The development of students and the quest for knowledge are core university goals. They are the foundations of success for the university, the student and the society of the future.

In this edition of “van Gogh’s Ear” (formerly Bulletin) we are featuring articles on teaching and learning. It's a small sub-set of the materials we could have reported. The issues we've sampled fall under the headings:

• The Big Picture  • At The Centre  • The Innovators  • The Point of It All

Also in this issue:
• Catalysis  • Research and Scholarship  • Achievements  • Letters to the Editor
FROM THE VICE-CHANCELLOR

As I take up my position at the University we have seen the election of a new Labor Government, and the appointment of Minister Kim Beazley to Education. The universities have been transferred upwards from the junior Minister to the senior Minister and will be handled directly by Mr Beazley himself. In the view of the AVCC this represents an improvement, since it is considered that Universities may have more sway with such an arrangement. The Vice-Chancellors apparently were well pleased with Mr Baldwin, but he has been moved elsewhere.

We now await the enunciation of policies, but may assume that some of the old concerns will remain on the table. The previous Government showed a great concern with quality management. We have had a comparative method of funding, whereby those universities which excelled in quality management would be awarded more of the funds from this program. Though a certain upward limit had been imposed, our performance in this regard could well mean a difference of $1m.

We expect some guidance shortly on this matter, and of course when it comes it should be fully ingested by the academic institutions of the university. This question will be handled by the usual consultative methods through the Schools and the Senate. There may be many who feel this way of instituting competition between universities is foreign, but I suppose it is the Labor Government’s way of ensuring there is greater responsiveness and energy in the public universities.

There may well be an opening for us to examine the way in which we do our work, and to see whether we can improve it. In particular I would suggest that we look at the whole experience of the student in the university and that of the staff member, not limiting our discussions to one particular sector, such as the experience of teaching. In any case this will be a matter for the various bodies to look at and I propose to proceed in consultation with the Students Representative Council and the Staff Association.

At this stage, however, we do not really know whether to expect a degree of continuity from the new Government, or a radically different outlook. The Liberal Party policy involving the voucher scheme and the admission of full fee paying students has obviously vanished from the political landscape for the foreseeable future. However, there are many who suspect that the present Government may well be led to extend the possibilities of admission of full-fee paying students to Australian students before very long.

I have asked those whom I meet in the University to be indulgent with me for a two month period, in which I plan to do a great deal of listening and a little ruminating; it is clear that a complex organisation of this kind cannot be understood overnight, and I do not want to be led into quick decisions or expressions of opinions which I may later regret. I ask for the patience of all staff and students in this, and of course I am willing to hear of concerns which people may have.

I look forward to a long and fruitful relationship with the University.

Raoul Mortley

AVCC
POLICY ISSUES FOR THE 1994-96 TRIENNIAL

POLICY STATEMENT

This statement covers major higher education issues which the AVCC wishes addressed in the 1994-96 triennium, and the funding and planning guidelines against which the policies of the major political parties can be evaluated in the context of the March 13, 1993 Federal election. The background to these issues is discussed in the AVCC’s policy documents, Foundations for the “Clever Country” Report for the 1992-94 Triennium, and Australian Universities in a Changing World, Report for the 1993-95 Triennium.

POLICY ISSUES FOR THE 1994-96 TRIENNIAL

GROWTH

- There is strong demand for places in universities from almost all sections of Australian society.
- University initiatives in credit transfer and the development of articulation pathways from industry and TAFE have combined to exacerbate this strong demand.
- While all of this demand cannot be met, forecasts indicate that there should be continued modest growth in university enrolments over the 1994-96 triennium. Therefore a total of 6,000 new places should be provided in each of 1994, 1995 and 1996. At least half of the additional places should be at the postgraduate level, funded at a rate appropriate for postgraduate education.

QUALITY

- The $67m funding already appropriated for the maintenance of quality from 1994 should be preserved.
- Should the quality assurance mechanism not be implemented, the funding currently identified for quality improvement should be incorporated into university operating grants so that the many initiatives already undertaken in Australian universities to evaluate and improve performance can be maintained and enhanced.
- The quality of university education should not be compromised by the imposition of inappropriate competency standards for universities or the professions.

RESEARCH

- Funds for infrastructure support through the ARC Infrastructure Program should be increased to $100m by 1995.
- An amount of $50m should be provided by 1995 to fund infrastructure involving collaborative research projects between universities and industry.
- The proportion of Australian Postgraduate Awards to Australian full-time higher degree research enrolments should be increased to 40% for each year of the triennium.

FUNDING

- Real funding levels per EFTS have declined by about 15% since 1983 and should be restored to 1983 levels.
- All growth funding should be provided at levels equivalent to the 1993 funding per EFTS.

FEES

- Increased access to universities should be facilitated through additional funded places. If limitations on public funding make this impossible, institutions should be permitted to levy fees for Australian students who are qualified for admission but are not selected for a Government funded place at university.

STUDENT SUPPORT

- The maintenance of AUSTUDY or a similar scheme of student support is essential to facilitate access to higher education for all Australian students who can benefit from it.
- An income contingent deferred loan arrangement such as HECS should be available to all Australian university students to enable them to fund their contribution to tuition fees.

WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT?

In the March 1993, draft Strategic Plan of the University of Newcastle, it is stated that "The University community...sees the University as a leading institution of higher learning in Australia and aims to set standards of excellence that are second to none."

I am pleased and delighted to see such positive ambitions declared.

Further, it is stated that the University "holds dearly...its high regard and care for students".

Teaching is part of the primary mission of the University and the graduation of effective graduates is the major contribution made to society by this institution.

Students are human beings with complex and demanding needs. Students who live away from home, and particularly foreign students, might be expected to have additional needs to those who enjoy local family support.

Students are our best ambassadors; they number in the thousands, and the best of them take up leadership positions in Australia and overseas. Their brothers, sisters, cousins, and friends are potential students; so are their own offspring.

In years to come, our alumni are likely to be sources of funding support through endowments of various sorts; the more happy alumni we graduate, the better our chances of maximising such endowments.

Do we know well what our students need and want? Are we catering well to both?

Do we know well what our graduates, and those who did not complete their studies, think of this University and their time here?

Is time spent as a student at the University of Newcastle one of life's truly memorable experiences for the majority?

Should we not aspire to have the majority of our students able to say:

"My time at the University of Newcastle was definitely one of the best times of my life."

As a student, I was not just treated as a number, but as an adult human being with personal needs and wants, which were generally well-satisfied.

Whilst I had to work hard for them, my qualifications are recognised throughout the world as being of a high standard.

My lecturers and tutors were at the forefront of academic and research developments in their fields and drew heavily on practical insights from the local, Australian and international arenas.

The University placed a premium on competence in both spoken and written English.

In addition to subjects which were important to my career, I was exposed to other fields, which I now accept as being important in the process of providing me with a broader perspective of my place in the international community.

I was particularly impressed with the University's library and computing services, and the sporting and personal fitness facilities were plentiful, diversified, easily-accessible and modern.

I was exposed to students and staff from many cultures, customs and religions and believe that racial and religious tolerance was widespread, as is the Australian way.

The campus generally was a vibrant and stimulating place; there was always something happening.

The student union was one of the best places of all: the food was good and cheap and incredibly diversified. I could meet with my friends over a cappuccino in any one of a number of interesting areas.

The wooded campus environment was naturally beautiful and felt safe and secure. I can still remember the afternoon chorus of the magpies, and seeing the occasional rabbit and possum in the evenings.

My time at the University of Newcastle was definitely one of best times of my life."

Do our students say or think these things?

Karel Grez
Chief Executive Officer
TUNRA Ltd.

ALL I WANT IS A ROOM SOMEWHERE...

Responding to the urgent need for more student accommodation at the University, Irene Hall Nurses Home in Pacific Street, Newcastle was established as a University Residential College in 1992.

Now in its second year, with positive management changes in place, Irene Hall College is alive and well. With its facility to accommodate over 200 students, its proximity to University transport, and the Newcastle beaches, cinemas and theatres all within several minutes walking distance, it is being perceived by its residents as a most attractive alternative to on-campus living.

The establishment of Irene Hall College itself as a Hall of Residence was the subject of some debate, due in part to the desire to contain the University community within the perimeters of the Callaghan campus. With the annexing of the Conservatorium to the University and the acquisition of Nesca House this argument loses ground. The Irene Hall building is now under lease from the Hunter Area Health Service but the feasibility of purchasing Irene Hall is currently being assessed.

Residential Colleges aim to provide an intellectual environment in which students are provided with low cost accommodation, a comfortable study environment and in-house support services to assist with problems arising during their studies. Academics are appointed as Wardens of the Colleges to provide pastoral care, academic counselling and to oversee the management of the Colleges.

Student involvement in the management of Irene Hall College provides direct feedback regarding student concerns and needs. The issues raised by students include the need for computing facilities at the College, a music rehearsal room and art and study rooms. Irene Hall can provide space for specialised study areas, although equipping them is more problematic. There is also a need for extra tutoring facilities in various courses; and for students to be regarded as more than just statistics. University staff must also be made more aware of the special needs of overseas students.

Irene Hall allocates "Fellows" to students. It is the responsibility of these citizens to assist students in the transition from home and school to College and University life and to generally keep an eye out for their wards' welfare. But there is only so much that the pastoral care structures within the College and the financial constraints placed on Irene Hall College can do to address the range of important issues that have been raised by the students. If the University of Newcastle is to attract students of a high academic calibre, including overseas students, then the University itself must address these issues.

In an economic climate where student numbers and student academic success is imperative to the healthy growth and status of a University, we must band together to provide for the needs of the students. Residential Colleges equipped to give the students all possible assistance to ensure their goals are achieved, in conjunction with the University acknowledging and responding to the specialised needs of students, is a crucial aspect of the process.

Helen Fletcher
(Vice Warden- Irene Hall College)
"A FAIR GO"

In the Mission Statement of the University it is stated that:

"The mission of the University is to provide a wide range of teaching, research, scholarship and service at the highest level of excellence and consistent with its aim of maintaining national and international esteem. The University will have a special identity with the people of Newcastle, the Hunter Valley and the Central Coast to whom it will pay particular attention in demonstrating its commitment to principles of equity and participation."

Put very simply, the University has a commitment to enable students to achieve their academic aspirations, help them cope with any difficulties experienced and provide services and facilities to overcome disadvantage and disability.

This commitment is pursued through goals set firmly in place by the Student Equity and Access Committee which works hand-in-hand with the University's Access and Liaison Section.

Recent statistics show that the people of the Hunter and Central Coast Regions participate in higher education at a much lower rate than others in the state and nationally; 30% as opposed to 44% in New South Wales. The statistics indicate that the retention rate in high schools is considerably lower in the Hunter and Central Coast regions than state and national figures.

Initiatives introduced to redress these imbalances are: the Access and Liaison Section; the Student Support Office; programs such as Newstep, Unilink, Open Foundation; and the Learning Support Unit (TUNCALT).

Assistant Registrar Access and Liaison, Helen Parker, says that even though Department of Employment, Education and Training (DEET) funding falls far short of what is actually required, equity initiatives will be maintained with a 1993 operating budget of $300,000. This is made up of $150,000 from DEET, with matched funds from the University.

Helen is justifiably proud that the University's Equity Plan is considered to be one of the best in Australia and is used as a model for others to emulate.

Helen says the consequences of factors such as high unemployment, and income levels which fall well below the national average, are manifested in such phenomena as low retention rates to Year 12 in the Regions' schools (again below state and national averages) and poor rates of transition from secondary to tertiary study, resulting in a poor overall rate of participation in tertiary education for people of the Region.

She says the Unit's priority groups are people from low socio-economic groups, people with disabilities, women in non-traditional studies, students from rural or isolated areas, people from non-English speaking backgrounds and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

"Our equity programs provide avenues for people who would normally not have access to a University education. By providing this access we believe the University of Newcastle is looking to the educational needs of the community in a practical and tangible way," Helen says.

"There are also numerous specific programs available for people of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent or who are accepted as such by the Aboriginal community," she says.

Helen says the Equity programs enjoy a high level of success. The programs are as follows:

Unilink - a schools link program established in 1991 designed to improve transition rates to higher education for disadvantaged students. The program is operated in conjunction with the Department of School Education, complementing the 'Staying On' program. It involves student role models addressing students in schools, student and parent information evenings involving University staff and officers of relevant government departments and visits to the campus by Year 10, 11 and 12 students of participating schools. This year the program has expanded its operation to 15 high schools targeted for their low retention and transition rates. It has also expanded to offer a range of specialist link activities such as "Girls Education Strategy" workshops.

Open Foundation - the University's mature-age entrance program, now successfully conducted in three locations, at the Callaghan campus, the Central Coast campus and at Muswellbrook in the Upper Hunter. It is available to people over the age of 20 years who do not have the necessary qualifications to enter a University course. Successful completion of Open Foundation enables eligibility for application to all degree and diploma courses at the University with the exception of Medicine.

Newstep - a bridging program for disadvantaged youth and specifically designed for students aged between 17 and 21 years. It is an enabling course for students who have either not completed the Higher School Certificate or who have not gained sufficient marks for entry into university and who can demonstrate or document disadvantage factors which prevented them from doing so. Successful completion of Newstep provides eligibility for application to all degree and diploma courses of the University with the exception of Medicine.

The Student Support Office provides assistance of a non-academic nature to students. It provides an advisory and referral service for students with non-academic problems or crises affecting their study and performance at University. These problems can include financial, family or legal matters.

The Learning Support Unit - the University's Centre for Advancement of Learning and Teaching (TUNCALT) was established in 1992. Its purpose is to facilitate continuous improvement in the learning environment of the University. Equity funds have established the Learning Support Unit within the Centre, the specific aim of which is to identify student learning problems and to develop and implement remedial action.

"We are constantly improving and refining our programs and we could certainly use more funding to do this," says Helen.

"But even with this constraint, our Equity programs continue to be effective and efficient and put University success within the reach of people who would have otherwise not had the chance."

1992 Newstep Graduates
WOLLOTUKA - A MEETING PLACE

Wollotuka, meaning "eating and meeting place" is a focal point on campus for Aboriginal students: a place to work, relax and socialise and a place where specialised academic support and encouragement is provided.

Wollotuka, the University's Aboriginal Education Centre, hums with activity, assisting students in areas such as selection of tutors, accommodation, personal and academic matters as well as fostering an important cultural link and establishing greater understanding of Aboriginal culture and values on campus.

Its motivation is the desire to attain equality for Aboriginal people in a positive way making higher education more meaningful to Aborigines as well as sharing Aboriginal culture and knowledge with non-Aboriginal people.

With an eight percent increase in Aboriginal students across all courses and a healthy retention rate, the Centre's activities are playing a very important role in the educational profile of the University.

Director of Aboriginal Education, Ms Tracey Bunda, says that as well as an increase in undergraduate and postgraduate students, the numbers in the Aboriginal Bridging Program, University Equity programs such as Newstep and Open Foundation and the Diploma of Aboriginal Studies have increased over the past couple of years. This year 26 people are enrolled in the Bridging Program while more than 40 people are enrolled in the Diploma in Aboriginal Studies over the two years of the course.

She says the Bridging Program is offered to assist Aboriginal people who wish to enter University courses and who do not meet standard Higher School Certificate aggregate or mature age entry. Prospective students are given tuition to prepare them for entry to accredited University programs.

"Students in the Bridging Program study English, Mathematics, Computers, Study Skills, Communications and Aboriginal Studies," Tracey says.

"It not only increases the chance of achieving a university education, but reinforces a sense of being through specific Aboriginal studies," she says.

Tracey says the Diploma in Aboriginal Studies is designed for people wishing to work in Aboriginal organisations or in the area of Aboriginal affairs. She says students in this course study Aboriginal Studies, Communication, Administration, Legal and Political Economics and Computer Studies.

"The aim of this course is to encourage greater Aboriginal participation in higher education through the provision of a program which is specifically Aboriginal in orientation, which takes account of Aboriginal circumstances and which prepares students for roles in Aboriginal organisations," Tracey says.

"Both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people are enrolled in the course which can also be studied by a block release program linked with external study," she says.

"In this, the International Year of Indigenous People, it is even more important that we focus on the ways that Aboriginal people can bring their message to the community. Working with the University's Equity Unit and through a sustained state-wide information program we make the programs for Aboriginal people known throughout high schools, Aboriginal community organisations and Aboriginal units in government departments. "Koori students find the level of support from Wollotuka helps them towards success," she adds.
TAKING IT TO THE STUDENTS ON THE CENTRAL COAST

THE PAST

• In the early 1970s the Government purchased 79.35 hectares at Ourimbah specifically for the establishment of a tertiary education facility.
• The University of Newcastle offered Bachelor of Education Studies/Master of Education Studies in borrowed and rented premises on the Central Coast.
• A local community group agitated to establish an (undefined) tertiary education presence on the Central Coast.
• In April 1989 the NSW Government requested the introduction of classes on campus in July 1989, as the initial stage in the collaborative development of a TAFE/University tertiary education precinct.
• Dr L.R. Eastcott, Deputy Principal, Hunter Institute of Higher Education, led a small team to address two important issues:
  • Appropriate courses of study
  • Appropriate site development

Negotiation with TAFE for a joint Campus commenced and the development of a 15 year academic plan was initiated.
• Ms Julie Becker was appointed Acting Campus Manager and assigned responsibility to commission the Campus for commencement in July 1989.
• In July 1989, 60 effective full-time students were enrolled in the Hunter Institute of Higher Education Bachelor of Business (Part-time) and Diploma of Police Studies (part-time); and in the University of Newcastle Graduate Diploma in Management/Master of Business Administration and Bachelor of Educational Studies/Master of Educational Studies. Classes were held in two refurbished houses and in transportable classrooms supplied by the WEA in return for a rent free site on campus.
• In October 1989, the present Warden, Associate Professor Michael Ewans, was appointed on a three year contract.
• In 1990 full-time enrolments were accepted in the Bachelor of Business and the Bachelor of Arts. Specialities in Business were identified as Tourism and Hospitality Management and Marketing. Initial subjects in Arts included Classical Civilisations, English, History and Sociology.
• On 1 September 1990, Campus Master Planners, Tony Corkill and the Public Works Architect, were appointed to prepare the Campus Master Plan. Planning and associated negotiations which continue to this day were commenced.
• In 1991 options in the Bachelor of Arts were expanded to include Drama and Education.
• A multi-purpose building was constructed at a cost of approximately $750,000. The Open Foundation Course was brought on campus. The University Union constructed a Union building.
• In 1992 provision was made for Student Services on the Central Coast Campus. Planning continued and design briefs were prepared for seven buildings:
  • Library
  • Hospitality Management
  • Lecture Theatre
  • Student Services and Amenities
  • Science Laboratories
  • Staff Accommodation
  • Precinct Services

The University Union added an office building and a small Co-operative Bookshop location.

The Federal Government announced grants to the University and to TAFE totalling $24M (approximately $12M to the University sector) over the period 1993 - 1995 for site development and building construction.

THE PRESENT

• An agreement was reached for a Single Project Director to be responsible for the development of the Precinct, in place of the dual University/TAFE structure planned. Les Eastcott has been appointed as Joint Project Director and Julie Becker assigned the role of University "Brief Manager".
• University student numbers have expanded to 364 EFTS.
• An Assistant Registrar, Mr Bob Prater, and an Assistant Director of Finance, Mr R. Croake, have been appointed.
• Fourteen academic staff are now located on campus, representing the following discipline areas:
  • Business
  • Education
  • Management
  • Commerce
  • English
  • Marketing
  • Drama
  • Classical Civilisation
  • Sociology
  • Economics

They are supported by travelling staff from Callaghan. A total of 11 full-time and 5 part-time general staff facilitate the academic work of the Campus.
• A part-time enrolment in the Bachelor of Commerce has been accepted extending the list of courses offered by the Campus to include:
  • Bachelor of Commerce (P/T)
  • Bachelor of Business (P/T and F/T)
  • Diploma and Bachelor of Social Science (Justice Studies) (P/T)
  • Bachelor of Educational Studies/Master of Educational Studies
  • Bachelor of Arts (P/T and F/T)
  • Graduate Diploma (Management)/MBA (P/T)
• Open Foundation Certificate

THE FUTURE

The future cannot be expressed with any certainty, although with continuing Federal and State support, the following achievements are possible:
• A University enrolment of 526 EFTS in 1994, 741 in 1995 and 950 in 1996. A goal of at least 3,000 EFTS by 2005 has been set.
• A construction program resulting in a Campus capable of housing 6,000 - 7,000 EFTS in University and TAFE courses by the year 2005.
• A University academic and general staff complement of approximately 350 by 2005.
• Education courses in Early Childhood and Design, Technology plus a Bachelor of Nursing Conversion course to be introduced in 1994.
• A Bachelor of Science (Food Technology) to be introduced in 1995 with students successfully completing the first year also being eligible to transfer to the final years of the Bachelor of Science at Callaghan.
• Expansion into the Fine Arts, Communications, Information Sciences and Health fields during the remainder of the decade.
• A closely articulated set of programs ranging from Adult and Community Education courses offered by the Central Coast Community College (WEA) through selected TAFE course to University level studies.
• A growing interaction with industry through development of the Campus' "enterprise zones" and the establishment of research, consultancy and other relationships.

Like all new developments, the Campus is limited only by finance and the capacity of its planners and implementers to have the necessary will, creativity and drive to achieve a visionary future.
THE CENTRAL COAST - WORKING TOGETHER

From inception, the Central Coast Campus has been a component of a much larger venture. Decreed by Ministerial authorities to be an education precinct offering technical and vocational programs through TAFE as well as University courses through The University of Newcastle, the Ourimbah precinct "escaped" a third partner, the Department of School Education, only because no site on campus, or adjacent was available. Yet, right from commencement, a third partner emerged, with the Central Coast Campus College (WEA) providing much of the initial on-campus accommodation in return for a rent free site. The Community College continues to contribute to the maintenance, security, landscape and other management costs of the Campus and has an input into the planning of Campus development.

Coast development group, led by Dr Les Eastcott, and the TAFE Research and Planning Group, met to formulate an agreement whereby the two partners would be able to jointly develop a plan that would provide a comprehensive range of post-secondary educational opportunities for prospective students living in the Central Coast area.

The result of that initial series of meetings was a "Heads of Agreement" document signed by the Vice-Chancellor of The University of Newcastle and by the then Director General of the NSW Department of TAFE.

One of the major decisions made during the course of discussions was the necessity to consult and collaborate in all phases of the project. As a consequence, a Joint of the building being planned. For example, the brief for the Library was developed jointly and in a collegial manner by TAFE and University librarians.

It is expected that when the Campus is fully constructed, more than 50% of all teaching space will be shared on a jointly timetabled basis, as will maintenance, landscaping, building and other yet to be determined support services. Provision of Student Services has been planned as a joint activity and ways of resolving differences in the provision of student amenities by the University and TAFE are being investigated.

The joint development of a child care centre is planned. A major feature of the collaborative activity has been the spirit of goodwill reflected in the venture, the desire to seek solutions to differences which do not compromise standards and other important values, and a willingness to consider with dignity the consequence of sometimes apparently irreconcilable differences in philosophical approaches. No doubt there will always be abrasive times in the relationship, but if these are addressed rather than used as an excuse to withdraw, the consequences for education and students will be enhanced.

Central Coast Tertiary Education Precinct 2005: an artist's impression.
Centre for the Advancement of Learning and Teaching

Q: CALT - Another acronym. What is its role?
A: The role of CALT is to help academic staff review the quality of their teaching. When people do that, they focus on learning. High-quality teaching is teaching which brings about high quality learning.

Q: Do other universities have programs like CALT?
A: Yes, most universities now have Centres or Units like CALT. Some have been long established. We have had ours only since last year, but some of the units within it have been around for considerably longer. That's interesting about our Centre is that though we started later, we have managed to put together a whole lot of things, all related, that other people have not.

For instance, we can offer a complete service to academic staff to help them improve and advance their careers, and to improve their teaching and research. On top of that, we can also offer a curriculum development service to design new courses and subjects, or review what they are doing. If they want to develop materials for teaching, we have a media production group. So we can help on personal, professional and curriculum levels.

For students, we provide a learning support unit to assist students having difficulty with their learning, study skills, numeracy, literacy or whatever. We're hoping it won't be long before we can help people who are already going well, but would like to go faster, by providing computer tutorials. Finally, we can provide classrooms and theatres where things actually work. The goal is to see that all major teaching spaces are equipped with a large screen video with computer facilities in place of the black or white board. It is a hierarchy. At the bottom you have a board. The next step up is using overhead projectors. The next step up from that is video. People will soon use information directly off computers onto a projector. Technology is developing fast, and our idea is to bring our teaching spaces to the point that if a lecturer walks into a theatre they have the equipment, and they have skills, to use it. We want to provide a better learning experience for students.

Q: Are some people interested in technology for its own sake?
A: Most people use technology because they believe it's an advance on what they are doing now. We do have some technology buffs, who chase the latest technology and encourage us to get into this or that particular area. They remind us that things are moving ever faster ahead of us. The reality is that the university budget is limited. People's ability to use technology is also limited, and my view is that we should help people do their job better with what they use now, and then move on to other areas.

Q: So how do you balance the competing demands for resources?
A: We are working to a five-year plan. In it, we aim to equip every teaching space adequately. We will work from the most urgently needed. When we have the plan worked out, we will also know how much money we are up for, and will simply divide it by five.

We will go through normal processes and get as much as we can of whatever we have asked for. Hopefully, we can do it in five years. It might take ten. It will be a shame if it does. Certainly within five years, we will have made a major impact on the teaching front.

It's also important to provide an integrated service. If you look at other Centres, they tend to focus on staff, or on curriculum, or on faculty. Or they might focus on computer management or something else. Most tend to put staff development and curriculum development together. But media production and computerised learning is often away somewhere else, and learning is often supported by something else again - say counselling.

We think it is in the right place where it is here, provided the Centre works closely with counselling because when a student has a learning problem, it is often a symptom of a more personal issue.

Q: So to spell out what the Centre should achieve over the next five years - what are the priorities?
A: We are still working through the plan. But by the end of five years, I expect learning support facilities to be well recognised, and to provide a wide range of support for students. We will have, in the new CALT Building, a couple of learning laboratories with computer work stations where students can use software to tutor themselves. I would expect that the Staff Development Unit will be widely known and that it would have a range of programs in place.

At the moment we are not doing enough for new staff. One of the peculiarities of university teachers is that they don't require teaching qualifications, whereas for TAFE or schools you need to learn how to teach as well as what to teach.

Academic staff should support programs like this. We have already made a significant step down that path with the Foundation of Tertiary Teaching program which we've run eight or nine times. Within five years, we should have a program for all new academics on the fundamentals of teaching.

I also hope that we will be making good use of electronic technology between Ourimbah and Newcastle. For fifteen years or more the capacity to use electronic communication for teaching has existed but we haven't exploited it fully yet.

There is great opportunity for academics from here to "go" to Ourimbah and academics from Ourimbah to "come" to Newcastle through audio conference links or video. Also, surely we will be using Email or computers between the two places. Once we have that going, it is a simple step to go further, because if we can get a link from here to Ourimbah there is no reason why we can't get one to Taree or Port Macquarie or wherever. And surely we can make more use of 2NUR-FM? The possibilities are wide.

Q: One thing you touched on is academic development. Universities have traditionally placed the emphasis for promotion on research and scholarship. Do you see a change in mood?
A: I think the mood is changing, in the sense that more academics are asking why we aren't adequately rewarded for putting effort into our teaching and management.

The university recently reviewed its promotions policy to make the contribution to teaching more explicit, but I think we still have a way to go. I remain to be convinced that you can in fact measure it adequately. One of the tasks ahead is to raise awareness of how teaching quality can be assessed and how its effects might be used for academic promotion.

Yes, I think the mood is changing. And I think we will see a gradual recognition of teaching.

Q: Has any Australian research been done on teaching skills?
A: Yes - quite a bit on things like student evaluation and quality teaching.

Q: What are the major issues for CALT?
A: You have to educate people to understand that you can assess the quality of teaching and learning. You then have yardsticks by which people can assess whether they are doing a good job.

That means people will take interest and reflect. It makes you feel that it is worthwhile to do that, as opposed to writing an extra research paper.

That will be a major change.
MIXED MODE DELIVERY

A more flexible approach to University postgraduate teaching

Scenario 1: It is early evening. After a long working day, and a half hour fighting the evening rush hour, postgraduate students rush to find a parking space in the crowded university car park. Most haven't time for a quick cup of coffee prior to joining the queue at the library short loans desk to check out the journal article they had been asked to read after last week's session. A few look up references on the computerised catalogue system - the library had already closed when their previous lecture finished and they hadn't wanted to take another long drive to the university. In class, they exchange quick pleasantries before the lecturer begins the evening session by giving a mini-lecture and then opening up the topic for group discussion. Some debate follows as the group interacts to resolve issues raised during the lecture. After four hours of lectures (in two 2 hour sessions in different subjects), the group scatters to the parking lot and heads for home. For some, home may be many kilometres away.

The first scenario is familiar to most postgraduate, part-time students at the University of Newcastle. For many, completing a postgraduate degree means driving considerable distances to attend evening lectures and tutorials one or two nights per week - always after a complete day of work. However, the second scenario may become more commonplace if the recommendations contained in a recent National Board of Employment, Education and Training (NBEET) report on the computerised catalogue system - the library had already closed when their previous lecture finished and they hadn't wanted to take another long drive to the university. In class, they exchange quick pleasantries before the lecturer begins the evening session by giving a mini-lecture and then opening up the topic for group discussion. Some debate follows as the group interacts to resolve issues raised during the lecture. After four hours of lectures (in two 2 hour sessions in different subjects), the group scatters to the parking lot and heads for home. For some, home may be many kilometres away.

Scenario 2: It is early evening. After a long working day, individual postgraduate students drive home to their families. Following a relaxing coffee and discussion with their family, each person checks their home computer for electronic mail messages from other members of their class or from their lecturer. The previous evening, the lecturer had challenged the class during their regular telephone tutorial to prepare their solutions to the problem raised by one member of the class. The telephone debate had demonstrated that there were quite divergent views within the group and each member of the class was curious about their colleagues' responses which everyone had been asked to type into their computers during the last 24 hours and placed on the electronic mail bulletin board for class comment. Some quickly scan the electronic bulletin board but most copy their classmate's responses into their computer file and print them out for more careful analysis. Each member of the class responds to comments raised by classmates by typing messages onto the bulletin board for all the class to react to at a time convenient to them. References can be checked by on-line access to the university library via the computer modem. During the drive home from work, some of the class had listened to one of the audiotapes included in the package of materials sent from the university. Listening to the recorded interview had been required prior to viewing the videotape which was also part of the package. The short dramatised video sequence brought the issue into clearer focus and acted as a stimulus to prompt each student to begin writing the mini assignment - due the following week when the class meets face-to-face at the university for an intensive Friday evening/Saturday workshop. This workshop will provide one of only two face-to-face meeting opportunities over the fourteen week semester. The remainder of the evening is spent reading one of the papers included in the book of readings which accompany the distance education study guide for the subject.

Therefore, student/lecturer and student/student interaction must be maintained. This does not mean, however, that only lectures and tutorials in buildings on campus will achieve this end. Strategies and techniques of distance education, such as independent use at home of printed, appropriately designed distance education packages, perhaps also containing audiotapes, videotapes and computer discs, provide students with more options in terms of when and under what circumstances they pursue their studies. Newer communications technologies such as teleconference tutorials and electronic mail enable interaction to be maintained, but from the comfort of the student's home. If these teaching strategies and use of resources such as videos are combined with some face-to-face interaction, eg. during a summer school, weekend workshop or occasional evening session, more people will seek postgraduate qualifications as their studies can be fitted around work and family commitments. This integration of face-to-face teaching with distance techniques is known as 'mixed mode' teaching.

The skills and the technology to implement the above scenarios are already available, are relatively inexpensive and are being implemented in an increasing number of universities around Australia. Expertise in devising effective distance education packages has been developed to a high level in Australian higher education. Increasing sophistication, accompanied by lowering costs of communication and computer technologies have made interaction at a distance through teleconferencing and use of electronic mail relatively cheap and very accessible. Therefore, by combining the best features of distance education university teaching and the interactive capabilities made possible through new technologies with concentrated face-to-face sessions, the positive features of a good university education can be made available to a greater number of people via mixed mode teaching. However, a major problem in implementing these mixed mode approaches is finding the time and resources necessary to modify existing lecture/tutorial notes in order to prepare different strategies and resources using mixed mode delivery systems. Funding the development of an alternative approach remains an obstacle, but recent allocation of specific funds to improve university teaching will assist.

Even greater use of technology in the future will enable more flexibility in the delivery of university courses. For example, videoconferencing, which enables groups at multiple sites to see and hear each other via television images transmitted through...
MIXED MODE
Continued from previous page
the telephone system, is in use at over half the universities in Australia. Groups at scattered study centres can participate simultaneously in debate and discussion. Desktop videoconferencing via personal computers is already possible and points the way for future interaction between university lecturer and students. Computers will become the driving mechanisms to enable communication of text, graphics, sound and video images to and from the lecturer’s office and the student’s home. For example, the recent rapid development of CD-ROM discs, containing the equivalent of many thousands of printed pages, long sequences of video, as well as graphics, music and speech, will enable development of teaching/learning packages in which interaction, based on the needs of the student, will be possible. When combined with delivery via small, portable computers with inbuilt TV screens, access to university courses will be significantly improved, regardless of where the student lives or what restrictions of work and family exist.

Mixed mode delivery of post graduate courses, combining the best features of face-to-face interaction with delivery systems designed around new communications technologies, will provide greater access to university-based retraining and upgrading courses. The challenge is to make effective use of these approaches in university teaching and learning.

Contact Dr John Schiller, Head of Instructional Design and Development within the newly formed Centre for the Advancement of Learning and Teaching for more information on mixed mode teaching and learning - ext 6603/6599.

HIGH TECH! OLD TECH! TEACHING MAY NEVER BE THE SAME

The notion of collecting and cataloguing all the works in classical Greek has been a long cherished philological dream. Gutenberg’s invention made possible the first attempt by Henri Estienne, a Swiss scholar, in 1572. His Thesaurae Linguae Graecae was drawn from fewer than 150 Greek authors. It was not until 1985 that the emergence of CD-ROM facilitated production of a modern version under the editorship of Professor Theodore Brunner at the University of California Irvine.

The Thesaurae Linguae Graecae on CD-ROM was recently purchased by the Classics Department under an agreement by which the Library will catalogue the work to ensure general access but it will reside in the department.

The Thesaurae Linguae Graecae CE-ROM contains 42 million words of Greek text and the next edition, to appear shortly, will represent 99 percent of extant Greek literature by 3,157 authors from Homer to 600AD. It is complemented by PHI CD-ROM #5.3, also purchased by the Classics Department, which represents all extant Latin literature up to 200 AD as well as several versions of the Bible (in Greek, Hebrew, Coptic, Latin and English).

For those who might wonder as to the utility of classical texts on CD-ROM, here are a few examples of its value. Half a century ago, after countless years of labour, Edgar Lobel succeeded in identifying twenty-nine of fifty-three papyrus fragments as containing a section of Sophocles’ Oedipus Tyrannus. By contrast, in 1986, a computer search through the TLG databank for the seven letters on one of the smallest pieces produced a match within three seconds. Professor Willis, the doyen of American papyrologists, waxes lyrical at the possibilities of this computer philology to join scraps of papyri and revive documents from the dead.

Further electronic riches await the classical scholar with the Packard Humanities Institute in California assembling Greek non-literary texts on CD-ROM encompassing 40,000 papyri. Chadwyck-Healey is also preparing the Patrologia Latina for completion in 1994. It will represent the largest collection of theological writings from Tertullian to Innocent III ever assembled, as well as possibly the largest commercial humanities database. For further information or access to the Thesaurae Linguae Graecae contact Daryl Palmer on extension 5231.
TEACHERS AND TEACHING AT NEWCASTLE MEDICAL SCHOOL

Does teaching turn you on? Are Newcastle medical students getting a good deal? Does teaching come naturally to doctors? How good a teacher are you? Should medical educators undergo formal teacher training?

A recent survey involving teachers at Newcastle medical school addressed these and other questions about attitudes to teaching and teacher training. A questionnaire was mailed to all 205 teachers who were listed in the 1992 University calendar for the Faculty of Medicine. The questionnaire had previously been validated and used in a similar survey of medical teachers at a 'traditional' medical school in the United Kingdom. The survey had a remarkably high response rate of 93%, probably due in part to a scheme which ensured the anonymity of respondents.

ATTRIBUTES AND BEHAVIOUR OF RESPONDENTS

The vast majority (89%) of respondents were male. Females were particularly thin on the ground in the upper echelons of academia - all but one of the 48 Associate Professors and Professors who responded were male. Although a relatively new medical school, Newcastle has mature teachers; only 5% are within 10 years of graduation and 22% are qualified for over 30 years. While 61% of respondents teach at least once a week, 17% teach less often than once a month. For 84%, small group teaching at the bedside or in the classroom is the principal method of teaching with 12% teaching mainly by lecture. 24% of respondents have attended a course in medical education within the past five years and 10% claim to be members of a medical education society (e.g. ANZAME). 35% rate their own teaching ability as 'above average'; 59% as average and 4% as 'below average'.

ATTITUDES OF RESPONDENTS

Staff at Newcastle seem enthusiastic about teaching, with 78% finding it as satisfying as other aspects of their work and 47% saying that given the opportunity, they would teach more often. There is general satisfaction with the current teaching package, with 75% believing that Newcastle medical graduates are well trained (an additional 17% have mixed feelings on this issue). Teaching is perceived as having a reasonably high profile within the rewards structure of the medical school, with 40% believing that recognition as a good teacher helps to advance one's career (a further 24% had mixed feelings) and 46% agreeing that teaching at the medical school is given sufficient priority (here 22% had mixed feelings).

Opinion is evenly divided on the issue of whether academics should be active in service provision and research and teaching. However, only 11% agree that those with teaching appointments should be allowed to opt out of teaching. Many readers will be aware that some U.S. medical schools such as Harvard have come to accept that it is unrealistic to expect academics to be competent in all areas and have developed separate academic pathways for the "clinician-teacher" and for the "clinician researcher".

Turning to attitudes toward teacher training, 86% of respondents believe that for most people, adequate teaching skills are not acquired from a general medical training. There is support for the concept of formal training for medical teachers and 68% of respondents believe that such training would improve the standard of teaching at the medical school. 61% consider courses in teacher training to be of personal use and 58% would go on such a course. Opinion is evenly divided on whether formal teacher training should be compulsory.

COMPARISON WITH THE 'TRADITIONAL' MEDICAL SCHOOL

The attributes, behaviour and attitudes of teachers at Newcastle are all the more interesting when compared with those of teachers at the 'traditional' UK medical school. This comparison is the subject of a paper currently in preparation. As might be expected, teachers at the 'traditional' medical school are more reliant on lectures and less on small group teaching. Otherwise, the attributes and behaviour of teachers at both schools are remarkably similar in many areas - among them in the extent of male domination. It is of interest that a similarly small number (5%) of teachers in the UK medical school perceive their teaching ability as below average. Where then are the poor teachers? It would appear they are not in the US, where in 1977, a survey of University (including medical school) teachers found that 94% rated themselves as above average teachers and 68% ranked themselves in the top quarter on teaching performance. Could it possibly be that medical teachers the world over have an inflated view of their own teaching ability? Could a lack or even total absence of appraisal contribute to these delusions of grandeur?

At the 'traditional' school, even fewer teachers than at Newcastle had been on a teacher training course in the previous five years. Of course, if people consider themselves to be able teachers, then they are unlikely to perceive the need for teacher training. I am reminded of the words of Des Marchais who said:

"for many years medical education and politics were regarded as the only two professions that did not require formal training'.

This can no longer be said of politics; for how much longer will it be said of medical education?

When comparing the attitudes of teachers at both medical schools, two important differences emerged. At Newcastle, teachers are far happier with the quality of medical graduate produced and are more positive about the rewards which they receive for teaching. Having appropriate rewards (i.e. recognition, promotion, pay satisfaction etc) for medical teaching is essential if there is to be a sustained improvement in the teaching of medical education. This will lead to teaching duties being taken more seriously. Teachers will undertake self-appraisal and undergo peer review. They will ensure that they are adequately trained for their teaching roles and keep up to date with developments in education. In other words, teaching competence will come to be on a par with clinical competence and research competence. While it would appear that Newcastle has progressed further along this road than the 'traditional' medical school surveyed, I believe that there is still work to be done locally.

I would like to thank the many people who took the time and trouble to participate in this survey.

Paul Finucane

Reprinted from the "Joint Medical Newsletter", March 1993
TEACHING INCENTIVES PROGRAM

One of the first planning documents produced in the lead-up to the University's amalgamation in 1989 was a Teaching Management Plan. The early attention given to this subject was indicative of the University's commitment to developing its position as a leading teaching institution and its recognition of the crucial importance of teaching expertise.

With the establishment in 1991 of the University's Teaching Committee, much attention has been focussed on teaching and learning. The Committee is dedicated to encouraging development and enhancement of the quality of teaching at this University.

The University's Teaching Grants Scheme (which offers small grants for academics to develop innovative approaches to teaching) and an Awards Scheme (identifying excellent teachers) are administered by the Teaching Committee.

The Vice-Chancellor, Professor Raoul Mortley, has announced the names of the 1992 recipients of the University's Awards for Excellence in Teaching. Awards are to be made to Mr David Corney (Faculty of Education), Ms Patricia Jacobs (Faculty of Health Sciences), Simon (Faculty of Engineering), and the Department of Social Work (Faculty of Social Science).

Each of the recipients will receive a grant of $5,000 to assist them in their continuing pursuit of academic excellence. David Corney has also been recognised as the most outstanding teacher, for which he will receive a further grant of $1,000.

The Teaching Committee has also made High Commendation for Teaching Awards to Mr Ian Cook (Faculty of Music) and Dr Ian Webster (Faculty of Engineering). Each will receive a grant of $2,000 in addition to certificates to be presented at the Teaching Awards Dinner on 23 April. Commendation certificates will be presented to Mr Bruce Cook (Faculty of Health Sciences), Associate Professor Rob Cowdrey (Faculty of Architecture) and Mr James Hunt (Faculty of Economics and Commerce).

The Committee received 14 nominations for the Awards and hopes that the success of the 1992 awardees will encourage even more nominations for 1993.

The University's Teaching Committee also oversees staff applications for National Teaching Grants, available through the Commonwealth's Committee for the Advancement of University Teaching (CAUT). National Teaching Grants totalling $64,000 were awarded to University staff in 1992. Applications for 1993 grants will be called for soon.

EDUCATING THE EDUCATORS

"What we need is a radical re-thinking of educational practice in schools and in institutions of higher education."

Dr Jennifer Gore, Senior Lecturer in Educational Studies at the University of Newcastle, is an advocate for change in teacher education. Her book, The Struggle for Pedagogies, describes the ongoing struggle for change in a system still characterised by practices which date back hundreds of years.

"Enormous obstacles are faced and, indeed, created by those who seek (and seek to understand) new pedagogies. Many of these obstacles stem from the fundamental tension in pedagogy that requires of those who seek to change it, their participation in it. My aim in this book is to begin to explore and explain the struggle that is pedagogy," she said.

TheStruggle for Pedagogiesdocuments a recurring problem in educational theory: the complex power struggle within and between different theoretical discourses. Using Michel Foucault's concept of "regimes of truth", Jennifer analyses why there is so much division between the currently influential critical and feminist approaches to education when the two clearly share a great deal of theoretical common ground. She provides a detailed discussion of their differing concepts of "authority" and "empowerment", and concludes that critical and feminist theorists each remain devoted to the notion that theirs is the self-professed alternative educational discourse. Jennifer says the book explores how it is that discourses having an emancipatory intent can end up having exactly the opposite effect.

Jennifer wrote TheStruggle for Pedagogiesas part of her PhD studies at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Published by Routledge in New York and London late last year, and released in Australia soon after, the book has already sold in excess of 1000 copies. Jennifer describes the book as a humble and honest approach to understanding her own practice in teacher education. "I am happy to admit that I am still struggling with knowing whether I'm getting it right," she said. "Writing the book has been freeing for me. Rather than struggling to live up to the unitary ideal of feminist and critical pedagogy discourses, the poststructuralist position taken in the book enables me to understand what I am doing in the local context and to focus on doing the best I can at this particular moment, with this group of students, in this institution," she added.

Assisted by an ARC grant, Jennifer is also conducting research into specific practices which account for the historical continuity of pedagogy. She is particularly interested in the exercise of power: teachers over students; students over teachers; students over other students, the education system over teachers and students. "Some of the early findings (and it really is in the early stages) show that a great deal of teacher time is spent using all the mechanisms of power discussed by Foucault," she said. These mechanisms include surveillance, classification and normalisation. "Students, on the other hand, spend a great deal of time contesting such exercises of power. I am hoping that teachers, in schools and in universities, may be encouraged to change their own teaching methods if I demonstrate to them how often they use these kinds of micro-practices of power and what effect," she said.
RECREATION FOR THE AGED

The trend in the population is shifting from a greater number of young people to a larger proportion of older people. Consequently, in future years the demand for services including recreation will increase proportionately. This trend has many implications for how our society organises its facilities for the use of leisure time.

The University of Newcastle Bachelor of Education (Physical and Health Education) 3rd Year students recently took the opportunity, as part of their Recreation and Leisure Studies Course, to acquaint themselves with the needs, interests and physical capabilities of a group of our older citizens. The students, along with University lecturer Ann McCormack, organised and conducted a games afternoon for 1,000 Hunter Region Probus Club members at Harker Oval, New Lambton. Activities included traditional favourites like tug-o-war, quoits and relays, together with activities such as archery and parachute games which participants may not have had the opportunity to participate in when younger. Modified games of volleyball and cricket were also conducted using a blow up beachball and plastic bats, wickets and balls.

The aged population of today has had the advantages of modern medicine together with growing awareness of the importance of physical fitness in extending lifespan. As this group in our society begins to assert itself in terms of its needs and rights to a quality lifestyle, new facilities, programs and directions are required to support this important increasing sector of our society.

The Bachelor of Education students aim to teach the younger population of today how to use their leisure time and in doing so produce a recreationally educated aged population of the future. As well as being both enjoyable and rewarding, the students found this practical experience with the Probus Club provided them with a closer insight into the needs, physical capabilities and interests of these older members of our community. They hope to use this knowledge in schools to assist in educating and developing sound recreational habits in our older citizens of the future.

IN SEARCH OF COGNITIVE PATTERNS

What can you do with 32 wooden blocks? Children at Mayfield West Demonstration School have been making models galore. Starting with eight basic shapes and four examples of each shape, the children built and built. Close behind, Third Year Industrial Design students from the University of Newcastle sketched and sketched. In the end the children won; there were many more models than drawings. Several of the children wanted to reverse roles; they took over the drawing job and set the university students to work building models.

When all the towers were knocked down, the Industrial Design students took their sketches to a 3D computer program. With 3D computer models, the Industrial Design students made up computer presentations to be taken back to the Primary School students.

This unusual creative meeting of university and primary school students is part of an Innovative Teaching Program being conducted by Keith Russell of the Department of Design. Keith recently took the computer presentations to Mayfield West Demonstration School to show the children the results of their model making. This presentation was made possible using computer equipment bought as part of a Teaching Committee grant. The same equipment allowed Keith to present examples of the Innovative Program while on a recent trip to the U.S.A.

Shown their 3D computer models, the primary school children were most impressed with the ability of the program to invent perspective views. Suddenly their models were huge buildings; buildings that could be rotated, tipped over and enlarged at the press of a button.

With hundreds of individual models now on computer, Keith looks forward to hundreds more. There seems no end to variation; what Keith is looking for is cognitive patterns. Do children go through stages of 3D cognitive growth; can these stages be predicted; can teachers structure ways to explore the development of 3D concepts; do adults continue to expand their 3D understanding; these are questions being asked.

According to Keith, the excitement created by the Innovative Teaching program, for the children and the Industrial Design students, is more than worth the extra effort. The Industrial Design students grasped difficult computer concepts more readily when they had a child start as their client. There was a real incentive to learn when the outcome was part of a bond with a child. For the children at Mayfield West it has provided an insight into a world of computer aided design that will be very much a part of their future.

Keith Russell
Department of Design
COMMUNITY RADIO 2NUR-FM

2NUR-FM's review of itself and its future was overtaken by the 1993 federal election campaign, and a welter of wider questions about the future of broadcasting, all sorts of communities, universities, and Australia itself. There is an elegant symmetry about that coincidence, given that university-based community broadcasting was introduced by the Whitlam government on the eve of the 1975 election and brought to fruition (against expectation) under Fraser.

Eighteen years on, with the generation which was conceived at the same time as community radio jostling for university places and the country searching for better ways to be clever, both sides of politics agree that Australia has to decide what it wishes to be, how it wishes to live and how it is going to pay its way in the world.

The same choice faces 2NUR-FM. To misquote the popular song, change is in the air. And, because that change will affect both the community and universities, there will be change on the air as well. The questions are "What change?" and "How will it be managed?".

Arts and film policy, which had flowered under Gorton and Whitlam, was still green fruit. The Australia Council and the Film Commission were being established, the Film and Television School was taking its first full-time students. Publishers still doubted our desire to read Australian literature. Commercial radio and television stations and motion picture distributors argued that no-one would watch or listen to Australian product. Yet, in drama and literature, art and music, on the screen and on the air, and against some odds Australia began to realise its own cultural identity, express it on its own voice and produce work that won critical acclaim and an audience, not only in Australia but wider, but at home also. There was a demand for it.

Community radio was part of the 1975 renaissance. Radio generally was in the doldrums. As popular entertainment, it had succumbed to cinema and television. Even talk-back, introduced in the late 60's, had apparently run out of puff. The ABC had just begun 24-hour radio on 2JJ (now JJJ-FM), but had not yet thought of ABC shops and selling programs on tape. Aunty remained a voluntary colony of the BBC - a province of transcription programs, clipped home-counties vowels and "gentlemen broadcasters". Margaret Throsby was yet to become the first woman since World War 2 to read the ABC news. Commercial radio too was stagnant, with stations competing by copying one another and US models. No new commercial station had opened in Sydney since the 1930's, or would until 2WS did in 1978. SBS, ethnic, multicultural and aboriginal broadcasting had not yet begun. Many and varied voices went unheard.

The relative emptiness of the communication landscape provided ample scope for a new kind of radio station, and a new approach to programming. Community radio might have been foisted on the Australian community by a small band of influential activists, rather than springing from any systematic needs analysis, that sort of rationality would come later.

Radio was at a watershed in 1975. As the number of radio receivers grew from less than one per household to more than one per person in Australia, radio ceased to be a mass medium, targeting the lowest common denominators of small audience, and became today's more personal medium.

As social values broadened the range of subject matter that could be addressed on air, and the language used to do so, radio became a more dynamic and vernacular medium. It also became more accessible both to audiences and to broadcasters - a medium of communication which not only transmitted programs but provided a focus for communal activity.

At the same time, other forces were at play. The 1973 Carmel Report on an open university had concluded that Australia had enough university and college places and did not need to follow the British O-BB model. Individual institutions needing and able to use distance education methods were encouraged to do so. Also there was a rising demand for adult, continuing and informal education, for all of which radio was a key asset.

Newcastle in 1975 had a daily paper, two television stations and four radio stations. The community wanted a broader choice of news, entertainment and information. The University wanted to expand and enrich its academic program. Community radio might have been dropped on them, its promise might have varied for different groups but, to all of them, it was welcome.

Today, the communication landscape has changed. There are fewer gaps. People have a richer choice of information and entertainment. Community radio has to both entertain and inform. And, while the University would have to provide adequate resources and incentives for the academics involved and 2NUR would have to provide the highest quality production, these costs would be marginal to those of their main operations and the benefits and would be considerable.

Communication students, no less than medical students, need clinical professional experience. 2NUR-FM offers them the opportunity to work under real-world conditions, learning not only to spin tape, operate control panels and be disciplined by deadlines, budgets and program concepts, but also to research, write and produce programs for real audiences. It further gives them a chance to see how their communication and cultural theory studies relate to an understanding of communities and audiences and the production of culture. Working with staff producers and volunteers, students would provide a corps of program-makers that the station could otherwise never afford.

In the beginning, the University looked to 2NUR to strengthen its academic program and the community looked to it for an alternative voice and an alternative sound. Australia now looks for more efficient and dynamic ways to improve employment and the quality of life. Community Radio 2NUR-FM and the University of Newcastle surely have a part to play in that, together. The question is simply How and When.

Frank Morgan
Department of Communication and Media Arts
SPARE ART SUCH MYSTICISM

The following is a modified version of an article recently published in the Australian by Faylene Rheem as a contribution to the debate over art practice being described as research in amalgamated universities.

The future of our universities may depend on keeping art free from the aura that surrounds current academic research. It is not difficult to define art practice in the same terms used for research science but such comparisons must be resisted if art is to avoid the governing measure of worth in academe today, that is: does it pay? Research is the quest for performative or saleable knowledge and no selfrespecting artist would ever want the description of research applied to her art practice.

Art long ago managed to dissociate itself from the physical and natural sciences, which were all born in artists' workshops. In the process, art became, like philosophy, free of instrumental imperatives; an activity with intrinsic value. No artist would want to go back to those times when art served the mistress of church, academy, state of sovereign and was duty bound to push, or paint, whichever particular form of ideology was dominant.

That universities today are research driven reflects their general loss of power and prestige within pragmatic capitalism. As the university has attempted to mimic the corporate world it has overplayed its own pragmatic function, to the point where the status of a university is measured by the physical and natural sciences, which dismisses as a preposterous assault on logic, the production of a billion finger paintings and clearly want to extend and batter the concept of university research.

Almost every Australian knows the name of the American painter, Jackson Pollock (who died in 1956) and, whether they feel awe or contempt toward him, I doubt if anyone would describe what he did as research. Not that his achievements cannot be defined in the same banal terms used for scientific progress. We need not claim that Pollock revealed some mystic truth to show he changed the way we perceive artistic expression. In the forty years since Blue Poles was painted our pre-schools have produced a billion finger paintings and are supplied with squeeze bottles for art in material testament to his influence. Before Pollock, such activity was outside the lexicon of legitimate art or creative activity. Any liberation of the human spirit that may have resulted is very debatable but the point is that one can demonstrate a change in paradigm triggered by Pollock's "discovery" in a similar way to the treatment of scientific change or progress. The same could be said of Sidney Nolan's "invention" of the Ned Kelly helmet to solve the problem of a new national symbol. I wouldn't be foolish as to develop this further by claiming that Pollock or Nolan were engaged in research, their achievement was too important to be so demeaned.

Research, as the new mysticism in our universities, can have no singular meaning in the minds of all academics. And it is probably best if we keep the term a little ambiguous because we all know what happened when academe attempted to define precisely the meaning of its original mission - the pursuit of truth and knowledge. Knowledge moved out of the scholar's study and into computer databases and philosophers (typically French) wrecked the concept of truth. Philosophy departments must be still busy trying to put it together again, as they don't seem to be doing much else. I'm not even sure that history teaches us lessons any more, but if it does, let's hope art never gets tagged with the term research. Because a consensus might develop that, if research is problem solving and the production of performative knowledge, it is best left to I.B.M. or Toyota. Universities will never produce a Sony walkman and nor should they try.

What universities need now is radical idealism. Is this likely to be found in a research laboratory? If art in the academic context can escape the research mentality that drives tertiary education our universities might produce what they desperately need - a Jackson Pollock.

Faylene Rheem is the pseudonym used by Ross Woodrow from the Department of Fine Art.

1993 BUDGET

When I made an enquiry about the deadline for this story, I was informed, rather dryly, that the presses could perhaps be held for a "riveting" article on the Budget.

Budgets are important and I am pleased to report, as Chair of Budget Committee, that the 1993 Budget has again maintained the University's policy of a balanced Budget, that is, that expenditure does not exceed income by more than 0.5%. The 1993 Operating Budget of the University is $113 M, with an estimated accumulated deficit of $450,000 by end 1993 (0.4% of the Operating Budget). This financial discipline has served this University well, notwithstanding the stresses and strains it has placed on the teaching and other operations of the University. In addition to the Operating Budget, Capital works amount to $10.5 M, and Discretionary Funds provide another $5 M for University use.

The Budget underpins the academic, administrative and other operations of the University; in a tight eight, the University continues to grow, with an additional enrolment this year estimated at around 690, bringing our total numbers to about 15,000.

As can readily be seen, the University has been substantially over-enrolled, putting pressure on space, teaching resources and staff. The 1993 Budget processes draw attention to the consequences of this over-enrolment and it is a pleasing feature of the 1993 enrolment that the University looks as though it will have pulled back some of this continuing over-enrolment. As new buildings come on stream next year, we should see some alleviation of pressure on lecture theatres and classrooms, and hopefully even parking.

Council approved the 1993 Budget at its February meeting. At its December meeting it had already approved the basis on which the Budget was to be prepared and a new format for Budget which established a Capital Fund showing the building and
1993 BUDGET
Continued from previous page

maintenance program for the future. A statement of building programs was incorporated in a previous edition of the Bulletin.

The University's high academic salary spending, which has supported a strong senior academic staffing profile, continues to cause concern. In spite of repeated strong representations to the Government, including by the Council itself, the University has not been funded appropriately for the national academic salary increases, thus restricting our capacity to improve staffing levels and support services. Some of the main features of the 1993 Budget are as follows:

(a) Central Coast Campus
   The Operating Fund allocation to the Central Coast Campus has more than doubled; in 1992 the expenditure in the Central Coast Campus was $858,000 which will increase to $1,885,000 in 1993. This increase reflects the rapid growth in students at the Central Coast, rising from 248 EFTSU in 1992 to a target of 364 in 1993. Capital works development at the Central Coast is also accelerating to complement the growth in the student population; the latest funding report provides some $11M for capital developments at the Central Coast Campus over 1993-1995.

(b) Growth In Schools
   Most of the Schools continue to grow in 1993. In terms of equivalent full-time student (EFTSUs) increases, the School of Economic and Information Sciences is expected to grow by 165; Science & Mathematics by 78; Education by 136; Engineering by 33; and Humanities and Social Science by 137. These increases have been offset by slight target decreases in the School of Art, Design and Architecture and the School of Health. The School of Medicine remains fairly static in terms of student load.

(c) Research Activities
   The research profile of the University in 1993 continues to expand. Now totalling almost $12M annually, these large programs of research reflect the University's size and commitment to both teaching and research, and its national standing. Of the research budget, $5.8M is obtained from specific Commonwealth Government Research programs; $0.5M is allocated from the Discretionary Fund; $1.2M is allocated from the Operating Fund; $2.2M is obtained from the National Health and Medical Research Council and the remainder from outside bodies.

(d) Law
   An establishment grant of $100,000 and an earmarked Law Library Development Grant of $300,000 were provided in 1992. For 1993, the first year of operation of the Law degree, the Library grant of $300,000 is repeated. Within the grant for the School of Economic and Information Sciences, an amount of $1.4M has been earmarked for the operations of the Faculty of Law.

(e) Library Materials Development
   Grant - $250,000
   This is a new initiative recommended by the Library Committee and the University Librarian, designed to provide upgraded support for selected courses in faculties developed out of former HIHE Schools; it will be focussed on the Huxley Library and the development of new areas of research. The program has been brought forward as the first year of a proposed minimum three-year program.

(f) Support for Creative Endeavour - $50,000
   This is a new grant provided to the Research Management Committee to enable it to provide special funding of creative endeavours. The funds will be available in response to bids from across the University and are intended to provide support for worthwhile creative projects that do not qualify as research projects.

(g) Equity and Access Program
   The Newstep program, the University's Commonwealth-funded targeted student equity program, has been expanded from 70 to 80 places; as the EFTSUs are funded from the Commonwealth grant, the program has now been "streamlined" and is funded from the Operating Fund at a cost of $130,000; also, staff costs previously met from the Equity Budget have been absorbed by Central Administration. As a result, it has been possible to institute a $100,000 program of support to the Student Support Office for students with disabilities, and to extend the Unilink program (schools access) to the Central Coast.

(h) Work-based Child Care Centre
   The Centre has been funded with a $480,000 grant from the 1992 Budget. The 1993 Budget also includes $80,000 for equipment and furniture for the Centre from the newly instituted Capital Fund; a recurrent subsidy will be payable in 1994.

(i) Minor Works and Maintenance Provisions
   The 1993 Budget continues a policy of seeking to build up these provisions. However, because of the pressure on funds, it has been possible to provide only $844,000 for Minor Works which, at 0.74% of operating expenditure, is still significantly below University average expenditure of 1.6%. Major maintenance provisions have been increased by only $150,000 (compared to $600,000 in 1992), giving a total fund of $884,000. Consultants to the Physical Planning and Estates Branch are carrying out an assessment of our long-term maintenance needs, which should be available by the middle of the year and be taken into account in the formulation of the 1994 Budget. It would be surprising if this review did not propose substantially increased expenditure on maintenance. A Grounds Refurbishment Program of $200,000 is provided for 1993 to restore and enhance the Campus environment and bushland setting.

(j) Staff Training and Development
   Staff training and development programs for academic staff have been boosted by special grants from the Commonwealth Government, including a $150,000 grant in 1992 for the training of women academics and a $228,000 grant in 1993 for the retraining of CAE academics in research. In the 1993 Budget, central funds for staff development for both academic and general staff have been maintained at their 1992 levels of $100,000 and $121,000 respectively. It is expected that the general staff award restructuring process will place special demands on the University for increased general staff training and development.

(k) Full Fee Student Income
   The final outcome for full fee student income for 1992 has been a satisfactory one with a further surplus, beyond earlier estimates, of some $463,000. The distribution of these funds is currently receiving attention.

In presenting the Budget to Council the Director of Finance, Mr Brian Penfold, described it as "tight but manageable". No budget ever satisfies all its customers, but it is a pleasing feature of the 1993 Budget that the University has been able to make provision for continued growth along with some important new initiatives.

It is evident that the growth rate in the higher education sector generally is slowing down and that the very high growth rates of the last few years experienced by this University will not be sustained for much longer. In short, we are going into tougher times. The 1993 Budget provides a sound base for the University's future development.

Lance Hennessy
Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Administration)
NEWCASTLE'S KILLER DISEASE

The 1960's. A time of freedom, choice, leisure, a strong Australian economy and long, carefree days in the sun. And a time in which a large percentage of Australian teenagers were developing melanoma (skin cancer). Indeed, the carefree days of the 60's have left us with some chilling statistics. Melanoma, which researchers say has a latent period of ten to twenty years, is now responsible for nearly 1,000 deaths a year in Australia. It is the second most common cancer in women and the third most common cancer in men in NSW - and it is on the increase.

Australia's melanoma expert, Dr Peter Hersey, from Newcastle University's Faculty of Medicine, says melanoma is truly a public health problem in Australia. And in particular in Newcastle, as the Newcastle region, along with the North Coast region of NSW, has the highest incidence of melanoma in the world.

Peter has been involved in melanoma research at several levels for a number of years. His secondary prevention program, conducted in association with the Newcastle Melanoma Unit, aims at implementing programs for early detection of melanoma. "We know that if patients present with melanoma at an early stage, they can be cured by fairly simple surgical excision," Peter explained.

An earlier study identified people over the age of 50 as those with the highest risk of presenting with bad prognostic melanomas. It is these people who Peter, and other researchers around Australia, hope to target with special prevention programs. A workshop, which will be attended by three or four key people from each State, will be held in Newcastle on April 29 to address programs for implementing early detection of melanoma.

"We would hope that this workshop will enable us to implement an early detection program in Newcastle next summer," Peter said.

But for some that is already too late. Peter's team is therefore concentrating efforts on developing treatments to help those people who have already had melanomas removed. "We know from the records that about 20% of patients with melanoma will go on and have further problems because the cancer has spread from their skin to other organs in the body."

The team is attempting to determine whether immunisation of patients with a melanoma vaccine may eradicate any residual melanoma that is left after surgery and thereby prevent recurrence of disease. "We are currently trying to characterise the antigens on melanoma cells which stimulate immune responses in patients," Peter said. "We would hope that within a few years we'll be able to develop a vaccine which we know will have appropriate antigens for the patient being treated."

Four hundred patients have already entered into a randomised control trial (of whom 200 received the vaccine). "It's now a matter of waiting to see what happens to the two groups of patients, and if at the end of a certain time there are more recurrences or deaths in the untreated patients, then we'll conclude that the vaccine has been of some benefit," Peter said. The vaccine would then become established treatment throughout Australia. Peter pointed out, however, that the vaccine is a therapeutic vaccine, and not a preventive vaccine. It may be possible one day to develop a preventive vaccine which may have a role in preventing melanoma in high risk families, he said.

The therapeutic vaccine was first developed by Peter's group in 1984. Since then there have been a great many developments in immunology, and the knowledge about melanoma itself has also increased. "We should therefore be able to make the vaccine more effective by tailoring it to target all the antigens on melanoma cells," he said. Research to date suggests that there may be as few as four to six crucial antigens on melanoma cells, however further testing is necessary.

Peter is also trying to understand the etiology of the disease. His studies support the idea that ultra-violet radiation has a direct effect on the immune system. It may be this lowering of the immune response as a result of repeated exposure to the sun which causes melanoma tumours to be established in the first place.

And "repeated exposure" may be as little as two erythemal doses (reddening of the skin) every day for a week. Worth contemplating before you expose your skin to the sun's rays next summer.
RESEARCH

RETRENCHED AND RETRAINED

By the end of this century some 52,000 employees in Australia's Textiles, Clothing and Footwear (TCF) industry will have lost their jobs. Most of those will have been retrenched in the 1990's. The reason? Government reductions in tariff protection. Ironically, the TCF Industry, established in the 1950's (because the Government thought it would be a good idea to have a substantial clothing industry in Australia), was formerly the most highly protected industry in this country - set up to supply the domestic market.

Now, forty years later, a substantial number of workers within the industry are losing their jobs. Many of these people have no training in the basic skills necessary to gain alternative employment. Many lack even basic English language skills. In order to address this problem, the Federal Government has made available labour market retraining programs, known as Labour Adjustment Programs, or LAP. They have also appointed independent researchers to evaluate these programs.

A three State academic partnership, which includes Newcastle University Geography lecturer, Phillip O'Neill, will assess the effectiveness of the LAP in assisting persons who have been retrenched from the TCF industries to obtain and retain employment. The group has received a $250,000 grant for the two year longitudinal study.

The study will look at ten locations around Australia; four in NSW (inner Sydney, outer Sydney, Newcastle, Lower Hunter), four in Victoria (inner Melbourne, outer Melbourne, Geelong, Northern Victoria), and two in South Australia (inner Adelaide, Mt Gambier). Phillip will be responsible for the NSW section of the study. 75 retrenched textiles, clothing or footwear workers will be selected from each of the ten labour market areas. Interviews will be conducted with all subjects by May this year and the study will be completed by the end of 1994 (prior to the next major round of tariff reductions in the clothing and motor vehicle industries).

Phillip says the study is of particularly significance to Newcastle and the Hunter Region. "In 1992 there were over 500 retrenchments in the textiles and clothing industries in this area," he said. A further 200 workers have been retrenched from the Depict Clothing Company at Kurri Kurri this year. There is ongoing uncertainty about plants in Cessnock and Maitland.

According to Phillip, retrenched Newcastle and Hunter Valley workers have generally reacted positively to the Government's retraining programs. "Initial investigations have shown that the Newcastle operation of the LAP program is exemplary," he said.

During the study, particular attention will be paid to five characteristics of retrenched workers: their industry, location, gender, English language skills and age. Phillip explained that they will also be comparing the labour market history of those who have taken up the LAP program with the history of those who did not. "We will look at differences in terms of the social, economic and cultural problems they face; their employment ambitions; their reasons for taking up or not taking up the LAP; their training and development needs; their skill levels; and their employment and training history since retrenchment."

The study will also look at the overall effectiveness of the LAP program in terms of the assistance provided; the appropriateness of the assistance; self-evaluation of assistance; self-evaluation of effects of LAP on lives and prospects; evaluations of changes in skill levels; evaluation of needs for additional assistance; and evaluation of employment and employment prospects.

"At the completion of the study we will be able to provide the Government with some insights not only into the retraining that follows tariff reduction, but also the effectiveness of the Government's retraining programs," Phillip said.

"If the study reveals that there are good reasons why the Government should undertake labour market retraining and assistance, then it makes it a lot more difficult for any Government to abandon these programs," he added.

Phillip says he fears that the situation could worsen if the present timetable for reform was abandoned in favour of negligible tariff rates, which could result in greater job loss in the TCF industry. He also fears for the future of the retraining programs. Under the Labor Government, retrenched workers are eligible for up to two years retraining assistance with an allowance. "People are thus given an incentive for undertaking a retraining program," Phillip said. Without the retraining program, their chances of future employment diminish considerably.

Phillip says that while the study may reveal that retraining is valued and successful as far as retrenched workers are concerned, it may also find that retrenched workers still have difficulty obtaining employment. "The industry employed a large number of women who, along with older men, may face particular difficulties in gaining employment elsewhere," he said.

The Federal Government's Department of Employment Education and Training is particularly interested in the effectiveness of the training programs, whereas the team of researchers undertaking the study is just as interested in why some retrenched workers did not use the Labour Adjustment Programs available to them.

DON'T PANIC!

Panic disorder affects up to 7% of the population.

If you experience shortness of breath or smothering sensations, dizziness, unsteady feelings or faintness, palpitations or accelerated heart rate, trembling or shaking, sweating, choking, nausea or abdominal distress, feelings of unreality, numbness or tingling sensations, hot flushes or chills, chest pain or discomfort, then you may be suffering from panic disorder.

The unexpected and intense nature of these sensations often leads people to think they are in danger of some physical or mental disaster such as fainting, having a heart attack, losing control or going crazy.

Recurrent panic attacks, which present a major problem, can occur unexpectedly and in almost any situation. A panic attack consists of an intense feeling of apprehension or impending doom which comes on suddenly.

Dr Justin Kenardy from the University of Newcastle's Psychology Department is undertaking pioneering research into the area of panic disorder. He is involved in a study which aims to assess the degree to which the efficiency of a cognitive-behaviour treatment program for panic disorder can be improved by the addition of computer-assisted homework and practice of therapy techniques.

The study, funded by the University of Newcastle, is being run as a collaborative project with Professor Barry Taylor of the Behavioural Medicine Program, Stanford University School of Medicine, USA. Free treatment is being offered to women between the ages of 18 and 50, who are experiencing at least two panic attacks per week. Women interested in participating in this study are invited to contact Michelle Mackintosh at the University's Psychology Clinic on 21 5075.
Launched in a research laboratory beaker, the Electrolytic Manganese Dioxide (EMD) plant at Mayfield has given Australia a major new value-added export industry. Run by BHP Minerals, a subsidiary of Newcastle. Now, the Australian Manganese Company Ltd (AMCL) is able to undertake this process in Newcastle. The value of manganese ore is increased tenfold by processing it to EMD (worth approximately AUS$2,000 per tonne). The company's annual capacity of 18,000 tonnes - enough for more than a billion alkaline batteries. The manganese ore, mined in Groot Eyland, was exported for value-adding prior to the establishment of the plant in Newcastle. The Electrolytic Manganese Dioxide (EMD), a black powder-like material, is being increasingly used worldwide as the energy source for alkaline batteries.

Electrolytic Manganese Dioxide is involved in a variety of research projects which they hope will gain them the competitive edge over their international competitors. This interest in research has resulted in a collaborative project between AMCL and the University of Newcastle's Mathematics and Chemistry Departments. Twenty-four year old Troy Farrell, an honours student within the Faculty of Science and Mathematical-Magic, will conduct research into electrochemical processes involved in alkaline EMD cathodes in the hope of developing a quantitative one-dimensional model of such a cathode. Troy's research project, which will conclude at the end of this year, is funded by a $2,000 scholarship from AMCL.

Troy says the aim of developing a mathematical model of an EMD cathode is to correlate theoretical predictions with experimental discharge curves. "The implementation of the model will allow both the confirmation and extension of our understanding of the electrochemical processes involved in alkaline EMD storage systems," Troy explained.

Troy's supervisor, Dr Sean McElwain from the Department of Mathematics, says the project is related to getting a more fundamental understanding of the role of "black mix" (or EMD) in batteries. "We are looking at the way in which particular protons move within the "black mix". In this way we are complementing other experimental work being undertaken in the University's Department of Chemistry," he said.

Troy explained that by developing a mathematical model, different parameters which may change the efficiency of batteries can be monitored. These parameters include EMD activity, carbon content and form, electrolyte concentration within the electrode, surface area of the electrode, and porosity. "AMCL will gain an important tool from this sort of fundamental understanding," Troy said. He also hopes that his research will assist in the development of more efficient household batteries.

A Nobel Rot

The Hunter Valley has long been associated with good wines. But few people would realise that one of our best drops can come from a "diseased" wine. The disease is known as Botrytis cinerea, or bunch rot, which at times may create a condition referred to as the "noble rot." The noble thing about this rot is that it can result in a wine with a market value of between $50 and $200 per bottle.

"Noble rot" results in water (but not sugar) being extracted from the grape. The concentrated sugar results in a wine which Dr Graeme McIntyre, from the Department of Geography at the University of Newcastle, describes as "exquisite and very curious...the first sip is sweet, and in the back of your throat it's dry."

In an effort to learn more about the cause and possible control of bunch rot, Rothbury Estate has enlisted the help of research scientists at the University. Graeme has been conducting research for Rothbury Estate since 1975. In recognition of the work he has done and to encourage young scientists to study viticulture, Rothbury introduced an Honours Scholarship at this University in 1987.

Peter Young, who has a Bachelor of Science degree (with a major in Geography) was awarded the 1992 scholarship and presented with a cheque for $2000. Rothbury presented the Department with a further $1500 for viticultural research.

Peter is conducting a study into microclimatology (a branch of Physical Geography). He is investigating spatial variations in relative humidity within a single vine canopy. This involves setting up monitors and special instruments, which he is doing with the help of experienced technicians from the University's Physics Department.

Graeme explained that bunch rot occurs in humid environments, which are typical of Hunter Valley vineyards. It remains a mystery to viticulturalists and vignerons why bunch rot will, at certain times, produce a noble rot. "We would obviously like to know more about it," Graeme said. "If we can control it and produce a recipe, then Australia's wine industry would certainly benefit.

The problem with bunch rot is that it can have devastating effects on crops," he added, quoting the old cliche "when it's good, it's very, very good, but when it is bad it's horrid", to describe the fungus. For this reason, viticulturalists have a "love-hate" relationship with the Botrytis fungus, he said.

At the moment the only way to control bunch rot (in its bad form) is by spraying with chemicals. Peter's honour's research may result in a new means of control which would be of benefit to the wine industry. The wine industry is one of Australia's most successful exporters. But, according to Graeme, the Europeans (in particular the French) are trying to keep Australian wines out of Europe. "Their reputations are on the line," he said, adding that the French are imposing artificial barriers to stop Australian wines entering the European market. These barriers come in the form of chemicals and Australian wine makers are thus endeavouring to use fewer disease controlling sprays.

Minimising chemical spraying will also have long term environmental benefits. Graeme says careful monitoring of the fungus is necessary. This will determine if and when spraying is necessary and, perhaps more importantly, will reveal the secret of the Botrytis fungus, the product of which, they say, tastes so good.
PONTIFICATUS MAXIMUS

"It is a non-negotiable editorial policy of this publication, one we share with the Washington Post, London Times and Outargambone Express!!" she thundered from the small but adequate office behind the photocopier.

"We will not", she postulated, "under any circumstances print unsigned Letters to the Editor. Nor will we print in these pages any material that is demeaning of a person; destructive of agreed strategies; incites class and factional warfare; or brings pasturulence upon the organisational health of this splendid place to whose history ofacademia and overseas, a system of car pooling works very well. The system relies on people who wish to have a ride in a private car standing under a sign which indicates their destination. As I walked through the carpark on the way to the bus and saw the many cars leaving the University each with one person in them, I thought to myself I wonder which of there is going to Merewether and indeed, I wonder which one is going to my particular street in Merewether. You and I know of course, that many of these cars were going quite near my place but it was impossible for me to know which one to choose to ask for a ride.

Therefore, my plan is that on the ring road of the University near both major exits, i.e. both Western and Eastern exits, a series of suburb signs can be erected. Any student wishing to go to that particular suburb would stand under the sign and hopefully, people going past in empty cars would stop and offer them a lift.

Of course this plan is filled with legal difficulties and moral and social problems. But taken in its simplest and purest form it would mean that somebody got a free ride, somebody else had company on the way home and hopefully, after a conversation, a car pooling system could be initiated such that the two persons or more in that car would then become a regular group coming to the University and leaving. This in the long run would cut down the number of cars I am sure and lead to better use of student resources.

Yours faithfully
Associate Professor Tim Roberts
Biological Sciences

Dear Editor

Driving out from the Chancellery via Student Union (Hunter) and the Central Animal House, I observed a new lot of "environmental mounds" being established in what I understood to be a student car parking area (Carpark No. 7 on Uni Map??). I raised the matter with Physical Planning and Estates and was advised that because of the problems with that car park (prongs, people getting parked in, etc) the area was being "ordered" and I was assured that no car parking spaces on a "normal" day would be lost. Others have commented that at least 200 car spaces have been lost. I question the use of the mounds to order the car park and wonder that there isn't a better (and possibly cheaper) way of organising the parking in the area. While I appreciate and applaud the idea of not cutting more trees down for car parks, regenerating growth and preventing soil erosion, I cannot, despite assurances to the contrary, comprehend what possibly appears to me to be a reduction in car parking spaces (the mounds must take up space!) nor can I understand the justification of the expense in doing so.

Maybe the students will soon have to start driving four-wheel drive vehicles for their trek into the wilds of higher education!

Sandra Hanchard

Dear Editor

In the March 8 edition of the Bulletin it was reported that Jonquil Deangelis had won an Engineering Prize. This prize was awarded on the recommendation of "The Engineering Department" for work he had undertaken in the course of his studies in 1991. This letter is to inform you that "The Engineering Department" is in fact the Department of Civil Engineering and Surveying which is one of five Departments in the Engineering Faculty of nearly two thousand students. It is surprising that the Bulletin is not aware of the structure of one of the largest and most successful faculties on the campus, particularly when it is located directly across the road from your offices in the Chancellory!

Professor Adrian Page
Head of Department

Dear Editor

LESLEY JACOVIT'S letter to the Bulletin addresses a serious gender issue on campus, that of contemporary attitudes towards women academics at the University of Newcastle.

Historically, women in Australia have had some considerable difficulty in gaining access to the corridors of knowledge, both in an educational and professional capacity. Where women have made inroads into the intellectual world, it has been on the same institutional terms as their male colleagues; utilizing the same educational objectives such as interest in the production of knowledge, teaching and research. The point being made here is that male and female academics have had to walk as well as work in the same corridors of "the ivory tower".

Yet the differences between men and women in academia, continue to be emphasised. The latest one at The University of Newcastle is that: "the University's women academics are, by nature, far more approachable", than their male colleagues; there is even a suggestion that women academics are "reader friendly".

It is inaccurate, patronising attitudes such as the one expressed by the University's Bulletin that continues to trivialise the significant relationship that women have built with the production of knowledge.

Yours faithfully
Inta Allegretti
Dept of Sociology and Anthropology

Dear Editor

Big bouquets and champagne for the Huxley library staff who have endured horrendous working conditions during massive renovations. They have kept smiling and somehow contrived to provide all the services we would expect over the summer period. Such stoicism deserves much praise and recognition.

Marie Williams
Curriculum Studies
CHINESE CONNECTION

Professor Zhu Qiliu, Dean of the Faculty of Management of the People’s University of Public Security, Beijing, is collaborating with Dr Roger Coldwell concerning comparative study of computer security in the S.E. Asian region. The incidence of computer crime has risen considerably in China over the last three years since they met through the Australian Computer Abuse Research Bureau of the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology. The collaboration is occurring through the Curtin Business School of the Curtin University of Technology where Roger is an Adjunct Associate Professor. They are planning an exchange of postgraduate students between Perth and Beijing under an international funding agreement. Various state Fraud Squads will be involved in the study.

THREE ACADEMIC STAFF ON THE EXECUTIVE OF HIGH PROFILE EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH ASSOCIATION

It is unusual for a number of members of one university to be represented on the Executive Committee of the Australian Association for Research in Education, but in 1993 three Newcastle academics are in that position. Professor Sid Bourke is the elected President, Dr Allyson Holbrook is the elected National Research Training Co-ordinator and Dr Roy Killen is an Ex-officio member by virtue of the fact that he is the Convenor of the 1994 Annual AARE Conference that will be hosted by this university. The AARE is one of the key research associations in Australian education with more than 800 members and a high profile annual conference. Last year its conference was held at Deakin University and attracted more than 600 participants. The Research Training Workshops are one of the Association’s most successful innovations, and the co-ordinator facilitates the movement of young and promising academics, and academics at the cutting edge of their field (including visiting academics) between universities so that new methodological and conceptual developments can be disseminated. Their travel expenses are covered by the Association.

CENTRAL COAST PROFESSOR HONOURED

The University is to honour a retired academic who has been a driving force behind the establishment of the tertiary education facility at Ourimbah on the Central Coast.

Emeritus Professor Clif Ellyett is to have conferred upon him at the 1993 Graduation Ceremony the Honorary Degree of Doctor of the University.

Clif Ellyett is a Foundation Member, and President of the Central Coast Tertiary Action Committee which was formed about nine years ago to seek the establishment of a tertiary facility on the Central Coast. He has played a distinguished role in the establishment of adult education on the Central Coast and also in the Hunter Region.

Warden of the Central Coast Campus, Associate Professor Michael Ewans, said Clif’s degree was well deserved.

"Clif has put a lot of time and effort into the campus, not just from the university perspective but also from the TAFE and community education perspectives,” Michael said.

“He has spent many hours working behind the scenes for the past nine years and he is the recognition is long overdue which Clif can be justly proud.”

In addition to honouring Professor Clif Ellyett, the University is to honour five other people in recognition of their outstanding service either to the university or to the community.

Five people, from various sectors of education and public life, will have their Honorary Degrees conferred upon them during the University’s 1993 Graduation Ceremony. The recipients are Mr Allan Beard (Doctor of Education), Mr Colin Glass (Doctor of the University), Dr Doug Huxley (Bachelor of Science), Miss Nancy Perkins (Master of Letters), Mr Michael Wilford (Doctor of Science).

COMPUTING SERVICES APPOINTMENT

Ms Julia Smith has been appointed Deputy Director of the University Computing Services (UCS). A science graduate from the University of London, Julia was formerly Manager of the Computer Systems Group.

First employed as a Systems Programmer at the University in 1975, Julia has seen many updates and changes in the computer systems used, and played a major role in their smooth implementation. Julia was Systems Manager for the ICL 1904A and a succession of VAX computers that followed. When the UCS was formed following amalgamation, Julia was involved in planning the structure of the service, and in particular, the formation of the Computer Systems group which included the new Help Desk service.

Director of UCS, Dr Paul Butler, said he was "very happy" Julia had got the job. "I think it’s going to be an excellent appointment and is already shaping up that way,” he said. "I am very pleased to be able to appoint a woman into senior management in this field.”

In her new position, Julia will be responsible for several areas of UCS activity, including user services, computer systems, computer laboratories and the Help Desk.

"Our main strengths over the years have been provision of central computing facilities, the campus network, and advice on computing and teaching,” she said. "I would want to assure that those services are continued and added to, whilst supporting the growing needs for computing services from Administration as fully as possible.”
UNIVERSITY SCIENCE GRADUATE AMONG AUSTRALIA’S BEST

A University of Newcastle science graduate was among 12 top science graduates in Australia to be chosen for the Australian National University’s Graduate Diploma in Scientific Communication. Danielle Lloyd, who majored in Biology at this University, will be assisted by a scholarship provided jointly by the ANU, the Shell Company of Australia, and the National Science and Technology Centre, Questacon.

The Graduate Diploma teaches students to work with the media, handle interviews, and develop public speaking skills. The aim of the course is to teach students to be competent, confident communicators of science and technology to general public audiences, and to be proficient in writing for scientific media.

Along with the other scholars, Danielle will spend half the year taking a miniature version of Questacon to regional and remote areas of Australia. In between the month-long tours she will study various forms of communication at the ANU.

Danielle Lloyd

SPECIAL FUNCTION PAYS DOUBLE TRIBUTE

More than six years of dedicated work was acknowledged by about 200 people when they recently said goodbye to retiring Vice-Chancellor, Professor Keith Morgan.

A special dinner organised by Convoca-

tion and the Friends of the University marked Professor Morgan’s retirement which took effect on March 31.

The function was cause for a double tribute as the 1992 Newton-John Award was presented on the night to Chairman of the Hunter Orchestra, Mr John Robson.

The Warden of Convocation, Mr Vic Levi, and President of the Friends of the University, Mr Keith Barbour, both said Professor Morgan had built many bridges between the university and the community. The Vice-Chancellor was always willing to contribute his thoughts and ideas and had supported both groups in their endeavours.

Professor Morgan is currently holidaying in England before taking up a teaching position at a Tokyo University.

Professor Keith Morgan

ELICOS STUDENTS GRADUATE

Command of the English language was given added importance for about 80 students from 18 countries who graduated from their university ELICOS courses before the start of studies this year.

The February graduation ceremony was the highlight of English language studies for the students who come mainly from the South-East Asian Region, but also the South Pacific and other countries.

The group, all full fee paying students, undertook the intensive English language courses at The University of Newcastle’s English Language Centre (ELICOS) which is located at Newcastle West.

Pro Vice-Chancellor (Development), Dr Les Eastcott, said most of the students have continued their studies at Newcastle this year, many enrolling in undergraduate degree courses.

“Some of the students have entered the Foundation Certificate Program while a few have enrolled in PhD research programs,” Les said.

“All of our overseas students have to meet set standards of English language and the ELICOS courses gave these overseas people the opportunity of gaining a competent command of English before enrolling in university courses.

“International students whose first language is not English need to demonstrate that they have proficiency in spoken and written English before undertaking their selected course and therefore the Language Centre is a very important component of their overall studies.”

Courses at the Language Centre range from four weeks through to 50 weeks and students can study at basic, intermediate or advanced levels.

Students who graduated earlier this year came from Korea, Japan, China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, The Philippines, Papua New Guinea, Fiji, Tonga, Kiribati, Nepal, Iran, Turkey and Italy.

The announcement of Mr Robson as recipient of the 1992 Newton-John Award was warmly greeted. The award, named after former Deputy Vice-Chancellor, the late Professor Brin Newton-John, recognises innovation and creativity in any field.

Mr Robson for many years had given artistic support and leadership to the Hunter Valley Theatre Company in addition to his role in nurturing the highly regarded Hunter Orchestra. He is also Chairman of the Friends of the ABC group.

In receiving his award, Mr Robson said he had been paid a tribute “for doing what I love.”

“I have had a passionate love for performing for a long time and I am pleased to be honoured in such a way - the award is something I will display with a great degree of pride.”

The “van Gogh’s Ear” is published monthly and edited by Sonja Duncan, with layout and design by Gillian Stack. Letters to the Editor (no longer than 300 words and signed); reports on outstanding and unusual research; news and human interest stories are welcome. Please contact either Sonja Duncan or Rosemary Roohan at the University’s Information and Public Relations Unit on 21 6440 or 21 6463. The “van Gogh’s Ear” is printed on recycled stock.