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PHONE: 6488 2315  FACSIMILE: 6488 1115
EMAIL: catering@guild.uwa.edu.au
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COVER: Supplies of fresh water were a vital component of Australian Government tsunami relief aid to Sri Lanka – see In the wake of disaster. (Photo: Focus, AusAID)

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Top: Tsunami chaos in Sri Lanka – see In the wake of disaster.
Centre: Fulbright Scholar Dr Andrea Li-Ying Ang – see In Focus.
Bottom: Robert Jacks Displaced ziggurat, oil and wax on canvas, at UWA’s Lawrence Wilson Art Gallery – see In Focus.

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Editor: Trea Wiltshire
Grad Briefs: Terry Larder
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Address Changes: Phone +618 6488 2447, +618 6488 7992 and +618 6488 8000, Fax: +618 6488 7996 (terry.larder@uwa.edu.au)
The vulnerability of communities living in seismically-active areas is much in the news following the Boxing Day tsunami and the Australian Government has been quick to extend a helping hand to tsunami victims, providing a $1 billion aid package to the devastated regions.

In this issue we talk to UWA oceanographer Professor Chari Pattiaratchi of the University’s Centre for Water Research who stresses the importance of public education programs for those in vulnerable areas, a point illustrated in Dr John Glover’s book *Geological Journeys: from Artifacts to Zircon*, published by the Geological Society of Australia’s WA Division.

Edited by Jenny Bevan, Curator of UWA’s Earth Science Museum, the book takes us on a fascinating tour, sampling 41 geological topics particularly relevant to humankind. In a chapter on volcanoes, Dr Glover, of UWA’s School of Earth and Geological Sciences, emphasises the value of cooperation between geologists and vulnerable populations by contrasting the fates of two cities during volcanic eruptions.

“The 1985 volcanic eruption at Nevado del Ruiz in Colombia destroyed the city of Armero 50 km away and almost no-one escaped. The 1994 volcanic eruption in New Britain destroyed much of Rabaul, but almost everyone escaped,” he writes. In Rabaul the staff of the volcanological observatory had thoroughly indoctrinated the population before the eruption, and eruption drills were practised at schools. When the eruption began, some 50,000 people left the city in an orderly way and the degree of preparation and public awareness ensured there were few deaths.

Dr Glover’s very readable book is on sale at UWA’s Edward de Courcy Clarke Earth Science Museum (which is open to the public and school groups). Phone: +61 8 6488 2681 (www.earthmuseum.segs.uwa.edu.au)

**THE CHINA CONNECTION**

Western Australia’s research and teaching links with China are extensive, and are strengthening. This active engagement – on political, educational, business and industry levels – has been underscored by the fact that the last six Australian Ambassadors to the People’s Republic have all been Western Australian, and five of the six are UWA graduates! In addition, many past and present business leaders and senior Commonwealth representatives in China share this WA background.

“These long government and ‘public affairs’ connections have created the fertile ground from which the current, extraordinary economic links between China and Western Australia have grown,” says Professor Paige Porter, Director of the UWA Institute for International Development.

The most dramatic business link was forged in 1992 with China’s decision to include LNG in its energy structure, leading to the largest resource contract ever negotiated in Australia, in 2002. As part of this contract, the UWA Business School and Curtin University’s Business School are establishing the Australian Centre for Natural Gas Management, thus sharing this State’s long industry experience by providing management and gas industry courses to those establishing the industry in China.

Professor Porter was instrumental in launching the well received current series of UWA public lectures on China being delivered by the current and former ambassadors and senior diplomatic and business identities. She also believes that this State has long needed a dedicated centre that provides a focus for China research and scholarship.

“While all WA universities have China scholars, none as yet has an in-depth academic program on China,” says Professor Porter. “UWA does offer a comprehensive Chinese language program and within the University an informal group has been working to establish a China Studies Centre that would provide such a focus and enrich the China connection. That goal is about to be realised with the establishment of a Confucius Institute partially funded by the Chinese government.”

In May, two ceremonies involving UWA took the University’s China connection to another level: one to recognise the establishment of the Australian Centre for Natural Gas Management, and another to establish the Confucius Institute, the only centre of its kind to be established in Australia. Both were attended by senior Chinese officials.
UWA'S FULBRIGHTS

With the help of Fulbright Postgraduate Awards, three UWA graduates will advance their studies in very different areas – diabetic retinopathy, human rights and international law, and the application of infrared technologies.

Dr Andrea Li-Ying Ang, the only Western Australian to win a Fulbright Postgraduate Award last year, travelled to Harvard Medical School a month ago. She will undertake a two year Masters course that will equip her to contribute not only as a clinician but through research.

Sarah Knuckey, who holds a 2005 fellowship will undertake Masters of Law studies at Harvard Law School, focussing on jurisprudence, international and human rights law.

Martin Soh’s 2005 fellowship takes him to the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering at the University of Minnesota. He will be investigating integrating optical and mechanical coatings into next-generation sensors and filters using micro-systems-technology.

The UWA graduate believes that the US and Australia share a burgeoning industry base that will benefit from the application of infrared technologies in areas such as homeland security, asset protection, agriculture, biomedical instrumentation, geophysical exploration and environmental monitoring.

“When, before portable and rugged devices can be commercially deployed the science of thin films and sensor systems needs to be improved,” he says.

FROM VILLAGER TO WORLD CITIZEN

When Noramly Muslim won a Colombo Plan scholarship to UWA in 1962, he had already travelled a long way from the village school that had been his introduction to the world of learning. Hard work and a string of prizes won him a place at the prestigious Malay College in Kuala Kangsar, and another scholarship saw him graduate with a PhD in Biochemistry at UWA.

When he returned to campus to receive an honorary doctorate earlier this year, the eminent scientist Dato’ Dr Noramly Muslim, who is dedicated to broadening international understanding through education, admitted that his first few weeks in Australia put him in “a state of shock”. He couldn’t understand the local accent nor the prevailing informality on campus– he himself turned up to lectures in suit and tie!

However the opportunity to mix with students with different ethnic backgrounds and world views proved invaluable. Much later, as Deputy Vice-Chancellor of the National University of Malaysia, he would initiate international bilateral programs to expand opportunities for Malaysian students and researchers.

A firm believer in the role that science can play in solving some of the world’s most pressing problems, Noramly Muslim’s career has taken him around the world. He was described at the March graduation as “a citizen of the world, committed to making a difference to the lives of others”.

Also receiving honorary doctorates were distinguished graduates Professor John Hay, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Queensland, Dr Gregory Bourne, an international figure in the fields of energy exploration and use, and an advocate for sustainable living, medical researcher, business woman and philanthropist Dr Patricia Kailis and Emeritus Professor John Bloomfield, a major architect of the Australian sports system.

SAVE THE CHILDREN BOOK SALE

The thought of unearthing a book you knew and loved or adding future reading pleasure to your library is hard to resist. The annual Save the Children sale at UWA’s Undercroft will see the usual long queues on 15th July as collectors, traders and book lovers gather for the opening.

“Amazingly we’re entering our fifth decade in association with UWA to whom we are indebted for ongoing support,” says Keren McCullagh of the University Branch of Save the Children.

The busy volunteers are looking for donations of books, CDs, DVDs, videos, records and sheet music (no school texts, encyclopaedias, weekly magazines or condensed books please). Material can be collected by phoning 9440 6411, 9312 3119 or

FROM FOCUS

Vice-Chancellor Professor Alan Robson, UWA Chancellor Dr Ken Michael, Dato’ Dr Noramly Muslim and Pro Chancellor Justice Christine Wheeler.

EXTENSION TRAVELS TO ANCIENT ATHENS

In ancient Greece a symposium (literally ‘drinking together’) was a social forum for intellectual pursuits and on August 11 the staff of UWA’s School of Humanities invites you to join them in the new University Club of Western Australia to discuss Plato’s philosophy of love over a shared meal.

This entertaining evening is one of many winter treats on offer from UWA Extension which also takes us on an extended exploration of ancient Egypt in the company of Professor Adel S El Menchawy, Associate Professor of Egyptology at the Arab Academy of Science and Technology. From July 25 – 29, the visiting professor will lecture on new discoveries in the Valley of the Golden Mummies, the art and architecture of ancient Egyptian civilisation and the development of Alexandria.

If you are in small business you’ll also want to check out the lectures by Associate Professor Tim Mazzarol, Director of UWA’s Centre for Entrepreneurial Management and Innovation.

For details and enrolment information, contact UWA Extension on 6488 2433 or visit: www.extension.uwa.edu.au

IN FOCUS

“As an urban studies student in the Geography Department, I appreciated that one of the challenges of decriminalisation would be designating areas in which prostitution could be directed – because while most people support decriminalisation, they don’t want the trade to be visible,” says Ms McKewon. In November 2003 the results of her honours thesis were published in the scholarly journal *Australian Geographer*.

Ms McKewon is now working on a Master’s thesis in UWA’s Department of History based on the research underpinning the book. While *The Scarlet Mile* is a descriptive history, the thesis will put the empirical data into a theoretical framework.

*The Scarlet Mile* traces the history of prostitution on the Goldfields from 1894 to 2004. Prior to the turn of the century, Kalgoorlie’s brothels were often run by international syndicates. After the turn of the century when families began to settle in the Goldfields, the open trade became an official headache, and Hay Street was officially but quietly gazetted in 1902.

Research for the book took the UWA graduate through mountains of council minutes, newspaper archives, town site maps and local history material.

Britain’s heir to the throne, Prince Charles, is known to be keenly interested in ‘green’ initiatives, and was clearly fascinated by the cutting edge Australian research he encountered during a recent visit to the Cooperative Research Centre for Plant-based Management of Dryland Salinity at UWA.

The Salinity CRC was showcasing research illustrating that eucalyptus trees can help to arrest salinity while also producing valuable products. Mallee trees not only soak up greenhouse gases and do a great job reducing salinity but, when harvested, deliver oil, activated charcoal (the most important component of air and water filters), raw material for particle board and biomass for energy generation.

Prince Charles also heard from a UWA research team cross breeding sea barley grass (a common weed) with wheat, Australia’s most important farm crop, with the aim of developing a plant that still yields valuable grain on saline land.

“What we have achieved is probably a world-first,” said Dr Tim Colmer. “We still have a long way to go, but if our current rate of success continues, we will remove a lot of the risk that farmers face with land that is becoming too salty to farm safely.”

“Local government officials and police never seriously tried to eradicate the trade in Kalgoorlie, believing that to be unrealistic in a town full of lonely miners, yet nothing about containment was officially documented. As a researcher I had to ‘read between the lines’ of official documents to appreciate what was happening on the ground.”

Elaine McKewon works as a Research Officer in the Department of Land Information. *The Scarlet Mile* is available from all major bookstores.

**Prince Charles shares a joke at UWA with Dr Hayley Norman of the CSIRO and farmer Tony York**

**UWA Expo 2005**

A diary date to note is UWA Expo 2005 on Sunday 18 September. This day-long event is always a great occasion for appreciating the full spectrum of what is on offer at this University. Prospective students will be able to participate in informative course information sessions that will be repeated throughout the day.

The community component includes faculty displays highlighting specific research projects, tours of the campus, including art galleries, museums and heritage tours as well as special community sport and cultural activities.

You can visit the Expo website on: www.expo.uwa.edu.au

**IN THIS ISSUE**

At its best, our Newsmaker column gives UNIVIEW readers a real sense of the individual behind a public persona – and of the journey that takes a UWA graduate from study to the upper echelons of their profession. This is particularly so in this issue which features Patti Chong who is currently General Counsel to the Corruption and Crime Commission.

Born in Malaysia into a family of 10 children, Patti Chong came to WA in an unhappy first marriage in her late teens. She worked as a waitress and in shops while studying for the mature age matriculation that secured entry to UWA and then to studies in Law. She admits that her early years in WA as a self-supporting student were lonely and that only “sheer grit and determination” got her through.

Recently voted by a WA magazine as one of this State’s most inspirational people, Patti Chong is now married to Ken Bates, a Consultant State Prosecutor in the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions, and is the mother of three teenagers. She is a feisty feminist and says that while women in law have made some progress, gender and racial barriers remain.

In a recent speech she told her audience: “I am proud to have been born a Chinese, proud to have become an Australian and would be prouder still if I were to become the first Chinese-born Australian judge. I have lots of life’s experiences and skills to contribute to a more equitable and just society. That is my ambition…”
“Making my life my argument...”

On completing a Masters degree in Public Health at Harvard University, no one was surprised when UWA graduate and paediatrician Annie Sparrow walked away with the Albert Schweitzer Award presented by the US university each year. The award recognises work and activities marked by ‘a reverence for life’, by an individual who has sought, as Schweitzer put it, to ‘make my life my argument’. The UWA graduate is currently using her Harvard fellowship to monitor the situation of refugees from the conflict-ridden Sudan. Trea Wiltshire reports.

As she talks of briefly running rural clinics for women in Taliban-dominated Afghanistan, of working with refugee children in Australian detention centres, of using a Harvard fellowship to work with Human Rights Watch, and of tackling the seriously under-diagnosed problem of foetal alcohol syndrome in outback Australia, you quickly appreciate that Dr Annie Sparrow is a graduate who works unstintingly for third world communities. And she includes remote Australian communities, with their often abysmal health records, in this ‘third world’ category.

While briefly back in Perth to visit family, Dr Sparrow talked of the Harvard Millennium Fellowship in Human Rights that sees her working with Human Rights Watch, an international organisation that monitors and documents violations in human rights around the world. Shortly after returning to the US to resume her fellowship work with Human Rights Watch, she was travelling again – this time to Chad where, along with a colleague, she visited nine refugee camps examining the issues of protection, gender-based violence and vulnerability to HIV.

While the United Nations debated and then demurred from labelling the Dafur atrocities as genocide, Annie witnessed one of its results: the steady stream of African refugees fleeing their homeland. Some 213,000 refugees now live in Chad and more arrive daily.

“As they have no hope of going home in the near future – in fact the likelihood is that the majority will be stranded in Chad for generations – protection and sexual violence are huge issues, particularly as Chad is such a poor country to begin with,” says Annie. “The conditions under which the refugees live are terrible – several thousands were without tents for four months – totally without shelter from the 40 degree heat and the terrible sandstorms.”

At the inaugural Karrakatta Club Lecture at The University Club recently, Annie said that conflict and its aftermath dramatically illustrate the relationship between health and rights.

“Many of us will remember the horrific of Rwanda, and its commemoration last year with the echoing ‘Never again!’ Yet the conflict in Darfur in Sudan is now in its third year, with at least 180,000 civilians dead and 2.4 million displaced as a result of crises against humanity. Government forces and militias have systematically targeted African civilian communities: bombarding, killing, raping,
forcibly displacing and destroying hundreds of villages.”

After graduating and working as a paediatrician in Princess Margaret Hospital, Annie felt a need to move into the wider arena of public health and, on advice from UWA’s Professor Fiona Stanley, Director of the Institute for Child Health Research, she enrolled in the Master’s program at Harvard School of Public Health.

“When I began working in the Kimberley and Alice Springs and saw the breadth of problems, I felt I had to move into public health. Suddenly I became aware of issues like equity of care. I saw that the geographically and ethnically marginalised automatically got inferior care. They don’t have the same access to resources; they don’t have the money or means to use resources that exist. Where there are language and cultural barriers, people get treated differently.

“There is such an integral relationship between health and human rights and I would like to be able to raise awareness of that in Australia, particularly in relation to Aboriginal people who have been, and continue to be, marginalised on a social and economic basis.”

Annie sees foetal alcohol syndrome and alcohol and drug abuse as the result of historical loss of rights, geo-ethnic marginalisation and the loss of identity it engenders. Her research into building capacity in foetal alcohol syndrome is ongoing and is being supported by the Institute for Child Health Research.

“Because the syndrome is difficult to diagnose and doctors haven’t been trained to identify it, we only become aware of it later – when a child displays poor language development, an inability to pay attention, or delinquent behaviour. There are few diagnostic tests, only three cardinal physical and mental signs in the most severely affected: facial anomalies; growth retardation, and neuro-developmental problems.

“The US has developed a coding system but it generally takes a team of specialists to make a proper diagnosis so it’s extremely labour intensive. In the US and Canada foetal alcohol syndrome has reached epidemic proportions. In Australia we don’t have the data to know the extent of the problem in Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians. Certainly the US and Canada are light years ahead of us in raising awareness among white, Native American, First Nation and Inuit communities and in making services available to identify mothers and children at risk.

“In Australia we need a national task force that will organise workshops and conferences to raise the profile of this condition. And while we can target single problems like this, unless we also tackle the bigger issues that produce Aboriginal ill-health in the first place, our public health initiatives simply won’t work.

“A major focus of the Millennium Development Goals is the improvement of maternal and child health. The Goals, however, do not talk about rights. If you build rural clinics and train community health workers, you will get a healthier population. Although needs and rights usually lead to the same health outcomes, rights bring the broader picture into sharper focus. Thus if you also recognise that health is related to education (and both are fundamental human rights) it becomes easier to institute changes that people can recognise as valuable and work towards as a whole.”

Annie spent two weeks last year in Mazar-i-Sharif in the north of Afghanistan: planning, teaching, and completing a sustainable school-screening project. This involved training 12 staff in basic health care and research methodology, focusing on anaemia, skin and urinary tract infections. Her brother Philip and his wife Julie (both UWA graduates) live in Mazar, working in community development and building local capacity in health, sanitation, agriculture and microcredit programs.

Currently, she says, it is a fairly fraught environment, with little incentive for foreigners to visit following the various bombs in Kabul and the abduction of the three aid workers. UNIVIEW ran articles on Philip and Julie in June 2001.

Annie’s father, Associate Professor Malcolm Sparrow, is an Honorary Research Fellow in Physiology at UWA and her sister Dr Louise Sparrow is also a UWA graduate.
The case for compulsory amenity fees

Throughout its history The University of Western Australia has built a reputation as a learning institution of the highest quality and standing that is acknowledged for the unique student experience it provides.

UWA’s founders recognised the value of such an experience which is why, along with the role of graduates, the role of the student body was incorporated in legislation to establish the University. It was a deliberate act to reflect the belief that a university and university life should encompass the human experience of shared activities – academic, cultural, social and sporting.

Recent Federal Government legislation sets out to establish a system of voluntary student unionism in Australia, something that is already an option at UWA. However, the new legislation also includes a prohibition on charging a compulsory student amenities fee.

The amenity fee levied by this University funds the provision of a wide range of important services to students, with 70 per cent of the fee being allocated to the UWA Student Guild and 30 per cent to the UWA Sports and Recreation Association. The funding supports educational assistance and study skills help, childcare, financial assistance and advice, counselling services, student representation and advocacy, on-campus catering, and a range of sporting and cultural clubs that are recognised as an important part of campus life. It expressly does not (and cannot by Statute) go towards the support of political causes. The Guild has to provide an annual, audited account of expenditure to the Senate and an explicit assurance that funds have been applied to approved purposes.

The Federal Government has questioned why all students should pay for these services if not all use them. This is in fact no different to the taxation system or local government rates, where members of the community pay collectively for essential services whether they access them or not. Providing such services is an accepted part of running a society for the greater good.

The removal of these benefits will hit students hard, particularly those from economically disadvantaged backgrounds and those who do not have ready support systems.

“The removal of these benefits will hit students hard, particularly those from economically disadvantaged backgrounds and those who do not have ready support systems.”

Social interaction on campus is now also very much enhanced by our fine new University Club of Western Australia.

Every time I visit the new University Club I am struck by the range and number of people using this excellent new facility. To me this is a sign that we are achieving some very important objectives: we are providing the sort of high quality facilities expected by those working in a modern university; we are re-connecting with many former staff and students; and we are making new connections into the community. The University Club opened its doors with around 4,000 members – and the number continues to grow!

For our staff, the University Club enriches our social, academic and professional lives by encouraging friendship and promoting inclusivity. For alumni, it is a reflection of our commitment to develop long-term relationships. And for both the University and the wider community, we have state-of-the-art facilities for conferences, seminars, workshops and functions which, in the past, we have been unable to provide.

No wonder its opening has stirred such pride on campus and such an enthusiastic response beyond!

Professor Alan Robson
Vice-Chancellor
The Earth’s tectonic plates have become the focus of special attention since the Boxing Day tsunami and subsequent earthquake claimed so many lives in our region. Understanding the nature of tsunamis – which a UWA oceanographer says could well affect our coastline – measuring the seismicity of our own State, and tracking WA earthquakes that are far more frequent than most people realise are all being studied at UWA.

Boats washed ashore in Sri Lanka, flooding of Galle road damage, and to Payagala railway station (Photos: Chari Pattiaratchi)
Western Australia has, over the years, recorded the effects of tsunamis that have caused widespread devastation in Asia. After the violent 1883 volcanic eruption of Krakatoa in Indonesia, it recorded the unusual tidal surges quoted above. More recently, a six metre tsunami reached the North West coast of WA after a 7.2 magnitude earthquake in Java in 1994. It swept fish, crayfish, rocks and coral inland for a distance of 300 metres. In 1977, a six metre wave was recorded at Cape Leveque to the north of Broome.

The unimaginable horror of the Boxing Day tsunami was a grim reminder of the devastation that can occur when the Earth’s carapace shifts violently due to the movement of tectonic plates. It also brought home the fact that there is much researchers need to know about the nature of tsunamis.

One of this University’s academics familiar with data related to tsunamis was close to the horror waves that hit Sri Lanka on Boxing Day. He is urging the Federal Government to establish a tsunami warning centre in Perth and is calling for more research and public education programs to better prepare the region for future events. WA Premier Geoff Gallop has proposed to the Federal Government that an Indian Ocean tsunami warning centre be located in Perth.

UWA oceanographer Professor Chari Pattiaratchi of the University’s Centre for Water Research was driving from the capital, Colombo, on Boxing Day. He recalls that a breakfast stop probably saved his life because a six metre wave swept away the road on which he had been travelling. Turning back for the capital he also escaped the second, much larger, wave that deluged the low-lying coastline. Thereafter his phone rang hot as Sri Lankan government officials – knowing of his expertise – sought his opinion on the possibility of further waves.

Shortly after returning to UWA, Professor Pattiaratchi convened the Indian Ocean Marine Environmental Conference at UWA during which delegates discussed the setting up of a warning system similar to that operating in the Pacific. The president of UNESCO’s Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC), Dr David Pugh, was a plenary speaker. One of those attending was UWA graduate Dr Sarah Grimes, now based in Fiji where she is promoting tsunami warning education in regional school and community education (see Grad Briefs).

Professor Pattiaratchi believes this University, with its wealth of expertise in the area of oceanography, could play a leading role should the Federal Government establish a tsunami warning system in this State. He says the University also has a role to play in public education, training and awareness programs for the region. Public education plays a vital role in reducing deaths caused by tsunamis and earthquakes (see In Focus). The IOC hopes to establish an Information Coordination Group that focuses on public education and brings together expertise on tsunamis and other coastal hazards.

“The Centre for Water Research could contribute to the development of materials, software, web-based information as well as running lectures, workshops and short courses for the 27 countries in the Indian Ocean region. Clearly, given the devastation of the Boxing Day tsunami and the March earthquake off Nias, there is a real need for action in this area.”

Professor Pattiaratchi says that following the Boxing Day tsunami, researchers had predicted the March quake in Indonesia, which did not however result in a second tsunami. He believes that further quakes are inevitable on the Ring of Fire arc running south – making the WA coastline vulnerable.

“The first quake sent water across the Indian Ocean, the second at Nias sent waves in a south-westerly direction. If a third quake occurs off Sumatra, it could send waves south towards WA. Particularly vulnerable areas would be our tropical north coast, in those areas where the continental shelf (that tends to dissipate wave energy) is narrow.”

– Professor Chari Pattiaratchi
as the Exmouth Peninsula. The region from North West Cape to Broome is also vulnerable, as is the low-lying area between Bunbury and Dunsborough. Deep underwater canyons, such as that off Rottnest, tend to focus the water of a tsunami, sending the uplift of water even higher."

Professor Pattiaratchi says that at present Indian Ocean countries have no way of determining whether an earthquake will generate a tsunami. "We won’t have that information until we have a network of tsunami buoys similar to those in the Pacific that are centred in Hawaii," he says. "The United Nations is keen to see such a seismic network established in the Indian Ocean, but whether countries agree to work cooperatively remains to be seen. For instance, India appears reluctant to be part of a regional initiative. It has suggested establishing its own warning system that would also serve the region, but that is not considered ideal."

Professor Pattiaratchi says that the creation of tsunamis depends on the depth below the sea bed at which the earthquake occurs and on the amount of energy released (higher than 7 and 7.5 magnitude).

"In deep water, where earthquakes which cause tsunamis occur, the wave height may initially be quite small; but as it gets close to the coast its height increases. Tsunamis are mainly generated where there are trenches and intersecting plates as happens in the so-called Ring of Fire where most earthquakes occur. The Boxing Day tsunami was generated by a quake in the Java/Sunda trench."

"The quake occurred at a depth of 30km and resulted in a 1,000 kilometre length of the seabed moving 10 metres, setting up a series of acoustic waves that swept the Earth in 100 minutes. This was a global event with waves being recorded half-way across the world, and sea level oscillations continuing for days afterwards."

"In Sri Lanka (the size of Tasmania, with the same population as Australia and with five million living within five kilometres of the coast) the continental shelf ranges from 20 to as little as one kilometre in width. So where the shelf was narrow the island felt the full effect of the tsunami. Two-thirds of the coastline was devastated, half a million people were without housing, 31,000 were dead and 5,000 were missing.”

The Sri Lankan-born UWA researcher continues to provide advice to the Sri Lankan Government and has been acknowledged as an eminent Sri Lankan scientist. The Centre for Water Research has a Memorandum of Understanding with the National Aquatic Resources and Development Agency in Sri Lanka which facilitates visits of UWA scientists to educational institutions on the island.

The study of tsunamis and coastal hazards is part of the 4th year oceanographic engineering unit at UWA and is part of the Bachelor of Engineering majors in Applied Ocean Science and Environmental Engineering. It is also available for students majoring in Marine Science within the Bachelor of Science degree.

If you would like to know more about the Centre for Water Research, visit the website: www.cwr.uwa.edu.au

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**Charting WA’s Seismicity**

Australian researchers are currently investigating the forces that drive the motion of the Earth’s tectonic plates and the distribution of stresses that give rise to earthquakes. UWA researchers have just launched a project (supporting by multinational mining companies) to learn more about the seismicity of the State’s north-west which accommodates major export industries. UWA’s Tectonic Special Research Centre is currently beginning a project that looks at seismic activity of the State’s northwest coast. This research involves UWA’s Dr Myra Keep, Professor Brian Kennet at the Australian National University and Dr Phil Cummins at Geoscience Australia. UWA graduate Professor Phillip Playford from the Geological Survey of WA will also be working with the research team.

“We will be deploying six seismic monitoring stations at locations around the north-west that will pick up large earthquakes as well as recording the much smaller and more frequent earthquakes that occur on a daily, weekly or monthly basis. Most are too small to be felt by humans yet they provide important information as to the background earthquake activity in the region,” says Dr Keep.

“This research will enable us look for evidence of fault activity and tsunamis in the geologically recent past – which
The biggest recorded WA ‘quake (magnitude 7.2) happened in Meeberrie during April of 1941, when the world was at war and destructive forces were being unleashed on the other side of the world. Because of its timing, the Meeberrie quake was largely unstudied except in its essential details. Its epicentre was 200km northeast of Kalbarri and it was felt as far north as Port Hedland and as far south as Albany. It left a surface rupture 40 km long.

Mr Dent can also tell you about ‘earthquake swarms’ that have occurred in the northern wheatbelt town of Burakin, a tiny farming settlement 200 km northeast of Perth. An earthquake swarm – a series of small quakes – commenced in the Burakin area on 16 September 2000 and lasted for well over a fortnight. Whereas the focus of the Meckering quake was seven kilometres deep, most of the ‘swarm’ quakes are believed to have occurred less than two kilometres below the surface, the largest event being of a magnitude 3.6. In September 2001, a new and larger swarm commenced in an area about 15 km north-west of the original swarm.

“In the six months from September 2002, there were four earthquakes of magnitude 5.0 or more, and approximately 18,000 smaller events,” says Mr Dent. “Some residents in the region felt thousands of these earthquakes. Many buildings within 25 km of the activity suffered minor damage, but none had major structural damage.” The activity at Burakin has been described by Geoscience Australia as the most significant seismic activity in Australia for the last 40 years.

Mr Dent says that the level of seismicity in WA from December 2004 to mid-March 2005 has been high, particularly in the south-west of the state. A high level of activity near Burakin continued into early December before migrating east, with earthquake swarms being recorded southwest of Kalannie and then north of Koorda. Activity at this location has continued with the largest earthquake in Australia so far in 2005 occurring there on March 16, with a magnitude 4.2 event.

Vic Dent has long been fascinated by earthquakes and volcanoes. He spent seven years at the Rabaul Volcanological Observatory in New Guinea within the so-called Ring of Fire, an area of volcanic arcs and oceanic trenches that encircle the Pacific Basin forming a zone vulnerable to earthquakes and volcanic eruptions. At the time he was
working with Geoscience Australia, and was on secondment to the Geological Survey of PNG.

During this time, he recalls, the observatory would register 10 quakes a day. “I became very sensitised to quakes, waking in the night to small events that would not have disturbed others and verifying them on the charts the next day. There was at least one quake almost every day! In one month I remember noting about 30 events! We would ignore smaller events that would have been noted in Australia.”

Mr Dent studied geology at the University of Sydney (and later completed a Master’s at UWA). After completing undergraduate studies, he underwent further training as a geophysicist when he joined the Commonwealth Government. One of his first assignments was at the Australian base in Antarctica.

At Mawson Station he ran the seismology and geomagnetic station for the Australian Antarctic Division. The seismological observatory detects and locates earthquakes and nuclear explosions, while the geomagnetic observatory records changes in the Earth’s magnetic field that originate in the Earth’s crust. In addition it charts the more rapid variations caused by electric currents in the upper atmosphere that are related to the Sun’s activities. Both observatories form part of a data-collecting global network.

“The magnetic side of the observatory’s work is fascinating because you are close to the geomagnetic poles where all the magnetic field lines come close together. Because of this you can get amazing magnetic storms – wild variations that are an interesting phenomenon associated with those luminous aurora lights. “Basically they are the reason why Mawson wanted to locate the south magnetic pole. Like the base of rainbows, the geomagnetic poles keep moving and the base in Antarctica tracks these movements”.

After spending 25 years working at the Mundaring Geophysical Observatory, Mr Dent joined the School of Earth Sciences in an honorary capacity. His main focus is maintaining an informative website on seismicity in Western Australia which – among a wealth of other useful facts – points out that we live in a region considered to be the most seismically active part of the Australian continent. About 400 earthquakes a year are detected by seismographs between Geraldton and Albany in what is termed the Southwest Seismic Zone.

If you want to read about subjects as diverse as the history of seismology, seismic research at UWA, the Asian tsunami in WA, and about the major quakes in our region, visit www.seismicity.segs.uwa.edu.au/

Mr Dent is also keen to hear from people with information about seismic activity. He can be contacted at: vdent@segs.uwa.edu.au

City of Subiaco
LOCAL HISTORY
Awards

Entries Close 5pm Wednesday
7TH SEPTEMBER 2005
MAJOR AWARD $1000

ENTRY FORMS – City of Subiaco Museum, Library and Council Offices or www.subiaco.wa.gov.au
IN THE WAKE OF DISASTER

UW A graduate Dr Sudhakar Rao with Zulfahmi, one of his Aceh patients

When the Boxing Day tsunami devastated Aceh in Indonesia, UWA graduate Dr Sudhakar Rao put together a WA emergency team that became part of the Australian Government’s response.

Aftermath of the tsunami on Aceh (Photo: The West Australian)

UWA graduate Dr Sudhakar Rao, Head of Trauma Services at Royal Perth Hospital, won’t easily forget landing in an RAAF Boeing at Aceh three days after the Boxing Day tsunami that devastated the Indonesian province.

“It was dusk and the last light was reflected in the huge expanses of water that lay over much of the landscape – and there was an eerie silence,” he recalls. “There were only three planes on the runway and two of them were Australian. It was a moment when we all felt really proud to be part of the relief effort.”

Within 36 hours of being asked by Emergency Medicine Australia (at the request of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade) to put together a WA tsunami relief team, the Health Department had assembled two surgeons, two anaesthetists, an emergency physician, four emergency nurses, a theatre nurse and a public health expert. The team flew to Sydney where equipment for the mission had been gathered and a NSW relief team was assembling. Some of the joint WA/NSW team were sent to Sri Lanka, others to the Maldives, but most of the local volunteers were sent to Aceh.

As the volunteers unloaded some 17 tonnes of equipment at Aceh airport, they appreciated how much they would be needed. “Of the province’s 400 doctors, we were told that only 14 had survived,” said Dr Rao. “It appeared that many of the severely injured old and very young victims had already died in the first couple of days. Those who gathered at the hospital we worked from were mainly young adults. None shed tears, most were in shock and they were grateful for our help. The saddest thing was there didn’t seem to be any intact families left – just shreds of families.”

Seeing up to 300 patients a day and often falling into bed after midnight, the team made a big impact – as did Australian Defence Force personnel who helped to provide 20,000 litres of drinking water a day, thus averting the secondary wave of infections that doctors had feared. Locals also rallied, providing rice for the injured.

During their week in Aceh, the doctors and nurses were constantly unnerved by the shuddering after-shocks – some up to 6.7 magnitude – that shook the area as they worked around the clock. There were also fears of confrontation between Aceh rebels and the Indonesian army, but these receded when the international media descended on the province.

Being there, says Dr Rao, was an exhausting but rewarding experience. “Everyone involved felt that it was a privilege to be part of the team – and it was a team that extended back to Royal Perth Hospital where people picked up our jobs so that we could go.”

Dr Rao is no stranger to trauma – it is an area of medicine that has drawn him since he graduated in 1984. He then completed specialist training in liver transplants at a Harvard University teaching hospital, and in trauma at Royal Perth Hospital. As Head of Trauma Services at Royal Perth he has been active in developing this vital area within the State and is currently WA Chair of the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons’ Trauma Committee.

In 1995, Dr Rao established a trauma registry that brings together data on accident victims from all adult teaching hospitals. This initiative enabled local hospitals to develop trauma systems, devise effective interventions and tackle prevention issues. Last November the State Government announced that coordinated trauma units would operate in both Royal Perth and Princess Margaret Hospitals.
Having participated in both Federal and State elections within the past nine months, Western Australians are mindful of the strengths of a democracy that stands in stark contrast with troubled regions where political rights are either non-existent or are battling to emerge. Australia’s strong bicameral parliaments have undergone important changes over the past half-century and UWA political scientist Dr Bruce Stone says that the revival of the Senate and the strengthening of State Legislative Councils make our brand of democracy unique – and increasingly studied by nations considering reforms to their upper houses.

While most of us don’t spend much time thinking about the political infrastructure that delivers democracy, our strong bicameral parliaments at regional and national levels are currently exercising the minds of political scientists and parliamentarians around the world.

Dr Bruce Stone, Chair of Political Science and International Relations within UWA’s School of Social and Cultural Studies, has conducted research on bicameralism and democracy – in particular, the transformation within the last half-century of Australia’s State upper houses. And his findings are likely to be studied in turn by countries considering changes to upper houses deemed to be ineffectual.

While federations typically have two national legislative chambers, the strength of our national and regional chambers makes Australia a showcase example of bicameral parliamentary democracy says the UWA researcher.

“Upper houses in federations have varying degrees of effectiveness,” observes Dr Stone. “Canadians have shown interest in Australia’s upper house at a national level because its own is relatively ineffective and the nation has experienced much regional disaffection. A strong upper house is often seen as a mechanism to protect regional interests.

“Italians have also shown interest in our system. In recent times Italy has changed its electoral system in a search for greater governmental stability and may look at further reforms because its upper house lacks a clear role, given that its composition tends to be similar to the lower chamber.”

In Turin, the Italian Centre for the Study of Federalism recently established a multi-country study of second chambers and Dr Stone has contributed a paper on the Australian Senate.

“Bicameralism was once viewed as having dubious democratic credentials,” says Dr Stone. “This may account for the lack of attention given to upper houses – apart from those in the United States – by modern political science.

“There was a period during the 1950s and 60s when bicameral systems were falling from favour and countries were abandoning their upper houses or considering doing so. However these institutions have been making a comeback over the past few decades, and there now appears to be renewed interest in keeping and refurbishing upper houses.

“Britain’s House of Lords has been reformed in some measure. Hereditary membership has been greatly reduced, with the Lords becoming essentially a chamber of appointees. While Prime Minister Tony Blair promised to make the Lords more ‘democratic and representative’, it is presently uncertain whether the Lords will ever become a truly democratic, elective chamber like those with which we are familiar in Australia.”

Dr Stone believes there has been a revival of appreciation of institutions such as upper houses which disperse political power. In the case of Australian upper houses this attitudinal change has been underpinned by institutional change.

“From an apparently failed ‘States’ house’ at the midpoint of the twentieth century, the Australian Senate was continued on page 32
Calendar of Events

Please note: These events and dates are subject to change please confirm event details on the Club website at www.universityclub.uwa.edu.au or by phone on +61 8 6488 8770.

June

Friday 3
FRIDAYS ON THE FORESHORE
Drink specials and Matt Styles Quartet
4.30pm-late, Club Café & Bar

Monday 6
FOUNDATION DAY BUFFET LUNCH
Live music from 'Stringy Bach' Quartet
12.00pm-1.30pm, Club Ballroom

Thursday 9
MATILDA BAY BEER DINNER
7.00pm-late, Club Restaurant

Friday 10
FRIDAYS ON THE FORESHORE
Live Jazz and drink specials
4.30pm-late, Club Café & Bar

Wednesday 15
LADIES CLUB LUNCHEON
2 course luncheon, fashion show and guest speaker, Prof. Fiona Wood AM
12pm-1.30pm, Club Ballroom

Friday 17
FRIDAYS ON THE FORESHORE
Live Jazz and drink specials PLUS Jerry Fraser's Oyster Shucking from 4.30pm – late, Club Café & Bar

Friday 24
FRIDAYS ON THE FORESHORE
Drink specials and live music
4.30pm – late, Club Café & Bar

Wednesday 29
WINE SERIES 04: SELECTED IMPORTS
Tastings from near and far. 5.30pm-7.00pm, Formal Private Dining Room

July

Friday 1
CLUB END OF FINANCIAL YEAR PARTY!
Live music, Happy Hour 5-6pm PLUS Jerry Fraser's Oyster Shucking
4.30pm-late, Club Café & Bar

Thursday 7
MATILDA BAY BEER TASTINGS
Matilda Bay Beer Tastings
5.30pm-7pm, Formal Private Dining Room

Friday 8
FRIDAYS ON THE FORESHORE
Live jazz and drink specials
4.30pm-late, Club Café & Bar

Thursday 14
CHRISTMAS IN JULY DINNER
7.00pm-late, Club Restaurant

Friday 15
FRIDAYS ON THE FORESHORE
Live music and drink specials
4.30pm – late, Club Café & Bar

Friday 19
BREAKFAST BY THE BAY #2
With special guest speakers
7.15am -9.00am, Club Ballroom

Friday 22
FRIDAYS ON THE FORESHORE
Live music and drink specials
4.30pm-late, Club Café & Bar

Saturday 23
'MEMORY MASTERS' QUIZ NIGHT
7.30-10.00pm, Club Café & Bar

Wednesday 27
WINE SERIES # 5
Cape Mentelle Wines
5.30pm-7.00pm, Formal Private Dining Room

Friday 29
FRIDAYS ON THE FORESHORE
Live music and drink specials
4.30pm-late, Club Café & Bar

August

Thursday 4
WINE SERIES # 6
Xanadu Wines – Margaret River
5.30pm – 7.00pm, Formal Private Dining Room

Friday 5
FRIDAYS ON THE FORESHORE
Friday on the foreshore
Live music and drink specials
4.30pm-late, Club Café & Bar

Thursday 11
'RED ON REDS' - Club Wine Dinner
A celebration of red meat complemented by WA reds
7pm-late, Club Restaurant

Friday 12
FRIDAYS ON THE FORESHORE
Live music and drink specials
4.30pm-late, Club Café & Bar

Wednesday 17
MEMBERS CLUB LUNCHEON
2 course luncheon, live jazz band beverage on arrival
12pm-1.30pm, Club Ballroom

Friday 19
FRIDAYS ON THE FORESHORE
Live music and drink specials
4.30pm-late, Club Café & Bar

Tuesday 23
VARIETAL WINE WORKSHOP
Wine Appreciation hosted by Michael Adonis. Dinner included
7pm-8.30pm, Formal Private Dining Room

Friday 26
FRIDAYS ON THE FORESHORE
Live music and drink specials
4.30pm-late, Club Café & Bar

Saturday 27
'MEMORY MASTERS' QUIZ NIGHT
7.30-10pm, Club Café & Bar

Wednesday 31
WINE SERIES # 7
Juniper Estate – Margaret River
5.30pm – 7pm, Formal Private Dining Room
**Fridays on the Foreshore**
The Club’s ‘Fridays on the Foreshore’ events have been very popular, with Members and guests enjoying laid back jazz from local musicians and Tasmanian rock oysters freshly shucked by the ‘King of Oysters’ Jerry Fraser. Fridays on the Foreshore kick off every Friday in the Club Cafe and Cafe Bar from 5.00pm. Almost 2000 Members and guests have enjoyed these events since the Club opened on March 12 and with live performances from Ali Bodycoat, Libby Hammer and Penny Cullen, the upcoming Friday events are also set to sizzle.

**Breakfast by the Bay**
The launch of the Club’s professional events series was a success with over 150 Members and guests attending Breakfast by the Bay. The topic under discussion - Western Australia: Boom, Bust or Built to Last? - was tackled by some of UWA’s leading graduates; Heather Zampatti (Bell Potter Securities), Mark Paganin (Calyton Utz) and Karen Brown (The Australian). Guests enjoyed a delicious cooked breakfast as well as a lively discussion on the future of the Western Australian economy. Spotted around the room were Tracey Horton, Robin McLeLan, Jim Gill, Ken O’Driscoll, Kellie Benda, Michael McAnearney, Patti Chong and Gaye McMath.

**European Food and Wine Dinner**
Members and guests enjoyed a round trip through Spain, Italy and France on an exploration of the cuisine (and most importantly) the wines, of Europe at the recent European Food and Wine Dinner held in the Club Restaurant on Thursday 12 May.

The evening opened with a glass of Cava from Penedes (Spain) as the perfect prelude to the Chicken and Pistachio Roulade which was accompanied by a Hugel Pinot Blanc from Alsace in France. The fine food and matched wines continued throughout the evening with a highlight being the Guigal Cotes du Rhone Rouge from the Rhone Valley in France served with the main course.

The evening was further enhanced by the excellent exhibition of over twenty panoramic photographs of Europe on loan from Tobias Port (Founder Member of the University Club).

**Ferngrove Estate Night of Culinary Delight**
Wednesday March 23 saw Ferngrove Estate host ‘A Night of Culinary Delight’ in the Club Restaurant, the first monthly event in our Dinner Series. Members enjoyed a sumptuous menu ‘inspired by the east’ matched to a special selection of Ferngrove Estate Wines, including a glass of the popular Ferngrove 2004 Sauvignon Blanc on arrival.
**A Night of all that sparkles thanks to Linneys**

The bubbly was flowing freely at the sell out Linneys Seafood and Champagne Dinner held in the Club restaurant on Thursday April 14. A fantastic night was had by all in attendance and guests were treated to a spectacular menu featuring fresh Western Australian seafood and Moet Champagne on arrival, followed by an impressive selection of Sparkling Australian Wines. Models dazzled in the latest collection of Linneys Jewellery in a fabulous parade during the meal.

**Official Opening of the Club**

The Club was officially opened by His Excellency Lieutenant General Dr John Sanderson AC, Governor of Western Australia and Visitor to the University of Western Australia, on Friday 22 April, 2005. His Excellency spoke about his attachment to the University and remarked on the quality of the architecture and the ambience of the new Club. After the formalities concluded, the official party were taken on a tour of the Club by architect Geoff Warn of Donaldson + Warn and enjoyed a standing lunch in the Club Ballroom.
## Calendar of Events

### June
- **Friday 3**
  - **FRIDAYS ON THE FORESHORE**
  - Drink specials and Matt Styles Quartet
  - 4.30pm-late, Club Café & Bar
- **Monday 6**
  - **FOUNDATION DAY BUFFET LUNCH**
  - Live music from ‘Stringy Bach’ Quartet
  - 12.00pm-1.30pm, Club Ballroom
- **Thursday 9**
  - **MATILDA BAY BEER DINNER**
  - 7.00pm-late, Club Restaurant
- **Friday 10**
  - **FRIDAYS ON THE FORESHORE**
  - Live Jazz and drink specials
  - 4.30pm-late, Club Café & Bar
- **Wednesday 15**
  - **LADIES CLUB LUNCHEON**
  - 2 course luncheon, fashion show and guest speaker, Prof. Fiona Wood AM
  - 12pm-1.30pm, Club Ballroom
- **Friday 17**
  - **FRIDAYS ON THE FORESHORE**
  - Live Jazz and drink specials PLUS Jerry Fraser’s Oyster Shucking from 4.30pm – late, Club Café & Bar
- **Friday 24**
  - **FRIDAYS ON THE FORESHORE**
  - Drink specials and live music
  - 4.30pm – late, Club Café & Bar
- **Wednesday 29**
  - **WINE SERIES 04: SELECTED IMPORTS**
  - Tastings from near and far.
  - 5.30pm-7.00pm, Formal Private Dining Room

### July
- **Friday 1**
  - **CLUB END OF FINANCIAL YEAR PARTY!**
  - Live music, Happy Hour 5-6pm
  - PLUS Jerry Fraser’s Oyster Shucking
  - 4.30pm-late, Club Café & Bar
- **Thursday 7**
  - **MATILDA BAY BEER TASTINGS**
  - Matilda Bay Beer Tastings
  - 5.30pm-7pm, Formal Private Dining Room
- **Friday 8**
  - **FRIDAYS ON THE FORESHORE**
  - Live Jazz and drink specials
  - 4.30pm-late, Club Café & Bar
- **Monday 11**
  - **‘RED ON REDS’ - Club Wine Dinner**
  - A celebration of red meat complemented by WA reds
  - 7pm-late, Club Restaurant
- **Friday 15**
  - **FRIDAYS ON THE FORESHORE**
  - Live music and drink specials
  - 4.30pm – late, Club Café & Bar
- **Wednesday 17**
  - **MEMBERS CLUB LUNCHEON**
  - 2 course luncheon, live jazz band beverage on arrival
  - 12pm-1.30pm, Club Ballroom
- **Friday 19**
  - **BREAKFAST BY THE BAY #2**
  - With special guest speakers
  - 7.15am -9.00am, Club Ballroom
- **Wednesday 27**
  - **WINE SERIES # 5**
  - Cape Mentelle Wines
  - 5.30pm-7.00pm, Formal Private Dining Room
- **Saturday 23**
  - **‘MEMORY MASTERS’ QUIZ NIGHT**
  - 7.30-10.00pm, Club Café & Bar
- **Friday 26**
  - **FRIDAYS ON THE FORESHORE**
  - Live music and drink specials
  - 4.30pm-late, Club Café & Bar

### August
- **Thursday 4**
  - **WINE SERIES # 6**
  - Xanadu Wines – Margaret River
  - 5.30pm – 7.00pm, Formal Private Dining Room
- **Friday 5**
  - **FRIDAYS ON THE FORESHORE**
  - Live on the foreshore
  - Live music and drink specials
  - 4.30pm-late, Club Café & Bar
- **Thursday 11**
  - **‘RED ON REDS’ - Club Wine Dinner**
  - 2 course luncheon, live jazz band beverage on arrival
  - 12pm-1.30pm, Club Ballroom
- **Friday 19**
  - **FRIDAYS ON THE FORESHORE**
  - Live music and drink specials
  - 4.30pm – late, Club Café & Bar
- **Tuesday 23**
  - **VARIETAL WINE WORKSHOP**
  - Wine Appreciation hosted by Michael Adonis. Dinner included
  - 7pm-8.30pm, Formal Private Dining Room
- **Friday 26**
  - **FRIDAYS ON THE FORESHORE**
  - Live music and drink specials
  - 4.30pm-late, Club Café & Bar
- **Saturday 27**
  - **‘MEMORY MASTERS’ QUIZ NIGHT**
  - 7.30-10pm, Club Café & Bar
- **Wednesday 31**
  - **WINE SERIES # 7**
  - Juniper Estate – Margaret River
  - 5.30pm – 7pm, Formal Private Dining Room
UWA is blessed with individuals who combine exceptional qualities as leaders, teachers and researchers. Professor Lou Landau recently stepped down as Dean of the Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry, a position now held by Professor Ian Puddey. With a track record filled with landmark achievements that have put Western Australia on the international medical research map, he was undaunted by the scale of ambitious projects. This is a quality he shares with the youngest professor to hold a chair in UWA’s School of Medicine. Professor Lyle Palmer hopes to launch a WA Genome Project that could establish this State as a world leader in human genetic research. The quietly spoken Lou and the exuberant Lyle are very different, but they share a common goal: to improve the health of Western Australians.

The Landau landmarks

Before stepping down as Dean of UWA’s Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry recently, Professor Lou Landau was one of the longest-serving medical deans in Australia, presiding over landmark changes in the way medical students are selected and taught – changes that initially did not sit well with traditionalists but that are already reaping benefits.

The widely-respected professor also played a key role in establishing research institutions that have dramatically increased the profile and output of WA researchers working to unravel the medical, environmental and social causes of disease.

Professor Landau, who took up UWA’s chair of paediatrics in 1984, witnessed the birth of both the WA Institute for Medical Research (WAIMR) and the Telethon Institute for Child Health Research (ICHR) – each making research breakthroughs that continue to catch the international spotlight.

“Initially the need for such institutions was not widely acknowledged, so our first task was to define the need and draw together the visionaries. Every community has a core of individuals with the requisite commitment and energy to make these things happen,” says Professor Landau.

“In the case of WAIMR, the late Harry Perkins, Chairman of Wesfarmers, was the visionary, and with Alan Robson’s support I was able to carry forward the initiative of enabling two existing research institutions to work together. In the case of ICHR the need was clear – the Princess Margaret Hospital Children’s Medical Research Foundation could no longer adequately fund paediatric research. Gaining support from Telethon and government were vital steps, as was bringing experts from across Australia to gauge whether we were on the right track. And of course Fiona Stanley’s ability to inspire provided its own impetus as we moved forward with our goal.

“I suppose my strength is that I listen to people and don’t feel threatened by initiatives put forward by others.”

Before stepping down as Dean, Professor Landau was already witnessing the benefits of initiatives he charted, such as changes in the way medical students were selected. Once, assessment was based entirely on academic performance, but the new criteria (the Undergraduate Medicine and Health Sciences Admission Test, UMAT, and a structured interview) examine qualities such as leadership, communication skills and problem solving ability.

Previously medical students studying at UWA came from perhaps a dozen schools. Today freshers come from more than 30 schools – some that had never previously sent a medical student to the University. Students who come from the country are more likely to ease the shortage of doctors in regional areas while at the same time increasing understanding of rural health issues among their peers.

“One of the stimuli for change was the community perception that some doctors lacked adequate communication skills. I certainly find the current students and graduates to be more articulate, more involved in community and more interested in rural health,” he says. “When the first cohort graduated in 2003, they performed as well if not better, and the failure rate did not increase as had been predicted by traditionalists – in fact graduates with honours increased. The next step will be to see how these graduates perform in their careers,” says Professor Landau.

“We also noticed that initially drop-out rates fell and they remain low. However today’s medical students do move around a lot – studying combined degrees and taking a year
or two off – so it will be a few years before we can build a complete statistical picture.

“Drop-outs – that are costly and regrettable – generally occurred around fourth year when students began having clinical contact with patients. There are always some who discover that they don’t like being in hospitals and have no rapport with sick people. Responding to this, the UMAT assesses empathy with people with illnesses and we now introduce students to patients in their first year.”

Under the guidance of Professor Landau and others in the faculty, the new curriculum has been shaped to reduce some of the daunting ‘book work’.

“Previously Medicine was very much a discipline-based science so you had to cover all science subjects and absorb the contents of all those books. Now it is more about knowing the principles and how to use them, and integrating that with patient care. The aim is not to underplay science, but to use it in a different way. While this way of teaching involves far more work for teachers, we are already seeing the benefits.

“We also had to take on board changes in our students. They are a lot more assertive than in my day, when you’d never dream of questioning academic staff. Today students want their point of view to be addressed and we are happy to do that, provided the viewpoint is not totally egocentric or invalid, and provided they accept responsibility for their commitment to learning.”

Another change in training is the fact that interns are no longer required to work (as he did) up to 100 hours or more a week (he once clocked up 120 hours, working non-stop from Friday morning to Tuesday night). An intern’s working week generally spans 48 hours, and hospitals frown on anyone working more than 60 hours. Recalling those snatched hours of sleep he endured, Lou Landau observes that medicine was much less complex then: “Fewer drugs, fewer interventions and fewer risks for potential ‘mistakes’.”

There were also fewer legal claims, an issue that, Professor Landau believes, has contributed to rural WA being without obstetricians, while city-based practitioners are leaving the profession or retiring early. “It is a sad and costly situation,” he says, “but understandable because after years of being available nights and weekends, and trying to do the best for patients, there is always the threat that someone is going to blame them for an imperfect baby.”

Professor Landau would like to see us adapting a strategy similar to the New Zealand ‘no blame’ legislation which sees families compensated when things go wrong, but that only holds doctors liable when negligence is proved.

“Society must accept responsibility for those unfortunate enough to have a disability or a serious illness so they don’t need to use the legal process to blame someone in order to get support,” he says. “A large proportion of claims do not involve negligence. There has to be a balance between patients’ and doctors’ rights.”

Professor Landau believes that the crisis in access to appropriate medical services was exacerbated when the Federal Government cut back on the medical students it would fund a decade ago, creating a situation where demand exceeds supply. “We currently produce only about 120 graduates a year because of those cutbacks. That figure will now rise to 300 in five years. UWA has admitted the first two years of the larger intake, but it will be another decade before the impact is felt.”

While Professor Landau has vacated the Dean’s chair, his working week remains hectic as he has assumed the role of Chair of the Postgraduate Medical Council of WA. He is also mentoring researchers in the School of Paediatrics and Child Health, ICHR and WAIMR, while pursuing his own research in asthma. This abiding interest reminds us that in 1971 the young researcher developed a lung function test for babies known as the rapid thoracic compression technique that is now used internationally.

At ICHR he is also mentoring Aboriginal child health researchers, and sees some heartening advances. “Individual projects are having positive impacts,” he says. “In Kalgoorlie, mothers are learning to improve the health of their children. In regional centres, swimming pools are dramatically reducing ear infections, and overall, child mortality rates have dropped. However, we still have a long way to go.

“Indigenous communities in Canada and New Zealand have achieved a lot more than we have – so we need to adapt relevant strategies from their programs. There is a great commitment by government and the Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities to move forward.

“What disappoints me is that we have received no funding...
at all from Federal or State governments for the Centre for Aboriginal Medical and Dental Health – yet it is directly addressing a major Aboriginal health problem. The centre was established 10 years ago to recruit Aboriginal students into medicine and dentistry and build up the critical mass of Aboriginal health workers. It also educates all medical students about the special needs of Aboriginal communities, the importance of communicating with patients, and the ways in which Aboriginal culture can impact on health care.

“What does excite me is the number of Aboriginal medical students that we now have studying at UWA. When I started at UWA our record was three doctors in 40 years. Now we have 17 currently enrolled. Of course not all will go out and solve the problems in regional communities (nor should we expect it of them) but they will be terrific role models.”

When relocating to Perth in 1984, one of the Landau sons famously lamented as they left Melbourne: “This is the end of my life!” However, that young man went on to become president of the University Football Club, and WA’s capital city now feels like home to the family.

While he jokes that his working week is now down to 48 hours, Professor Landau may yet find time for the books and music he enjoys, and for the violin abandoned because of his ‘obsessive traits’ – traits that peers would say have greatly benefited teaching and research in this State.

Lyle Palmer: First Amongst Equals

When UWA graduate Professor Lyle Palmer won the 40under40 First Amongst Equals Award from a wide field of high profile young business achievers, his win acknowledged the benefits of developing a strong knowledge-based biotechnology and pharmaceutical development sector in Western Australia.

The youngest scientist to be appointed to a chair in UWA’s School of Medicine, Lyle Palmer believes that WA is poised to reap health and economic rewards by establishing a WA Genome Project, a biobank that will add another dimension to the State’s unique linked health databases.

Professor Palmer had several claims to the First Amongst Equals Award sponsored by WA Business News and supported by The University of Western Australia amongst others.

At 36 he holds the Foundation Chair in Genetic Epidemiology at the UWA and the WA Institute for Medical Research (WAIMR). His research has attracted nearly $10 million in research grants and his research team currently juggles some 40 research projects (one recently identified a gene that reduces the risk of asthma by 50 per cent).

Four years ago UWA graduate Professor Simon Mallal at Royal Perth Hospital’s HIV Clinic identified a gene that could predict which patients would have an adverse response to the most commonly used – and effective - antiretroviral drugs. About five per cent of patients develop a hypersensitive response to this drug that could send them into intensive care.

Professor Mallal’s findings have since been integrated into clinical practice in WA. Now all new HIV patients are offered a simple genetic test before being put on this therapy, and adverse reactions have dropped from more than seven per cent to well under one. The health benefits are as significant as the savings. The drugs are expensive, and the costs of treating those patients who respond badly to them are substantial.

“The pharmacogenetic aim is to deliver the right drug to the right patient in the right dose,” says Professor Palmer. “Genetic information is going to play a major role in establishing which patients will react badly to a whole range of expensive, heavy-duty drugs including those used in chemotherapy. Every patient will benefit – and so will hospital budgets.”

It is this ability to ‘sell’ both the health benefits and the hard-nosed financial gains of genetic epidemiology that will be Lyle Palmer’s strength in securing support for the ambitious WA Genome Project. The aim is to create a WA biobank of DNA samples that will help researchers understand what, for instance, makes an elderly long-term smoker escape the ravages of lung cancer while the disease claims the life of a young non-smoker.

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The International Centre congratulates
UWA Prize List Winners for 2004

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Faculty</th>
<th>Prize</th>
<th>Country of Residence</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Miss Renay Lynn Thompson</td>
<td>Faculty of Life and Physical Sciences</td>
<td>Biochemistry and Molecular Biology Third Year Prize</td>
<td>USA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr Tung Zhong Paul</td>
<td>Faculty of Economics and Commerce</td>
<td>CPA Australia Prize in Management Accounting</td>
<td>Singapore</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr Foo Brendan Tze Xein</td>
<td>Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry</td>
<td>D.E. Clement Prize</td>
<td>Malaysia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ms Tam Siew Lai Priscilla</td>
<td>Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences</td>
<td>David Anderson Memorial Prize in Latin</td>
<td>Singapore</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr Khabaria Suketu Chandra</td>
<td>Faculty of Economics and Commerce</td>
<td>Department of Industry and Resources (WA) Prize in Asian Business Contexts</td>
<td>Singapore</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miss Nkumbu Nachinga</td>
<td>Faculty of Economics and Commerce</td>
<td>Dr Andrew M. Houston Memorial Prize in Economics</td>
<td>Zambia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr Foo Brendan Tze Xein</td>
<td>Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry</td>
<td>Emele Bradshaw Vance Prize in Medicine</td>
<td>Malaysia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr Mr Foo Brendan Tze Xein</td>
<td>Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry</td>
<td>Florence Alexander Dumble Prize in Topographical Anatomy</td>
<td>Malaysia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr Ling Xuehua Justin</td>
<td>Faculty of Engineering, Computing &amp; Mathematics</td>
<td>Honeywell Prize for Professional Computing</td>
<td>Singapore</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miss Tan Xiao Yee</td>
<td>Faculty of Economics and Commerce</td>
<td>J M Wolf Prize in German</td>
<td>England</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miss Renay Lynn Thompson</td>
<td>Faculty of Life and Physical Sciences</td>
<td>JW H Lugg Prize in BiochemistryUSA</td>
<td>USA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miss Tiong Linda</td>
<td>Faculty of Architecture, Landscape and Visual Arts</td>
<td>Jackson’s Drawing Prize in Architecture</td>
<td>Malaysia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr Chiam Yik Wee Ivan Roy</td>
<td>Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences</td>
<td>Janet Anderson Prize for Woodwind</td>
<td>Singapore</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr Lim Tao Kie Eric</td>
<td>Faculty of Economics and Commerce</td>
<td>Japan Chamber of Commerce and Industry in WA Prize in Japanese Economic History and Contemporary Japanese Economy</td>
<td>Singapore</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miss Nkumbu Nachinga</td>
<td>Faculty of Economics and Commerce</td>
<td>McGraw-Hill Prize</td>
<td>Zambia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr Gregory David Martin</td>
<td>Faculty of Law</td>
<td>Philip Lionel Sharp Memorial Prize in Law</td>
<td>England</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miss Sia Chui Wei</td>
<td>Faculty of Economics and Commerce</td>
<td>Public Transport Authority Management Science Prize</td>
<td>Malaysia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ms Tam Siew Lai Priscilla</td>
<td>Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences</td>
<td>Rose and Cecil Owen Bequest Prize in Level 1 Latin or Greek</td>
<td>Singapore</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miss Tiong Linda</td>
<td>Faculty of Architecture, Landscape and Visual Arts</td>
<td>UWA Graduates Association Prize in the Faculty of Architecture</td>
<td>Malaysia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr Tung Zhong Paul</td>
<td>Faculty of Economics and Commerce</td>
<td>UWA Graduates Association Prize in Commerce – Second Year</td>
<td>Singapore</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miss Lim Yan Xia</td>
<td>Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences</td>
<td>Sadao Hirano Prize in Japanese</td>
<td>Malaysia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr Anton Denis Smit</td>
<td>Faculty of Life and Physical Sciences</td>
<td>Science Union Prize in Biology</td>
<td>Zambia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miss Lim Mei Shi</td>
<td>Faculty of Economics and Commerce</td>
<td>Taylor Woodings Prize in Entrepreneurship</td>
<td>Singapore</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miss Oneg Elepino Ruby</td>
<td>Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences</td>
<td>University Choral Society Prize for Music</td>
<td>Singapore</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr Anton Denis Smit</td>
<td>Faculty of Life and Physical Sciences</td>
<td>UWA Graduates Association Prize in Science – Biology, Botany, Geography or Zoology – First Year</td>
<td>Zambia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr Anton Denis Smit</td>
<td>Faculty of Life and Physical Sciences</td>
<td>UWA Graduates Association Prize in Science – Physics, Geology or Chemistry – First Year</td>
<td>Zambia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr Stuart Innes Molloy</td>
<td>Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences</td>
<td>Walter Murdoch Prize in Level 1 English</td>
<td>England</td>
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Please Note: At the time of printing not all faculty prize lists were completed.
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“What makes people healthy or unhealthy has a lot to do with genes and their interaction with the environment,” he explains, “but the important thing is that genes offer the potential for new therapies and interventions, and they can also be used to understand the biology of a particular condition.”

Professor Palmer’s new chair in Genetic Epidemiology was endowed by Perth businessman Graham Morgan and he is currently seeking corporate and government support to create a series of scholarships and opportunities for Indigenous students to study genetic epidemiology. “It’s vital that Indigenous researchers be involved in studying diseases such as diabetes that are common in Aboriginal communities,” he says. “The School of Population Health, the Institute for Child Health Research (ICHR) and WAIMR are working collaboratively to try to make this happen.”

Professor Palmer knows that leadership plays a vital role in getting major projects off the ground. “Let’s remember that one man started the Busselton Health Surveys,” he reminds us. “Dr Cullen decided it would be a good idea to chart the health of everyone in Busselton and asked people to help him. The response was incredible – and was a first step in creating the WA Data Linkage System.

“Western Australia’s health databases – containing health data on the whole population from birth to death – are so valuable they draw researchers from across the world. They also put us in a unique position to do genetic health research that will help to unravel the causes of diseases such as diabetes and cancer and to offer new treatments. Opportunities also exist for forging partnerships with the pharmaceutical industry so that laboratory research can be quickly turned into treatments.

“We have been undertaking research on the population of Busselton since 1966 – this has included taking blood samples. This has resulted in enormous advances in clinical medicine, epidemiology, and genetics. Now we’d like to expand across this idea from one town to the whole of the State so that we can cross-match DNA samples provided by consenting West Australians with existing health data accumulated over 30 years. Together they will form the world’s most comprehensive resource for human genetic research – and it will be an asset that stays within the State, that belongs to the community, and that benefits the community.”

Will the cooperative spirit so evident in Busselton extend across WA?

Will we respond as positively as have over 10 other nations – including the British, with the UK BioBank launched several years ago?

Federal privacy legislation makes it illegal to share genetic information (say with insurance companies). Professor Palmer emphasises that DNA will only be collected with informed consent. He would like to see a pilot launched within two years, in tandem with a community outreach and education program.

Professor Palmer recently returned from a stint as visiting professor at both Oxford and Bristol Universities. He used his visit to Britain to study the success of the UK BioBank Project, particularly in relation to its successful community outreach.

When UNIVIEW last ran an article on Lyle Palmer (October 1999) he had just won the Fulbright Postdoctoral Fellowship for Australia that year, and was on his way to Harvard Medical School in Boston to join a multidisciplinary team of researchers working in the relatively new areas of genetic epidemiology and advanced biostatistical genetics. He became an Assistant Professor of Medicine and Director of Statistical Genomics at Harvard Medical School.

A year ago, when he returned to Perth to take up his new chair at WAIMR, he was the only researcher in the newly-formed Laboratory for Genetic Epidemiology. By the time he left for Britain, he had gathered a team of 27. Their readiness to work with him to chart the way ahead is clearly an energising force.

“There are lots of UWA graduates in my team, and their skills give us great technical strength. This University produces technical graduates as good if not better than Harvard where you’d be hard pressed to find, say, a genetics researcher with an engineering background,” he says.

“We have the intellectual capacity and an internationally unique resource. Now we need the political and corporate will to help us build the best human genome resource in the world.” – Professor Lyle Palmer

“We have the intellectual capacity and an internationally unique resource. Now we need the political and corporate will to help us build the best human genome resource in the world.”

In the past, Australian universities have not been that good at building links between universities and industry – certainly not in comparison with, say, the United States. This project offers an opportunity for us to all work together on a project that must be looked at as a national endeavour.

“We are incontestably in the best position to do this work – it’s our moonshot!”

One suspects that if anyone can convince researchers, governments, industry, corporations – and the public – to climb on board for take-off it’s Lyle Palmer, First Amongst Equals.

We wish him well.
As a secondary school student did you have a clear idea of what you wanted to study?
I was born and raised in a small town in Malaysia and did not study English until I was seven years old. To improve my English, I was encouraged to read widely, so I started with Enid Blyton, graduated to the crime and law genre – and was finally hooked on Perry Mason novels! I knew then that I wanted to be a lawyer, after briefly flirting with the idea of politics. I hero-worshipped the Kennedy brothers and grew up with the dream of wanting to right the wrongs of the world and to ensure that children were nurtured, loved and protected. I had a strong belief that all people – regardless of race, ethnicity, culture, religion and gender – should be treated equally. While I am living part of my dream there is still a lot more that can be achieved particularly in the areas of ethnic diversity and gender equality.

When you were studying at UWA, how did you view your future career? Did you have a game plan?
When I was at UWA, I was a self-supporting student and worked in two jobs most of the time. Whatever spare time I had was devoted to study to achieve the bare minimum to pass. One of my brothers, a respected and renowned surgeon in Canberra, used to write and encouraged me to strive to be top of the class like him, a university medallist. He used to say that recognition for excellence cannot be achieved without top academic results. Much as I respected his wise counsel, my circumstances were such that it was difficult for me to achieve top academic results whilst struggling to survive. I did the best I could to balance survival and my dream of becoming a lawyer. I did not have a game plan. I had this image of a quiet, shy, docile Chinese girl going out into a St George’s Terrace backroom and plugging away – and that’s exactly what happened. It was not until 12 years after graduation that I got into criminal law. I didn’t become Perry Mason but a Crown Prosecutor. I suppose both of us have the same ideals – righting the wrongs of the world but from different perspectives!

Apart from studies what were your interests/involvements at UWA?
I was extremely shy in those days and found it very difficult to integrate. Not having been through the school system in WA, I did not have any school friends at UWA and was a couple of years older than my classmates. Also I spent all my time working when not studying.

What are the qualities you acknowledge in yourself that are strengths in your present role?
My resilience, tenacity, ability to communicate with all people – no matter who they are – in plain English and, in my previous role as prosecutor, an ability to empathise with
the victims of crime. My mother used to say in Chinese that “if a job is worth doing, it is worth doing well.” I am no Rhodes Scholar or Einstein but every task I undertake is undertaken with zest, zeal, thoroughness and vigour. I bring to the job a lot of my life’s experiences and skills which are not taught at any university. When I was a Crown Prosecutor, I was very conscious of the need to ensure that the victim and the accused each had their day in court. The victim demands justice; the accused vindication. As long as I present the case to the jury in a fair and balanced way, without fear or favour, I can accept the verdict, knowing that I did my best.

What is your working day like and how do you relax?

After many years as a Crown Prosecutor, I have now taken up the position as General Counsel at the Corruption and Crime Commission. When there is a public hearing, the day has a frenzied start! I get up extra early to get the children ready for school and I get into the office earlier than normal. There is a degree of anticipation and anxiety that the day will go according to plan. Generally, we start the hearing at 10am, by which time I would have had the fourth or fifth cup of coffee! We generally finish around 5pm, depending on the stage of the hearing, and then debrief and re-analyse our plan for the next day. I have always been a teetotaller and to unwind, I go to yoga, the gym and indulge in retail therapy on Saturdays! In recent times I have involved myself in charitable work, particularly fund-raising for the Leukaemia Foundation. There is a great sense of achievement being involved in the community. That is a form of relaxation for me!

Do you still have close ties with any of the people you have studied with at UWA?

There are lawyers, judges and magistrates who were my contemporaries at UWA. I have appeared before some who are now on the bench and come up against others in court. There is only one lawyer from the Law School with whom I have kept in touch and have close ties with. I know a wide circle of people through my legal work, charity fund-raising, the Chinese community, the school community and having lived in my particular suburb for a long time. These are the people who have enriched my life and I feel very privileged to be part of the wider community.

What does the future hold?

I would like to serve the community – as an elected Parliamentarian or on the Bench – so that I can contribute to my adopted country which has given me so many opportunities. I would like to empower young people, women and the disadvantaged to believe in their dreams and in themselves, and am prepared to mentor, counsel and advise anyone who needs a friend to talk to. I want to continue assisting the Leukaemia Foundation achieve its plan to build the Village of Courage for country patients and their families who need accommodation during treatment in Perth.

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**Last Chance!**

**Be in THE BOOK!**

**Calling all Subiaco Residents and Business Owners**

This is your last chance to send in a personal anecdote or short memoir about living or working in Subiaco for inclusion in a new book about Subiaco and its people. The City of Subiaco is producing a new modern history book and we want to know what you like or dislike about contemporary Subiaco.

Write your short story and take it, with any supporting photos, to:

**Evelyn H. Parker Library**
**Corner Rokeby & Bagot Roads, Subiaco 6008**
**Closing date: 30th June 2005**

Written contributions should recount things that occurred in the 1980’s, 1990’s or the 2000’s. They may relate to family life, employment or business, memorable events, favourite places, local issues, sporting or community groups…or any other aspect of your life in Subiaco. All contributions will be acknowledged in the book and any photos received will be scanned and the originals returned.

Enquiries should be directed to Carole Lambert, Creating Communities on 9284 0910 or email carole@creatingcommunities.com.au.
Having played the game with her English born dad as soon as she could walk, Claire McLean was set on becoming a professional soccer player at the age of eight. But back then (1981) there was simply no place for girls in the world of soccer. Nothing daunted, and being a competitive, sporty child, adept at hurtling on her bicycle round the cul de sac near her Roleystone home, Claire opted for cycling. She started to train at 14 and set her sights on the Olympics. How was she to know that at the age of 25 she would, due to a motor bike accident, have to realign those sights to the Paralympics?

"I was upset of course, but it’s been a long time now. It’s been a huge turning point in my life – a positive part of my life which led to being able to travel all over the world and even to studying. At the time of the accident I just wanted to earn money at Sizzlers,” she recalls.

The accident resulted in brachial plexus palsy – she lost feeling in nerves in her arms but can still wriggle her fingers, which, she says, is “okay” for cycling. “But I can’t lift or move my arm out – I have to move it with the other hand.”

Since the Athens’ Paralympics, Claire thinks life is getting more interesting for disabled cyclists. “It was the first time they hosted LC1 single bike competitions – two time trial events – a 1000m track and a 16k road trial (in which I won silver),” she explains. “Before that it was only tandem, made for the visually impaired girls to compete with able bodied partners.” LC1 classification (in which Claire qualifies) is for some form of paralysis in upper body, or half a foot or leg difference (often for people who have had amputation).

She likes competing in track or road trials where you ride your own time for set kilometres, and then wait for everyone to finish. Her bike is adapted. Everything is on the right-hand side, even a tube to drink from, because in a bunched group it lessens some of the problems caused by her disability. “I’m disadvantaged in hill climbing as I can’t get out of my saddle. I have a problem with starting quickly enough. Endurance races and sprinting are me.”

What she likes about cycling is the rush and the speed. “I love the thrill of moving at 80k per hour and being able to plough round a corner. I like the short circuit when you go around the block, with a three or four corner road, for forty minutes and then finish with three extra laps. You don’t know how many laps you’ll do and you’re constantly cornering.”

After the accident Claire began studying Health and Safety at TAFE which led to a Bachelor of Science (Health Sciences) at Curtin and then a Graduate Diploma of Education (Training and Development) at ECU.

“Then I went to work in the Health Department. The experience was everything everyone says about working for Government – no progression – the system’s so frustrating,” she says.

Deciding to enrol at UWA, she is now working towards a law degree. “I’m not sure what’s going to happen next – I’ve tried to get articles, but it’s hard to combine that with my cycling. I need to find a firm which will be sensitive to this.”

In between, and whilst studying, Claire has worked (lecturing at TAFE) and travelled in her quest to finance and improve her cycling prowess. She likes to stay in small towns. Training at base camps around the world, she says, takes her to wonderful places where you get to experience all the back roads. “I love Avazano in Italy – it’s like a home from home now.” She has also been to the Czech Republic and the USA.

The UWA student is contemplating using her UWA Sports Bursary to help fund a trip to the USA for the able bodied female circuit. “I want to build fitness and speed for the World Championships in 2006. After the results of the Paralympics I know I have to work on my track events and plan for winning Gold for any future road events.” This, she says, will require at least 12 months of solid intensive training along with integration into the elite able bodied female racing scene. "Racing consistently in able bodied ranks puts me at a huge advantage when I then race in the multiple disability events.”

If she can’t manage to get to the USA (due to lack of
Claire McLean in action

Chancellor’s Award for UWAGA Councillor

Dr Barrie Purser has been awarded the Chancellor’s Medal in recognition of his significant contribution to the University through his association with the Convocation/UWA Graduates Association Council.

Dr Purser has been a member of the Council for over two decades and is valued not only for his efficiency and insightful comments and ideas, but for his sense of humour and affability. This was particularly apparent when faced with the appointment of his wife (Dr Sue Baker) as Warden, which he encouraged and which she incidentally fulfilled superbly. But as we all well know, working alongside spouses can be a fine line to tread. One hesitates to suggest that since both work in Agriculture, a lesson has obviously been learned from the way nature aligns its fauna.

Dr Purser was involved in the initiation of the program of Sports Awards and Scholarship in UWA and served on selection committees for these and the Postgraduate Research Travel Awards. He worked to ensure that these prestigious awards are strongly supported with adequate future funding from Convocation Reserves.

As convenor of the Membership and Marketing Committee, he focused on promoting a strong graduate community and was instrumental in implementing “lifetime email” which provides a service to graduates and assists the University in maintaining contact with its valued graduates.

The UWA graduate received his Bachelor of Science (Agriculture) Honours degree in 1957 and a PhD in 1961. He began a successful career as a research scientist and subsequently promoted interactions between UWA and CSIRO, being an architect, chairman and member of the CSIRO/UWA Collaborative Research Fund; promoted joint staff appointments between CSIRO and UWA; encouraged the CSIRO Animal Production Undergraduate Summer Vacation Studentship Scheme and initiated CSIRO’s Division of Animal Production-funded PhD Scholarships.

His retirement from the University is a loss, but an advantage for Northam, where he is now attempting to practice what he preached by trying farming life.

finances, work and study commitments) Claire will use the money to upgrade her bicycle which needs a new heart rate model and new singles (special glued on tyres) which need replacing constantly due to wear and tear.

Claire’s future aim is to be recognised as much as an able bodied rider. She’d also like sports spectators to know how exciting it is to watch the Paralympics.

“People just don’t realise what they’re missing out on,” she declares.

“It’s amazing to watch a cyclist cycling with one leg – it’s hard to imagine them even getting on a bicycle. To watch the sports is a real eye opener – you see what human beings are really capable of achieving.”

Claire McLean in action
Donations help third world countries

UWAGA donated the cost of shipping discarded WA textbooks and teaching equipment to schools in the Fijian Islands. Rita Clarke talks to the man behind the idea, Maths Lecturer, Dr Doug Pitney.

Doug Pitney, who completed a PhD at UWA in 1992, is supposed to be retired. A Canadian and lecturer in Mathematics, he spends half the year in Perth and half in Kelowna, 400k from Vancouver, where he owns a lakeside cabin.

Whilst in WA, he windsurfs at Matilda Bay in between contract work at UWA’s Graduate School of Education – or is it the other way round? He also meets up with mates at the Northern Districts Engineering Society where he works on pieces of the model engines he constructs in his Canadian workshop and brings with him. “I’ve made plane engines and a coal-fired Paddington shunting engine with live steam,” he says with a hint of surprise at his own dexterity.

In Canada, he uses his skipper’s ticket to charter people about in his 15m boat. And often he’ll fly up to Alaska to bring charter boats back to Vancouver for people who don’t want to retrace their steps.

Doug himself doesn’t mind retracing his steps. Commuting between Canada and WA since the 60s, he has always travelled to outlandish places from a sense of adventure, but now spends time in various countries making contacts, and seeing what might be needed in the way of educational equipment. If he can get hold of it, he ships it out, then tries to go back to make sure it’s been distributed properly. It’s a voluntary new occupation that sought him out, he says.

It was in 1993 whilst visiting a WA school that he came upon huge piles of books destined for pulping machines. Most were near new – casualties of continuing curriculum changes. Knowing how bereft of text books third world schools were, he offered to try to ship them overseas. So there he was in his small flat surrounded by hundreds of books. Teachers brought more. “I started to pile them up in my daughters’ house. We couldn’t move,” he says laughing. “In the end I had to put them into Fort Knox Self Storage in Fremantle while I tried to figure out how I was going to get them overseas.”

Since figuring it out he’s shipped some 90,000 books to townships in Papua New Guinea and South Africa.

This year – on account of a six-week backpacking trip in Fiji – Doug has sent, along with books, some 24 computers, 14 microscopes, 125 school chairs, 20 steel boxes of language arts training kits and old canvas maps, to Fiji. University books are destined for the University of Suva and primary equipment for Viwa, the remotest island in the Yasawa group.

Doug travelled for five hours in a small open boat with an outboard motor to reach Viwa, 45 nautical miles from Lakota. “If we’d missed it the next place is the Solomon Islands,” said Doug.

In Viwa, he was seated with village chiefs, police from Lakota, and the Director of Primary Education to watch a day-long rugby 7s and netball tournament. “There were 25 rugby teams and 14 women’s netball teams. Everyone played in bare feet and they were all running, screaming and laughing. They loved it – I loved it. Everyone’s so happy.”

He also watched a prize-giving ceremony attended by all the villagers. “The prizes were notebooks the children could use at school next year. Only teachers have text books – it’s all chalk and board teaching. On Monday, children walk from the three villages and stay at the school, sleeping on the floor as the rats have chewed all the mattresses. I slept on the floor too. Each day, fishermen go out and catch the fish the children eat for breakfast, lunch and dinner. We were sitting round the Kava bowl at night when the generator started up suddenly – they told me it goes for three hours – and ‘bingo’ I knew they would be able to use computers if I could get them over.”

With the help of volunteers – friends and students – assistance from UWA Associate Professor Les Jennings,
the unique marine environment of Western Australia explaining why WA has the largest and smallest tides in world; Perth receives more rainfall than Hobart or London; we enjoy lobsters rather than anchovies; whales aggregate to the west of Rottnest Island and coastal hazards relevant to Western Australia such as the possible impacts of tsunamis and effects of climate change on our fabulous beaches.

Viwa primary school children receiving prizes
there until his retirement in 2003. He retains an honorary position at Monash and is Editor of the Australian Biochemist, a magazine published by the Australian Society for Biochemistry and Molecular Biology. Clem writes that he has been exceedingly fortunate to have been raised in Perth and to have received a first rate education at UWA. He is married with two children and lives with his Danish-born wife in Glen Waverley, Vic.

• Victor Ranzetta (BJuris 1975; LLB 1976) left for Sydney after graduating and was practising in Wyong from 1978-1991. He went into partnership in 1991 with David and June of 2004, mainly working in Gosford but is now back as a sole practitioner. Victor is married with three adult children. Former classmates can contact him at ranzetta@bigpond.net.au.

• Terry Casey (BA 1976) writes that after teaching at high schools, he moved to Chicago and studied at the Loyola University, working with young people who were interested in religious life. He then spent several years doing community work with youth. His present occupation is providing staff at Christian Brothers schools in WA and SA with spiritual formation.

• Charles Drew (MSc(Agric) 1976) is National President of the Australian Institute of Agricultural Science and Technology. He is also Principal Agribusiness Consultant with Schofield Robinson in Parkside, SA. Charles is married and still enjoys playing pennant squash.

1960s

• Ilonka McGill (née Knucker) (BA 1961) taught for four years in the country and at Hollywood Senior High School before accepting a position as senior tutor in UWA’s Department of German. In 1974 she and her then husband started an antiquarian book business, Serendipity Books, which became an all-consuming passion. Ilonka and her son, David McGill (BA 1991) still run the bookshop today.

• Edmond La Vertu (BCom 1968) completed an MBA at Harvard Business School in 1976 and is currently a doctoral candidate at Edith Cowan University.

• Surya Shah (MEd 1976) left the University of Queensland in 1996 and became the first Professor of Occupational Therapy in England, where he completed his PhD. He is currently Professor of Occupational Therapy and Neurology (College of Medicine) at the University of Tennessee Health Science Centre. He has been advised of his selection to be on the Roster of Fellows of the American Occupational Therapy Association for Advancing Evidence-based Occupational Therapy and Service. He is the first Australian OTR to receive this prestigious Fellowship.

1970s

• Kong-Lam Ang (BE 1972) was appointed Chairman of Kerry Properties Ltd, a company listed on the Hong Kong Stock Exchange. Its core business includes real estate investment and development in Hong Kong and mainland China, third-party logistics with a Pan-Asia focus and infrastructure related developments.

• Barry Gibson (BEd 1973; MEd 1977; MPE 1986) is Head of the School of Exercise, Biomedical and Health Sciences at Edith Cowan University.

• Alitha Pazolli (BSc(Hons) 1974) has studied Art, Philosophy (Western, Buddhism and Zen) Yoga, Meditation and Dance. She has previously been awarded the Commonwealth University Scholarship, Shell Final Year University Scholarship, Commonwealth Public Service Cadesthip and the Commonwealth Postgraduate Course Award.

1980s

• Ian Hughes (BA 1981) spent several years in the UK and then moved to Japan to teach English in 1992. He returned home with his wife and child in late 2003, and now works from home as a Japanese-English financial translator. Former classmates can contact Ian at iuhughes@arach.net.au.

• Sherrine MacLean (BSc 1981) lives in Bellevue, Washington USA, with her husband and two teenage sons. Former classmates can contact Sherrine at macleans@comcast.net.

• Jeanette Robertson (BSc 1981) and Maxine Wardrop shared the 2004 Cochrane Users Award (in the Maternal and Perinatal Health category) presented by the National Institute of Clinical Studies. The award related to an Evidence Based Midwifery Practice Manual produced by King Edward Memorial Hospital for Women together with the School of Nursing at Curtin University. The manual is published on the WA Department of Health’s intranet site for use by all government health care providers.

• Basil Palassis (BCom 1983) has been actively involved in financial planning for the last nine years and was last year awarded the 2004 Top 50 Masterclass of Financial Planners in Australia by Personal Investor magazine. He was invited to speak at the 6th annual Hedge Funds World Conference last March. Basil works in partnership with Whiting Financial Services, in Osborne Park.

• David Taylor (BEc 1985) moved to the Porongurups in 1999 and set up

Graduate involved in Subiaco History Awards

Christobel Bennett is appreciative of the rich history of Subiaco – and of the rapidly changing face of the city with its unique mix of residential, commercial and industrial building, as well as sporting and arts establishments. The UWA History graduate is happy to be working to preserve its history through involvement with the annual City of Subiaco Local History Awards co-ordinated by the Subiaco Museum.

The awards, launched in 2003 open to all ages and involve written or visual accounts of a part of Subiaco’s history. To date they have attracted a range of participants – from college students to individuals researching family or social club histories.

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the Lothlorien Gallery, a rendered strawbale gallery on Takalarup Road. His gallery is a showcase for his wrought iron, timber furniture and art. He has written that in 2004, he tried his hand at sculpture incorporating these materials and has found encouragement in the past four exhibitions.

- **Rodney Hughes** (BA(Hons) 1986) has been appointed General Manager of the Swan River Trust, a State Government agency managing and protecting the Swan and Canning Rivers. He has held several media, public affairs and managerial positions in WA Government departments and has also worked in the media in the Northern Territory.

- **Kim Pearson** (née Mostyn) (BA 1986) worked in London after graduating, first in advertising then in the arts as Conference Manager of the Royal Festival Hall. She is married and has two teenage children. Kim now lives in Perth and has a practice in interior design and developing residential properties.

- **Michael Schager** (BA 1988) has been appointed the inaugural Small Business Commissioner of the ACT. He was previously Chair in Entrepreneurship and Small Business at the University of Newcastle’s Graduate School of Business.

- **Michael Marsh** (MBA 1989) writes that he is still practising as a consultant surgeon at St John of God Hospital, Murdoch, and is a consultant surgeon at St John (MB BS 1992) and is researching ritual and story in the Executive Director of Velan Hotels, in Tamlindu, Nadu. He is managing two four-star hotels in India and his company is in the process of adding a third hotel to its portfolio.

- **Gautham Mathukumara** (BCom 1993) has been appointed the General Manager of Velan Hotels, in Tamilnadu, India. He is managing two four-star hotels in India and his company is in the process of adding a third hotel to its portfolio.

- **Roy Wittkahn** (BSc(NRM) (Hons) 1997) completed his PhD at Curtin University in 2002, investigating the fire ecology and nutrient dynamics of grasstrees. He writes that he has been working in the Kimberley region and the UK. Roy Wittkahn is currently working on Western Australia’s farming methods and sustainable anti-inflamatory drugs.

- **Ben Glencross** (BSc(Hons) 1992), is married with three young children graduated and writes that he has been working in the media in the Netherlands. He is now a locum basis. Ben Glencross is a consultant surgeon at St John of God Hospital, Murdoch, and is a consultant surgeon at St John (MB BS 1992) and is researching ritual and story in the process of adding a third hotel to its portfolio.

- **Sue Peing Ng** (MB BS 1996) is CEO of the Melbourne-based biotechnology company, Cortical Pty Ltd, which is developing novel anti-inflammatory drugs.

- **Matthew Coates** (MB BS 1997) has returned to study and is currently midway through a Graduate Diploma in Arts (Political Science) at the University of Melbourne. He continues to practice as a doctor on a locum basis.

- **Carolyn Brandner** (BCom 2001) has been working as a chartered accountant for Priscaumb & Co in Vienna since May 2004. Carolyn writes that she and her dance partner topped their class at the Tanzschule Elmayer Dance School and were selected as one of 160 couples to take part in the opening of the 2005 Vienna Opera Ball. They were also selected to dance at a ‘sister’ opera ball in Dubai last February.

- **Jennifer Markich** (BA(Hons) 1997) works as an intern auditor for a casino in the area, south of San Francisco. Jennifer writes that she was seconded to Labrador for more than half have vanished in the last twenty years.

- **Donna Henning** (née Shedley) (BSc(Agric)(Hons) 1996) and her husband are farming a property near Wongan Hills. They have three children. Donna writes that she has an enjoyable lifestyle and is finding it a constant challenge keeping up with current farming issues.

- **Sue Peing Ng** (MB BS 1996) is CEO of the Melbourne-based biotechnology company, Cortical Pty Ltd, which is developing novel anti-inflammatory drugs.

- **Matthew Coates** (MB BS 1997) has returned to study and is currently midway through a Graduate Diploma in Arts (Political Science) at the University of Melbourne. He continues to practice as a doctor on a locum basis.

- **Stephen Liddle** (BCom 2000) returned to Perth after working for two years in Melbourne. His new role is working on Western Australia’s statewide mental health software application. And his partner is hoping to visit Melbourne next year for the Commonwealth Games.

- **Matthew Scott** (BA 2000) is the troop commander of the Helicopter Crash Rescue Troop at the Australian Army Aviation Centre, at Oakey, Qld. He and his wife live in Toowoomba. Former classmates can contact Matthew at mathew.scott@defence.gov.au.

- **Jennifer Markich** (BA(Hons) 1997) writes that she returned to Singapore and completed her postgraduate diploma in Education with distinction from the Singapore Ministry of Education. She has been teaching history in a junior college for the past seven years but took a two-year sabbatical and accompanied her husband to the USA. They have two young sons.

- **Teoh Hsien-Jin** (PhD 1997) is Head, Department of Psychology at Sunway University College, Malaysia.

- **Catherine Taplin** (BEc 1998) writes that she was seconded to Labrador City, Canada with Rio Tinto Iron. Former classmates can contact Catherine at taplin@rntoreco.ca.

- **Ziafan Haron** (BSc 1999) writes that he is teaching Physical Education and General Science in a secondary school in Singapore.

- **Jaimi Burns** (BEnSc 2000) moved to Adelaide and completed a BSc degree with a double major with honours in Pharmacology/ Genetics. She is now working at IMVS in a cancer research laboratory. Former classmates can contact Jaimi at jaimi.burns@student.adelaide.edu.au.

- **Robert Coelen** (PhD 1990) has taken up the position as Vice-President International at Leiden University, in the Netherlands. He can be contacted at r.j.coelen@io. leidenuniv.nl.

- **Nor Achar bin Md Noordin** (BSc(Hons) 1992) is married with four children and lives with his family in the Malaysian armed forces. Nor Achar has been with Singapore Airlines since graduating and writes that he has very fond memories of WOU.

- **Lawrence Chin** (MB BS 1992; MBA 1998) writes that after working for five and half years in Singapore, he is now the director of a venture capital fund focused on the life sciences sector in the US. He is living with his wife, Caroline Chin (MB BS 1995) in the Bay area, south of San Francisco.

- **Benedict Imbun (MIR 1992) taught at the University of Papua New Guinea for several years and now teaches at the Paramatta campus of the University of Western Sydney.

- **Megan Jaccodre (BA 1992) is a PhD student at Murdoch University and is researching ritual and story in contemporary cultural spaces.

- **Belinda Lonsdale** (LLB 1992; MIA 2000) was recently practicing as a barrister at Albert Wolff Chambers since April 2003, primarily in the area of criminal law. Belinda is the President of the Criminal Lawyers Association for 2003.

- **Susan Taylor** (MB BS 1992) writes that she has just relocated to Perth after completing a year in Scotland working in a teaching unit, expanding her skills in surgical education and laparoscopic surgery. She writes her busy setting up in the general practice in Subiaco. She is married and has a two-year old son.
system change in the Legislative Councils and examined
published in 2002, he charted the consequences of electoral
upper houses and the effect of such differences, as well
model of government."

instance, the celebrated parliamentarian and commentator
Lord Hailsham famously warned of the dangers of ‘elected
dictatorship’ and called for more checks in the British

functions of parliament.

Insurance and financial services industry for 20 years and is currently
Managing Director of each of the companies within the St Andrew’s
Group. He is also Chief Executive of the HIBOS Australia Insurance
and Investments Division and in a voluntary capacity, developed
a mutual fund to help protect consumers when motor dealerships fail.

Sam Bertridge (BSc(Hons) 2003) worked in gold exploration in the
Ivory Coast, Africa, but owing to the outbreak of civil war he returned
to Australia. He is now exploring for gold in the Murphyson until
the political situation overseas improves.

Sorelle Dyer (BA(Hons) 2003) is studying for a Master’s degree in
Health Psychology at La Trobe University, in Melbourne.

Geoffrey Laing (MBA 2003) writes that he is involved in engineering
projects in the resources sector based in Africa.

Claire Simmons (née Thompson) (BSc 2003) has been married
for two years and has taken up a new traineeship working with the
Christian Union at Curtin University. Claire writes that she is looking
forward to talking to students about Jesus and reading the Bible with them.

Sally Thompson (BSc(Hons) 2004; BE(Hons) 2004) is an
environmental engineer at Sinclair Knight Merz, in Perth. The company has a scholarship
program to assist young engineers who are interested in aid work experience. Sally will spend one
month working on a wetlands project in the coastal area of the Mekong delta, in Vietnam.

Dr Stone is interested in differences between Australian
upper houses and the effect of such differences, as well
as the common features in their evolution. In a paper
published in 2002, he charted the consequences of electoral
system change in the Legislative Councils and examined

the importance of continuing differences between them.

“The reform of franchises that once restricted voting
for a number of state upper houses to voters who owned
property made a huge difference,” explains Dr Stone. “The
design of upper houses now no longer casts them as hand
brakes on democracy but rather makes them key elements
within a system of bicameral democracy.”

In a forthcoming paper Dr Stone examines the effect of
electoral system change on the performance by State upper
houses of their core functions of review of legislation and
scrutiny of government. He has again found considerable
differences in the five Legislative Councils and concludes
that the WA and NSW chambers represent a comparatively
high level of procedural development and performance.

“The WA Council has been a leader in the development
of machinery for legislative review,” he says. “Further,
its arrangements for parliamentary questions are overall
among the most effective of the Councils and its carefully
arranged committee system has enhanced the autonomy of the
chamber.”

Dr Stone’s paper on the changing procedures and
performance of Australian State upper houses will be
published in the first issue of the Australian Journal of
Political Science for 2005.
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