Troy Cukrov’s market gardens produced about two million lettuce last year.

He was processing about 16 tonnes a week for the Perth and south east Asian fast food market, so when he found he was losing up to 20 percent of his winter crop to a fungal disease, he looked for expert advice. But it was hard to find.

Troy, who has a Bachelor of Science in Horticulture with Honours from UWA, contacted his former plant pathology lecturer, Professor Krishnapillai Sivasithamparam (known to many simply as Siva).

“I asked Siva about the latest research into lettuce drop and found there wasn’t much,” said Troy.

“We discussed the fungicides I’d been using and my ideas for controlling the disease in other ways.

“Then he called me back and said that my ideas and my way of approaching the problem would make a good Masters research project, as a forerunner to a PhD. If nobody could supply the answers for me, I would have to find them for myself.

“So that’s how a lettuce farmer is working towards a PhD.”

Troy is a third generation market gardener who always swore he would not follow his family into the fields. But he found that his study helped him with problem-solving and made him a smarter market gardener.

Lettuce drop is the major winter lettuce disease in WA and, Troy thinks, probably throughout the world. It is caused by a soil-borne fungus, Sclerotinia minor, which is active in wet, cold conditions. The affected lettuce collapse and die very quickly.

“Up until now producers have been trying to control it with fungicides and fumigation. But the longer your land has been under cultivation, the more of the pathogen is in the soil. New properties are not so badly affected.

“We need new management techniques. My PhD will be very broad, looking at combinations of cultural practices, fungicides, irrigation techniques and crop rotation, to manage this fungus that can have such a marked affect on our crop,” he said.

His lettuce crop is all the more important now that the export of his cauliflowers (more than a million last year) has been adversely affected by huge low cost production in China.

Continued page 4
Some international comparative perspectives are especially interesting at this time of intense national focus on reforming our own university sector.

More than 500 Vice-Chancellors/Presidents/Rectors/Principals from more than fifty nations have recently gathered at the Association of Commonwealth Universities Conference (held every four years) in Belfast, Northern Ireland.

The main theme of the conference was University ‘engagement’ with their societies. And nowhere was this more relevant perhaps in the divided society of Ulster, as it searches for truth and reconciliation based on the Good Friday Peace accord.

But in such a big meeting of plenary address, papers, seminars and talk amongst delegates over coffee and social events, some critical issues stood out to bring home.

The real unifying theme was the global under-funding of universities, whether in the advanced or developing economies. It was only a matter of degree as to the levels of under-resourcing – so placing huge pressure on staff, students, support and facilities, including infrastructure and research funds. How sad to be told by an African Vice-Chancellor that at times he simply does not have enough funding to buy food for the students in the colleges – let alone invest in new technology.

And how revealing that colleagues from the United Kingdom and Canada remarked unhappily on the gap between the rhetoric of ‘knowledge nations’ among our politicians enamoured of innovation, and the reality of declining public investment in the basic grants of universities.

On the other hand, another common issue was the increasingly ‘instrumental’ and interventionist approach of governments towards public universities. Higher education has clearly become the adjunct of economic policy and labour force production in many countries. “What is happening to the ideal of universities as custodians and generators of fundamental knowledge?” was a cry from the heart that I frequently heard as Vice-Chancellors from different societies compared notes.

‘Influencing governments’ was accordingly a major theme and I found intense interest in our own Crossroads Review process. (My own presentation, on the AVCC’s policy papers and lobbying, produced an extended discussion, questions and requests for our documents). Few had good stories to tell and some African and Asian delegates stressed that the Australian approach – including the Universities Meet Parliament occasion – would not even be possible in their nations.

Students featured largely in discussions – issues of access and equity, support and scholarships, international experience and exchanges were prominent, together with the new technologies for teaching and learning. Universities are clearly vibrant places for social change and human advancement. African campuses have a special and deep concern to confront HIV-AIDS on their campuses.

The Australian system clearly had many comparative advantages in a world of higher education where quality is so uneven and the student social challenges so great. But we are quite an orthodox sector, which may or may not be a good thing. The fastest growing aspect of higher education globally is now the proliferation of private universities in many countries as well as the notable growth of ‘corporate universities’. In addition, e-learning based ‘open universities’ are burgeoning, especially in developing nations.

The British are also giving serious consideration to a major equity-access approach, to be based on a system of admission by lottery choice. The Minister is being advised by the Vice-Chancellor of Brunel (Professor Steven Schwartz, formerly of Murdoch University in Western Australia) on the value of assigning student places, above a certain A-level set of scores, on the basis of random lottery allocation. The idea is to counteract social bias/advantage in choosing students for the most popular/over-subsidised courses (eg in medicine, law, technology). We await the report with interest!

Finally, I noted that fee-paying has become more of a norm than an exception in university experience. We all believe in the fundamental public good of higher education and tend to believe it should be based on public funding. But the realities of budget increasingly operates on a user-pays basis.

The global village has the university at its centre. But the universities globally live not so much in interesting as sombre times.
A unique process that will dramatically cut the cost of a light weight high strength racing car chassis is being tested in the UWA Motorsport’s 2003 project – mirroring the efforts of Formula One and aerospace industries overseas.

Final year engineering student Mike Haywood came up with an innovative design improvement for a carbon fibre chassis, to replace the tubular steel the students have used in their last two racing cars.

The design has a monocoque, or single skin body, that will reduce the weight of the car from last year’s 37 kilograms to 22 kilograms. Last year, Mike worked with the Motorsport team as a third year, doing two mechanical engineering projects on advanced composite materials, looking at the feasibility of a single skin chassis improving the adhesive strength between the core and the carbon skins.

“We have to prove to the technical judges of the Formula SAE that the chassis’s strength is equal to one made from tubular steel.”

He said the best material for a monocoque chassis was a resin-impregnated carbon fibre (known in the trade as pre-pregs) that cost around $70 a metre. “It was out of the question when you consider that we need up to 60 metres for testing and full construction.

“I’ve researched a method of improving the adhesion between the honeycomb core and carbon skins to increase the bending stiffness by at least 30 per cent and to drastically improve the energy absorption capable from the chassis. I’ve also been working with Dr Laurie Walker, a consultant in composites; we’ve developed a completely different method for curing pre-pregs that eliminates the need for expensive autoclave equipment traditionally needed to ‘cure’ the material,” he said.

(Dr Walker was a PhD student in 2000 and worked on the composite material used in the Motorsport’s first project, a speed boat for the Avon Descent.)

Mike and Dr Walker have interested some major material suppliers overseas - enough so to warrant the supply of all carbon pre-pregs needed for testing and vehicle construction.

When the project (and Mike’s thesis) is complete and the car has raced against the other university cars in Adelaide in December, Mike plans to travel around Europe, taking his thesis to the Formula One companies in hope of work based on his acquired knowledge, before flying to America with the team in May to compete against 140 other universities. Right now, he’s not giving away any details of the innovative processes, keeping them a trade secret.

Mike is just one of about 40 students working on the Motorsport project this year. About half of them are final year engineering students who are all writing a thesis on their particular area of expertise in the design and building of the racing car. Others are third years, writing papers on specific problems.

The only part of the car that the team doesn’t design and build from scratch is the engine. This year they have chosen a CBR 600, a 600cc engine from a wrecked Honda Fireblade motorcycle.

“But the engine team have done an enormous amount of work to the engine, transforming it from carburettor-run to fuel-injected, redesigned the intake system, and spent hundreds of hours on the dyno, tuning it,” Mike said.

Every part of the car is getting expert attention from individual students, who are hoping to better UWA’s record of second place in the Formula SAE competition.
Helen Hosking was one of those people who always thought of others before herself. And since her untimely death in 1985, more than a dozen biochemistry students have benefited indirectly from that generosity.

Each year since 1990, the Helen Hosking vacation scholarship has been awarded to a final year student, for six to eight weeks’ research work over the summer holidays. It is funded by the Rotary Club of Thornlie, where Helen’s husband was a former president.

Helen, a graduate of the University of Sydney, worked in the former Department of Biochemistry during the 1980s. One evening, while driving home, she stopped to offer assistance at the scene of a car accident, and was killed by live electric wires, brought down by the car crash.

Her local Rotary Club took a few years to decide on the best way to honour her, coming up with the vacation scholarship idea. The club has funded it ever since.

Two members recently presented acting Head of the School of Biomedical and Chemical Sciences, Associate Professor Paul Attwood, with a cheque for $7,000 to top up the fund.

“The successful student receives about $1,200 for the research work, which isn’t a lot. More important is the opportunity to do some research rather than spend the holidays working at unrelated jobs,” Professor Attwood said.

“We greatly appreciate the Rotary Club of Thornlie’s generosity in continued funding.”

“I’ve had the same thing happen with the US recently, too. A couple of years ago, I saw an opportunity in the processing market. I knew that the McDonald’s stores in south east Asia didn’t have a relatively close, consistent, reliable lettuce supply, so we provided it, vacuum-packing shredded lettuce that has a refrigerator life of 12 days.

“It takes just five days to ship lettuce from Perth to south east Asia, compared with 21 days from the US, so they were keen to do business with us.

“Unfortunately, when the Aussie dollar strengthened against the US dollar, they went back to their US suppliers because the US growers are heavily subsidised, which makes their produce so much cheaper.”

He is now concentrating on supplying local fresh markets and, via two wholesalers, Troy’s lettuce is also found locally in McDonalds, Hungry Jack’s, KFC, Subway and Coles supermarkets. Troy is also testing the pre-packaged gourmet lettuce market, starting about a month before Christmas.
Wars, battles and invasions become more romantic with the passing years.

The biggest Roman hill fort in Dorset, first occupied 2,400 years ago to defend an Iron Age community, and with connections to both the Battle of Agincourt and WWII, was the highlight of a tour of Roman Britain for some of the 30 historical enthusiasts led by Classics and Ancient History Professor, David Kennedy.

Natalie Cullity, a student of Professor Kennedy’s, said she had prepared a paper on the fort, Hod Hill, for her second-year ancient history unit. “It was a great thrill to visit the site,” she said.

“Hod Hill was the biggest Roman hill fort in Dorset, but only outlines of the fort remain, in the form of massive ditches around the perimeter. While recovering our breath on the summit, our guide pointed out a grove of yew trees on nearby Hambledon Hill, and related two extraordinary stories.

“The trees hid a bunker where explosives were stored in World War II in case of German invasion, and the wood from those very trees had been used to make the bows for the Battle of Agincourt in 1415!”

Professor Kennedy’s tour group has been eager to write down their experiences, to describe their trip of a lifetime.

Another of the group, former student Lynne Junk, was also captivated by Hod Hill.

“Who could forget the feeling of standing on top of the world at Hod Hill, Maiden Castle and Hardnott and wondering at the perseverance of not only the Romans in building forts in difficult places, but the amount of backbreaking effort put in by iron-age man in shifting so much soil in the hill-forts!

“And the military genius of the Romans could be fully appreciated by their strategic placement of defences at the entrance to glens and heads of valleys commanding mountain passes.

“To actually stand in the beautiful villas where ancient Romans trod was awesome, to see the beauty of their mosaics and the vastness of their built-up areas, together with their excellent placement to command panoramic views, was breathtaking.”

Student Diane Donegan wrote lyrically about walking along Hadrian’s Wall: “Dreamers tended to dawdle, scrambling into the two milecastles along the way to indulge their imaginations. Gazing in the direction of the border country is an experience that thrills to the very marrow. To think this was once the north boundary wall of the Roman Empire! Away it stretches, mile after mile, scorning the lie of the land, rising with the craggy hills that frown grimly towards the north.”

Professor Kennedy had been asked for many years by his Roman Britain students to lead a tour. With the success of this one, assisted by his research students Emmie Lister and Nigel Wright, Professor Kennedy will probably lead another tour next July.


The Roman baths and Bath Abbey. The group viewed it by torchlight after dinner in the Pump Room.
A group of earth and geographical scientists is helping East Timor to develop its natural resources.

Geologist Dr Myra Keep is the driving force behind a program of research and training in Timor Leste (now the country’s official name) that involves geologists, geographers, soil scientists and a biological oceanographer.

Dr Keep was invited to address an international conference in Dili last March, on the oil, gas and mining opportunities in Timor Leste.

“There were 16 international speakers and the conference, a first for Timor Leste, was exceptionally well-run, and a great success. I talked about the petroleum potential of the Timor Sea and, afterwards, I had such great feedback that it made me want to go back there again,” Dr Keep said.

“It was obvious from their response to my talk that the country is lacking even simple information.

“They really needed direction and help. So I came back to UWA and roped in Associate Professor David Haig, who has worked extensively on similar geology in Papua New Guinea and Western Australia, and Dr Warwick Crowe, a postdoc in geology and a brilliant field worker, with extensive field experience in remote areas. They both agreed to come back to Timor Leste with me in July.”

Dr Keep said that Professor Haig’s expertise in micropaleontology and stratigraphy (ageing determination of rocks) was crucial to the East Timorese, whose island had formed very quickly.

“They need David’s expertise to help them determine the exact ages of their young rocks; an absolute necessity for petroleum exploration,” she said.

The three UWA staff went to Dili during the mid-year break. They gave a lecture to the staff of the government Department of Minerals and Energy on the geology of Timor Leste, then five East Timorese joined the geologists on a field trip across the island, the start of a long-term training program for the East Timorese people.

“It’s a tremendously beautiful place and I can see the future for Timor Leste lies in eco- and geo-tourism,” Dr Keep said.
The team started work on a major national geological database for the island, which can be used to attract international exploration companies. Dr Keep and Professor Haig are preparing distance lectures on resource geology as part of a long-term plan to help train the East Timorese people to control all aspects of their oil and gas potential.

"After our trip, we became so excited about the enormous potential for research and training over a broad area of resources and I approached several other people with a view to putting together funding applications to go back next year," said Dr Keep, who funded the initial trip with her own research funds.

She has approached soil scientist Professor Bob Gilkes, geographer Dr Kimberley Van Niel, soil scientist Dr Mark Tibbett and biological oceanographer Dr Anya Waite.

"Together with Bob Gilkes and Kimberley Van Niel, we put together an application for seed funding for multidisciplinary projects for next year. We want to look at the whole gamut of natural resources: geology leads on to soil science, then the next natural step is agriculture," she said.

Professor Gilkes said East Timorese agriculture was very depressed. They grow coffee but are not well organised enough to market it. "The first step is to help the people understand what's possible, how good the soil is, and to look at their land capability," he said.

Dr Van Niel's expertise is in native vegetation and she plans for her students to handle special analysis of the plant life on the island.

The group will be taking honours and PhD students to Timor Leste next year. "But the great thing about this program is that it won't be purely research," Dr Keep said. "Each student will have an East Timorese counterpart, so we will be training them as well."

The group has a UWA research grant application pending for more geological work and will be applying for an ARC Discovery Grant, in which they hope Anya Waite and Mark Tibbett will be involved.

"It's all very exciting stuff. There's such a lot we can do and we are so hopeful we will get the grants to continue. But we are going back regardless of funding!"

In the meantime, David Haig and Myra Keep are bringing two staff from the East Timorese Department of Minerals and Energy to UWA next month for more training. "They are coming for three weeks. David will take them up to the Exmouth area and, when they come back, they'll learn how to process samples, so they can do it when they go back home."

Dr Keep has also become involved in the community in Dili. Realising the Timor Leste government had few educational resources, she sent out a plea for geology textbooks. Dr Keep recently sent 25 boxes to Dili, shipped free of charge by Phillips Petroleum.

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UWA scientists volunteered their help during the last school holidays to give high school students hands-on experience.

The Students Research Scheme (SRS) is an Australia-wide program that gets students involved in short-term projects with practising scientists. It is run by the CSIRO and this is the first time UWA has taken part.

Four scientists, Dr Rachel Cardell-Oliver (Computer Science and Software Engineering), Associate Professor Geoff Hammond (Psychology), Dr Anya Waite (Water Research) and Associate Professor James Trevelyan (Mechanical Engineering) designed projects that could be completed in 20 hours by two secondary students.

All four UWA staff said they were impressed by the enthusiasm of the students and the quality of the work they completed. They all said they would do it again, after being initially dubious about the benefits of the scheme to UWA.

Associate Professor Trevelyan and his research group are developing a remote access laboratory system for students to do lab work off campus. It is one of few such systems in the world, and he took the opportunity of the SRS to examine the feasibility of setting up experiments for high school students.

His students, from St Mark's Anglican School and Mandurah Christian College, conducted feasibility assessment of using UWA’s facilities. “The students gave me some insight into the curriculum as well as their feedback after using our equipment,” Professor Trevelyan said.

Dr Rachel Cardell-Oliver said it was great to have students from areas which traditionally didn’t feed into UWA. Her students were from Gosnells and Woodvale Senior High Schools and she said she found them delightful, interesting and intelligent.

“I arranged for them to experiment with environmental monitoring, which is something our research group is working on with sensor technology. They used Lego bricks to read temperatures in offices. I set up a framework for them but they had to design the experiment themselves,” she said.

Associate Professor Geoff Hammond’s students were supervised by two of his doctoral students, Deb Faulkner and David Morris, who spent four days with the students from St Hilda’s and Perth College.

“Deb and David wrote the software for their problem. They had to gather data on how well they traced lines, using two hands, singly and together. They then analysed the data and made graphs. They were to present their work back at their schools and also make a poster to be presented at Scitech,” he said.

(SRS is co-ordinated by Andrew Hannah, the manager of the CSIRO Science Education Centre at Scitech.)

Dr Anya Waite’s students from Perth College and Applecross Senior High School, spent a day out on a boat, doing an oceanographic survey, looking at the plankton that can be seen from satellites in space. “They took samples and came back to the lab to analyse them,” Dr Waite said.

Geoff Hammond, Anya Waite, Rachel Cardell-Oliver and James Trevelyan all encouraged other scientists to become involved with the scheme next year.
Equity for students

The University has a strong commitment to ensuring access and equity for its student population.

There is great diversity among students in terms of gender, race, age, disability, sexual orientation, cultural background and socio-economic status.

The Vice-Chancellor’s Equity and Diversity Advisory committee wants to recognise a general staff member who has made a significant contribution towards the provision of inclusive services for students.

The General Staff Diversity Award is open to all general staff, who can self-nominate or be nominated by a colleague (with the nominee’s consent).

Brief submissions addressing the selection criteria can be lodged with the Equity and Diversity Office by Friday October 24. More information about the award and the selection criteria can be found at www.equity.uwa.edu.au

Ideas on the market

UWA’s Office of Industry and Innovation (OII) has its finger on the pulse of commercialisation throughout the country.

OII’s director, Dr Andy Sierakowski, has recently been elected as chair of Knowledge Commercialisation Australasia (KCA), representing university and related public sector commercialisation bodies.

“Industries, universities, business and governments need a co-ordinated approach if Australia is to fulfil its potential through greater commercialisation of ideas and inventions,” Dr Sierakowski said.

“I’m pleased to be taking up the role of chair of KCA at a time when our members and the entire sector are making significant advances in commercialising Australia’s intellectual property,” he said.

“It is rewarding to see that both the private and public sectors are increasingly recognising the value that bodies like KCA can add to the development of key intellectual resources within Australia. KCA is in a prime position to identify the important strategic elements required to bring ideas to fruition.”

Chocolate reward for emotions quiz

Do you have two hours to spare and would like to be rewarded with chocolate?

You can help Emma Savery, a graduate student in the School of Psychiatry and Clinical Neuroscience, who needs volunteers to help with her investigation of the biological mechanisms of emotion.

She is looking for people between the ages of 18 and 65 with no known mental illnesses to take part in one testing session at QEII, lasting about two hours.

To gain a better understanding of emotions, volunteers will be asked to look at pictures on a screen and listen to sounds through headphones. Their eye blinks will be measured as they respond to the pictures and sounds.

They will also be shown pictures, including some of naked men or women and some depicting graphic injuries to body parts, and asked to rate the pictures on three aspects, using a pencil and paper questionnaire.

Emma is offering $15 reimbursement and chocolate! If you can help please call her on 0403 804 860 or at emmas@ccrn.uwa.edu.au

AusAID finds a niche

AusAID students at UWA now have a quiet private place to discuss their needs.

A new office, off the Hackelt Hall courtyard, has been dedicated to the 50 students from Indonesia and developing countries in Africa, South Asia, East Asia and Papua New Guinea, who are studying at UWA with the help of AusAID.

Rhonda Haskell, AusAID liaison officer, has relocated from the International Centre to the new premises where she welcomes staff and students with any queries or concerns related to AusAID.

Fast food

Physics technician John Budge enjoyed a dramatic lunchtime performance in the Great Court recently.

“I watched a student sit down and pull a paper bag out of his backpack and, as he did, a kookaburra flew in to sit on a nearby branch. The student looked up at the kookaburra, who avoided eye contact, but was back eyeing the bag as soon as the student turned his head away,” Budgie said.

“He took out a pie, looked again at the kookaburra, who again looked away, as if he wasn’t interested. Then the student lifted the pie to his mouth, but before he reached for the pastry, the kookaburra had swooped and snatched it out of his hand, carrying the whole thing back to his branch.

“With few frogs around these days for the kookaburras to eat, you’d have to say they were living hand to mouth!”

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UWA honours life’s work

The horror of the Burma-Thailand railway was not over for the Australian prisoners-of-war when they returned home.

Many of them had been infected by an unusually virile intestinal worm, Strongyloides stercoralis, which lived on in their bodies for many years.

There were patients in the repatriation hospital in Perth (now Hollywood Private Hospital) in the 1980s, still suffering from infection by the worm, nearly 40 years after coming back to Australia, when Dr David Grove became interested in their case and subsequently devoted his life’s work to the field of parasitology.

Now Senior Director in the Department of Clinical Microbiology and Infectious Diseases at South Australia’s Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Clinical Professor of Microbiology and Clinical Professor of Infectious Diseases at The University of Adelaide, David Grove has been awarded a Doctorate in Science, from UWA.

Over his long and productive career, Professor Grove has made a significant contribution to the field of parasitology.

He submitted his thesis, presenting research on worm infections undertaken over three decades in Australia, the US, the Philippines and the UK, and including 73 original articles, 38 review articles and two books, to UWA because the majority of the work was done while he was a senior lecturer, then an associate professor, in UWA’s Department of Medicine from 1978 to 1988.

Professor Grove said the ex-POWs’ worm infection was very unusual. “Worms generally die within a few months to a few years and cannot multiply in the body. But Strongyloides is an exception to the rule and is able to multiply in the human body so people reinfect themselves and the infection lasts for years. The longest documented case is 64 years,” he said.

Three honorary doctorates were also awarded in the spring graduations, to author Robert Drewe, violinist and Director of the Australian Chamber Orchestra, Richard Tognetti, and earth scientist Professor Michael McElhinny.

Robert Drewe was born in Melbourne but grew up in Perth, his childhood and early adulthood captured for Australian audiences in his best selling novel The Shark Net, recently adapted for television.

As a young journalist, Mr Drewe won two Walkley awards, but abandoned a career in journalism while still in his 20s, to write novels and short stories. He was one of the first writers-in-residence attached to the UWA English Department in 1979 and has since held a similar post at La Trobe University, Melbourne, and in London’s South Bank Centre at the Royal Festival Hall and Brixton Prison.

In 1996, he was awarded an Australian Artist’ Creative Fellowship by the Prime Minister. Last week, he received the honorary degree of Doctor of Letters.
Charismatic Violinist

Richard Tognetti, a charismatic violinist, has had a remarkable impact on the musical life of Australia and on the reputation of Australian musicians at an international level. He was awarded the honorary degree of Doctor of Music.

Mr Tognetti studied at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music and at the Berne Conservatory where he was awarded the Tschumi prize in 1989.

In that same year, he took up the position of Artistic Director and Leader of the Australian Chamber Orchestra (ACO). Richard has directed the ACO on nearly 20 international tours, spanning 19 countries. From a small ensemble little-known outside Sydney, it has received international acclaim and was described by the London Times in 1999 as the best chamber orchestra on earth. It has the largest audience subscriber base for chamber orchestras worldwide.

Richard Tognetti has an association with the UWA School of Music, having visited as Artist in Residence, and in residence with the ACO. He and the ACO have a very strong following in Perth.

Distinguished Scientist

Professor Michael McElhinny is a distinguished scientist who is pre-eminent in his field of palaeomagnetism and its application to global tectonics.

After completing his PhD at Rhodes University in South Africa, Professor McElhinny migrated to Australia where he became a Senior Fellow in geophysics at the Australian National University. He was elected to the Australian Academy of Science in 1981 for his contributions to the solid earth sciences, and in 1983 was awarded the Academy’s highly prized Mawson Medal.

He has had a close and ongoing association UWA: as Gledden senior visiting Fellow in 1992, and chair of the science advisory council of the Tectonics Special Research centre since its inauguration in 1997. In 2000, he was a Distinguished Visitor to our University.

Professor McElhinny was admitted to the honorary degree of Doctor of Science.

Athletes aglow with gold and bronze

UWA students won two of 12 medals brought home by the Australian team from the World University Games in South Korea, Universiade 2003.

Australia finished 16th out of 170 countries, with its best medal tally ever: two gold, five silver and five bronze.

Fourth year science student Kylie Wheeler, a Commonwealth Games athlete, won one of the two gold, with a personal best score in the gruelling heptathlon. Kylie scored 6031 points, an Olympic B qualifying score, ahead of Australian team captain and fellow Commonwealth Games athlete Jane Jamieson from NSW TAFE. Jane had finished ahead of Kylie at the 2002 Commonwealth Games.

“I’m a bit disappointed not to have made an Olympic-A qualifying score, but I did improve my personal best by 19 points. I also got a personal best in the long jump and javelin, so I’m pretty happy with that,” Kylie said.

Third year commerce student and swimmer Adam Lucas also scored a personal best when he won a bronze medal in the men’s 200m individual medley.

Bruce Meakins, Executive Director of UWA’s Sport and Recreation Association, said the results were great for Australia, with outstanding UWA performances by Kylie and Adam.

The word Universiade is a combination of University and Olympiad. More than 7,700 students took part in the Universiade 2003, with Australia represented by 115 athletes. Held every two years under the banner of the International University Sports Federation, it is the second biggest international sports event behind the Summer Olympic Games.
I'm sitting at my desk working my way through the plethora of papers that lay in waiting for some action, thinking that Expo could not have been so long ago.

This building was a hive of activity in the week before Expo. There were shopping expeditions for sweets for the lucky dip, clips for balloons, gazebos, streamers, table cloths and various essential small items. Last minute phone calls, faxes and emails to confirm delivery of promotional flyers, posters and, the all essential Business School blue t-shirt. Some offices were looking like storage rooms as brochures and other items were being delivered.

Did Expo happen or didn’t it? We settle into our old routines as if Expo had been a dream.

When I drove in the Hackett Entrance on Expo day, I looked at the car park in front of me and decided that was too much for me to deal with on a Sunday. Never before have I seen so many people trying to get onto campus. This was a substantial increase on attendance from previous years.

I was even more astounded when arriving at Social Science South where the UWA Business School had set up shop to find the place buzzing with activity. Balloons were flying, banners and displays were beckoning people to look at "what we do!" and volunteers were busy talking about courses to parents and young people. The sausage sizzle was being cleaned up and removed as all supplies had been depleted.

The sausage sizzle was to be the drawcard to get people into the courtyard so that they could have a look around while eating. The volunteers had done a wonderful job, and the demand was such that there was nothing left to provide in the afternoon. This was interesting considering there was some discussion about the optimal amount of supplies. I don’t think anyone expected the number of people coming onto campus to be so high. Obviously, the weather had an impact on the attendance as well as the promotional activities that occurred beforehand.

Why is Expo so important and why all this planning for one day? It is important so that our stakeholders can get to know us – what we do and how we do it – and why we are The University of Western Australia. It is also important for bringing the various stakeholders together in one location. The focus for us on the day was to provide for our future students, including their parents; our current students; and the organisations that recruit our graduates.

We do provide opportunities to meet with stakeholders throughout the year but these events tend to focus on target groups. Expo brings the future students onto campus so that they can talk to course advisors on what majors will get them the job they want. To support the information obtained from the course advisor, they can then talk to organisations such as Ernst & Young and KPMG about career opportunities once their degree is complete. Other career information was also provided by Woodside Energy, Rio Tinto and the Institute of Chartered Accountants. It’s like a one-stop shop for course and career information and something we would like to develop further.

What was great to see on the day was people of all ages coming along enjoying some of the promotional items. We had balloons, lollies, rulers, and clock-tower money boxes. The distribution of the UWA name is facilitated at Expo by many of the giveaway items. Our School is fortunate to be able to do this as many Schools are struggling and do not have the resources. Expo provides the opportunity for Schools to promote themselves. A School can spend as much or a little as necessary to promote their activities to the community. Sometimes what we do everyday is the best form of promotion’... and usually the cheapest.

The best part of Expo for me was seeing the larger Faculty working together. There was a sea of blue UWA Business School t-shirts representing all facets of our Faculty, including student groups, who participated in presenting our face to the community. We had more than 80 volunteers on the day providing advice, coordinating competitions and serving the community.

Unfortunately, or fortunately, Expo has been and gone for another year. However, in the back of some minds are ideas to make next year’s Expo even better than this year.