Staff and students gathered at Wollotuka Aboriginal Education Centre to celebrate the launch of the Koiki (Eddie) Mabo Trust Fund - see story p3

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Publisher - Fran Flavel
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The 1999/2000 Federal Budget recently announced was a real mixture for the higher education sector broadly and for the University in particular.

There were a number of measures to increase funding for the sector in some specific areas, which included:

- a commitment to double the research funding for the National Health and Medical Research Council from $165million currently to $350million by 2005. Universities now receive about 45 percent of NH&MRC funds, and are likely to benefit from this additional funding
- extra funding for the Strategic Partnerships with Industry - Research and Training (SPIRT) Scheme over the next three years of $59.8million
- funding for science lectureships of $10million in 2000 and 2001, and $5million in 2002. We will be invited to tender for grants of about $0.5million per year to fund programs which either respond to high demand or emerging areas in science; or focus on course development or innovative teaching practice in science. We will be expected to involve industry partners in this new scheme for promoting excellence in science education.
- Given our strong academic and research profiles in the medical and health sciences, industry related grant funding, and in the sciences more broadly, we will be in a strong position to attract additional funding in support of our programs in these areas.
- The restoration of research infrastructure funding to 1996 levels will mean ongoing funding for Research Infrastructure Block Grants and Research Infrastructure and Equipment Facilities of about $98million a year through to 2001, which compares unfavourably with 1999 funding of $115million.
- the final one percent reduction in university funding flowing from the disastrous 1996 Federal Budget will still take effect in 2000
- no measures were announced regarding the provision of a realistic salary indexation mechanism, which is a major issue for the sector industrially
- Equity Scholarships providing HECS exemptions will be phased out saving the Federal Government $12.3million per annum from 2002/03, which will further reduce participation rates among disadvantaged groups in higher education
- the Higher Education Innovation Program is to be reduced by $4million per annum, which largely removes the funding used by Committee for University Teaching and Staff Development (CUTSD), although a modified CUTSD will continue to oversee activities such as the Australian Awards for University Teaching.

These changes in funding opportunities emphasise the 'roller-coaster' ride approach to higher education funding in Australia, and the importance of good strategic planning on our part to reduce our reliance upon Federal Government funding. Our strengths in research must continue to be nurtured and supported, and our plans for the enhancement of our coursework postgraduate and international programs should be strongly endorsed and implemented across the University. In addition, our increasing emphasis upon improving the quality of teaching and research higher degree supervision, must continue as a high priority.

I have never been a major fan of roller coaster rides, however it is apparent that our funding base will continue to change into the future. Governments will always wish to ensure that taxpayers are gaining an excellent return for their investment in higher education, and will have their own agendas for assisting with areas which are considered to be important at the time. Consequently, the need to respond positively to new initiatives of government will be ongoing. At the same time, however, we must focus on our own strategic plan and performance indicators for the long term enhancement of the University and work towards its recognition as a truly international University with its foundation in the Hunter and Central Coast regions.
Trust fund says “sorry”

Establishing a $200,000 Trust Fund to help support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in Newcastle’s medical and health related courses was a way for donors Roger and Sally Riordan to say sorry.

Roger Riordan, director of computer virus detection company, Cybec Pty Ltd, was moved to do something to help Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people after reading the autobiography of academic Dr Roberta Sykes, Snake Cradle. Speaking at the launch of the fund at a graduation ceremony in the Great Hall on April 30, he said “This fund is our way of saying sorry; sorry to you all for the part I fear my ancestors played in driving yours from their homes, sorry to the stolen generation for the appalling treatment you received, sorry to you, Dr Sykes for all your suffering, and sorry to you all for the mean spirited and short sighted policies of our governments.”

Named in honour of the late Koiki (Eddie) Mabo, the Trust Fund will provide academic and other support for the University’s Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in the Yapug program. Run by the Enabling Programs Unit and the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences, Yapug gives people exposure to a range of health professions, enabling them to make informed decisions about what they would like to study.

Dr Sykes, Founder of Black Women’s Action in Education Foundation, said there is an urgent need for health professionals in black communities. “There are doctors prescribing treatment for Aboriginal people or discharging them from hospitals who have no idea about the resources available in the communities they are going back to,” she said. “It’s no use telling someone to go home and take a tablet three times a day when there is no water in the community or they can’t afford to fill the prescription.”

Koiki Mabo’s widow, Bonita, attended the trust fund launch. She said her husband would have been very happy about the donation toward health education. “It wasn’t just fighting for the land that he [Koiki] did in Townsville,” she said. “He was the founder of the medical centre and the legal centre.” Mrs Mabo, whose daughter is studying a health related course in Rockhampton, said Mr Riordan would be “blessed” for making the donation.

Mr Riordan told students at a morning tea at Wollotuka Aboriginal Education Centre that his dinner conversation with Mrs Mabo and Dr Sykes the night before had been his first proper discussions with Aboriginal people. He told of his change of direction in life when he developed a virus detection software program while working as a college teacher in Victoria two years ago. “At the age of 55, all I had to look forward to was retirement but I established a successful company employing 90 people,” he said. “So never say ‘It’s too late’, remember the courage and determination with which Koiki Mabo fought for the rights of his people and keep fighting until you get there.”

Editor’s note: Uninews was saddened to hear of the sudden death in England of Sally Riordan, who died of a heart attack. Roger said he and Sally had been happily married for 38 years. “Sally has been an excellent mother to our three children and to all our ‘kids’ at Cybec,” he said. “Cybec would never have succeeded as it did without her unfailing support for me, in bad times and good, and her interest in the wellbeing of the staff.” Our sincere condolences to Roger.
Creating first class honours

Two graduates who received their Bachelor of Arts (Honours) at the April 30 ceremony became the first to be awarded honours in English at Newcastle by submitting creative writing theses.

Lauren Eade and Peter Kocan both received first class honours for their writing, with Peter being awarded a University Medal.

Course coordinator, A/Professor Paul Kavanagh, said the honours program was proving popular with creative writing students.

"There are about six other students currently undertaking honours, some who are working on novels and others who are writing poetry. It's also possible for writers to do a Master's degree in Creative Arts at the University now," he said.

Lauren, who submitted more than 30,000 words of a novel as her thesis, has written for as long as she can remember. The former Newcastle High School student, who undertook a double degree (Bachelor of Arts/Bachelor of Laws) when she began studying in 1995, is now completing her law studies.

"My novel, Jewel, is now at around 50,000 words but after reading constitutional law for a few hours, I don't have much creative spark left, so it might have to go on hold for a while," Lauren said.

She found honours studies productive and liberating, spending at least two full days a week working on her book last year. While working to complete her law studies, Lauren is also working part-time at her other interest, computers. She lectures on web design at Wollotuka Aboriginal Education Centre, as well as working on the University's computer help desk.

Peter Kocan is a more established author, having published seven titles including three novels and four volumes of verse. For his honours thesis he submitted poetry, a short play and some prose work. He has written six one-act plays, which have been performed on the Central Coast and at drama festivals. He admits that he began his studies in order to get a qualification that might improve his job prospects.

"Most writers in Australia struggle to keep their heads above water financially," Peter said. "But I found the course an interesting experience in its own right. I tended to have a magpie approach to learning and reading, pursuing whatever was my current preoccupation. I got to read books I wouldn't otherwise have read, to learn a lot I wouldn't otherwise have learned, and to do it in a systematic way."

Peter, who hopes to proceed to a Master's degree, is currently working as a lecturer in creative writing in the Department of English.

Tripartite study into treatment of back pain

The University, Hunter Area Health Service and the Hunter Imaging Group have combined expertise for an innovative study into the assessment, treatment and rehabilitation of patients with back pain.

The project, which will be administered by the Newcastle Bone and Joint Institute, has received $220,000 in Federal Government funding for two years.

Project coordinator and head of the University's Discipline of Medical Radiation Science, Tony Smith, said about 300 patients will be involved in the study.

"The aim of the project is to investigate at the outset whether MRI (magnetic resonance imaging) examinations can predict which patients will not respond to traditional rehabilitation and would be more suited to other forms of treatment," he explained.

Project participants will be patients with chronic low back pain who have been referred to the Hunter Area Health Services' Hunter Rehabilitation Unit. They will undertake a lumbar MRI scan, at the Hunter Imaging Group, prior to the start of their rehabilitation therapy and will also be interviewed by a research nurse and a psychologist to gather information on their health status, pain assessment and the impact the condition has had on their lifestyle.

Further interviews will take place at the conclusion of treatment and at three, six and twelve months after therapy. According to Hunter Imaging Group radiologist and researcher Dr Peter Lau, the project will be beneficial to both patients and the health care industry.

"If MRI can identify that sub-group of patients who will not benefit from general rehabilitation, then we can look at offering them other alternative diagnosis and treatment options," he explained. "Management of back pain places a huge cost on the Government and industries so there will be considerable savings if we can identify cost-effective treatments. It is essential that the total integration of services is available in the Hunter Region and that government bodies and private providers, such as the Hunter Imaging Group, work together to promote this area as a centre of excellence."
Everyone is worried about boys

When psychologist Steve Biddulph talks to people about parenting, he attracts up to 200 people to hear him speak. When he talks specifically about boys, however, he is more likely to have 1500 parents come along. Everyone is worried about boys, Steve, the author of best-selling books *Raising Boys* and *Manhood*, told delegates to a national forum on *Leadership in Boys’ Education* held in Newcastle this month.

Attendance at the forum — more than 280 school principals and teachers from around Australia and New Zealand, with more than 100 people turned away — was testament to this concern about boys.

Australian Bureau of Statistics figures show boys continue to drop out of school in greater numbers than girls do. Almost 69 percent of boys who started Year 10 in 1996 went on to Year 12, compared with almost 80 percent of girls.

Forum convener, Richard Fletcher, Director of the Men and Boys’ Project (an initiative of the University’s Family Action Centre), said that teachers feel boys are losing the plot, both academically and socially.

“In the seminars we conduct all over Australia, teachers are telling me the same story - boys with no sense of where they are going, who are failing dismally compared with their female classmates,” he said.

Providing leadership for boys in education meant offering them hope and inspiration, Richard told forum delegates. “Leaders need to understand what we value in men in our community and how we can communicate that to boys,” he said.

Steve Biddulph said that people working with boys in schools needed to understand that industrialised societies were suffering from chronic “father-hunger”.

“This is not specific to biological fathers but to the whole fathering function in society,” he said. “Fathering studies show that fathers in industrialised countries spend around six to eight minutes a day on average interacting with their children.”

There is a need to broaden what goes into boys’ education so that their teachers, fathers, grandfathers, uncles - a whole range of men - provide them with meaningful models of manhood, Steve said.

“I don’t feel anxious about boys. I feel incredible excitement about the will to get boys going along in the same way that we got girls going 20 years ago,” he said.

He pointed to successful initiatives aimed at improving boys’ educational outcomes including:

- relationship-based learning – an approach adopted by Ashtonfield High School in Sydney that saw Years 7 and 8 restructured to foster closer links between boys and their teachers;
- separate English classes – trialled at a school in the Cotswolds in England, where boys who were separated from girls for their English studies for two years achieved a four-fold increase in their grades (the girls also improved performance);
- cross-age tutoring, which sees boys who are causing problems in older grades helping younger children with their work, puts boys in a responsible position and boosts their self-esteem; and

- Pathways to Manhood – a program initiated in Melbourne that involves parents and school communities formulating activities to engage fathers with their adolescent sons.

The forum included 16 case studies of boys’ education initiatives from schools and colleges around Australia as well as discussion groups, action sessions and presentations. The two day forum was held at Noahs on the Beach and the Novocastrian Motor Inn on May 12 and 13.
Running as President

President of the University’s Senate, Hilary Winchester began drifting towards administrative positions from the time she was a 12 year old representative on the sports club committee. From the beginning of her academic career, working as a lecturer in geography in her native England, she was on lots of committees.

None of this prepared her, however, for the load she took on as President of Senate. Hilary is Chair of nine major University committees including the time-consuming Coursework Postgraduate Programs Committee; Deputy Chair of the Curriculum Review Committee; and a member of 17 other University committees including the University Council.

“Obviously I must enjoy it,” Hilary says, when asked how she came to put her name forward for election. “I like the policy part of it – the idea that you can improve things.”

There are times when the meetings are back to back, with no time in between to get things done. She admits that there is a lot of paper pushing involved. “It’s a lot more challenging than that, however,” Hilary said. “The learning curve is very steep but I get to stand back and look at the things we do, to review them and try to make them better.”

One of the areas where Hilary has worked hard to improve the University’s systems is in curriculum review. The demands on her time from this activity alone are enormous, with six full afternoons in July set aside for the next round of reviews. “It’s a necessary part of quality assurance to look at revised courses,” she said. “We need to assess the proof that there is a demand for a course, how it will be resourced and whether it will impact on other areas of the University.”

Much of her time in the past weeks has been spent on TAFE-University articulation, with credit agreements reached for every TAFE diploma course in the business, information technology and fine arts areas. “It will level off,” Hilary said of this workload. “If we can get articulation arrangements in place for all TAFE diploma courses then we will have done the job.”

Another area in which Hilary has been closely involved is in the development of coursework postgraduate programs. Beginning last August, she chaired the Coursework Postgraduate Programs Committee, which shouldered the load of implementing the Vice-Chancellor’s plans to urgently upgrade our coursework student numbers.

“Coursework postgraduate programs had grown like topsy at the University and the committee was trying to do the housework and decide which were viable.” Hilary was relieved when the Graduate School was established in January and Professor Scott Holmes took over much of the burden. “It was difficult and challenging but I feel that we’ve done so much in such a short time in that area,” she said.

Hilary came to Australia in 1987, when her partner Stephen, who had been offered a job at the University of New England asked her to marry him. Hilary, who had done her undergraduate and postgraduate degrees at Oxford, looked forward to establishing her own research. It became obvious to her, however, that her PhD research interest in France was going to be too hard to maintain from such a great distance and she wound up her interest, producing a book – Contemporary France – in 1993.

“My interest in geography began when I took an elective subject in my first year of high school and discovered a fascination for other places,” she said. “When I began university, I thought it was the physical side of geography – geomorphology – that interested me but I came out a human geographer.”

Working on the borders of urban sociology, Hilary is interested in how people impact on spaces and landscapes. Work done in the past few years has focussed on how Newcastle has been constructed - how others perceive it – and how that has changed over time. She is course coordinator of the honours program in the Department of Geography and Environmental Science and supervises several PhD students.

Hilary is a runner and trains on the track two evenings a week as well as competing in triathlons and fun runs. Beginning in 1987, she competed in State and National veterans’ competitions before six year old Richard entered her life, making her less competitive. “I don’t like being at the back of the pack,” Hilary admits, “but there is a limit to what you can do.”

Added to her University commitments, Hilary sits on the social sciences panel of the Australian Research Council grants committee and a suitcase on the floor of her office holds a huge pile of grant submissions she must read and assess.

“Whenever there is a big stack of work to do, it is satisfying to get on top of it,” she said.

Hilary plans to stand for re-election to the President’s position when her two year appointment ends later this year.
Noted writers honour Emeritus Professor

A collection of articles, poems, short stories, plays and portraits by noted Australian and international writers and scholars to honour the career of Emeritus Professor Ken Dutton was launched on May 7.

Variété: Perspectives in French Literature, Society and Culture has been compiled to honour the life of Professor Dutton, Second Professor of French and former Head of the Department of Modern Languages at the University.

Associate Lecturer in French with the Department of Modern Languages, Marie Ramsland, has edited the book, which features contributions from author Jean-Paul Delamotte, poet Les Murray, and a preface by French Ambassador to Australia, Dominique Girard.

"The book commemorates the varied and valued contributions Ken has made to the teaching of French and the appreciation of French life and culture," Marie explained.

The book features a mixture of academic articles and creative pieces, including every literary genre and a variety of disciplines: history, education, philosophy, religion, linguistics, aesthetics, art and architecture, psychology and sociology.

Ken said he was touched and honoured by the publication of the volume.

"It was very thoughtful of my Newcastle colleagues to devise and carry through such an ambitious project, and I was pleasantly surprised to know how many people in Australia and overseas were prepared to contribute to it," he said.

Ken was born in Sydney in 1938. He attended Sydney Boys' High School where he received the highest marks with first-class honours in English, French and German, taking first place in the state in French, third in German and sixth in English.

His language studies continued at the University of Sydney and later, Paris. After returning home he lectured at the University of Sydney, Macquarie University and, since 1969, the University of Newcastle.

Since that time, Ken has served as Foundation Head of the newly-formed Modern Languages Department, Dean of Arts, Acting Dean of Architecture, Warden of Convocation and Deputy Vice Chancellor.

In 1994 he took up the Inaugural Directorship of the Hartley Bequest Program, a program of scholarships, fellowships and publications made possible by the generosity of his predecessor Kelver Hartley. Deputy Chancellor Professor Trevor Waring launched the book at Pepperina’s Bookshop.

Murder on his mind

The Dean of the Faculty of Architecture, Building and Design, Professor Barry Maitland, has an absorbing hobby. He is not a golfer, not does he own a boat — Barry writes crime novels in his spare time.

Speaking at the launch of the fourth book in his popular Kathy Kolla series at the Coop Bookshop last month, Barry said that he feels somewhat eccentric in pursuing his interest and is grateful to the University for supporting him.

"It's very absorbing and I sometimes wake in the middle of the night with ideas that I have to get up and write down," Barry said. "There is a kind of discipline in crime writing that is a strong test for whether your writing is relevant or not."

His novels are very successful and Barry's "hobby" has led to his first book being short-listed for an award for best new crime fiction in the United Kingdom and to his second one winning the Ned Kelly award for best crime fiction in Australia. His books have been widely read and translated into German, Japanese and Italian.

In launching Barry’s latest book, The Clillon Heads, Emeritus Professor Ken Dutton said it was as good as anything he had done — that means very good indeed. "People sometimes mistakenly think of the novel as a somewhat inferior genre," Ken said, "and in that they are quite wrong."

He praised Barry's ability to not only provide an intriguing puzzle in the twists and turns of plot but also to create the architecture that holds the structure of the novel together. His training as an architect gave Barry the ability to create a stylish and elegant fictional world and his academic training allowed him to do the enormous and detailed research necessary to create the complex worlds of his characters, Ken said.

In a crowded literary world, where 600 new titles are released a day, devotees of the crime novel and discerning critics would view the launch of Barry's latest book as "one of the outstanding literary events of the year", Ken concluded.

The Clillon Heads is published by Allen and Unwin and is available at the Coop Bookshop.
In what has been hailed as a major step forward, the provision of information is now much easier at the Central Coast Campus.

The breakthrough is in the form of information kiosks which operate by way of computer touch screens. A number of different forms of information are available ranging from a series of orientation and campus information programs, location maps and course information. As well there is a fully narrated virtual tour of the campus which has proved to be very popular with visitors. Along with these, there is a live database which

Diligent daughters decorated

Head of the Department of Physics, A/Professor Phil Smith, was excited when he heard that his daughter Sharon had won a University Medal for her studies in Psychology at the University. But when his second daughter Vicki phoned on the same day to say that she was also to be awarded a medal for her studies in Education, his happiness was complete.

"The girls have always been very diligent," he said of his high-achieving daughters. "They are hard working and self motivated and set their own goals. We've always encouraged them and let them make up their own minds."

Both Vicki and Sharon chose not to follow their father into the physical sciences but to pursue human-oriented disciplines.

Twenty six year old Sharon, whose married name is Champness, graduated with a Bachelor of Science (Psychology) (Honours). She also won Ward's Award in Psychology and was one of six graduates from the Faculty of Science and Mathematics to win a Dean's Medal.

Sharon studied part-time while working at BHP, and did her Honours thesis on how people cope with job insecurity.

"All the people I studied were from BHP and the company were very interested in my findings and has used them in relation to the intended closure of the Newcastle plant," Sharon said.

Vicki Akester, 23, graduated with a Bachelor of Education (Primary) (Honours). Having deferred her studies to travel overseas for a year, Vicki was very surprised to hear she'd won the University medal. "It was a bit of a shock really. I phoned Mum when I got the letter and she kept it a secret from Dad until we'd both had a chance to call him ourselves."

While the girls graduated on different dates, the family celebrated the girls' achievement by going out to dinner. And they all swear there is no pressure on younger sister, Tania, who is currently studying Speech Pathology at the University to emulate the deeds of her siblings!
Anne Lambert had a lot to celebrate at graduation. Not only did she receive her Master's degree in Special Education, but she also attended the graduation of two of her seven sons. Anne’s long involvement with study began when her oldest son Graeme was preparing for his Higher School Certificate. She decided to do the HSC herself and completed it via correspondence before doing an associate diploma in agricultural business to help with the running of the family’s 500 acre cattle property at Wherrol Flat, near Wingham.

Not content with that, Anne began to study for a Bachelor of Arts through Open Learning on television. She broke new ground by becoming the first student to qualify as a full-time student via Open Learning and receive an Austudy benefit.

The authors are Webpage Development Officer Peter Davey and programmer Tina McCaffrey with assistance for content from Electronic Resources Librarian Catherine Moffat. The program has been carefully thought out with an answer and explanation for virtually every question that could be asked.

Peter, who also designed the cabinets, says that access and user-friendliness were prime considerations. He says that easy access for people with a disability was very important. The screen is lower and at a 45 degree angle so that wheelchair users are not inconvenienced.

“It is quite a simple process to obtain whatever information is required. Other design features include larger buttons and colour coded information paths to help people find the information they need quickly and easily,” Peter says.

Director of Information Services at the Campus, Bill Linklater, says it has been a challenge to develop the kiosks in a way that caters for a wide range of users.

“They are designed to provide a broad base of information to complement the information services already on campus. Sometimes, people would like to find information at their own pace as well as asking a course adviser or member of staff. These kiosks allow that, as well as providing a good first point of information. They answer our primary criteria, viz. they are easy to use, easy to access, easy to look at and easy to maintain,” Bill says.

“Members of the development team asked themselves a lot of questions and consulted a lot of people, particularly those in areas who deal with enquiries. I think everyone agrees that they have come up with a product that does the job well,” he said.

Graduation a family affair

Anne’s husband, Len, recalls the battle she waged to convince Austudy authorities that they didn’t have any grounds to refuse her benefits. “Because of Anne, other women who are isolated geographically can now apply for benefits. There was no way she could get work,” Len said.

After doing first year via Open Learning, Anne completed her BA and Honours externally through Deakin University. She then did her Graduate Diploma in Adult Education and Training through the University of New England before enrolling to do her Master’s in Special Education through distance learning from Newcastle.

“It’s been hard for me to change from being Anne’s tutor to being her research assistant,” joked Len. “I’m very proud of her achievements. She found a way to combine being a mother and a member of a rural community by studying through remote centres.”

The family has a strong association with the University, with son Douglas graduating with a Bachelor of Education (Design and Technology) in a previous year. Sons Brian and Richard graduated this year with a Bachelor of Education (Primary) and a Bachelor of Commerce respectively. Anne was able to combine visits to the boys with research using the University’s libraries.

“It all worked in fairly well,” she said. “I tried to study while the boys were at school. I found that my studies were portable so wherever I was, at sport or wherever, I had books in the car and often my laptop so that I could keep up with my studies while still being a part of things.”

Anne hopes to work as a Special Education consultant and help train teachers in the field.
Nursing's first medallist

Richard's practical experience in operating theatre at Royal Newcastle Hospital while in the early stages of her career was enough to convince Kristine Morgan that she wanted to specialize in perinatative or theatre nursing.

"I always thought I wanted to work in intensive care nursing, but after my placement in the operating unit as part of my studies I didn't want to leave," Ms Morgan said.

"I had learnt to pracise is a completely new aspect of nursing. It was very exciting and demanding and constant, different, with each patient and operation presenting their own set of challenges to overcome."

Kristine was one of three nursing graduates to graduate with Honours last month. She is also a University Medallist in the first for the Faculty of Nursing.

"I chose to complete my Honours because I was interested in the perinatative area because it's a very challenging area and something I really enjoy," she said.

"I was commited to contributing to the formal documentation of the affect of perinatative nursing practice." she explained.

Now a perinatative nurse at John Hunter Hospital, Kristine and perinatative nurses are extremely demanding, with the constant challenge of providing comfort and reassurance to people in severe circumstances, often on a regular basis.

"As a perinatative nurse you develop excellent understanding of the body while making a difference to people at a time when they are desperately seeking a comforting hand," she said.

Her thesis, completed for her Honours, is an examination of perinatative experiences of dying births in the operating room.
Honorary degree for top international researcher

A researcher who has dedicated her life to understanding the emotional needs and feelings of people who are critically ill or dying has been acknowledged for her work with a Doctor of Nursing from the University.

Professor Jeanne Morse, Professor of the Faculty of Nursing and Director of the International Institute for Qualitative Methodology at the University of Alberta in Edmonton, Canada, has been named as the University's first Honorary Professor of Nursing.

Born in England, Professor Morse grew up in Canada, New Zealand and still has family in New Zealand. Her career has taken her to NZ, USA and Canada with her most recent research focusing on comfort and the "comforting" work of nurses and others in the context of illness and trauma.

Dean of the Faculty of Nursing, Professor Margaret McMillon said Professor Morse had been recognised with the honorary degree for her tremendous contributions to health care research and nursing knowledge.

"As a researcher, Professor Morse has been a pioneer in the development and application of qualitative methodologies, both within the discipline of nursing and collaboratively with other health-related disciplines," she said.

Professor Morse established the International Institute for Qualitative Methodology in February last year. The University of the Australian Capital Territory is the first recipient for the institute.

"This research line explores the experiences of illness and the emotionally ill and dying, and explores the experiences of discomfort and suffering," Professor Morse said. "Caring for the critically ill and dying requires extraordinary nursing skills and these patients are often lonely, anxious or overwhelmed with pain."

"Most medical research focuses on drug and surgical techniques to alleviate symptoms or to cure. While that research is important, it is only part of the story.

Understanding the experience of these patients, and seeking ways to comfort, to console and support them and their families is also vitally important," she said.

First OH&S graduates

Nearly an average six years study, the University's first students in the Bachelor of Occupational Health & Safety graduated in April.

Eleven people graduated with the qualification, which is offered through the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences.

"The degree grew out of the Associate Diploma course, which charges employers legislation.Nothing is going to be specialists in occupational health and safety with a bachelor's qualification," explained course coordinator Val Nye.

Students were originally only able to complete their studies on a part-time basis, but now the option of full-time study is also available. This means the graduates are the first for the bachelor's degree, and in general have taken six years to reach this point.

"Nearly all those students have been employed, and some who were working while they studied have received better jobs because of their qualifications," Val said.

The course is designed to give students a thorough understanding of occupational health and safety issues - from the safe operation of machinery, to the proper handling of hazardous substances, stress-related health problems to an understanding of the legal system as it relates to this field.

People with appropriate VET qualifications may be able to get credit for their studies when they enrol in the degree. Recognising that workplace safety issues are constantly changing, the University supports its undergraduate degree with a postgraduate course in occupational health and safety.

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Exporting Australian know-how

Five South African engineers came to Newcastle to celebrate their graduations at the University. The South Africans (pictured above) and one Australian student are the first graduates of the Master of Engineering Practice program.

The postgraduate course was established by the Centre for Bulk Solids and Particulate Technologies to provide education in bulk solid handling practices. The Centre is a Key Centre for teaching and research and is established and supported under the Australian Research Council's Research Centres Program. It combines activities of the University of Newcastle and the University of Wollongong. The course is a joint degree of the two universities and is the first joint degree of its type in Australia.

Industries dealing with bulk solids range from pharmaceutical, food, and process to mining. The two-year program is designed for industry and has applications in industries including mining, steel making, and agriculture with implications in fields like industrial safety and the efficient handling of bulk materials.

Professor Alan Roberts of the Centre said South Africa wasn’t specifically targeted when the course was first set up.

"The course was designed to be offered externally across Australia," he said. "However shortly after we began the course there was a number of expressions of interest from South Africa. That interest has grown to the point that one third of the students come from South Africa and we actually teach some of the subjects in the Republic itself."

Four of the five South African graduates work for ESKOM and the other is from AMCOAL, South Africa’s major electricity generating company.

Nursing lecturer makes history

A study into the institutionalisation of people with intellectual disability in New South Wales in the early twentieth century has earned a University nursing lecturer her PhD in History.

Ann Williams graduated on April 30. Her thesis is titled "Managing the Feebleminded: Eugenics and the Institutionalisation of People with Intellectual Disability in NSW 1900 to 1930".

"The term 'feebleminded' was frequently used to describe people with intellectual disability," she explained. "Eugenics was based on the belief that people with intellectual disability were a threat to society. It encouraged the 'fit' to reproduce and the discouraged the 'unfit' and impacted negatively on attitudes towards people with intellectual disability," she said.

Ann’s research explored the experiences of people who worked, lived and died in mental health institutions, incorporating oral history accounts from former nurses now aged in their 80s, and accessing NSW Health Department records.

During this 31-year period 39,064 people were admitted to NSW mental hospitals. From 1898 to 1923, 1,459 children were admitted to the Hospital for the Insane Asylum at Newcastle, now known as the James Fletcher Hospital. The records of these children formed an integral part of the thesis.

Ann’s thesis also looked at admissions to Stockton, Morisset and Rabbit (Peat) Island in the Hawkesbury River.

"Whilst eugenic theory did not drive admission rates, the impact of more pessimistic eugenic perceptions did affect the provision of services, the incidence of long-term committal, discharge rates and many other dimensions of the institutional experience during this period," Ann said.

The time frame for the study was determined by the access to records, including access restrictions. The study commenced at the beginning of the century and concluded at the time the NSW Mental Deficiency Bill failed to pass into legislation in 1930.

Ann, who is currently Assistant Dean (Undergraduate Programs) in the Faculty of Nursing, hopes to publish her PhD findings.
From mummy's boys to soldier heroes

Fiction, particularly children's fiction, can reflect the values of the society that produces it. History lecturer and PhD candidate, Martin Crotty, uses children's stories written between 1875 and 1920 to examine a change in the construction of Australian masculinity that took place in the lead up to World War One.

In a recent seminar paper, *Mummy’s Boys and Soldier Heroes: Changing Depictions of the Heroic Australian Public Schoolboy in Juvenile Literature, 1875-1920*, Martin focused on the work of three authors - Robert Richardson, who wrote five public school stories between 1875 and 1877; Mary Grant Bruce, who wrote the famous Billabong series of stories; and Lillian Maxwell Pyke, who wrote four classic public school stories for boys between 1916 and 1921. Richardson's book, *The Cold Shoulder, or, A Half-Year at Craiglea*, has a decidedly unmasculine boy, Philip, as its hero. "Physically, he is a weakling, and is in fact emasculated by the shoulder injury which renders him unable to fight. He has no father... is not good at sport, being a rather ineffectual cricketer, and is instead a hard worker academically. When in trouble his two sources of solace are his mother and God," Martin said. In contrast, the heroes of the later books by Bruce and Pyke are imposing young men variously described as ‘bronzed giants’, ‘excellent specimens of long-limbed Australia’, ‘immensely tall’, ‘a fine young specimen of an Australian athlete’. They are captains of the cricket eleven and are associated with the 'bush'. "There is no mention of God, they scrape by in their studies with minimum effort and women have very little influence on the formation of their characters. "So we can see that the ideal of manliness promoted by different authors in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century depictions of the ideal Australian public schoolboy moved from praising the feminine to suppressing it," Martin's paper concluded. "The masculine manliness of soldiering and the bush life... displaced the effeminate manliness of religious morality. Reflecting this transformation, the Australian public schoolboy was, in the years from 1875 to 1920, transformed from an effeminate, Godly and studious creature into a physical, sporty, bush boy who answered the call to arms with willingness and capability, a change... from Mummy's boy to soldier hero." Martin, who has recently completed his PhD thesis, delivered his paper in the Staff Seminar Series of the Department of History on April 22. Currently lecturing in Australian history at the University, Martin's next project will be to carry out research into the anticipation, experience and memory of World War One in Angaston, a small town in South Australia, from 1900 to the present.

Public forum on Kosovo

NATO had violated its Charter by launching the current attack against Yugoslavia, a public forum held at the University last month heard.

The forum discussed a number of issues including the legal standing of NATO's actions, the historical forces at work in the Balkans, the possible outcomes of the current action and the physical after-effects, such as dealing with a variety of munitions.

Speakers included Dr Srdja Trifkovic, the executive director of the Lord Byron Foundation for Balkan Studies (London, United Kingdom - Scottsdale, AZ, USA). An expert in Balkan and Yugoslav history, Dr Trifkovic has appeared on British and US television networks as a commentator during the current crisis. He said at the forum that US President Bill Clinton and his supporters and advisers were "guilty of conspiracy to wage war" against Yugoslavia.

Dr Erica Wanless, a lecturer in Chemistry at the University, discussed the after effects of depleted uranium bullets and shells used by US A10 aircraft and MIA1 tanks in the attacks.

Dr Peter Radan is a lecturer in Law at the University of Western Sydney. His recently completed PhD looked at the breakup of Yugoslavia. Dr Radan said that NATO is purely defensive in purpose and had violated its Charter by launching the offensive. The decision was "legally, politically and morally bankrupt" and as well as being illegal, "violates one of the most fundamental tenets of international law" i.e. the use of force, he said.

About 80 people attended the forum, which took place on Wednesday May 12.
Millennial madness

Every age has had its doomsayers - those who think the end of the world is at hand - and the approach of the Year 2000 has spawned fresh interest in millennial studies. Historically, millennial movements have affected whole populations and resulted in some of the bloodiest moments in history. They have sparked revolutions and some historians suspect there was a millennial dimension to Hitler's monstrous Holocaust.

A new history course at the University, *Millennium*, compares the impacts of various millennial events and movements in the medieval, early modern and colonial periods, culminating with debate on the Waco siege and the Y2K bug.

Course coordinator, Dr Hilary Carey, says millennial studies began in the 1950s as part of a major study by historians who were looking for the ideological roots of the Holocaust. Norman Cohn emerged as one of the most significant of these historians and his book, *Pursuit of the Millennium*, is the text for the course.

"From their reading of scripture and prophecy many apocalyptic visionaries dreamed of a third age in which a perfect kingdom made up of a select bank of true Christians - freed of Jews and other unbelievers - would be ruled by a last world emperor. Maybe this was one of the factors which determined why the German people greeted the Third Reich with such enthusiasm," Hilary said. "Millennial movements can be violent and volatile and can lead people to abandon morality as they expect Christ to return and hasten the end of the world."

The course begins with a reading of the Book of Revelation and looks at events surrounding the approach of the year 1000 in Europe. Medieval movements, such as the flagellants and the radical Taborites, are then compared with their early modern successors, such as those active in the English civil war period. Finally it looks at millennial movements in the colonial world, including the Ghost Dance of the American Indian, and at 'new age' and 'new right' movements which have emerged in the contemporary west under the shadow of the new millennium.

"It's immensely stimulating to look at history in this way," Hilary said, "as well as being a great way to slog through great slabs of time and make links between different periods.

"There's nothing so salutary as looking at these movements and the way in which they spill over into violent antagonism to help us remain conscious of how important it is to nurture tolerance between groups with historical differences," she said.

*Millennium*, which was offered for the first time in Semester One, is available to second and third year history and religious studies students. The subject guide can be checked out from the history department's website at http://www.newcastle.edu.au/department/hist/. It will be offered in the year 2000, if, that is, nothing happens at midnight on December 31 to stop it...

University moves into Sydney

The University now has a foothold in the competitive Sydney postgraduate market, thanks to an innovative deal with a private training provider.

The University's Graduate School has signed an agreement with private provider Focus Learning Systems to offer postgraduate, short course and executive programs. The courses will be taught at the Focus facilities in Harris Street Pyrmont, and will use Newcastle's problem based learning approach.

Vice-Chancellor Professor Roger Holmes said the agreement reflected the University's significant development at the post-graduate level.

"The Focus agreement allows us to offer executive level training in the heart of Sydney," he said. "Combined with other developments like our recently established Graduate School, it will give us a new flexibility to meet the training needs of business. The Graduate School gives us cross-campus support for all our postgraduate activities.

"This not only assists with administration, but also gives us greater resources to develop inter-disciplinary training courses. For example we could develop a management program based on issues with workplace health and safety."

Focus Learning Systems director Judi Burleigh said the agreement added to her company's respected track record in the design and delivery of private and public sector training programs.

"Focus has a history of successful assignments within the vocational education and training system, and the link with the University of Newcastle is a natural extension of those activities," she said. "It also allows organisations to enrol staff in short course programs which, with the right structure, can lead into other courses at the University."

The initial courses in Sydney will focus on subjects related to management and Newcastle's Master of Business Administration.

It's planned to offer disciplinary focused courses in health science subjects and education in the near future. The University is also seeking to build links with Sydney based organisations to provide in-house Master of Applied Management programs.

The Master of Applied Management (Industry) is designed to specifically encourage applied problem solving within an individual industry or organisation.
Volunteers celebrated

Volunteers make many of the University’s programs possible. Their contributions include presenting programs on Radio 2NUR, supporting children in difficulty through the Family Action Centre’s programs and mentoring students, both domestic and international.

National Volunteers Week (May 10 to 16) saw a meeting between the Lord Mayor of Newcastle, Greg Heys, and a group of international students at the University. The meeting, a joint initiative of the International Student Care Program and the Hunter Volunteer Centre, gave the students an opportunity to share their experiences with the Mayor.

Master of Business Administration graduate, Jawaharlal (Joe) Shanmugam, from Madras, India said that overseas students acted as ambassadors for Newcastle when they returned home, with word of mouth providing a powerful endorsement for the University. He also pointed out that students from abroad contributed significant amounts of money, not just in fees to the University but in dollars spent in the local community.

“We would like to see more community involvement with overseas students, particularly in the form of the business community offering part time jobs,” Joe said.

Cr Heys agreed that more could be done to make local businesses aware of the potential offered by overseas students. “Perhaps we need a special part of the Student Care Program that involves business people caring for business students,” he said.

Cr Heys said he would meet with the students again and involve some representatives of local business in an attempt to address the issues raised by the overseas students.

10 years old

The Family Action Centre’s Homestart program celebrated 10 years of support from the community in Newcastle with a dinner for volunteers. Held at the University on May 3, the dinner recognised the efforts of the many trained volunteers who provide in-home support for families struggling to raise young children. The volunteers help with strategies for childcare, provide personal guidance and much more in the highly successful scheme, which began in 1989.

Homestart patron, Dr John Irvine, attended the dinner along with Margaret Harrison, who started the program in the UK in 1973.

“I like to help people”

Jeff Bell didn’t find it easy to return to study when he first attempted the University’s Open Foundation Course (OFC) in 1995. It was so difficult for him he pulled out half way through the year.

The 36 year old, who came from a single parent family and left school in Year 8, enrolled again in 1996 and completed the OFC, before enrolling in a Bachelor of Arts at the University.

“The feedback I got when I did OFC was very positive - I can’t speak highly enough of the staff,” Jeff said. “They encouraged me and told me I had the potential to do well at university if I chose to stick it out. Because I got so much out of the OFC and I like to help people, I thought I’d become a mentor for other students.”

The Enabling Program Unit held a lunch on April 27 to thank the twenty or so mentors who had helped OFC and Newstep students during the past 12 months. The student mentors for Open Foundation and Newstep students were asked to help new students acclimatise to the University by walking them around important sites such as the library, the Learning Skills Unit and the Counselling Service.

Coordinator of the programs, Dr Keryl Kavanagh, said having a mentor who had been through the same experiences helped students who could be feeling isolated and nervous about studying.

“Mentors are not expected to solve a student’s problems but to help them find support when they need it,” she said. “The mentors know how beneficial the programs are and are able to offer encouragement when new students waver.”
Poetry

The first two entries in our poetry competition set a high standard. We are publishing them anonymously in the interests of impartiality for our judges. The author's names will be published in the December edition.

Dreaming design

We lie sleepless in our nuptial bed
With a carved image at our head,
A symbol of our monogamy,
Flowering Swamp Mahogany
Embedded in a polished flitch,
Of thousand year old Antarctic Beech.

Thoughts in word and image arrive
From this timber store, hard drive
Akin to some kind of osmosis.
Electricity illuminates the process
Of research... a shallow image scan
That breathes slow life into our plan.

The task is brief, the brief is clear.
We will do it, never fear.
Plagiarism threatens, copycats call,
Quests for originality rise and fall.
Our theme beats strong however benign
When we poor artists dream design.

Mental sound echoes, the pulse is rife,
Line begets tone, form begets life.
Colour infuses the black and white,
And shapes are formed by end of night.

There's always an outcome not too far,
Even if it is just “BLAH, BLAH, BLAH!”

This heat

Two days after the stroke
which tossed him thrashing, foam-flecked
and blind across the hardwood floor,
I remember my dog
coming home from the vet, innocent
and doomed, his wide brown eyes
filled with apology
for how his hind legs
now worked so badly,
and how the shame burned me
to be loved like that.

Letter to the Editor

Her golden curls and impish face
stood out like a beacon in the sea of
mortar boards at the graduation
ceremony in the University's Great
Hall.

Her eyes sparkling with
excitement, she sat with two friends, a
large, good looking young man in his
early 20s and an slightly older young
woman wearing glasses on a smiling
face.

But unlike the thousand other
undergraduate eyes at the ceremony,
theirs were not focussed on centre
stage as the Chancellor rose to give his
welcoming address. Instead, they were
staring intently to the left of the stage
at the young man using sign language
to interpret the proceedings.

At times the girl with the curls of
gold would smile and nod at the fast
moving hands and lips of the
interpreter. On other occasions she
would allow herself a little frown or a
shake of the head as if she didn't quite
understand or disagreed.

But when her two friends
appeared on stage to receive their
testamurs, her face lit up with the
glow of a lighthouse and her eyes
shone with a glistening brilliance. And
as the applause from a thousand other
hands echoed through the hall, she
raised her tiny fingers high above her
head and shook them so her friends
could see her applause and her delight
as they took centre stage.

Finally, it was her turn to take the
stage and receive congratulations. She
beamed again, her mortar board tilted
at a jaunty angle on the yellow locks as
she gazed back to her seat towards her
two friends proudly clutching her
testamur. Their hands were also raised
high to salute her success.

It was a day of triumph for that
trio, a triumph which turned into heart
warming inspiration for me and
anyone else who happened to spot the
girl with the golden curls. She and her
two friends have bearing impairments
but had triumphed over that disability
to graduate in the special education
area and become qualified to teach
others with sensory difficulties.

For me, they made that
graduation one I will never forget.

Vic Levi,
University Council Member
Former Warden of Convocation

Editor's note

The student referred to in Vic's
letter is Keflie Dick, who was one of
fifteen students in the Master of Special
Education (Sensory Disability) from
Renwick College to graduate last month.
Their graduation was the result of a
partnership between the University and
the Royal Institute for Deaf and
Blind Children.

Renwick College is a centre for
research and professional training in
the education of children with a
sensory disability established by the
Royal Institute for Deaf and Blind
Children in affiliation with the
University of Newcastle.
Retirement of Margaret Stewart

Margaret Stewart, Librarian for the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, retired on May 14. Staff gave Margaret a send-off in appreciation of her many years as a colleague and friend. Margaret’s association with the University began as a student in the Faculty of Arts forty years ago at the University College, Tighe’s Hill.

“I feel that I have come full circle as I am completing my career with the Faculty of Arts and Social Science,” Margaret said. Her ambition was to be a teacher but she failed her medical, and so she applied for library positions at the Teacher’s College and the University College. Griff Duncan (then Principal of the Teacher’s College) told her that she was too educated to be a librarian but Professor Auchmuty (then Warden of the University College) applauded her for not following all her friends into teaching. In the end, she served both institutions.

Margaret presided over the reading room at the Tighe’s Hill Library, which contained the wooden tables and red leather chairs still found in the Auchmuty Library.

“I have fond memories of the move to the Shortland Campus, which accompanied our becoming a University,” said Margaret. “The place was full of mosquitoes and mud.”

Margaret recalled that when she married a teacher, Professor Auchmuty used his influence with the Department of Education to have her husband Robert transferred from Yanco to Maitland – so that she could be retained on his staff. Between 1967 and 1977, Margaret taught in a country high school but teaching was not all that she thought it should be, and she returned to librarianship at Newcastle College of Advanced Education, later becoming Librarian for the School of Education. Subsequently, when the University and Hunter Institute of Higher Education merged she became Faculty Librarian.

“I enjoyed fighting to stop amalgamation with the University,” Margaret recalled. Her years at the Huxley Library coincided with that time when technology began to have an impact.

“It was a period of great change in librarianship,” she said. “The Library staff dedicated many hours to entering all our cataloguing records onto the national database (ABN), but my greatest achievement over that time was the building up of a significant curriculum resource collection.” This has recently been merged with the CRRC collection to form an invaluable resource for Faculty of Education students.

Margaret preferred life on the smaller campuses of the University College and Newcastle College of Advanced Education, where everyone knew everyone else. “My fondest memories are probably of those early days with characters such as Professor Kelver Hartley and Professor Brin Newton-John, both of whom were my lecturers - and of the father-figure of Professor Auchmuty.” Margaret said it had been challenging keeping up with the technological advances in librarianship but that these advances had helped remove the profession from the ‘bun-and-glasses’ era to one which is stimulating and enjoyable. “I have always enjoyed working with students and academics. It has broadened my mind to help them with their academic pursuits. I will miss this and the comradeship of my fellow workers. I plan to continue to use the Library’s resources.”

Best of luck, Margaret, and thanks.

Flexible Learning

Some 21 courses and 900 students went “live” on TopClass, the web-based learning system, in first semester. Most subjects focussed on the interactive and collaborative aspects of TopClass rather than content delivery. Over 70 staff have attended the Getting Started with TopClass workshop. Enrolment went smoothly under the supervision of Technical Managers, David Morrison.

An IESD Software Evaluation Working Party has now recommended the Motet conferencing software (http://www.motet.com/) and Spaniel Chat (http://www.newcastle.edu.au/chat/spaniel/chat.html) to complement TopClass for those faculties only requiring an online discussion facility or a realtime conversational tool that can be used within or outside TopClass. Spaniel Chat is currently available and Motet will be installed and training provided in time for second semester. For further information on these products, contact Jim Cleary, ext 5856 (email: uljtc@dewey.newcastle.edu.au) or Marj Kibby, ex.6604, (email: vfmk@cc.newcastle.edu.au).

IESD has received a varied response from faculties about TopClass, with concern expressed about the difficulty of loading content and the inflexibility of some aspects of the email and discussion facilities. This feedback will be valuable in the evaluation of web-based learning systems which will shortly commence. We will ensure that the academic community has maximum input into the process and is kept fully informed. IESD is also liaising with the Faculty of Science and Mathematic’s Electronic Management Support Working Party which is exploring needs in this area.

Jim Cleary, Flexible Learning consultant

Computer Laboratory Booking Deadline

Could all staff teaching in the computer laboratories in second semester please get their bookings to Rohan Bentley by June 4. Late requests must be considered after those delivered on time. The following Internet address has current second semester bookings as well as the booking application form:

http://www.newcastle.edu.au/services/iesd/clientservices/labs/

A final draft of the Timetable will be available at the above address by the end of the exam period. For information, contact Rohan Bentley, Computer Laboratories Services Officer ext 8743 (email: iesdlabs@newcastle.edu.au).
Dramatic reduction in CO2 emissions

The University, with the assistance of the Sustainable Energy Development Authority (SEDA), has reduced its greenhouse gas emissions by 830 tonnes per annum and has dramatically cut its operating costs by adopting a program of energy efficiency across its campuses.

Increased levels of carbon dioxide (CO2) in the atmosphere are contributing to the greenhouse effect, which scientists believe could cause negative impacts on the climate and natural environment. By joining the Energy Smart Business Program, a SEDA initiative, the university is committed to a five year plan to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions by over 3000 tonnes.

With an annual energy bill in the order of $2 million per year, the university is a high energy consumer. By implementing cost effective upgrades to optimise energy consumption, the university has huge potential to significantly reduce its energy bill.

David Alexander, the University's energy manager, is proud of the progress made under the program.

"The changes we are making generate both financial and environmental benefits as upgrades make facilities more efficient and minimise pollution," he said.

One project demonstrating impressive returns is an innovative air-conditioning upgrade in the CT lecture theatre. The installation of motion sensors ensure that when the room is empty the lighting and air-conditioning automatically turn off. This project alone is eliminating over $5,000 in energy costs and 100 tonnes of CO2 every year.

A larger and more efficient central plant, installed last year, will now provide high efficiency air-conditioning for the Auchmuty Library, the New Medical and Biological Sciences Building, the Language Centre extension and the Basden Theatre, saving $20,000 per annum. Greenhouse gas savings on this project are 530 tonnes per year - equivalent to taking 115 cars off the road.

UNINEWS
### ETCETERA

**For sale**

The following items are available for sale by tender:

**Item 1:** Computer; Axis Intel Pentium 100mhz, S/No. 01039, 1.2gb hard disk drive, 48mb ram, 1.44 floppy disk drive, lan adapter, 2 serial ports, 1 printer port, svga monitor, keyboard and mouse.

**Item 2:** Computer; Osborne Pentium 90mbz, S/No. ZMDL0 0515, 1.2gb hard disk drive, 32mb ram, 1.44 floppy disk drive, cd-rom, soundcard, 2 serial ports, games, printer port, svga monitor, speakers, keyboard and mouse.

The goods are sold in “as is” condition and the University reserves the right to reject any or all tenders.

Tenders close on Friday, 11th June, 1999 at 3:30pm and should be forwarded to the Finance Officer - Assets, Financial Accounting, The University of Newcastle, University Drive, Callaghan 2308.

Please mark clearly on the envelope “TENDER 01/99”.

Please quote the Item Number on the tender application.

**Snowskis - K2 TRC (giant slalom) 200cm with Marker M48 (top line) bindings never been used, only $500 (about half retail); contact Mike ext 7306 email: avmdn@cc.newcastle.edu.au**

**Tenor saxophone - Conn/ Armstrong in excellent condition. Will consider any reasonable offer. Ph Patricia on 4959 2893 (after hours).**

**For Rent**

**Cooks Hill - April 1 - June 24, 2000.**

**1.** Huge well-loved Victorian terrace house available while owners on sabbatical. 3 stores, 4-5 large bedrooms, dining room, family room, 3 bathrooms, cottage garden and inner courtyard, garage, short walk to surf beaches, city shopping and Darby St restaurants. Rent negotiable. Contact ext 7352 or 49293254 (pm)

**Pre-school vacancies**

Monday & Tuesday 9am to 3 pm

The Early Education Program at the Special Education Centre has vacancies for 4-5 year olds in an integrated pre-school program. Total group size is 16 children and contains 8 children with special needs.

Enquiries Phone Anne Porter on ext 6265.

**The colour of difference**

The Post Adoption Resource Centre (PARC) is looking for people who were adopted by parents of a different race to themselves to contribute to a book on the subject. If you are interested in submitting your story or in being interviewed about your experiences, contact Petrina or Sanah on 02 9365 3444 or toll free 1800 024 256, website: http://www.bensoc.asn.au/parc, email: parc@bensoc.asn.au

**Overseas work, travel and study exchanges**

Council on International Educational Exchange (Council) announces its 1999 overseas work, travel and study exchange programs for Australian students, taking in the US, UK, Europe, Japan and China. Programs include:

- Work and Travel (USA, UK, Holland, Japan)

- Language Study (France, Spain, Italy and Germany)

- Teach in China

- Internships (USA)

For information call Melinda Chulvers on 02 9373 2730, email: info@councilexchanges.org.au or visit the website at http://www.councilexchanges.org.au

### What’s On

**May 6 - 24**

Certified - an exhibition of new work by selected graduates from the School of Fine Art including ceramics, drawing, fibre, illustration, painting, printmaking, photography and sculpture. Watt Space Galleries - University House

**May 26 – June 13**

Watt Space Galleries presents: Queen for a Day – an open exhibition to coincide with the Queen’s Birthday weekend.

Contact Penny, ext 5108 or the Fine Art secretary.

**June 27 - 29**

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

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

**July 1 - 3**

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.

Contact Richard Fletcher, ext 6401, email: fnrf@cc.newcastle.edu.au

**July 21, 28 and August 4, 25**

Racism in a Just Society – a series of seminars directed by the Centre for Comparative Genocide Studies. Catholic Diocesan Centre, Maitland Road, Hamilton - 6.00 to 9.30pm - $60 per person.

Session 1: Race and Ethnicity

Session 2: Aboriginal Themes

Session 3: Specific Genocides

Session 4: The Refugee Experience

Contact Esther Kilkelly, ph: 4933 2528.

**September 19-22**

‘Regenerating Regional Communities’ - 1999 ANZRSAI Annual Conference.

Coordinator: Dr Moira Gordon, Email: ecmtgo@cc.newcastle.edu.au

**September 20 - 22**

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

Contact Richard Fletcher, ext 6401; email: fnrf@cc.newcastle.edu.au

**September 23-24**

6th National Conference on Unemployment - hosted by the Employment Studies Centre at Noaths on the Beach. Enquiries to Linda Cooper, Conference Organiser on ext 6012 or email: mgimc@cc.newcastle.edu.au

**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 in 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 UN campus. Contact BZ Dlugogorski, email: cbz@alinga.newcastle.edu.au
Science Week gets SMART

The University officially launched its new SMART program as part of the Hunter’s contribution to National Science Week (May 1-9).

SMART (Science Mathematics and Real Technology) is designed to increase interest in the sciences across the general community. The program particularly focuses on children from preschool to Year 12, and has already impressed hundreds of Hunter Valley school students and teachers.

The SMART Program Science Week activities included an official launch at the Newcastle museum, a science show, a bike ride and an astronomical viewing night. SMART program coordinator Terry Burns, of the Department of Physics, said that although the program and the week were designed to be fun, there were serious motivations involved.

"There has been an alarming drop off in the number of school students studying mathematics and the sciences," he said. "Between 1991 and 1996, the number of New South Wales students studying chemistry fell by 28 per cent, while there was a 23 per cent drop in the number of students studying 3 Unit mathematics for the HSC. Trends like these have to be turned around if Australia is to maintain its excellent reputation in science and research."

The SMART program involves a number of initiatives including classroom visits, public science shows, educational resource rooms at the University and a web page. The resource rooms are available to the community and can be used especially for the in-service training of schoolteachers. The web page is interactive and allows the community to ask science and technology questions and obtain background detail on science, the SMART program and the University.

Strengthening families

The Family Action Centre is developing an inventory of family strengths, in an effort to help families that are facing difficulties. Federal Department of Family and Community Services funding will see the work of internationally renowned researcher Professor John DeFrain from Nebraska applied in the Australian context.

The project, called Building Family Strengths - A Resource For The Community, will produce an inventory of family strengths and provide a tool for anyone concerned with the health of families - general practitioners, counsellors, early childhood nurses, policy developers and schoolteachers for example.

Small focus groups are currently commenting on the inventory and project manager Helen Bryce is recruiting families to provide input through interviews and questionnaires.

"I’m looking for individuals or several members of the one family to take part. They can either answer a survey, take part in a group discussion or be interviewed individually," Helen explained.

She plans to conduct this research over the next two months. The inventory developed from the research will be launched at the first national Family Strengths conference being hosted by the Family Action Centre at the University in November.

Professor DeFrain will be in Australia in the coming months to add his expertise to the project. Families wishing to take part can contact Helen Bryce on ext 6617.

Unibriefs

Academic Senate resolved to congratulate the recipients of the 1998 Awards for Excellence in Teaching: Jennifer Allen, Faculty of Education; Anthony Williams, Learning and Development Program, IESD; Paul Scott and Lynette Sheridan Burns (team award); Paul Dastoor, Bruce King, John O’Connor and Ron MacDonald (team award).

National writing competition – 1999 Greater Dandenong Short Story Competition is now calling for entries. Writers throughout Australia are invited to compete for a total of $6,500 prize money. Categories include Young Writers (8-18), ESL Encouragement Award, Chinese Writers Award, Local Writers Award (Dandenong area) and an Open Award ($3,000 prize). Call Georgina on (03) 9239 5141 or (03) 9239 5131 or visit the website at www.cgd.vic.gov.au.
Our Open Day deserves a Big Tick

The University of Newcastle
Saturday 3 July 10am-4pm

Free Parking
Callaghan Campus University Drive
Callaghan NSW 2308
1800 636 466

It's festive, it's fun, it's free