment their current practice with herbal therapy.

"It's a real breakthrough for the Campus to have a lecturer of Denis Stewart's calibre on the Central Coast," Doug said. "His work and outstanding reputation, combined with our research capabilities, make this a very exciting partnership indeed."

South Africans visit Legal Centre

A group of top level South African legal officials visited the University of Newcastle Legal Centre in October as part of a fact finding tour in the pursuit of equality.

Associate Professor Ray Watterson, John Boersig and Robert Cavanagh were invited to meet with the officials because of their work on coronial investigations and in examining police procedures.

"We have been approached because of our investigations concerning 'at risk people'," John Boersig said. "Ours was the only hands-on group they spoke with."

The study group wanted to gain an understanding of academic approaches to teaching equality by Australian tertiary institutions and an insight into the approach of the courts in issues of equality.

During their week-long stay in Australia, the group met with government officials, members of the judiciary and community groups who had demonstrated an interest in human rights and the elimination of unfair discrimination. In Newcastle, they also met with Aboriginal community leaders, Arthur and Leila Murray and with Roderic Pitty, of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade on October 30. The delegates were: Thuli Madonsela, Chief Director, Transformation and Equality; Tsieisi Malerma, Director, Transformation and Corporate Strategy; Cecil Van Reit, Head of Justice College, Stadnick Guito, an academic; and Ralph Zulman, Judge, Supreme Court of Appeals.

Beware of thieves

Following several recent incidents where people have had their belongings stolen from offices, staff are warned to take precautions against thieves.

Manager of the University's Security Services, Peter Boyd, says people should be aware that every time they leave their workplace unattended, even if only for a short time, they present thieves with an opportunity.

"Offices should be locked and other areas secured when they are left unattended," he said. "That advice applies to all areas of the University, including the city precincts."

Staff should report anyone behaving suspiciously to Security by phoning extension 5729 or the emergency number - 5888 for a rapid response by Security officers.
University paralympians shine

Speech pathology student and paralympian Gemma Dashwood made her decision to retire from competitive swimming as she hit the wall at the end of her gold medal winning 400 metre freestyle swim.

"If I hadn't performed up to my expectations in the 400 metre, I might have been tempted to keep going with my swimming," she said. "But to win in front of a packed home crowd that included so many people who were special to me was wonderful. I knew that was how I wanted to remember my last experience of swimming competitively."

Gemma, who also won silver in the 200 metre individual medley and bronze in the 4x100 metre freestyle relay at the Sydney Games, was swimming in the S10 category - the least disabled swimming category - after septic swim.

"Applications to study the Master of Business Administration are increasing and now that the course is being offered online, it is more flexible than ever before," he said.

The successful applicant will have their course fees fully paid. Club 13 has committed to the scholarship for 2001 and 2002.
The brief for the anti-graffiti campaign was to highlight to the community the cost of graffiti, and make perpetrators think twice about what they are doing. The work was presented to the Lord Mayor John Tate and Newcastle and Hunter Business Chamber President Paul Murphy when they visited the design building on November 20.

Roger Dunstan from the Department of Design in the Faculty of Architecture, Building and Design, says Paul Murphy viewed the initial results and was so impressed that he wanted the Lord Mayor to see them.

The campaign coincides with Newcastle City Council’s Graffiti Blasters Project, a joint initiative undertaken with the State Government. Newcastle has been conducting a trial of two environmentally friendly graffiti cleaning machines, which use baking soda and water at high pressure.

Graffiti removal has cost Newcastle City Council almost $25,000 in the first three months of the 2000-2001 financial year. The Newcastle business community has also indicated it spends a comparable amount of its own money on graffiti removal.

Medals reward long service

The contributions of the 119 staff members who received Long Service Medals added up to more than 30 centuries of combined service to the University, Chancellor Ric Charlton said at a presentation ceremony in October.

Each of the recipients of the 25 Year Long Service Medal has served the University in excess of two-thirds of the time it has been in operation as a University, he said.

"The University community, to which you belong, of itself is a major factor in encouraging staff to remain, and to remain committed," Ric said. "I hope that this strong sense of community will continue to be one of the most positive factors characterising the University of Newcastle. Today's recipients have played integral roles in shaping that sense of common purpose and commitment."

The Long Service Medals, established this year, recognise 25 years or more service and will be presented annually.

Speaking on behalf of the long serving staff, Director of the Development Unit Dr Bernie Curran said that the people who had received medals had helped to shape the University. Not only had they helped to shape courses and design buildings, they held memories that were the repository of the University's tradition, he said.

"Those of us here have a mental image of the people who have been part and parcel of building this place," Bernie said. "We also have a memory of the landscape and have seen the University expand to take in the whole area and move into the city and down to the Central Coast."

Bernie said he was very proud to have seen the University grow from its relatively simple origins at Tighes Hill into the international sphere.

As I go around setting up [alumni] Chapters it is wonderful to find the number of people overseas who want to come back here," he said. "People who have succeeded financially in Hong Kong who talk about the thrill of living in Birmingham Gardens or Jesmond - places that have assumed mythical proportions in their lives."

The medal presentation ceremony was held in the Great Hall on Friday, October 27th.
The University's cartographer and a Fine Arts Honours student have illustrated a new book about the Hunter, *Journeys: The Making of the Hunter Region*, the most comprehensive survey undertaken of the region's natural and social environments and its economy.

Cartographer Olivier Rey-Lescure has given the Hunter a new look with digital cartography that provides a three dimensional appearance to topographical maps. Overlaying the relief modelling are the Hunter's vital features such as its geology, roads and population distribution. "The maps provide a genuine new picture of the Hunter landscape," says Olivier. "It is the first as a collection, I believe."

Contributors to *Journeys* are academic researchers from the University. The easy-to-read style covers a range of topics from topography and climate to the Newcastle Knights, BHP, food and wine.

The book is published by Allen and Unwin and was launched last month.

Olivier, the University's cartographer for eight years, has contributed 15 maps and numerous schematic diagrams to illustrate the text. The book also contains nearly 100 black and white and colour photographs showing the Hunter's past and present.

The cover is by Honours art student Annemarie Hopcroft, 22, of Wyee.

Annemarie's richly coloured painting, Looking Back, was influenced by her teenage years spent in Alice Springs and is part of a series called *Fencelines*.

"I was delighted when I was asked if my painting could be used for the cover illustration," says Annemarie. "It's great to be involved in the project, particularly as it comes entirely from the University. Artists rarely get this sort of exposure," she said.
Call for Australian centre for new cancer treatment

A Newcastle medical physicist is calling for a proton radiotherapy centre to be established in Australia to put the country into the forefront of cancer treatment.

Proton radiotherapy is particularly suited to treating eye and brain tumours because it delivers maximum dose to the tumour with a smaller dose before the target and virtually no dose behind. Dr Tomas Kron, of the University of Newcastle and the Mater Hospital says that radiotherapy is still under-used in Australia although we are technologically well-equipped.

"Proton radiotherapy would not compete with conventional radiotherapy - it would complement the current approach and offer many patients potentially superior treatment for their disease," Tomas said. "In many clinical situations, protons have the potential to deliver the best possible dose distribution to the patient and this may be of particular interest in treating children."

There are 23 proton radiotherapy centres in the world and a further 10 planned, but none in Australia. Tomas, together with Dr Michael Jackson and Dr Mamoon Haque of Sydney's Royal Prince Alfred Hospital, presented a workshop on radiotherapy with protons and particles at the annual conference of Engineering and the Physical Sciences in Medicine - EPSM 2000 - held in Newcastle last month.

EPSM 2000, a major discussion forum for international and Australian biomedical engineers, medical imagists and radiotherapists, was held at Newcastle City Hall from the 5th to the 9th of November. It was jointly hosted by the Institution of Engineers Australia (College of Biomedical Engineers), Australian College of Physical Scientists and Engineers in Medicine, and the Society for Medical and Biological Engineering (NSW).

Speakers included leading international experts, practising biomedical engineers and radiologists from major Australian hospitals and medical institutions. Some 100 papers were presented to the conference - none of the material had been presented in Australia before.

The inaugural Newcastle Medical Radiation Symposium was held immediately after the conference with the theme of Patient Dose Levels and Risk in Diagnostic Radiology.

Physicists, radiologists and radiographers attended the symposium, held on November 10 and 11. Speakers included Dr Paul Shrimpton, National Radiological Protection Board, UK, and Dr George Klemmhan, Senior Partner with Radkin Medical Imaging (currently General Secretary of the International Society of Radiology).

The symposium brought together the analytical and research skills of medical physicists and the professional clinical skills of radiographers and radiologists in the pursuit of dose optimisation in diagnostic radiography. Discussion centred on the setting of reference dose levels for common diagnostic radiology examinations carried out in Australia.

Award winning training program expanded

An innovative retraining program developed for retrenched BHP staff has been expanded in the Hunter to include other employees in trade occupations who wish to re-skill as high school teachers.

The TAS program, developed to retrain workers from the Rod Bar and Wire Division of BHP, has proved so successful that it has been expanded.

The program offers employees the opportunity to graduate with a Bachelors award in the area of Technological and Applied Studies in Industrial Arts, Technicals, wood and metals.

"Part of the success of the TAS program is utilising the current skills of the students and building on that with new knowledge in teaching," explained Sandra Srinach, Assistant Dean of the Faculty of Education. "Our experience with the Newcastle workers has shown that they are not only suited to experience, but also very willing to share their expertise."

A flexible delivery format allows students to attend classes and experience close contact with teachers and schools in the region. The program has received two National Teaching Awards, one for collaboration with industry, and the other a National Teaching Award for the provision of educational services to the region.

Jean Bogan Prize winner announced

Twenty-nine-year-old Kirsty Beilharz, a lecturer in the Music Department at the University of Sydney, has won the prestigious Jean Bogan Prize for Piano Composition for 2000 with her original piano composition work.

Professor Robert Constable, Dean of the Faculty of Music, explained that selecting this year's winner was a difficult task, but Kirsty's piece used the material in an exciting way.

"The piece is a real virtuoso work, very difficult to perform and requiring the utmost concentration. It uses the full range of expression that the piano has to offer," Robert said.

The Jean Bogan Prize for Piano Composition - which is administered by the University - was established by Laurie Bogan as a memorial to his late wife, who understood piano as a means of communication between composers and listeners. The Australia-wide competition is open to composers with original works for solo piano, of between seven and 10 minutes duration.

The $5000 prize was presented to Kirsty at the Conservatorium Concert Hall last month. Her winning composition will be performed at the 2001 Keyboard Festival in August next year.
Disciplines
Mathematics (Pure and Applied), Statistics and Physics.

Compatibility
There is a natural connection between statistics and mathematics and at many universities they traditionally have been joined. This was true at Newcastle until 1989 when statistics went to the Faculty of Economics and Commerce. With the formation of the School, statistics and mathematics again merged and we are now in the process of returning the discipline physically to the mathematics building and reappropriating its name.

The border between mathematics and physics is a vague one but physics at Newcastle is quite experimentally oriented, so the two disciplines complement each other. Mathematics now teaches some of the more mathematical elements of physics while Physics adds strength to the school from a practical perspective. The strongest cooperation between the disciplines occurs in the teaching area.

Strengths
Physics is very strong in research, with two main focuses — the surface physics group that researches the structure, properties and possible uses of the top few layers of atoms on a surface, and the space physics group that is studying interactions between the earth's magnetic field, the upper atmosphere and solar wind. Mathematics is recognized as a world centre for research in functional analysis, with up to 15 research visitors being attracted from all over the world each year and our own researchers regularly travelling overseas to collaborate with other leading experts.

We are keen to build new collaborations within the school in the future, although physics is unlikely to relocate physically to be closer to the other disciplines because of its need for laboratories and other facilities. As time passes, a deeper symbiosis between the disciplines will develop. The formation of the school has already opened up fruitful discussions between us.

Statistics has a strong national and international reputation for its work in applied statistics and provides expert input into a number of large projects, particularly in the health area. Stronger links with local business and industry are being developed.

Another strength of the school is the launch of our photonics degree, which will have its first intake of students in 2001. Photonics studies the use of light as a media of communication (eg. optical fibres). Given the short time we have been promoting the course, the number of students interested in doing it is very pleasing. Telecommunications is the science of the current decade and we hope this undergraduate degree — which involves physics, mathematics and engineering — will also lead to short courses for those already in the industry and to new graduate programs.

There are opportunities for our school in the bioinformatics area, with the human genome project creating an exciting potential for study and research. As the project unfolds, vast amounts of data will become available for analysis. Locked within this data are the secrets to understanding and preventing all hereditary disease. We are examining ways that students can specialise in bioinformatics during their Bachelor of Science or Bachelor of Mathematics studies.

Challenges
The biggest challenge we face is the same as that being faced by all the sciences and all Australian universities — that of building enthusiasm amongst students to study the core enabling subjects of mathematics, chemistry and physics at school. We are running active promotional campaigns in the region's schools to engender an awareness amongst students of the wide range of career paths available to people who study science. Physics and mathematics are both major components of the University's SMART (Science, Mathematics and Engineering Technology) program and Mathematics has for many years been active in secondary mathematics at the State level and been involved with Hunter schools and teachers through the local mathematics association.

Newcastle has bucked the national trend, doubling the number of students choosing to major in mathematics over the past three years. We like to think that our campaign in the schools has made an impact.

Another challenge for the school is in rebuilding the statistics discipline, which has lost a significant number of its staff. We will aim to continue servicing the areas it has traditionally serviced but will also take advantage of the opportunity to develop new strengths. The prospect of creating new cross-links with different areas of the University is exciting.

Head of School
I grew up in Newcastle and went to Newcastle Boys' High School. I came to the University as a physics student in 1965. However, I soon realized that mathematics was essential for a proper understanding of my studies and soon I found myself spending more and more time on it, eventually being wooed to it. I completed my PhD at the University in 1971, although for a significant period of my candidature I had followed my supervisor, John Giles, on a sabbatical to Edinburgh, where I benefited from the experience of working with a very active international group of researchers.

In 1972, I took up a lectureship in physics at the University of New England, where I stayed until I returned to Newcastle as a Senior Lecturer in 1980. I was the Head of the Department of Mathematics for three years before becoming Head of School.

While I don't enjoy paperwork, I do derive satisfaction from helping to shape things and having a hand in making sure worthwhile things go done. I love teaching and still teach some subjects, although these days I often give myself the dog's job — for example, taking over classes for people who are away.

Keeping my research going is difficult, but so far I've managed to do so, helped by 'escaping' overseas for five or six weeks each year to work with colleagues — mainly in Spain at the Universities of Valencia and Seville and in North America.

The formation of schools in the Faculty has jolted many of us out of our ruts and improved communication. Both mathematics and physics have always been very harmonious groups. In mathematics, we socialise together regularly — playing tennis and dining with each other. One of my aims with the merger is to preserve and spread that harmony across the school.
Achievements

Fourth year Bachelor of Architecture student Ooi Wei Yap has won the prestigious 2000 Royal Australian Institute of Architects Student Prize for the Advancement of Architecture. 25-year-old Ooi received his award at the 2000 RAIA National Architecture Awards, held in Canberra last month.

Ooi began his studies at Newcastle in 1999 as a second year student, after completing a Diploma of Interior Architecture and Design at Temasek Polytechnic in Singapore.

His outstanding results and abilities saw him promoted to third year after just one semester, and into fourth year at the beginning of 2000. He will complete his fifth and final year of the Bachelor of Architecture next year.

The RAIA Student Prize is for a most outstanding contribution by an individual RAIA or SONA (Student Organisation Network for Architecture Australia) member to the advancement of architecture. The judging panel was not only impressed with Ooi's outstanding work, but also his exceptional contribution to student life, welfare and advancement of architectural education, by inspiring his fellow students and promoting the concept of the practice of architecture as something beyond just a professional activity. The jury felt that his uniting efforts in the encouragement and support of others in pursuing excellence created a model that was worthy of reward.

An interactive computer package developed by surveying staff has won the Australian Institution of Surveyors Excellence in Surveying Award.

The group was presented with its award by the President of the Australian Institute of Surveyors, John Gickmore, on November 17 at a ceremony in the Faculty of Engineering.

The five-person team of Professor John Fryer, Des Harvey Mitchell, Karl Brettegge, Eric Kiest and Mr Robert Patterson, has won the category award for Small Project. The team developed an interactive computer package, known as GEOD, and animated PC tutorial that assists in the transfer of map coordinates to the more accurate system of the Geodetic Datum of Australia.

Professor John Fryer, Head of the Department of Civil, Surveying and Environmental Engineering says the program was created because of discrepancies in map coordinates between printed maps and those used in Global Positioning Systems (GPS) units.

"These units are popular with recreational fishermen, bushwalkers, the transport industry and others," he said. "But the problem is that they are based on a mathematical model of the Earth, which is slightly different to that previously used on our mapping systems in Australia. GEOD enables the map coordinates to be easily converted to the new Australian system so a direct comparison with the output of GPS units can be made."

The program the group initiated is now the de facto standard for the surveying industry and has been accepted by state and national surveying and mapping authorities.

Professor Fryer acknowledged Graiton Samuel, a computer specialist, and Paul Horcombe, Deputy Surveyor-General of NSW, for their valuable assistance in implementing the GEOD project.

PhD student Bryce Healey has been awarded the "Charles Marshall Thesis Award" to recognise his outstanding contribution to the Australian mining industry. Bryce, who is about to start his PhD within the school of geosciences, won the award for his Honours thesis on rock wall assimilation at the base of a magmatic chamber.

"I appreciate that my work has been recognised by others in the field," he said. "The award was quite unexpected."

Bryce's thesis investigated and documented various geological processes at the base of a granite magmatic chamber. The research involved substantial fieldwork in south east Australia around Eden, where recent work by honourable students from geology had recognised the base of a granite pluton, a feature of granite which until now had remained enigmatic.

Bryce received his award (and $1000 prize) at Rothbury Estate on November 30.

Brian Marsden from the Department of Mechanical Engineering has been awarded an inaugural Australian Sports Medal for his services to shooting in NSW. The Sports Medal was awarded during 2000 to commemorate Australian sporting achievement and has been established as a commemorative award in the Australian honours system. The medals have been created to recognise the contribution of current and former sport participants and those who have provided support services for sport.

The Sports Medal recognises the wide-ranging efforts of the people who have made Australia a great sporting nation. Nominations for the medal are recommended by the Prime Minister, Federal, State and Territory sports ministers; senators and members of the House of Representatives; and peak sporting bodies recognised by the Australian Sports Commission.

Arts/Law student Faith Evans has been selected as an Australian Youth Ambassador for Development in 2001. She will spend 12 months as a tutor/administrator at the National University of Samoa and her duties will include tutorial assistance and the provision of legal support to review university statutes, regulations and contracts.

Her successful application represents a development of closer links between the Faculty of Arts and Social Science and its counterpart at the National University of Samoa.

The Commonwealth funded AYAD program aims to strengthen mutual understanding between Australia and the countries of the Asia-Pacific.
Do you trust your boss?

Employees are losing trust in their managers and employers, according to two Management academics who coordinated an international conference on trust in the workplace in Newcastle last month.

Dr Rachid Zeffane and Julia Connell say that as organisations downsize to become "leaner and meaner", the effectiveness of managers increasingly depends on their abilities to gain the trust of their subordinates.

The Australian Workplace Industrial Relations Survey in 1995 included over 2000 workplaces and 19,000 employees, and found a very low level of trust in managers, particularly in the public sector," said Rachid. "This is an issue of concern, as employees who don't trust their managers are likely to be more stressed, and achieve low levels of productivity. The issue of trust is a critical ingredient for workplace performance and success, and employees need to earn this trust if they are to gain respect from their employers."

Betsy Blundson and Ken Reed from Deakin University in their presentation - "The effects of technological and social conditions on workplace trust" - reported on research that shows that trust levels are partly determined by features of the workplace itself and not simply individuals' experiences and dispositions.

"Evidence of industry differences implies that there are forces acting on workplaces that must be considered part of the environment," their paper said.

"Given that these differ considerably across different industries, the lesson is that the means by which workplace trust is fostered and developed needs to be considered in the light of the specific technical and social conditions impinging on the workplace."

The Trust In The Workplace - Beyond The Quick Fix conference was hosted by the University at Noah's on the Beach on November 9 and 10. International speakers from the United Kingdom, Canada and the Netherlands joined others from across Australia for the event, which focused on workplace relationships and trust, issues of leadership and trust, how workplace change strategies may affect trust and how the introduction and implementation of new technology may affect trust.

Teaching on a virtual Blackboard

Blackboard - a computer software program to facilitate online course delivery - will be introduced into the University next year.

Over the last two years, faculties and departments throughout the University have devised syllabuses for online postgraduate courses. Many of these have used computer programs such as TopClass and Blackboard.

Dr Carol Richards of the Faculty of Education presented the Diploma of Education course online this year. Carol found that direct instruction was less effective in the face of growing student numbers and staff limitations in the faculty and began to look for alternative ways to help students be more responsible for their own learning.

Last year she went to the Centre for Excellence in Education at Indiana University, where academics and teachers are working together to shape the tools that will change the face of education. The Centre for Research on Learning and Technology is also there and a number of people are researching the pedagogy of teaching and learning online.

"Online learning is beneficial only if it succeeds in achieving the most appropriate educational outcomes," Carol said. "I went to Indiana to look for tools and methods of achieving some very specific outcomes and, through my study there, I feel I have managed to design and deliver a subject that meets those outcomes."

For Carol's students, Semester 3, 2000 was their first experience of online learning. Many of them had poor computer skills and were initially upset by the frustrations of learning to use a computer and logging onto the system.

"In the first two weeks, the student feedback mirrored their frustration," Carol said. "After the first two units of work, however, the negative comments stopped as they became familiar with the technology and the requirements of the subject."

By the end of the course, the students were so enthusiastic about their experience they asked if it would be possible to re-design one of the second semester subjects to be provided online. Carol used a website and the Motet system to present her course.

Late last year, the University employed consultants from the OpenTraining and Education Network (OTEN) to evaluate online learning systems and determine the best one to meet the diverse needs of faculties.

OTEN collected recommendations via submissions, interviews and focus groups throughout the University to develop relevant selection criteria. The system that best matched the selection criteria was Blackboard.

Blackboard will be implemented in stages, so as to ensure proper support mechanisms are in place. At the end of 2001, the need for the continued use of online learning systems currently in use will be reviewed. For further information about Blackboard please contact Kaye Cleary on ext 5840 or email Kaye.Cleary@newcastle.edu.au.
Peak season at PPE

It’s that time of year again when the atmosphere in the services building is like Wall Street shahmarg. Busy bees are using the University’s off-peak season to improve campus facilities and provide a safe, comfortable and pleasant environment at the start of Semester 1 next year.

Parking Station

The Western Entrance has been shut-down for the construction of the roundabout prior to the development of the multi-level carpark.

Hunter Building Refurbishment

Stage 1 of the Hunter Building Refurbishment is near completion and occupants are scheduled to move in over the next three weeks. The refurbishment has included laboratories, offices and teaching spaces for the Department of Health Sciences. Project Architect Jodie Dixon said: “We are peeling the building back to its original architectural fabric with light tunnels and open spaces to be recovered.”

Efforts are being made to incorporate environmentally friendly building materials and strategies including the long awaited ergonomic upgrades of office spaces.

A natural linoleum material is being used for benches to reduce toxic fumes. The product is made of linseed oil, limestone, cork flour, resin, wood flour, pigments and jute. Existing cupboards, shelves and parquetry flooring have been revitalised to maintain a sense of the building’s historical heritage.

Anyone for a Facelift?

It’s a sad fact that the ravages of time ultimately take their toll on the face and the faces of buildings are not exempt. The Social Sciences building was an example of this when pieces of concrete were found on the ground. Upon inspection it was discovered that the wall on the north elevation had ‘concrete cancer’.

This ‘ailment’ is caused when the usual protection for the reinforcing steel afforded by the concrete breaks down and the steel corrodes. The corrosion process is slow, developing over decades, and causes gradual expansion of the steel, which breaks portions of concrete away (known as spalling) from the affected steel.

The extent and random nature of the degradation made it essential to carry out immediate repairs. To overcome the patchwork effect of repairs done on an “as needs’ basis and to reduce ongoing maintenance cost, a complete facelift of the northern elevation has been completed.

This activity caused some unavoidable inconvenience to times student and staff. PPE staff and Brett Manning contractors worked with those that had special needs to minimise this interference. We thank all staff and students occupying the building for their cooperation with PPE during the intense maintenance period.

Closer links for Newcastle and Harbin

A group of language students will visit China in December, under a student exchange agreement between the University and Harbin Institute of Technology (HIT). Ten Chinese language students will spend two months at Harbin, a prestigious Chinese university in Heilongjiang Province, located in the northeast of China. Li Xia, lecturer in the Department of Modern Languages, and Newcastle coordinator for the Exchange Agreement, said it was a unique opportunity for students.

“Students who have studied Chinese here at Newcastle will be able to immerse themselves in Chinese culture – an experience that will bring their language studies to life” said Li Xia.

The visit will be the first since the signing of an Exchange Agreement on June 8 in Harbin. Two students from Harbin will study at Newcastle for one semester next year.

HIT, founded in 1920, was last year designated as one of the top nine priority institutions of higher education in China, earning $AUS5 billion in government development funding. It is a comprehensive university with more than 50,000 staff and students.

Third year Commerce/Law student Scott Reid, who will go with Li Xia to Harbin, has won a scholarship to continue his studies in Mandarin Chinese at Tsinghua University in Beijing.

“Learning Chinese at uni has been great and has helped me to speak to some of my friends in their language,” Scott said. “But living in China and speaking the language will be an unforgettable experience.”

As Australia and China form closer links through business, education and trade, Scott wants to explore how his Commerce/Law degree could be applied in China.

“I’m looking forward to seeing how China’s legislative, legal and financial markets operate, and how business markets in China develop in relation to Australia,” he said.

Li Xia says Scott will be an ideal representative for the University.

“He is a very good student of the Chinese language, being open minded and well read, and will make a tremendous ambassador for the University and the Hunter,” she said. “He will also benefit from the opportunities presented by this scholarship.”

Scott departs on 26 December, along with the study group to Harbin, where he will stay until late February. He will then travel south from Harbin to Beijing to commence his study at Tsinghua University on 1 March 2001. The scholarship was awarded by the China Scholarship Council to enable students to develop a stronger understanding of modern China, its culture and language.
**Internet Access Policy Trial**

Over the past several months, staff and students have been asked to consider the implementation of an Internet Access Policy. Faced with 59 percent growth in Internet traffic and evidence of significant inappropriate usage, Academic Senate directed IESD to prepare a policy to better manage this important resource. The policy seeks to promote responsible, self-regulated usage of the Internet and to ensure fair access for University members.

Following the development of a draft policy, Senate required that the views of the staff and students be ascertained before any decision was taken on its implementation. Feedback was invited directly from facilities and student bodies, and individuals were invited to respond via a feedback web page. While most recognised the need to manage Internet usage costs, there were concerns expressed about possible inequity between students in different courses and staff in differing roles. There were also concerns expressed about the impact on the emerging online modes of learning, on academic freedom and on research activities.

On 11 October, Academic Senate met to consider the policy in the light of the statistics of Internet usage and the reservations expressed by staff and students. From recommendations that arose from the discussion, the Vice-Chancellor has issued a memo outlining the intention to conduct a trial period of the Internet Access Policy. The Vice-Chancellor has agreed that:

1. The University will undertake a six month trial of a quota system commencing Semester 1, 2001. The trial is intended to gather information on current Internet usage and on the impact of quotas. Students reaching their quota limit will apply for extension, with no changes for excess usage. Staff usage will be measured, but not limited, against nominal quotas.

2. During the trial, and before any final decision, further consultation will occur with stakeholders including the student bodies and the industrial unions.

3. Additional information will be gathered prior to a decision on the future of dial-in services at the University. During the six month trial period, however, the student and staff modems will continue to provide access to the campus network and the wider Internet. Any traffic downloaded from the Internet will be included in the individual's quota usage (apart from exempt library-related sites).

The trial will involve the implementation of a full Internet traffic management system so that the usage patterns of staff and student groups can be measured and the impact of quotas understood. To achieve this by the start of first semester 2001, a multi-disciplinary project team will be formed consisting largely of IESD staff, but including a faculty representative and a Central Coast Campus IT representative. During the trial all students and staff will be required to log-in when accessing the Internet (both on-campus and via modems). Total usage for each staff member will be reported monthly to the relevant dean and heads of division. Monthly reports on overall student usage will be provided to the faculties and to NUSA, NUPSA and the Central Coast Campus Student Association.

The full text of documents concerning this policy, frequently-asked questions, feedback responses and details of the trial may be seen at http://www.newcastle.edu.au/iatp/.

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**Digital Scriptorium**

The Archives, Rare Books and Special Collections Unit of IESD has an ongoing project to make available in digital form select collections from its vast repository of regional historical material. Such digitised records are housed within a website known as the Digital Scriptorium. Representatives of the National Library of Australia who visited the University earlier this year were shown the Scriptorium and were so impressed with its quality that they decided to list it on the National Library's Australian Libraries Gateway site. The Gateway site is a comprehensive inventory of current, complete and/or ongoing digitisation projects in this country. Thus far, the University's only entry on the site is the Digital Scriptorium. The web address is http://www.nla.gov.au/libraries/digitisation/projects.html.

The National Library has also archived a website on the history of Mayfield, developed by Archives' Giovanni di Gravio. The Mayfield website includes transcriptions of interviews with local residents, printed documentary accounts from rare books and theses, digitised plans and scanned photographs relating to the history of the suburb. The National Library described the site as a "website of national significance". The site may be seen at http://www.library.newcastle.edu.au/archives/mayfield.html.

**$500,000 truck hits the road**

The University's Geotechnical Research Group has won an Australian Research Council grant to establish an advanced truck-based facility for in-situ soil testing.

The grant proposal was based on the strengths of the Geotechnical Research Groups at the Universities of Newcastle and Sydney, with additional funding from geotechnical consultants Robert Carr and Associates.

The facility, called NEWSYD, has now been commissioned following much hard work from Dr Stephen Fityus, Professor Scott Sloan, and Associate Professor Hai-Sui Yu at the University of Newcastle.

The truck-mounted testing facility allows accurate and routine field measurement of a wide variety of soil properties including type, strength, permeability, seismic response and electrical conductivity. The facility is also equipped with a ground water sampling and monitoring system for investigating soil and ground water contamination.

"Traditionally, soil is tested by a small sample being taken from the site to a lab, which can lead to two problems," Scott explained, "the sample can be disturbed in the process and a small sample may not give an accurate picture of the properties of the soil over a larger area."

The 20-tonne truck enables large quantities of soil to be tested at a site, leading to more accurate results about the soil properties. It is also very useful for investigating the effects of ground water contamination over large areas.

The main purpose of the facility is to enhance research on the measurement of soil properties and geotechnical design. However, to cover the costs of its operation and development, the facility will also be made available for a limited amount of commercial consulting. The Vice-Chancellor launched the truck on November 9.
**For sale**

**Long ball/formal dress. Size 12 — burgandy 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 sell $70. Phone Susan x6561.**

**Washing machine, 5 litre Automatic Hoover, good condition, reconditioned motor, $250 ono. Phone Robyn after hours on 49 526493.**

**Boys** 26 inch Bike 2 years old, 15 speed, good condition $85 ono, contact Glen x6541.

**For Sale By Tender 09/00**

The following item is available for sale by tender.

**Item 1:** Photocopier: Konica Model 1112 - Very good working condition. Serviced by Complete Bus Supplies - Toner x 5 also supplied. Serial Number 586001779, Asset No. 120341-00

Tenders close on Friday, 22nd December, 2000 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 09/00”.

**For Sale By Tender 08/00**

The following items are available for sale by tender.

**Item 1:** Video/computer projector: Sharp LCD model XG-3781e
Serial Number 604312931, Asset No. 120341-00

**Item 2:** Projection panel: $3600 model, Smartview
Serial Number 9AP00242, Asset No. 119561-00

**Item 3:** Pentium computer, Axis 90MHZ, 32MB RAM, 540MB HDD Serial Number 774-4, Asset No. 120010-00

**Item 4:** Pentium computer, Axis 90MHZ, 32MB RAM, 540MB HDD Serial Number 774-6, Asset No. 120008-00

**Item 5:** Pentium computer, Axis 90MHZ, 512 cache
Serial Number 671-3, Asset No. 119544-00

**Item 6:** Pentium computer, Axis 90MHZ, 512 cache
Serial Number 671-1, Asset No. 119542-00

**Item 7:** Pentium computer, Axis 90MHZ, 512 cache
Serial Number 670, Asset No. 119541-00

**Item 8:** Computer: Optima P5-100 pentium PCI
Serial Number 043260, Asset No. 119976-00

**Item 9:** Computer: Optima P5-100 pentium PCI
Serial Number 043261, Asset No. 119977-00

**Item 10:** Computer: Optima P5-100 pentium PCI
Serial Number 043265, Asset No. 119980-00

By tender.

**For rent**

**Fully renovated, 3 storey, 2/3 bedroom, 2 bathrooms, terrace in the city (off Church street) available from January 22, 2001. Close to beaches, shops, etc. $225 per week. Long-term rental sought. Contact Eric Kennedy by email: gkeele@klinga.newcastle.edu.au or on ext 6177.**

**Holiday Rental**

Turuncu: roomy 2 bedroom (sleeps 6-7) ground floor apartment. Central to beach, lake, cinema, shops and shops. Decorated in a contemporary Scandinavian summerhouse style. $350/week in peak. Contact Brett 6703.

**Hunter Postgraduate Medical Institute Seminar Series**

Gold Series Meetings 2001

Programs may be subject to slight changes. Gold Sponsors may display free of charge

**Saturday February 7**

Cancer in the New Millennium I - Screening for Bowel, Prostate and Ovarian Carcinomas, Case Findings for Lung Carcinoma. Dr Richard Adams

**Tuesday March 13**

Cancer in the New Millennium II - Complications and Treatment for Breast and Prostate Carcinomas. Dr Richard Adams

**Saturday April 7**

Shared Obstetric Care Afternoon: current updates to renew certification, including Premature Labour, Examination of Antenatal Chart, Obstetric Examinations and Looking at Timing and Mode of Delivery. Dr Greg Hicks

**Tuesday May 15**

Practical Procedures I - Renal Transplantation. Basic Resuscitation. Dr Craig Barnett

**Tuesday June 16**

Practical Procedures II - Emergency Medicine: including management of adult and paediatric medical emergencies, Fractures, plastering and stripping. Dr Milton Sales

**Tuesday July 24**

Neurology: MS and Parkinsons. Dr Nick De Vitis

**Saturday August 25**

Paediatric Infectious Diseases and Dermatology: diseases such as Meningococcus and Chicken Pox, and public health issues. Dr Alan Watson

**Tuesday September 18**

Practical Procedures III - Paediatric Burns and Wounds: surgical repair and lesion removal, minor procedures and suturing. Dr Di Bridger

**Saturday October 27**

Vascular Access: approaches by a surgeon and a physician to cerebrovascular disease, renal vascular disease and peripheral vascular disease. Dr Di Bridger and Professor Dimity Pond

**Tuesday November 20**

Practical Procedures III - Eyes and Ears: upskilling procedures including practical eye assessment and assessment of deafness. Dr Craig Barnett

**Teleconferences 2001**

**Tuesday March 27**

Cardiology: Convenor - Dr Peter Beiers

**Tuesday May 29**

Cardiac: Convenor - Dr Richard Adams

**Tuesday August 14**

Urology: Convenor - Dr Peter Beiers

**Tuesday November 13**

Respiratory: Convenor - Dr Peter Beiers

* Tuesday evenings by telephone.

For information contact HPMBI by telephoning 4923 6173 or 4923 6163.

**Mail arrangements during the holiday season**

The Mailroom will make the final 2000 delivery/collection service on 22nd December. All outward mail should be ready for collection to enable Mailroom staff to coordinate dispatches with Australia Post's collection around lunchtime. Any urgent outward mail not collected on this run can be hand delivered to the Mailroom beneath the Hunter Building. Any Gold Express Post envelopes that miss the run can be lodged in the Gold Express Post mail box at the Shortland Union Building. Normal mail deliveries will resume on Tuesday, 2nd January 2001. If Departments are not re-opening until later in January, please advise Michael Rye (ext 5203) of a drop-off point within your office where deliveries can be made until your office re-opens. Mailroom staff of Michael Rye, Charlie Bell, David Mordaunt, Andrew Patterson, Michael Willis, Eric Myers, Sean Sutherland and I extend to all our clients the compliments of the season.

David Heggart, Physical Planning & Estates.
Summer safety tips

Summer is coming – this means more time can be spent in the great outdoors, both at work and play. Here are a few summer safety tips.

More time in the sun means a higher exposure to Ultra-Violet Radiation (UVR), and a higher risk of skin damage. This can take the form of wrinkles, sunspots, and skin cancers in various forms, and it is sobering to think that skin cancer will affect two in every three Australians at some time during their lives. According to the NSW Cancer Council, one in 32 Australians will develop melanoma, the most dangerous form of skin cancer, by the age of 75.

Exposure to solar UVR in the first 15 years of life more than doubles the chance of getting skin cancer later in life, making sun protection especially important for the young. People with fair skin, particularly those with large numbers of moles and freckles, are more susceptible to the effects of UVR. We get enough exposure to sunlight to keep us healthy through our normal, daily activities – and for most of us, deliberate exposure to sunlight (for example, by sunbathing) doesn’t provide any health benefits.

UVR damage to the skin can be minimised by adopting a few simple practices:

- Avoid the sun during the middle of the day (10 am till 2 pm).
- Wear a wide-brimmed hat and clothing made from closely woven fabric to cover exposed skin.
- Don’t forget to protect your eyes – wear close-fitting sunglasses.
- Wear sunscreen daily and reapply every two hours, or more often if there is a chance of it being wiped off; be prepared by always having sunscreen with you.
- Protect the entire body; the most common sites for melanoma are the lower legs for women, and the upper back for men.
- Stay in the shade where possible.

Mosquitoes not only make us itch, they can carry several viral diseases. Each year, cases of Ross River Fever reported by both the Hunter and Central Coast health services make up a significant fraction of the total for NSW (refer to http://www.arbovirus.health.nsw.gov.au).

The University has a program of monitoring the freshwater breeding habitats found on campus and minimising the number of larvae they hold through environmentally sound means.

However, research indicates that most of the mosquitoes found on the Callaghan campus are ‘interlopers’, blown over from areas like the nearby Hexham swamp. (The mosquito species found at Callaghan in the largest numbers is Aedes vigilax, which breeds in saltwater mudflats and mangroves; this species is common to the coastal regions of NSW). The University’s local mosquito control efforts are therefore limited in the effect they can have on this widespread issue.

Exposure to mosquito bites can also be minimised adopting a few simple practices:

- Avoid being outdoors in the early evening and morning.
- Wear a repellent – students can make use of the service provided by NUSA. Note that many repellents warn against using over prolonged periods or large areas.
- Wear loose clothing that covers as much of the skin as possible, and consider applying repellent to this clothing.
- Keep screens on doors and windows in good condition.
- Air movement can help keep mosquitos away.
- Use a low-irontim knocks down spray to clear a room, and/or plug in vapourising mats to keep them out of an area.

So cover up and have a safe summer! (Our thanks to Elizabeth Drinan for compiling the information in this article.)

Next issues: Sharing common problems – the Universities Safety Association

Altemations

Hems, zips, all other alterations. Careful work done. Can pick up and deliver if necessary. Five minutes from the University. Fair prices. Phone 4968 2823 or call at 317 Macland Road, Mayfield. No Sunday work please. Judy Chedlan.

Study leave visitor

Visitor from Canada looking for a house (3 bedroom minimum) for 11-12 months starting in July or Aug, 2001. Contact J.M.Floryan at mfloryan@eng.uwo.ca. Will consider house swap for visitors interested in coming to University of Western Ontario in London, Canada.

House-sitter

Experienced single female house-sitter (BCom - Newcastle, MBA-Griffith, QLD). Honest, clean and reliable (non-smoker), loves animals (brought up on a farm), competent with garden and pool care. Available for short and long term - house sitting references will be supplied. Contact Jackie on 0412 44-1717 or leave message with Wendy on 0415-4949.

Cricket Coaching Clinics

Clinics for players aged 8-15 will be conducted on campus on December 20-22, January 17-19 and 22-24. The clinics are run by qualified coaches and focus on refining game skills, extending knowledge of rules and strategies and having fun. Contact Kerry Thompson, ext 6232.
African art on display

Traditional African patterns and images were a feature of an innovative contemporary exhibition of art held in the Chancellery foyer last month. The exhibition showcased the work of nine visual arts teachers from Botswana who have just completed two years of study at the University as part of an IDP Education Australia scheme. The nine secondary teachers, who have all completed a diploma level qualification in Botswana, are part of a group of more than 70 students currently doing undergraduate studies at Newcastle as part of the scheme.

Program Coordinator for Art Education, Dr Peter Thursby, said the exhibition demonstrated the different interests pursued over two years by the students and represented the culmination of their practical studio sessions.

“The artworks on display were produced using many of the traditional western art conventions and new media technologies,” Peter said. “Traditional African patterning has been incorporated into prints and some of the clay vessels, and the subject matter in many works is distinctly African. The students have used western media with passion and dexterity.”

The Botswana art teachers were studying towards the Bachelor of Education (Art). The exhibition, on display from November 22 to 27, included drawing, painting, printmaking, sculpture, ceramic forms, photography and digital media.

Rocket flight wins photo competition

This photograph of Terry Burns from Physics “launching” a rocket designed and built by a child visiting the department on Open Day 1998 is the winning entry in the Uninews photographic competition. Congratulations to part-time physics tutor and demonstrator Tim Howard, who took the shot on a Ricoh 500 Series (viewfinder) camera. You have won a weekend for two at Barrington House.