V-C in Favour of Amalgamation

The Vice-Chancellor, Professor Keith Morgan, will recommend to the Council of the University on April 22 that he initiate discussions concerning the amalgamation of the Hunter Institute of Higher Education with the University.

Professor Morgan, speaking to the News on April 15, said: "It is my judgement that the weight of advantage is now clearly in favour of the amalgamation of the Institute with the University."

He said he would propose to the Council that discussions be held with the Institute and the appropriate Commonwealth and State authorities.

The Vice-Chancellor referred to the Federal Government's Green Paper on Higher Education and said that implicit in the discussion in the paper about consolidation of institutions was the possibility of amalgamation of the Institute with the University.

He said that an earlier proposal to amalgamate on grounds of savings in operating costs had been properly resisted, largely on grounds of inadequate safeguards for academic standards and status.

However, the Commonwealth Government's objective of creating a unified national system of higher education, which abolishes the binary system, made it inevitable that a proposal to amalgamate the two institutions had now to be considered in a new context.

There now existed a potential for overall gain for both institutions on their amalgamation of their administrations, student services, facilities and resources.

Professor Morgan said the advantages of a consolidated institution would benefit:

students — with a wider range of educational opportunities;

staff — through expansion of career prospects and more flexibility in teaching and research programmes;

the institution — through greater scope to develop research infrastructure, and to benefit from economies of scale; and for

the community — through the expansion and strengthening of academic programmes and more effective implementation of community services.

Professor Morgan said a precondition for amalgamation had to be that the outcome must provide an appropriate structure within which the excellence of the University and its reputation would be assured.

Upgrading of the News

University News is to change its format, appearance and purpose from the first issue of Second Term.

It will become a monthly magazine reporting on the variety and excellence of University activities.

More attention will be given to reports on research and on academic and student pursuits.

One aim is to enhance University News' reputation, appeal and support within the University.

Another aim is to extend readership outside the University so that the community is better informed about our activities.

University News will aim at providing more interesting and meaningful articles than was possible in the tight publishing schedule of the past. (An issue every fortnight left little time for researching articles and planning).

A Campus Bulletin will be published twice a month to inform staff and students of campus activities, diary events, domestic administrative matters and print Letters to the Editor. The first issue will appear on campus in a few days.

The changes are part of a programme which is still developing to improve the quality and purpose of University publications.

18 Weeks to UNIVISIT '88 (Bicentennial Open Days)
JOINS ARC COMMITTEE

A UN Professor has accepted an invitation to be a member of an expert committee of the Australian Research Council and has attended his first meeting.

Professor of Geology, Professor Ian Plimer, attended a meeting of the Committee of the Engineering, Applied and Earth Sciences Division of the ARC in Canberra on March 22.

The ARC, still not officially in place, succeeds the Australian Research Grants Committee following a restructuring of the administration of Commonwealth research funding and activities.

The former Chairman of the ARGS, Professor Don Aitkin, is the Interim Chairman of the ARC, which has four divisions specializing in Engineering, Applied and Earth Sciences; the Humanities; the Life Sciences; and the Physical Sciences.

Professor Plimer said the committee of which he was a member was responsible for the formulation of policy on national research priorities and effort, the assessment of national interest grant applications, ARC and Queen Elizabeth II Fellowships, the formulation of policy on institution, discipline and post-graduate funding mechanisms, and the assessment, interviewing, ranking and recommendation of ARC grant applications (i.e. duties formerly carried out by ARGS committees).

He said he welcomed the appointment because the University would 'have an ear' in the Government's policy-making on research. Nonetheless it would entail a lot of work for him with the committee sitting in every university across the nation and holding further meetings in Canberra.

NEXT LUNCH WITH A WRITER

The Friends of The University, in conjunction with The Newcastle Herald, will hold a Lunch with a Writer at Newcastle Beach International (formerly Settlers) on April 27 at 12.15 pm.

The speaker will be Gabrielle Lord, who grew up in Sydney and gained an honours degree in English Literature and Language in 1974.

Her first novels, Fortress and Tooth and Claw, were based on her country-life experiences as the wife of a school teacher and a market gardener in St. Albans. Jumbo, published in 1986, is set in the Western Suburbs of Sydney, where she worked as a Commonwealth Employment Officer.

For the last two years, writing for television has been her main occupation. She hopes that her current project, The Last Resort, a drama for ABC television, will be screened this year.

She lists cats, pot plants, Bach and Mozart among her interests.

Tickets cost $16 and are available from Hunter Street Books, or from Marie Tietze, (63) 2774) or Eileen Bilbie (29 2674).

RECEPTION

The Friends of the University will hold a reception in the Common Room of the University Union at 5.30 pm on Friday, April 22, to farewell The Friends Patron and former Chancellor of the University of Newcastle, Sir Bede Callaghan, CBE, and welcome the incoming Chancellor, the Honourable Justice Elizabeth Evatt, AO.
Statistics in medicine and industry

Two overseas academics who are visiting the university have joined forces to apply statistics to analysing data on hospital administration costs.

The two researchers say they are trying to develop an overlap between the two areas which the Department of Statistics has as its main interests: biostatistics, which is the application of statistics to medical and health problems, and industrial statistics, which ranges from theoretical model building to quality improvement on the shop floor.

Professors Duane Meeter, of Florida State University, Tallahassee, Florida and David Matthews, of the University of Waterloo, Ontario, Canada, say the analysis should reveal worthwhile clues about the differences in costs between hospital regions, hospitals in regions and departments in hospitals, thus increasing efficiency in the public health system.

The visiting statisticians are collaborating on the project to assist the Hunter Health Statistics Unit, which is headed by Assoc. Professor Bob Gibberd, a staff member of the Department of Statistics.

Within the Department of Statistics, Professor Meeter, who is Director of the Statistical Consulting Centre at Florida State University, is partnering Dr Dennis Sinclair in the area of Industrial Quality Improvement.

Professor Matthews, both an exchange staff member in Mathematics and a Visiting Lecturer in Statistics, is an Assoc. Professor in the Department of Statistics and Actuarial Science at the University of Waterloo.

Professor Meeter's research interests are quality control and statistics in ecology, while Professor Matthews is interested in biostatistics and industrial statistics.

Mrs Meeter has taken leave from the Public Service Commission in Florida, which employs her as a supervisor. The Meeters will be here until early May.

Professor Matthews, his wife Nancy and their son Lukas (2) will be residents of Newcastle until the middle of July.

The Ellen Rose Award provides the winner with $500 and was established in honour of WEL member, Ellen Rose, who was tragically killed in a car accident in 1986.

A wife, and mother of two, Ellen returned to studies, after her children started school, qualifying for entry to University as a mature-age student after having completed the Open Foundation Course. She trained as a teacher and later taught as a special education teacher at a local primary school.

After Ellen's sudden death, the WEL Committee decided to offer such an award.

Ms Leslie Phillips

An Arts 1 student who studied as an Open Foundation student last year has won Newcastle Women's Electoral Lobby's 1988 Ellen Rose Award.

Ms Lesley Phillips, of Jesmond, is a single mother who has an ambition to become a psychologist. She left school at fifteen and worked in unskilled jobs in her home country, Scotland. She has had difficulty finding work since she arrived in Australia.
Inaugural Lecture — Allan Ward

There would always be a community demand for history because of the fundamental search for meaning and purpose — the need to make sense of it all, Professor Alan Ward said when he delivered his inaugural lecture at the University on March 23.

In an increasingly aware community, that demand would grow, as History has been growing in the University by 10 per cent a year. "If no artificial constraints are put in the way — reintroduction of fees or staff ceilings — there is potentially no limit to our growth. Moreover the forces of history at work in our region, especially those concerning race relations, are such that no government can afford an ill-informed community, unprepared to wrestle with tough choices," he said.

Professor Ward, who took office as Professor of History last year, spoke on History, Ties and Mythology — the Historian and the Community. This is an edited report.

What has gone wrong with the Humanities in Western universities is argued by the retiring Professor of Philosophy at Chicago, Professor Allan Bloom, in an important new book, The Closing of the American Mind. Bloom's thesis is that education has aimed so much at developing openness to, and acceptance of, other cultures, and of all minorities, that it has bred students who are so open, so accepting that they are unable to evaluate, to make difficult choices and judgements so, paradoxically, their minds have closed. His argument is that there should be a return to the scholarly practices of the Greeks, who did not make a sharp distinction between fact and value. He wants, like them, to keep to the fore the questions, 'What is a good society? What makes for the good in terms of human potential, over and above the myriad of particular, competing goods?' He wants people to wrestle with tough options, and steer between the nihilism of an all-embracing relativism, and mindless 'commitment' unsupported by reason.

I believe he is largely right. The liberals of West European democracies have been notoriously slow to apprehend and to confront brutal realities; they leave difficult choices until too late, or plump rather inexpertly for one side or another without much real understanding. The notorious dilletantism of Oxbridge youth in the '30s in the face of rising dictatorship, or the foolishly quirky commitment of some to Stalinist communism and a lifetime of treachery, illustrate the two poles of Bloom's concern.

The story now being told by younger historians of different social origin, like Richard Broome, is a story of horror anything but comforting to the white liberal imagination. To quote one example, very close to home, Broome cites the Reverend Thrilefeld of Lake Macquarie mission who in 1825 wrote in his journal that he had been tormented 'at night by the shrieks of [aboriginal] girls, about 8 and 9 years of age, taken by force by the vile men of Newcastle, and of a man who came with his head broken by the blow of a musket butt because he would not give up his wife'.

Indeed the tendency of white liberals to launch into excesses of breastbeating and contempt for their whole tradition can be as facile as their former complacency. Because, Evelyn Waugh pointed out in the 1930s in his novel of that name, there is 'black mischief' as well as white mischief, as Fiji showed last year. Europeans too are entitled to seek for the values and institutions which promote liberty and dignity.

The history of the Pacific region, indeed, faces us with some of those very large, ultimately philosophical issues that Professor Bloom believes we are ill-equipped to deal with. The problem was well-expressed by a young Maori woman, another of the well-educated, highly-articulate members of elite families, leading radical protest various parts of the region. At a conference at Auckland University, when the question came up of the civil rights of non-Melanians born in New Caledonia, in a future Melanesia-state of Kanaky, she said: 'You can have a litter of kittens born in a banana box, but that doesn't make them into bananas'.

But let us return to our historians and Bernard Smith's defence of history as telling the truth about the past. There is another difficulty that we have noted in passing. For many decades a rather laundered view of Aboriginal-settler relations appeared in the works of professional historians — a view which minimised white violence and put most blame for the apparent Aboriginal demise on the Aborigines' ineptitude. Aborigines reading those accounts would say that they were all lies — that the truth was something like a settler-inspired genocide.

Napoleon reflecting gloomily on how the history of the Empire would be written after
Waterloo is credited with the statement that History is the 'lies written by the victors', and here is a reputable school of thought which stresses the relationship of historical writing to the dominant power culture.

Historians, and most scholars and artists perhaps, need to find their key points of reference not within their academic or artistic sub-cultures but within the wider community and to its concerns. Those concerns are not just about the subject-matter of history, I suggest, but relate to Professor Bloom's demand that the Humanities get away from cultural relativism and make informed valuations; to Smith's concern for some kind of truth - at least more ultimate than that which preceded it. Professor Manning Clark can pack the lecture halls because, apart from the intrinsic interest of his subject and the attractiveness of his presentation, he is prepared, on the basis of a very firm framework of evaluation, to say, in effect, 'That is what it all adds up to', 'That is what it means'.

I am not saying that finding a reference point in the community's needs is to succumb to parochialism, to let the local community write the entire agenda, let alone dictate the conclusions. On the contrary, the professional historian's task like that of any other scholar, is to widen horizons, not lower his own.

But the beauty of history is that the local and particular so readily relate to the gamut of human experience. So the relations between indigenous peoples and settlers, between landlords and tenants, victors and masters, capital and labour in the Hunter Valley or in a Pacific island, as well as having intrinsic local worth, can illuminate the larger questions of race and class, of power and status, which are the concerns of all humankind.

Manager appointed

A former Station Manager with the North Coast radio station, 2NCR, has been appointed Manager of the University's radio station, 2NUR-FM.

A Bachelor of Business in Accounting and Administration from Northern Rivers College of Advanced Education, Mr Brett Gleeson has had more than eight years' experience as a broadcaster, including four and a half years in station management.

Since May, 1987, Mr Gleeson has been Manager of the Arts Media Centre at Northern Rivers CAE

EXPO 88

About one million visitors are expected to see the first university pavilion at a world exposition — the UNlvations exhibit at World Expo 88 in Brisbane from April 30 to October 30 this year.

UNlvations, a celebration of university research and its significance to the wider community, will be a major attraction at Expo 88 (the largest Bicentennial event, with an estimated total attendance of eight million).

In the era of change to the binary system signalled by the Dawkins Green Paper, it will focus valuable public attention on the University sector.

The University of Queensland and Griffith University (at Brisbane) and James Cook University (Townsville) will combine to present the display.

The new Bond University (Australia's first private university, due to open on Queensland's Gold Coast in 1989) and the Queensland Tertiary Admissions Centre (QTAQ) are also taking part.

The UNlvations pavilion will be built on the theme University Research - the Basis for the Age of Technology, to complement the Expo theme of Leisure in the Age of Technology.

Organised in three main segments (water, land, and space and communications), the display will give a glimpse of university research and its fundamental importance to social and technological advancement.

It has been designed so that visitors can walk through for a quick overview, or linger for as long as they like in areas which particularly interest them.

The pavilion will also include a radio studio, from which Australia's national radio broadcaster, the ABC, will transmit daily throughout Expo. UNlvations will also provide course information for prospective students, and encourage more people to consider university study among their career options.
Settler's Diary Published
A Swiss Settler in Australia

The Diary of Etienne Bordier
1849-1851

Translated by Kenneth Dutton
Edited by Kenneth Dutton and Denis Rowe

A diary kept by a young Swiss adventurer during his years in Australia provides some interesting insights into the attitudes of Continental Europeans towards the 'Colonies' in the mid-19th century.

A Swiss Settler in Australia: The Diary of Etienne Bordier (1849-1851) has appeared as the latest in the series of Auchmuty Library publications. Translated from the French by Professor Ken Dutton, and edited by Professor Dutton and Denis Rowe, it describes the experiences of a small party of French and Swiss settlers in Sydney, the Hunter Valley and the Clarence River district.

Their dealings with Aborigines and their unsuccessful attempts at running a Clarence River cattle station illustrate the mixed reactions of wonder and disappointment felt by optimistic but naive Europeans attracted by an unknown land.

The author, Etienne Bordier (1821-1861), returned to Europe a bankrupt about 1859 after the failure of his scheme to build prefabricated houses in Hunter's Hill — one of which, the Chalet, is still standing (classified by the National Trust). One of Bordier's companions (the Baron de Milhau) was more successful and went on to become Mayor of Hunter's Hill, the largest French 'settlement' in nineteenth century Australia.

Extensive research in Europe and Australia has enabled Ken and Denis to piece together the life-story of Bordier, whose Australian experience was used by the Genevan 'establishment' as a salutary warning to others against risking their lives and fortunes in the New World.

Appearing in pamphlet form in Geneva in 1865, the diary was totally forgotten until Denis Rowe drew attention to its significance as an interesting document of early settlement in the Grafton area.

Probably because it was never intended for publication, the diary is not 'over-written'. The author's fresh and vivid account of his activities — and misfortunes — makes it eminently readable.

Copies of the diary will shortly be obtainable at the Co-op Bookshop and from local booksellers.

Students Share $10,000 Award

Four students of this University have shared the 1988 Edgeworth David Memorial Scholarship, which is valued at $10,000.

They are: Linda Cornall, of Thornton, who attended Maitland High School last year; Kaylene Bramham, of Weston (Kurri Kurri High School); Mark Heagney, of East Maitland (St Peter's High School) and Matthew Gavey, of Mulbring (Kurri Kurri High School).

Each will receive a $2,500 scholarship to assist with their tertiary studies in earth sciences or mining related subjects.

The scholarships are made available by Coal and Allied Industries Limited, one of the Hunter Valley's largest coal mining and exporting companies.

The scholarship scheme was inaugurated in late 1986 to coincide with the Centenary of the discovery of the famous Greta Seam by Edgeworth David. This discovery laid the basis of today's coal mining industry.

Presenting the scholarships, Mr Ted Bradshaw, Manager-Group Services, of Coal and Allied's Hexham Office, said the company had a long association with the mining communities in the Cessnock, Kurri Kurri and Maitland areas.

Mr Bradshaw said the company had established the scholarship scheme as an on-going memorial to Edgeworth David's achievement, and as a way 'to put something back' into the communities with which it had been associated for so long.

(Left to right): Mark Heagney, Kaylene Bramham, Ted Bradshaw, Manager - Group Services of Coal and Allied Industries Limited, Linda Cornall and Matthew Gavey.

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STUDIES OF NATURAL OPIATES

About ten years ago, the first of a series of hormones which have actions similar to morphine were discovered in chemical extracts of human and animal tissues.

Studies carried out in the late 1970s and early 1980s showed that one of these natural opiates, beta-endorphin, was secreted into the human and animal bloodstream within minutes after an acute stress such as injury, surgery, blood loss, strenuous exercise, or abrupt deprivation of oxygen or glucose.

Dr. Phil Owens

The view that the natural opiates, beta-endorphin, provides the human body with a quick supply of its own analgesic to suppress pain has been challenged by Dr. Phillip Owens, who has been awarded a PhD degree for his research in the Faculty of Medicine.

Dr. Owens, who is now attached to CSIRO's Division of Human Nutrition in Adelaide, was a postgraduate student in Assoc. Professor Roger Smith's laboratory in the Faculty of Medicine.

His thesis argued that if beta-endorphin produces analgesia during acute stress, then it must reach the brain or the central nervous system itself, because this is where the opiate responsive cells involved in the transmission of sensory information are located. For this to occur, either beta-endorphin secreted into blood must be able to reach the brain or the opiate must be secreted within the central nervous system itself.

In either case, the amount of beta-endorphin in the fluid which bathes the brain, the cerebrospinal fluid, should increase during acute stress if the opiate is involved in stress-induced analgesia.

Dr. Owens designed a series of experiments in animals to test this hypothesis. Sheep were chosen because they produce relatively large amounts of cerebrospinal fluid, which allowed several collections of this fluid over a three hour period, including before and after stress. Catheters were surgically implanted into blood vessels and the cranium of sheep under general anaesthesia by Dr. John Falconer, using an original procedure developed in Newcastle in conjunction with Drs Smith and Owens, and the animals were carefully maintained under veterinary supervision for up to three weeks in a specially designed laboratory in the Medical Sciences Building.

Dr. Owens found that if the amount of glucose in blood was quickly lowered by intravenous injection of insulin into sheep, a typical stress reaction occurred, and the amount of beta-endorphin in blood was rapidly increased as had previously been observed in human studies. However, the amount of the opiate in the cerebrospinal fluid of the sheep was not significantly altered.

Dr. Owens published this study in 1984, the results of which contradicted those of a similar study reported by Japanese researchers in 1982.

Dr. Owens therefore performed another series of experiments, this time using rapid blood loss to stimulate the stress reaction. He showed that haemorrhage induced a stress response in sheep, which included a rapid increase in the amount of beta-endorphin and related hormones in blood. He also showed that, despite the increased amounts of beta-endorphin in blood after haemorrhage, the amounts of this opiate in cerebrospinal fluid were unchanged.

After completing the studies for his doctoral thesis, Dr. Owens, in collaboration with Professor Smith and co-researchers Margaret Lovelock, Eng-Cheng Chan and Dr. Falconer, turned his attention to another natural opiate, met-enkephalin. They found that under some, but not all, stress conditions, the amount of met-enkephalin in blood was elevated, but the amount of met-enkephalin in cerebrospinal fluid was unchanged under all conditions studied.

The studies show conclusively that the temporary increases in the blood levels of the natural opiates beta-endorphin and met-enkephalin cannot effect pain perception because they do not elevate the cerebrospinal fluid levels of these opiates, which they must do if they are to influence the opiate-sensitive cells of the central nervous system that transmit pain sensation to the brain.

It remains possible, however, that beta-endorphin may be secreted within the brain itself during stress, since recent studies suggest that the brain may metabolize beta-endorphin before it has a chance to leak out into the surrounding cerebrospinal fluid. This is currently being studied.
THE UNIVERSITY'S GRADUATION CEREMONIES FOR 1988 will be held on April 29 and 30. There will be two graduations each day.

The University will mark the Bicentenary by awarding honorary degrees to a large group of distinguished Australians.

A total of 11 people will be admitted to honorary degrees - by far the largest number at any Graduation Day in the life of the University.

In addition two graduates of the University will be awarded higher doctoral degrees for having made original contributions of distinguished merit to their specialisations.

The Honourable Justice Elizabeth Evatt, AO, the University's new Chancellor, will officiate at all four ceremonies.

At the first, on Friday morning at 10 o'clock, degrees will be conferred on candidates in the Faculties of Arts and Education.

The next ceremony will be at 2.30 pm, when degrees will be conferred on candidates in the Faculties of Architecture and Engineering.

On the Saturday at 10 am, candidates in the Faculties of Economics and Commerce and Mathematics will have their degrees conferred. In the afternoon at 2.30 pm, degrees will be conferred on candidates in the Faculties of Medicine and Science.

At the first ceremony four honorary degrees will be awarded.

Judge Evatt will receive an Honorary Doctor of the University degree in recognition of her eminent service to law.

An Honorary Master of Arts degree will be awarded to Mr Harry Bradford, Foundation Amenities Officer of the University, for his contribution to University sport not only on the campus but also at the Australian level.

An Honorary Master of Arts degree will be conferred upon Mr Jim Comerford, of Weston, in recognition of his long and distinguished union career and his work as a historian and author on the Coalfields.

In addition, Mrs Judy White, of Belltrees, via Scone, will have an Honorary degree of Master of Arts conferred upon her for her outstanding contribution to the study of local history.

Mr Gunther Kress, Head of the Department of English at the New South Wales University of Technology, will be the first recipient of a higher doctoral degree. Mr Kress will be awarded a Doctor of Letters degree for his distinguished original contributions to stylistics, language in education and critical linguistics.

At the Friday afternoon ceremony an Honorary Doctor of Engineering degree will be presented to Mr Manuel Alves, Deputy Chairman of Alco Steel Corporation, of Tomago, in recognition of his record of achievement in engineering, industrial manufacturing and technology.

Next day, during the Economics and Commerce graduation, an Honorary Doctor of Science degree will be given to Mr James Kirk, Chairman of the Australian Bicentennial Authority, for his contribution to the commercial infrastructure underlying Australia's economic progress.

Emeritus Professor Beryl Nashar will have an Honorary Doctor of Science degree conferred in recognition of her long service to the University and her distinguished contribution to community and business organisations in the Hunter Region.

In addition, Mr Warren Pengilley, a Senior Partner in the Sydney legal firm, Sly and Russell, will be a recipient of a higher doctoral degree. A Doctor of Science degree will be conferred upon him for his original contribution to the study of restrictive trade practice law.

Proceedings for the Saturday afternoon ceremony include the awarding of four honorary degrees.

An Honorary Doctor of Medicine degree will be conferred on Dr Gordon Kerridge for his achievements as a practitioner, and a teacher, in the field of orthopaedics, his support for the establishment of the Medical School and his contribution to the development of the School.

An Honorary Doctor of Medicine degree will be awarded to Dr Peter Hendry for his contribution to pathology in Newcastle and other parts of the world and his dedicated service as a member of the Council of the University.

Emeritus Professor James Allen will receive an Honorary Doctor of Science degree for his record of achievement in an extensive career in science and tertiary education, including his 12 years' association with Newcastle University College and the autonomous University of Newcastle.

Dr Keith Boardman, Chief Executive of the CSIRO, will be a recipient of an Honorary Doctor of Science degree in recognition of his contribution to biochemistry and plant science.

Judge Evatt, Mr Alves, Mr Kirk, and Professor Allen will deliver Occasional Addresses at the ceremonies at which they receive their degrees. The Vice-Chancellor, Professor Keith Morgan, will report on matters of importance to the University.

The Chancellor will admit the candidates to their degrees after they have been presented to her by the Deans of the respective faculties. The Graduation Ceremonies are again expected to attract capacity audiences of graduands, members of their families and friends.