uninews

Threads of a life

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Uninews schedule

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2000

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Council at its 29 October meeting gave approval for the extension of my appointment for a five year period to take me through to at least October 2004 as Vice-Chancellor of this University.

I am grateful to members of Council for the confidence they have shown in me. Certainly, I am very confident about the University of Newcastle. It is one of Australia's most successful universities in terms of teaching innovation, particularly with its pioneering use of problem based (or 'evidence based') methodologies in professional education and training.

In addition, we enjoy a broad and comprehensive academic profile and rank within the 'top ten' of Australian universities in research performance. We also have excellent working relationships with the community, major business, industry and government agencies, particularly those based in the Hunter and Central Coast. Moreover, our international 'partnerships' and academic activities are growing at a steady rate, and our strategic objectives in increasing research postgraduate training, coursework postgraduate education and international education activities and students are being implemented.

We have successfully managed a difficult financial period during 1997-99 following reductions in Commonwealth operating allocations, which of course have been borne with some cost to academic and general staff positions and to increasing student/staff ratios. Good management within faculties and divisions of the University has created the platform for this success.

Finance, human resource management and student administration are being transformed through the use of leading-edge IT/World Wide Web based systems, and we are investing heavily in IT infrastructure to enhance student and staff usage of electronic and computer based information delivery and acquisition of knowledge.

Modern academic management practice does not support major reference to 'problems' for the University, and these are now considered as 'challenges'. Whatever they are called, they are potential 'headaches', both for the University and for me personally. A recent newspaper article (October 27; Australian Higher Education Supplement) entitled 'Academe is no place for dreams', based upon presentations by a number of NSW Vice-Chancellor's Committee colleagues at a University Alumni Conference, revealed what is keeping some Vice-Chancellors awake at night. The usual suspects were identified such as insufficient public funding, industrial tensions, high costs of running universities as successful major enterprises, lack of understanding and appreciation by governments of our role in promoting and supporting national prosperity, competition between universities, to name a few. I wish to advise you that I do not intend to be 'Sleepless in Newcastle' at any stage, and I hope that this applies equally to all staff and students of the University. We obviously need to plan well strategically, and to be adaptable in a changing political climate, but with increased emphasis on maintaining quality teaching and research programs by whatever ethical and appropriate means are available to us.

I was interested to note that students were not included in the reported list of contributions to Vice-Chancellorial sleep disturbance. Certainly in my recent experience, our students are strongly supportive of the University but these views cannot be taken for granted at any stage. We have witnessed strong and continuing negative reactions to the 'leaked' Federal Cabinet teaching and learning proposals from the Federal Minister for Employment, Education and Training. It is obvious that our students, in the main, wish to retain Australian universities as strong public assets with a stable funding environment, and support for equitable access by all educationally eligible Australians. I share that view strongly.

I look forward with enthusiasm to the next five years and welcome the ongoing support of my family, staff colleagues, the students of the University, our major partners, the Hunter and Central Coast communities and the Council of the University.
Aggressive alumni friendship called for

Convocation's friendship with the University needs to be honest, open and at times aggressive, the Director of the Graduate School, Professor Scott Holmes, told graduates at the alumni association's Annual General Meeting last month.

Scott, who was guest speaker at the meeting and is a Newcastle graduate himself, said Convocation must take a much more active role.

"We need to attract a greater interest in maintaining an active link with the university. We must support, advocate and question it. As the Canadian philosopher John Ralston Saul argues: 'Those of us who believe in universities must not hold back from criticising them out of fear of further weakening them in a time of crisis.' That would be false friendship."

Social activities should take a secondary role to building a profile as an important and relevant branch of the University, he said.

Scott began his address with a personal story of how his father put him in a headlock in the backyard of the family home at Beresfield to prevent him from leaving school at the end of Year 10 and impress on him the importance of going to university. He was the first person in his family to go to university.

"But it was because of their limited access to education that they knew that the University of Newcastle would give me the key; would give me opportunities and all of the things they wanted for their son and grandson."

The University has the highest proportion of students who are first generation university students in Australia. While the University is recognised nationally and internationally for its innovative approach to teaching and is the only regional university in the top ten for research performance, we need to work to ensure that it is a truly comprehensive and outstanding institution, Scott said.

"To be such a university, its activities and role need to be supported, advocated and when necessary questioned by convocation and alumni. Why? Because this will be a key signal of our maturity."

Convocation's AGM was held at University House on October 20.

Poetry competition-No 7

Heatseeking

Over the hill, a pillar of head-lit street-lamp cloud leads the way, rising to scorpion skies.

Foraging through dreaming streets, we pull up a block behind: through the gate, across the yard of a disused depot, fiery hands caress eaves and timber, cracking and popping hot against the night.

Through the car window, the reek of earthy consumption and hypnotic chaos burns the nostrils, while ears drink the sirens and eyes trail the back-lit scurrying firemen with snake-silhouettes.

A gush of water, a gout of smoke blue-black in the new absence of orange. Gone, too, all but the soaked and creaking shell of undistinguished suburbia, a relic that never before (in life) drew passers-by to stop for a glimpse of barbeques or birthday parties, or the flickering caress of TV light through the curtains.

Start the car.

His

Your face is like a book
That crease in
The middle of your forehead.
I want
To lay you on your back
But you always
Spring shut
Before I can get to the next sentence
And I want
To read every part of your mind
Underlining my favourite bits.

Hers

Your mind, my love,
Is like a pencil
But it never comes
To the Point.

$3.32 million in ARC funding

The University has won 20 Large Research Grants in the latest round of Australian Research Council (ARC) funding.

The federal Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs announced the prestigious and highly competitive large grants at the end of October.

The Faculty of Engineering was awarded 10 grants, while a further seven have gone to the Faculty of Science and Mathematics, and one each to Medicine and Health Sciences, Arts and Social Science, and Economics and Commerce. The total amount of new Large Research Grants funding to the University over the period 2000 to 2002 is $3.32 million.

"In announcing this funding for the university, the ARC is reinforcing our reputation as one of the leading research institutions in Australia," Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research), Professor Ron MacDonald said. "Our success rate of 27 percent is well above average, and reflects our standing as one of Australia's strongest research universities."

The University has also received additional ARC funding for Strategic Partnerships with Industry for Research and Training. Nine grants have been awarded, with funds over the next three years totalling more than $950,000. In addition, Newcastle has received two of only three Indigenous Researcher Development Scheme grants awarded in NSW, and two grants in the Research Infrastructure Equipment and Facilities (RIEF) Scheme, totalling $520,000.
Science can be fun and rewarding

A group from Glendale High School see how well their building withstands a simulated earthquake.

There is a disturbing trend in Australia of students rejecting science studies, especially the enabling science subjects of mathematics, physics and chemistry.

A recent report commissioned by the Australian Council of Deans of Science emphasised the importance of general science knowledge as the basis for innovation and entrepreneurship in a "high-wage, high technology economy".

Professor David Finlay, Dean of the Faculty of Science and Mathematics, says studying basic sciences like physics and chemistry provides a solid background for many careers, especially if the training includes mathematics.

"In addition to employment in the professional area of their choosing, people with science backgrounds excel as product managers, business developers, financial consultants, and sales and marketing executives."

He says the type of training that a science student undergoes is systematic and rigorous and imparts many basic skills in addition to the discipline knowledge.

"Communication and computer skills, number manipulation and research expertise, and a way of thinking that often leads to problem solving ability are highly sought after by employers. Scientists and engineers carry a good deal of the technology and innovation knowledge for the country."

The Faculty of Engineering, also alarmed at the declining number of students studying science and mathematics for the HSC, has formulated a new teaching package that is being piloted in local high schools.

Tackling the IT shortage

The University has joined other education providers in the Hunter, to encourage secondary school students to study Information Technology.

A recent survey by consulting company Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu, indicated Australian employers will need to find more than 30,000 IT professionals in this financial year, and almost 180,000 by the year 2004. The survey has found the skill mix required by companies is changing, and must be addressed by the education sector.

The University has joined with the Hunter Institute of Technology, EdNet and Information Technology and Telecommunications consortium HunterTech, to meet with Careers Advisors from Hunter secondary schools.

The meeting will outline the varied job prospects in IT and the many different education paths into these careers.

The University's Bachelor of Information Science degree reflects input from employers and educationalists, with a tier of core subjects, and a full year major project. The course produces highly skilled graduates equipped to work in IT in any environment.

A scholarship is being offered from SAP AG, the world's second largest software company. Undergraduate students starting the Information Science course in 2000 can apply for the $15,000 mySAP.com scholarship, which is paid over three years.
Connecting with isolated students

Students from rural areas who come to the University often struggle with loneliness and isolation as well as the usual academic pressures of studying. A project being piloted by the Student and Academic Services Unit and the Family Action Centre (FAC), UniConnection aims to support these students and give them a greater chance of doing well at their studies.

Program coordinator, Michelle McDonnell from the FAC, said country students face the stress of managing independent living without the support of family networks. “UniConnection will link students with trained volunteers from the community who will offer friendship and support,” she said. “The first four week volunteer preparation course began in August with eight participants.”

Six of the eight graduates from the first course are University staff members from various departments. Some will be linked to students before the final exams, with the rest available to help students enrolling in 2000.

People should come first in teaching

The dramatic decline in postgraduate enrolments in the Faculty of Education with the introduction of fee-paying courses is due to a lack of incentive for teachers to continue with their education, according to the Dean of the Faculty, Professor Terry Lovat.

“The lack of encouragement for teacher development was the greatest single challenge facing the profession,” Terry said.

“As education faculties, we have worked hard over a long period of time to convince the profession it was good to do postgraduate work and we had succeeded in getting them thinking that way,” he said.

Over half the postgraduate coursework students in the University were in the Faculty of Education until the introduction of fees, two years ago.

“We had an 83 percent decline in enrolments in the first year,” Terry said, “with a slight pick-up in the second year when we offered rates significantly below the full HECS rate.”

Many of the education faculties around the country have bought right out of postgraduate coursework because they don't believe there is any future in it, and those that are continuing to offer programs are subsidising them from their undergraduate programs.

A further problem which is showing up nationally is that the decline in postgraduate coursework enrolments impacts on research programs. In education, the majority of research students tend to follow on from coursework programs. The faculty is working on strategies to find alternative pathways to research. It is also working with the NSW Department of Education and Training on schemes to offer incentives to teachers to continue their tertiary training.

One such scheme is the School Leadership Excellence Seminars being offered by the Department’s Educational Leadership Development Unit. Judith O’Brien from the Unit says that the pilot program for this two year course began last year and that seminars are now being run across NSW. “The program was introduced because research coming out of our quality assurance initiatives indicated a strong correlation between quality leadership in schools and quality outcomes of our programs,” Judith said.

Another program being developed by the Department aims to improve the quality of in-school mentoring of beginning and student teachers by offering a diploma or certificate course to mentors. Director of Training and Development, Graham Dawson, says the Department has co-developed the program with universities. “We are looking for integrated courses that can be delivered flexibly, taking account of in-place learning,” Graham said. “The program will provide twin benefits of improving the level of in-school support for beginning teachers and of rewarding teachers who undertake these professional qualifications through our sponsorship arrangements.”

Terry Lovat, however, believes that a whole new regime of thought is required for the sake of the teaching profession. He points to Pennsylvania in the US, where there are enormous incentives offered to teachers to upgrade their qualifications and to move into new areas.

“Completing a Master’s degree there will earn a teacher a $10,000 to $15,000 salary increment and a doctorate will add that much again,” Terry explains. “The government also offers plenty of scholarships to encourage people to study.”

While the cost of providing such incentives to teachers is high, Terry says it’s a matter of priorities. “They have taken a decision to support their teachers and stuck by it. The result is that while there is an international shortage of teachers, there is no shortage in Pennsylvania.”

Providing teachers with incentives to improve and with career progression that did not simply rely on moving into administrative positions, avoided the sort of human resource problem we are seeing in Australia’s teaching profession, Terry said. When teachers reach the top of their salary range, 10-12 years out of university, there was nowhere for them to go and a huge number of them drop out of the profession.

“People should come first in our priorities for funding,” Terry said. “The profession hangs on how good and enthusiastic the people in the classroom are. Putting money into developing leadership is important but schools are not going to run well if the troops are unhappy.”
Chandra Murti, Assistant Registrar (AR) in the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences, says his position is similar to that of the permanent secretary in a government department.

"We may get transferred to another Faculty or have a new Dean appointed, but we are expected to make sure the Faculty continues to function efficiently," Chandra said.

Unlike the stereotypical public servant, however, Chandra likes to make things happen.

"A university is an academic enterprise with the core business (teaching and research) conducted in the faculties. The AR and his/her team is uniquely placed to support the core business of the University."

"Our job is to provide accurate information and advice to academics and to make sure the rules and regulations of the university are adhered to. At the same time, it's important we are not negative about new ideas or initiatives that academics may want to put forward. Rather than saying it cannot be done I usually try to find a way that it can be done."

Chandra says there is a fine balance to making sure that no rules are broken while helping the university achieve its goals and objectives. He says the dwindling government resources and increasing demands for the facilities to become more entrepreneurial have added to the workload of ARs.

Chandra began his working life as an economist, joining the Ministry of Economic Planning and Development in his native Fiji after completing his BA at the University of the South Pacific in 1979. He won a scholarship to do a Masters in Development Studies at the Institute of Social Studies in The Hague in 1982. The decision to apply for migration to Australia came after a chance encounter with a friend.

"When we were accepted to come to Australia we were a bit reluctant to migrate," Chandra said. "But everyone I spoke to in Fiji advised us to go."

In July 1986 the young family came to Newcastle as Chandra had a cousin here. Although his wife Sarojini had their second child just a month after they arrived and the settling in period was difficult, the military coup in Fiji in March 1987 dispelled any doubts they felt about coming.

Chandra got a job as an Administrative Assistant at the Newcastle College of Advanced Education (NCAE) in September 1986. He worked in the NCAE Secretariat for three years. In 1989, he was appointed Administrative Officer in the School of Education in NCAE, and in 1991, Assistant Registrar in the Faculty of Education at the University.

"The Faculty was a combination of the old education faculty from the University and the NCAE School of Education. It wasn't a happy marriage and it was a very challenging time to work there."

Surviving amalgamation was just one of the upheavals Chandra experienced in Education. The Faculty underwent major restructuring in the mid 1990s that saw all its undergraduate courses disestablished and new double degrees established. It was also earmarked for downsizing during this time.

"I got a lot of satisfaction being part of Education during those very difficult years. It has now come out the other side and is the third largest faculty in the university, in terms of student enrolments. We had a great team in the Secretariat and we all felt a sense of satisfaction at having helped the Faculty to succeed."

He moved to the International Office in 1998, where he was Acting Deputy Director from July to December. It too was undergoing restructuring and Chandra oversaw the move of the student administration functions from the International Office to the Student and Academic Services Division. He then returned to his position as AR of Education.

University Secretary and Registrar Gem Cheong, however, had other plans for him. Chandra was transferred to Medicine and Health Sciences in April. Medicine has also recently been restructured, moving to a four school model with a new academic governance structure. Added to this is the fact that the Faculty is spread over six different locations and that his own Secretariat staff is split over three. "This Faculty offers new challenges for me and I have a wonderful Secretariat team to support me," Chandra said. "I am prepared to work as hard in Medicine as I did in Education. We spend a significant part of our lives in the job, so we should make every effort to enjoy what we do."
Tooth erosion study

A new multi-national interdisciplinary study will explore the link between diet and tooth erosion, a condition that, if unchecked, costs patients thousands of dollars in lifelong dental treatment.

Lecturer in Surveying, Dr Harvey Mitchell from the Department of Civil, Surveying, and Environmental Engineering and Dr Graham Chadwick, senior lecturer at the Dental School, University of Dundee, Scotland have teamed up in an unusual partnership between medicine and engineering.

"For the first time early stages of tooth erosion can be detected using an engineering-based software program," Harvey said, a tool that Dr Chadwick says is the difference between the project being done or not.

"Erosion levels of patients’ teeth are difficult to quantify," Dr Chadwick said, "especially because permanent markers cannot be left on teeth. Now we have tooth replica measurement techniques and mathematical comparison methods which will enable us to carry out the dental study."

Funded by a grant worth more than $AU520,000 from the Chief Scientist’s Office of the Health Department of the Scottish Executive, as part of a routine community dental health screening program conducted by Dr S. Manton, the project will examine the teeth of 250 Scottish children over three years with the aim of identifying material and activities that contribute to the existence of erosion-causing acids in the mouth. While anecdotal evidence suggests that some food and drinks are bad for children’s teeth, this can’t be assumed and their effects need to be measured.

"This is an extremely important study as children in some western countries are experiencing alarming rates of tooth erosion," Dr Chadwick said.

"If the causes of the condition can be understood, preventative measures could be taken to arrest the rate of erosion and save people a lifetime of costly dental treatment."

Well, Timmy, if you do decide to participate in our dental survey on why the incidence of tooth erosion is on the increase in the children of Western populations...there’s some yummy ice cream and fizzy cola afterwards.

Dr Harvey Mitchell and daughter Amy

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Assistant Registrars

Each Faculty of the University has an Assistant Registrar. In terms of line management they report to the University Secretary and Registrar, but work to the Dean on a day to day basis. They are responsible for a wide range of duties including:

- promoting courses to prospective students
- admissions
- enrolments
- re-enrolments
- student progression through courses
- graduation
- writing and editing of Faculty literature
- being members of Faculty Board/Faculty Management Committee.

They are also expected to advise the Dean and other academic staff about the university’s rules, regulations and policies. They serve Faculty Boards and committees and prepare reports for transmission to other university committees, including the Curriculum Review Committee, the Senate and Council. In many faculties, they also act as an Executive Officer to the Dean.

Assistant Registrars supervise the administrative staff of their Secretariats and act as a resource person for their team. They are unable to take leave between November and March.
Yerra Early Childhood Studies Centre officially opened

When Senator John Tierney addressed guests at the official opening of the Early Childhood Studies Centre at the Central Coast Campus recently, he told them how positive experiences during a child's early years can be of great benefit throughout their life.

Other speakers from both the University and the Hunter Institute of Technology echoed his sentiments and paid tribute to the vision and planning that had gone into the Centre.

The Centre, known as Yerra (an Aboriginal word for gumtree), is a state-of-the-art facility which forms part of the latest building development on the Campus. It is used by staff and students involved in University degree programs in Early Childhood Teaching and also TAFE childcare training programs.

Senator Tierney said Yerra was the result of a successful collaborative venture. He said it had all the ingredients for success because teaching staff had had a hand in the design along with the architects and that there had been a lot of community and industry involvement right from the start.

"In other words, this is not only seen as an academic facility, but a community one as well," Senator Tierney said. "There are a lot of challenges raising children for the future and the investment we make in their development at an early age is so important," he said.

Guest speaker, Quentin Bryce, said the opening of the Early Childhood Centre demonstrated a recognition of the needs of children and families and of career development for those who seek the enriching experience of working with children.

She recalled her own early days as a young mother trying to balance child rearing with work and community responsibilities. "In those days, working mothers as we were called, were vilified and blamed for all of society's ills from drugs to delinquency," she said.

Ms Bryce who has spent most of her life working as an advocate for children, set up the National Childcare Accreditation Council in the early 90s to implement the Quality of Improvement and Accreditation System for long day care centres.

"Brain imaging techniques have improved in recent times, facilitating greater understanding of brain development and functioning. The number of brain cells that children are born with is mainly an hereditary issue. However this is just a framework; the environment has a big part to play in what happens once the framework is in place. "Children are born with many more neurons and synapses than they really need. However only those that are used become permanent. Those that are not used are eliminated. Quality early childhood experiences have a crucial part to play. It’s just like physical development, use it or lose it."

"Early in life the brain has a great capacity for change so we need to make the best of this. We need to ensure appropriate stimulation as brain cell connections develop very quickly. What is needed is developmentally appropriate practice.

"What lies at the heart of early childhood expertise and professionalism, research and knowledge are observing the individual child...understanding the individual child and finding out what’s special about them."

Ms Bryce congratulated the Campus on the establishment of the Centre. She said that quality childcare and education depends on quality teachers who need as their foundation, quality training and education. She also commended the Campus as the leading institution in the development of an early literacy strategy for prior to school services in New South Wales.

"The early childhood field needs advocates, supporters, lobbyists, just at children need champions. That is what we have here," she said. “A Centre dedicated to quality education and training programs and one that is strongly linked to its community. That’s a solid ingredient for success," she added.
Award winning sounds from Stuart and Sons

A CD collection recorded in the Faculty of Music Concert Hall was voted best classical CD at this year's Aria Awards. The “Complete Piano Sonatas Vol 1 by Beethoven” is a collaboration between Sydney pianist, Gerard Willems, ABC Classics and the University. It features the Stuart and Sons piano designed by Wayne Stuart under the auspices of the Faculty of Music and TUNRA. Two of the six Aria nominees in this year's classical category featured the Stuart piano.

The recording is available from reputable music shops and ABC shops.

Gerard Willems, left and producer Brendan Ward with the Stuart and Sons pianos at the Conservatorium

Inspiring young Aboriginal students

David Newham thought a university education was out of his reach, but he didn't lose sight of his hopes.

Now, having completed his Diploma in Aboriginal Studies at the University, he's doing what he's always wanted to do – encouraging other young Aboriginal people to set high goals and achieve them.

A project officer with Wollotuka Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Centre, David's job takes him around New South Wales to talk to Aboriginal school students about the opportunities available to them at the University.

"Aboriginal people have been told for too long that they can't achieve anything. They've sold themselves short, and my aim is to change that by encouraging young people to think about going to university," he said.

David tells the students about his own school days, where he concentrated on sport and very little else. "I just didn't consider going to university, and was actually told in Year 10 that it wasn't a good idea. But when I had some contact with Wollotuka, my attitude changed."

Wollotuka, meaning meeting and eating place in the Awabakal language, offered David information about courses and the various types of assistance available to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. It also provided him with cultural support that helped him during his studies.

Newcastle hosts Aboriginal games

The University of Newcastle Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Student Association (ATSISA) hosted the 4th Annual Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Games held in Newcastle on October 9 and 10.

The games, which drew Indigenous tertiary students from across the State, included competitions in touch football, netball, basketball and softball, as well as social events.

ATSISA chair, Leonie Williamson, said the games were very successful. They aimed to celebrate Indigenous culture; promote unity, health, fitness and wellbeing; demonstrate self-determination; encourage participation of Indigenous people in tertiary education; initiate new communication networks; and reinforce identity through positive role models.

The overall winner was Goolangulla, with Yooroang Garang taking out best and fairest team. Next year's games will be held in Canberra.
The student art gallery Watt Space celebrated its tenth anniversary with an exhibition of works by artists who have showed at the gallery as emerging artists before establishing careers in the arts.

The Watt Decade exhibition was held at the gallery, which is now housed in University House in Auckland Street, from September 29 to October 17. It was the last exhibition curated by outgoing Director, Penny Metham, who left to take up a position as Director at The Broken Hill Region Art Gallery. "In my selection I have chosen artists across the ten years of the gallery, my underlying philosophy relating to the actual influence of the gallery at the beginning of professional careers in the arts," Penny writes in the exhibition catalogue.

Ross Woodrow, from the University’s School of Fine Art, went on to say that Watt Space is unique amongst student galleries in Australia because of its organisational infrastructure. "Watt Space is administered by a committee which includes a full-time Gallery Director," he writes. "The committee comprises equal representation from the student body, the University Union and the School of Fine Art." Art students hold all the executive positions on the committee.

New Director, Simone Paterson, said Watt Space was established in response to student activism. "The students went to the Union and demanded a space in which to show their works," she said. The unique collaboration was born with the establishment of a gallery in a single-room shopfront in Watt Street in 1989.

Simone, an artist who has exhibited both nationally and internationally, is eager to share her exhibition and curatorial experience with students at Watt Space. After receiving her Master of Visual Arts in sculpture, performance and installation from the University of Sydney in 1995, she has been a lecturer in fine arts at a number of universities. She has recently taken part in multimedia installations, collaborating with international artists in Holland and Italy. Her art practice covers a wide range of skills and media that she says will help her to facilitate an exciting exhibition program at Watt Space.

"The gallery provides a bridge for students from study to becoming professional artists," she said. "I’m very keen to help students make that transition and to make them aware of survival strategies and how to sell their work."

The works in the Watt Decade exhibition were lent by artists and galleries from as far afield as New Zealand and Germany.
Final year graphic design student, Susanna Kirtley, has won the 1999 Australian Paper Poster Design Award. Susanna's poster beat a record 218 entrants to win the Gold Medal in the prestigious annual awards. She will be presented with her prize at the National Print Awards to be held in Sydney in March 2000.

The threads of a life

A remarkable exhibition of tapestries by the late Janet Brereton recently visited the University as part of a national tour.

Janet Brereton was a major force in the growth of the significance of textiles in Australian art practice and theory for the three decades of her life. Born in Melbourne in 1933, she taught art in secondary schools before establishing an Arts Centre and tapestry workshop at New Brighton on the far north coast of NSW.

Janet completed a postgraduate diploma in printmaking at Newcastle College of Advanced Education in 1981 and established a tapestry workshop at the University the following year. She created many of her rich and complex works while she was here and several of the exhibition pieces were loaned by the University. Janet died in Canberra in 1992.

The Janet Brereton Tapestry Retrospective, 1997 - 2000 was managed by the Goulburn Regional Art Gallery and resulted from the 'dedication, perseverance and hard work' of Janet's daughter, Sal Brereton.
30 years of innovation

The University's commercial arm, TUNRA celebrated 30 years of consulting, testing, and research at a function at the Harbourside Function Centre on October 13.

Dr Soozy Smith, Chief Executive Officer of TUNRA says the principal activities and main sources of income of the company during 1998 were undertaking research and consulting projects to industry and commerce throughout Australia and overseas.

"In 1988 our turnover was $1.8 million, in 1998 almost $6 million, highlighting TUNRA's developing worldwide reputation in areas such as engineering and scientific research," Soozy said.

Some of the commercial success stories to emerge from TUNRA include:
- Jameson Cell - a bubble flotation apparatus which operates within a column to separate particles, marketed worldwide.
- Craft Software - Children's Records and Financial Transactions (CRAFT) computer software, in agreement with OAS Computers.
- UMAT - a battery of psychometric tests as part of the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences admissions strategy for medical students. TUNRA makes this testing facility available throughout Australia and it is now an accepted criteria for admission to most major medical schools.
- TUNRA South Africa - a program offering teaching, consulting and research facilities in South Africa.
- TUNRA Bulk Solids - has provide consulting/research to mining industries in Australia and Indonesia, Ghana, New Zealand, South Africa and USA.
- Employment Studies Centre - coordinates major projects in areas such as unemployment, skill formation, wage bargaining, award simplification, outsourcing, redundancy, gender equity, and regional development.

Design wins national award

Engineering student Dave Scott has won the 1999 Nescafe Big Break Award, which will help finance the commercial production of an agricultural implement he has designed.

Twenty-year-old Dave is a second year student of the Bachelor of Engineering degree in Mechanical Engineering.

"I have designed a machine which will save farm labour and machinery costs, and conserve the environment when sowing crops," explains Dave. "Traditionally, paddocks must be prepared before crops can be sown. The Stubble Warrior eliminates the need for this preparation. Crops can be harvested, with the stubble left in the paddock to break down and act as mulch, therefore reducing erosion, preserving soil quality, and ensuring the sustainability of the industry. This modern technique is known as 'zero tillage'."

The Stubble Warrior cuts the stubble, fertilises, and sows seed all at the same time. The Warriors are attached to planting machines that are about 10 metres wide. Each machine will hold approximately 25 Stubble Warriors.

Dave has sourced subcontractors across Newcastle and the Hunter to make the components of The Stubble Warrior, and completed Warriors are sent to Quirindi to be attached to the planting machines. Preliminary orders are already in place, and the company DTS Mechanical Design has been formed to handle the business.

Dave Scott is one of seven young Australians aged between 16 and 21 years, to win $20,000 in the 1999 Nescafe Big Break Awards. More than 600 people from across the country entered this year's awards, and 11 finalists were selected to present their business ideas to a panel of judges, comprised of previous winners.
Professor Adrian Page
Faculty of Engineering

Background
I trained as a civil engineer part-time at the Tighes Hill campus while doing a Water Board cadetship. When I graduated from the University of New South Wales (Newcastle was then a college of UNSW) with a Bachelor of Engineering in 1965, I had no intention of becoming an academic. After working as an engineer in Australia and overseas for a number of years, I was recruited to come back to Newcastle to teach structural design. I came to the University at the end of 1970.

While working in the construction and design of buildings, it became apparent to me that there was a lack of knowledge about the behaviour of masonry. I did my PhD in this area, developing realistic material models to define the behaviour of masonry. From there we have built up the most active masonry research group in Australia. My Chair is sponsored by the Clay Brick Manufacturers. The 1989 earthquake boosted our activities, since most of the one and a half billion dollars worth of damage was to masonry. We did lots of specialist consulting and a lot of our findings have since flowed into building codes.

Over this period, as well as establishing international links along the way, especially in the United Kingdom and Canada, I was head of the Department of Civil Engineering (now Civil, Surveying and Environmental) for four years and held various other positions until I finally floated to the top.

Challenges
Keeping up with changing technology is one of the major challenges facing the faculty. We have introduced two new programs next year; in mechatronics and telecommunications, in direct response to industry needs.

Another significant challenge is the declining numbers of high school students studying science and mathematics. We are producing two innovative teaching packages to try and raise awareness among high school students of the practical relevance of engineering.

With only ten percent of our enrolment female, we have introduced a program to boost the participation of women and other under-represented groups in engineering.

We are also trying to raise the profile of the faculty nationally. We are one of the best engineering faculties in the country and while that is generally known in the profession, it is less well known further afield.

Strengths
In terms of research success per capita, Newcastle has the strongest engineering faculty in Australia. The first intake of engineering students was in 1952 - we celebrate our 50th anniversary in 2002 - and we have a long tradition of industry interaction. The key to our success is the quality of our academic staff and our graduates. That goes back a long way, involving progressive policies in staff appointment by previous deans and heads of department. One of my biggest challenges is to ensure that talented junior staff is brought in to maintain the high standards set by the established academics.

Work
It's satisfying but very time consuming to keep up with all the things that a Dean is expected to do, as well as retaining an active research and teaching profile and interacting with industry. You have to sprint but it's fun. I still enjoy teaching and students are my number one priority.

Trying to maintain cohesion so that we operate as a faculty and not five separate departments is difficult, especially in these tight financial times. I also think the faculty has a crucial role to play in the ongoing development of Newcastle. We have a major contribution to make to the city's move into high technology industries.

Leisure
Growing up in Tamworth, I've always been a keen sportsman. I was part of the University's inaugural first grade hockey team when it entered the Newcastle competition in the early '60s. Now I tend to gravitate to social tennis, as well as swimming and walking.

I have three sons, two of whom are Newcastle graduates, with the youngest doing his HSC this year. I enjoy live theatre, good food and fine wine (who doesn't?).

The future
Having been here for almost 30 years, I've taken pleasure in watching the faculty grow and do so well. The faculty has a very bright future but it won't come without effort.

I'm very positive and I enjoy coming to work every day. Being an academic is a very satisfying and challenging career and I look forward to that continuing for a while yet.
Reliving memories of 'Pommytown'

A documentary celebrating the life and times of the Welsh and English migrants who came to work at the BHP Steelworks in the 1920s, that was launched at the Ribbons of Steel exhibition in August, is part of an ongoing project.

Mapping a Community: Memories of early years in Pommytown, is part of an ongoing cultural memory project, Whatever Happened to Pommytown, which has been jointly funded by the University and BHP.

Film Studies lecturer, Helen Macallan and Media and Cultural Studies lecturer, Therese Davis, co-produced the 17 minute video, which features memories of everyday life in and around Mayfield East from the 1920s onwards.

In launching the video, Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Social Science, Professor John Ramsland, described it as one of the best works of cultural and social history to come out of the Faculty.

"It is a brilliantly conceived and executed collage of the developing community and of everyday life in the early years of Pommytown, exploring key areas of social, cultural, domestic, work and leisure history of this most significant community and using both images and words in a fascinating and complex way," John said.

Pommytown began in 1914 when John Lysaght Ltd bought land beside the site where BHP was erecting its steelworks. By the early 20s, arrangements had been made for the migration of 80 skilled workers and their families from Bristol and Newport.

The video’s three narrators tell interweaving stories from the 1920s and 1930s that evoke, with the aide of visual images, the real life experiences of families and individuals.

"Together, the video forms a very moving social document," the Dean said.

"Through this initial video we begin to know what really happened there."

It will be followed up with a series of other studies of equal length on the themes of the war years, industrial relations, football, community hall and home entertainment, chapel, and school.

The Ribbons of Steel exhibition featured a range of artworks, theatre and cultural events in response to the closure of the steelworks in September.

The video was launched in The Tool Room exhibition space at the Mayfield plant of BHP on August 27.

An unruly trinity

The corruption scandal that gripped the International Olympic Committee in 1999 may have saddened some of the more "terminally naive sports romantics," but it provided quantities of front-page copy and 'shock horror' lead stories.

Associate Professor David Rowe from the Department of Leisure and Tourism Studies explains in a new book the media’s "incalculably“ large impact on sports, especially over the last 30 years, and that media sport is a key component of the fabric of contemporary culture.

Sport, Culture and The Media: The Unruly Trinity, was launched on October 26 in conjunction with the two-day forum on Intercultural Studies.

The book is one of four founding titles in a new series on Issues in Cultural and Media Issues published by the Open University Press in the UK (and distributed by Allen & Unwin in Australia).

"The sights, sounds and feel of sports are everywhere," David said. "Sport provides the mass media with precious qualities - large audiences, loyal readers, listeners and viewers, and unpredictability."

The problem with this interdependence is that sport, culture, and the media are influencing and being influenced by each other in an increasingly extensive exchange of exposure and rights fees for content and audience capture, he said.

"What we call sport - what occurs on fields, courts, etc.- is actually at the bottom of an inverted pyramid of sports watching, selling, marketing, sponsorship, presentation and discourse," David said. "By learning a little more about how media sport is set before us and what media sports texts can be made to mean, perhaps we can take back a little of the cultural power that we have ceded to it."
Commissioner on crime prevention

There is a greater need for community ownership of crime prevention, Commissioner of the New South Wales Police Service, Peter Ryan, told an audience in the Griffith Duncan Theatre last month.

Presenting the 1999 Newcastle Lecture, Commissioner Ryan pointed to the link between crime and social disadvantage. He described the social and economic changes that have impacted on the Australian community and contributed to an environment where there is a greater potential for criminal and anti-social behaviour. These include globalisation, technological advancement, restructuring and downsizing, unemployment and the increasing cost of essential support services such as childcare, health and education, he said.

The Commissioner stressed the importance of early intervention programs by non-traditional law enforcement agencies to the prevention of juvenile crime. While outlining the role of police in crime prevention, he recognised the need to look beyond traditional policing responses towards greater collaborative work with other agencies to develop crime prevention strategies. These agencies include health, welfare and education authorities, he said.

Commissioner Ryan joined the ranks of Geraldine Doogue, Thomas Keneally and John Doyle (aka Rampaging Roy Slaven) in presenting Convocation’s Newcastle Lecture on October 28. The Newcastle Lecture was instituted in 1975 with the purpose of giving residents of the Hunter the opportunity to hear and meet with celebrated people. The first lecture was delivered by the then Chief Justice of the High Court, Sir Garfield Barwick. Other speakers have included Cheryl Kernot and Paul Lynham.

Cultural studies on the agenda

The Faculty of Arts and Social Science has introduced a new, interdisciplinary major – Cultural Studies – into its undergraduate programs. Cultural Studies Convenor, Dr David Rowe, from the Department of Leisure and Tourism Studies, said that Cultural Studies is the fastest growing area of studies in the humanities and social sciences.

"It adopts a cross-cultural and interdisciplinary perspective and concerns the connections between our experience, symbols and rituals in both 'global' society and in local communities," David said. "As well as looking at the circulation of images and information that shape our everyday lives, it examines and analyses a wide range of cultural forms such as youth subcultures, popular fiction, television, cinema and video."

Graduates of a cultural studies major will be highly employable because of their broad, inventive command of how culture works to remake society, David said. By understanding how various 'social texts' shape the social world, they will display a sophisticated understanding of the complexity of contemporary society that can be applied to many work situations, he said.

Launched at the fourth annual Inter-Cultural Studies Conference hosted by the Department of Modern Languages last month, the Cultural Studies program includes subjects from the Departments of English, Leisure and Tourism Studies, Philosophy, and Sociology and Anthropology.

Speaking at the launch, leading cultural theorist Dr John Docker, from the Australian National University, said that cultural studies was still a field being made and unmade.

"It is a field whose borders remain thankfully open," he said. "Its vitality emerges from the jostling presence of so many different disciplines."

Describing cultural studies as a 'trickster' and 'wanderer' amongst disciplines, he warned that this relatively new field (the term only gained general provenance in the 1990s) could be superficial and meretricious, sometimes benefiting from the "hubris of generality".

Dr Docker was a guest speaker at the conference, which had as its theme "The Inter-Cultural Paradigm" and explored the extent to which the concept of inter-cultural studies is useful in structuring existing knowledge and constructing new knowledge.

The other guest speaker at the conference was Mr Tabe Yoshihiro, Director of the Sydney office of the Japan Local Government Centre, who spoke on "The Globalisation of Japanese Local Communities".

The Cultural Studies major will be available to students enrolled in numerous degree courses including the Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Social Science. It will be 'housed' in the Department of Leisure and Tourism Studies and enquiries should be made to David on ext 6630, email: ltdcr@cc.newcastle.edu.au.
PNG link established

Four students from the Faculty of Architecture, Building and Design have recently returned from Papua New Guinea, where they have been studying as part of a trial student exchange program with the University of Technology (Unitech) in Lae.

The program began last year, with a 12-week stay by six third year architecture students, and continued this year with four building construction management students spending 10 weeks at Unitech.

John Snook, Eric Hammer, Andrew Bell and Richard Webb were in Lae from July to October. Twenty seven year old Eric, an international student from Norway who is in the third year of his construction management studies at Newcastle, said the first thing that impressed him in New Guinea was the sign at the airport: Land of the Unexpected.

"The fact that I didn’t know anything about PNG before going heightened the whole experience for me,” he said. “Everything was new to me – the climate, the language and the dress and behaviour of the people.”

The four found the teaching approach and the specific construction management issues at Unitech completely different as well. A range of local considerations including remoteness, a developing infrastructure and the expense of materials, were all challenges that were unique to the building industry in PNG.

"The lecturers at Unitech were interested in getting our perspective because we use problem-based learning,” Eric said. “We undertook a refurbishment study on Angaun Hospital in Lae, where the class was split into four groups, each of them led by one of the Newcastle students. We helped the group to implement problem-based learning techniques – it was interesting to see how they adapted it into their own methodologies.”

The exchanges with Unitech came about as an initiative of Kora Korawali, a lecturer in architecture at Lae who is currently doing his PhD at Newcastle. Deciding that an exchange of students would be beneficial to both Unitech students and those from Newcastle, he applied for funding through the Department of Training and Youth Affairs.

“Papua New Guinea link established…"}

Marketing campaign gets big tick

The campaign conceived to promote this year’s University Open Day at Callaghan, that featured a magnified purple tick, was shortlisted in two categories in the Australian Marketing Institute Awards for Marketing Excellence.

Developed for Marketing and Media Services (M&MS) by Roger Dunstan, lecturer in the Department of Design, and implemented by Rhys Palmer and Greg Boddy from IES Division, the Big Tick campaign was selected from 17 entries in the Business Services category for the State finals.

Director of M&MS, Dr Fran Flavel, said the Big Tick was beaten by a campaign constructed for Australia Post by Peach Advertising.

“Newcastle was not only represented by both shortlisted entries, but won as well,” Fran said. “The Big Tick was also one of seven entries shortlisted in the Communications category at the awards and lost in the finals to the Salvation Army’s Red Shield Appeal. We are in very good company!”
Stanford University's Writing and Critical Thinking Program

Recently, Dr Carolyn Ross and Dr Ardel Thomas from the Writing and Critical Thinking Program at Stanford University visited the University and presented a seminar on one of the writing programs offered at Stanford. The Writing and Critical Thinking Program at Stanford provides a range of writing skills programs. All undergraduate students must participate in at least one such program as part of their "general education" requirement for graduation. One of the subjects offered through the Writing and Critical Thinking Program is a course called Writing in the Community.

During the seminar, Drs Ross and Thomas discussed how the subject is coordinated and taught, and showed examples of students' work. Students have produced a wide range of written materials for non-profit organisations: they have written web-sites, educational materials, information brochures, and even grant applications which were successful in gaining large grants for organisations. It was shown that students had their sense of the need for highly-developed written communication skills heightened by their involvement in the production of such materials.

Staff who attended the seminar pointed out that the aims of Writing for the Community Program are highly relevant to university teaching everywhere. First, the program aims to integrate the core skills of being able to produce effective written communications and of being able to critically assess materials into the student's learning experience from the earliest stages of studying at university. The program also encourages students to develop a sense of "audience", and to find the appropriate written style to reach that audience. Furthermore, students are enabled through the program to write for "the real world", rather than for assessment only. The process-approach to writing-skills tuition also allows students to identify how they engage in the writing and editing process, and allows them to develop essential skills in editing and drafting written work. Finally, the non-profit organisations for which students write benefit greatly from the high-quality products produced for them.

More information about the Writing and Critical Thinking Program, as well as examples of student's work in a number of the courses can be found at http://www.stanford.edu/class/wct.htm

For hardcopy of materials or for further discussion, contact Dr Ania van der Wal in the Learning and Development Program, on ext 5890 or email aliev@cc.newcastle.edu.au

New faculty librarians

Celia Munro has been appointed to the position of Faculty Librarian of the Faculty of Arts and Social Science, replacing Margaret Stewart who retired earlier this year. Celia was formerly librarian for the Faculty of Education, Health and Professional Studies at the University of New England. As well as working with the Faculty, Celia will also coordinate reader education on campus. Debbie Booth has been appointed Faculty Librarian of the Faculties of Architecture, Building and Design and Engineering.

Y2K Update

Protect your hard work...back-up

As we near the end of the year, and the Y2K roll-over, it is expected that some computer-based data may be at risk of loss or damage due to issues arising from "Year 2000 Problems". All staff are reminded to ensure their (and their department's) data records are protected with a reliable backup procedure. This process is crucial to Y2K planning but should not be ignored at any time as numerous other threats exist including power surges, computer viruses or even accidental deletion. For data that you create or are responsible for, it is necessary that you ensure a reliable and timely procedure operates in order to archive data to a separate location. For electronic data, reliable backups should be done regularly (at least once a month if data is changing). Part of this process should also involve checking that the backup has occurred correctly.

Apart from the obvious reasons of wanting to preserve data, it is also more important than ever to ensure that data is backed-up. This is due to recent legislation whereby university records are now considered state records thus giving all staff specific responsibilities and making the University more accountable for its record keeping practices. Examples of state records are committee papers (agenda, minutes, attachments), policy documents, agreements/contracts, emails, correspondence and purchase requisitions. For further examples of state records and how to store and manage our records visit the University Records Management Office web page at: http://www.newcastle.edu.au/services/our/services/records/

Staff are reminded that the Year 2000 Project Team are available to assist with understanding and dealing with the "Millennium bug". For more information please check out http://www.newcastle.edu.au/y2000 or contact the Year 2000 Service Centre (email: y2000@newcastle.edu.au, ext 5847 - Fax: 6988).
For sale

Upright mobile computer workstation, grey in colour. $60. Please contact Anne on ext 6444 or 49752139 (ah)

Lamkoke A4/A3 laminator. Brand New. Only $300. Contact Brid, Chris or Justine at NUSA on ext 6006 or 49681281

Upright grey computer desk, good condition - $60; baby cot mattress—one side quilted/reverse plastic—$50. Ph Glen on ext 5276

Internal Transfer


Hunter Mission Christmas Appeal

UNICOM Credit Union, in the Shortland Union Building, is accepting non-perishable food items and wrapped, labelled gifts for Hunter Mission. If you can help, please drop in your donated items to the Credit Union by Monday December 20.

Free housesitter available from January 2000. Mature, responsible lady, non-smoker, impeccable housekeeper, totally reliable. References available. Email lbrown@mail or telephone ext 6532.

Parking permits

Physical Planning and Estates circulated motor vehicle entry permit application forms with pay slips on November 11. Permits can be collected from the Atrium in the Chancellery on December 6 and 7 and from the McMillin Building on December 9. Payroll deductions will automatically roll over unless staff advise the Parking Section of PPE that they no longer wish to purchase a permit.

Heads of Department are reminded to advise usual and part-time staff that parking fees apply on campus between the hours of 8am and 5.30 pm weekdays throughout the year. A staff validation permit is required in conjunction with a paid entry permit for eligibility to park in Staff parking areas.

The Creation

The University Choir and Orchestra, conducted by Kevin Cameron, will present Haydn's The Creation, on Saturday, December 4 at 8 pm in the Great Hall. The soloists, soprano Jennifer Barnes, tenor Jamie Allen, and bass Michael Saunders, have all performed for the Australian Opera.

Tickets are $25 ($20 concession) and $10 for full-time students. They are available from Pepperina Books and Records, Latham's Music Store, Garden City, MacLean's Bookstore, Hamilton, University Post Office and McDonald Bros, Maitland.

Amateur film-maker wins national award

Electronics technician, Michael O'Neill, has won the 1999 National Mattara Video Festival prize for best documentary for a film on a man who collects radios.

One Radio focuses on the hobby of Warners Bay man, Lou Albert, who has created a museum of antique radios that date back to Marconi.

Michael, who works in the Department of Physics, used a Sony DCR-VX1000 digital video camera that he won in a magazine competition in 1997, to shoot his film. He beat 30 entrants to take the Mattara prize.

International soccer team in Newcastle

The Faculty of Engineering designed special water-filled goal posts for an international paralympic soccer team that visited the University at the end of October.

The team, from The Netherlands, was here for a series of friendly games against the University's Men's and Women's soccer teams.

The games were used as pre-paralympic training for the Dutch side.

Dr Ian Webster, from the Faculty of Engineering, worked on the special water-filled goal posts needed for the matches.

"The Paralympic soccer team uses goalposts which are an unusual size. We needed them to be portable, but at the same time sturdy enough to withstand the demands imposed on them by international athletes" Ian, who is also President of the Sports Union, said.

"Using local innovation, we succeeded in creating goalposts that met the criteria for much less than it would have cost to purchase them."
Health, Safety and Development

Aust & NZ Industrial Relations Society Conference 2000 1.2.2000/4.2.2000 - Venue: Noah's on the Beach Contact: Julia Connell, School of Management, Ext 5011

Assoc of Industrial Relations Academics of Australia & NZ 1.2.2000/4.2.2000 Venue: The University of Newcastle Contact: John Burgess, Dept of Economics, Ext 5028, Fax 6919

Asia Pacific Carnival-Odyssey of the Mind 22.1.2001/23.1.2001- Venue: the University of Newcastle Contact: Elaine Street Ph: 02 49 63 3575

3rd International Conference on Gas-Liquid-Solid Reaction on Engineering 2000 April 2001 - Venue: TBA - Contact Prof. G. Jamieson-Ext 6181 Dept. of Chemical Engineering


7th International Conference on the Structure of Surfaces July/Aug 2002 - Venue: City Hall - Contact Prof John O'Connor, Dept of Physics, Ext 5439, Fax: 6907

National Alcohol & Drug Prevention Conference 2000 April 2000 - Venue: TBC. Contact Jenny Knight 02 4924 6349

2nd International Conference On Managing Enterprises 17.11.99/20.11.99 - Venue TBC. Contact Marilyn Stegermaier-Newcastle University School of Management - 02 49 217248.

Family Strengths Conference 22.11.99/24.11.99- Venue: University of Newcastle Contact Jane Yeaman Ph: 02 49 84 2554, Fax: 02 49 84 2755

Injury/incident/hazard reporting system

Occupational injuries and illnesses are preventable. One of the challenges facing the University is how we prevent them? In order to prevent injury, we have to be able to identify potential hazards and implement management processes to control the risks associated with them.

Reporting accidents and injuries forms an integral part of managing health and safety. An injury/incident/hazard reporting system can help prevent injuries in two ways. Where an accident or injury has occurred, the system is used to identify and address the cause(s) so that similar accidents will not recur. Where a hazard is identified, the system is used to reduce its potential impact before anyone gets hurt.

It is important to note that injury and accident reporting is required under NSW Occupational Health and Safety legislation.

If an injury occurs, the first priority is to ensure the injured party gets appropriate medical attention by contacting the area First Aid Officers, the University Health Service, or the relevant Emergency Services. In all situations, steps should be taken to control all immediate threats to the health and safety of anyone who might use the area. Everyone has a responsibility to do this.

Once the situation is under control, it is necessary to report what happened and start the investigation process. The University's current injury and hazard reporting mechanism is encompassed in the "pink" Accident/Injury and Potential Accident/Hazard Report form available from departmental secretaries, first aid officers, or by contacting Health, Safety and Development on extension 6543.

This form should be completed by the person who was involved in the incident or identified the hazard, in conjunction with their supervisor, or the supervisor of the area in which the incident occurred.

The supervisor is then responsible for implementing measures that will reduce the risk of the incident recurring. This may be very simple to achieve, or it may require a more detailed investigation involving a number of other groups. In order that the investigation and follow-up is carried out in a timely manner, staff are reminded that an Accident/Injury Report Form must be submitted to the Health, Safety and Development Team within 24 hours of the occurrence. If medical treatment is required or time lost from work, a Claim for Workers Compensation should also be completed, and the Workers Compensation Claims Officer (ext 5263) should be contacted.

By compiling a picture of injuries that have occurred at the University over the last 12 months, slips, trips and falls have been identified as the hazard most frequently encountered by staff. Through the injury reporting system, and other proactive systems such as the Building and Grounds Safety Audit Committee, such hazards can be quickly attended to by PPE. Whilst this hazard is still significant for students, sporting injuries are more prevalent for them.

In order to meet legislative requirements, a new Injury/Incident/Hazard Report Register form has been developed and has been on trial in a number of locations across the University. This trial has identified a few "system" issues that are now being addressed, and it is envisaged that the new registers, in booklet format, will be provided to first-aid officers and departmental secretaries in the near future. The existing pink Injury Report form will then become obsolete. Further details will be provided when the new form is approved.

Next Issue: What is "Chemwatch"?
Newcastle hosts
Australian premiere

The Faculty of Music recently presented the Australian premiere of The Maze of the Muses, a chamber opera by New Zealand composer Edwin Carr.

Written from an original libretto by Hal Smith, Maze is a one-act opera for three singers and three instrumentalists – piano, clarinet and cello.

Edwin Carr was born in Auckland in 1926. After graduating from Auckland University, he studied composition with Benjamin Frankel in London, and later with Petrassi in Rome. In 1960 he was commissioned to compose his first opera, Natasya (based on Dostoyevsky). After a career as a teacher of composition, piano and conducting, in 1987 he devoted himself entirely to composition. The Maze of the Muses was first performed in Dunedin in 1997.

Carr's opera was preceded by excerpts from two of Mozart's comedies, two libretti by Lorenzo da Ponte – the opening scene of Act 2 from Così fan Tutte, and most of the Second Act of Figaro's Wedding.

The double bill showcased the talents of graduate and undergraduate students in opera studies in the Faculty of Music. In The Maze of the Muses Jane Lobban sang Bianca, Naomi von Senff was Negrita, and Ashley Giles played Cyril. In the scenes from Mozart, Jane sang Despina and Cherubino, and Naomi appeared as Fiordiligi and Susanna. They were joined by Jedda Jones as Dorabella, Heather Lee as the Countess and Kim Cunio as the Count.

Michael Evans directed the production. Dr Rosalind Halton conducted the Mozart scenes from the fortepiano. Adam Wills conducted The Maze of the Muses. The double bill was performed on October 7, 8 and 9 in the Exhibition Space of University House.

unibriefs

Nominations are being sought for the 2000 Australian Technology Awards, celebrating the achievements of Australia's 'technopreneurs'. Two new award categories have been added for the year 2000, Excellence in the Development of Data Management and Excellence in the Development of Technology from the Engineering/Manufacturing Sector. For more information on the awards contact Kate Ryan on (02) 9253 8555, email austecka@ozemail.com.au.

The Faculty of Economics and Commerce is offering seven new $2,000 scholarships to first year students commencing a Bachelor of Finance or Bachelor of Business course. Dean of the Faculty, Professor Steve Easton, says the scholarships are designed to encourage students to pursue careers in the areas of finance and business.