Egyptian mummies have become popular fodder for children’s comics and cartoons: figures of fun which are often portrayed as dirty, rotting and stinking.

How far the modern Western interpretation of mummies has come from the Victorian era when the Curse of the Pharaohs was incited against archaeologists who dared to disturb ancient Egyptian tombs.

Dr Jasmine Day, who receives her PhD in anthropology at a graduation ceremony in Winthrop Hall tonight, has been fascinated by Egypt all her life. She has spent the past several years unravelling the reasons why the Western perception of mummies has undergone such a dramatic cultural change.

Her doctoral thesis, The mummy’s curse: the origins, development and roles of popular visions of Egyptian mummies and their relationships with representations of mummies in museums in Britain and the United States of America during the 19th and 20th centuries, explores the journey from sacrosanct to scabrous via Western movies, books, comics, toys and souvenirs.

She explained that the Curse of the Pharaohs was originally an ethical discourse used to dissuade archaeologists from digging up Egyptian remains.

“There was genuine debate early last century about the rights and wrongs of unearthing mummies, of violating the ancient tombs. But these days, people are happy to see

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Should Australia be developing one ‘world class University’ as a focus of national policy?

Just at the time when there is much critical comment over the decline in significant competition in the national airline sector — with effectively only one major courier remaining — so the higher education sector is being urged to concentrate excellence in one (or two) institutions.

The idea has appeal in certain business and policy circles as Australia begins to feel the challenges of international competitiveness in the global knowledge revolution. And as issues of scale and resources hit hard, in measuring the gap which our universities face in aspiring to work at an international level of excellence, so it is tempting to adopt a simple strategy of concentration.

But as with many simple responses to complex issues, this idea is flawed at many levels. In a recent article in the Higher Education Supplement of The Australian (13 March 2002) I attempted to set out the major problems in any such policy initiative. To those general reservations let me here add my concerns for WA and for UWA.

Yes, it would benefit our whole sector to enjoy the halo effect of having at least one ‘world beating university’. But at what price? Distorting national funding in a narrow focus will hardly produce the diverse sector of excellence that a diverse modern society requires.

Likewise, choosing as a model the often cited instances of Oxbridge or the US Ivy League ignores not only the vast gap in the historic endowments of ancient (and private) universities, but presumes that they are exactly what a modern Australia needs. As many of our leading universities have built strategic linkages and partnerships internationally, we have especially come to value the innovative and entrepreneurial newer universities of Europe and North America.

Such universities have also come to achieve excellence through competitive environments, they have carefully focussed missions within a range of institutions, and they have also become ‘hybrid universities’ through a strong diversification of funding — including major industry and professional alliances.

Deliberately creating a tall poppy institution policy moreover has some extraordinary federal or regional consequences. Is it feasible to imagine that the focus of such a strategy would be other than eastern Australia, or even the Sydney/Canberra/Melbourne axis? Would it be likely that Australia’s ‘world beater’ university be placed in WA, no matter how excellent our University’s research performance in recent years?

One of the critical aspects of Australian society has been a major recognition of regional/state development. And the capacity of a federated system to support regional/state communities and their cultures. Both key features of a diverse nation draw heavily from the role of their universities as powerhouses of development and community.

Since 1911 UWA has fulfilled that vital role for its State society and is now also a critical international gateway for Western Australians as globalised challenges and opportunities increasingly shape our lives. The UWA Operational Plan has an absolute commitment to ‘achieving international excellence’.

In short — as a nation we need the kind of flexibility in policy frameworks, and the levels of contestable funding, which would allow world class universities to emerge in an environment of open competition.

UWA is ready and able to compete in such a de-regulated and contestable environment.

We know the Power of One!
Alzheimer’s, that insidious disease that indiscriminately robs the minds of elderly people, is coming closer every year to being obliterated.

Already, there are drugs available to treat the symptoms of Alzheimer’s and, in the opinion of Associate Professor Ralph Martins (pictured right), in 10 years’ time, it is very likely that there will be drugs available that can treat the cause of the disease.

Ralph Martins is the Director of the Sir James McCusker Alzheimer’s disease research unit at Hollywood Private Hospital, and an Associate Professor in the UWA Department of Surgery.

He and his colleagues around the world, but especially his lab at Hollywood, have made extraordinary progress over the past decade.

His research team is short of space (there are 15 of them working at Hollywood Private Hospital) and short of money, despite the generous patronage of the McCusker family. But it hasn’t prevented them from making huge strides in the understanding of Alzheimer’s.

The first steps were made in 1985 when a research team from UWA under Professor (then Dr) Colin Masters found that deposits known as senile plaques seen in the brains of Alzheimer’s patients were composed of a new type of protein, which they called beta amyloid.

Researchers are now experimenting with ways of controlling the formation of these beta amyloid deposits in the hope of preventing or even curing the disease.

“But even now, nearly a hundred years after Alzheimer’s was identified, it’s still not possible to give a definite diagnosis while the patient is still alive,” Professor Martins said.

“Why most people get it is still a mystery. For the vast majority of the population, there’s no way of predicting who is at risk.

“We need to know the molecular factors that cause the formation of beta amyloid and the leading scientist in this field is Professor Sam Gandy from New York University.”

Professor Gandy has been working with Ralph Martins’ team and spent time at UWA as a Raine visiting professor in 2000. Together, they discovered that sex hormones play an important role in reducing beta amyloid. Hormone replacement therapy is now considered as a possible key to controlling or even eradicating the disease though further research is needed to establish its clinical significance.

“When to start drug therapy is so important,” Professor Martins said. “Memory clinics have now been set up in most cities in Australia so people with symptoms of Alzheimer’s are diagnosed early.

Professor Martins said that controlling cholesterol could help prevent Alzheimer’s. The APOE gene, which is a major high risk

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The 16 new equity and diversity advisers were guests of the Vice-Chancellor for a special morning tea on Harmony Day.

The Equity and Diversity Office, which organised activities for Harmony Day, was pleased that the staff members who had recently been inducted were recognised by the Vice-Chancellor on a day devoted to living in harmony with our fellow men and women, exactly what the advisers are promoting.

Of the 16 new advisers, eight have previously been sexual harassment or equity officers. Their brief is now broader and all of them attended a two-day training course, opened and supported by Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Professor Alan Robson.

“They are people on campus who can listen sensitively, without prejudice and give sensible advice,” said Beverley Hill, the University’s acting manager of Equity and Diversity.

“These advisers are working throughout the University and anybody who has a problem can contact any one of them.

Sometimes people don’t want to go to somebody who works too closely with them.

“They can tell you what course of action is available to you, and it may not fall within the equity/diversity framework,” she said.

Ms Hill said the idea of the advisers was to empower people to resolve matters at the lowest possible level, quickly and sensitively.

Posters identifying the new advisers are no going up around campus and information about them is also available on the Web.

“It’s not just about compliance,” said Ms Hill. “We have proactive strategies in place. And if anybody has some good ideas about promoting equity and diversity, they can approach an adviser. There is some funding available for small projects, like posters or providing relief for somebody while they attend a course.”

Alzheimer’s
gene associated with the disease, also carries fat and cholesterol around the body.

He said that people still feared aluminium could cause Alzheimer’s but it now seemed unlikely. Recent studies show that aluminium identified in the brains of patients now appears to have resulted from contaminants in the lab. However, the publicity given to aluminium pots and pans has stuck in people’s minds. The amount of aluminium coming in through the diet or the use of deodorants is much higher than from pots and pans but is not associated with disease,” he said.

The McCusker Foundation laboratories are currently hosting a visiting professor of neurology from China for 12 months and later this year, a visiting post-doctoral fellow from Italy will join the team for six months. These visitors are self-funded.

If you would like to make a donation or a bequest to the McCusker Foundation, the phone number is 9346 6312.

Associate Professor Ralph Martins: “You have to be passionate about your research because, for the first few years, you’re just banging your head against the wall”
Improvising a piece of music takes special talent, and teaching improvisation is another level up.

Teaching improvisation across the world via the Internet is a dream of senior music lecturer, Dr Sam Leong, and his latest work with visiting Professor Fred Reeves from Indiana University is bringing that dream a step closer to reality.

Professor Reeves, Head of Graduate Studies at Indiana University at Indianapolis, teaches a unique course, a Masters of Science in Music Technology. Dr Leong is an adjunct professor at Indiana, working with Professor Reeves on the only music course of its kind in the world. While he was at UWA, consulting with Dr Leong on his music software, Professor Reeves was able to keep up his teaching, from the other side of the world.

Using AARNET, Australia’s high band Internet system, Polycom software and a ViaVideo camera, Professor Reeves was able to deliver a lecture in real time to his students, who could see and hear him as clearly and smoothly as if he was in the classroom. He could see and hear them, with the camera automatically zooming into whichever student who asked a question. “I was blown away when I could see the students and instruct them how to use my software,” Dr Leong said.

“This new technology has exciting implications for teaching students in Albany, Kalgoorlie and Geraldton. There is less than half a second’s delay between Perth and Indiana, so the delivery is far superior to any system used before. And it’s more flexible and cheaper than conventional video-conferencing. Once you’re connected to the Internet, it’s practically free,” he said.

Dr Leong is on sabbatical leave this year, concentrating on developing diagnostic and metacognitive software, and writing and exploring flexible delivery for the music education courses at UWA.

His software, developed with Dr Martin Lamb from the University of Toronto, over the past two years, is designed to help students find new and better ways of improving their aural skills. His research, funded by a grant from the Committee for University Teaching and Staff Development and an ARC small grant, will be presented at an international music education conference in Norway in August. He is also working at the commercialisation stage in the development of his aural software and hopes to launch it as shareware later this year.

“With livestream lecturing so easily and economically available, the next thing Professor Reeves and I would like to do is try the challenge of teaching performance and improvisation,” Dr Leong said. “It’s so exciting and it’s something that will benefit all students who are remote from the campus because it can be used in any discipline.”

This year marks a milestone in the legal history of WA. For the first time police will be allowed to use a suspect’s DNA in a criminal investigation.

They will also be able to check DNA profiles against unsolved crimes. Will some of our most baffling cases be re-opened and solved? Is this realistic or is this new technology vastly over-rated? UWA’s Centres for Forensic Science and Crime Research present a weekend seminar, DNA – An Effective Contribution to Justice?

To be held at Rottnest Island from May 3 to May 5, the seminar brings together four international experts in DNA. David Richards, Head of the National Crime Faculty in the UK and Dr David Barclay, Chief Forensic Scientist, Forensic Science Services, UK, will join Judith Fordham, a WA barrister who is currently studying for her PhD in forensic science and who lectures internationally on the presentation of expert evidence in court. The fourth expert, Robin Napper, the Director of Research and Development at UWA’s centre for Forensic Science, is a former Detective Superintendent from the UK who was instrumental in introducing the use of DNA to most other Australian states.

What has been the experience of other countries? What is the real story behind the first intelligence-led DNA screen in Australia at Wee Waa? Answers to these and other questions will emerge at the seminar.
As the autumn leaves start to fall, the University has its own way of marking the change of season — the first of the year’s graduation ceremonies.

Tonight, 396 graduands will receive degrees in architecture, landscape architecture, visual arts, social sciences, the arts and humanities. By far the biggest group among them will be the 215 Bachelors of Arts, followed by 50 newly-qualified social workers.

Over the next ten days, a total of 2,247 degrees and diplomas will be conferred across six graduation ceremonies. Among them are 65 new Doctors of Philosophy, and the biggest single group of first degree graduands, 338 Bachelors of Commerce. This year, there are 108 new medical doctors, each receiving their MB BS and 150 lawyers, graduating with Bachelors of Laws. The Graduate School of Management has passed 94 students as Masters of Business Administration.

The idea of Australians producing food in their backyards because they couldn’t afford to buy it is largely a 20th century myth.

Dr Andrea Gaynor, who receives her PhD in history at the first of this year’s graduation ceremonies, studied people’s relationship to the environment by looking at the history of suburban food production in Perth and Melbourne.

While many suburban Australians are now subdividing their land and building houses in their backyards, Dr Gaynor says it is surprising how many people still grow fruit and or vegetables on their suburban blocks.

“The keeping of poultry has greatly diminished but, according to the statistics I used (which are now ten years old), I guess that between 40 and 50 percent of Perth households and from 50 to 60 per cent of Melbourne households produce some of their own fruit and vegetables,” said Dr Gaynor, who is now a lecturer in History at UWA.

Her research showed that backyard food production was not usually carried out for reasons of economic necessity and was, in fact, most prevalent among the middle class, who had the space and security of tenure.

“During the Depression, for example, the people who most needed to grow their own food were often fleeing from landlords, unable to pay their rent. They didn’t have the luxury of staying in one place long enough to grow their own food.”

She found that home food production became a symbol of independence for middle-class home-owners. “Like home ownership, which showed they were independent of landlords, growing some of their own food allowed them to think of themselves as independent producers rather than dependent consumers” Dr Gaynor said.

She did some modelling on quantities and proportions of productive households, based on statistics from the Australian Bureau of Statistics, and found that if around a third of households in Perth and Melbourne grew some of their own fruit, the average quantity produced per household would have been around 35kg in 1992. Average vegetable production probably ranged from 47kg to 51kg.

“I also found that although keeping chooks wasn’t as popular in the 1990s as it had been earlier in the century, more households in Perth kept them, whereas more households in Melbourne grew vegetables.

“I put this down to the dry hot summers and sandy soil in Perth which make it very difficult to keep crops going over the summer,” she said.

Dr Gaynor is teaching Australian Studies and next semester she will run a course on aspects of Australian culture and the rise of suburbia, in which she will draw on the work in her thesis.
Continued from page 1

mummies on display in museums and they now think of the Curse as a legend, rather than an argument about ethics,” Dr Day said.

“The big question was what disempowered the Curse of the Pharaohs? And I began to find the answer in the writings of an Italian academic in the 1930s, Antonio Gramsci’s theory of hegemony.

“He says that in order to maintain power, the powers that be, whether they are politicians or the mass media, take a phenomenon that is of interest to the people, neutralise it to ensure it can’t incite them, then return it to them in a sanitised form.

“The mummy’s curse has been neutralised by the mummy films so popular in the 1930s and 40s. They began with Boris Karloff in The Mummy in 1932 and progressed through many films, with the mummy coming alive to visit the curse on whoever disturbed him.

“The pre-classic curse followed the hubris-nemesis pattern but the classic curse, the curse of cinema, extended that pattern to hubris-nemesis-revenge. The mummy was always defeated in the end.

“The film industry implied that it was OK to dig up the dead and turned the mummy into a defeatable character (the archaeologist always won). In contrast to the days when King Tut’s tomb was discovered and people raged against its violation, the mummy had been changed from victim to villain.”

Dr Day studied the plots of movies and television shows (mummies have even featured several times in episode of The Simpsons), collected hundreds of mummy toys and souvenirs from museum shops around the world and bought them from Internet sites, read books and comics such as the 1990 children’s series of novels, Goosebumps, and talked to Egyptologists as well as ordinary people visiting Egyptian displays in museums in England and the USA.

“I had been to Egypt twice before I began my research and I didn’t go back there again until I had completed it. I didn’t need to because I was interested in the Western responses and images. But when I did return last year, I took some of my dolls and toys with me and the Egyptians were horrified by them. Nothing like them is available in Egypt.” Dr Day said.

One of the most outlandish mummy spin-offs she came across were jelly-baby-type lollies called Gummy Mummies from the Mummy’s Tummy!

Dr Day found that feminist author Julia Kristeva’s theory of abjection had also been applied to mummies. The theory groups together anything that is unpleasant and polluting like cruelty, decay, incest and death.

“The mummy has become abjected. In films and comics there is always lots of emphasis placed on dust and smells coming out of the mummy, with unravelling bandages showing rotting flesh and decay. In reality, mummies don’t mould and rot as long as they are kept dry. The latest image of them as filthy and rotting is in exact opposition to the truth.

“This idea of filth could be why mummy toys and characters appeal to children, who, although they’re told it is undesirable, love the idea of anything dirty!”

“The post-classic stage of the curse, following the great mummy movies, is that the idea of the curse is laughable and the mummy character has passed entirely into children’s culture. The curse is no longer a part of the mummy story and there is no reason given for a mummy to get up out of the tomb and walk. (In earlier films and stories, he got up and walked so he could carry out the curse.)”

Nobody else in the world has studied mummy-mania to this extent.

Following in Mum’s footsteps

There was no question for Sarah Dawson when it came to choosing a university.

“I felt so comfortable and at home at UWA and I knew it was the best,” said one of tonight’s 233 arts graduates.

One of the reasons for Sarah’s impressions was that her mother, Janet Dawson, had been working on campus for 10 years. Janet is an administrator in the Vice-Chancellor. She, like her daughter, has also studied arts at UWA, in the late 1970s.

Sarah, who receives a Bachelor of Arts in Linguistics and Political Science, has also worked on campus. She did some research work for Community Relations last year and is now contemplating starting her Honours thesis mid-year.

Janet pointed out that this was the second time Sarah had graduated in Winthrop Hall. Her former school, St Hilda’s, always holds their speech nights and graduation ceremonies here.
LDW runs into double figures

The Leadership Development for Women Program that starts next month marks the tenth intake from staff at UWA.

Over the eight years since the program began, a total of 250 women at UWA have benefited from the course, one of the most successful run by the Centre for Staff Development.

LDW is open to all levels of female staff who are employed half-time or more and whose contracts run at least until the end of the year in which the program starts.

To meet the needs of all eligible women, two separate programs streams are now run in alternate years.

Jen de Vries, LDW Program co-ordinator, said that while there were no stipulated levels of appointment required for either program, women were encouraged to self-select according to their particular needs and what would be appropriate for them.

The 2002 program, for which applications are due on April 17, is Leadership and Management, designed for women in leadership roles who are focusing on developing and exercising their leadership in a broader area.

“The women we expect will choose this course will be reasonably well established in their research, academic, administrative, technical or professional roles. They will have a large degree of autonomy in their positions and may carry responsibility for projects or new initiatives, be managing teams or units, supervising others, or participating in University-wide committee or working parties,” Ms de Vries said.

Next year’s program is for women who are keen to explore their leadership potential while they are establishing themselves. Potential participants will be keen to extend their self-management and leadership skills within their current roles as well as explore future career paths and possibilities.

Applications for that program will be called later this year.

Ms de Vries encouraged heads of schools and sections, managers and supervisors to encourage eligible women staff to apply for the LDW courses which have made such a difference already to 250 women at UWA.

Muffins & maintenance

The bicycle co-operative has had news that was even better than the free muffins at their annual Bike to Breakfast recently.

The co-op, which comprises all bike groups on campus, is setting up a bicycle repair shop in the Recreation Centre where it will run classes on bicycle maintenance and carry out repairs for anybody who cycles to University.

The co-op has been looking into establishing a fleet of second hand bicycles for sale or hire around the campus but the legal implications will probably mean the scheme will not get off the ground.

The club is also looking for a ‘home base’ somewhere on campus and, depending on the success of the bike repair shop, this too may be established somewhere close by.

The fifth annual Bike to Breakfast was another great success with about 250 staff and students dropping in for free breakfast, water bottles and stickers, a chance to win prizes including two nights at the Esplanade Hotel, and an opportunity to meet other cyclists. The morning is sponsored by UWA Sports, the Office of Facilities Management, the UWA Cycle Club and the Bicycle Users’ Group (BUG).

BUG members cycled from as far away as Kalamunda to support the event.

UWA Cycle Club members show how it’s done.
UWA’s champion law mooting team has narrowly missed out on first place in the international Jessup Moot competition.

The Australian national winners came second to the University of Witwatersrand in a split decision in the grand final in Washington last month.

The Jessup Moot competition, which centres on international law, involves 1,500 of the best law students from 300 law schools throughout the world.

The president of the Jessup Moot association said he had been part of the finals for the past 16 years and this was the highest standard moot he had ever seen.

Lorraine Van Der Ende was awarded best mooter in the grand final and she also finished third best oralist overall in the preliminary rounds. Another UWA team member, Lee Carroll, who was awarded best oralist in the Australian national competition, was sixth best oralist in the preliminary rounds. The team’s written work received a score of 97% coming third.

Others in the team, made up of fourth and fifth year law students, are Ben Gauntlett, Julie Taylor and Adam Sharpe with coach Jamie Edelman, a UWA graduate and Rhodes scholar.

Congratulations to them and their supporters in the Law School for their marathon effort and brilliant results.

A not too sympathetic biographer

When UWA historian Richard Bosworth set out to write a biography of Mussolini, he was warned that he would become too sympathetic towards the Italian leader.

“But now the book is written, I do not believe that I have weakened in my hostility to fascism,” Professor Bosworth (pictured) said.

His book, Mussolini, the first major biography of Benito Mussolini since the end of the Cold War, was launched recently at the Imperial War Museum in London.

Professor Bosworth is a leading historian of 20th century Italy and his biography is expected to create new debate about the role of Mussolini in Italian politics.

His portrait is described as a subtle and complex one that captures the multiple strengths, flaws and contradictions of Mussolini’s personality and of a remarkable political career that spanned the most traumatic moments of the 20th century.

“I have loved the writing. I am notoriously a person who finds true happiness in a nice sentence. Of all my books, Mussolini was the most fun to write, probably because I was aware of writing for a considerable audience and not only for other academics,” Professor Bosworth said.

Mussolini is published by Oxford University Press.

Family link with moot court

Richard and Hilary Lane with Bill Ford (centre) in the moot court named after their relative the Wellington district and Perth, has a Moot Court named after him.

His niece, Edith Stewart Gordon, left a bequest to the Law School in 1976, with the specific instruction that it be used to construct a moot court for law students.

Last month, Warden Owen’s biographer Richard Lane and his wife Hilary visited from England and inspected the moot court with the Head of the Law School, Bill Ford. Mrs Lane is related to Warden Owen.
In memory of a maritime scholar

The personal library of the late Professor Frank Broeze has been acquired by the Library.

As well as maintaining a remarkably productive record of research and publication at UWA, Professor Broeze, a leading international scholar in the field of maritime history, served as President of the International Commission of Maritime History and as Deputy Chair of the Board of the Western Australian Maritime Museum.

University Librarian, John Arfield, described Professor Broeze as a dedicated teacher who inspired generations of students with his enthusiastic approach to modern history.

He said Professor Broeze’s personal library reflected these interests and activities and contained a wide range of books, journals and papers relating to maritime history and shipping, as well as more general books on modern political and economic history. A particularly important aspect of the collection was its considerable amount of Dutch and German material, including books on early Dutch commerce, and on the port of Hamburg.

He said the Library had a special interest in developing its strong collections on the maritime and commercial history of the Indian Ocean region.

The new acquisition — to be known as the Frank Broeze Memorial Library — will be housed in the Scholars’ Centre, where it will complement the Erulkar Collection, which contains rare books and manuscripts relating to Indian Ocean commerce in the colonial period.

“This is a significant acquisition which is a major addition to our research collections and will be of great value to researchers. It will also provide a most fitting memorial to an outstanding scholar,” Mr Arfield said.

Six books and then six more

The number six is an auspicious one for UWA Press this year.

Already, they have six new titles in circulation since the beginning of 2002, with a further six due to appear over the next six weeks.

Children of the Shadows: Voices of the Second Generation is a collection of personal reflections on growing up in a home touched by the shadow of the Holocaust. It is the first time such a collection has been published in Australia. It is edited by Kathy Grinblat and is for sale for $34.95 (paperback) and $45 (hardback).

The story of a loyal pet dog, a best mate, rabbit trapping after school, a horrible headmaster, adventures on a bike, summer heat and bushfire are all elements of Bodger, a novel by Peter Jeans, set in the Australian bush in the 1940s.

It is described as a heart-warming tale about a boy and his dog (Bodger), based on the author’s own childhood experiences and adventures. It is published under the Cygnet imprint, for young readers’ fiction and is available in paperback for $14.95.

Professor Ken Clements, the Director of UWA’s Economic Research Centre, has made some provocative proposals for the reform of energy policy in WA in his newest publication, The Great Energy Debate: Energy Costs, Minerals and the Future of the Western Australian Economy.

With decisions about future energy policy imminent, this book provides a timely analysis of the importance of energy costs to the entire state. It is published in paperback and sells for $39.95.

A collection of essays takes the reader back to the early modern period in A Touch of the Real: Essays in Early Modern Culture In Honour of Stephen Greenblat.

Edited by Philippa Kelly, the collection addresses in particular the works of Shakespeare, and asks how historical texts might be seen to interplay with identity. It is for sale for $38.95 (paperback).

UWA Press has also recently published Built on Faith: A History of Perth College for Perth College, and While We Live, Let Us Live: From University Hostel to Currie Hall, 1942 – 1999. These two books are available only from Perth College and Currie Hall.

The others are on the shelves at the Co-op Bookshop and the Visitors’ Centre on campus and are also available at UWA Press, on the corner of Mounts Bay Road and Crawley Avenue.
**Expo’s on — rain or shine**

A tower-to-tower steeplechase will be one of the highlights of the University’s inaugural Expo on August 25.

This will be a fun run from the Bell Tower in the city to the clock tower in Winthrop Hall, to mark the Expo which will take the place of the Open Day and the Prospective Students’ Evenings.

Ian Lilburne, UWA’s special projects manager, will co-ordinate the event, bringing his extensive experience of Open Days to the Expo.

“This time, we are anticipating that it will rain and working from that premise!” he said.

He already has a committee working on the details. These include community activities to get the public involved, both on and off the campus.

“We decided to combine the Open Day and the Prospective Students’ Evenings to give staff less work and to build on the strengths of both of those events,” Ian said.

For information on the Expo, call Prospective Students on 9380 2477, and keep reading UWAnews for updates each fortnight.

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**Most people know there is a swimming pool at Human Movement and Exercise Science. But did you know YOU could use it?**

The pool is open for convenient daily exercise from 6am to 7.45am on Monday, Wednesday and Friday, from 11.30am to 2pm on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday, and from 12noon to 2pm on Wednesday, Saturday and Sunday.

It’s open to the public as well as staff members so if you want to meet a friend who doesn’t work at UWA and have a lunchtime swim together, you can.

It costs $2.20 and if you plan on swimming regularly, you can buy 12 tokens for $20, a much better saving than most commercial or council-run swimming pools offer. You can also get a season pass for $250 ($150 for pensioners) which allows you to swim as often as you like all year.

Uniswim runs adult squads for grown-ups who want help with their style and lessons for those who want to learn to swim from scratch. There are special squads for the over-50s. For more information about squads and lessons, please call Robyn on 9380 2277.

Make the most of the heated Uniswim pools and keep fit over winter.

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**Wanna race? — Olympic swimmers, Jonno van Hazel and Rachel Harris at the Uniswim pool**

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**If you have a secret spot on campus, a favourite feature or a little-known fact to share, please send it to us: lindy.brophy@uwa.edu.au or phone extension 2436, fax 1192.**

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**The Last Word**

in HM&ES at $50,000 a year, that’s $3 million!

So, with governments directing research funds so stringently, one should beware of just following their cues. Governments come and go, universities are here for the longer term and we should fight for the spontaneous, creative, outside the square, basic functions for the betterment of humankind — not fit into a government formula.

Eighty per cent of our clients/customers are undergraduates who contribute immensely to the local, state and national communities. Therefore, 80 per cent of our human and technical resources should be directed to nurturing that group to maximise the benefits they can provide.

Change we must but, selectively, not blindly. Smokescreen change is not new: “We trained hard … but it seemed that every time we were beginning to form up into teams we would be reorganised … I was to learn later in life that we tend to meet any new situation by reorganisation; and a wonderful method it can be for creating the illusion of progress while creating confusion, inefficiencies and demoralisation!” Petronius (65AD) Roman scholar and military leader.

Is there anyone out there with a staff:student ratio of 1:14? We’d like a bit of that action!
A recent newspaper article, How We Have Changed 1971 – 2001, just about matches up with my time at UWA.

In 1970, I was 28 with a love of the beach and all things swimming - so life was good with a joint appointment in Anatomy and Physical Education. Being young and invincible, "those people who thought they knew everything annoyed those of us who did."

Teaching was big then and I lined up for 20+ hours per week. Staff:student ratios were 1:10 or thereabouts. Of course changes were around at that time. Anatomy changed its name to Anatomy and Human Biology, and Physical Education and Recreation became Human Movement and Exercise Science (HM&ES). I suppose the words were important because meanings do change regularly but, sometimes, it confuses rather than clarifies issues. For example, when I was a child, being happy on the grass meant you were out playing on the lawn!

There was less pressure then because the staff:student ratios were more manageable. Of course we still complained and one Vice Chancellor even told me we had a divine right to complain — although what was done about it was another matter. Then, another Vice Chancellor told me we were expected to do considerably more with considerably less — what a wise prophet he turned out to be!

Then came another change when we had to become more business-like and words such as mission statements, clients and customers appeared. I suppose a bit of goal setting and focussing never went astray.

During the 80s I was the Head of HM&ES, and in that period we had the amalgamation/devolution changes which used up a lot of emotional energy on various proposals, most of which never happened. Mark Twain said something about that: “Some terrible things have happened in my lifetime, and some of them have actually happened”.

The 90s were much more pleasant for me while performing a somewhat quieter role of teaching classes and writing research papers. In 2001, my friends and colleagues (at least I thought they were), suggested I do a ‘Nelly Melba’ and step back into the Head of School role for a final stint before retirement.

Well, a return to the meeting circuit revealed ‘plus ça change …’ and that we still had the same problems, but they were worse. For example, now HM&ES has a staff student ratio of 1:22 and several departments in the faculty spend more than 100 per cent of their income on fixed salaries and are gradually disappearing down the gurgler via incremental creep!

What has this government done to us? About 15 years ago we had a few international students here under such schemes as the Colombo plan. Currently, education is Australia’s fifth highest export earner. And, still they cut, cut, cut.

One is reminded of the Ardmona fruit commercial on TV a few years back in which Rod Marsh juggled, then dropped the can of peaches. I told someone that I had heard he was paid $5000 for that commercial and the response was: “Cripes, what would they have paid him if he had caught it?”

Doesn’t one feel a bit that way about the success universities have made of the education export industry? Maybe we should have ‘dropped the peaches.’ We have picked up so many extra tasks outside core business (largely marketing and administration at which we are untrained) which are completely ignored by our funding fathers in the East — tasks which mysteriously but regularly just materialise. The increase in paper warfare in an era of the supposed ‘paperless office’ is nonsensical. What size army is required to sift through it, let alone interpret. All in the name of accountability. Hell though, it’s good for the ACT economy to hire all these people to collect and archive materials which will not help anyone but will provide a focus point from which to hold an enquiry when something goes pear shaped — of course, always after the events they were supposedly employed to prevent.

I sometimes think the mistake we made was to make a success of it and so the government has decided to squeeze more and more. Rather than being rewarded for self-help, it seems that “make yourself a donkey and we’ll ride you into the dirt”.

Down here in HM&ES, at the true epi-centre of campus on the river bank, we have changed enormously over my 32 years. The only remaining certainty is change but it needs controlling and balance.

‘Switching on’ undergraduate students to scientific endeavour provides a heap of young, talented Honours and PhD researchers working under careful, passionate and dedicated supervision for efficient and effective research output. About 60

Continued on page 11
Medical research gets a $4 million boost

A total of 29 new medical research projects have been funded by the Western Australian Institute for Medical Research (WAIMR).

To celebrate the $4 million invested in these new partnerships, WAIMR announced them at a special awards evening last month.

New collaborations have been funded at UWA, Royal Perth Hospital, Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital, King Edward Memorial Hospital, Princess Margaret Hospital, Hollywood Private Hospital and Curtin University.

An initial $1.7 million has been allocated for these endeavours in the first year, with a further $2.3 million over the following two years. The vast majority of the funds will go into new appointments. Through these grants, 15 positions have been created for Postdoctoral fellows, biostatisticians and bioengineers, as well as eight research assistants and eight PhD scholarships.

One of WAIMR’s aims is to contribute to increasing the cohesion between researchers in WA and to foster the careers of outstanding young investigators.

The creation of these positions is seen as investment in the intellectual capital of the state, in line with the recommendations of the Premier’s Science Council and the vision of WAIMR.

The Institute was established in March 1998 with Wesfarmers as the founding sponsor. Its vision was to create a multi-site Institute which would enhance the intellectual environment in WA and to become an international leader in biomedical research, which would also mean improved health care in WA.

These research awards are one of the steps WAIMR has taken towards promoting medical research in the state. They were awarded on the basis of new collaboration, scientific excellence, recruitment of new research personnel and the potential for commercialisation.

The 29 programs funded include: investigating mechanisms of cardiac failure; epidemiological and genetic studies of asthma and chronic airflow limitation (within the Busselton Study); proliferation and apoptosis in the placenta during development and pre-eclampsia; genomics in bone and cartilage disorders; vaccination against mesothelioma; molecular-based classification of ovarian cancer; and optic nerve regeneration.

Dr Giles Plant, David Prast and Louise Daw from the Neurotrauma Research Program celebrate the new grants
Monday 8 April

INSTITUTE OF ADVANCED STUDIES PUBLIC LECTURE
“Language evolution and the evolution of language”, Dr Simon Kirby, University of Edinburgh, as part of the Language Puzzle program. 6pm, Geography Lecture Theatre I.

Tuesday 9 April

PUBLIC HEALTH SEMINAR
“An overview of programs by the Rural Health, Primary Heath and the OATISH branches”, Ann Blunden, Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing. 11am, Seminar Room 3, Department of Public Health, Clifton St Campus.

Thursday 11 April

UNIVERSITY MUSIC SOCIETY
Masterworks of stage and screen – Taryn Fiebig (soprano), Matthew Styles (saxophone), Richard John (piano) and the Chameleon Ensemble. A concert of diverse musical styles from popular classics to classic jazz, including Barber’s poignant Adagio for Strings (from the film Platoon), Bernstein’s immortal West Side Story and haunting melodies from the films Meet Joe Black and The English Patient. 7.30pm, Octagon Theatre. Book through BOCS on 9484 1133 or through the Octagon Theatre on 9380 2440.

Friday 12 April

MICROBIOLOGY SEMINAR
“Xenotransplantation and infection risks”, Dr Mark Farrington, Cambridge. 9am, Seminar Room 1.1, First Floor, L Block, QEIIIMC.
CHEMISTRY: RSC LECTURE
“Capillary Electromatography: the new wave in separation science”, Paul Haddad, University of Tasmania. 2.15pm, White Lecture Theatre.

Monday 15 April

CHEMISTRY SEMINAR
“Chiral cyclopentadienyl compounds at work and play”, Colin White (University of Sheffield). 12 noon, White Lecture Theatre.

Tuesday 16 April

PUBLIC HEALTH SEMINAR
“Application of record linkage to the drug and alcohol field”, Anne Bartu, Curtin/ Women and Infants Research Foundation. 11am, Seminar Room 3, Department of Public Health, Clifton St Campus.

PERTH MEDIEVAL AND RENAISSANCE GROUP TALK
“The sacred landscape: natural imagery in Italian Renaissance art”, Victoria Bladen, English. 7.30pm, Postgraduate Lounge, Hackett Hall.

Thursday 18 April

FREE LUNCHTIME CONCERT
Erkki Veltheim, viola) present a concert of solos and duos, including Dusapin’s In flagranti for classical guitar. 1.10pm, Octagon Theatre.

Friday 19 April

MICROBIOLOGY SEMINAR
“Thermoacidophilic Archaea for mining technology”, Dr Jason Plumb, CSIRO. 9am, Seminar Room 1.1, First Floor, L Block, QEIIIMC.

ASIAN STUDIES SEMINAR
“Making sense of sorcery in Java: Why are there ‘sorcerers’ and why do they get killed?”, Nick Herriman. 1pm, G.25 Seminar Room, Social Sciences.

Friday 26 April

MICROBIOLOGY SEMINAR
“Are all MRSA equal?”, Professor Warren Grubb, Curtin, 9am, Seminar Room 1.1, First Floor, L Block, QEIIIMC.

Sunday 28 April

KEYED UP! PIANO RECITAL SERIES
Virtuoso Italian pianist and winner of the Busoni Competition, Roberto Cominati, presents a program of great romantic works, including Carnaval by Schumann and Rubinstein’s Melody in F. Single night tickets can be booked through BOCS outlets on 9484 1133 or the Octagon Theatre on 9380 2440.

MUSIC SPECIAL EVENT
In Memorium. Annette Goerke, one of Australia’s finest organists, performs a recital marking the 10th anniversary of the death of the French composer Olivier Messiaen. Admission is free. 3pm, Winthrop Hall.

Tuesday 30 April

GRACE VAUGHAN LECTURE 2002
Given by Dr Lowitja O’Donoghue, AC, CBE, Yunggorendi First Nations Centre for Higher Education and Research, Flinders University. 7pm, Octagon Theatre. For further information, call the Institute of Advanced Studies on 9380 1340.
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or utilise the Government's GEM Service web site www.gem.wa.gov.au

CENTRE FOR MICROSCOPY AND MICROANALYSIS
COURSES JUNE/JULY 2002

Scanning Electron Microscopy
June 10-13 8.30am-6pm
Queries: Dr Greg Pooley, ext. 2261, email: gdp@cmm.uwa.edu.au. This course is a prerequisite for the Electron Microbeam Analysis course and the Environmental Scanning Electron Microscopy course. *This is a two-day course but some labs may run on the 12-13 June. Note on your application if this is a problem.

Electron Microbeam Analysis
June 24-27 8.30am-6pm
Queries: Dr Greg Pooley, ext. 2261, email: gdp@cmm.uwa.edu.au. Completion of the SEM course is a prerequisite for this course.

Environmental Scanning Electron Microscopy
June 13-14 8.30am-6pm
Queries: Associate Professor Brendan Griffin, ext. 2739, email: bg@cmm.uwa.edu.au. Completion of the SEM course is a prerequisite for this course.

Electron Microprobe Analysis
June 17-19 8.30am-6pm
Queries: Dr Greg Pooley, ext. 2261, email: gdp@cmm.uwa.edu.au. Completion of the SEM course is a prerequisite for this course.

Introduction to Transmission Electron Microscopy
June 17-19 8.30am-6pm
Suitable for biological scientists, physical sciences and engineers. Queries: Dr Martin Saunders, ext. 8092, email: martin@cmm.uwa.edu.au. This course is a prerequisite for the Biological Transmission Electron Microscopy course and all other TEM courses.

TEM Sample Preparation for Materials Science
June 20-21 9am-6pm
Queries: Dr Martin Saunders, ext. 8092, email: martin@cmm.uwa.edu.au. Those wishing to learn only about the GIF need only attend the third and fourth days. Please indicate on your application whether you wish to attend the full course or only the GIF component. Queries: Dr Martin Saunders, ext. 8092, email: martin@cmm.uwa.edu.au. Completion of the ITEM and 3000F basic operation courses is a prerequisite for this course.

Confocal Laser Scanning Microscopy
June 27-28 9am-6pm
Queries: Professor John Kuo, ext. 2765, email: jjskuo@cmm.uwa.edu.au. Especially suitable for the biological/medical fields. Queries: Professor John Kuo, ext. 2765, email: jjskuo@cmm.uwa.edu.au

Analytical Electron Microscopy/Gatan Image Filter
June 24-27 9am-6pm
Those wishing to learn only about the GIF need only attend the third and fourth days. Please indicate on your application whether you wish to attend the full course or only the GIF component. Queries: Dr Martin Saunders, ext. 8092, email: martin@cmm.uwa.edu.au. Completion of the ITEM course is a prerequisite for this course.

Biological Transmission Electron Microscopy
July 1-2 9am-6pm
Queries: Professor John Kuo, ext. 2765, email: jjskuo@cmm.uwa.edu.au. Completion of the ITEM course is a prerequisite for this course.

Optical Microscopy
June 24-26 9am-6pm
Especially suitable for the biological/medical fields. Queries: Professor John Kuo, ext. 2765, email: jjskuo@cmm.uwa.edu.au

Digital Image Manipulation and Storage
July 4-5 8.30am-6pm
Places are limited and all courses are open on a first-come basis. There is no cost to UWA or Curtin students and staff. Course charges: $330 per course, except for Electron Microprobe Analysis Course, $495. All prices include GST. The School will charge a $50 no-show fee if a participant does not attend without cancelling in advance. For application forms, telephone 9380 2770, fax 9380 1087, on the web at http://cmm.uwa.edu.au/ or email: admin@cmm.uwa.edu.au

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Dr Elizabeth Quail, Biochemistry: “Does overexpression of the forkhead box M1B transcription factor reverse ageing and senescence?” – $10,000 (2002).


Dr S. Arndt, Mr Peter Landman and Dr Stephen Livesley, Botany: “Water relations and nutrient dynamics in Dryandra woodland” – $17, 350 (2002).

Prof Craig Atkins, Dr John Russell and Dr Penelope Smith, Botany: “Dual targeting of purine biosynthesis enzymes in nodules of cowpea” – $10,000 (2002).

A/Prof Diana Walker, Dr M. Cambridge and Dr Gary Kendrick, Botany: “Nutrient use efficiency and growth rates in the seagrass Posidonia coriacea an oligotrophic temperate environment” – $12,000 (2002).


Mr Peter Landman, Crystallography: “Macromolecular data as distributed, executable objects” – $7000 (2002).


Dr Charles Musca, Electrical & Electronic Eng.: “High performance variable integrated MEMs inductors for RF and wireless networking applications” – $16,491 (2002).

Dr A/Prof Brett Nener, Electrical & Electronic Eng.: “Wet etching of semiconducting aluminium gallium nitride” – $5970 (2002).

A/Prof Charitha Pattiaratchi, Environmental Engineering: “Characterisation of rip current systems associated with coastal structures” – $12,800


Dr Martin Cheng, Civil & Resource Engineering: “Pipeline stability due to wave-induced liquefaction” – $12,500 (2002).

Dr Nic Spadaccini, Computer Science & Software Eng. and Prof Sydney Hall, Crystallography: “Macromolecular data as distributed, executable objects” – $7000 (2002).

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A/Prof Dieter Wege, Chemistry and Prof S. Berners-Price (external): “Novel gold-carbene complexes as potential new anti-tumour agents” – $17,591 (2002).


Mr Rodney Pinna, Oil & Gas Engineering and A/Prof Dieter Wege, Chemistry and Prof S. Berners-Price (external): “Novel gold-carbene complexes as potential new anti-tumour agents” – $17,591 (2002).

A/Prof Garth Brown, Physics and Astronomy: “Wet etching of semiconducting aluminium gallium nitride” – $5970 (2002).

Dr Karol Miller, Mechanical & Materials Eng.: “Low-frequency noise - its effects and control in WA’s mining industry” – $5200 (2002).


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