Glover win for UTAS landscape artist

BY LUKE SCOTT

UTAS alumnus Josh Foley has won the richest landscape art prize in Australia, with his work praised by the judges of the Glover Prize as ‘unique’.

At the recent announcement of his win of the hotly-contested prize, judges Anthony Bond, Francis Parker and UTAS School of Visual and Performing Arts head Professor Marie Sierra said Foley’s work stood out as being unlike any of the other works contesting the 2011 prize.

A Bachelor of Contemporary Arts with honours graduate, 27-year-old Josh scored the top prize for his colourful work Gee’s Lookout, based on an old workman’s hut near Launceston’s Cataract Gorge. (Photo courtesy Examiner newspaper)

“Foley has depicted tangled masses of brush marks that appear to be three-dimensional, occasionally breaking into thick texture and thereby combining illusion with reality. His carefully simulated brush strokes represent the landscape but also parody the application of paint,” Josh said he had stumbled on the subject of his painting while walking near his West Launceston home.

“In a way the Glover was a reason for me to start thinking about the landscape,” Josh said.

“Since leaving uni it has always been something at the end of the year that I’ve thought about entering. It’s such a good prize – a good incentive to make a landscape painting. “Last year I just did landscapes for the whole year. The momentum of entering the Glover, thinking about the landscape, and developing a landscape vision built up and it really defines what I am now doing full-time.”

Josh resettled in Launceston a year ago with his partner and their two young children after a three-year stint in Melbourne. With six exhibitions behind him and plans for more in the future, he is teaching an Adult Education art class and studying a TAFE business course in his spare time.

Sales of Josh’s work are increasing too, with buyers who heard of his Glover win buying works exhibited in Launceston in Tasmania. “Now that I am based back here in Tasmania I am really focusing on landscapes,” he said.

“I plan to do a bit more exploring now, to find a few more interesting places to paint.”

Josh said his time at the UTAS Academy of the Arts in Launceston had played a significant role in his artistic career to date.

“I started as a 17-year-old, so I guess I was quite young,” he said.

“It was challenging but by third year I felt like I was much more well-rounded. It was an exciting environment to be in.”

Josh plans to buy a new bass guitar and art supplies with his $35,000 in winnings from the prestigious 2011 Glover Prize.

BY CHERIE COOPER

A RECENT STUDY of the marine life in Hobart’s Derwent River has found parts of the estuary are dominated by introduced and non-native species.

The surveys of marine life were undertaken by Reef Life Survey, a national marine science and conservation program, initiated by UTAS researchers and involves a dynamic mix of scientists, marine managers and recreational SCUBA divers.

Reef Life Survey divers and UTAS staff, including Jemina Stuarts-Smith, Neville Barrett, Graham Edgar, Toni Cooper and postgraduate student Amelia Fowles extensively surveyed areas of rocky reef habitat throughout the Derwent, recording all fish species and larger invertebrates including sea stars and sea urchins.

Dr Rick Stuart-Smith from the UTAS Institute for Marine and Antarctic Studies said the results were startling.

“Although the Derwent River is home to unique and globally significant fauna like the endangered spotted handfish, it is also heavily impacted by abundant fish and invertebrate species not native to Tasmania.

“They are so common in some areas they totally dominate,” he said.

“So much so that not a single native species was found on the sea floor in some patches of rocky reef close to the Hobart port.”

Dominated by interstate interlopers: The Derwent River’s endangered spotted handfish represents a jewel in an area overwhelmed by an abundance of fish and invertebrate species not native to Tasmania.

Ewen marine life in Sydney Harbour and Port Phillip Bay contained fewer introduced fish and large invertebrates than the Derwent.

But some rare fish species were also recorded by the survey team and areas of rocky reef in the lower estuary appeared relatively healthy.

For more information on the Reef Life Survey program, please visit: www.reeflifesurvey.com

Derwent River filled with interlopers

Contribute to a UTAS social justice bursary in memory of Sandy Duncanson >> www.utas.edu.au/foundation
**Spirits soaring on Harmony Day**

*By Jacqueline Firth & Luke Scott*

Kite flying and a traditional Chinese dragon were highlights of UTAS Harmony Day celebrations in Hobart and Launceston.

In Hobart 150 people gathered; kites and spirits soared at the Hobart Cenotaph in an event run by the Community Friends and Networks Program, UTAS Accommodation Services and Hobart City Council.

It was an opportunity for UTAS students, staff and residents to meet and make friends with people from the Hobart community and to celebrate the Harmony Day 2011 theme of diversity within our community.

And to gee up UTAS kite making skills, Lizie from the Tasmanian Kite Flyers Association taught students, Accommodation Services’ residents and staff to make simple, light kites.

In Launceston more than 800 people flocked to Harmony Day celebrations at the Newnham campus. The record crowd made the most of the entertainment and food on offer, despite forecasts of heavy rain.

**Guidance on copyrights and wrongs**

*By Catherine Rogers*

Luke Padgett knows the Australian Copyright Act inside and out. It’s his job.

Luke joined UTAS as the new copyright officer early this year. Based at the Morris Miller Library in Hobart, his role is to ensure UTAS staff and students are aware and understand the nature of copyright and how it relates to their activities at UTAS.

Copyright law protects the rights of copyright owners but it also provides exceptions allowing people working in educational institutions to use copyright material in certain cases without seeking permission from the copyright owner.” Luke said.

“One of my jobs is to ensure that UTAS staff and students have the know-how to take advantage of these exceptions whilst abiding by copyright law and licences.”

Luke provides advice to academics on exceptions to copyright infringements and ensures that the reproduction of printed materials, such as those contained in course readers comply with copyright licence agreements.

He also manages the distribution of copyright royalties for any works produced by UTAS which other organisations may have reproduced.

Luke has a wealth of experience in copyright within the university environment, previously working at Curtin and Swinburne universities.

Catherine Rogers is the Copyright Librarian at UTAS Hobart Library. She can be contacted on 03 6324 3440.

**Bite-sized stories on UTAS people**

Do you have a tidbit for ‘Our people’? Email snippets on UTAS people to: Media.Office@utas.edu.au

**On campus**

**Lights out at UTAS for Earth Hour 2011**

UTAS switched off all non-essential lights statewide to take part in Earth Hour 2011 recently.

To celebrate the event UTAS and the TDU hosted a free public event in Hobart. Staff, students and the public lit a candle for Earth Hour while enjoying the sounds of local musician Dean Stevenson.

UTAS sustainability manager Corey Peterson said the university is committed to playing its part in securing a sustainable future.

“Prioritise a reduction in the UTAS carbon footprint and energy use,” he said.

“Our participation in Earth Hour 2011 symbolises a commitment to demonstrate the need for greater global action on climate change.”

UTAS staff and students Amit Joshi, Arash Kashani, Scott Wylie, Ziya Kordjazi and Mehdi Mohagheghi were among the crowd at the event.
Keeping research in the family

A family holiday that started with David Bowman's interest in Aboriginal landscape burning, finally happened — after hurdles brought on by a recent cyclone in Darwin.

Professor David Bowman from the UTAS School of Plant Science has conducted research in the Northern Territory on the land of Joshua Rostron's family for many years.

“They were set to visit us then Darwin was shut down by the cyclone,” Prof. Bowman said.

The Rostrons couldn’t get to their aeroplane, they tried to get out from their outstation and found the river flooded and when they finally got a truck it broke down.

But they eventually made it to Tasmania to stay with the Bowmans.

Prof. Bowman has had a long history of collaboration with Joshua, his father and his uncle.

“They invited a lot of scientists to study their land when I still worked for the Northern Territory Government in the 90s. I became interested in studying Aboriginal landscape burning, one of my primary research interests, and I needed somewhere to study,” he said.

In Tasmania Joshua Rostron experienced an unfamiliar, cold world.

“It's been interesting for someone who's never seen a sheep or a fire stove: things we take for granted,” Prof. Bowman said.

Joshua and his family saw a Tasmanian devil and the Tasma-nian Museum and Art Gallery’s thylacine video and artefacts. Joshua had never seen either animal but recognised them both from rock paintings and knew of them from traditional stories.

“Aboriginal people are not necessarily enamoured of your research — they are more interested in you as a person. Family life is very important.”

Prof. Bowman's PhD student, Clay Trauernicht, is also conducting research on Joshua’s land and has camped there.

“We’re so indebted to the community,” Prof. Bowman said.

“When you’re doing cross-cultural research a visit like this is a social visit but it’s also fundamentally important to the collaborative relationship.”

Aboriginal people are not necessarily enamoured of your research — they are more interested in you as a person. Family life is very important.

Collaborative degree sees AMC partner with Edith Cowan University

THE AUSTRALIAN Maritime College has announced a collaborative agreement with Edith Cowan University aimed at meeting the specialist skills demands of the maritime engineering industry.

The partnership will see ECU students spend two years studying engineering at their home campus in Perth, Western Australia, before doing two years' study at AMC in Launceston, Tasmania, specialising in ocean engineering, naval architecture or marine and offshore systems.

AMC’s National Centre for Maritime Engineering and Hydrodynamics director Neil Bose said the innovative ‘two plus two’ degree would strengthen ties with key industry and education stakeholders.

“Perth is the centre of the oil and gas industry in Australia as well as being a major player in the shipbuilding sector but currently no WA universities offer maritime engineering degrees,” he said.

“AMC and its world-class hydrodynamic facilities are well placed to provide the education and training that graduates need to meet industry demands. We believe this partnership will be of great benefit to Edith Cowan University and AMC as well as the companies that manage the vast offshore oil, gas and iron ore developments in Western Australia and further afield.”

ECU’s head of the School of Engineering, Professor Darynul Habib, said both institutions were strongly committed to the successful delivery of these joint programs at both institutions.

The first intake of students under the agreement will begin their studies at ECU in 2012 and arrive at AMC for their third and fourth years in 2014.
Worthy intent doesn’t always deliver

Senior lecturer in international relations at the School of Government
DR MATTHEW SUSSEX

considers different countries’ responses to intervention in Libya.

Those viewing UN Security Resolution 1973 authorising intervention against Libya as a watershed for universally humane international law should temper their enthusiasm with some sobriety. The Responsibility to Protect (R2P) – the idea that all countries are obliged to protect their citizens, and that this obligation passes to the international community if they fail to do so – offers little more than a handy rationale for intervention.

Instead of being a reliable instrument in the global human rights toolkit it is, at best, irrelevant. At worst, it can be manipulated by countries wanting to justify much more selfish objectives.

To start with, the BRIC nations (Brazil, Russia, India, China) and ‘alliance-abstained’ from voting on Resolution 1973, as did Germany, which is usually at the forefront of international humanitarians. With US power increasingly challenged by new centres of authority it should be worrying – not comforting – to proponents of the R2P that the rising nations wanted nothing to do with intervention.

Abstention doesn’t hurt the interests of the BRICs one iota, but it does allow them to do some buck-passing. So can the Arab League, which called for UN intervention in the first place but had no willingness to lead it. Instead, both groups can afford to sit back and watch how the West deals with a particularly nasty dictator who has few friends in the international community.

For the loudest supporters of intervention as a core aspect of international humanitarian law, this is all due to the R2P, a principle that has actually been languishing for years, despite its laudable intentions.

In fact, R2P really only comes into play when powerful nations have no real stake in opposing intervention on humanitarian grounds. And by extension it also means that a heavily armed country, or one of its allies, need not fear it at all. This is something the R2P’s proponents seem unable to grasp.

One recent commentary in The Australian suggested that “if the measures adopted succeed, not only will Libya be transformed but tyranny everywhere will be put on notice.” Leaving aside the question of how we define tyranny (nuclear-armed North Korea? Saudi Arabia? The PRC)? there is no clear sense in Libya of how we might judge success. Is it regime change? But that is not the stated goal of Resolution 1973. Or is it enabling a protracted civil war? If so, doesn’t R2P exacerbate the problem?

Even more disturbing is the fact that R2P can also be used by countries to take actions that have little to do with human rights. In 2008 Moscow claimed its intervention in Georgia came from its responsibility to protect ethnic Russians. But the West stands to lose if its actions in Libya are too heavily-handed, if Gaddafi draws neighbouring states into the conflict, or if the West’s actions fail to kick-start Libya’s stalled revolution. Then it will face the spectre of supporting an insurgency over a long period of time. It will be backing a loose coalition of rebels with views that span a spectrum encompassing democrats, local tribal leaders with scores to settle, and champions of Sharia law. Certainly they have no common agreement on what might replace Gaddafi.

Likewise, it is disingenuous to spin Obama’s painful attempts at diplomacy as cool-headedness. By dithering over a no-fly zone the White House was shooehorned into supporting a much tougher resolution once momentum gathered behind David Cameron and Nicolas Sarkozy. And once it did, each side tripped over the other in an unseemly race to be seen as the most humane. That’s why France started targeting Gaddafi’s tanks while the parties were still talking in Paris about how to proceed.

And there’s the rub. Interests and morality can come together in foreign policy, but equally often they can be diametrically opposed. The tragedy of untempered idealism is that it is always disappointing when apparently altruistic statements by leaders are revealed to also contain a heavy dose of pragmatism. Neglecting the political dimension of the West’s latest adventure, and focusing instead on the rhetoric, is merely putting the cart before the horse.

Career advisers view world-class facilities at UTAS

UTAS HOSTED a three-day visit by a group of 22 secondary school career advisers from Victoria and NSW recently as part of the annual Careers Adviser Symposium.

The event showcased UTAS’ world-class academics and facilities, promoting the university as a number one choice for interstate students.

UTAS manager of marketing and recruitment Jo Bailey said the symposium provided an ideal opportunity for the university to highlight the many benefits of Tasmania to interstate education colleagues.

“The visitors met senior academic staff and gained a greater awareness of the lifestyle advantages that Tasmania can provide for their students,” she said.

“Our relationship with these advisers and schools, as well as the university’s regular attendance at major career expos, is intrinsic in attracting young people to Tasmania for tertiary study.”

“In 2010 more than 2,500 interstate student enrolled at UTAS across all programs and campuses. We anticipate this number will continue to grow.”

The career advisers began their Tasmanian visit in Hobart before travelling to Launceston where they joined by 24 Tasmanian advisers for a day of professional development.

Features

Up close

Natalie Nimmo
Alumni Administrative Assistant

Your role model/ idol
Lance Armstrong. My husband’s a cyclist and so I can relate to what Lance does. His books are great and it’s amazing what he’s achieved during and after cancer. It’s an inspiration to all.

When I’m not working
I’m a busy mum, running the kids to and from sport and looking after a household. I play a bit of social tennis and I love being with my “other two children” Millie (dog) and Ellie (cat).

Favourite place on earth
Wineglass Bay. It’s peaceful and one of the few treasures left in the world without commercial things everywhere. It’s one of the last natural beauties left.

Music I’m listening to right now
The Eagles when I have free time, which is rare for me!

Life before UTAS
I used to work at a chicken producer for 13 years and I was definitely ready for a new challenge, so I went to UTAS and two months later I’m loving it. The people, the atmosphere – it’s just lovely.

Secret talent
I’m secretly a scrapbooker. My secret’s out!

Favourite memory
I loved my grandmother’s lamingtons. Favourite memory
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Robin Frith: Adventurer and problem solver

BY LUKE SCOTT

Former University of Tasmania electrical engineering student Robin Frith has one impressive CV.

Along with serving as project manager for the “PDP-6” computer in 1965 – the first multi-user time-sharing system in the world – Mr Frith designed the first remote weather stations for the Bureau of Meteorology, has flown a single-engined Cessna 626 around the world, was involved in the first around-the-world computer networking connection and served as managing director of NEC Australia.

Now the 72-year-old is about to become an author, and has even proposed a novel solution to deal with silt in Launceston’s Tamar River.

Mr Frith’s $120-million proposal would see a 600-metre barrage built across the mouth of the Tamar, effectively separating saltwater and freshwater.

This in turn would eliminate silt build-up in the river because silt remains suspended in fresh water unless it mixes with salt water.

Mr Frith has released a 32-page report on his solution, and politicians, councils and ratepayers are already taking notice.

However, the plan had a relatively mundane beginning.

“I was cruising down the Tamar with some friends for a tennis club lunch a couple of years ago and they mentioned that silt doesn’t precipitate out in the form of mud unless it mixes with salt water,” he said.

“That started the cogs going. I also started thinking about what that could do for the Tamar Valley, for the economy, for tourism, for aquatic sports and all the things that would go hand in hand with that,” he said.

From anyone else, the barrage proposal might seem like pie in the sky, but anyone speaking with Mr Frith for a few moments will quickly realise that he is, and always has been, a problem solver.

After early success in his chosen field designing the earliest computer systems and remote weather stations for the Bureau of Meteorology in the 1960s, Mr Frith was poached by US company Digital Equipment Corporation (DEC).

He spent a few years in the US designing computer systems, before being promoted to project manager for the PDP-6 super computer.

In its day, the PDP-6 was cutting edge in other ways; it is commonly regarded as being part of the very first around-the-world computer network connection.

In November 1965, Mr Frith and his colleagues attempted for the first time to link Digital’s US headquarters in Massachusetts to the PDP-6 in Perth over a telex link.

“A fading roll of printed telex paper, held in Sydney’s BACK Museum – founded by another former DEC engineer, Max Burnet – is testament to the successful link,” Mr Frith said.

Within a few years Mr Frith had set up the Australian arm of DEC, before taking on a global role with the company at its headquarters in Massachusetts.

After seven years in the US, Mr Frith and his first wife Virginia decided to take their three young children back to Australia.

“I had learned how to fly in the US, and flew the family around to places like Martha’s Vineyard, Nantucket, that sort of thing,” Mr Frith said.

“So when it came time to come home to Australia, we decided to buy an aircraft and fly it as a family back to Sydney. I took three months leave of absence from Digital and flew around the world from Boston to Sydney via Europe, the Middle East and South East Asia.

“That’s the subject of my book, Virginia’s Diary.”

After returning to Australia Mr Frith was approached by the then struggling Nippon Electric Company, known today by its acronym NEC, to set up an international marketing strategy.

Within a few years, NEC Australia had grown into a $100 million company.

In 2005, Mr Frith and his second wife decided to return to Launceston to retire.

“We both feel a temperate climate is more suited to our style of life so we visited then decided to come back permanently,” Mr Frith said.

Despite being officially retired, Mr Frith acknowledged that he was still busy – his barrage proposal and book have both taken up a lot of time.

“I can’t help it,” he laughed.

“If I see something that needs to be done, and other people are struggling with it, I tend to apply my experience and skills to try to find a solution.”

Virginia’s Diary will be available for purchase as either a hard copy or an e-book via Amazon in coming weeks.

Innovator, adventurer, author: Robin Frith.

“I built that computer, which took up multiple rooms, put it on a chartered aircraft and sent it out to Perth in 1965,” Mr Frith said.

“But this computer was different – it had up to 64 terminals located right around the campus. The students could sit there in their individual faculties and use the computer remotely into the central computer system. That is what’s called multi-user time-sharing.

“The corporation became quite famous for having done it.”

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Safe hands: The PDP-6 being loaded at Boston’s Logan Airport in the US on its way to Australia.

Robin Frith, his first wife Virginia and their three young children alight from their Cessna 626 on their round-the-world adventure.

Big adventure: Robin Frith, his first wife Virginia and their three young children alight from their Cessna 626 on their round-the-world adventure.

World-first: The multi-user time-sharing PDP-6 shortly after it was delivered to the University of Western Australia. (Photo: The University of Western Australia Computing Centre)
Research

Judgmental society, poor public transport and expensive childcare keep Tasmanian women out of the workforce

BY CHERIE COOPER

New research has shone the spotlight on a big jump in the numbers of under-employed women in Tasmania. It also found they need flexible working hours, are committed to their roles as mothers and have concerns about being too old for jobs.

Unions Tasmania approached the UTAS School of Government to investigate the reasons for women’s low participation in the labour market in Tasmania, in comparison to national rates.

Romy Winter, Dr Megan Alessandrini and Tania Forthegill from the UTAS School of Government consulted more than 200 Tasmanian women, encompassing the full spectrum of age, occupations, life stages and educational backgrounds.

The study found women’s participation in the workforce in Tasmania has grown from 40 per cent in February 1978 to 56 per cent in January 2011.

The research also considered the under-employment rate. This refers to workers who want and are available for more hours of work than they have.

For females, 260 were under-employed in 1979 compared to 12,700 currently. Women in the study also had concerns about being too old for the workforce.

“This manifested in two ways: often they had low personal skills or expectations and were therefore competing with young people for low-paid retail and hospitality positions – and were not being successful,” Dr Alessandrini explained.

“They believe that the potential employer saw their relative maturity in a negative way.”

Data collected indicates when compared with other Australian states, fewer Tasmanian women in every age group and region are participating in the labour market, fewer are employed on a full-time basis, and generally there is little motivation on the part of many of these women to join the labour market full-time.

When asked why they worked part-time or casual, more than 34 per cent stated it was to fit in with child caring responsibilities; 16 per cent claimed it was the only mode of work available to them.

Sixteen per cent also said they did not work full-time because they didn’t need to. For 14.5 per cent it was a lifestyle choice.

“This data suggests that women have a strong commitment to their roles as mothers and carers,” Dr Alessandrini said.

“The role of an actively engaged mother becomes more than a biologically ascribed one: it is an achieved role from which they derive their identity,” Dr Alessandrini said.

“They are making conscious decisions to embrace this role.”

“It is clear that the combination of a society that is implicitly judgmental, and support infrastructure that is at best inconvenient, results in many opting for part-time work or full-time parenting as a lifestyle choice,” she said.

“Overall, the participation of women in the Tasmanian labour market has seen some improvement over recent decades, but is likely to be among the first groups to suffer with an economic downturn such as the one we are now facing.”

Mountain climbing is easier with a little help

BY CHERIE COOPER

The keynote speaker at the launch of Mountain Climbing: A resource for tertiary graduates with lived experience of mental illness was activist in Canberra who was diagnosed with bipolar disorder in 1996. He has been active in local, national and international mental health initiatives. Keith is creator of the online mental health resource www.mentalsympians.org.

The hard-copy resource will be widely distributed throughout Australia and an electronic version will be placed on the web.

The project was funded by the Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations through special project funding to the National Disability Coordination Officer Program.

Mountain Climbing is available to download at: www.ndcotas.com.au and from all UTAS libraries.

Help to climb the mountain: At the launch of a new handbook for tertiary students with a mental illness are Keith Mahar and Debbie Hindle, Mountain Climbing project officer Jese Shipman and Darlene McLennan, national disability coordination officer.
Early 100 Bachelor of Nursing students graduated from their fast-track course at a special ceremony in Sydney last month.

The two-year course is offered by UTAS in Sydney, allowing students to complete their degree a year earlier than the standard Bachelor of Nursing course.

But completing the course in two years requires focus, determination and hard work, according to many of those who graduated last night.

Sixty-two year-old Suzanne Court said determination and the support of her husband had been vital.

“I’ve been working as a nurse for the past 45 years, so for me this is coming back to finish what I started,” Mrs Court said.

“I am very proud of myself and the other students.

“It has been extremely tough – there have been times when I have wanted to pull out. But I got support from my tutors at Darlinghurst, and support from my husband Ray. “Nursing has been my career. It’s all I’ve done, it’s what I love. It’s what I do.

“I have experienced life, I’ve travelled and done other things, but nursing is what I always come back to.”

Mrs Court said the supportive atmosphere of the course had been uplifting.

“The mood among the students in those last eight weeks was great,” she said.

“The support we were giving each other was just amazing.”

Now that Mrs Court has graduated, her husband Ray is contemplating returning to study next year.

“It’s definitely his turn now,” Mrs Court laughed.

Maria Couglan
It is intensive and you have to be motivated. The reason I chose such an intensive course, something that was fast-tracked, is because I’m not getting any younger. Not a lot of young people seem to do this course and I think that is because they want the university experience of going out clubbing and having long holidays. I’ve now started a new graduate program at Justice Health. My previous background was as a criminal lawyer so I’m now incorporating that, hoping to specialise in forensic health.

Leonardo Gualterio
I’m excited to graduate, it’s a big relief. It was very tough to get to this point; you need good time management. You just have to learn to drop other things and focus on study. You have to keep up with the work. I’m proud of myself that I’ve done it because it was very stressful at times.

Shelly Reid
It was busy, especially if you are working as well. It is good to have it done and over with. You have to sacrifice your weekends so it was hard work. It’s great to be graduating.

Mary-Jane O’Brien
It has been a very intense experience. I was very lucky to have such a supportive family – that made all the difference. Balancing it with full time work was really challenging. It meant I had to spend every weekend studying. The only breaks you get are at Christmas so I really treasured those times. I feel really great now, like I’ve really achieved something. It was very hard but it was also very stimulating and interesting. I learned a lot and it was really worthwhile.
Scholarship winner sailing into the future

BY LUKE SCOTT

Launceston-based HITLab student Shannon Woolley has scored a prestigious international award for his 3D simulation of the historic Longford motor racing circuit.

Mr Woolley worked on the project in his spare time, recreating every detail of the Tasmanian track which was a racing hotspot during the 1950s and 1960s.

In its heyday motor racing at Longford was enormously popular, with greats like Jack Brabham, Jim Clark, John Surtees and Bruce McLaren competing there.

Mr Woolley built the track on top of the existing game rFactor, and the community behind the game has officially recognised his efforts.

Last month Mr Woolley received a 4th place award in rFactor Central’s fifth annual Modder of the Year Competition.

The awards are presented to those who design tracks or special vehicles, known as ‘mods’ for the rFactor game.

Mr Woolley said it had been an unexpected surprise to win the award, adding that competition from other modders around the world had been fierce.

“The nominations came up in December and when I saw it was nominated, I thought it was cool,” he said.

The track was recently shown at the Longford Revival Festival, after Mr Woolley was invited to exhibit it there by event organiser Octagon.

Since the track was released online, it has been downloaded more than 10,000 times.

Awards for talented business students

Business Faculty Awards: Award winners Kristian Aarbog and Leigh Cuthbertson; Dean of the UTAS Faculty of Business Professor Gary O’Donovan; award winner Stephanie Wallace and Vice-Chancellor Professor Peter Rathjen.

BY NICOLE MAYNE

The Australian Maritime College recognised the accomplishments of its high-achieving students recently.

Seven students were awarded an Outstanding Achiever Scholarship and 22 took home an Excellent Achiever Scholarship, comprising accommodation packages or contributions to HECS fees and other education expenses.

AMC Principal Malek Pourzanjani said the scholarships were designed to reward bright students with high Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR) or equivalent scores.

“These scholarships will support our students as they settle in to the demands of tertiary study during their first year at AMC, reward them for their academic efforts to date and encourage them to continue their good work over the course of their degrees,” Professor Pourzanjani said.

“We congratulate them for their achievements and trust they will enjoy the rest of their time here.”

All AMC students are eligible to apply for AMC awards.

Scholarships reward high-achieving students

7 Outstanding Achiever Scholarships – awarded to students with an ATAR or equivalent score above 95. The scholarship comprises the student’s choice of either an accommodation package or payment of HECS fees for 2011, plus $2000 towards their education costs.

22 Excellent Achiever Scholarships – awarded to students with an ATAR or equivalent score between 90-95. The scholarship comprises the student’s choice of either an accommodation package or payment of HECS fees for 2011.

7 Remote and Outer Regional Scholarships – designed to assist Marine Environment students who need to relocate for their studies. The scholarship comprises an accommodation package valued at $3500 in the halls of residence at AMC’s Newnham campus.

2 Women in Maritime Engineering Scholarships – supports women studying in the areas of Naval Architecture, Marine and Offshore Systems and Ocean Engineering who have achieved an ATAR or equivalent score between 70-89. The scholarship comprises an accommodation package valued at approximately $5500.

2 Certificates of Appreciation – for engineering students Rebecca Randle and Jessica Ryan for their outstanding contribution and assistance with the Women in Engineering Scholarship.
Recognition for top arts students at Cradle Coast

BY ANNA OSBORNE

H igh-achieving arts students at the UTAS Cradle Coast campus were recognised recently for their academic excellence.

Six students collected awards presented by Faculty of Arts Dean Professor Susan Dodds.

The prizes recognise the outstanding achievements of students who have completed their first year of study at the campus in a degree within the Faculty of Arts.

The students have achieved the highest level of performance within a disciplinary area with each student receiving a $100 book voucher.

“These annual awards aim to recognise the time and dedication the students have put into their first year of study,” Prof. Dodds said.

As part of the program, a best first-year student prize is awarded. Award recipients: Edward Heckethorn (best first-year arts student, Aboriginal studies, geography);

Students combine love of law with creative pursuits

Luke hopes to one day achieve his dream of becoming a criminal lawyer, but is also a keen actor and is a member of the acclaimed Southern Gospel Choir.

He is studying an arts/law degree and is also part of the advanced honours program.

“My ambition is to work as a criminal lawyer in a prosecution or defence capacity, with a view to perhaps returning to North-West Tasmania,” he said.

“I am motivated by an innate sense of justice and desire to play a role in the legal system.”

Rebecca is also musically inclined. She plays violin, teaches the cello and is studying an economics/law degree. She is interested particularly in equality and human rights, aiming to work towards promoting legal and economic reforms in developing countries and encourage the protecting of human rights.

“My interest in law is based on my passion for equality. When I graduate I hope to work on promoting legal reform in developing countries in the Asia-Pacific region.”

– Rebecca Byrnes

Nursing students crowned winners

BY CHERIE COOPER

TWO DEDICATED Danish nursing students are the latest recipients of the Crown Princess Mary Scholarship.

Emilie Middelhede, is on student exchange from VIA University College in Aarhus and Lynette Munk is from University College in Zealand.

Both are enrolled in acute care nursing in the UTAS School of Nursing and Midwifery.

Emilie has been a helper for a disabled blind girl with renal failure and mental disability, has worked in a psychiatric unit and for the past few years has been a helper for a disabled girl with cerebral palsy.

After a semester’s study in Tasmania she will travel around the state before she returns to Denmark.

Her objectives are to develop her nursing skills, and challenge her professional knowledge while developing her English skills and seeing Tasmania’s extraordinary nature first-hand.

Lynette’s objectives for applying for the scholarship were “to continue to develop her entire self”, to broaden her horizons and to have a better command of English.

She has worked as a qualified social and healthcare worker and has the support of her husband, children and grandchild in Denmark to follow her dream to become the best nurse she can be.

UTAS Vice-Chancellor Professor Peter Rathjen congratulated the two nurses.

“The Crown Princess Mary Scholarship is particularly special. It emphasises the strong friendship between Tasmania and Denmark and allows students to study abroad to gain the experience and understanding of a different culture,” he said.

Crown Princess Mary’s father, Professor John Donaldson, sister Patricia Bailey and members of the Danish Consulate attended the ceremony at the UTAS Sandy Bay campus.

Spiny lobsters PhD wins NZ award

IMAS research fellow

Dr Cedric Simon was recently awarded the Vice-Chancellor’s prize for best doctoral thesis at the University of Auckland for his study, Advancing the nutrition of juvenile spiny lobster, Jasus edwardsii, in aquaculture.

Of 296 doctorates awarded across all faculties in 2010, his thesis was the only one from the Faculty of Science selected for the award.

Dr Simon’s work focused on the development of cost-effective, sea-cage rearing systems and nutritionally adequate formulated diets for culturing juvenile spiny lobsters in New Zealand.

The research investigated various aspects of spiny lobster digestive physiology and identified digestible and utilizable carbohydrates sources and binders for inclusion in new formulated diets.

“When the opportunity arose to move to the University of Tasmania I jumped at it as IMAS (which incorporates the Tasmanian Aquaculture and Fisheries Institute) is world-renowned for its work on larval fish and crustacean propagation,” he said.

“In a world where food security is becoming increasingly important and where seafood demand is outstripping supply, working at the cutting edge of aquaculture and being part of the IMAS aquaculture program gives me a chance to make a difference,” Dr Simon said.

University of Auckland’s best doctoral thesis: Dr Cedric Simon, now at IMAS.

Awards
New IMAS director has ‘the right stuff’

BY PETER COCHRANE

In a former life, Mike Coffin, the new executive director of the Institute for Marine and Antarctic Studies, was shortlisted by NASA for astronaut training. He was one of 5000 applicants in 1984.

With 19 other semi-finalists he spent a week in Houston undergoing rigorous physical and psychological evaluation. Five other groups of 20 were also being evaluated a week at a time.

“If you’ve seen the movie The Right Stuff, you will have some appreciation of the testing we underwent,” Professor Coffin recalls. “And being interviewed by a committee that included John Young, who’s been to the moon twice, as well as several other astronauts, has definitely made all subsequent interviews easier.”

FBI agents and federal marshals then visited his family, friends and colleagues. “I am told that they always asked the same questions: about drug use, alcohol use and sexual preference. I was greatly amused at the time – even more so looking back now.”

Obviously satisfied with the responses, NASA deemed Prof. Coffin ‘fit’ for space flight and eligible to be considered for a year’s training at Johnson Space Center. In the end, he didn’t make the final cut – only 19 from the 5000 original hopefuls were chosen, and that was his good fortune.

“Years later I was approached at a conference by someone who introduced himself as a member of the NASA evaluation panel. He told me that they were very interested in me as a potential astronaut but in hindsight I seemed to have had a far more interesting career than what I would have had as an astronaut.”

Sometimes a little too interesting. In September 2001, after nearly a dozen years at the University of Texas, Prof. Coffin was packing his bags for Japan, having accepted a professorship at the University of Tokyo, when the twin towers in New York were hit.

“Some of my belongings were stored in the University of Texas’ research facility, which houses a small nuclear reactor. The facility went into lockdown mode that morning.”

He eventually boarded flights for Tokyo on 15 September, four days after the attack, leaving family and friends behind and with very mixed feelings. “It was a time of great uncertainty politically. The US was in crisis mode – the Vice-President was flown to one secret location, the President to another.”

Prof. Coffin was to view the aftermath of September 11 from the other side of the Pacific. He had been working off and on with Japanese scientists since the early 1990s. “They spent 10 years sizing me up and then finally I was invited to apply for a professorship at the University of Tokyo. It blinded me.”

The post was with the Ocean Research Institute, the only academic oceanographic institute in Japan. Thirty-nine years after it was founded, Prof. Coffin became the third woman to fill an associate professor vacancy – she became the institute’s first tenured female staff member. “So my little group started to stick out like a sore thumb.”

Prof. Coffin finally left Japan at the end of 2007 to become director of research at the UK’s National Oceanography Centre, Southampton, which would become a model for the development of IMAS.

In January this year he began the challenge of building IMAS into a world leader in marine and Antarctic science. As he recently told the Columbia University Review, IMAS is a ‘mere toddler’ compared with peer institutions such as the ‘centenarian’ Scripps, the ‘octogenarian’ Woods Hole and the ‘teenage’ National Oceanography Centre.

Yet the “concentration of ocean and Antarctic expertise in Hobart – about 1000 staff – is remarkable for any country, let alone one with a population of only 2.2 million people – there are two million more Texans than Australians!”

The man who once looked to the heavens now finds himself charting a new course on a vast ocean of possibilities.

Education elite win scholarships

BY JESSIE STANLEY

KATRINA McNAB, Damon Thomas, Grant Cooper and Sun Hee (Sunny) Jang are off to a great start with their PhDs.

The four talented education students have been awarded UTAS elite research scholarships, receiving $30k per annum tax-free, over three years, with a possible six-month extension.

These students will not only have the support of accomplished supervisors, but a laptop, scholarship top-ups, conference support funds and other generic skills workshops which will help them navigate their way through their PhD journeys.

Katrina McNab, an early childhood graduate from the Cradle Coast campus in 2009, is eager to get started.

“I’m passionate about early childhood literacy education and home/school relationships and I’m keen to use my experience through further research, she said.

Katrina’s research topic, home/school early literacy partnerships, seeks to compare the effectiveness of traditional shared reading methods with multi-media methods, focusing on concepts about print, phonological awareness, and vocabulary and comprehension with children aged four to six years old.

Grant Cooper will delve into the values and beliefs underpinning school students’ decisions when selecting their senior secondary subjects whether they are VET or pre-tertiary ones, surveying current academy and polytechnic students.

Gaming enthusiast Damon Thomas will research the semiotics of game authoring, investigating how primary school students construct narratives through the medium of videogames.

And Sunny Jang will look at how story-telling on YouTube extends the traditional concepts of narrative, with relevance to pedagogy and 21st-century classrooms.

From a computing background, Sunny is interested in what young people are learning from digital media. Her research aims to inform teachers about that learning and how it can be enhanced through integration into the classroom.

“I hope as a result we can provide possibilities to reduce the technological gap between the teacher and the student in order to fulfill class practices more fruitfully,” she said.

Students with an outstanding academic record and a passion for research can apply for a variety of other scholarships in the education field in 2011. Topics include mathematics education; leadership; education, health and wellbeing; and teaching and learning in teacher education.

For more information see http://www.utas.edu.au/graduate-research/elite
Tasmania’s vibrant history from court and criminal records

Crime ‘how-to’ workshop for historians: Professor Hamish Maxwell-Smith and Professor Alison Venn in the Birdcage Walk, under Hobart’s Penitentiary Chapel where the autumn symposium, Crime in the Colonies, was held.

BY PETER COCHRANE

Many Tasmanians take for granted the treasure trove that is our colonial court and criminal records, says leading historian Professor Hamish Maxwell-Smith. Yet they are of international significance.

“It will probably surprise many people to learn that these records were admitted to the UNESCO Memory of the World Register before any of our renowned historic sites,” he said at a two-day symposium devoted to exploiting this incredible resource at Hobart’s Penitentiary Chapel.

“These records were registered by UNESCO in 2008. Our best-known convict site, Port Arthur, wasn’t registered until last year – after a 12-year campaign of writing reports and building a case.”

The symposium, entitled Crime in the Colonies, was organised by the UTAS Centre for Colonialism and its Aftermath. It was basically a ‘how-to’ workshop, aimed at instructing participants in extracting maximum value from the colonial records.

Panelists – including speakers from the universities of Tasmania, Sydney, New South Wales, Melbourne, Adelaide and Keele (UK) plus Tourism Tasmania – discussed such themes as criminal lives, crime on the frontier and the challenge of interpreting convict sites.

The criminal lives session, for example, addressed the “incredibly detailed archives which cover all facets of peoples’ lives … information that is not normally recorded,” Prof. Maxwell-Smith explained.

Barry Godfrey from the University of Keele and series editor for the seven-volume A Criminal History of Britain featured in the session entitled Persistent Offenders.

His current research interests include the use of historical data to address current criminological issues.

The symposium’s broad aim was to show how to create “really vibrant and compelling histories from the plethora of histories from the plethora of court and criminal records”, Prof. Maxwell-Smith said.

Such symposia bring together experts in the field, postgraduate students and staff from the university and representatives of industry partner organisations from all over the state to look at a particular issue.

Why krill is key

They may be tiny but krill are a cornerstone of the Southern Ocean food web and Cathryn Wynn-Edwards is taking a closer look at these tiny creatures.

“My interest in krill started when I was doing my honours,” Cathryn explained.

“The interest in ocean acidification was always there, but in reading all the literature I wanted to do something that had a connection to something central in the food web.

“It has been difficult at times, but now that I have two major experiments behind me I feel really motivated again.”

Cathryn said krill were a tiny but important part of the Southern Ocean ecosystem.

Living in swarms so massive they can stretch for miles, their numbers are estimated in millions of tonnes.

Many species rely on krill as a source of high protein food: whales, seals, penguins, sea birds, fish and squid.

Man too, and increasingly so; 2010 is the first year that the krill fishery has had to be closed to prevent going over the fishery quota. They are a rich source of protein and fats, but most of the krill harvested is used in animal feed and aquaculture.

Cathryn’s PhD investigates an aspect of another major threat to krill: acidification of the Southern Ocean. Increasing atmospheric carbon dioxide leads to increased levels of the dissolved gas and acidity in the oceans, and research has shown high levels of acidification can result in krill embryo death.

Her research also gauges the effects of high levels of carbon dioxide on the krill’s food. The biochemical makeup and nutrient composition of phytoplankton are shaped in part by the levels of carbon dioxide in the water and Cathryn is investigating just how much of an impact this can have on the krill larval diet and thus their growth rate and overall fitness.

Although she has worked in ocean acidification before, Cathryn completed her honours in the plant sciences. One of the challenges she faces is bridging the research between acidification effects on phytoplankton and the work done on the impacts of ocean acidification on krill.

Eventually she plans to use the data she collects to simulate changes in the phytoplankton populations and ultimately develop a model to estimate krill populations at different projected levels of dissolved carbon dioxide. Cathryn said she hoped the model could eventually be incorporated into the existing krill population models used to manage the krill fishery.
The sculptured shape of dance

BY SAMANTHA MARSHALL

The 30-year history of Launceston’s only professional contemporary dance company is celebrated in the UTAS NEW Gallery’s latest exhibition.

The work of Jenimaro is featured in 21 pigment ink prints by artist Jenimaro. The photos were taken from the company’s 2009 and 2010 seasons. They were photographed in the rehearsals of Anton’s Blurr, Graeme Murphy’s Forty Miles, Chrisie Parkin’s Racing Heart and Frances King’s Remembering Us.

Jenimaro was a dancer as a child and now, in mid-life, loves to photograph dancers. She is particularly interested in evoking within each image the fleeting sculptures made when dancers pause as well as the flow of their movements. She achieves this by layering together images of the same dance sequence taken on very short and very long exposures.

“Dancers are interesting in terms of both the shifting sculptural shapes their bodies make as they move in relationship to one another and the fluidity with which they draw patterns across space,” she said.

“I wanted to convey to the viewer a sense of beauty and passion of contemporary dance without the dancers ‘posing’ for the shot. They had to be unaware of the camera and fully focused on their dancing to achieve this.”

Sometimes Jenimaro spent 20 hours on one image, merging, cutting and collaging the long exposure and the fast shutter speed photos to get the right effect.

“I approached this with an open mind and experimented. I couldn’t be too precious with my work because at the end of the day, you are your own best critic,” she said.

The results sometimes appear more like drawings and paintings than photographs.

Golf day beats record for charity

NEARLY 80 COMPETITORS raised $7000 in the 2011 UniGym charity golf day at the Mowbray Golf Club – more money than last year and raised by nearly double the competitors.

Organisers Sarah Campbell and Andrew McCarthy said they were thrilled so many golfers had turned out for the seventh annual event, despite threatening rain clouds.

“The day was all about raising money for two local charities: the Clifford Craig Medical Research Trust and Cystic Fibrosis Tasmania,” Mr McCarthy said.

“It was open to staff and students, as well as to the wider community and people who have associations with the two charities.

“It’s not so much about competition – it’s about enjoying the day and enjoying the fine food and wine donated by Tasmanian businesses.

“Everyone chips in to make sure the event goes well, and the emphasis is on having fun."

Mr McCarthy said the UniGym aimed to improve the event each year.

“Our major sponsors were STA Travel, Budget Rent-A-Car, the Old Woolstore and Corporate Express, and they were all been very generous and donated some great prizes and auction items."

More than $5000 was raised at the 2010 golf day.

Before the tee-off: Shane Harris from Asset Management and Bruce Baudinette from the Launceston Vehicle Fleet chomped on a sausage in bread before the action started.

What’s on

TALKS & SEMINARS

12 MAY

The Great 2011 Tohoku Earthquake and Tsunami

Presenter: Professor Mike Coffin, RAS Time: 6.7pm Venue: Lecture Theatre 9, Faculty of Arts Building, Newnham campus Information: UTAS.Events@utas.edu.au or phone (03) 6226 2521

12 MAY

Richard Selby Smith Oration

The national education agenda for schooling: Does it foster or inhibit equity?

Presenter: Professor Alan Reid, Professor of Education at the University of South Australia. The Richard Selby Smith Oration 2011 is the fifth annual event to celebrate the life and work in education in Tasmania and nationally by Professor Richard Selby Smith.

Time: 6.71pm Venue: Stanley Burbury Theatre, University Centre, Churchill Avenue, Sandy Bay campus Information: duncan@utsas.net bigpond.com; Phone: (03) 6234 8243

13 MAY

Unearthing the World of Archaeology and Ancient Cultures:

Present: Dr Geoff Adams, University of Tasmania, specialist in Roman history and the archaeology of ancient domestic spaces. Dr Adams is currently running the classical archaeology program at UTAS, and his presentation stems from his research on houses and villas at Pompeii, Herculaneum and Rome.

Chair: Sir Guy Green, AC, KBE, CVO

Time: 6.73pm Venue: Stanley Burbury Theatre, University Centre, Churchill Avenue, Sandy Bay Information: UTAS.Events@utas.edu.au or phone (03) 6226 2521

20 MAY

Art Forum: Jon Cattapan

Jon Cattapan has established himself as a prolific and significant Australian artist having exhibited his paintings, drawings and prints extensively since 1978. Central to Cattapan’s practice is a concern with the way in which humans negotiate space and territories.

Time: 12.30-1.30pm Venue: Dechaineaux Lecture Theatre, Level 1, Tasmanian School of Art, Hunter St, Hobart Information: art.forum@utas.edu.au

24 MAY

School of Government Seminar Series

Women and workplace participation in Tasmania: trends and challenges

Presenter: Dr Megan Alessandrini, School of Government UTAS

Time: 12-1.30pm Venue: Mick Townley Research Room, 5th Floor Social Science Building, Sandy Bay campus Information: (03) 6226 2896 or Richard.Eccleston@utas.edu.au

27 MAY

Art Forum: An Archival Impulse Seminar

This is a special 1.5-hour seminar-style forum that will feature a number of artists and the curators from “An Archival Impulse”. The exhibition features the work of 10 artists who use the archive, or strategies associated with the archive, across a range of media including photography, printmaking, installation, sculpture, video and e-media.

Time: 12.30pm Venue: Dechaineaux Lecture Theatre, Level 1, Tasmanian School of Art, Hunter St, Hobart Information: art.forum@utas.edu.au

For a complete list of, or to contribute to, What’s on visit www.utas.edu.au. Contributions are free but may be edited.