The University's new $20 million sports and aquatic centre - The Forum - was officially opened by the Chancellor on February 27. To find out how it was named, who it is intended for, the plans of the new swimming coach and more, see our centre page feature - pages 10 and 11.

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Welcome to the new University newspaper.

Designed as an internal communication, Uninews replaces the Ear. In response to feedback and in the interests of being inclusive we have returned to the more descriptive title Uninews.

Uninews will incorporate Etcetera, with its notices, administrative announcements, calendars and classifieds. It will accept paid advertisements, although classifieds will still be offered free as a service to staff.

Feel free to contribute news and ideas to Uninews.

Enquiries and contributions should be directed to the Editor, Uninews, Marketing and Media Services, phone: Ext 6457, email: prklb@cc.newcastle.edu.au. Classified advertisements and other contributions for Etcetera should be sent to email: prrr@cc.newcastle.edu.au, Ext: 6963.

Uninews is written in an informal and friendly style using Christian names unless honorifics or titles are specifically requested.

1998 Deadlines and Publishing Dates

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March issue

Publisher — Fran Flavel
Editor — Kim Britton
Writers — Anne Long, Karla McCormack, Cae Pattison
Photography — Chris Paterson, John Freund
Designer — Tim Burns

Cover pic: the climbing wall at the Forum is the second largest in Australia. Seen scaling it for Uninews are members of the University Mountaineering Club – from top to bottom – Glen Peters and Katie Powell on the wall and Melanie and Stephen Fityus and Darrin Gray acting as belayers on the ground. Clinging to the lower part of the wall is Uninews' intrepid designer, Tim Burns.

Vice-Chancellor’s column

Welcome to the first edition of Uninews. The purpose of the newspaper is to improve communication across the University, and to keep you informed of recent developments. We represent a large and growing community of students and staff, predominantly located in Newcastle and at Ourimbah, and it is important for us all to be informed about current events, key developments, our achievements and successes, our concerns, and other general news about the University. In addition, it would be useful for Uninews to act as a forum for discussion on current ‘hot topics’ and I hope that members of the University will respond to the opportunity to contribute to the newspaper on a regular basis.

1998 looks to be a substantially better year than 1997, now that we have worked our way through many of the funding difficulties, which arose following the announcements from the Federal Government cut-backs towards higher education. Domestic student enrolments are ‘on track’ at this stage, and we can be pleased with our efforts in raising the TER entry levels for many of our courses. It is apparent, however, that increases in HECS charges for students are having an impact on enrolments across the system, particularly in science, art and humanities courses. With this evidence, it is hoped that the Federal Government will undertake a review of this policy and take steps to address this worrying trend. International student enrolments continue to be strong in some areas, such as the study abroad, AusAID and other scholarship supported programs, although the currency ‘crisis’ among some South East Asian countries will have a significant impact. Current estimates indicate that these numbers will fall to near 1996 levels of enrolment for some courses. We must continue to be active in marketing our programs in SE Asia, and we are doing what we can to assist students who are having difficulties in meeting course fees.

Major challenges are ahead because of the increasing unpredictability of Commonwealth higher education funding, changes in student preferences for course enrolments, the necessity to charge fees for coursework postgraduate programs, and the SE Asian currency crisis. I am very confident that we are able to address these as they arise, because of the strengths and comprehensiveness of our teaching and research programs, the quality and commitment of our staff, and the ongoing strong support of the Hunter and Central Coast communities.

May I invite you to contribute to our ongoing success, and wish you an enjoyable, healthy and productive 1998.

Roger S. Holmes,
Vice-Chancellor.
Premier opens new laboratories

The late Emeritus Professor Ian Stewart has been honoured with the naming of a new wing within the Chemical Engineering Department.

The Ian Stewart Wing of the Chemical Engineering Laboratories forms part of the Cooperative Research Centre for Black Coal Utilisation and was officially opened by the Premier of New South Wales, Bob Carr, late last month.

The Centre was established in 1995 to carry out world-class research to help maximise the value and performance of Australian black coal resources. The new facilities offer the infrastructure support to carry out this research, and will double as teaching laboratories for the Chemical Engineering Department.

"Part of our research and teaching is aimed at reducing the amount of greenhouse gases which are released when black coal is burnt. While Australia's – and the Hunter's – coal reserves are already among the cleanest in the world, we can continue to make improvements in these areas by developing new technologies for processing the resource," explained Head of the Chemical Engineering Department, Dr Nafis Ahmed.

The new laboratories were partly funded by a $200,000 State Government grant through the Office of Economic Development. They have facilities for computer modelling, coal preparation and sampling, and an open area for larger experiments.

The late Ian Stewart was the first Professor of Chemical Engineering (1965-1977) at the University. He oversaw the construction of the initial laboratories on the Shortland campus in 1969 and pioneered internationally-recognised research into coal combustion.

Stewart's early research in coal combustion with Professor Hoyt Hotell in 1936 at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology is cited as the first scientific proof that chemical reaction rates limit the rate of coal combustion. It was the standard reference until further experiments with more sophisticated techniques were undertaken in the 1970s.

During the 12 years of his professorship, the Department of Chemical Engineering moved from Tighes Hill to the Shortland campus, the Chemical Engineering Laboratories were constructed, the first PhD students were enrolled and research activities in several areas were initiated.

During his retirement, Stewart remained active in community affairs, chairing the Hunter Division of the Institute of Engineers through the '80s; establishing the coalmining display at the Newcastle Regional Museum and assisting with the publication of a local historical document Shaping The Hunter.

He retired from the University in December 1977 and, in recognition of his achievements, was awarded the title of Emeritus Professor, followed by an Honorary Doctorate in Engineering in 1989.

During his opening address, the Premier acknowledged the contributions made by Emeritus Professor Stewart and the international relevance of the work currently being carried out at the University in the field of coal research.

"The Hunter is the State's largest coal producer, and Newcastle the equal largest exporter of coal in the world – soon to be the largest with the planned expansion of the Port Warah Coal Services facilities," Mr Carr said.

"To complement and support this vital industry, it is important that research like that carried out at the University of Newcastle continues," he said.
Grant to combat youth suicide

During one week of last year there were three suicides and one attempted suicide of young males in Cessnock. Three primary school aged boys in the Hunter region attempted suicide last year. Suicide in the 15 to 24 year age group has increased alarmingly in recent decades, with more than 400 deaths in Australia in 1996, 350 of them male, compared to 130 deaths in 1970.

Although the number of deaths per capita is higher in older age groups, the potential years of life lost represented by the 1996 figures, when calculated against the average life expectancy, is 19,000 years for the males and 3,500 for the females.

The Federal Government has introduced a National Youth Suicide Prevention Strategy, with numerous groups receiving funding to carry out various programs aimed at reducing the toll. The University's Family Action Centre (FAC) is one of the groups to be funded under the strategy, with a $300,000 grant. The Community Volunteers Supporting Families (CVSF) project has been established, combining FAC's successful Homelink and Homestart programs.

"Homestart and Homelink are existing, proven and evaluated initiatives," FAC Director, Di James said. "By combining them we are offering continuity of service to parents and their children, as well as allowing the service providers to share resources."

The grant will enable FAC to run the CVSF project in the West Lake Macquarie, Maitland/Kurri Kurri and Nyngan/Warren areas.

Homestart and Homelink are voluntary programs providing support for children and their families by linking them with trained volunteers.

Homestart is aimed at pre-school aged children and their families, with referrals coming from various agencies including early childhood nurses, doctors, Department of Community Services (DOCS), and as the program has become known, self-referrals. Homelink matches school aged children with volunteers, with the majority of referrals coming from the schools and DOCS.

"While there is no research to support it, teachers and other childworkers say that when they see a kid acting out in kindergarten it's as though it's stamped on his forehead that he will end up in jail or on drugs or attempting suicide," Di said.

"Some of the kids we've seen have been through the whole school referral and intervention program and nothing works. But when we put a volunteer in we see enormous changes. Ninety percent of referrals to Homelink are boys. Not all of them have behavioural difficulties, with some of them lacking social skills - self esteem is a really big issue."

Richard Fletcher from FAC's Men and Boys Project says the University has piloted a scheme to target men as volunteers.

"When you consider that 80 to 90 percent of kids who are suspended from school or caught up in the juvenile justice system are boys, it makes perfect sense to recruit male volunteers to support them," Richard said.

"The current climate in NSW, with the Wood Inquiry, makes recruitment doubly difficult. There has been a tightening of volunteer supervision and I think there should be guidelines so that parents, community organisations and volunteers can all have guarantees."

"But the program is important because the community perception that men who volunteer are untrustworthy needs to be addressed."

Richard has developed specific training programs for male volunteers, as well as resources for boys in schools that relate to the idea of being a man. He is also involved in training mental health workers, teachers, and others who will be working toward youth suicide prevention about young men and suicide.

Peter Gron has been a Homelink volunteer for two years. A marine engineer who has some time to spare when not at sea, he visits two boys, one at primary school and a 14 year old who is at high school.

"I wanted to do something for kids," Peter said. "I have boys of my own and through them I saw there is a lot of kids out there who can get into trouble and who need a positive influence."

While Peter's main involvement with the boys is through their schools, he has taken them fishing and camping with his own family.

"I try to get them motivated and to see opportunities that exist that they otherwise might not get to hear about," he said.

The Pasminco Cockle Creek Smelter has sponsored the Homelink program in the Westlakes area to the tune of $5,000 this year.

* Pictured above are Pasminco's Public Affairs Manager, Keith Powell (left) and Homelink volunteer, Peter Gron at a volunteer graduation ceremony.
First year students enjoy a free barbecue in the Auchmuty Library courtyard, one of a number of activities sponsored by the University Union during Orientation Week.

The easy road to student recruitment

Dr Bernie Curran knows better than most how difficult it is to promote an out-of-mode course. As a Classics teacher, he has had to defend his discipline in an environment that has become increasingly negative for courses that don't have a clear vocational outcome.

“We went into schools in Sydney and Newcastle to build up interest in Classics,” Bernie recalls. “There is no one better to promote a discipline than those who teach it but it certainly eats into your primary tasks of teaching and research.”

In his role as Director of Community and Alumni Relations, Bernie is responsible for the University’s schools liaison and student recruitment programs and sees it as important that he create mechanisms that allow academics to become a part of the programs without compromising their academic careers in the process.

“I attended a careers market at Parklea in Sydney’s west last year where there were around 15 University of Sydney lecturing staff manning staff and about 12 from UTS, led by the Professor of Chemistry. By contrast, the Newcastle careers market, on our own patch had only three academic staff in attendance.”

Bernie doesn’t attribute the poor attendance to apathy, saying that academic staff did not know about the market and, in any case, had been led to believe that these events were the responsibility of the administration. “It is my responsibility to make people aware of what is happening with student recruitment and suggest ways they can help,” he said.

Schools Visit Day is a good example of how some central coordination can involve academic staff in a positive way.

“Students have traditionally listened to administrative staff talking about HECS and enrollment procedures, so last year we asked some academic staff to come up with topics to talk to careers advisers about,” Bernie explained. “So we had David Finlay talking about biotechnology, Ian Webster talking about engineering and Annette Dobson talking about economics and commerce and they were ideal advocates for their disciplines.”

But with the University’s student recruitment effort involving dozens of careers markets as far afield as Tamworth and Dubbo, presentation of academic awards at around 30 high schools, Schools Visit Day, HSC Advisory days, Open Day and more, academic staff can only do so much.

“We definitely want to involve academics in our programs but it is counter productive for them and for us if they take a scattergun approach and do their own thing,” Bernie said. “They can’t be everywhere and we can streamline their activities by targeting the dates and venues they are able to attend. There is an added bonus to be gained by doing things together, as travelling in a group tends to make things cheaper, as well as more fun.”

If you’re planning some promotional involvement with NSW high schools, Bernie would love to hear from you. He can provide a comprehensive list of the centrally funded activities and help you plan your recruitment efforts for maximum effect.
New Dean of Medicine and Health Sciences - seeking to improve

Newly appointed Dean of the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences, Professor Rob Sanson-Fisher believes that while Newcastle has one of the best faculties of its sort in Australia and in some aspects the world, it is time to change.

"There seems to be a widespread feeling that it's time to make significant changes in the way we educate health care providers," he said. "I think Newcastle with its problem based learning was very innovative 22 years ago when it was started but the world has changed."

Rob, who has been a member of the Faculty for 16 years, went overseas looking at health care in Britain, Sweden, Canada and the United States while on holidays from the position he held last year as Director of the National Cancer Control Initiative.

"There is a sense that other innovative schools in the world are experiencing the same sort of issues as we are at Newcastle," he said.

The issues include reduction in funding with greater accountability for expenditure, a decrease in the average length of stay in a hospital setting, providing fewer opportunities for continuity of contact with patients for students, and increasingly stressed health delivery systems all over the world, with the subsequent ramifications for education and research. "There have been radical shifts in health care delivery, in the political environment and in technology and we should reflect that in what we do," Rob said.

Fortunately for Newcastle, however, the Dean sees many advantages in our faculty that will help it to adapt to the changing times.

"We have a strong commitment to educational innovation and a strong community involvement that has shaped the way we are. It is easier for us to change than some other schools where tradition is much more entrenched," he said.

"Institutions, like people, carry images of themselves and our image is forward looking. We can and will be different and more efficient. It's a tradition most of us really enjoy. We are committed to continuing to adapt things we know make a better undergraduate education for students and to ensure that our efforts produce benefits for our community."

Other advantages in the Faculty include the fact that it combines medicine with health sciences.

"Increasingly the effectiveness of health care delivery depends on the intelligent and cost effective use of multi-discipline practitioners," he said. "No one group is enough... we need doctors but we also need medical radiation therapists and nutrition and dietetics and speech therapists and a whole range of other specialties. It allows students to work together in a constructive way and learn about each other's disciplines."

The other area he sees as a particular strength of Newcastle is the use of evidence-based health care practice, which involves educating under graduates in the judicious and effective use of research literature to aid in clinical practice.

"There is a huge volume of literature which holds important lessons that should change some clinical practice. We teach students to sift through the chaff to extract the jewels and use them in their practice," Rob said.

Rob considers the Faculty's community orientation to be important. "With the pressure on hospitals growing, the number of days patients stay has been reduced so a lot of health care is now being provided in the community," he said. "We have always provided education in these areas and will continue to do so."

The Dean has build an international reputation as a researcher and consultant on health care. He has been Director of a World Health Organisation (WHO) collaborating centre in health behavioural research and a WHO consultant. His Newcastle research group has earned approximately $1.2million per annum in competitive research grants over the last five years, with much of the research focussing on the quality of health care.

"I will maintain my research commitments," Rob said. "I am involved with two programs that have large National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) grants."

The first is a five year project to enter into partnership with Aboriginal communities to see what can be contributed to their health outcomes. The second project involves attempts to help general practitioners deal more efficiently with melanomas and skin cancers.

While these are tough times for deans and university administrators, with limited resources and increased scrutiny on how budgets are allocated, Rob is looking forward to the opportunity to preserve and extend the things that make Newcastle unique.

"I think it will be fun," he said. "Fun's really important, you should get joy out of what you do. This is an exciting Faculty and one of its hallmarks is that it is characterised by a willingness to compromise to achieve shared goals and visions."
The Public Affairs Unit has merged with the Marketing Office to form a new unit, Marketing and Media Services (M&MS). Launched by the Vice-Chancellor last month, M&MS will be responsible for scheduling the production of all promotional materials, advertising and publications of all parts of the University.

The image portrayed by the University to its various audiences should not only present its many strengths and advantages, but be consistent and powerful, the Vice-Chancellor said at the launch. The new M&MS unit would play an integral part in ensuring this, he said.

M&MS Director, Dr Fran Flavel, said the new unit is not just an amalgamation of the old entities, but will operate in an entirely new paradigm.

"All of us are committed to the new, client focussed, results orientated Marketing and Media Services, and we are prepared to be measured on our performance publicly, through the balanced scorecard system," she said.

While introducing the staff who make up M&MS, Fran listed the range of skills and expertise housed in the unit including marketing, advertising, journalism, media management, copywriting, design, publishing, market research, production management, public relations, editorial services, direct marketing, list management and agency management.

"We are developing internal systems and structures which will meet the challenges which the Vice-Chancellor has outlined," she said.

The balanced scorecard is a management system that is being trialled in the External Relations Division for possible adoption across the University.

Among the targets set by M&MS to achieve under the balanced scorecard system are a 20% increase in public awareness of the University as a potential partner in education, research and community development in the next three years. A baseline against which performance will be measured has been established using Newspoll surveys.

The unit will attempt to expand the University's reputation as a centre of excellence in research and teaching, with a 10% growth in national media coverage the target, as well as maintenance of our lead over benchmark university UTS (University of Technology, Sydney).

As the unit will now be responsible for scheduling production of all promotional materials, advertising and publications (including printed materials, stationery, videos and outputs of all other technologies) of all areas of the University, another target will be to reduce overruns by 10% in the first year. To help achieve this target, M&MS will employ a materials scheduler and institute computerised planning and tracking systems.

"In a fee for service environment it is essential that we deliver assignments on time and on or better than budget," Fran said.

M&MS will work closely with the Information and Education Services Division (IESD), as well as overseeing production by external agencies.

Media services for the corporate University and for individual faculties is provided by M&MS, with a new strategy aimed at providing quality coverage (in terms of frequency, reach and consistency) to targeted groups.

The Vice-Chancellor recently launched a Corporate Identity Manual aimed at protecting the University's logo and marks and presenting a consistent corporate image across the institution.

Exporting diabetes education to the developing world

"Diabetes is known to be a major and increasing problem in Asia and there are very limited opportunities for doctors to improve and update their understanding and skills," she said.

"I'm delighted that the University has the opportunity to contribute to improving the situation in countries which have a real need." TUNNDA will educate and train doctors from developing countries in all aspects of diabetes treatment including epidemiology, early detection and prevention and management of complications. It will offer short courses for health practitioners and postgraduate studies via distance learning for doctors who complete the short courses.

The Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences, through its Health Professional Education Unit, will develop all materials and will call on the skills and experience of two experts in diabetes, Dr Kerry Bowen, director of the Diabetes Centre at Royal Newcastle Hospital, and Dr Trish Crock, staff specialist in endocrinology at the John Hunter Children's Hospital.

The University Communications Plan was also released at the M&MS launch and provides detail on the key messages that have been identified to promote the University.

"We will optimise the marketing inputs to increase awareness of the University, presenting it as successful, solid, modern, professional and tolerant with innovative teaching and research in a real world environment," Fran said.

The Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences, with Project Director Jean McPherson, of the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences, said diabetes is an enormous problem in the developing world.

The University has signed a groundbreaking agreement with Novo Nordisk Pharmaceuticals that will see the export of Australian academic and medical expertise to developing countries.

The signing in January marked the official commencement of the partnership known as the University of Newcastle Novocare Diabetes Academy (TUNNDA).

Established to improve diabetes care in many parts of Asia, TUNNDA will directly benefit primary care practitioners and people with diabetes in countries such as India, Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand and eventually China.

Project director, Dr Jean McPherson, of the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences, said diabetes is an enormous problem in the developing world.

"Diabetes is known to be a major and increasing problem in Asia and there are very limited opportunities for doctors to improve and update their understanding and skills," she said.

"I'm delighted that the University has the opportunity to contribute to improving the situation in countries which have a real need."
Dr William Gladstone gets the answer to the obvious question out of the way quickly and politely. Yes, he is a descendant of that other famous William Gladstone of nineteenth century British political fame. Unlike his ancestor, however, this Gladstone is an environmentalist and very much a man of the times.

Appointed to coordinate the University's degree program in Sustainable Resource Management at the Central Coast Campus, Bill brings with him a wealth of experience achieved both nationally and internationally. And although his academic focus has been mainly on marine ecology, his interest in conserving the environment globally is all consuming.

He has spent the past three years working on resource projects in the Middle East for the United Nations and the World Conservation Union. Based in Saudi Arabia and travelling widely around the region, his time was taken up with two major projects - the establishment of a marine national park in the Red Sea and the coordination of UN-funded marine resource projects operating in several countries.

Previous to that he was based in Townsville where his coral reef management for the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority was held up around the world as the model for sustainable resource management in this area.

Sustainable resource management is not based on national boundaries or geographical locations, he said.

"It is world-based (or some might say planet-based) and has direct implications, today and for future generations. The conservation of biodiversity, sustainable use of resources, catchment management, waste disposal, livestock and agriculture, regional planning and mapping from a total environmental viewpoint is the responsibility of us all, guided by sound ecological practices."

While working to establish a marine national park in the Red Sea, Bill found that the area was totally unsurveyed and no-one held any documented information on where people were fishing or what fish species were either plentiful or in danger of being depleted. By conducting underwater surveys and engaging in a rigorous consultative process with the local fishermen, he was able to glean the information he needed and involve the local community in management decisions.

"These people have been using the same fishing techniques and following the same traditions for thousands of years and in actual fact they do their work on a sustainable basis. They know the habitats where the juvenile fish live and do not destroy the habitat or fish there in order to protect them for the future," he said.

"But there are no marine ecologists in these countries and a lack of education for people generally so that when an ecological problem arises they don't necessarily know what the problem is, let alone how to solve it. It's a prime example of the importance of the link between ecological, economic and social factors, the very basis of sustainable resource management."

While he enjoys working on international programs and continues to act as a UN consultant, Bill doesn't see his Central Coast appointment as tame - far from it. "There is so much growth at this campus and so many exciting things happening, especially this innovative course (Sustainable Resource Management) and all in such a vibrant and beautiful area, that I cannot help being excited about the challenges here," he said.

Recent amendments to the Local Government Amendment Act require that ecologically sustainable development be a principle for the activities of councils and their employees.

"The opportunities are there now for graduates in this field, and as the principles of sustainability become more widely established in government, business and the local community, there can only be a widening of opportunities," Bill said.

"Our students actually do resource management from their first year onwards, using local issues and will graduate with the skills to work in the multidisciplinary field of sustainable resource management. Their qualification can take them into many different areas from local and federal government, national parks, forestry, non-government organisations and private industry consultancies through to community groups and research organisations, locally, nationally and internationally.

"People are slowly becoming more aware that sustainable resource management is really about people management and that the principles of ecological sustainability, social responsibility and economic stability are inevitably linked. Put simply, when our resources are managed on an ecological basis, the economic returns naturally follow. And this is where the social factor comes in. You need to have people's acceptance of the whole idea of sustainability and community involvement in management."

Bill has transferred his passion for water sports from the Red Sea to the Central Coast where his leisure time is taken up with diving, underwater photography and sailing.
Politics program launched

The region’s first undergraduate major in Politics is being offered this year through the Department of Economics.

Head of Department, Bill Mitchell, and Coordinator of Politics, Andrew Buck, launched the program at the recent International Political Seminar.

The program will be available to first year students via Introduction to Politics and Australian Politics and Government. Second year topics range from political theory through international relations to such controversial and complicated issues as the politics of Aboriginal property rights.

“Our emphasis will be on the inter-disciplinary nature of politics, how it interweaves with other subject areas and our everyday lives,” Andrew explained. “We want to make the course relevant to the rest of their degree and accessible.”

The department trialled some subjects during last year with positive results.

“The students were so keen and, surprisingly, very interested in the politics of the day, especially the issue of the republic,” Andrew said.

“The only cynicism displayed was towards the politicians themselves but not at all towards the issues.”

The entire course will be delivered by Andrew and Bill which will enable them to develop a closer relationship with their students.

“It’s going to be more like the university of old because every student will have direct contact with either myself or Bill,” Andrew said.

“We’re very pleased that, in a time of general university downsizing, we are able to be offering something new.”

One of the world’s most outstanding atomic researchers is currently lending his expertise to Physics Department staff working on the development of key research equipment.

Dr Robert Langley was invited by fellow international scientific society member and head of the department Associate Professor John O’Connor to assist with the automation of the department’s gas feed system for their low energy accelerator.

These changes will make the system more user-friendly, reliable and far more productive for students and staff.

“Upgrading the equipment in this way will open up new opportunities for postgraduate students who can spend less time fighting experimental problems and more time directly on their projects,” John said.

With almost 40 years’ experience in the field of atomic research, Robert has worked on a variety of projects including experiments on the earth’s upper atmosphere for the US Government, investigating the interaction of nuclear weapon debris with the atmosphere, materials science and vacuum technology.

In the early 1980s, he began a working relationship with the International Atomic Energy Agency, serving as Director of the Atomic and Molecular Data Unit and assumed responsibility for the research program dealing with material properties of fusion reactor plasma facing components.

This particular area of interest was the topic for a seminar which Robert delivered last week as part of his campus visit.

“It’s tremendous to have someone of Robert’s experience working with us in this way,” John said.

“What could take us months to develop, he can do in a much shorter period of time,” he said.

Robert will also be utilising the newly-automated gas feed system to examine the growth of silicon on copper surfaces as part of a wider research program on developing new coatings technology.

It is hoped his visit will also strengthen ties between the department and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

“Individuals sponsored by the IAEA have already trained with us because of our expertise in ion scattering,” John explained.

“Through our work with Robert, we’re hoping to expand on that interaction.”
The Forum
- what’s in a name?

The dilemma of naming the University’s $20 million sports and aquatic centre is symbolic of the difficulties being experienced in juggling its role as the University’s gymnasium with that of commercial fitness centre.

Chairman of the centre’s Board of Directors, Bernie Curran, made light of the debate in his speech at the opening ceremony last month.

"Let me put to one side the original suggestion of NU-FIT...Its early popularity suffered... when a certain Mayor of Lake Macquarie thought it referred to a University bra factory."

But a more serious note crept into the speech as Bernie, a classicist, began to relate the discussions around the original name, the Auchmuty gymnasium, which has been refurbished and retained as a section of the new centre.

The word gymnasium originally referred to a place of education, Bernie said, which reinforced the ideal of James Auchmuty, the University’s foundation vice-chancellor, that the University should be a place for all-round education.

The ancient gymnasium nurtured the ideals of excellence, beauty and nobility of mind, body and soul, ideals central to the ancient Olympics and inspirational to Baron de Coubertin, who resurrected education, Bernie said, which originally referred to a place of self-funding. He says that being “cut loose” from the University provides him with the flexibility to achieve things that are not possible as part of an institution.

The reality of any public facility is that they never recoup their capital cost,” Stuart said. “In the past when this standard of facility has been built they have always run at a substantial loss. But having been given this $20 million building, it is my job to achieve a sustainable level of operation.”

The hardest part of his job will be balancing the demands of what Stuart defines as the five key user groups: staff, students, academic use, high performance athletes and the community.

“We owe each group an obligation of sorts and each has a substantial claim on the facility while having differing needs and requirements,” Stuart said. “The job of myself and the staff is to walk the tightrope between them all to meet their needs. And that means prioritising.”

While students and staff will pay a fee to use the facility, it is discounted and the centre management is working with the University to try and improve access by enabling staff to pay their fees through payroll deductions, for instance.

A decision to limit the number of times when the pool will be closed is another concession to the centre’s campus population. Three lanes will be retained for casual swimming during squad training times.

“We’ll be asking staff what they want and need from the centre,” Stuart said.

Stuart, who holds a degree in Physical Education from the University, sees enormous scope for academic use of the centre, not only in terms of training Physical Development and Health students but also in collaborating with research projects.

“That infrastructure isn’t available at that level anywhere else in the country and it was important in bringing Bill (swim coach Bill Nelson) to us.”

“We have the opportunity to work hands on with a range of professionals in their areas. There are a lot of questions in sport that need answers and we can sit in with research programs.”

A former Newcastle Falcon’s player, Stuart has a 10 year background in sports administration and is enthusiastic about The Forum.

He hopes to promote the centre overseas, seeing it as an obvious candidate to attract athletes looking for training venues in the lead up to the 2000 Olympics.

“The standard of the facility is rare, not only in Australia but worldwide,” he said. “We had representatives from the Dutch paralympic team look over the centre recently and they have no pool of this rank anywhere in their country, even though they are a world ranked swimming nation.”
Stuart worked as manager of Lindgard Sports Medicine Centre before coming to the University and, during his time there, revenue increased six fold over three years.

"Ultimately I will apply the same theory here, only on a bigger scale," Stuart said. "Success is about building strong and effective personal relationships with staff and with clients. It is people that drive business, both at the service and customer end."

His staff at the Forum are "outstanding", Stuart says. "The University sent a clear message when it employed Bill Nelson that we are operating at a high standard. Every person I have offered a job to has accepted without hesitation, they want to come on board."

The centre has employed 20 full time staff in the four months Stuart has been manager and will ultimately employ about 40.

While it seems we can trust the Forum's management and staff to look after our financial interests and our bodies, we might allow Bernie the final word in the debate.

"All of us who are interested in sport know that all the marketing and all the rhetoric will not bring satisfaction or victory. What counts is what happens out in the middle," Bernie, a rugby legend, told an appreciative crowd at the opening.

"We saw that last year in the rugby league grand final and we saw what that did for the Hunter community. We hope that the Forum will be the centre for action, for winners, and that we will become a focus for the community of the Hunter."

Newly appointed swimming coach, Bill Nelson, plans to develop Australia's first university elite swimming program at Newcastle.

"There have been a lot of programs based at universities before but never a situation where the university has employed the coach," Bill said.

With 15 years international experience, including the Barcelona and Atlanta Olympics, Commonwealth games and world championships, Bill is among the elite of world swimming coaches. He has coached a multitude of Australian representatives at world, Olympic and Pan Pacific Games including Daniel Kowalski, Matthew Dunn, Michael Klim and Nicole Stevenson.

His appointment and the University's initiative in establishing an elite training program have received the backing of Australia's head swimming coach, Don Talbot.

"Australian Swimming sees it as a model they can sell to other universities," Bill said. "It's the ideal way to encourage other high performance programs in elite environments and to create well-paid career options for top level coaches."

Bill hopes to build career paths for swimmers and avoid the traditional dilemma faced by promising young swimmers - to choose between their sport and their studies.

"The dropout rate of swimmers is high and the number of hours that go into being an elite athlete don't mix with the number of hours needed to be an elite academic. I want to provide training hours outside of lecture hours so that in 10 years time the University of Newcastle swimmers that are on the national team also graduate well and on time."

Bill has recruited two squads - 18 juniors (11-14 years) and 12 seniors (15 to around 20 years) to train at the Centre pool.

"Only about six of the seniors are at University," Bill said. "My long term goal is to have a 30 person University-based program within five years and to then pass the club (or non-University) work back to the assistant coaches."

The new sports centre was a dream come true for Bill, who always wanted to establish a world-class training facility in his home town of Newcastle. "It is perfect for my needs - the depth and the length (of the pool) are good and the aesthetics are ideal, which is very important to swimmers who are spending four or five hours a day going up and down it. They need to enjoy the environment."

The University offers unique advantages to an elite swimming program, with ready access to a well respected medical school and psychology department.

"I think it's important to be involved in research and the more areas that are able to provide information on athletes, the better the decisions coaches are able to make," Bill said.

While coaching at the Australian Institute of Sport, he worked with Dr Maree Gleeson of Hunter Immunology on a project that tested the immune systems of elite athletes. Bill hopes to continue this association and to combine it with research being done by Dr Tim Roberts into Chronic Fatigue Syndrome.

"These projects are aimed at benefiting swimming nationally. If we can help swimmers at the 2000 Olympics that will be really worthwhile."

And on the subject of the Games, can our new coach send Newcastle swimmers to the Olympics in 2000?

"I'm good at my job but I can't do in two years what Newcastle has been unable to do in 15. There are a couple of swimmers who are good and who will improve but my main focus is in taking the 15 and 16 year olds through their HSC while improving their swimming and get them to University," Bill said.

While he doesn't currently have a swimmer on the national team, Bill is still a member of the national coaching board."I hope to be involved in the national program at all levels in a very short time."
February 27 was a proud day for the President of the Sports Union, John Fryer, whose task it was to invite the University's Chancellor, Ric Charlton, to officially open the sport and aquatic centre.

He stood on a dais specially constructed on scaffolding in the 50 metre heated indoor swimming pool looking out on the stands crowded with dignitaries and spoke about the years of planning and negotiation that had led up to the opening.

"Today is an important occasion in the history of the Sports Union," John began. "It represents the culmination of over 10 years of planning, financial management, cooperation with sporting clubs, negotiations with the University and determination and dedication by many individuals."

The Sports Union's first major indoor facility was constructed in 1974 - the Auchmuty Basketball Hall, which has now been refurbished and integrated into the new complex. It was completely funded by the Sports Union, which took 10 years to finalise the debt.

In 1991 a Project Advisory Committee was formed to plan the development of a major indoor facility and a competition held to select an architect for the project. In 1994, former Vice-Chancellor, Raoul Mortley, announced the University would build a swimming pool and following negotiations between the Sports Union and the University, it was agreed that it would be incorporated in the indoor facility.

John spoke of a spirit of great cooperation between the University Council, the Vice-Chancellor, university officers and the Sports Union. "This spirit was never more evident than when the July 1995 tenders came in $6 million over budget," he said.

The final outcome was a $20 million super centre, with about $5.3 million direct input from the Sports Union (much of it raised through a levy on student members), $5 million on loan to the Sports Union to be repaid to the University and the balance from the University. The cost includes the $3 million Physical Education building.

"Past and present student members of the Sports Union are the real owners of this facility, the company and management are really caretakers of a wonderful asset," John said.

"Chancellor - I believe we have a facility here which links the University, sport and the community in a new and exciting manner," John concluded.

"I invite you to officially open this Sports and Aquatics Centre of the University of Newcastle."

**Boost to Hunter's medical research efforts**

A not-for-profit umbrella organisation has been established in the Hunter to promote medical research.

Hunter Medical Research (HMR) Ltd is a collaborative venture between the University and Hunter Health aimed at establishing the Hunter as an area of excellence in medical research and education.

HMR will provide opportunities for existing research groups to present a unified face to the outside world, Chairman of the Board, Geoffrey Leonard said.

"There was a cooperative with about 90 members established in 1990, but it was only applying for minor infrastructure funding," he said.

"Tim Smyth [former CEO of Hunter Health] suggested it would be better legally and structurally to set up as a company limited by guarantee so a feasibility study was funded to see if such a facility would be supported by local corporations and the community."

When the results of the study were favourable, a business plan and action timeline were developed and HMR was established.

According to Geoff, the quality and significance of the research being conducted in the Hunter is astounding. "We already have a world class medical school at the University, with the curriculum being emulated by the University of Sydney and others," he said.

"When we add a medical research institute to the facilities of the John Hunter Hospital we will be in a position to attract pharmaceutical and biotechnology companies to the Hunter, which could provide a real boost to the local economy. We will also be able to offer our medical graduates jobs in the Hunter rather than seeing them disappear to research laboratories elsewhere."

HMR aims to conduct medical research into the causes, prevention, relief or cure of disease, to disseminate knowledge from medical research to the public and to attract government, community and corporate support.

It will initiate, facilitate, support and promote research into all types of human diseases including cancer, cardiovascular disease, maternal and child health, respiratory disease, bone and joint diseases, mental health and neuroscience.

HMR will operate under the direction of a Board, supported by two major committees, HMR Foundation and HMR Council.

The Foundation will develop a fundraising plan with viable projects and facilitate community support for fundraising endeavours.

The Council will assess applications to HMR and prioritise funding for projects.

"There is a critical shortage of laboratory space available for research at the John Hunter," Geoff said. "Stage One of the HMR plan is to address this shortage by establishing the HMR Institute in the John Hunter grounds and Stage Two aims to double the available space."

Stage One of the Institute will house the Children’s Cancer Research Centre, the Maternal Health Research Centre and the Familial Cancer Testing Centre. Research undertaken will proceed along a development path from basic research through to health care research.

If you would like to know more about HMR, or would like to become a member or make a donation, contact Libby Rodgers-McPhee, HMR Development Office, by telephoning (02) 4921 4841 or email: lrodgers-mcphee@doh.health.nsw.gov.au
Recognition for innovative students

Two University of Newcastle students have been recognised for their innovative contributions to the world of computer science and software engineering.

Mao Huang and Dr Wendy Feng received their awards at the recent Australasian Computer Science Conference in Perth.

Mao’s award was for the best student paper for 1998 while Wendy was presented with the Computer Science PhD Dissertation of the Year award.

Mao’s paper was based on a new animated graphical technique designed to help users navigate the Internet.

The new system draws a ‘map’ of the Internet giving the user a visual representation of where they are, where they’ve been and where they’re going.

It took Mao a number of months to develop the prototype and a few revisions along the way.

“I originally devised it on paper and then took it to the computer and made changes as I went,” he said.

“It’s basically a visualisation tool – a second-generation web navigator, if you like.”

Mao will present his paper in even greater detail at the 7th International World Wide Web conference to be staged in Queensland in April.

Wendy’s award recognised her outstanding postgraduate studies in ‘clustered graph drawing’, a method of automating design work required for visual representations of such things as organisational charts and telephone networks.

Since graduation, she has been working for Tom Sawyer Software, a leading information visualisation and Internet software company located in America’s Silicon Valley.

According to Dr Michael Hannaford of the University’s Department of Computer Science and Software Engineering, the awards were the latest affirmation of the growing recognition of the quality of its course.

“Our postgraduate students, in particular, are winning top jobs in major firms because of the excellence of their work, and because employers know a Newcastle degree gives potential employees a broad range of knowledge and skills,” he said.

University medals updated

The University Medal for outstanding academic achievement has been redesigned to reflect new developments in the logo and corporate identity of the University.

Originally designed for presentation to graduands with outstanding academic records throughout their course of study, the medal was first presented in 1967.

With stocks running low, the need to reforged the medal led the University Secretary and Registrar, Gem Cheong, to take another look at the design.

“The medal design no longer reflected the University’s logo,” Gem explained. “We also needed to design an Exceptional Service Medal.”

The University Council has approved the development of an Exceptional Service Medal for presentation to former staff members or members of the community who have carried out exceptional and sustained contributions toward some area of the University’s activities.

Gem called on Marketing and Media Services and designer, Tim Burns carried out the design work on both the University Medal and the Exceptional Service Medal.

Tim, who began work with the M&MS at the end of last year, is a graduand himself, set to graduate with his Bachelor of Art (Graphic Design) in May this year.

After meeting with Gem, Tim liaised with his former Design lecturer, Nick Eterovic, who advised him on forging and the use of metals and enamels.

“The Vice-Chancellor’s Advisory Group decided that the shape, weight and colour of the University Medal should remain the same to retain integrity and tradition,” Tim said. “So I just updated the type and crest that appear on the medal and drew up specifications for the metal forging company.”

“For the Exceptional Service Medal, I came up with a more aesthetically pleasing shape which incorporates the university blue within the design. It’s great to be designing these ceremonial items that will be a part of the University for a long time before I even graduate,” Tim said.

The Exceptional Service Medal will now become the prototype for all future medals, with Tim’s design lending itself to the use of different coloured enamels that will differentiate different awards while retaining corporate continuity.

If you are interested in having a medal designed for presentation through your Department or Faculty, you should consult with the University Secretary and Registrar.
Social Science student Christine Jennings first became interested in overseas students when she was in high school.

"I became very good friends with a Danish student who was on a year-long exchange program," Christine said. "That got me pretty excited about travelling myself so I decided to go on an exchange through the University. I will finish my course at the University of Tampere in Finland in second semester this year."

Christine's decision to study abroad increased her interest in overseas students at Callaghan. In an effort to become more involved and to learn from them she became a volunteer for the International Students Care Program, a joint initiative of the International Office (IO) and the Family Action Centre (FAC).

"The four days training were really good and gave me a different perspective on what it is like to come here," Christine explained. "Australiaw's bush culture is very different to the cities where most of the students come from."

Christine was linked to Ji-eun Seo, a 20-year-old Arts student on exchange from the Ewha Women's University in Korea.

Ji-eun, who is on a six-month exchange, asked to participate in the program after hearing about it through International House.

"I came here with four others from my University but I was sometimes very lonely." Ji-eun said. "It was helpful to meet Christine because she could be my very close Australian friend and because she is a Newcastle citizen she can introduce me to lots of cultural things. This can be a bit difficult — when I say something it could be a little bit rude because I don't know the nuances."

As well as providing a home base for Ji-eun and advice when needed, Christine tries to see her whenever she is doing something interesting. "I try to refrain from seeing her unless it's to go to the movies or to dinner or the beach or something that will be fun for her," she said.

Both girls cited a trip to Redhead Beach as their most enjoyable outing with the nine mile stretch of sand and a big dumping surf providing a totally new experience for Ji-eun.

Coordinator of the International Students Care Program, Ruth Gresham, said that the FAC had seen the need to care for international students personally while running a short AUSGID program in 1996.

"These students and sometimes their spouses are guest in our country," Ruth said. "We have a responsibility to look after them while they are here and those who have a positive experience act as marketers for the University when they return home."

Volunteers to the program are recruited through advertisements in newspapers and journals but are increasingly hearing about it through word of mouth. Christine's sister has just volunteered to be part of the program, for instance.

The demand for the program is strong from the 1200 international students enrolled at the University, Ruth said.

Evaluation and research on the seven-month old program is expected to be completed by the end of June, when it will be assessed and a decision made on whether it will continue to be funded. For information call Ruth on ext 6841.

Animated exchange

When 22 year old Visual Arts student Leo Martyn applied to complete his studies in Sweden last year, he had no idea that his decision lead to a career niche for him.

Leo originally wanted to go to Germany when he applied through the International Office for an exchange program, hoping to develop his rudimentary German, but was unable to find a course to suit his needs in the German universities who have exchange agreements with the University.

Instead he went to Skopje, a small university in a town of around 30,000 and enrolled in a computer art course.

"I had majored in video at Newcastle and the course was video related involving computer animation and 3D effects," Leo said. "I was interested in Scandinavia and studying in Sweden was easy because they teach in English and almost everyone under 35 is fluent in English.

"The software that I learned to use there is uncommon in Australia and my studies ended up getting me a job here, so it was definitely a good decision."

Leo learned to use the sort of software that produced the tornadoes in the hit movie 'Twister' while in Sweden and is now working in a Sydney production house. "There are only 215 copies of this software in use in Australia and it is very specialised for what it does," he said.

"I love what I'm doing, which includes 3D and other computer effects and animation for television, commercials and corporate videos."

While studying abroad, Leo also spent time backpacking through Europe. He will graduate with his Bachelor of Art (Visual Art) in May.
School restructuring under the spotlight

It might be a long way from Wisconsin, USA, to Newcastle but that doesn't mean the issues are all that different, according to Dr James Ladwig.

James, Senior lecturer from the Faculty of Education, has secured a $1.3million contract to research Queensland's Leading Schools restructuring program - a case of déjà vu for him as he was involved in the same type of research in the US just six years ago.

James was a Research Associate with the Centre on Organisation and Restructuring of Schools at the University of Wisconsin-Madison in the early '90s.

The findings from the Wisconsin restructuring research have been influential in the design of the Queensland program.

The Faculty's Associate Professor Jennifer Gore will work with James on the three-year study in conjunction with researchers from the University of Queensland's Graduate School of Education.

According to James, while there are obvious cultural differences between the two countries, both nations seek the same positive educational outcomes.

"Of course, there are different approaches due to varying socio-economic and other factors but the main aim remains similar," he said.

The research will involve evaluation of the program which is designed to increase flexibility in schools with a major focus on decentralisation.

"The study is designed to examine what aspects of school restructuring contribute to both the overall improvements in student learning outcomes and more equitable student outcomes," James explained.

"The Queensland program is a more curriculum-driven model which allows for a greater emphasis on improved student outcomes and teaching practices and enables equity gaps to be significantly narrowed," he said.

The Leading Schools research contract is the largest research grant ever awarded by Education Queensland and will involve 100 government schools in its first year alone.

Is life a party for young women?

Most of us would assume that stress levels would be highest among older women with more responsibilities and greater demands on their time.

But a recent study conducted by researchers for the Women's Health Australia (WHA) project paints quite a different picture.

The findings show that less than 2% of young Australian women (aged 18-23) are happy with their weight despite 30% being underweight; one-third smoke, while nearly 18% binge drink (five or more drinks) at least once a week.

As well, 40% of young women do little or no exercise, while young women as a whole suffer higher levels of stress than middle-aged or elderly women, with money, employment and study the main sources of stress.

The results come from a survey of about 14,600 women aged between 18 and 23 across Australia as part of the federally-funded research project which aims to track 42,000 women in three age groups (18 to 23, 45 to 50 and 70 to 75) for 20 years to explore how changes in biological, psychological, social and lifestyle factors impact on their physical and emotional health.

According to project manager Dr Wendy Brown, the study shatters the long-held belief that life is a party for young women.

"That age group is a period of great change for many women and that appears to be why the stress levels are so high," she said.

"We are very concerned at the high levels of unhealthy behaviours like smoking, drinking and too little exercise; we have to work much harder to help women make healthier choices," Wendy said.

She said young women's most common method of coping with stress was talking to a friend, although many women also turned to the other behaviours as well as over-eating or dieting.

Almost 60% of the women had dieted to lose weight at some stage in their life, with 15 the average age of first dieting, while only 1.6% were happy with their weight.

Wendy said the women who smoked, drank to excess or engaged in unhealthy eating practices had poorer mental health than other women, although it was yet to be seen if the behaviour caused the poorer mental health or vice versa.

"Because it's a longitudinal study we won't really know the long-term implications of these behaviours for a few years yet but there are clear links between this kind of lifestyle and subsequent problems in later life such as menstural and reproductive problems, osteoporosis and other bone disorders and a higher risk of cardiovascular disease," she said.
A former maintenance worker with no accounting experience has saved the University hundreds of thousands of dollars in international freight costs.

George Florek, 47, who was retrenched when BHP’s maintenance section closed in 1992, discovered discrepancies in invoices and introduced systems to track accounts that have resulted in savings of more than $180,000.

Employed by the International Office (IO) as a part-time freight clerk in 1996, George noticed some anomalies when comparing the accounts of two freight companies who were delivering IO promotional materials to exhibitions and agents around the world.

“We were regularly using two suppliers and when I looked at both bills it seemed that one was too much so I checked the original contract and saw they weren’t charging at the contract rate,” he said.

George approached the supplier and after protracted discussion, much of which he initiated and pursued independently, was successful in negotiating a substantial reimbursement of amounts that were overcharged.

“They tried everything to blame us for overcharging but I wasn’t wearing it,” George said. “When they began to make us offers I thought that’s not enough and I kept negotiating on my own. They kept increasing the offer and I even got to the stage of bluffing them, threatening to involve the Department of Fair Trading, before they offered an amount that I thought was fair.”

Not content with pursuing amounts overcharged in the past by suppliers, George began to negotiate for better deals with the IO’s other freight suppliers and developed a spreadsheet database for tracking expenditure.

“It took me a while to learn the tricks of the trade but it was satisfying to be able to look after the freight accounts.”

IO sends several tonnes of brochures, prospectuses and other literature to its agents around the world, as well as into other universities and to exhibitions and fairs. In 1996, they spent $301,000 on international freight. To send around the same amount (15,000 kgs) of freight in 1997, when George had shopped around for the best prices, cost $166,000. The savings were made by negotiating new prices and are ongoing.

He is modest about his achievements. “Even at home I like to do things right and when I buy things I like to bargain - I’m a good negotiator.”

Examining health issues for transient groups in rural areas

The two-day, Commonwealth-funded event was attended by health professionals, peak service providers and representatives from a range of government bodies and ethnic and cultural groups throughout Australia.

It was organised by the National Dissemination Program (NDP), an initiative of the University’s Family Action Centre, which has been working to highlight health and social issues affecting caravan park populations and more recently extended its work to transient rural groups.

According to NDP project co-ordinator Gus Eddy, the think tank was the culmination of a series of focus groups staged in four states last year to address the issues surrounding transience.

According to Gus, transient Australians have long suffered from a dislocation from health services as well as the stigma attached to their circumstances.

“There are many Australians living transient lifestyles – casual labourers, retirees, fruit pickers, mining and construction workers, teachers and the like,” she explained.

“We need to do away with the negative connotations attached to transient groups; it’s particularly important that we understand that they have needs which must be met just like the rest of us.”

Issues of restricted access to services and continuity of care for transient groups were worsened by a lack of staff and resources, Gus said.

“There is insufficient funding to staff and resource services in rural areas for people who don’t travel around, let alone for transient groups,” she said.

The think tank examined a range of topics relating to health issues for transient rural groups and developed draft recommendations to be submitted to key State and Federal Government decision makers.

“One of our main objectives will be to see the introduction of training, education and support programs for rural health and allied service providers who deal with transient groups on a regular basis,” Gus said.

“By giving support to these providers we can, in turn, hope to support people whose work or lifestyle is transient in mode.”
The title of this book suggests that it focuses on the options available to universities to survive and contribute to society. What it offers instead is a very modern history of the factors which have impacted on the activities of Australian universities. Given that it doesn’t discuss strategic options for dealing with the significant changes currently confronting universities, it is difficult to determine to whom the book is actually relevant. University administrators and academics are familiar with the issues and while the book may serve as an historical reference, it will hardly add to their knowledge or kit of options for addressing current challenges.

No one familiar with the university sector would deny that “universities do have an important future. It is a future which depends on their ability to make a range of fundamental changes to the way they go about their teaching and research activities, as well as how they manage and present themselves” (p.6). On the Brink however, simply fails to address how universities might actually evolve or respond as organisations. While it does outline existing options in areas relating to teaching activities and the structure of employment conditions, the guidance and even speculated debate on how events may evolve is sadly missing.

The book provides a well researched overview of the current factors influencing the development of universities, outlining the key issues and placing them in historical context. An analysis of the economic role that universities play in Australia, their contribution to commercial research, employment, GDP and local communities, would have reinforced the need for a book which considers how universities can continue to make such contributions in a period of significant funding uncertainty. A more systematic comparison with other countries would have helped to place the discussion in a more global context. Some of the thorny issues which have been debated for many years within the sector are highlighted in the book. For example, the problems in rewarding “good” teachers who do not follow a mainstream research path are outlined. But, like most of the discussion in the book, there is no reference to the research literature and the authors fail to present any solutions to such issues.

On the Brink will perhaps prove to have some historical relevance or serve as a very solid reference book for those currently engaged in the management of universities, but direction and assistance with strategic responses to the growing “uncertainties” facing university managers will need to be sought in other quarters.

Professor Scott Holmes
Head – Graduate School of Business

Professor John Ramsland came across an abundance of fascinating stories while he was researching his book, With Just But Relentless Discipline, A Social History of Corrective Services in New South Wales.

Like the story of Aboriginal outlaw Jimmy Governor who covered over 2000 kilometres around the rugged Liverpool Ranges while on the run from police, or of the notorious Blue Mountains murderer, Frank Butler, said to be responsible for the deaths of more than 40 people, who was apprehended by NSW police as he stepped from a sailing ship in San Francisco after assuming the identity of a sea captain he had killed.

Or the story of the lost button, about a prisoner in Goulburn Gaol at the turn of the century who invented a game to maintain his sanity while serving time as punishment in a “dark cell”. A tale of the effects of confinement on an imagination fed on bread and water, The Lost Button was told many times by prisoners and warders throughout the NSW prison system for the first 50 years of this century and was thought by many to be true.

It was, however, a fictional short story written by James Dwyer, based on his experiences as an inmate of Goulburn Gaol in 1900. The Lost Button was published in the Bulletin magazine on the day of Dwyer’s release from prison and was subsequently published widely outside Australia.

Commissioned by the Department of Corrective Services to create the book, John was given complete freedom and access to archives including post 1924 material. “It was totally overwhelming,” he said. “All of the records since the first county jails were established in 1797 have been kept for legal reasons. There is a warehouse full just at Long Bay.”

While the official records provided him with details of the daily routines of prison life and records of hangings and punishments, John said it was the unofficial anecdotes and memoirs that provided him with the sort of detail that brings the book to life. “There are hundreds of individual stories – tales of vengeance, betrayal, loneliness, obsession and fear; of living on the margin; of human weakness and lack of will and of redemption, success and achievement in the most difficult circumstances and against the odds.”

Using sources including diaries, letters and contemporary newspaper features, John has recreated the daily life of prisoners and warders. He examines the history of criminal behaviour in the state and the largely forgotten crimes including the bushranger menace, the larrikin pushes and the underworld matriarchs of depression-era Sydney.

With Just But Relentless Discipline was published by Kangaroo Press in November 1996.
May 1998 Graduation Ceremonies

Dates and times for May Graduation Ceremonies have been finalised. Ceremonies will take place as detailed below at both the Callaghan Campus and Central Coast Campus.

For enquiries about the Graduation Ceremonies at Callaghan please contact Joanne Beveridge or Robert Milan in Examinations and Graduation on ext 6490 or 6356.

For enquiries about the Graduation Ceremony at the Central Coast please contact Karynlee Mossman in Student Administration on ext 4047.

Callaghan Campus

Great Hall

Friday 1 May

10.30 am
Science and Mathematics
Arts and Social Science
BA (Communication Studies)
BA (Psychology)

2.30 pm
Arts and Social Science - all awards except
BA (Communication Studies)
BA (Psychology)

Thursday 7 May

10.30 am
Art and Design
Education
BEd (Art)
BEd (Design and Technology)
BEd (English/History)
BEd (Languages/Asian Studies)
BEd (Mathematics)
BEd (Music)
BEd (Physical and Health Education)
BEd (Science)
BEd (Social Sciences)
DipEd(Secondary)

2.30 pm
Education - all awards except
BEd (Art)
BEd (Design and Technology)
BEd (English/History)
BEd (Languages/Asian Studies)
BEd (Mathematics)
BEd (Music)
BEd (Physical and Health Education)
BEd (Science)
BEd (Social Sciences)
DipEd(Secondary)

Central Coast Campus

The Quadrangle

in front of the Information Resource Centre

Friday 15 May

10.00 am
Arts and Social Science
Economics and Commerce
Education
Nursing
(other Faculties may be added)

Location of Used Clothing Bins on Campus

On March 9, two used clothing bins will be established on campus. If you wish to dispose of clothing, blankets, etc, these can be deposited in the bins at any time. The bins are situated:

1. Hunter Lane: near the Faith Centre, which is adjacent to the Griffith Duncan Theatre, Hunter Building.
2. Carpark S: next to the University Union-Shortland building, beside the crossing, at the start of the footpath to the Hunter side of the campus.

Classes

For Sale

Treadmill or walking machine
AP Sport brand, near new. Only $80
Telephone: Vannak 4921 6000 or 4969 9327

Item available for tender:


Ford Festiva, Red, 91 model, A1 condition, garaged, new tyres, 11 months rego, plus extras. $7700
ono. Call Kristie Geddes on 4963 6838 or 0416109167

 Wanted

If anyone has in their possession a book titled "Federal Directory of Newcastle and District, 1901", could they contact Ros on ext. 6304 during business hours. Please telephone Karen on extension 6225 or 02 49 526007 (ah)

Large Internal Envelopes. Would you like to help our students obtain graduate and vacation employment? Careeers and Student Employment are after LARGE internal envelopes so we can distribute our notices around the campus. If you have a stash of these elusive items please call on 5588 and we will take them off your hands. Thank you very much for your generosity.

 Convocation News

The Sydney Chapter of Convocation is delighted to invite you to attend a cocktail party to welcome new graduates to the Chapter. These Sydney-based graduates would particularly love to see the familiar faces of their lecturers and staff from the Uni at this event or at one later in the year.

6.00pm - 9.00pm Friday March 27, 1998

The Terrace

Australian Museum
Cost $20.00 per head
RSVP before March 20 to Alison Kinder or Sue James by phone 6459, Fax 8730 or email convocation@newcastle.edu.au.

For Sale by Tender 02/98

The Central Animal House has the following item available for sale by tender:

Item 1: 1 x Computer, Moebius KTX, 120MB HDD, FDD, 20MB RAM, mouse, keyboard and monitor in good working condition.

For further information please contact Robyn Centre or Melissa Taylor on XT6220.

The Department of Social Work has the following items available for sale by tender:

Item 2: 1 x Computer, Axis 486DX2-66Mhz 256K cache serial number 00463-02

Item 3: 1 x Symantec Q & A Easy-to-use database and word processor version 4 for windows 3.1

For more information or inspection please contact Jo Gaha on XT5492.

Electrical Engineering has available for sale by tender:

Item 4: Fax machine, Canon model B200 bubblejet

For more information please contact Mr Fred Martinez on XT6149

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

Tenders close on Friday, 3rd April 1998, at 3.30pm, and should be forwarded in a sealed envelope to:

The Manager, Purchasing Department, The University of Newcastle, Callaghan 2308, and clearly marked "Tender 02/98"

Please quote item number on your tender.

R. Richardson, Manager, Purchasing Department, University of Newcastle.

RW 149 Lecture Theatre

The lecture theatre in the Richardson Wing is ready for use.

The theatre has had a major audiovisual equipment installation including a public address system, audio recording/replay facilities and auditory loops for the hearing impaired. It also has high brightness video/data projector for the projection of images from the multi-standard VHS video player, the video disc player or the IBM compatible computer which are permanently installed.

MACs can be carried in and plugged into the data projector.

The equipment is controlled from a "user friendly" LCD touch screen using the latest I presentation technology from AMX.

A user guide has been developed and is available from C&TS.

For further information contact Doug Kaiser on 5941 or the C&TS technical staff on 6699 or 6697.

For Sale

Treadmill or walking machine
AP Sport brand, near new. Only $80
Telephone: Vannak 4921 6000 or 4969 9327

Item available for tender:


Ford Festiva, Red, 91 model, A1 condition, garaged, new tyres, 11 months rego, plus extras. $7700
ono. Call Kristie Geddes on 4963 6838 or 0416109167

 Wanted

If anyone has in their possession a book titled "Federal Directory of Newcastle and District, 1901", could they contact Ros on ext. 6304 during business hours. Please telephone Karen on extension 6225 or 02 49 526007 (ah)

Large Internal Envelopes. Would you like to help our students obtain graduate and vacation employment? Careers and Student Employment are after LARGE internal envelopes so we can distribute our notices around the campus. If you have a stash of these elusive items please call on 5588 and we will take them off your hands. Thank you very much for your generosity.

 Convocation News

The Sydney Chapter of Convocation is delighted to invite you to attend a cocktail party to welcome new graduates to the Chapter. These Sydney-based graduates would particularly love to see the familiar faces of their lecturers and staff from the Uni at this event or at one later in the year.

6.00pm - 9.00pm Friday March 27, 1998

The Terrace

Australian Museum
Cost $20.00 per head
RSVP before March 20 to Alison Kinder or Sue James by phone 6459, Fax 8730 or email convocation@newcastle.edu.au.

For Sale by Tender 02/98

The Central Animal House has the following item available for sale by tender:

Item 1: 1 x Computer, Moebius KTX, 120MB HDD, FDD, 20MB RAM, mouse, keyboard and monitor in good working condition.

For further information please contact Robyn Centre or Melissa Taylor on XT6220.

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Item 3: 1 x Symantec Q & A Easy-to-use database and word processor version 4 for windows 3.1

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R. Richardson, Manager, Purchasing Department, University of Newcastle.

Location of Used Clothing Bins on Campus

On March 9, two used clothing bins will be established on campus. If you wish to dispose of clothing, blankets, etc, these can be deposited in the bins at any time. The bins are situated:

1. Hunter Lane: near the Faith Centre, which is adjacent to the Griffith Duncan Theatre, Hunter Building.
2. Carpark S: next to the University Union-Shortland building, beside the crossing, at the start of the footpath to the Hunter side of the campus.

Classes

For Sale

Treadmill or walking machine
AP Sport brand, near new. Only $80
Telephone: Vannak 4921 6000 or 4969 9327

Item available for tender:


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1998 Conservatorium Concert Program

MARCH 1998

Evening Concert - Musica Viva
- Concert - Brodsky
Quartet
Three of Shostakovich's Quartets
Friday 20th 8.00pm
Opus 101 (1956)
Opus 118 (1964)
Opus 142 (1973)

Sustainable Energy and Industry Conference and Exhibition

Thursday 26th 1.10pm
Featuring the University Conservatorium Collection of Baroque Brass.
Composers - Clarke, Purcell, C P E Bach, Beethoven
Robin Fischle - Natural Horn
John Kellow - Natural Trumpet
Baroque Trumpet Ensemble
Brass Ensemble
Tickets Adults $5.00
Concession $4.00 Child $3.00

Further Information, please contact:
Mr Guo
Further Details please contact:
Sustainable Energy and Industry Conference and Exhibition
Qingdao (266071), P.R. China
Telephone: (02) 926119300 r (008) 025712, Facsimile: (07) 3369 1512
Email: apc@cheque.uq.edu.au
WWW:http://www.uq.edu.au/apc/

For a full listing or further information, please contact:
Philip Sketchley
Hall and Concert Manager
The University of Newcastle,
Conservatorium of Music
Auckland St, Newcastle 2300
(02) 4929 4133

Learning and Development Training Programs

Course Title | Dates | Cost | Duration
--- | --- | --- | ---
Access 2.0 | Module 2 | 25 March | $10 | 1 day
Access 97 | Module 1 | 3 April | $20 | 3 hours
| Module 1 | 20 April | $20 | 3 hours
| Module 2 | 3 April | $20 | 3 hours
| Module 2 | 20 April | $20 | 3 hours
| Module 3 | 27 March | $20 | 3 hours
| Module 4 | 27 March | $20 | 3 hours
Excel 5.0 | Module 1 | 24 April | $10 | 3 hours
| Module 1 | 29 April | $10 | 1 day
Excel 97 | Module 1 | 17 April | $20 | 3 hours
| Module 2 | 17 April | $20 | 3 hours
Web Publishing | Module 1 | 28 April | $10 | 1 day
| Images & Tables | 26 March | $25 | 3 hours
| Search Engines | 26 March | $25 | 3 hours
Windows 3.1 | 26 March | $10 | 1 day
Windows 95 | 7 April | $20 | 1 day
| 27 April | $20 | 1 day
Word 6.0 | Module 3 | 25 March | $50 | 1 day
| Module 1 | 27 April | $10 | 1 day
Word 97 | Getting Started | 9 April | $20 | 1 day
| And We Created | 9 April | $20 | 1 day
| Merging | 30 April | $20 | 1 day
| Tables | 30 April | $20 | 1 day
WordPerfect 6.1 | Module 2 | 27 March | $10 | 1 day

To book, please call Tanya Madsen on extension 8634.

Effective business writing: Reports, letters and memos.
Friday, 24th April (first session) Friday, 1st May (second session)
2:00pm to 5:00pm
The workshops will be led by Dr Anita van der Wal and Dr Christo Moskovski, of the Learning and Development Program, IESD.

Fast-tracking your clerical/administration qualifications using recognition of prior learning
Wednesday, 29th April 10:00am to 1:00pm
For more information contact Bob Wiltshire, Learning and Development Program, IESD on ext 6570.
Registrations: Tanya Madsen on ext. 8634.

The 2-Day Symposium on Teaching and Learning
The Place of Core Skills and Graduate Outcomes at the University of Newcastle: Enhanced Adaptability, Flexibility and Employability?
The University's strategic plan has as a goal: "Develop graduates whose knowledge, skills, abilities and attitudes are highly valued in the workplace and broader community."
This symposium will provide an opportunity for staff and students of the University to explore ways of advancing this goal in 1998. It will also provide a showcase of innovative staff initiatives. An issues paper will be circulated prior to the symposium to stimulate thinking about the issues.
Date: 16th and 17th April
For more information contact: Jim Cleary, ext 5856.

Music Appreciation and The Music Lovers Club 1998 Programs

For information and a copy of the above programs phone Barbara Manthorpe 4969 5126 or David Barker 4968 1637.

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Conferences and/or Prizes/Awards

Twelfth International Conference on Higher Education (ICHE)

Demand and Supply of Higher Education in a Market Economy
Sunday 23 - Tuesday 25 August 1998
Venue Ocean University of Qingdao P.R. China
Further Information
Contact Address
Ms. GwendOLIHANG (M.A.)
College of Foreign Languages
Ocean university of Qingdao (Maidao Campus)
23, East Hongqiong Road
Qingdao 266071), P.R. China
Tel: +61 352 5882365, Fax: +61 35 2032805

Education '98
Industry Practitioners Forum
17-19 March 1998 Sydney
http://www.isg.com.au

2nd Asia Pacific Conference on Sustainable Energy and Environmental Technology
14-17 June 1998
ANA Hotel, Gold Coast, Australia
Further Details please contact:
Intermedia Convention and Event Management Pty Ltd
PO Box 1280 (Unit 11, 97 Castlemaine Street)
MILTON QLD 4064 AUSTRALIA
Telephone: (07) 3369 0477
Facsimile: (07) 3369 1512
Email: apc@cheque.uq.edu.au
WWW:http://www.uq.edu.au/apc/

AUSTRALIAN PRESS COUNCIL'S 1997-8 Annual Prize
The Australian Press Council has announced the terms of entry for its 1997-98 award. The Prize is awarded for the best essay submitted on a set topic. In 1997-98, the topic is:
"Discuss the responsibility of the press in keeping the public informed while, at the same time, respecting the privacy and sensibilities of individuals. Entries are invited in two categories: (1) Tertiary students (as at 30 June 1998), who will have a 2,500 word limit; and (2) Secondary students (as at 30 June 1998), with a 1,500 word limit. The final date for receipt of submissions is 30 June 1998. Inquiries and further details: The Executive Secretary, The Australian press Council, 303/149 Castlereagh Street, Sydney 2000 Tel: (02) 9261 1930 or (008) 025712, Fax: (02) 9267 6826 and Email: press@fii.net.au
Local industry will benefit from the Department of Mechanical Engineering’s recent purchase of a $160,000 laser microscope.

The Laser Scanning Confocal Microscope (LSCM) can produce three-dimensional images and will enable the University to offer specialised engineering services to industry.

Laser scanning microscopes have traditionally been used in the biomedical field for fluorescing DNA gels, detecting cancer, imaging skin lesions and forming intricate images of mosquitoes and other insects.

As well, they have been used in forensic science for detecting fingerprints and counterfeit bank notes.

William McMillan, head of the Quantitative Microscopy Laboratory, said the microscope had many other uses.

"For example, I’ve been working with Broadmeadow engineering firm A.Goninan & Co to gain a profile of how glass fibre materials used in the production process are wearing. From there, we might be able to slow the wearing process, and extend their life," he said.

As well as looking at wear surfaces, other important areas for materials science include imaging paper fibres and coatings, studying corrosion products on surfaces, examining micro-machined parts, and imaging electronic circuit components such as silicon chips.

The Australian Research Council provided the bulk of the funds for the purchase, and industry partners like Pacific Power, the Cooperative Research Centre for Advanced Composite Structures, Key Centre for Bulk Solids and Particulate Technologies and Centre for Multiphase Processes also lent their financial support.

According to Vice-Chancellor Professor Roger Holmes, this acquisition recognises the importance of such technology and reflects the close working relationship the University and its departments have developed with local industry.

“We are not only offering relevant research partnerships, but equipment such as this also allows our students access to the latest technology so that when they graduate, they are more highly skilled – and with improved employment prospects,” he said.

• The undergraduate major of Hotel Management and Tourism is being offered this year at the Central Coast Campus as part of the Bachelor of Business degree. This sought-after discipline complements the other hospitality course offerings available at Ourimbah including the one-year, part-time Graduate Certificate in Hotel Management designed for graduates and those already working in the industry.

• The results of a study by the University’s Employment Studies Centre on female employment patterns in the Hunter were released at a workshop on March 7 at Rutherford. Convened by Pro Vice-Chancellor (External Relations) Jenny Graham, the “Putting Gender on the Agenda” workshop, was organised by the Regional Chamber Women’s Forum and focussed on the employment prospects and promotion opportunities for Hunter women living and working in rural areas. Associate Professor Roy Green and Dr Glenda Strachan from the Employment Studies Centre presented the findings.

• The Asian financial crisis hasn’t dented enrolments of overseas graduate management students, with the Graduate School of Business (GSB) 1998 intake its biggest ever. “We have maintained our enrolments from overseas with some forty students from Chile, Indonesia, Thailand, Singapore, Hong Kong, Vietnam and Taiwan,” Head of the GSB Scott Holmes said. “In addition, we have new students from India, Pakistan, Africa, Scandinavia and the United States.”

• University drama and music students took part in a unique performance event staged in King Edward Park this month. The play Elektra, based on an ancient Greek drama, was directed by Associate Professor Michael Ewans and starred actress Alida Vanin. Students from the Department of Drama played other roles, while music students wrote and performed the score.

• Three University members have obtained 1998 National Teaching Development Grants. They are Associate Professor Robert Conway for his project titled Mainstreaming Special Education: including all faculty staff in a compulsory undergraduate subject; Peter Summons for Automated Assessment and Marketing Management Package; and Dr Mary-Anne Williams for A Web Based Tutoring System for Teaching and Learning intelligent information modelling and management.

• Professor Scott Sloan and Associate Professor Richard Middleton from the Faculty of Engineering have been appointed to the Engineering, Earth and Applied Sciences Discipline Panel and Associate Professor Hilary Winchester (Faculty of Arts and Social Science) has been appointed to the Social Sciences and Humanities Discipline Panel of the Australian Research Council.