It’s only slightly above freezing on a wintry Tasmanian morning. Rob Gasperini, a research fellow from the Menzies Research Institute, has headed into work on his bicycle—as he has done many mornings over the years.

Mr. Gasperini is typical of a growing number of UTAS staff members and students who use bicycles as one of their primary means of transport.

“Mr. Gasperini is far from alone in feeling this way. Statistics from Bicycle Victoria’s national Super Tuesday Bike Counts 2010 show there were more than 200 bicycle movements in and around the Sandy Bay campus from 7am to 9am on a randomly selected morning. The count also showed more than 70 bicycle movements at an intersection near the new Medical Science 1 (MS1) building. In response to this demand, the design team working on the Medical Science Precinct have attempted to include features to encourage cycling, along with other healthy work practices. A temporary lock-up facility for 100 bikes has been built close to the showers/change rooms at MS1, with an improved, permanent 200-bike facility to be incorporated in the next stage of the Medical Science Precinct.”

‘Clearly, the Government’s objectives align very much with our own, in working to further excellence in education, research and health in this state for the benefit of all Tasmanians.’ – University Chancellor, Mr. Damian Bugg

On a bike: Rob Gasperini is one of a growing number of UTAS staff and students who use bicycles as one of their primary means of transport.

‘To realise a vision of an environmentally sustainable society, it starts with the actions of the individual.’

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Kamal Singh, the Sustainability Manager at UTAS, said the Medical Science Precinct bike facility is a practical demonstration of UTAS’ commitment to environmental citizenship.

“To realise a vision of an environmentally sustainable society, it starts with the actions of the individual,” Mr. Singh said.

“Riding a bicycle to work may not seem like a big deal. But it’s the collective behaviours of each member within the community that are crucial to initiating and supporting institutional change.”

Applications for 2011 are now open » www.utas.edu.au
Our people

Anna Carew
Dr Carew is co-author of a textbook that has just been named the 2009 Best Textbook in Australia by the Australian Publishers Association. Engineering Your Future: An Australian Guide has been highly acclaimed by the engineering academic fraternity. Dr Carew’s co-authors were David Dowling from the University of Southern Queensland and Roger Hadgraft from the University of Melbourne. Social Research Methods, edited by UTAS academic staff member Dr Maggie Walter, also made the shortlist for this award.

Morgan Miles
Professor Miles will take up his appointment later this year as professor of enterprise development in the School of Management at Launceston. He was appointed as part of the New Stars Recruitment Program, which recruits a new generation of academic leaders and role models to UTAS. Prof. Miles was most recently employed as Professor of Marketing at Georgia South University in the United States.

Kirsty Máté
Kirsty Máté is the new director in interior design at the UTAS School of Architecture and Design. Previously she was head of the interior design programme at the University of NSW and, before that, Ms Máté combined academic work with her business, Eve Betera. Ms Máté is also currently working on a PhD exploring sustainability and retail design.

Lucy Bleach
Hobart artist Lucy Bleach was recently awarded a Qantas Foundation Art Award – the winners of which, from each state and territory, share in cash and airfares to the value of $112,000. Ms Bleach was awarded a Master of Fine Art from the UTAS Tasmanian School of Art in 2007, where she is now an associate lecturer in fine arts, teaching in sculpture and core studies.

Fearful fliers learn to soar

P eople suffering from a fear of flying may soon be able to soar with the help of a new program at UTAS. The UTAS Psychology Clinic at the Sandy Bay campus is running a free four-session program entitled “Fear of Flying”. It began in early August.

Aerophobia: The fear of flying is common but the UTAS Psychology Clinic wants to help sufferers overcome their phobia. (Photo: ©iStockphoto.com/Rapideye)

BY CHERIE COOPER

Aerophobia is a specific fear of flying. It is characterised by an intense feeling of panic and threat when confronted with situations in relation to flight. Dr Caroline Schwerkolt, from the UTAS School of Psychology, said aerophobia can be isolating, preventing people from travelling and enjoying experiences with long-distance friends and family.

“It can also impact work and career opportunities,” she said. “This impact is even greater when living in remote locations such as Tasmania.” The Fear of Flying program aims to help people understand the causes of their anxiety and learn coping strategies to help them overcome their fear. The program is co-ordinated by two psychology interns. It also features input from an experienced pilot, Gus Vans-Collina, who has more than 18,000 hours of commercial flying time.

Masters of Clinical Psychology student Nick Falk, who is working on the program, said other common phobias include the fear of spiders, as well as public speaking. Spider phobia seems to have a biological basis – we know that spiders might be dangerous so we’re cautious of them.

Dr Schwerkolt said flying is a similar case. “There is a real reason people are scared of flying,” she said. “You throw a ball in the air and it drops – and a plate is a million times heavier.”

“Some people experiencing turbulence on a flight will think, ‘We went through a different pocket of air – that was strange,’” Lisa said. “But other people think, ‘We’re going to crash.’”

On campus

Amazing Race around UTAS

A group of 19 students from Korea recently visited the UTAS Sandy Bay campus as part of their trip to Tasmania, organised by Hobart’s Calvin Christian School. The students, aged between 12 and 15 years, and their two teachers came from Imae Middle School in Korea, which is a sister school to Hobart’s Calvin Christian School. They are part of the foreign exchange program set up by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade in Korea.

The students also took part in an Amazing Race around UTAS, which saw them answering questions in different locations around campus. The visit was supported by the UTAS Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade in Korea. The students also had the opportunity to visit Hobart’s Calvin Christian School and the Hobart International Airport.

Many thanks to Michelle Hornby for contributing the August ‘On Campus’ feature image.
Pharmacy research to save millions in healthcare costs

BY MICHELLE GRIMA

Australians can expect 50,000 additional quality-of-life years and healthcare savings of $900m over the next five years, following a major UTAS pharmaceutical research project.

A new software solution for Australia’s community pharmacists has been developed over 10 years by the School of Pharmacy’s Unit for Medication Outcomes Research and Education (UMORE). This work has culminated in the Federal Government investing $97m to roll out the software.

Federal Government investing that assists community pharmacists has been developed Australia’s community pharmacists. The UTAS project was in partnership with the University of New South Wales, University of Sydney, Monash University and Curtin University.

Research was funded by the Department of Health and Ageing as part of the fourth Community Pharmacy Agreement.

A pharmacist’s intervention can improve patient care through improved medication use.

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Tasmanian parasitic wasps to NZ rescue

A tiny Tasmanian parasitic wasp, Cotesia rugosata, is going to be released by scientists in New Zealand next year in an attempt to tackle an Australian insect that’s ravaging their eucalypt trees.

Dr Geoff Allen, a senior lecturer in entomology from the UTAS School of Agricultural Science and the Tasmanian Institute of Agricultural Research (TIAR), and his New Zealand research colleagues have received approval to use the parasitic wasp to combat the gum-leaf skeletoniser (Eucalyptus plantations) across New Zealand.

Dr Allen said, “But Cotesia rugosata is only about 3 mm long and is harmless to humans. It’s an effective control against the gum-leaf skeletoniser because the wasp lays its egg inside the caterpillar, and when ready to pupate the larva eats its way out and kills the caterpillar.”

Since 2003 Dr Allen has been working as a research advisor on an international biocontrol program (funded by New Zealand’s Sustainable Farming Fund) to combat the gum-leaf skeletoniser in New Zealand.

An economic impact assessment conducted for New Zealand estimated the potential cost of gum-leaf skeletoniser at NZS100-$142 million.

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**Features**

**Up close**

**Sophie Lloyd**
School of English, Journalism and European Languages

**What’s your role at UTAS?**
I’m an administrative assistant at the School of English, Journalism and European Languages. I’m the first point of contact for students and external parties. I’m also involved with the general running of the office.

**What do you like best about your job/area?**
I like the opportunity to meet a lot of different people. I also enjoy working in a very friendly and supportive work environment.

**Things that make you laugh out loud?**
Joking with my friends and family.

**Ambitions?**
In the future I’d like to expand my skills and perhaps work in other areas of the University. I’d also like to learn a martial art.

**Favourite subject at school?**
I enjoyed fine arts and languages.

**Top holiday location?**
Japan sometime in the future.

**What are you listening to?**
Radio Nix.

**What are you reading?**
*Sabriel* by Garth Nix.

**Secret skill/hidden talent?**
I’ve been told I make a good zucchini slice.

**What are you doing when you are not working?**
When I’m not working I enjoy reading, shopping, exercising and spending time with my friends and family. I also like going to the cinema.

**Favourite hobby?**
I like cooking, bowling and playing mini golf.

**NEXT EDITION: The submission deadline for the October issue of *Unitas* is 10 September**
The acid story of snails and snot

BY WENDY PYPER
AUSTRALIAN ANTARCTIC DIVISION

A team of researchers, fondly known as Team Acid, has started trawling the Southern Ocean to determine the effects of ocean acidification on tiny marine snails (pteropods) and planktonic, single-celled, shell-forming organisms (foraminifera). The scientists—from the Antarctic Climate and Ecosystems Cooperative Research Centre (ACE CRC), the University of Tasmania and the Australian National University—hope to establish a baseline of the health of these organisms in the ocean now, so that they can detect changes in the future.

Pteropods are an important food source for marine predators in the Antarctic food web. Foraminifera are prey for many small marine invertebrates and fish. Both organisms are indicators of changes in the ecosystem that could have profound implications for commercial fish species, seals and whales.

About 40 per cent of man-made carbon dioxide is absorbed by the Southern Ocean and forms a weak acid (carbonic acid) when it mixes with water. This acid readily releases hydrogen ions, and as acidity is determined by the concentration of hydrogen ions (measured on the pH scale), the more acidic a solution, the more hydrogen ions are present and the lower the pH. Increasing hydrogen ions affect the ability of pteropods and foraminifera to form shells, resulting in thinner, lighter, and pitted or etched shells. As colder water absorbs more carbon dioxide than warmer water, the effects of ocean acidification will be seen first in the Southern Ocean.

According to Dr John Baxter, a scientific advisor to government from the Scottish Natural Heritage who has joined “Team Acid”, ocean acidity has increased by 30 per cent since the beginning of the Industrial Revolution and is already affecting shell-forming marine organisms. Observed effects include thinner shells, fewer Pteropods in areas where they were previously common, and an increase in gelatinous organisms such as jellyfish and salps (glutinous jelly-like creatures, described as looking like clear “snot” by one of the researchers on the team).

Team Acid is deploying a rectangular midwater trawl (RMT)—a pair of rectangular mesh nets—to catch the organisms, at different latitudes along a line from Hobart to Casey Station. A total of eight trawls will be conducted; four in subantarctic waters (45–49°S), three in polar waters (54–56°S) and one in the narrower channel of water where the subantarctic and polar waters meet (51°S). The team expects to see a change in the shell weight, size and species of pteropods as it moves further south into the colder and more acidified water.

Upon returning to Australia, the mechanical properties of the captured pteropod shells will be examined to provide definitive evidence that they are becoming more fragile.

The art of recycling

BY NICKI FLETCHER

The Cradle Coast campus of UTAS has marked the successful voyage of Plastiki, the plastic bottle boat, by launching its own exhibition of recycled and recreated milk containers.

The exhibition, Puso, is the work of Tasmanian artist Ritchie Ares Doña and Ulverstone High School students. They spent more than a hundred hours collecting, washing, peeling and reconstructing hundreds of plastic milk containers.

“This exhibition is strongly influenced by my childhood in the Philippines where my backyard was a rubbish dump and where the culture of recycling rubbish has existed for generations,” Mr Doña said.

“Plus it’s always good to be able to work in materials that don’t cost you anything because you’re more likely to take risks and experiment. This worked especially well with students.”

Puso is a technique used in the Philippines to weave cooking vessels, usually from coconut leaves or bamboo. The artist: Ritchie Ares Doña

Nothing but the milk containers: Puso consists of hundreds of individual parts of milk containers cut up, reformed and strung into three-dimensional artworks. Only the lids were not used.

The Cradle Coast campus will host two more exhibitions in 2010. North-West art students enrolled in the School of Visual and Performing Arts UTAS College program will exhibit their work in the Atrium Gallery from 25 September to 5 October. The 2010 RACT Insurance Tasmanian Youth Portraiture Prize will be displayed from 8 to 29 October.
Celebrating the science of Tall Poppies

BY JANETTE BRENNAN

A separation scientist from the University of Tasmania has been named the 2010 Young Tasmanian Tall Poppy at a presentation hosted by the Honourable Chief Justice Ewan Crawford, Lieutenant Governor of Tasmania.

Dr Robert Shellie, a senior lecturer at the UTAS School of Chemistry and the Australian Centre for Research on Separation Science (ACROSS), was recognised by the Tall Poppy Campaign for research excellence and his involvement in the promotion of science, particularly among young people.

Also celebrated at last month’s ceremony were Dr Jerome Staal, a neurologist from the Menzies Research Institute, and Dr Peter While, a postdoctoral fellow from the UTAS School of Mathematics and Physics.

It is the second year that Tasmania has been included in the national Tall Poppy campaign. In 2009, the inaugural Tasmanian Tall Poppy Award was won by Dr Emily Hilder, who, like Dr Shellie, is a UTAS separation scientist.

“This award is especially thrilling because I see a strong importance in communicating science in a meaningful way outside of my scientific discipline,” Dr Shellie said.

“I’m looking forward to continued opportunities for community engagement through the Tall Poppy Campaign.”

Dr Shellie specialises in an area called “multidimensional chromatography.” But what does that mean?

Chromatography is a technique that allows scientists to separate mixtures so that the amount of each component in the mixture can be measured. Multidimensional chromatography has given rise to sensitive approaches for the analysis of a wide range of very complex mixtures – everything from allergens in perfumes through to the detection of small traces of explosives that might be used by terrorists.

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BY MICHELLE NICHOLS

A research idea designed to improve water and energy efficiency when growing and harvesting vegetables has taken top honours at the recent 2010 UniQuest Trailblazer competition at UTAS.

Dr Susan Lambert and Dr Frank Hay from the Tasmanian Institute of Agricultural Research (TIAR) took out the open section of the competition with their “Waterprofit” project. This idea provides new technology to enable site-specific irrigation to improve water and energy efficiency during vegetable production.

Dr Lambert said the system enables communication with a network of real-time wireless soil moisture sensors (provided by CSIRO Communication Technology Centre, ICT) and a decision support system, which can be retrofit to a centre pivot or linear move irrigator.

“’Our project is in the early stages of research and will provide new technology to enable site-specific irrigation to improve water and energy efficiency during crop production,’ she said.

“Our project is in the early stages of research and will provide new technology to enable site-specific irrigation to improve water and energy efficiency during crop production.’

“We have sourced funding from Horticulture Australia Limited (HAL) and have a collaborative research project between TIAR, CSIRO ICT and a Tasmanian irrigation company, Seattle Services Pty. Ltd.

“I also wish to mention the major role Professor Tony Norton has played in both the development of this project and attaining funding. Both he and Dr Bill Cotching are team members of the HAL-funded project.”

Run by UniQuest, the Trailblazer competition aims to identify, nurture and commercialise University of Tasmania’s applied research ideas, with entries encouraged from all University research disciplines – whether they relate to business, products, services or scientific and communication technologies.

UTAS has formed a research commercialisation collaboration with UniQuest, the University of Queensland’s main technology transfer company. This partnership has boosted opportunities for UTAS researchers to take their innovations to a global market.

Brilliant ideas light the path for the future

Winners of the Open Section: (L-R) Dr Susan Lambert, Dr Frank Hay and Prof Tony Norton. (Photo: Dr Jason Scott)
Graduation stories of hard work and achievement

Civil Engineer Jessica Andrewartha received her Doctor of Philosophy during one of last month’s University of Tasmania graduation ceremonies. A feature of Jess’s graduation was the fact that her uncle, Dr Peter Davis, gave the occasional address. Dr Davis is Chief Executive of Aurora Energy and a member of the University of Tasmania Council.

“I always enjoyed maths and science at school and I initially considered a career in medicine,” Jess said. “But no-one wants a doctor who faints at the sight of blood. “Still, I wanted a career in which maths and science are applied to real-world problems. That’s what attracted me to engineering and why I specialise in renewable energy and energy efficiency.”

At the same ceremony, Professor Simon Foote, the Director of the Menzies Research Institute, was awarded a Doctor of Science. And later that day Jes Villa, from the Faculty of Arts, received his PhD in Philosophy after travelling all the way from Munich, Germany.

Meanwhile, Launceston secondary teacher Julienne Colman shared the stage with many former students when she received her Doctor of Education at the Albert Hall. More than 900 graduates received their awards in Hobart, while almost 400 took part in the Launceston ceremony.

As well as Dr Davis, speakers at the graduations included Mrs Robyn Kronenberg (Principal, St Michael’s Collegiate School); Professor Richard Herr, OAM (Adjunct Professor of Governance and Ethics, Fiji National University and Honorary Associate, School of Government and School of Law).

Open days a success

Prospective students, families and members of the community flooded the three Tasmanian UTAS campuses for the recent Open Days. There was a wide range of fun activities, campus tours and demonstrations on offer to inform and entertain visitors to the University. Prospective students had ample opportunity to speak with UTAS staff and students about courses on offer, scholarships, applications and accommodation.

Hobart Open Day drew approximately 4500 people, Launceston had around 3000 people and Cradle Coast 300 people.

High-profile guest speakers gave presentations at each of the events which proved popular with the public.

Ian Pidd, Artistic Director of the Junction 2010 Regional Arts Australia Conference discussed the merits of a career in the arts at the Launceston Open Day and Todd Sampson, CEO of one of Australia’s top creative advertising agencies, Leo Burnett, and co-creator of the Earth Hour initiative, drew an enthusiastic crowd at the Hobart event. Arctic explorer and environmental scientist Tim Jarvis gave an inspiring talk at
**Phillip Adams, the atheist, defends religion**

**BY JANETTE BRENNA**

Broadcaster and commentator, Phillip Adams, AO, will be speaking on the topic "An Atheist Defends Religion" when he presents the 2010 James Martineau Memorial Lecture.

Mr Adams is a filmmaker, author, archaeologist, controversialist and satirist. He was elected one of Australia's 100 National Living Treasures in The National Trust's inaugural poll and, for almost 50 years, his columns in major newspapers and magazines have provoked discussion and outrage.

"Phillip has been known nationally for many decades as someone who doesn't have a Christian or other religious faith," said Dr Natasha Cica, the Director of the Centre for Applied Philosophy and Ethics at UTAS.

"That can be a provocative position to hold publicly in Australia, even today. So it will be interesting to hear how Phillip – as both a confirmed atheist and a thoughtful commentator – defends religion."

Mr Adams is currently Chairman of the Advisory Board of the Centre for the Mind at the University of Sydney and the Australian National University in Canberra. The honours awarded to him include two Orders of Australia, the Senior ANZAC Fellowship and the Australian Humanist of the Year.

The James Martineau Memorial lecture is supported by the UTAS School of Philosophy, supported by a bequest from Tasmanian educator Samuel Lovell (1851–1936). James Martineau was an English philosopher who wrote on philosophical and religious topics.

The lectures will be held in Hobart on Monday 13 September and in Burnie on Tuesday 14 September, both starting at 6pm. It's a free event and everyone is welcome to attend but, for catering purposes, please RSVP to UTAS.Events@utas.edu.au or phone 6226 2521 by Wednesday 8 September.

**Talking megaherbivores ... from Kruger to Bialowieza**

**BY MICHIEL NICHOLES**

A UTAS academic who headed to South Africa earlier this year as part of the Australian Academy of Science's 2010 Graeme Caughley Travelling Fellowship has been invited to chair a session at the Cradle Coast campus in Burnie this month.

Mr Adams has been invited to attend a workshop held at Kruger National Park has also had some longer-range impacts. He will present the 2010 James Martineau Memorial Lecture.

The paper Prof. Bowman presented at the Kruger meeting was entitled "Feral Asian water buffalo in Kakadu National Park, Australia – the ecology and management of Australasia's 'new megafauna'."

"This paper was based on my research experience in the Northern Territory on two feral bovines – the Asian water buffalo (Bubalus bubalis) and the Banteng (Bos javanicus)." Prof. Bowman said.

"It emphasised the extremely unusual nature of the Australian mammal assemblage. For example, the Banteng (which we have demystified as a browser) is 100 times larger than the largest native browser in the monsoon tropics, and the buffalo is 30 times larger than the largest marsupial grazer.

"I used the success of these introduced megafauna to underscore the point that the Australian biota has numerous empty niches and therefore, arguably, has a dysfunctional ecology. I also pointed out that if, as it is likely, humans were responsible for the loss of the Australian megafauna, then we should not be sanguine about the future of the African megafaunal assemblage."

Prof. Bowman believes extant global megafauna assemblages are actually a "house of cards", being vulnerable to extinction through the direct and indirect impacts of humans.

Dr Siroli discussed the place of passion and entrepreneurship in the rebirth of local economies, highlighting alternative approaches to wealth and job creation.

Mr Evans will discuss ethical and small-scale food production.


**Ground-Up approaches to sustainability**

**BY NICKI FLETCHER**

Clean energy, bottom-up economic development and ethical food production are the focus of the Institute for Regional Development's 2010 Café Forum Series, which kicked off at the Cradle Coast campus in August.

Ground-Up Approaches to Sustainability, is designed to promote debate about alternative approaches to regional development.

The first forum was presented by Caroline Brown, who has recently returned from an international fellowship to study leadership in a low carbon economy. Launceston-based Ms Brown was one of 14 people selected from around the world this year to explore a range of climate change topics with international specialists and experts in the field.

Using local knowledge to spark economic innovation in North-West Tasmania was the focus of the second forum, hosted by an international authority on economic development, Dr Ernesto Siroli.

Dr Siroli discussed the place of passion and entrepreneurship in the rebirth of local economies, highlighting alternative approaches to wealth and job creation.

Mr Evans was invited to chair a session on the role of these animals, including giraffe and zebra, in shaping woody plant communities.

"Kruger is a brilliant natural laboratory to understand the interplay between megaherbivores, fire and vegetation," he said.

"It also has very detailed fire history records, arguably the best fire history dataset for any savanna on Earth. Recent analyses of these data show that despite a number of different management objectives, the absolute amount of burning has remained the same and is largely controlled by climate. Yet the size of individual patches and the timing of fires are strongly controlled by humans.

"The challenge for me is to find the funding to bring Ben to Australia to make this happen!"


SBS gourmet farmer and author of The Real Food Companion, Matthew Evans, is scheduled to present the third forum in the series. Mr Evans will discuss ethical and small-scale food production.
Rosie Dub: the writer’s journey

By Janette Brennan

Travelling through the Australian outback with her young family, a storm began to gather within writer Rosie Dub.

“The outback didn’t care whether we were alive or dead,” said the Hobart-based author. “My third child, Harry, was born during that 14-month trip and, as we travelled, the image of an abandoned toddler came to me. The outback has that sort of frightening sentiment and I remember thinking that a child abandoned out here would have no hope.

“Suddenly, I knew I had a novel. I just knew it.”

The image of the abandoned child became the central point of Gathering Storm, a novel published in 2008 and described by The Weekend Australian as a “compelling, stylish and well-paced read”.

Storm Cizekova, who grew up out in her writing is about legitimacy and belonging. Gathering Storm is also a lesson in the grit a writer needs to get published.

After completing a BA in communications at the University of Technology in Sydney, Adelaide-born Rosie travelled to London and worked as a reader for publishers and literary agents. The pay was dreadful. The experience was priceless.

As she was following the birth of her first daughter Nikita, Rosie began an MA in writing at Sheffield Hallam University, which she completed when her second daughter, Frida, was six months old. Rosie said the MA was the only way she could sustain herself as a writer, and it produced the unpublished novel Nowhere Man.

It was not long after this that Rosie and her British photo-journalist husband, Tim, packed up the family for that trip across Australia.

“At the outback, I got the image in my head of the abandoned child but, with three young children, it took me quite a long time to write Gathering Storm,” Rosie said. “And when I finished it, my agent sent it to all the publishers. They absolutely adored it, loved it — and said they wouldn’t publish it. Fiction was out.

“I was incredibility disappointed. So I said to my husband that there were three things in my life: my family, my work and my writing. But something had to give. The whole process of the rejections was tormenting me and so much that I just had to give it up, despite the fact I’d always felt that writing was my path in life.”

So Rosie threw herself into her family and her work and did manuscript editing, and teaching writing through UTAS and the Tasmanian Writers’ Centre.

Then one day, one of Rosie’s students interrupted class to say that the reason her novel hadn’t been published was because it had the wrong title (at the time it was called Lucky Baby). That night, Tim suggested Gathering Storm as a title because it was Storm’s story of gathering the damaged and lost pieces of her life. Soon after Rosie heard about a publisher wheret she recently returned from maternity leave. Rosie convinced her agent to send off the manuscript one last time.

The publisher snatched it up straight away. “It taught me that being able to write isn’t enough,” Rosie said.

“You can complete a project and re-work it, but you also have to persist in trying to get it published and they have to take a look at it.”

Rosie is currently working on a series of beautiful tragic performances, but they are connected. “The story reflects the author’s life experience. Rosie was adopted by a baby, and a lot of what comes out in her writing is about legitimacy and belonging. Gathering Storm is also a lesson in the grit a writer needs to get published.”

After completing a BA in communications at the University of Technology in Sydney, Adelaide-born Rosie travelled to London and worked as a reader for publishers and literary agents. The pay was dreadful. The experience was priceless.

“Writing is a life-long apprenticeship,” she said. “You’re never going to graduate because you’re always learning.”

To find out more about Rosie Dub’s writing, go to: www.roisidub.com

Newitt art prize winner for digital media

One of the many rising stars of the UTAS Tasmanian School of Art has gained another accolade for his work.

Dr James Newitt was awarded a $15,000 prize for his artwork Dreams.

The Dreams, an eight-minute video featuring four street performers, was filmed in Los Angeles in 2008.

Dr Newitt said the work examines how people are encountered, but fiction and reality are not presented as binary concepts, rather they co-exist and intertwine.

He said in Dreams, the street performers are connected through a series of beautifully tragic performances.

“Futility and failure seem ever-present during these isolated and introspected performances, which are enacted in public spaces in the evening,” he said.

“The performers seem to be responding to their immediate environment, marking their presence in the city.”

A well-known artist who has exhibited widely, Dr Newitt was also recently awarded the Qantas Foundation Encouragement Award of Australian Contemporary Art Award.

Dr Newitt completed his PhD in fine arts from the School of Art in 2007. Prior to his doctorate he completed a Bachelor of Fine Arts followed by First Class Honours, both at UTAS.

He has received numerous state and national funding grants for his collaboration projects.

Dr Newitt is also a founding member and past director of INFLIGHT art.
... happily ever after!

By Sharon Webb

UTAS librarian Linda Luther will retire on the last day of the month, and she’s giving herself the best-ever gift: a summer spent in the sun that is blissfully free of book shelves.

On the contrary, Linda has been sharply focused on bringing the UTAS libraries over three campuses up-to-date with the electronic world of learning: introducing learning hubs, electronic journals and an ethos of communication rather than silence.

“The bid for commonwealth funding for the move to learning hubs went in before I arrived – I got the fun bit,” she said.

Only wood you can love

By Will Owens

In June this year, after my final undergraduate semester, I was lucky enough to be sponsored by Forest and Wood Products Australia to attend the 11th World Conference on Timber Engineering (WCTE) in Riva del Garda, Italy.

The objective of WCTE 2010 was to provide a forum for the exchange of the latest technological advances, research results and design innovations. The conference was attended by practising engineers and architects, researchers, educators and manufacturers in the field of timber engineering.

This wasn’t your usual, run-of-the-mill conference; mainly because of the Italians’ ostentatious mix of creativity and passion that makes anything they do remarkable.

One particular presentation started with a quote that I will always remember: “You can like other construction materials like concrete and steel, but only wood you can love.”

The amount of information and product knowledge that could be taken away from such an intense collaboration of research and development presentations makes it difficult to identify one or two key points. However, industry has been able to solve a great many of the problems regarding fire performance, durability and maintenance that once limited the use of wood for buildings, and hopefully the excellent fire resistance of timber is now not forgotten.

The growing number of companies dedicated to research in the field of timber engineering, and the publicity of well-renowned architects and engineers are leading to a renaissance of this raw material.

I encourage all students to apply to attend the next WCTE in Auckland 2012 and then Quebec in 2014.
Having a beer with Duncan in his third career

By Sharon Webb

Conservative British politician Enoch Powell said that all political lives end in failure— but that doesn’t apply to Duncan Kerr. In his lively late 50s, the Denison MHR has made his own decision on the timing of his departure from politics. At the recent federal election, close to the 23rd anniversary of first being elected, he bowed out to resume his legal practice.

But as Mr Kerr, a UTAS alumnus with degrees in law and social work, heads towards his third career, he’s clear about the best and worst of his political time.

The worst was in 2001 when Premier Jim Bacon dangled the tantalising carrot of a place in State Parliament, then whipped it away.

And for the best aspect of politics...

“Nothing is better than having the confidence of the people who elect you,” he said, recounting the David-and-Goliath 1987 win against a Liberal stalwart, the now retired Michael Hodgman.

Mr Kerr’s years at UTAS, in the 1970s, were formative.

“It was an expensively political time,” he said. “Everyone was strongly engaged in debate about involvement in the Vietnam War. Students of every faculty were drawn into discussion and academics profoundly influenced my thinking.

“The environmental movement was growing— the Lake Pedder controversy, the growth of the United Tasmania Group, the end of a long period of conservative government with Holt, Gorton and McMahon, the Whirlam government’s arrival and the excitement it generated. These things were in the air, one couldn’t avoid them.”

After graduating from his Bachelor of Laws, the young Duncan Kerr made a decision that marked him as different from fellow graduates, who headed for places in their families’ Hobart law firms. He chose instead to do a degree in social work at the then Tasmanian College of Advanced Education.

“I thought law was not just a skill but that it also gave the opportunity to engage in wider debates and decision-making,” Mr Kerr said. “I lacked that intellectual framework.

“I was wet behind the ears— I wanted to experience more of the world before hanging up my simple.”

He got that experience: plunged into placements in the probation and parole services and the Education Department, while the head of social work Adam Jamrozik enlightened him with the literature of social change.

Mr Kerr now maintains that law followed by social work was “an extraordinarily practical experience as well as theoretically challenging”— a significant springboard for a politician now regarded as having a long-standing interest in human rights.

Further extraordinary experiences include the campaign for Mr Kerr’s federal seat— perhaps that’s because it’s the most entertaining. There were also the serious achievements of his time as Attorney-General and Minister for Justice— his involvement in Tasmanian gay law reform, reforming the law of evidence, cutting red tape in the Copyright Act, his stand on personal drug use and refugees.

But for Mr Kerr, getting into the chamber seems to have been the ultimate triumph.

“Labor had lost every seat in Tasmania in 1977 at Whirlam’s final election and remained in the wilderness over issues such as the jobs versus environment debate,” he said. “So it was with a determination to get a Federal foothold for Labor in 1987 that I put my name forward for Denison.”

In recent months, Mr Kerr has been reflecting on the future political challenges facing the nation.

“The big challenge is whether we’re capable of inter-generational political action,” Mr Kerr said.

“We’re challenged by climate change because the costs will be seen in three generations, not by the next one.

“How do we engage a population that thinks locally and short-term? The answer might be pessimistic and that troubles me.”

School students experiment with UTAS science

More than 350 Tasmanian science students from Years 9 to 12 recently completed the challenge of representing the state at the Royal Australian Chemical Institute Titration Competition, which will be held towards the end of the year.

Two-hundred and fifty students made their way to the Sandy Bay campus of the University of Tasmania for the annual competition, while 100 more students competed across the state.

“The competition involves the best and worst of his political time.

School students experiment with UTAS science

Science appreciation: Katie Teders (left) and Rebekah Lewis, from Hobart’s MacKillop College, were among 350 students taking part in the Royal Australian Chemical Institute Titration Competition.

the number of students who are participating— and who are gaining an appreciation of science in general.”

Meanwhile, Tasmanian high school students also battled it out last month in the state final of the Science and Engineering Challenge, culminating in an event called the “testing of the bridge”.

Co-ordinator Henk Kortekaas, Lecturer in Marine Engineering at the Australian Maritime College, said the overall performance for the activities was good.

“Website the bridge of some schools did not come to its full potential. I’m sure next year will bring the schools to a higher level,” Mr Kortekaas said.

The challenge program is highly regarded as a means of raising the awareness of students in relation to exploring career opportunities in the sciences and engineering.

Riverine High School and Calvin Christian School were placed first and second respectively in the event, qualifying them for the National Final (Grand Challenge) to be held in Gosford, NSW in mid-October.

Microalgae as a renewable source of biofuels and omega-3 oils

The objective of my research project — "Microalgae — A Renewable Source of Biofuels, Omega-3 Oils and Other Co-products" — is to investigate microalgal strains from Australian waters for their capacity to co-produce biofuels, omega-3 oils and other co-products as well as biomasses for food, feed and fuel applications. Developing microalgae for biomass and oil production requires significant consideration on whether different oils for different applications can be economically obtained from one type of microalgae.

This project will concentrate on strains held in the Australia National Algae Culture Collection (ANACC), as well as targeted new strains from Australian waters. It will also characterise promising strains, optimise production and scale-up of selected strains, and examine the potential to develop multiple co-products.

I am 10 months into the project and still at the early stage. However, good progress has been made and we have discovered new strains from Australian waters that have the potential for the co-production of biofuels and long-chain polyunsaturated fatty acids, such as omega-3 LC-PUFA.

My PhD is a great opportunity to work with career scientists at CSIRO towards a better understanding of microalgae from Australian waters and hopefully utilise microalgae to find a solution for the petroleum fuel shortage. Also I have a fantastic supervisory team that provides me with expert advice, comments and techniques.

As a first-year PhD student it was a great opportunity to attend and present my poster at the recent ANSA New Waves in Marine Science Conference in Wollongong. My presentation, ‘Biodiversity of Thraustochytrids’, was co-authored by Graeme Durstan, Sue Blackom, Peter Nichols, Carol Nichols and Anthony Koutoulis, whom I acknowledge for their expert advice.

Thraustochytrids are heterotrophic protists, commonly found in marine and estuarine environments. Most are characterised by the capacity to produce omega-3 long chain polyunsaturated fatty acids. Due to their fast growth rate and high lipid content, thraustochytrids have potential for producing a feedstock for omega-3 oils with the shorter chain fatty acids suitable for biodiesel. I have successfully isolated new strains from the southeast coast of Tasmania.

I was awarded the best poster presentation sponsored by the Australian Fisheries Management Authority at the ANSA conference. It was an honour to receive this award and also all the feedback during the poster session.
The work

A breathtaking comment on climate change

BY CHERIE COOPER

Artist Mike Singe’s work Five Hour Carbon Capture and Storage (2010) is a potent comment on climate change.

Mike was videoed inflating a giant balloon with his own breath, using a modified respirometer – for five hours. This lengthy event took place in the same gallery where the final work was displayed. The video was then projected onto the inflated balloon in the gallery space.

The respirometer hung on the wall, still attached to the balloon, implying the potential to capture more breath. This work is from a series that utilised weather balloons to capture human breath as a primitive form of carbon capture and storage.

“Technically, we contribute to global warming every time we breathe out,” Mike said.

He added that climate change is altering the way we think about the environment. It’s not a localised event. Climate change is global.

“The environment has ceased to be a distant landscape under threat,” he said. “It now surrounds us everywhere we go, in our homes and workplace, influencing our daily decision-making and changing the way we live.”

The specific focus of Mike’s masters research at the UTAS Tasmanian School of Art is to discover how the strategic utilisation of energy (as a material in its own right) can be developed into a language-strategy-methodology capable of actively responding to the anxiety surrounding climate change.

Mike said a number of recent national and international climate change-themed exhibitions indicate that this issue is a growing concern for artists and curators.

“The challenge for artists is to develop a language to communicate their individual response,” he said.

“My interest in human breath relates to the concentration of carbon dioxide as part of the process. Inhaled air contains approximately 0.04% per cent carbon dioxide and exhaled breath is around 4%, which is 100 times the concentration.

“This is perhaps a perfect metaphor for the apparent planet warming culpability of the human race.”

Breathing space: Mike Singe’s work Five Hour Carbon Capture and Storage (2010) is a potent comment on climate change.

What’s on

LECTURES

13 & 14 SEPTEMBER
Monteux Memorial Lecture
The 2010 Dr James Monteux lecture will be given by broadcaster and commentator Mr Phillip Adams.

Time: 6pm for 6:15pm on 13 September
Venue: Portrait Hall, 5 Sandy Bay Road, Hobart

15 SEPTEMBER
Woodwind and Brass Showcase concert
Featuring staff and students from Conservatorium’s Winds and Brass Department.

Time: 6pm Venue: Conservatorium Recital Hall, 5 Sandy Bay Road, Hobart

26 SEPTEMBER
Sartana Discovery Orchestra concert

Time: 7pm Venue: Conservatorium Recital Hall, 5 Sandy Bay Road, Hobart

10 OCTOBER
Keyboard Showcase concert
Program: Featuring staff, student and alumni pianists of the Conservatorium of Music.

Time: 6pm Venue: Conservatorium Recital Hall, 5 Sandy Bay Road, Hobart

10 OCTOBER
Sunday Lunch: University of Tasmania Symphony Orchestra

What’s on summer arts

Graffiti splashes onto summer arts


A workshop on street art is one of the exciting additions to the Tasmanian Creative Arts Summer School program, which will be run again in Launceston next January. Hobart artist Jamin, who is renowned for his stencil and street-based artwork, will tutor a unit called “Street Art: Graffiti and Public Intervention.”

“This new workshop is a great opportunity for me to share some of the knowledge and skills I’ve developed as an artist,” said Jamin, “as well as introduce others to the arena of interventionist and street art – a highly relevant and growing component of contemporary art.”

The Tasmanian Creative Arts Summer School – which is hosted by UTAS, the Tasmanian Polytechnic and the Launceston City Council – is proving to be an important fixture on the Tasmanian cultural calendar.

Other workshops include acting and singing, ceramics, and sculpture. The Summer School is open to everyone. The full program will be released this month, with enrolments to the UTAS workshops opening in October.

For more information, contact the Academy of the Arts by phone on 03 6324 4400 or visit email at: Academy. Admin@utas.edu.au

Flitting space: Mike Singe’s work Five Hour Carbon Capture and Storage (2010) is a potent comment on climate change.