The latest building program at the Central Coast Campus, worth $10 million has recently been completed - details and photos on pages 10 and 11.

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- Poetry competition for staff and students - p 3
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- Central Coast Campus graduation - p 8

Ball and Train

more than $90,000 raised for medical research in the Hunter - p 20
Vice- Chancellor's Column

1999 has been rather a mixed academic year thus far. We have successfully enrolled new cohorts of undergraduate and postgraduate students, have comfortably exceeded our DETYA targets for funded places at the University, and have attracted an increased number of overseas students. Our success rate for funding new ARC large grants was the highest in the country, being successful with 32 percent of our grant applications compared with a national average of 21 percent. The success rate for the Faculty of Engineering was even higher (48 percent), which places the Faculty among the top engineering research groups in Australia. The University also secured three of the eight grants awarded under the Indigenous Research Development Scheme, which will extend the activities of Umulliko into new areas of research. 1999 is also a good year for NH&MRC grants, with a success rate of 28 percent, compared with a national average of 24 percent. Congratulations to all of our researchers who applied for and participated in these grant rounds.

The establishment of The University of Newcastle Graduate School (TUNGS) on 1 January 1999, and the appointment of its Director (Professor Scott Holmes) and Postgraduate Coursework Officer (Dr Geoff See), heralds new opportunities for the University. The role of TUNGS is primarily one of facilitating the development of coursework postgraduate programs within the University, and to work with Faculties, who will retain primary responsibility for the courses and subjects. An articulation model of web-based subjects linking faculty-based programs across the University is a key feature of the next phase of coursework postgraduate program development within the University, and I would urge all faculties to participate strongly in this strategic initiative.

The challenges for the University during 1999 are substantial in a number of areas. The VSU legislation continues to be a landmark issue for the University, with major impacts highly likely for student and university facilities and support activities. We have seen the results of the implementation of VSU within Western Australia, where student guilds have been placed in jeopardy and where memberships have fallen to less than 20 percent in some cases. The highly doctrinaire approach of the Federal Government towards 'student unions' is inconsistent with the roles of student associations in providing a broad range of facilities and support for all students.

Another major area of concern for all Australian universities is the scholarly information crisis which is impacting on our teaching and research activities. During regular visits to Departments, Schools and Faculties, I receive complaints that current funding for information and library resources does not meet their needs. Library journal 'cutbacks', the costs of obtaining interlibrary loans, and restrictions on monograph purchases are a continuing concern. Of critical importance to all Australian universities is the issue of obtaining timely, cost effective access to global information and knowledge. Currently, Australia's investment in relevant information infrastructure is inadequate to deal with the major goal of linking our students and staff to key global information networks, as well as teaching and research publications. This will require a national strategic and planning framework, with appropriate funding, in order for this and other universities to be internationally competitive in this area. The Commonwealth Government's vision for Australia in the information age, as outlined in the December 1998 document, 'A Strategic Framework for the Information Economy – Identifying Priorities for Action', is welcome in this regard, as long as appropriate action with support funding follows.

On balance, the challenges are outweighed by opportunities that are available to us as one of Australia's most comprehensive and successful universities. I do, however, have serious concerns about the likely impacts of the VSU legislation and the inadequate information and knowledge infrastructure currently available at Australian universities. I am sure that these views are shared by many of you.

April edition

Editorial enquiries and contributions should be directed to the Editor, Uninews, Marketing and Media Services, phone: (02) 4956 1869 or (02) 4956 2829, email: prkb@cc.newcastle.edu.au

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1999 Schedule

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Publisher - Fran Flavel
Editor - Kim Britton
Writers - Kim Britton, Karla McCormack, David Herbert, Cae Pattison
Photography - John Freund, Chris Patterson
Designer - Tim Burns
Central Coast Campus photographs (cover, pages 10 and 11) by Philip Drake
Knights victory a mixed blessing

In September 1997 100,000 people lined the streets of Newcastle in an ecstatic celebration of the victory of the Newcastle Knights over Manly in the Australian Rugby League grand final. Football fever gripped the city and the winning team was honoured with a tickertape parade.

The response was remarkable, even for Australia - the nation that virtually comes to a halt for a horse race each November and where sporting heroes are highly venerated. Similar scenes, however, are a worldwide phenomenon, as the jubilant celebrations in Paris at the French victory in last year's World Cup soccer competition show.

A panel discussion at a recent conference at the University looked at what makes us respond so emotionally to sport and why rugby league has such a close affiliation with Newcastle and the Hunter. The panel of four included Knights forward Tony Butterfield and conference organiser Associate Professor David Rowe of the Department of Leisure and Tourism Studies.

"Eighteen months after the grand final victory is a good time to take stock of where sport fits into the Newcastle culture and review its positive and negative aspects," David explained in the lead-up to the discussion. "Rugby league is deeply entrenched as the dominant code in Newcastle, which is a very cohesive society. There is some argument, however, for not tying the fortunes of the town to the Knights' fortunes so that when they win we feel as though we are a great success and when they lose we are collectively depressed."

The dominance of the Knights locally and their virtual monopoly of corporate sponsorship dollars caused problems for codes and sports like basketball and soccer, David said. "While the Grand Final victory was good for the Knights, it was not such good news for the Falcons, the Breakers and the Wildfires."

Panelist and self-confessed Knights fanatic, lecturer Dr Peter Brown cited three observations on why people feel emotional about sport:

- excitement - some theorists believe that western societies are so regimented they are unexciting and that involvement in sport provides a context in which people can become emotional;
- physicality - both adults and children can appreciate the level of skill in professional sports as they have been involved themselves, either as players, coaches or parents. It may also be important in the culture of boyhood and manhood as an expression of masculinity;
- as a focus for society and culture - providing a sense of belonging for people in a community.

Tony Butterfield said that rugby league had historical links to Newcastle and the Hunter region. "It is a working class game that came here with Welsh and English immigrants. In places like Kurri Kurri and Cessnock, the communities are all fiercely loyal to rugby league."

The burly front-rower, who is studying business at the University, said that the input of the media (both as sponsors and image builders) was crucial to the level of support the Knights enjoy in Newcastle.

"It's not surprising that people are studying the phenomenon of local support for the Knights, he said. "I think there should be critics of the game within the town so that the players will pull their heads in and not believe everything that is written about them."

The fourth member of the panel was Dean Frith, an honours student who is completing a thesis on the experience of local sports fans.

Other speakers at the conference included Dr Richard Giulianotti of the University of Aberdeen, Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Social Science Professor John Ramsland, and Oonagh Chan, Audio and Visuals Operations Manager of the Hong Kong Jockey Club and a Newcastle graduate. A number of pressing sporting issues were discussed including the way in which modern stadiums 'downgraded' ordinary sports fans in favour of corporate and television concerns.

The Sport and Community Life conference was presented by the Faculty of Arts and Social Science, the Department of Leisure and Tourism Studies and the Australian and New Zealand Association for Leisure Studies. It was held in the Purdue Room on March 26.

Poetry competition

In the interests of introducing some culture into Uninews, we are running a poetry competition for staff and currently enrolled students. Selected poetry will be published in each edition for the rest of the year. An editorial panel will then select a winner from the works submitted for the prize, a Folio Society edition (1970) of the Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam.

The first version of Edward Fitzgerald, with drawings by Virgil Burnett, the volume is beautifully bound in rich maroon and gold, with gold leaf and slipcase and is generously donated from the publisher's collection.

Submissions should be sent via internal mail to Poetry Competition, Uninews, Marketing and Media Services or emailed as electronic files (text only) to prkib@cc.newcastle.edu.au

Entries for the competition close on October 30 and the winner will be announced in the December edition of Uninews.
Health researchers gather at international conference

The plight of Kosovo's refugees, who are being temporarily accommodated all over the world, possibly including Australia, has implications for public health workers, according to the keynote speaker at an international conference held in Newcastle last month.

Professor Lenore Manderson from the University of Melbourne said there were currently more people seeking humanitarian aid in Europe than the population of the Hunter region and that the physical and mental costs of war needed to be considered.

"As public health workers, we will need to find ways to respond to those who have paid with their bodies for other people's politics," she said.

The consequences of the European war might provide people with an idea of the cost of imperialism and colonisation for our own Indigenous people, Professor Manderson said. She is part of a research team that examined the health of Indigenous and immigrant Australian women as part of the longitudinal study into women's health (Women's Health Australia).

Speaking at the Fifth International Multidisciplinary Qualitative Health Research Conference, hosted by the Faculty of Nursing from April 7 to 10, Professor Manderson said that while politics often dictated what research was funded, it was the community good that was the commitment of qualitative researchers.

"We are less interested in wide figures and trends than in what they mean. Our commitment to qualitative research reflects our interest in how people live."

Women's Health Australia, which involves researchers from the University of Newcastle, the University of Queensland and the University of Melbourne utilises a range of research methods, including both quantitative and qualitative. Professor Manderson, who is the foundation professor of Women's Health and Director of the Key Centre for Women's Health in Society at the University of Melbourne, said it was ideal to have data gathered by a variety of different approaches.

Her research into the health of Indigenous women focussed on Aboriginal communities, who had helped determine the research questions. Research undertaken on cancer oriented towards collecting information about barriers to screening.

"It is a story of racism and poor access. Aboriginal women speak of being treated as a number in public hospitals, pap smear clinics and general practices and equate their experience with being on a 'cab rank' queuing up for a smear."

The research had identified a number of health issues for Indigenous women including:

- the early onset of chronic disease
- fitness and lifestyle diseases
- smoking, drinking and addictive behaviour
- generational conflicts
- sexual problems and conditions
- mental health problems.

Research had also been carried out with immigrant women including Filipinas and women from the former Yugoslav Republics. "There is no evidence that culture affects health but settlement issues in Australia profoundly affect women's wellbeing and this will almost certainly affect their health in the long run," Professor Manderson said. "Employment is paramount. As well as meeting the needs of immigrants, it is symbolic of settlement and of having status in their new society."

These findings highlighted the effect that temporary settlement might have on the Kosovo refugees, she said.

Speakers and delegates at the conference came from around the world including America, Canada and South Africa. Research interests and expertise covered nursing, medicine, anthropology and education.

Professor Irena Madjar from Nursing was part of an organising committee for the conference, which saw the presentation of more than 200 papers from some 300 abstracts submitted.

Vice-Chancellor, Roger Holmes, in opening the three day conference said the University is seeking to expand its multidisciplinary areas of study.

"A multidisciplinary approach opens up strong and productive interfaces between particular disciplines," he said.
Participating in research

Visiting Canadian nursing lecturer, Associate Professor Liz Lindsey, believes that research should be conducted “with” the community being studied rather than “on” them. An advocate of participatory action research methods who recently spent six weeks visiting the Faculty of Nursing, Liz says the community should even decide the question to be examined by the researcher.

“Participatory action is a partnership rather than a top down model for researchers,” she said. “Many communities are fed up with having research done on them. This method provides a way to involve them and they love it.”

The communities involved often become empowered to use the knowledge generated by a participatory research project to effect necessary changes. It is important that research has relevance to the community in which it is being undertaken and that the participants are committed to it, Liz explains.

“Often the actual research question comes from the participants and I work as a facilitator to help them find the answers and make changes. If I do my job well I should be almost invisible.”

Liz, who was on sabbatical from the School of Nursing of the University of Victoria in Canada, said that researchers who have seen how effective participatory research is in motivating communities to make necessary changes are committed to it.

She cited a project initiated by the AIDS Respite Care Society in Victoria, BC, where she was asked to help them present a case for funding for a respite care home for people with AIDS.

“I devised a research project that examined the possibility and desirability of providing the home and worked with the community to decide who needed to participate in the study and to set up the project,” Liz said. “The research report provided the organisation with the additional credibility to go ahead and try to get the house going.”

This was the first trip to Australia for Liz, who was interested in viewing some Australian nursing education, particularly the flexible learning undertaken at Newcastle. “I’ve been very impressed with the innovation here, particularly when it comes to graduate education,” she said. “There is a sense of incredible energy and enthusiasm and very hard work, with a real commitment to providing opportunities for advancing nursing education while making sure it has integrity and good academic standards.”

During her visit to Newcastle, Liz presented a paper on participatory research methods at the Fifth International Multidisciplinary Qualitative Health Research Conference.

Understanding the experience of illness

A book on the use of phenomenological research in nursing, edited by Jo Ann Walton and Irena Madjar from the Faculty of Nursing, was launched at the Fifth International Multidisciplinary Qualitative Health Research Conference last month.

The book, Nursing and the experience of illness: Phenomenology in Practice, is about the experience of patients and the care they receive. Phenomenology is a type of research that focuses on lived experience.

In the first chapter, Jo and Irena describe the ‘listening gaze’ employed by nurses using phenomenology. “The listening gaze that nurses employ is not just a looking gaze. It is a particular stance in the world - an attitude and an openness to others. It is a gaze that is attuned to the concerns of the patients and that can adopt different perspectives in order to understand another’s experience and to act with care.”

Contributors to the book include graduate students supervised by Jo and Irena, and research colleagues who are committed to a phenomenological approach. It will be particularly useful to graduate students using phenomenology as a research method but will also be of interest to practising clinicians and undergraduate students who are interested in gaining an insight into people’s experiences of disease.

The book was officially launched by Allen and Unwin at the conference. Deputy Vice-Chancellor Brian English spoke at the launch.
New Warden prepared to take the hard decisions

The new Warden of International House hall of residence is one of the youngest females to be appointed as a residential warden in Australia. While her youth helps her to keep in touch with the students, 26 year old Kylie Tootell brings a wealth of knowledge and experience to the position that would be hard to find in another.

Beginning as a resident of International House while studying for her Bachelor of Education, Kylie has held all the residential staff positions over the past seven years including Deputy Warden for two years and Acting Warden for eight months.

Chair of the University's Residential Advisory Board Trevor Waring said that the warden's role included recruitment, orientation activities, pastoral care and administration as well as supervising 16 residential staff members. "I think there may have been some surprise that one so young has been appointed," he said. "Kylie is someone with vision and passion for the job, with runs on the board, who is respected and creative and has ideas for the House."

There are 222 beds at International House, with 50 percent of residents from overseas. Kylie wants to encourage a more collegiate atmosphere for the House as well as more community involvement. The International House Fellows Association is a community group that provides support for residents by sponsoring students. Commencing students are housed in residential groupings of 10 and each unit is allocated their own fellow.

"The fellows have been a part of International House since its inception," Kylie said. "They provide a chance for international students to visit an Australian home and for country students to meet local people."

Coming from Inverell, in the state's north, Kylie understands the homesickness and uncertainty experienced by country students in their first year at university. She can also relate to the sort of issues that are faced by international students. Not only did she live with international students while she studied, she went to Thailand in the third year of her Education studies. Her five week teaching practicum inspired her and on her return to Newcastle, Kylie became secretary of the Thai International Student Association. She then became secretary of the Turkish Student Association.

"I was the only girl as well as being the only Australian," Kylie recalls. "It is a way to break down barriers for others if they see someone getting involved." Kylie, who is a keen amateur singer and has done some Conservatorium studies, has sung Turkish songs in the Cultural Awakenings Festival as well as organising and dancing in an Indian stick dance with other residents of International House. She has instigated a singing and drama group in the House this year, which will put on a festival for the residents and the fellows at the end of semester.

"I love it here - I love the students and I have made many friends from being here," Kylie said. "The great diversity of nationalities is the essence of International House and one of the challenges we have is in preventing ghettos of similar cultures from forming."

To combat this, Kylie tries to create a non-threatening, inclusive atmosphere in the residence. While it was originally self-catering accommodation, the House now has a communal dining room where students eat four meals a week. The recently extended dining room was the venue for the 1999 Commencement Dinner last month, where new students are introduced to each other and to their Fellow.

Kylie's years of experience allow her to be aware of potential problems in the House and respond to them quickly. She likes to connect with the residents straight away and has her ear to the student grapevine.

"It is easy to lose contact with students as you move up through management," Kylie said. "What is most rewarding for me is that the students respond very positively to my style of management which involves them in the decision making process. Sometimes it's hard for students to see the big picture and it's very important to have a vision for the future. I'm prepared to take the hard decisions and to say 'this is how it is going to be' for the benefit of students in later years."
Engineering student wins major scholarship

A Newcastle engineering student has received one of the world’s top scholarships. Chemical engineer Murray Height is one of only ten Australian graduates to receive the prestigious Fulbright Scholarship, to study in the United States this year.

Murray will study at MIT after receiving offers from four other US universities including Stanford and Berkley. He graduates with honours this year, after enrolling in 1993.

Murray’s primary area of research has been investigating toxic fumes in fires, specifically the fumes given off by burning ozone-safe refrigerants, with a view to trying to lower their toxicity.

Some of his research has been done on behalf of TUNRA, the University’s industrial research arm. The former Lambton High student said he is looking forward to his time in the USA.

“I see it as a chance to grow my mind,” he said. “I’m keen to explore the differences and similarities between Australia and the US. I developed a strong interest in science, mathematics and chemistry while at school. Towards the end of my school years I began to look at Engineering and finally decided Chemical Engineering was for me. I never thought then, that I’d have the chance to go to MIT, which has one of the world’s leading chemical engineering schools.”

Murray leaves for the United States in July, and begins his studies in August.

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The Graduation Ceremony held recently at the Central Coast Campus was a colourful and enjoyable event, not only for the graduates and their families, but for the academic and administrative staff who took part.

Held on campus for only the second year, the outdoor event has captured the imagination of Central Coast residents and this year saw the largest crowd (more than 2,000 people) to attend the ceremony. More than 90 academic staff members processed and took an active part in the day's proceedings.

Degrees were conferred and awards presented to graduates from courses across the Central Coast Campus, a multi-sectoral educational partnership between the University, the Hunter Institute of Technology and the Central Coast Community College.

Pro Vice-Chancellor and Director of the Central Coast Campus, Professor Les Eastcott, said this year's ceremony marked yet another milestone in the development of the campus at Ourimbah, now in its 10th year of operation.

Professor Eastcott said this year's ceremony saw the first graduates in the Graduate Certificate in Hotel Management, the Bachelor of Science (Food Technology) and the Bachelor of Fine Art, courses which are only offered at the Central Coast Campus. He said it was exciting for the campus as well as the students to see these pioneer groups achieve their goal.

"That is what the Graduation Ceremony is all about. It is the recognition of the years of hard work, organisation and study, the achievement of a goal and the step forward after that achievement," Professor Eastcott said.

"Graduation is a time when we pause to congratulate our students and celebrate with them. It is a proud day for the graduates and their families as well as the Central Coast Campus," he said.

The occasional address was given by Ken Jolly, Managing Director of Scholastic Australia and the response on behalf of the graduates was given by Adam Nicholls who graduated with a Bachelor of Business.

One of the most excited groups of graduates at the recent Graduation Ceremony held at the Central Coast Campus was the first contingent from the Graduate Certificate in Hotel Management.

The four graduates are all employees of the Holiday Inn Crowne Plaza at Terrigal.

The group, Julie Barnes, Corrynne Hobbs, Cathy Maher and Michelle Milne, didn't exactly look like pioneers, although they were in the truest sense of the word.

"We are delighted to see our first graduates in this course," said Graeme. "It has proven to be very relevant and practical, particularly for the Central Coast region."

Spokesperson for the graduate group, Cathy Maher, echoed Graeme's words. "We have found this course to be just what we needed and it was offered in a way that we could manage along with a busy work schedule. The fact that it was right on our doorstep was a bonus."

An interesting fact that emerged during the preparations for the graduation ceremony was that 20 members of staff from the Holiday Inn Crowne Plaza graduated from the Central Coast Campus. Along with the four from the Hotel Management course, the others graduated from courses across the range offered at the Campus.
**Julie-Ann’s biotechnology career takes off**

When Julie-Ann Wong began her academic life at the University, she probably never saw herself working as a biotechnologist in Sweden.

Julie-Ann originally had enrolled in aviation with visions of becoming a pilot.

Instead she’s working at Pharmacia and Upjohn, helping to develop a new product for haemophiliacs.

“Finding a job wasn’t easy. I spent a lot of time surfing the net and writing endless letters.”

“Eventually I was offered a job as a senior research scientist at the University of Oslo in Norway. One year later I was employed as a Process Engineer in Sweden at Pharmacia & Upjohn, the ‘Mecca’ of biotechnology.”

Julie-Ann said studying at Newcastle had contributed to her success.

“I gained a lot of my interest in Sweden and Norway by talking to the many Scandinavian students on campus,” she said. “It was also a great help to be working alongside a researcher of the calibre of Tim Roberts.”

Julie-Ann also has some tips for other graduates considering overseas work.

“Get ready for a lot of paperwork,” she said. “I surfed the internet a lot to find the relevant research centres and companies and followed that up with many letters to many people.”

“Also took a holiday overseas, to give myself the chance to meet many of the people face to face. I’m sure everyone would agree it’s easier to get a job when the person hiring you has met you.”

One of the big differences that Julie-Ann has noticed has been the respect given to scientists in Scandinavia.

“Science is a more respected profession in Sweden,” she said. “Scientists are able to command better salaries and there’s generally a more positive attitude to research and development. There’s an understanding that real technological edges only come through extensive research, that sometimes takes years to yield results.”

**Fun, festive and free**

Given the enthusiasm of this year’s Open Day committee, it would be very surprising if there was someone on the Callaghan Campus didn’t know the date of this year’s Open Day.

But just in case - it’s Saturday July 3.

With the theme “Fun, Festive and Free”, the Open Day will reinforce the image of the University as a very important member of the Hunter community, while at the same time displaying a festive spirit and giving the impression that it’s a fun place to work, study and visit.

The organiser of last year’s Open Day - Tone Gibson - has again been recruited by Marketing & Media Services to coordinate the event, with support from design and media staff in Marketing & Media Services and IESD.

All faculties are represented on the organising committee, which has approved the print and television advertisements. Moves are now underway to finalise the displays for each faculty. These will be supported by street theatre, a cultural festival, stands from local community groups and a Food and Wine Festival being organised by the Shortland Union.

Planning for media work to publicise the event has also commences, and Professor John O'Connor from the Faculty of Science and Mathematics has been nominated as the spokesperson.

The University has sponsored the Newcastle Knights’ home game the week prior to Open Day. The players will break through the University logo prior to the match and Vice Chancellor Professor Roger Holmes will draw a major prize at half-time.

Given that the University has the capacity to seat 25,000 people, and that the game is broadcast, this provides an invaluable opportunity to publicise the event.

Open Day will be held the day after Schools Visit Day to maximise opportunities for student recruitment. On Open Day families of potential students will have the chance to look over the University and visit the Information Centre.

Given that just over half the people studying at the University don’t come directly from high school, Open Day provides a valuable opportunity to highlight the University’s strengths in teaching and research, and the many courses it has available at both an undergraduate and postgraduate level.

For further information on Open Day contact the Director of Marketing and Media Services, Dr Fran Flavel, on extension 6444.
The Central Coast Campus at Ourimbah has reached a new stage in its building development and infrastructure. After a period of massive growth and constant activity, the last stages of the latest building program have been completed and the sounds of jackhammers and builders have died away. In their place are a series of purpose-built buildings that create a landscape which reflects the energy and enthusiasm of the Campus.
A short ten years ago, the Campus was just a tangle of bush with two old houses perched high on its perimeter and a couple of demountable buildings. Executive Officer, Julie Becker, then Campus Manager, tells a story that today is entertaining, but back then would have been a nightmare.

"We had been held up with weeks of rain which prevented the construction of footings and delivery of the demountable buildings. After a major detour to avoid rain-soaked gravel roads, they finally arrived on the Friday before lectures started. That wasn’t the end of our problems. The one-lane bridge on Brush Road couldn’t carry the weight of the trucks so we had to bring in cranes to lift the buildings over the bridge and onto trucks waiting on the other side,” said Julie.

That kind of episode is long gone and the latest building program, worth just over $10million, is complete. It comprises five new facilities, the Early Childhood Studies Centre, the Fine Art Studies Centre, the Information Technology Studies Centre, a substantial office complex for academic staff and two general purpose teaching blocks. They are in addition to the recently completed Building and Construction Studies Centre, purpose designed and built to provide facilities for students enrolled in Hunter Institute of Technology building courses.

Pro Vice-Chancellor and Director of the Central Coast Campus, Professor Les Eastcott, said the completion of the new buildings had added a dynamic new dimension to the campus.

"With a total of state and federal funding to the value of $55million our expansion has been rapid and now we are seeing the benefits of that,” Professor Eastcott said.

"It is not often one has the chance to start from the very beginning and construct purpose-built laboratories, lecture theatres, classrooms and tutorial rooms, offices, and an Information Resource Centre, all to a house-style that is harmonious and modern. It is an exciting opportunity.

"As a multi-sectoral campus, most of our facilities are used by both University and TAFE students. For instance the IT Studies Centre, a large central laboratory containing 60 computers and seven laboratories each containing 20 computers, is used by Central Coast Campus students across the board,” he added.

Now the Campus stands as the realised dream first promised by the planning of Tony Corkhill and the fine tuning of Phillip Cox. Instead of chasing cows away and removing snakes from ceilings, staff and students can appreciate a beautiful campus in a spectacular setting.
Australian to lead global network

UNESCO's new global network of journalism and professional media schools, GLOBJOURNET, at its inaugural meeting in Paris on 18-19 March, unanimously elected Associate Professor Frank Morgan of the Department of Communication and Media Arts to be its foundation president.

GLOBJOURNET will link universities, industry training centres, media organisations and professional associations of journalists and other media practitioners in a network to enhance the quality of journalism in all media worldwide. Its priorities include the establishment of Internet links to improve access to learning resources, better course design and staff development. The hub of its network will be the African Council for Communication Education, in the University of Nairobi, Kenya.

Associate Professor Morgan is a former screenwriter and television producer who was Deputy Director of the Australian Film Television and Radio School before taking up his post at Newcastle. He has worked extensively in media development in Asia and the Pacific for over 25 years. He was elected to lead GLOBJOURNET in his capacity as President of the Professional Education Section of the IAMCR, the International Association for Media and Communication Research.

GLOBJOURNET's vice-presidents will be M. Ridha Najar of Tunisia (representing Francophone Africa and the Arab States), Professor Kaarle Nordenstreng of Finland (representing Europe and North America), Professor Luis Nunez of Mexico (representing Latin America and the Caribbean) and Mr Gil Santos of the Philippines (representing Asia and the Pacific). Executive Director and Network Co-ordinator will be Dr Peter Wanyande, Acting Secretary General of the African Council for Communication Education.

Obituary

Lorna Tredgold (Mrs ‘T’) 1913 - 1999

Many long time staff members at the University were saddened to hear of the death of a former manager of the University's Staff House, Mrs Lorna Tredgold, known affectionately as Mrs ‘T’.

Lorna ran the Staff House with her husband Jimmy, who was a maître d’ at the luxurious Great Northern Hotel in its heyday. Her nephew Norm Clifford, said in his eulogy that Lorna found her true calling in life as manager of the Staff House. “Her fame spread throughout the university where she made many good friends,” he said.

Emeritus Professor Godfrey Tanner said Lorna was a “wonderfully generous lady”.

“In contrast to modern big business, Jim and Lorna were generous caring people,” he said. “Jim at the bar was utterly charming and Lorna, with no dependents, treated the Staff House members as her family.”

“They were pioneers of the University in the sense of their warm hospitality which has so much enriched our reputation in Newcastle.”

“It is only right that I say of her requiem aeternam dona ei, domine.”

Science Week

Science Week kicks off on May 1 with the Faculty of Science and Mathematics involved in several events during the week. The official launch of the University’s SMART program will be held from 10am on May 3 at the Newcastle Regional Museum.

SMART (Science, Mathematics and Real Technology) is an initiative of the Faculty of Science and Mathematics at the University that takes science to the people.

Other events during Science Week include a viewing with the Newcastle Astronomical Society on Scobie Heath (behind engineering) from 6pm on Wednesday, May 5. Experts will guide you in the use of telescopes and barbecue dinner is available.

On Thursday May 6, at 7.30pm Douglas Adams, author of Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy will present a Hitchhiker's guide to the Pub at the Newcastle Workers Club. Tickets are available from the club for $12 and there is a prize for the best fancy dress outfit on any Douglas Adams theme. Dr John O’Connor, from the University, will co-present during the evening.

Friday night, science buffs can test their knowledge with a Science Trivia Night at the Brennan Room of the Shortland Union from 7.30pm. Tickets are $6 each or $30 for a team of five. The week is wrapped up with “Science Seeing”, a family bike ride beginning from the Newcastle Ferry Terminal at 1pm and passing some of Newcastle’s interesting science and technology sites. The ride is free but you’ll need $1.40 for the ferry fare.

For details of Science Week events and activities, contact Terry Burns in the Physics Department on ext 5434, fax 6907, email: phwbs@cc.newcastle.edu.au or visit the website at www.abc.net.au/science

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Wellbeing to spread nationally

Popular 2NUR health program, Wellbeing, is likely to be syndicated nationally.

A public service provided in association with the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences, Wellbeing is hosted by Dean of the Faculty, Professor Rob Sanson-Fisher and invites listeners to talk about their attitudes, experiences and opinions on a wide range of health related issues.

"The program provides us with an excellent opportunity to use a different medium to talk to people about health issues," Rob said. "The more informed the community is about various conditions and diseases, the more active they become in intervening for themselves and the more effective we, as health professionals, can be."

Program producer, Nigel O'Donnell, said Wellbeing has been running for 28 weeks from 12.15 to 1pm on a Tuesday.

The show includes three or four segments including Good Food News, sponsored by the Sanitarium Health Food Company and Health in Print, presented by Angus and Robertson. Expert speakers present a topic, with previous programs focussing on euthanasia, suicide, menopause, arthritis, juvenile depression, cancer and diabetes.

"Rob has a talent for leading the presenter away from using technical language and encouraging them to speak in layman's terms," Nigel said. "We are currently negotiating with the Community Broadcasting Association of Australia to broadcast Wellbeing nationwide to 120 community radio stations throughout Australia."

Forthcoming programs on Wellbeing include Dean of the Faculty of Nursing, Professor Margaret McMillan talking about International Nursing Day (May 11) and Dr Tony Smith, Head of the Discipline of Clinical Pharmacology talking about prescribing and using medicine (May 18). Previous topics can be downloaded from 2NUR's web pages.

Standards in teaching legislation a must

The New South Wales government's plans to set minimum education and training standards for school teachers should be allowed to proceed, according to the Dean of Education Professor Terry Lovat.

Terry, who is also President of the NSW Teacher Education Council, said the issue should be "as basic as chalk on a blackboard" but had been confused by misunderstanding of what it is all about.

"Legislation which establishes a Teachers' Registration Board and minimum standards for teachers in both government and private schools was deferred when it came before the New South Wales Upper House at the end of last year. The Carr Government will probably reintroduce it into the Upper House soon," he said.

He said parents should be aware of what the legislation would mean. "Doctors, lawyers and engineers have to meet minimum standards before they can practise, and have to be registered. But this is not the case for teachers."

"With so much discussion about the quality of education in this country, it's imperative that standards are set and the people who are registered are properly qualified. These have to be maintained and assessed by an independent body," he said.

Such a move would also confirm a commitment to the professional development of teachers. This was identified in the report by the Ministerial Advisory Council on the Quality of Teaching, titled Teacher Preparation for Student Management: Responses and Directions, in which experienced teachers expressed the concern that the environment in which they operate is extremely different to when they first started teaching a decade or so ago.

"The desire for professional development expressed in the paper is reflected in our postgraduate students, who see the need for programs like the Master of Leadership and Management in Education, Master of Educational Studies and Master of Special Education. They see that to be good teachers they must continually learn. It would be good if this was formally recognised through government policy."

"It would also be reassuring to parents to know their children are being taught by people who meet set standards - they expect that when they take their child to the doctor, why shouldn't they expect the same with their child's education?" he concluded.
Pap smears for Aboriginal women encouraged

Around 10 in every 100,000 Australian women will be diagnosed with cervical cancer each year and fewer than five of those will die of the disease. Aboriginal women, however, are five times more likely than other Australian women to be diagnosed with cervical cancer and seven times more likely to die of it.

A new strategy aimed at improving outcomes for Aboriginal women was launched at the University last month. The first phase of a project by Newcastle PhD candidate Fay Acklin, aimed at encouraging Aboriginal women to have regular pap smears, resulted in a video.

Fay’s supervisor, Dr Jill Cockburn of the Hunter Centre for Health Advancement, said that 90 percent of cervical cancer would be eradicated if all women had a pap smear every two years. “Pap tests pick up changes before they become cancer. When Fay first came to me in 1996, she had the data about the rate of cervical cancer in Aboriginal women and she wanted to use her experience to help her Aboriginal women have pap tests.”

Fay’s vision was to use research, with an evidence-based approach, to ensure that she developed a strategy that was culturally acceptable and sustainable in the Aboriginal community. “I used focus groups and educational sessions to try and identify the barriers to Aboriginal women having regular smear tests and to try and identify ways to empower them by giving them information they would retain, that would enable them to make informed choices.” Fay said.

The video, developed by Fay in collaboration with the local Aboriginal community, the Hunter Area Health Service and the University’s Media Production unit, uses the stories of nine Aboriginal women and their experiences of cervical cancer.

In launching the video, Veronica Arbon, Assistant Director of Bachelor College in the Northern Territory, said the video draws on the medium of story telling that is important in Aboriginal culture and further draws on the notion of relationships between mothers, daughters, sisters, aunties and nieces. The importance of the relationship between Aboriginal patients and health practitioners is another important element, as is medical knowledge about cervical cancer.

“This video is the culmination of many years of hard work and a vision that Fay has had for a long time,” Veronica said. “I commend the video to you. It is fundamental and central to women’s health and something that we need to carry with us into the future.”

Fay is a lecturer at Wollotuka Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Centre and a registered nurse. She hopes that her video will be viewed not only by Aboriginal women but by health professionals, through the NSW Cervical Cancer Screening Program and the area health services. She is now seeking funding to undertake the second phase in her cervical cancer project, testing what Aboriginal people perceive and know about the disease.

East meets west in management practices

From left - Gus Eddy, Di James and Marilyn Barnes with an Indian workshop participant

Author of Principle-Centred Leadership and a range of other books on business management Stephen Covey once said: “Corporations today need both the ‘minds’ and the ‘hearts’ of their employees to succeed in the current market place”.

The philosophy behind Stephen Covey’s work is similar to that taught by eastern scholars - Mahatma Gandhi, for example - according to Di James of the University’s Family Action Centre (FAC).

“The belief that individuals must feel valued and wanted underpins the success of the centre’s work. It’s also a philosophy that underpins the success of many large and successful corporations such as IBM,” Di said.

Di James, Gus Eddy and Marilyn Barnes (members of FAC executive), and Rochelle England from the Information and Education Services Division, have returned from a ten-day workshop in India.

“We attended the Management by Human Values workshop run by the Indian Institute of Management in Calcutta. It was most inspiring and thought-provoking,” Di said.

Workshop facilitator and Director of the Institute of Management by Human Values Professor Chakraborty has had 20 books published on his teachings, which focus on higher values such as generosity, compassion, wisdom and integrity and their relevance in modern workplaces.

“His argument is that if people don’t apply these values in their decision-making, and don’t instill in their employees a sense of belonging and self-worth, an organisation is unlikely to succeed in the long-run. Employees who feel trusted and empowered are more likely to give their organisation their one hundred percent effort,” Di said.

The Bernard van Leer Foundation in the Hague funded the trip. FAC staff have begun to implement the teachings at their centre. Anyone wanting to know more about Management by Human Values can contact Di on ext 6859.
Consumers will enjoy fresher, tastier fruit and vegetables thanks to recent research advances that promise to be a financial boon for farmers.

The University of Newcastle Research Associates (TUNRA), in conjunction with Bar Ilan Research and Development Company, Israel, are perfecting a process which can extend the shelf-life of fruit and vegetables by up to 200 percent.

TUNRA Chief Executive Officer, Dr Soozy Smith, said the process involved exposing the picked fruit and vegetables to Nitric Oxide and an inert gas. This blocks the production of ethylene, the substance that causes the ripening process to continue after the fruit and vegetables have been harvested.

The process is currently being fine-tuned in accordance with findings that fruit and vegetables respond individually to levels of Nitric Oxide, so they must be treated at different concentrations. Dr Smith said the research had tremendous ramifications for export and in terms of the quality of fresh produce on domestic shelves.

"Instead of having to be harvested when they are semi-ripe so they will still look good by the time they reach their market, fruit and vegetables will be able to ripen naturally for longer so they will taste better," she said. "Once the produce is ripe it can be harvested, packed and fumigated with Nitric Oxide which will stop it over-ripening. By the time it reaches its export destination or domestic consumers it will look good and taste good."

TUNRA is seeking commercial support to continue the research and is turning the focus of the experiments to other types of fruit, flowers and Asian vegetables.

Distinguished conductor launches Orchestra's 1999 season

One of music's most distinguished performers and conductors appeared as guest conductor for the University of Newcastle Symphony Orchestra's first performance of the 1999 season.

Ronald Woodcock has toured in over 84 countries during a long career as a concerto and recital soloist, chamber player, teacher and orchestral conductor.

On March 31st he raised his baton in his home city, launching the Symphony Orchestra's season with an evening of Rossini (Overture to the 'Thieving Magpie'), Tchaikowsky (Symphony No 5) and Warlock (Capriol Suite).

"They are all very challenging pieces. Rossini's Overture to the 'Thieving Magpie' brings a light heartedness to the performance, while Tchaikowsky's Symphony No 5 allows all sections of the orchestra to come under the spotlight," Mr Woodcock said.

Having worked with professional musicians and enjoyed a career as a concert violinist, conductor, and teacher at the University of Adelaide (where he was Associate Professor of Violin), Mr Woodcock draws great enjoyment from the enthusiasm of his students.

"They rise to the challenge in a refreshing way, with a level of adrenaline and excitement that adds to the drama of the pieces being performed," he said.
Cooperation key to top HSC scores

Academics from across the University are working with teachers from the region’s high schools to discuss the most productive and effective ways to help Year 12 students gain top marks in their Higher School Certificates.

The workshops between teachers and academics from the same disciplines follow a meeting organised by the Faculty of Education in March. The working parties are putting together packages to present at this year’s HSC Study Days being hosted by the university on July 6 and 7.

Sandra Sirasch from the Faculty of Education said the cooperative approach would allow the university to ensure the HSC Study Days were very constructive.

“We want to make sure that the days are really relevant to HSC students and to make sure the organisation of them was coordinated. Centralising the organisation of the days in the Faculty of Education would provide a coordinated avenue for people to come to for their HSC information, Sandra explained.

More than 30 teachers from State, Catholic and independent school sectors attended the March 23 meeting. They are all teaching the HSC curriculum this year and/or marking for the HSC and represented high schools from Newcastle, the Central Coast and Hunter regions.

“Teachers have been paired up with university staff in their discipline area to put together the materials for the HSC days,” Sandra said. “It’s good for the teachers to see what is going on in the university areas, but more importantly, the lecturers get more idea of the latest trends and issues facing this year’s HSC students.”

An organ-ised tour

Music lecturer and organist, Philip Matthias, presented British audiences with an all-Australian program on his recent tour of the UK.

Philip performed recitals at many venues including Westminster Abbey, St Paul’s Cathedral in London, Chester Cathedral and St Asaph Cathedral in Wales during the January/February tour.

The works he performed included Elijah on the Mountain (Robert Ampt), Romance in G Minor (William McKie) and his own composition, Festival Prelude on “Ein feste burg”.

Impressions of Anzac Cove

A few years ago, while travelling through Turkey, I made the obligatory trip to Gallipoli. The most striking impression I was left with was not of the ragged beaches and treacherous gullies up which the Anzacs had to crawl and fight, but the graves of those who died there. Not the number of graves, nor their scattered locations, but simply what was written on them.

What these graves impressed on me more powerfully than any historical account or documentary of the Gallipoli campaign could ever have done, was the youthfulness of those who died and lie buried there. Probably, like a great many Australians, in the past I tended to see Anzac Day and the veterans who marched in it through comparatively young eyes: eyes that had not been exposed to the same impressions; to see nothing but old and often feeble men. Festooned with medals and militaria, marching or riding in an event of little significance to me. But at Anzac Cove, the reality impressed itself upon me that it wasn’t the tired old men of Anzac Day parades who scrambled and clawed their way up those gullies, but vigorous, healthy young men. Having identified Anzac Day for so long with white-haired old men, it was a sobering experience to wander the graves of “men” who died at 18, 19 or in their early 20s. At this age, thousands of young Australians were flung onto
the beaches of Suvla Bay. It was the “adventure of a lifetime”, an experience not to be missed; and one the magnitude of which very few of us (myself included) will ever have to deal with and the memory of which will not remain with us the rest of our lives. It is easier now to understand the passion of those who survived it and similar experiences.

Trevor Gerdsen, Media Design, Production and Publications.

New Voicemail System arrives!

IESD installed a new voicemail system for the Callaghan and city campuses in February this year. Voicemail is a valuable customer service tool with a range of facilities beyond that of an ordinary answering machine.

Staff may have noticed that there are several differences between the old and new voicemail systems:

- The date and time of the message is not announced when you retrieve your messages.
- If you require the time and date stamp of a particular message, simply dial 00 after listening to the message and the system will supply you with all of the relevant information.
- You can listen to your messages from another internal phone. To do this, dial your own extension number and press the # key when the system begins to play your recording. Then enter your mailbox number (i.e. your extension number) and your security code and listen to your messages in the normal way.
- You can listen to your messages from a phone outside the University system. To do this, simply dial 4921 5215 and enter your mailbox number (i.e. your extension number) and your security code and listen to your messages in the normal way.

Setting up your voicemail

During the setup of your mailbox you will be asked to record both your name and a message (referred to as a personal greeting). Your name is used for the system database only and is supplied (if recorded) with the date and time stamp if a message has been left by an internal extension.

When recording a personal greeting you should state your name and keep your message as brief as possible: a familiar voice and the name of the person at that extension is always reassuring to a person leaving a message.

To change your personal greeting (from your own extension) dial 5215 and enter your security code. Then press 3, which takes you into Phone Manager. Press 1 for your Personal Options, and then press 3 Record a Personal Greeting and follow the instructions.

Applying for Voicemail

Staff wishing to apply for a new voicemail box can find the application form on the University's website: http://www.newcastle.edu.au/services/iesd/infrastructure/telephones/voicemail.html.

A brochure explaining the functions of the new facility will be distributed to all users shortly. If anyone has any questions please contact Jon Nightingale, ext 7000, fax 6910, email: telephones@newcastle.edu.au

Year 2000 Legal Responsibilities

A presentation Legal Aspects of the Y2K Problem was organised this month (8th April) by the Year 2000 Project Team. Mr Tony Deegan, a solicitor for Sparke Helmore, spoke about the risks associated with non-compliance and how the statutory, contractual, and insurance aspects could affect staff. The impact of the recently passed legislation, Year 2000 Information Disclosure Act 1999, was explained along with the extent and nature of the protection given. A video of this presentation was made and will be available for loan to staff. Also the PowerPoint slides used by Mr Deegan can be viewed on our Year 2000 web site: http://www.newcastle.edu.au/y2000/internal/y2k_int_news.htm

One aspect of the legal presentation which all staff should take into consideration is the possible effects of supply chain failures. To this end all purchase enquiries, requests for information or tenders should be made with a view to also obtaining a statement of Year 2000 Compliance. Conversely this University has prepared a standard letter on its Year 2000 Compliance that the Year 2000 Service Centre can organise to send to key customers or trade partners. For more information on this please contact David Cater.

Please check our University Web Site at http://www.newcastle.edu.au/y2000 or contact the Year 2000 Service Centre, email us on: y2000@newcastle.edu.au, ext 5847, fax 6988.
ETCETERA

Free housesitter available from end of Semester 1. Mature, responsible lady, non-smoker, impeccably housekeeper, totally reliable. References available, including academic staff member. Contact Lynn Brown, Ext 6532.

For Sale

Stepper, excellent condition, $35. Contact ext 5995 or (02) 49 634728

Maltese Terrier puppies, pure bred. Wormed, vaccinated and vet-checked. 8 weeks old. Very healthy, absolutely loveable and love people - want good homes. 1 male $200, 2 females $250 ea. Call Deborah Moore Ext 5715.


To Let


Kilaben Bay - near Toronto - 3 bedroom house on 1.6 acre block with 11mtr swimming pool. Can be rented furnished or unfurnished - available from June or earlier - rent negotiable. Will also consider selling. Call Rochelle England, ext 6311, ph: 4950 5875 (hm), email: alrhe@alinga.newcastle.edu.au

What's On

Schedule of Ceremony Times - Graduation 1999

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<th>Ceremony Date</th>
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<td>Friday 30 April</td>
<td>10.30am</td>
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Friday 30 April 2.30pm

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<td>• Bachelor of Arts (Visual Arts)</td>
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6.00pm

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Faculty of Architecture, Building and Design

• Bachelor of Architecture
• Bachelor of Construction Management (Building)
• Bachelor of Design (Graphic)
• Bachelor of Design (Industrial)
• Bachelor of Science (Architecture)

Faculty of Science and Mathematics

• Bachelor of Science
• Bachelor of Science (Hons)

7 - 10 April

Fifth International Multi-disciplinary Qualitative Health Research Conference

Contact Prof Irena Madjar, Faculty of Nursing, ph: ext 7043; fax: ext 6981; email: pmn@cc.newcastle.edu.au

27 - 29 June

1999 NSW Teacher Education Council Annual Conference - hosted by the Faculty of Education,

Enquiries: Sandra Sirasch, Ph ext 6443, Fax ext 6987, email edss@cc.newcastle.edu.au

1 - 3 July

Working with Boys, Building Fine Men - a conference for teachers, youth workers, police, health and welfare staff, community members and planning, research and policy staff.

20 - 22 September

Clinical Skills in Men’s Health - Healing men in practice

26 - 29 September

Chemeca 99 is being held in Newcastle. This conference is being organised in conjunction with the host organisations of The Institution of Chemical Engineers, Australia, The Institution of Engineers, Australia, and The Royal Australian Chemical Institute.

30 Sep and 1 Oct

The 1999 Australian Symposium on Combustion and the Sixth Australian Flame Days will be held on the Callaghan campus. Contact B. Dlugogorski, email: cgbzd@alinga.newcastle.edu.au.

Faculty of Nursing

proudly presents

Professor Irene Stein

Inaugural Lecture

Cross Sectorial Collaboration: a journey to excellence

In this address Professor Stein will explore the relationship between private aged care providers and the University of Newcastle.

Inherent in this will be the role of ideologies, values and practical outcomes. Professor Stein will give her address on Wednesday 19 May 1999 at 4:00pm in the Recreation Room, Orana Nursing Home Brisbane Waters Drive Point Clare

Admission is free and light refreshments will follow

RSVP to Michelle Bird
Tel: (02) 4921 6005
Fax: (02) 4921 6981
Email: mbird@mail.newcastle.edu.au
Newcastle lecturer wins top award

A Newcastle engineering lecturer has won Australia's top award for Geomechanics. Associate Professor Hai-Sui Yu, from the Department of Civil, Surveying and Environmental Engineering has received the prestigious D.H.Trollope Medal from the Australian Geomechanics Society.

The biennial award is presented for an outstanding paper on theoretical or applied geomechanics research conducted in Australia. Associate Professor Yu's research paper concerned the development of a novel test device for on site soil testing. It was published in the American Society of Civil Engineers' Journal of Geotechnical Engineering. It also recognises Associate Professor Yu's international reputation in this field of research.

"I feel very honoured to have received this award," he said. "It's always wonderful to have your efforts recognised, particularly after many years of hard work."

Associate Professor Yu received his PhD from Oxford and has held visiting professorships in several leading universities in the US and Canada. Most recently Associate Professor Yu has been involved in the development of an on-site soil testing laboratory. The collaborative effort with the University of Sydney obtained a $460,000 Australian Research Council grant to build the truck-based laboratory.

The vehicle will be based at the University of Newcastle and will significantly improve the time and accuracy of test results.

Finance 1 - ironing out the wrinkles

The Financial Services Unit has taken on board feedback from University users on the implementation of the new finance package, Finance 1, and is busy ironing out the wrinkles.

Executive Director of the Finance and Property Division Brian Penfold said Finance 1 was chosen by the University after an assessment of available software that would provide a year 2000 compliance. "It was recognised that any package would only be an 80 percent fit for our requirements and this has proven to be the case," Brian said. "With the benefit of feedback, we are working hard to close the gap."

One of the problems had been unexpected difficulties in installing the software as a result of the variation in PC configurations across the University. Installation is now over 90 percent complete and all Finance 1 users have been invited to undertake refresher training courses. Step by step guides for users have also been distributed with the information also available on the Finance 1 web page (www.finone.newcastle.edu.au).

The purchasing module, which is not as user friendly as it could be, has been updated to be windows based and will be implemented on June 1. This will provide significant improvements for users. One hour training sessions in the new module will be provided.

While changing to a new system initially involves more work as users come to grips with the way it operates, the Financial Services Unit says the electronic system makes ordering much faster than under the old paper system and internal mailing is no longer required. "Reports from users indicate that as they become more familiar with the new system, they agree that their workload has not increased," Brian said. "In moving from a very cumbersome paper based system to a 'state of the art' electronic system teething problems are to be expected."

All Finance 1 users will be invited to attend a feedback session where the new purchasing module will be demonstrated. In future, it is proposed that annual forums will be organised for users to provide feedback.
Ball and Train huge success

Hunter Medical Research Institute (HMRI) made Hunter history when they raised over $90,000 at their Ball and Train fundraising event in March.

The Ball and Train, held at the recently reopened Mintla Hall, was attended by 412 business and community leaders. The money raised on ticket sales and on live and silent auctions will be directed towards medical research in the Hunter.

After riding the “real roller” to the hall, guests were fingerprinted and searched before having their mug shots taken. Person “Governor” for the evening, wine gum Sheri Evans, pardoned the guests who were then treated to a three-course meal and fine wines.

Room to relax

The Friends of the University have helped to fund an extension to an observation room for parents of children attending the Early Education Program at the Special Education Centre.

Opened at an afternoon tea on March 30, the extended room provides parents with the opportunity to relax with a cup of tea or coffee while they watch their child taking part in the program.

Centre Director Associate Professor Phil Foreman said the extra space would give the parents of preschool-aged children with disabilities a chance to interact.

“The parent interaction is often as important as what goes on with the children in the program.”

The Friends donated $10,000 towards the cost of the extension. There are about 80 children aged from 0 to six years, involved in the program, with up to 20 participating in each session at the centre.

John Lambert (Friends of the University) presents a cheque to Vice-President of Finance Dorothy Kelly as Phil Foreman looks on.

The Friends of the University plan a Spring Family Day in May to celebrate the opening of the extension and the success of their fundraising efforts.