Experience

EXPO 2003
Sunday August 31
9am – 4pm

Abseil down Winthrop Hall, watch robots play a soccer game, feel what 10,000 volts does to your hair, design a dry stone arch bridge, check out anthrax under a microscope, taste some wine, find out how the stock exchange works, perform in a video, climb a rock wall, eat some emu sausages ...

Go horizontal bungee jumping, graze at international food stalls, plunge into a personality reading, indulge in strength testing, watch films and performances. Feel what it’s like to be standing in a wind tunnel, learn to write your name in a foreign script and go home with a helium balloon...

Yes, it’s all happening on OUR campus at EXPO, this Sunday August 31 between 9am and 4pm.

Information sessions for prospective students (both undergraduate and postgraduate) and faculty displays will be the staple for those who seriously want to know about how to study at UWA. But the rest of EXPO is designed to entertain, excite and entrance visitors as they get a taste of what universities are all about.

Be part of it. Bring your families, remind your friends, tell your neighbours and see what help you can offer your faculty, school or centre.

Many people from across the entire campus have worked hard for a long time to make EXPO a success. They deserve
If beauty is in the eye of the beholder, it seems that quality is often seen to be in the PI — the performance indicator.

The most common question asked by the highly professional Australian Universities Quality Agency (AUQA) audit team visiting UWA recently was “how do you know that you have achieved the outcomes you set out to achieve?”. To which many reasonably responded that outcomes can be measured in the quality of our graduates, our research performance and community service record. But that often only provoked a further question: what hard evidence do we have to prove that this is all true?

Behind these encounters — in which a great deal of UWA data has of course been presented in our AUQA Portfolio submission and in oral testimony — has been a major issue of educational philosophy. Indeed, a matter of institutional culture.

While we do measure many things numerically, we also gauge outcomes qualitatively — through peer review, comparative benchmarking with other institutions, graduate success, and public esteem.

And beyond that, as an academically orientated, research-led University, we aim to create a culture of performance that is self-regulating — respecting the reality that we see our staff as self-directing professionals, with the performance ethics and goals of the global ‘academy’ of scholars.

External questions should challenge internal self-perceptions and self-assessments.

It is always good to consider those genuinely external and independent comments and perceptions. They may highlight areas where our policy is not clearly enough mirrored by our practice.

Overall I should say, the AUQA panel seemed to be most impressed with UWA, its processes and the people who make up our learning community. In particular, the mission and culture was a consistent picture that emerged of UWA from across more than 200 people who met them over the three days of the visit.

Within the next couple of months we shall receive a draft report from AUQA for factual checking — it is an independent agency and able to make independent comment. After that we shall quite soon receive the final report, which becomes a public document once it has been conveyed to us. We shall expect considerable discussion across the University of the document, starting with Senate, our governing body. The best outcome will be an external recognition of the University’s considerable reform and advancement strategies of the past few years, together with practical recommendations for our future quest for excellence in teaching and research.

Yet in anticipation of the report, I would here like to say how proud I was of the way in which our University presented itself to AUQA and of how well that presentation — based in not only aspiration but achievement — was received.

Warm thanks to all who were part of the AUQA process — beginning with our Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Executive and extending to Deans, Faculties, Schools and Centres, teachers, and students, managers and community members of governing and advisory bodies.

The deepest values of UWA ultimately relate to our quest for knowledge and the ways we support that. Quality is, in end, about not only efficiency and accountability but about the ongoing seeking of wisdom that the community founders had in mind when proposing UWA more than 90 years ago.
Family is important to history student Jenni Worrall.

Research for her Master’s thesis has taken her deep into very personal family histories both in the UK and here, in Western Australia. And one of the reasons her work took her from Royal Holloway University in London, halfway across the world to UWA, was that a member of her own family, her mother — Professor Anne Worrall — would be here.

Professor Worrall (see UWA News June 30) is an expert on women and crime and a visiting research fellow at UWA’s Crime Research Centre.

Daughter Jenni spent six months in Western Australia after finishing school and wanted to come back.

“I was thinking about how I could combine my Master’s with coming out here, then I found out that Mum would be here at the same time, and that sealed my decision.”

Her mother also had an influence on the direction of Jenni’s research, which is looking at so-called ‘baby farming’ — or illegal adoption services — in the UK and WA around the turn of last century.

“The original idea of looking at criminal women came from one of Mum’s colleagues. My undergraduate dissertation was on baby farming in Britain and now I’ve been able to look at how it happened here. The phenomenon has been studied as a legal issue but not, that I know of, in a historical context and not as a comparative study, between Britain and Australia,” she said.

Baby farming was common in the UK in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. “It was before adoption became a legal concept, and it was an accepted way for poor working-class women, mostly married women who already had children of their own, to make a little money,” Jenni explained.

“They would take babies (usually illegitimate children) from women who couldn’t keep them, and look after them, for a small sum of money.”

“Baby farming changed from a labour of love to purely a business transaction. Alice Mitchell, gaoled in 1907 for manslaughter after baby farming
“I was interested to see if the practice translated to Australian society, as so many practices did from Britain. “Here, in such a new country with a small population, the babies were precious and it seemed that everything possible was done to keep them alive, to keep the population growing. It was common for mothers to use wet nurses to help keep their children alive, if they were having trouble feeding them. “And it seems that that’s where the baby farming started. I found one woman, Alice Mitchell, convicted of manslaughter in 1907, over the death of a baby in her care. “She was found with two babies, one of whom died soon after. While she was only ever charged and found guilty of one death, she is believed to have killed 40 babies, although their bodies were never found.” Alice Mitchell spent five years in Fremantle Gaol and Jenni says there are no records of what happened to her when she was released. But she did find a letter from a woman who believed that she was the second baby, found with Alice Mitchell when she was arrested — the only baby to have survived her ‘care’. “I’ve been looking at how Alice Mitchell was treated in court, by the press, and by the public, and what it says about the social values of the time. She was held up by the press as the ultimate example of a bad woman.” Jenni said the theme of her dissertation was how the community in the newly-established colony looked after its children to become a strong nation. “It also raises the question of what happened to Aboriginal children in this community.” Jenni is Royal Holloway’s first student to work on her Master’s thesis overseas. Her main supervisor has been Professor Patricia Crawford. “She has been an invaluable support for me, a great help with contacts. And so have Dr Pamela Sharpe and Dr Jane Long,” Professor Crawford and Dr Sharpe are both honorary fellows of Royal Holloway University.
Students ensure the delights of Denmark will endure

The tourist town of Denmark has been under the scrutiny of final year environmental engineering and applied ocean science students this year.

They have been working on a long-term sustainability design for the south coastal town and its surrounds that should see the area thrive to 2050 and beyond.

Student project managers, Rebecca Gianotti and Sally Thompson, agree that a concrete definition of sustainability is hard to come by.

“But our design works within the outlines of the State Sustainability Strategy, and uses a series of processes, rather than specific outcomes, to create a way for Denmark to become sustainable while still adapting to new ideas,” Rebecca said.

These processes include: a strong sense of place, using education for sustainability, integrated catchment management; whole-farm planning; clustering of industries and businesses; regional branding for the area; and administration of sustainability via community and policy avenues.

Rebecca said the local historical society had done a lot of work on the area’s history and the students suggested that it be incorporated in local education (to build pride in the area) and be made more accessible to visitors.

Sally said the suggestion for regional branding focussed on the Wilson Inlet, the region’s icon. “Our plan is that criteria of sustainability are attached to the use of the brand, so there is added value in the brand,” she said.

“A design for sustainability for a town as active and community-driven as Denmark needs to incorporate the activities the community is built on, and ensure that any plans are in line with the community’s vision,” Rebecca said.

So the design has included extensive consultation and feedback with members of the Denmark community. Part of this consultation was to establish what the vision of the town may be for the future. “The community’s vision may change with time, but has been identified at the present as including a village-like atmosphere in the town, with environmentally-friendly activities and a strong economy based on low-impact tourism,” she said.

With regular input from the community, monitoring and feedback of the success of these activities and processes, and incorporation of new, innovative technologies and ideas, this design can ensure that Denmark remains sustainable into the future.

The students’ design will be presented by the class on Friday September 19 at 3.30pm, in the Social Sciences Lecture Theatre at UWA. The presentation will be followed by a poster session in the School for Water Research, with refreshments and the opportunity to talk to the students about their design.

The following week, the students will present the design at a community expo in Denmark, with opportunities to discuss their ideas and get direct feedback from the community.
Fledgling research takes off

A new program to develop a culture of collaboration at the University is spreading its wings at UWA.

The Fledgling Centre Program is designed to encourage collaborative, interdisciplinary research, which will increase the University’s ability to access funding for centres of excellence and cooperative research centres.

In terms of individual grant funding per academic staff member, UWA ranks in the top two Australia universities. But this excellent track record has not translated into equivalent success with national centre rounds.

A paper prepared by Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation), Professor Colin MacLeod, points out that none of the Cooperative Research Centres established through the 2002 round were based in WA, and only $8.6 million of the $454.9 million (1.9 per cent) in funds distributed in this round flowed to WA.

Similarly, none of the Australian Research Council Centres of Excellence established through the 2002 round were hosted in WA, or even partnered with a WA university.

A key to successful applications appears to be existing research partnerships that already have established track records of productive collaboration.

Two new research development officers (RDOs) have been appointed to facilitate the development of the Fledgling Centre Program, and to identify funding for collaborative research that will pave the way for successful national research centre bids late in 2005. The RDOs will also identify new funding sources and establish linkages with external partners for ongoing and future individual research initiatives at the University.

Research Services is kicking off this campaign with eight two-hour research forums, one within each of the UWA Strategic Priority areas. These fora, during August and September, are designed to identify potential themes – based upon individual research interests and framed by the national research funding environment — for research collaborations that could serve to establish centre capability.

Each forum will be facilitated by Professor Colin MacLeod, PVC (R&I), along with Dr Campbell Thomson, Director, Research Services, Kym Peck, and Michelle Emmett.

Ms Peck comes to UWA from PricewaterhouseCoopers, where she was involved in organising tax concessions and research grants for companies doing research. Ms Emmett was working in Indonesia for the US agency for International Development, as a project and grant manager in the area of Governance.

“We will be looking at things from an interdisciplinary perspective, taking a holistic approach to research,” Ms Emmett said. “The Fledgling Centres Program will kick off a new way of looking at research.”

“We hope to help build collaborations, both between disciplines within the University, as well as outside the University,” Ms Peck said. “Then hopefully we can increase our involvement in national research centres.”

After the initial brainstorming forums of up to 70 people per session, the research development officers will arrange a series of two-day programs at the Institute for Advanced Studies (IAS), to bring together the potential collaborators.

Michelle Emmett and Kym Peck will be based at the IAS, so that they are geographically convenient to the greatest number of research staff. Professor MacLeod said the Institute had also proven its ability to mount well-received programs that had brought together academics from diverse disciplines to share perspectives and exchange ideas. It had established a successful tradition from which to launch the Fledgling Centre Program.

The goal of the IAS program will be to refine alternative possibilities into a well-delineated Fledgling Centre proposal, in the research areas previously identified at the Forum series.

The proposals will ideally identify the research milestones the collaborators will need to meet, over two years, to become highly competitive for national centre funding.

While some funding will be available centrally, Kim Peck and Michelle Emmett will also be identifying new sources of funding for the Fledgling Centres, as well as for other research initiatives across the university.
As a newcomer to an English-speaking country just five years ago, Dr Farzad Sharifian knows first-hand the language problems that can arise, even for an English teacher.

"Although I had learnt English as a child and had taught English for many years in Iran, there were still some problems with interpretation: people misunderstood what I was trying to say and I found it hard to understand them sometimes," said Dr Sharifian, an Australian Research Council postdoctoral fellow in the School of Humanities. "It is a cultural problem rather than a straight linguistic one."

So it was with great sympathy that Dr Sharifian approached his second PhD, on cultural conceptualisation in Aboriginal English. He spent three years with two groups of primary school children in Perth, one Aboriginal, the other non-Aboriginal. He found that the reason so many Aboriginal students failed at school was their difficulty in grasping the English language as used in the classroom, and also the difficulty experienced by teachers in understanding the Aboriginal students' English.

"Aboriginal English differs from Standard Australian English in its pronunciation, grammar, discourse forms and underlying cultural meanings," he said. "A simple, and possibly the best known example, is their use of the word family. While a teacher is referring to the nuclear family, the student understands the word family to include all aunts, uncles, cousins and grandparents."

Dr Sharifian completed his first PhD in English language teaching in Iran before he emigrated in 1998. He came to Perth and became an honorary research fellow at Edith Cowan University, where he then completed his second PhD.

After winning ECU's Research Medal and the Dean's Prize for outstanding research, Dr Sharifian was awarded the ARC fellowship to continue his research at UWA. Last week, the WA Institute for Educational Research presented him with their 2003 Early Career Award.

He is continuing his research into intercultural communications, looking further at Aboriginal English and also at people whose first language is Farsi or Persian, Dr Sharifian's native tongue.

THE UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA • 25 AUGUST 2003
Reverse the process for the best results

While your car is running well, you take its mechanics for granted. It’s only when it breaks down that you get to understand what the carburettor does (or doesn’t do!).

Visiting cell biologist Dr Steve Smith uses this analogy to explain his interest in reverse genetics. He works out gene’s functions by isolating mutant genes.

“It’s easiest to see how something works when it goes wrong, or breaks down, like your car!” he said.

Dr Smith is a Leverhulme research fellow, who is spending his sabbatical, from the Institute of Cell and Molecular Biology at the University of Edinburgh, in UWA’s School of Biomedical and Chemical Sciences.

He will be working mainly with head of the discipline of biochemistry and molecular biology, Professor David Day, and colleagues Associate Professor Jim Whelan and QEII Fellow Dr Harvey Millar.

“We have interests in common and I plan to spend my seven months here brainstorming with them and their colleagues, learning from each other, reading and writing. My first couple of weeks have already been very productive,” Dr Smith said.

Dr Smith was one of the group which isolated the first plant gene. They published that breakthrough in 1980 and since then Dr Smith has achieved several other ‘firsts’ in gene identification and analysis.

He is a recognised world leader in the field of plant metabolism and the application of functional genomics tools to its study.

Over the past eight years, has worked exclusively with the plant, Arabidopsis thaliana. It is a common weed in the northern hemisphere and extremely easy to propagate.

“It’s one thing having the genes identified, but the challenge is trying to work out how genes work. I’m now going back and looking at old problems with information that was unimaginable 20 years ago. A complete genome sequence seemed unrealistic but we have it, about 28,000 genes in Arabidopsis, and information on the expression of these genes in different circumstances. It’s a massive task to make sense of it all.”

To do so, Dr Smith uses reverse genetics, a method that has become possible in the past three years. “We probably have mutants available for about half of the 28,000 genes now.

“There has been such a huge explosion in DNA information and sequences and the only way it can be accessed and understood is with the use of bioinformatics through computer programs. “It has totally changed the way we do things. You can now generate huge amounts of data with a single experiment and people all over the world are doing experiments every day, so you have to be really on top of things to keep up,” he said. Using UWA expertise, Dr Smith plans to develop his complex computer analysis skills while he is here.

He will teach senior undergraduates and work with PhD and honours students. He will also take part in a research project in collaboration with the Plant Molecular Biology Group in the School of Biomedical and Chemical Sciences. The main focus of this research will be the involvement of mitochondria in fatty acid oxidation in plants, using Arabidopsis to delineate pathways.

Dr Smith will also present seminars in both the Biochemistry and Plant Biology seminar series.

Dr Steve Smith, a world leader in plant metabolism
On one hand, it sounds too good to be true. On the other, it seems so obvious, you wonder why it wasn't done before.

A consortium of 26 of Australia’s public universities is harnessing buying power, and saving time and money that adds up to hundreds of millions of dollars a year.

The Australian Universities Procurement Consortium (AUPC) is also working on standardising an electronic system of ordering supplies (e-procurement). Ron Philippkowski, UWA’s Manager of Strategic Procurement, led the push, with Steve Pelham from Edith Cowan University, to form the consortium after Higher Education Systems brought the Director of the London Universities Procurement Consortium to Australia two years ago.

“We’ve been talking about it since then,” said Mr Philippkowski. “And we have recently set up a management committee, with representatives of nine universities to get the system under way.

“Each participating university is putting in $10,000 to get AUPC going. And one of the first priorities we have is to pay that $10,000 back,” he said.

“With our enormous buying power, we’ll be able to get the best deals, not only with discounts, but with maintenance and service. As we negotiate with suppliers, the AUPC will retain a small portion of the savings achieved in the form of a rebate from suppliers to cover operating expenses. For example, if we arrange a 20 per cent saving on printers, the AUPC may retain up to two percent with the universities receiving the remaining 18 per cent. This is preferable to charging a subscription fee as is the case with many other such purchasing consortiums.”

“Once we get going and the seed capital is paid back, we will start making bonus payments to the universities, based on their use of the agreements we have in place.”

Mr Philippkowski said the AUPC would not be disadvantaging the suppliers. “We want to work with suppliers to reduce their costs, so they share in the savings too. If you work with the suppliers, you get the after-sales service that is often so important,” he said.

He explained that the term procurement went beyond simply purchasing goods. It also covered leasing and renting, and could be applied to almost every aspect of University spending, from cars, travel and consultants, to stationery, laboratory equipment and furniture.

Part of the e-procurement idea is that Mr Philippkowski and his counterparts at participating Universities will negotiate deals, then the agreed items will go onto an electronic catalogue for all the AUPC members. As the best supplier has already been found, universities will not need to ‘shop around’ for better prices, saving time for both university staff and their suppliers.

University staff will simply be able to order the approved item on-line, its purchase will be recorded, payment made and the item delivered.

“Some universities are already using an e-procurement system, but it is a way down the track for UWA and many other universities” Mr Philippkowski said.

“We will be putting supply agreements into place first, then concentrating on acceptance, to make sure those agreements are being used, before we start standardising e-procurement among all the members,” he said.
A strategic win for business

Two teams of business students have beaten off competition from the State's other public universities to win the WA final of Australasia's premier tertiary management competition.

The regional final of the Boston Consulting Group Business Strategy Competition was won by UWA teams in both the undergraduate and postgraduate sections. They will compete in the Australasian finals in Sydney in October.

Each team had a limited time to prepare a solution to a business case study, and were assessed on teamwork, problem solving and presentation skills.

UWA's undergraduate team had won the WA final before, but this was the first win for the postgraduate team, all Master of Business Administration students from UWA's Graduate School of Management.

Team member Peter Ochman said he felt it was a fantastic achievement for the six members. “There are 300 MBA students and 26 of them applied to be in the team. Eventually six of us were chosen, so it was an achievement just to be in the team, let alone to win!” he said.

Opening UWA research to the world

After the years of work and effort put into them, most PhD theses end up gathering dust on library shelves.

The University Library, together with The Australian Theses Repository, has now given them a new lease on life.

The UWA Digital Theses Repository was launched this month by Professor Robyn Owen, Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation), with 20 PhD and Masters theses already on-line.

New regulations, put in place at the beginning of this year, require all students submitting theses to send an electronic copy to the Library, as well as a hard copy.

“So, within three years, it will become automatic for all theses to go on the Web,” said University Librarian, John Arfield.

“They will also have links to them on the Australian Theses Repository site,” he said.

“We are connected to the national repository and, every night, a Web crawler harvests the metadata, or key words assigned to each thesis, and adds them to a continually updated index.”

Mr Arfield said the Australian Theses Repository had been in operation for a few years but UWA had not joined the service because it required students to do the work involved in converting their theses to the required format and producing the metadata.

“We think that’s too much to ask of students who have just put an enormous amount of work into their theses. So, as long as they send us an electronic version of some sort, we will format it for them and identify the key words for the links,” he said.

“I’m quite confident that the great majority of graduate students will be delighted that their theses are going on the Web. Those who are part-way through their research now, and are not subject to the new regulations, are very welcome to submit electronic versions of their theses to the Library, if they wish.”

Mr Arfield said the UWA Digital Theses Repository had built-in security measures so restricted theses (including those connected to pending patent applications) would not be made available to general scrutiny.

Otherwise, all future UWA theses will eventually be available on the Web via the UWA Library catalogue.
Pulse research still beating strongly

LEGUMES have a major role to play in the health and nutrition of the Australian people, as well as the nation’s economic well-being.

So it is not surprising that, after two years of commercial operation, the Centre for Legumes in Mediterranean Agriculture (CLIMA) has more external funding than when it was a Co-operative Research Centre.

For two years, it has been a research alliance between UWA, CSIRO, the WA Department of Agriculture and Murdoch University.

During that period, domestic pulse consumption has expanded, driven by increasing health consciousness, in response to the dietary woes that cost Australia $2 billion per year in medical and associated expenses.

CLIMA scientists are participating in research to produce legumes for isoflavines capable of prohibiting cancer cell growth.

While expanding markets complement the value of legumes to cropping systems, where they fix atmospheric nitrogen and lift subsequent wheat yields, new research shows that legumes can also benefit the environment and cereal performance by increasing soil phosphorus availability. This could help moderate the $200 million WA farmers spend each year on phosphorus fertilisers.

CLIMA has released a biennial report, which cites the UWA-based centre hosting 23 postgraduate scientists conducting 50 research projects into legume performance.

“Legumes have only been subject to breeding improvement for half the time cereals have, so we still have a long way to go,” said CLIMA director Professor Kadambot Siddique.

“CLIMA is adding muscle to WA’s grain and pasture legume species to better combat diseases and conditions which challenge their performance. Ongoing industry support is central to this outcome,” he said.

Weeping grass could put a smile on farmers’ faces

For 10,000 years grain production has relied on annual grasses such as wheat and barley.

Flying in the face of orthodoxy, a team of WA researchers are domesticating a perennial Australian grass which they believe will be commercially viable and environmentally sustainable across some three million hectares of Australia, for both grain growing and livestock grazing.

Their audacity has won researchers from UWA and CSIRO the Grains Research and Development Corporation Eureka Prize for research to improve the environmental sustainability of grain growing.

The group, which includes CLIMA senior research scientist Dr Christine Davies and former UWA research fellow Dr Ted Lefroy, says: “Perennial grasses can harness rainfall throughout the year, making them well suited to areas with poor soils and unreliable seasonal rain. Additionally, native grasses may be better able to manage dryland salinity.”

Dr Davies and CSIRO’s Dr Lefroy and David Waugh have already identified appropriate native grasses and started selection trials.

“We’re not proposing to replace wheat and barley. Rather, we want a crop that would be suited to some traffic, so watch out for people and signs.

There are changes to the traffic signs on the internal ring road next to Riley Oval.

While construction of the new University Club is under way, stop signs and speed humps have been installed north and south of the exit onto Hackett Drive near the construction site.

Please observe them and take care when driving in the area, looking out for trucks and other construction vehicles coming and going and also pedestrians, who are more likely to be walking on the road near the site.

When there is lots of movement on and off the site, a contractor will control the traffic, so watch out for people and signs.
Building the traditions

Creating the future

The University of Western Australia is steeped in sporting history. We have clubs that go back over 75 years, and the contribution of sport to the academic experience is as important to our present and future students as it has been to our past students.

Building on these sporting traditions, the UWA Sport and Recreation Association helps ensure that the University’s sporting clubs continue to represent UWA strongly, and that we continue to recognise our sporting achievers and teams through the Blues program and other sports awards.

We also recognise that to create the best future, we will have to engage past students, current students and staff. The Sport and Recreation Association helps to create local, national and international sporting opportunities in many ways.

We have developed a sports scholarship program to enable students to participate at the highest level possible while still maintaining academic performance. It’s a program which includes not only financial support, but help with achieving excellence in both academic and sporting performances.

On the international and national scene, four students will be competing at the World University Games this month in Deagu, South Korea; the Australian University Games (now a major event in the Australian sporting calendar) will be hosted in Western Australia in 2004; and together with other WA universities, UWA is establishing the Indian Ocean Rim Games – an international event that will invite universities from the Indian Ocean Rim nations and Asia to compete in Perth in 2005.

Over recent years, we have also had success with the continued development of our first grade sports clubs. For example:

• the long-term development of facilities for the UWA Hockey Club has helped in the club’s 2003 success in both men’s and women’s first grade and second grade competitions in the same year—a feat never before achieved;
• both the UWA Cricket Club and UWA Rugby Club have developed substantial foundations to assist with provision of sporting scholarships for their clubs;
• with the recent development of the clay courts at UWA Sports Park, the UWA Tennis Club (the oldest club on campus) was able to get back into the men’s first grade for the first time in 20 years, winning in the past two years; and
• the UWA Boat Club ran a fundraising campaign to contribute to the refurbishment of the boat shed.

We currently have two major facility development projects coming together with the support of UWA faculties and schools, corporate partners, state and local governments and our alumni. They are:

• the provision of tennis clubrooms and an additional six clay courts at the UWA Tennis Club complex at UWA Sports Park, planned to be complete for the 2004 Australian University Games (in September next year); and,
• Stage 2 of the UWA Watersports Complex – the development of land-based facilities adjacent to the refurbished UWA Boat Shed – planned for commencement next year (this facility will provide home for many of our UWA sporting clubs).

A significant contribution to these success stories has come from our alumni. The creation of the UWA Sports Alumni program is uniquely Australian and includes a series of UWA sporting events to provide alumni opportunities to get together, to network, and to enjoy sport at UWA. Its significant fundraising component helps with sports scholarships and facility development. We are extremely grateful for the generosity of our graduates.

The UWA Boat Shed twilights piloted last year will recommence in September this year, and will provide a regular opportunity for Sports Alumni and Association members to come together on Thursday evenings.

There is no doubt that the sporting traditions of UWA help build the character and experience of the students, staff and graduates. I urge you to be part of our exciting sporting future by joining the Sport and Recreation Association and/or the UWA Sports Alumni.