Science of success

BY CHERIE COOPER

After Emily Hilder finished her postdoctoral work at UC Berkeley in the United States, she could have gone anywhere to work, such as her academic prowess and Berkeley's standing in chemistry. But she decided to come back to Tasmania where she has since established herself as one of Australia's most talented and productive young researchers in analytical chemistry, with an excellent national and international reputation for her ability to perform high-quality research in separation science.

Awarded the 2009 Foundation Graduate Award by UTAS, Dr Hilder told the 500-strong crowd at the Wrest Point Casino awards dinner that she had been tugged back to the fold of the people who had supported her through her studies – her family and her closest friends.

She said it was also a decision driven by the quality of the research environment in the Australian Centre for Research on Separation Science, based at UTAS.

"Professor Paul Haddad had a vision for the centre that was so compelling, he convinced me that this was an opportunity I didn't want to miss," Dr Hilder said.

"It was the best decision I could have made – it also means a lot to me that I get the opportunity to put something back into UTAS and the Tasmanian community that did so much for me."

The Foundation Graduate Award recognises a high-achieving graduate in his or her early or mid career. A winner of this award has been judged as having the potential to shape the world through their vision, leadership and professionalism – and the potential to inspire the community and the next generation of graduates.

As a kid, Dr Hilder enjoyed science at school but her dreams were of being a writer or a diplomat; science won out.

As a kid, Dr Hilder enjoyed science at school but her dreams were of being a writer or a diplomat; science won out.

She graduated from UTAS with a Bachelor of Science in 1996; then was awarded first-class honours in chemistry and a PhD in analytical chemistry in 2000, both from UTAS.

After international experience at Berkeley and in Austria, Dr Hilder took up her first academic position at UTAS in 2004 and is now senior lecturer in chemistry and an assistant dean of graduate research.

Her expertise has been recognised by the awarding of two highly competitive Australian Research Council research fellowships: an Australian Postdoctoral Fellowship in 2004 and a Future Fellowship in 2010.

Other awards include UTAS Rising Stars Award, a UTAS Vice-Chancellor's Award for Research Excellence and the Royal Australian Chemical Institute's Robert Carrad Medal. In 2009 she was promoted by The Australian newspaper as one of only 10 'emerging leaders' in science in Australia and was the recipient of a Victorian and Tasmanian Young Tall Poppy Science Award, being named the Tasmanian Tall Poppy of the Year.

"I've just started my Future Fellowship so for the next four years the plan is to consolidate what I've spent the last few years building in research," she said.

"Beyond that it depends what opportunities arise – I'll be looking for a good challenge and a chance to make a meaningful contribution."

Health impact a matter of degrees

BY SHARON WEBB

UTAS School of Human Life Sciences researcher Sibella King is calling for volunteers from rural Tasmania for testing on the effect of temperature changes on people with chronic conditions such as diabetes and cardiovascular disease.

Ms King's study seeks to determine the effect of heat, humidity, and cold on central blood pressure and blood coagulation in healthy people, and in people with type two diabetes.

She said climate change scientists predict increases in global temperature of 1.5 to 5.8 degrees by 2100 which may lead to a greater incidence of, and variability in, extreme weather events in the future.

"Repeated exposure to such extreme temperature variations may have serious health consequences for individuals with underlying chronic disease," she said.

"Exposure to sudden extreme variations in temperature and humidity cause changes to your circulation which aims to maintain your body's blood pressure and temperature.

"Heat exposure dilates the skin's blood vessels and increases the heart rate to maintain falling blood pressure whilst exposure to cold constricts them and is accompanied by increased blood pressure. These effects are thought to partially explain the higher incidence of heart attacks seen in winter."

For the testing Ms King measures pulse wave velocity at sites on the neck and wrist using a pen-like "tonometer" which senses the pulse and transmits the signal to the computer as a pulse wave visible on a computer screen.

"Using the participant's ECG wave, the machine calculates the speed at which the blood is traveling between the two sites and that number (the velocity of the blood) can tell us about the stiffness, or compliance of the arteries in that segment.

"I take these measures four times throughout each two-hour session to see how the arterial system changes in response to the acute climate change."

Study volunteers need to be:

- over 18 years old;
- healthy OR suffering from type two diabetes;
- available to attend five testing sessions over two to five weeks.

Measuring temperature change effects: Sibella King is researching the effect of temperature change on people with diabetes and cardiovascular disease.

Participants will undergo height and weight, blood pressure and body temperature measurements and have blood collected by trained university researchers. Results of personal vascular function will be available to participants at the end of the study.

People wishing to be involved in the study should contact Sibella King, ph. 6324 3688 or email Sibella.King@utas.edu.au
From Munich to UTAS for library learning

Finding out what makes academic libraries tick: Munich-based library student Jessica Meindorfer visited UTAS on a work placement exchange.

By MICHELLE NICHOLS

Refurbishment across UTAS libraries has provided a tangible example of the changing face of libraries to a German exchange student on work placement in Tasmania. Munich-based library student Jessica Meindorfer recently visited all three UTAS campuses and branch libraries to gain a broader understanding of how university libraries are run in Australia.

Currently studying library and information sciences at the University of Applied Sciences for Administration and Legal Affairs in Bavaria, Jessica will finish her three-year course at the end of this year. Her studies required a long internship at the Bavarian State Library in Munich which has more than nine million holdings. She also completed short-term placements at a public library in Munich and the library of the University of Movies and Television in Munich. For their final placement, students chose a library in another country.

“My placement has offered me an understanding of the range of professional roles and information services offered within academic library environments and how they might change in the future,” Jessica said.

“The current refurbishment of the UTAS libraries showed me how libraries are changing to meet learning and teaching needs.”

And learning went both ways, as staff from the Morris Miller Library discovered when Jessica gave a presentation on the Bavarian State Library. Jessica's UTAS time included examining books in the rare collection including the oldest book in UTAS storage, written in 1472 and bound with a wooden cover.

UTAS health research mentor

A UTAS research fellow is mentoring on a project investigating clinician adherence to public health guidelines in the Tasmanian Aboriginal Health Service.

Through the federally funded Primary Health Care Research, Evaluation and Development Program, Dr Clarissa Hughes from the University Department of Rural Health is working with the medical director of the Tasmanian Aboriginal Health Service, Dr Scott McKeown.

Dr McKeown’s project, Implications of clinical governance arising from clinician usage of an influenza-like illness surveillance system in Tasmanian Aboriginal Health Services, is based on semi-structured interviews with clinicians in the statewide Aboriginal Health Service.

“I came to UDRH in need of a research mentor to provide practical advice and guide the ‘organic’ pathway of my research project.”

“It was helpful for me to be able to talk through my project with an experienced qualitative researcher,” Dr McKeown said.

For more information contact the Tasmanian PHCRED statewide co-ordinator ph. 6226 4770 or email: PHCRED.Tas@utas.edu.au

It was candle power only as UTAS switched off for an hour to mark Earth Hour 2010. More than 150 members of UTAS staff, students and the Tasmanian community joined in the evening of free food and entertainment to celebrate the commitment to environmental sustainability. The outdoor public event was hosted by UTAS Accommodation Services and Asset Management Services and held at the Accommodation Services Amphitheatre, at the top of College Road in Sandy Bay.

The University turned off non-essential lights and computers across all three campuses between 8.30pm and 9.30pm on Saturday 27 March as part of the global event.

Wicked composer to perform at Broadway festival

The Festival of Broadway will bring Stephen Schwartz, the composer with Broadway’s biggest smash hit of the decade, WICKED, to Hobart next month.

The festival is Australia’s only musical theatre festival where composers, writers and stars of Broadway gather for a week of concerts, masterclasses and forums to celebrate the American stage musical. Academy and Grammy Award-winning composer Stephen Schwartz will perform live with the Festival of Broadway Band, musically directed by conductor Professor Kevin Purcell, head of UTAS Conservatorium of Music.

“We want composers from all over Australia to attend the festival and work with Mr Schwartz and other musicians and teachers,” Prof. Purcell said.

Mr Schwartz is the composer of Broadway musicals Pippin and Godspell, films, including The Hunchback of Notre Dame and The Prince of Egypt, and the highly acclaimed new opera Stance on a Wet Afternoon.

Prof. Purcell said the festival revolves around a two-day workshop of new work convened by a panel led by Mr Schwartz.

“Either side of the workshop we will stage two major concerts, featuring Mr Schwartz’s Broadway musicals in Hobart and Sydney,” Prof. Purcell said.

The first concert on 12 June will showcase songs from all Schwartz’s musical shows, performed with Emmy Award-winning vocalists, Liz Callaway and Sharon Webb, and the highly acclaimed new opera. The second concert, on Sunday, 20 June in Sydney during the Australa-

http://festivalofbroadway.com/

The festival runs from 11 to 20 June; for more details see The festival is Australia's only musical theatre festival where composers, writers and stars of Broadway gather for a week of concerts, masterclasses and forums to celebrate the American stage musical.
Family is first for NW Coast medic

Sarah, a law academic at Monash University until the twins arrived, is a UTAS alumnus, having written her PhD on the influence of domestic violence on property settlements after divorce.

They came to Tasmania last year in an extraordinary blaze of publicity as their personal lives and Michael's global expertise in preventing unnecessary deaths in hospital were chronicled in ABC Television's Australian Story.

It's not obvious that they are bothered by having people know intimate things about their lives: that their baby Hannah died at 26 weeks; that Michael nearly died the same day when an appendix procedure went wrong; that all this prompted the move from Melbourne to Wynyard, Sarah walking out of hospital with six-day-old twins onto a plane bound for Tasmania.

"All that makes you think about what you want out of life," Sarah said.

Now Michael wheels Thomas up the street in his buggy to creche; their rambling weatherboard house opposite the beach has space for growing children in a huge mature-treed garden where the back fence is nowhere in sight.

"Simplicity has a lot to do with it. Getting to work is easy, it's great for the kids," Michael said.

Michael is director of medicine with the North West Area Health Service, straddling daily hospital work with his academic role as Clinical Associate Professor at the UTAS Rural Clinical School in Burnie.

'That all makes you think about what you want out of life.'

Family life on Tasmania's NW Coast: Associate Professor Michael Buist and his wife Sarah, with children James, Thomas and Jessica.

By SHARON WEBB

Discussions on the challenges of the North-West Coast's health system are not a top priority in the Buist household on a Sunday morning.

Three-year-old Thomas is grumpily withdrawing from afternoon naps and nine-month-old twins James and Jessica, mostly serene, have obviously noticed that needs can be met by occasionally screeching.

But their parents, Michael Buist and Sarah Middleton, sail calmly through the maelstrom of toys and teething, paired pumpkin and pears. They speak politely to the children and distract where necessary; only the occasional gap in the conversation betrays a slight loss of concentration.

"I enjoyed doing locums here – and I wanted a change from 14 years of intensive care, to do more academic stuff."

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Sarah and Michael look like a team, with the kids and work.

Their joint legal/medical research on the issue of using a man's sperm when he's dead or dying was published in the Medical Journal of Australia. They concluded that regulatory inconsistency made it a minefield for doctors, but that a woman should have explicit consent from a man to do this.

And Michael, having settled into grappling with the issue of staff retention on the North-West Coast and its implications for patients, is turning his mind to researching system-wide problems.

The North-West Coast's shortage of clinical staff – no renal or cardiac services – keds him to think about networking and how to link in better with services in Hobart and Launceston as well as using services in Victoria.

After last year's high number of deaths on Tasmanian roads Michael also wants to research trauma deaths, including the possibility of a road death register.

However these problems are solved, one thing is clear: Michael Buist may be a world expert in his field but on a quiet Wynyard Sunday, family is the focus for this couple.

Swiss premiere for Conservatorium composer

Composer and Conservatorium of Music senior lecturer Dr Maria Grenfell will take her music to Switzerland this year for a new music festival.

Dr Grenfell has been selected to take part in the Music 10 Festival in Blonay, Switzerland, in June, one of a handful of composers chosen from over 120 applicants worldwide for the prestigious international program.

She will work for two weeks with other composers, including Martin Beinick, Stephen Harke and Joel Hoffman, composing a piece for the festival. The music will be workshopped and premiered by internationally acclaimed artists including Grammy Award-winning classical music group Eighth Blackbird and pianist Lisa Moore.

"This is a wonderful opportunity for my music to be performed and heard by leading American and European musicians," Dr Grenfell said.

Dr Grenfell is fast becoming one of the leading names in Australian composition, especially for chamber groups and orchestras.

Her works have been performed by all the Australian and New Zealand principal orchestras and many chamber groups, including the Australia Ensemble, the New Zealand Tiro and the Vienna Piano Trio.

Quality audit encourages best practice

At the end of this year, the Australian tertiary sector will have a new regulatory body to monitor, promote, audit and report on higher education in this country. The University of Tasmania is well-placed to take on this new regulation by the Tertiary Education Quality Standards Agency (TEQSA), which is being established following the recommendations of the 2008 Bradley Review of Higher Education, but we will be seeking to clarify various elements of the change.

By way of background, the existing quality assurance organisation for higher education is the Australian Universities Quality Agency (AUQA). This is an independent, not-for-profit national agency that was established by the Ministerial Council on Education, Training and Youth Affairs in 2000.

At the end of 2010, AUQA will be superseded by TEQSA. The new agency is intended to oversee the development of strengthened quality assurance arrangements and protect the overall quality of the Australian higher education system.

It will accredit providers, evaluate the performance of institutions and programs, encourage best practice, de-clutter current regulatory arrangements and provide greater national consistency.

TEQSA will evaluate higher education providers every five years or whenever an evaluation is considered necessary to address an unacceptably high level of risk to quality or viability.

As well as institution-specific audits, the new agency will carry out audits that focus on particular areas of risk for the higher education system, such as providers operating in a particular geographic region or offering a particular program of study. TEQSA will build its capacity over the medium term with the aim of expanding to cover the entire tertiary sector, including Vocational Education and Training from 2013.

Compared with AUQA, TEQSA will therefore have a significantly expanded role in the setting of standards for Australian higher education and the imposition of sanctions for providers that do not meet these standards.

However, it is unclear at this stage either what standards may be required or what sanctions may be applied. It is the intention of UTAS to energetically engage with government as these matters are clarified.

UTAS is scheduled to undergo a second AUQA quality audit in October 2011. As the AMC integrated with UTAS in 2008, this will be the first time the University has undergone a national quality audit as a dual sector higher education provider.

Information from AUQA confirms that this second audit will be undertaken by TEQSA, and UTAS is currently preparing for this audit.

Warms regards

David

www.utas.edu.au/academic

AUQA quality audit
Making minority government work

What will it take to make Tasmania’s new minority government effective? DR RICHARD ECCLESTON from the School of Government comments...

The result of the recent state election was both predictable and surprising in equal measure. While few foresaw the final outcome of what proved to be an unexpected constitutional thriller, the fact that Tasmania would be governed by some flavour of minority government was widely anticipated.

Tasmania’s proportional electoral system combined with the fact that we now have three established political parties means that majority government will become the exception rather than the rule in our island state. The challenge is to build a political culture and establish institutions and practices that can deliver stable and effective government in a multi-party system.

Making minority government work in Tasmania was the theme of a public forum hosted by the School of Government immediately after the March 20 poll. The reasuring news from the international panel leading the discussion was that multi-party systems are becoming increasingly common and can and often do deliver stable and effective government. Yet we can’t become complacent because minority governments can become dysfunctional leading to instability, conflict and decline.

Effective minority government requires a culture of compromise such that political parties are willing to put the overarching goal of providing stable government above any short-term policy or partisan goals. Yet the real challenge is to develop strategies and institutions that can help achieve this spirit of accommodation in the Tasmanian context and to this extent some useful conclusions could be drawn from the recent UTAS forum.

First, the transition from adversarial two-party politics to a more consensus model takes time. In New Zealand it took political parties a decade to adapt to the consequences of their historic 1993 electoral reforms. Second, a multi-party system must be sufficiently flexible to allow a government to survive a major disagreement between governing parties. The evidence suggests that formalised partnership agreements between parties setting out a shared legislative program tend to enhance stability as long as the parties can agree to disagree on certain matters. Finally, it is important to establish a more open and democratic approach to policy development in order to minimise inter-party conflict on the floor of parliament.

This last piece of advice could easily be adopted in Tasmania with good effect. This could be achieved through the introduction of a robust committee system in the Tasmanian House of Assembly. The objective of such a system would be to provide a deliberative forum where stakeholders and experts could provide input on significant issues early in the policy process. Unlike other forms of public consultation, the advantage of an Assembly-based committee system is that all parties would have an input into proceedings and contribute to the findings of committee reports. While this system won’t deliver a consensus in relation to the most contested issues, at least the parties know what is possible prior to any parliamentary debate.

Committees havegressed the wheels of government in most advanced democracies for decades. Countries such as the United States, where the president seldom has control over Congress, would be completely unrecognisable without a committee system trying to build a consensus for various legislative agendas. Tasmania should learn from the international experience in this regard if our multi-party system is to have the best chance of delivering the stable and effective government Tasmanians deserve.

Dr Richard Eccleston is a senior lecturer in the School of Government. His expertise is in comparative and international political economy but he maintains a keen interest in Tasmanian politics. See www.richardeccleston.com

Engaged universities to meet at UTAS

Conference corner

IY SHARON WEBB

In 10 years time Vice-Chancellor Professor Scott Bowman of the Central Queensland University wants his university to be the most community-engaged university in Australia.

At the UTAS-based conference of the Australian Universities Community Engagement Alliance in July, keynote speaker Prof. Bowman will describe exactly how and why he aims to achieve his goal.

Conference convenor Associate Professor Anne Langanthy said that the conference will be held at the UTAS Newnham campus on 5-7 July.

“The aim of this conference is Community, Participation and Partnership; we’re hoping that about 150 people from Australia and overseas will attend,” she said.

Prof. Bowman, who took up his vice-chancellor position in August 2009, said his university is currently working with its communities to discover what they want in terms of community engagement.

“We’ve appointed a vice-chancellor of community engagement and developed a position statement on our goals,” he said.

“We want to try to get a similar level of understanding of the scholarship of engagement as we already have of the term ‘research’.”

Prof. Bowman admits that, like all Australian universities, Central Queensland has pockets of good examples of community engagement impacting on the outcomes of teaching, learning and research, but he wants to take a more systematic approach across the university.

“We want to share and reward good practice,” he said.

The Australian Universities Community Engagement Alliance brings together universities committed to community engagement; the conference is a forum for discussion of good practice, the scholarship of engagement and an exchange of ideas.

Three other conference keynote speakers are:

• Professor Sarena Seifer, founding executive director of Community-Campus Partnerships for Health and adjunct professor at the University of Guelph in Ontario, Canada. Prof. Seifer will speak about promoting health within our local community–university partnerships.

• Senator Ursula Stephens, Parliamentary Secretary for Social Inclusion; and teaching and learning officer at the University of South Australia, Social Inclusion Commissioner for Tasmania.

For more information see www.aucca.org.au

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For more information see www.aucca.org.au
Teaching taster in South Africa

Y oung, ready, willing and able to volunteer, third-year UTAS Cradle Coast Education student Mark Kingston travelled to South Africa last summer to help out in a busy classroom.

Finding a place to volunteer as an undergraduate teacher was a challenge but he found a UK agency offering him an opportunity to teach in a small rural town called Knysna, four hours east of Capetown, on the famous Garden Route.

“I’d never travelled outside Australia before and my family was worried but the agency was reassuring,” he said.

“I would be well looked after with accommodation, food and great opportunities to look around when I wasn’t volunteering.”

In Knysna, Mark shared accommodation with eight people from Britain and two other Australians; German volunteers were staying in the region as well.

“We had a retired teacher plus mainly younger people staying with us. Two of them were working at a local orphanage, one was at a youth centre and the rest of the group worked in local schools,” he said.

Mark worked in a large local school with 1400 children and around 45 in each class. “Sunridge Primary had tiny bare rooms: no computers or library. I took posters to brighten up the rooms and they were greatly appreciated. “All the children spoke Afrikaans as their first language. They start learning English in Grade 1; it’s seen as important in improving the children’s job opportunities in the area.”

Outside school hours the volunteers visited the many beautiful tourist attractions including wildlife parks, beaches and wineries.

“I would love to teach there again. It was rewarding; the children were affectionate and had great respect for their teachers. “And I made great friends among the other volunteers who I plan to visit when I’ve finished my degree.”

Jane’s big birthday

‘She was the first woman to climb Mount Wellington and to suggest Tasmania change its name from Van Diemen’s Land.’

A party celebrating the 60th birthday of a UTAS student residence included the launch of a new book chronicling the life and times of an institution affectionately known as ‘Jane’.

The launch of Jane Franklin Hall 1950–2010: The Story of a Residential College, written by Dr Alison Alexander, was followed by a reunion of hall alumni.

And former ‘Jane’ principal Ruth Solomon, visiting from the Isle of Man, said she was sure the original Lady Jane Franklin would be delighted with the current college.

Dr Alexander, an honorary research associate in the School of History and Classics, said examining the college’s fascinating history was a wonderful way to celebrate its anniversary.

“The hall was founded by the Tasmanian Council of Churches in 1950 as a non-denominational Christian college,” she said.

“It was named after the wife of the arctic explorer Sir John Franklin who was the sixth Lieutenant-Governor of Tasmania (then Van Diemen’s Land). “Jane Franklin was known as a knowledgeable and enthusiastic patron of the arts and education.” Mrs Solomon told past and current hall residents that Jane Franklin was an exceptional, enthusiastic woman, always prepared to take risks and take up causes.

“She was the first woman to climb Mount Wellington and to suggest Tasmania change its name from Van Diemen’s Land,” she said.

The current principal of Jane Franklin Hall, Michael Scanlan, said the 60-year partnership between Jane Franklin Hall and UTAS had provided many students with the opportunity to embrace an extended tertiary education.
New academics at art’s pointy end

To celebrate the new appointments at the Tasmanian School of Art, an exhibition of their work, Director’s Cut, was held earlier this year. Unitas introduces readers to the new academics and their work ...
Dr Martin Walch

An associate lecturer in fine arts, Dr Martin Walch is a photographer. His work is represented in public and private collections including the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery and the Art Gallery of South Australia.

Martin was artist-in-residence with Copper Mines of Tasmania at Mount Lyell, Western Tasmania between 1998 and 2003 and he has participated in group exhibitions in Asia, the Netherlands, Madrid, Adelaide, Sydney and New York.

The central concern of the work Martin has produced over the past decade is a preoccupation with visual perception and so-called ‘objective’ systems of measurement.

Dr Yvette Watt

Dr Yvette Watt is an associate lecturer in fine art, teaching painting at all levels from undergraduate through to postgraduate.

Having qualified at Curtin University and UTAS, her work is held in public and private collections including Parliament House, Canberra, Artbank and the Art Gallery of WA.

Yvette's primary research interests are based in human–animal studies. Actively involved in animal advocacy since the mid-1980s, her artwork is heavily informed by her activism and her interest in the changing nature of human–animal relations.

Dr Brigita Ozolins

Dr Brigita Ozolins lectures in theory and studio subjects and supervises research higher degree candidates. She specialises in Australian art 1970–2000 and contemporary art of the Asia Pacific region.

Brigita was awarded the Dean’s Commendation Award for her PhD, which explores the links between language, bureaucracy and subjectivity through installation.

She exhibits regularly and has completed commissions for the State Library of Tasmania and the National Library of Latvia.

Brigita’s research is focused on the way language, history, bureaucracy and identity are explored through visual art.

Dr Megan Keating

Dr Megan Keating graduated with a UTAS PhD in 2003 and is head of painting at the School of Art. She is a multidisciplinary artist, crossing installation, painting and paper cutting.

Megan has exhibited extensively with recent solo and group projects in Malaysia, Taipei, Melbourne, Sydney and Devonport. During 2008–2009 her work was exhibited in Under My Skin, an Asian tour exhibition touring to Manila, Hanoi, Singapore and Korea.

In her research Megan is particularly interested in the concept of the screen as a physical and perceptual barrier that inhibits the viewer from entering into a perceived sense of illusionism or the space of an image.

‘This is a moment of change; all the new staff have strong individual creative arts practices, research qualifications and are deeply engaged in the local community.’

Dr James Newitt

Dr James Newitt is an associate lecturer in fine arts and teaches visual communication. He is particularly interested in the potential to create collaboration and fluidity between different disciplines.

James was awarded a UTAS PhD in fine arts in 2007, visually exploring cultural and social relationships with place, primarily focusing on situations specific to Tasmania.

James creates work through social engagement.

Dr Brigita Ozolins: Blind Spot (installation detail), 2008–09, six digital prints on paper; single channel video, dimensions variable.

Dr Megan Keating: Slow Poetry: Willow, 71 x 71 cm; Exhale, 71 x 71 cm; Softly Softly, 62 x 71cm, 2009, acrylic and mica on canvas.
Graduations

Sydney health professionals graduate

BY SHARON WEBB

ew Australian health management professionals from one of the nation’s largest health services graduated with UTAS in Sydney recently.

The 29 graduates already work in leadership roles in the Sydney South-West Area Health Service’s hospitals and clinics; they include doctors, nurse educators, pharmacists, neurologists and X-ray experts.

The graduates are the first to complete a UTAS Master of Business Administration (Health Management), with another 50 beginning the course this year.

Sydney South-West Area Health Service covers all hospital and healthcare facilities in central and south-west Sydney, providing healthcare for 1.3 million people over 15 local government areas.

UTAS Acting Dean of the Faculty of Business, Professor Martin Grimmer, said that the health service wants to develop a high quality of leadership in its organisation.

“We worked with them to cater for their particular needs and offered the program in a flexible mode through interactive CD/DVD and online learning,” he said.

“That a major Sydney health service uses our program speaks highly of their attitude to the UTAS Faculty of Business and our flexible learning programs.

“The feedback from the graduates who have studied with other universities is that the quality of the materials they’ve received in this MBA is superior.”

Sydney South-West Area Health Service chief executive Mike Wallace said the MBA scholarship program would provide aspiring or current managers with improved knowledge of business management principles in the health care setting.

“Feedback from students has been really positive and I know the course will prepare staff for future health management roles and give current managers the theoretical attributes to be more effective leaders in healthcare,” Mr Wallace said.

UTAS is also developing a Master of Management and Leadership (Health and Human Services) through its Faculties of Health Science and Business, and a Doctor of Business Administration.

“These are designed for health service staff expected to take up senior executive positions; we’re currently discussing it with Tasmanian health services,” Prof. Grimmer said.

Students taking the course, which is also offered in Hobart, are often mature-age people who are motivated to qualify more quickly and therefore move into the workforce faster.

The 2010 graduating group consisted of the first Rozelle cohort to complete the course and the third Darlinghurst cohort. Many of them have already started work as registered nurses in NSW.

Nurses on the fast track to employment

BY SHARON WEBB

very students were awarded Bachelor of Nursing degrees recently in a graduation ceremony at Sydney’s Angel Place Recital Centre.

The students studied at UTAS’ Sydney campuses at Rozelle and Darlinghurst, completing a fast-track, two-year degree enabling them to be registered nurses.

The Rozelle students completed their professional experience with either the Sydney South-West Area Health Service or the South-East Sydney and Illawarra Health Service; the Darlinghurst students did professional experience with the five hospitals which are part of St Vincents and Mater Health Sydney.

While the course length is two years compared with the three years offered by other universities and the UTAS Launceston campus, the Sydney students have the same course content, contact hours and practical experience as other nurses; the difference is the lack of holidays.

Students taking the course, which is also offered in Hobart, are often mature-age people who are motivated to qualify more quickly and therefore move into the workforce faster.

The 2010 graduating group consisted of the first Rozelle cohort to complete the course and the third Darlinghurst cohort. Many of them have already started work as registered nurses in NSW.

Beihao Zhang has three high school-aged children but with good time management was awarded distinctions during her degree studies. She began her nursing job at Mater Hospital in Sydney this month.

“I wanted to achieve my goals quicker by doing this course rather than wasting summer holidays.”

“I enjoyed it – the support was really good and the teachers were easy to approach. It was better because there weren’t too many students and because they were mature-aged everyone helped each other.”

Stuart Plye now a mental health nurse at Bloomfield Hospital, Orange, had his hands full as he started his final nursing prac at the Prince of Wales Hospital at Randwick in Sydney. On his first day his twin daughters Kate and Matilda were born.

“’The course was full-on with no breaks so it was tough at times.

I wanted to do the fast-track course so that I could get into the workforce more quickly, other universities don’t offer it.

By the end I felt competent to nurse; I’d had enough practical experience.”

Harish Khumar Gaih received his degree course and has begun his new nursing job in mental health at Campbelltown Hospital.

“I’ve lived in Australia for more than three years; I was working for Blackmores Pharmaceuticals when I saw an ad for the UTAS fast-track course in a magazine on a train.

‘The best part of the course is the staff – it’s like a family structure. In India I wouldn’t be allowed to do nursing.”

Ma Mailig (Abbie) began a new job in the operating theatre at St Vincent’s Hospital in Sydney in April.

“’I was very excited to start my new job.

I was motivated to work hard during the course and didn’t find it too difficult – but I had some background in nursing from studies in the Philippines.”

“I was motivated to work hard during the course and didn’t find it too difficult.”

Pricilla Buckley was a flight attendant for five years and was working in a medical centre as a practice manager when she saw a flyer for the UTAS fast-track course.

“I wanted to get stuck into my studies with no three-month break each year.

‘The course was the most challenging thing I’ve done in my life; at the same time I worked 30 hours a week as an assistant at St Vincent’s to earn a living and to learn. It’s a lot of pressure and commitment to see it through.”

Diane Zirpo, a former beautician, starts work this month at the Mater Hospital in Sydney, rotating on maternity and orthopaedics wards. She wants to study midwifery in 2011.

‘I’m a mature-age student and I wanted to do a fast-track nursing course because I didn’t want to waste three months at the end of each academic year.

‘It’s a lot of pressure having only one holiday between semesters; I’d advise anyone doing it to make sure they have their financial and emotional supports sorted out.”
Monash VC 2010 distinguished alumnus

The Vice-Chancellor of Monash University, Professor Edward Byrne, has been awarded the 2010 Distinguished Alumnus Award, presented recently at the UTAS Foundation Awards Dinner at West Point Casino.

Presenting the award, UTAS Alumni Committee Chair Elizabeth Daly said the University was honoured to have him as one of its alumni.

"Prof. Byrne's career achievements span many spheres and are outstanding by any measure," she said.

"He is an Officer of the Order of Australia, a highly eminent neuroscientist and has made an outstanding contribution to research into degenerative neurological diseases, particularly as it relates to progressive diseases such as muscular dystrophy. His ground-breaking research, which identified the contribution of mitochondrial abnormalities to neurological diseases, has been of singular importance."

"Prof. Byrne has also trained a new generation of clinical neurologists and neuroscientists."

Prof. Byrne obtained his MBBS degree from UTAS in 1974 with first class honours. He undertook postgraduate medical training at the Royal Adelaide Hospital and was awarded the degree of Doctor of Medicine in 1982 at UTAS before spending three years in London as the Muscular Dystrophy Research Fellow at Queen Square.

On returning to Australia, at only 31 years of age he was appointed director of neurology at St Vincent’s Hospital, Melbourne, and later the first Professor of Clinical Neurology at the university.

He was the founding director of the Melbourne Neuromuscular Research Institute, and in 2001 he was appointed Professor of Experimental Neurology at the University of Melbourne.

Prof. Byrne first went to Monash University as the Dean of the Faculty of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences, a role he held from 2003 to 2007. In July last year he became the eighth Vice-Chancellor of Monash University.

Among other accolades, he was awarded the Queen Square Prize for Neurological Research in 1982, the Berlihjem Griffiths Research Medal in 2003 and the Sir Louis Pyke Award for contribution to multiple sclerosis research in 2004. The University of Melbourne awarded him a Doctor of Science in recognition of a demonstrated record of research excellence, and in 2006 Prof. Byrne was made an Officer of the Order of Australia for contributions to clinical neurology and medical research.

Danish duo win 2010 Crown Princess Mary Scholarships

BY MICHELLE NICHOLS

A winner of the 2010 Crown Princess Mary Scholarship has praised Tasmania’s beauty and jokingly questioned why her award’s namesake would want to leave it.

Kirke Munch and fellow Danish student Marie Mortensen are the recipients of the scholarship, awarded to high achieving students from Tasmania or Denmark and providing $3000 towards the cost of their studies.

A native of Aarhus, Denmark, Kirke attended secondary school from Tasmania or Denmark and providing $3000 towards the cost of their studies.

A native of Aarhus, Kirke enrolled in a Bachelor of Science degree.

The Crown Princess Mary Scholarship is open to undergraduate and postgraduate students in all areas of studies offered at UTAS.

The Crown Princess Mary’s father, Professor John Donaldson, her wife, Susan Donaldson, and their twin daughters, Trish Bailey and Jane Stephens, and members of the Danish Consulate and local Danish community attended the recent award ceremony.

UTAS young architects are winners

UTAS architecture students scooped two of three major prizes announced at the inaugural Australian Architecture Awards in Architecture Awards announced in Brisbane recently.

Alysia Bennett won the Student Prize for the Architecture award. Keith Westbrook won the 2010 COLORBOND® steel Student Biennale Prize.

Alysia’s prize, aimed at encouraging leaders in the profession and acknowledging the value of their efforts to advance architecture, was awarded for her significant contribution to architecture through her outstanding support for the architectural student community and her local design community.

The $8000 2010 COLORBOND® steel Student Biennale Prize was presented to Keith Westbrook for his most outstanding design work from a student of architecture in 2008/2009.

The jury praised Keith’s project, Ross Slip: Shipwright School, as an exemplar in its sensitive interpretation and engaging design quality.

A record number of entries were received for the 2010 competition, with 174 students from 16 architecture schools vying for Australia’s most recognised student design prize.

The work of 12 finalists selected by the jury will be exhibited in a Student Biennale Design Gallery website to celebrate the competition’s 25th anniversary.

Fiona Lew from Melbourne University won the BlueScope Steel Glenn Murcutt Student Prize for her examination of suitable self-help housing for Indigenous men near Darwin.

IN BRIEF

Super Science funding

A four-year project studying the Milky Way and other galaxies and the Earth’s continental drift and sea-level rise will be supported by a Federal Government Super Science Fellowship valued at more than $1.5 million.

Professor John Dickey, head of the UTAS School of Mathematics and Physics, will lead a team looking at Terrestrial, Galactic, Extra-Galactic Science with the AuScope and Australian Pathfinder Arrays.

"Two new radio telescope arrays are under construction in Australia," Prof. Dickey said.

Scholarship for Fine Arts student

Christopher Lissau was recently awarded the University Club Honours Scholarship for 2010 including a $12,000 contribution, cash donation and University Club membership for 2010.

Head of the Tasmanian School of Art Professor Noel Franklin and Christopher had not only achieved stellar academic results, but had crafted his own opportunities by creating a program of learning for himself.

"Christopher did classes in painting, art theory and new media as part of his advanced honours program and did a winter school in screen printing and sculpture," he said.

Damaged facility reopens

The Australian Maritime College has reopened its Beauty Point flume tank nearly two years after it was destroyed by fire.

The flume tank, its building and associated research spaces have been rebuilt at a cost in excess of $2 million.

The only facility of its type in the Southern Hemisphere, the flume tank is primarily used for fisheries-related research. The 11 m x 5 m x 2.5 m deep channel is fitted with a perspex viewing window.

Interstate careers advisors visit

UTAS’ growing number of interstate students was highlighted recently when 21 interstate secondary school career advisors from Victoria and NSW visited the University for three days as part of the annual UTAS Career Advisor Symposium.

At the Newnham campus the group toured the Australian Maritime College and the Nursing Simulation Centre; they also visited the Inveresk campus.

In Hobart they attended information sessions about UTAS; and toured the new Medical Sciences building, the ARC Centre of Excellence in Ore Deposits and the UTAS media laboratory.

Taste of uni for college students

Some of Australia’s top writers, artists and comedians recently shared their skills and creativity with more than 100 Tasmanian creative arts college students from the north and north-west.

Writer and creative director of Big hART Scott Rankin; comedian Mick Lowenstein; installation artist Jack Robins; writer and curator Sean Kelly; and Melbourne sculptor John Mandle spoke at the School of Visual and Performing Arts University College Program Colloquium.

More than 100 Year 11 and 12 creative arts students attended the event.

The UTAS College Program nurtures talented and gifted students in Years 11 and 12 who could qualify for recognition and assessment in university-level units in visual and performing arts.
Out of the cesspit: clues to life in 1840s Hobart

BY MICHELLE NICHOLS

A backyard privy from an early nineteenth-century inner-city Hobart house has revealed a wealth of treasures and an interesting insight into past daily life.

Artefacts such as children’s board games, French perfume bottles, door handles, sewing implements and labouring tools are now on display in the new UTAS Medical Sciences One building on the corner of Liverpool and Campbell streets in Hobart.

The artefacts were uncovered during the excavation of the site. Early records show two two-storey Georgian homes were constructed next door to each other at 53 and 55 Campbell Street in the 1840s. The site also once hosted dwellings at 15 Campbell Street in the 1840s.

Excavations of the site identified a footprint, cellar, stables and a backyard privy from an inner-city Hobart house has revealed a wealth of treasures and an insight into life in 1840s Hobart.

Archaeologists studied early surveys of buildings and boundaries on the site before digging test pits at selected sites. Excavation of the properties revealed the entire house footprint, cellar, stables and a back house at 53 Campbell Street and uncovered the old privy (or toilet) complete with items discarded over the centuries.

Discarded items give insight into life in 1840s Hobart: Objects uncovered during the excavation of the new Medical Science One building are on display throughout the new complex.

“In the 1840s in Hobart, there were no rubbish bins as we know it,” said Parry Kostoglou, archaeologist with Hobart-based ARC Tas Pty Ltd. “Instead, all household rubbish was thrown into the privy. The privies were traditionally about the size of a modern-day bathtub, with toe-holders in the sides to give cleaners easy access to the long-drop of rubbish and waste.”

The properties were owned by well-to-do, upper-class residents keen to live in the centre of Hobart in the 1840s. Mr Kostoglou said he was surprised by the quality and quantity of objects uncovered from the privy.

“The artefacts give insight into what was discarded and why,” Mr Kostoglou said. “For example, we know these families were wealthy because there was a high level of wastage. We found a whole set of dinner plates, up to 12 pieces, which appears to have been tossed out simply because one plate was broken.”

Other found objects include decorated clay tobacco pipes adorned with carvings of human heads, often in caricature; perfume bottles from Paris; and ceramic dolls made in Belgium. A number of the inhabitants had large families and items related to children’s activities are also on display, including dominoes and other board-game pieces, toothbrushes, combs, shoes, ceramic and limestone marbles and a writing slate.

One of the original inhabitants in the Campbell Street Georgian mansion was William Crowther, who lived at 55 Campbell Street with his family from 1842 to 1845.

“He was an avid collector so we have also uncovered objects he gathered during his lifetime, including a vertebra from a sperm whale which was found in what later became the driveway of one of the Campbell Street properties and appears to have been used over time as a drain cap,” Mr Kostoglou said.

Crowther went on to become a surgeon and a premier of Tasmania. Surgeon Sir Robert Officer lived at 53 Campbell Street from 1843 to 1852, while Captain William Fisher lived at the same address around 1878 to 1882.

The displays also highlight the everyday tools used by servants and handymen at the property, such as spades, hammer heads, sewing equipment and handmade clay roof tiles. The discovery of rooster leg bones with spurs intact leads to questions as to whether cockfighting may have been a popular pastime for some in this area.

The privy also revealed a copper-sheeted and gilded fire insurance plaque dated 1835. “Back then, a fire was only extinguished if the owners had paid a levy, and a plaque was proof of payment,” Mr Kostoglou said.

The shine on this sought-after 1840s city block is expected to fade with the establishment of the Campbell Street Gaol in the 1850s. More industries were established in the latter part of the nineteenth century as the area came to be regarded as “working class”.

Archaeological work on the precinct is continuing, concentrating on 15 Liverpool Street and the property backing onto Barburth Street.

Exertime for Tassie cops

Tasmania’s desk-bound police will soon be bouncing around the office as they trial a UTAS research project designed to decrease their waist measurements.

Project PAUSE (Physical Activity Using Short-burst Exercise) uses a computer-based exercise program called Exertime – physical activities suitable for doing at a desk or around the office.

Aimed at office-based employees who spend the majority of their day sitting at a computer, Project PAUSE builds on research showing individuals who take breaks from sitting have lower body mass indexes and lower waist circumferences, regardless of other exercise. Even the effort of standing up can double the metabolic rate and the amount of calories burned.

Education Faculty human movement researcher Dr Dean Cooley said the aim is to prompt police and emergency staff to decrease the amount of sitting time at work.

“Studies show you can improve your overall health by spending more time on your feet during the workday,” he said. Exertime pops up automatically on computers when an employee has spent a period sitting down at their computer, prompting the individual with a suggestion for an exercise activity that takes one or two minutes to complete.

The exercises are brief and low-impact, ranging from chair-based knee-lifts and squats to stepping exercises at the photocopier.

Project PAUSE is a joint initiative of the University of Tasmania and the Department of Police and Emergency Management.

Acting Police Chief Darren Hine said his department is committed to providing opportunities for employees to improve their health and fitness at work.

Researcher Dr Scott Pederson said 60 employees will take part in the 13-week trial of Exertime and will be asked to report on any health improvements as a result of the project.

“The research could lead to Exertime software being made widely available across the public sector in Tasmania or even nationally,” he said.

Get on your feet for health: (from left) Dr Scott Pederson and Professor Neil Cranston from the Education Faculty check out the Exertime program being trialled by Tasmania Police.
Searching for future stars

In the stars: UTAS Honours student Courtney Jones enjoyed a summer stint at the Gemini South Telescope in Chile.

By Alice Knight

Strange but true: Courtney Jones loves doing night shift in the wilds of Campania with only a satellite dish for company.

Physics honours student Courtney regularly monitors the radio telescope at the Mt Pleasant Observatory at Campania at night after the day-team experts have left. Her 3pm shift requires her to monitor data and instruments.

"There aren’t many undergraduate students in Australia who get the opportunity to monitor a 26-metre dish, so I am lucky," she said.

Courtney returned in February from a 10-week studentship program in Chile at the Gemini South Telescope.

One of two Australian students to gain a place, she got hands-on experience working with a scientist researching the Hyades and Praesepe star clusters.

The unknown and unpredictable nature of astronomy has driven Courtney’s interest in the radio telescope at the Mt Pleasant Observatory in February from a 10-week student program in Chile.

The Alan Myers Centre at the Mt Pleasant Observatory at Campania and Mt Canopus near Hobart give students hands-on experience. The one-metre optical telescope at Mt Canopus eventually will move to the soon-to-be-built observatory at Bidde Tier, east of the Midland Highway at Spring Hill.

Courtney is working with Professor John Dickey, head of the School of Physics and Mathematics, on a collaborative project analysing data collected from previous surveys about hydrogen gas around the Milky Way.

The outcome of the project will be a map of the results. While the specifics of the project have not been confirmed, Courtney is hoping for exciting results.

Alice Knight is a UTAS Masters student in journalism.

New system for Newnham library

By Michelle Nichols

It has been a case of out with the old and in with the new at the Newnham campus library this year, with a change in the collection’s classification system from Dewey Decimal to the Library of Congress system.

Books have had their shelf numbers changed from the decimal style (example: 333.956/56) to the alphabetical style (example: SH 328 W35 2004). Books on the same topic also now appear in a new location on the shelves.

Library of Congress classification provides a specific number for topics, making finding more obscure research areas easier. For this reason, it is used by many university and research libraries around the world.

Launceston Campus Librarian Wendy Hoyle said there are many advantages to the new system, such as more accurate call number details now being included on the library catalogue.

"It is also easier to locate items on the shelves. The numbers are much shorter and in most cases the call number label can now be attached to the spine, rather than the front of the book, making it easier to see when browsing," Wendy said.

"The process has meant a complete clean up of all of the records for the Launceston collection and has served as a stocktake, ensuring that any missing material is identified."

Senior Library Officer Client Services Prue Senior said with the re-organisation of the collection, the library now has a dedicated silent study area for students.

The library revamped has also included making more space for new types of study areas where students can use their laptops to study together – rather than alone on single desks as was demanded in the past.

Launceston now has the same classification system as all other UTAS libraries. The change was completed at the AMC Library in the middle of 2009 and at the Cradle Coast campus in December.
The work

BY MERIAN ELLIS

A defining feature of the UTAS Cradle Coast campus is its setting, nestled among the hills and paddocks on the outskirts of Burnie. The view is a patchwork of soil, crops, sea and sky.

The external landscape is brought into the boardroom by two artworks in timber and on canvas. The artists, Toby Muir-Wilson and Patrick Grieve, live in North-West Tasmania, strongly influenced by their environment.

The recently acquired boardroom table is the latest reincarnation of a mighty blackwood tree that was removed from the site of the 2008 extensions to the UTAS Cradle Coast campus. Milled and seasoned by Ian Robinson at Barrington, the tree was carved and crafted by woodcraftsmen Toby Muir-Wilson. The table is in five sections, totalling 6.5 metres in length. Each piece is a mosaic of the landscape that has been divided by agricultural development. The snaking lines dividing the tables are rivers running north into Bass Strait. This is supported by sandblasted grey legs, the eucalypts that dominate the foreground view from the boardroom.

In his painting on the wall of the boardroom, Burnie-based artist Patrick Grieve used a bold brush and palette to flatten the landscape and reveal the layers and rough geometry of paddocks running down towards the sea.

“I have always been deeply influenced by the physical nature of paint and methods of application. For these years these formal aspects of painting dominated my work.”

Toby Muir-Wilson

Cradle Coast campus; Patrick Grieve’s Wet Moreeville late Spring (acrylic on linen) overlooks Toby Muir-Wilson’s boardroom table.

pushing to the background a deep urge to express the landscape that has been part of me since childhood,” he wrote in 2006.

Patrick Grieve (b. 1969) is a UTAS alumnus and art teacher at Burnie High School.

His work is represented in the collections of Devonport Regional Art Gallery, the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery, Queen Victoria Museum & Art Gallery, the Henry James Art Hotel and many others.

Toby Muir-Wilson (b. 1953) grew up in Forest, near Stanley. Always interested in wood and fine wood species he travelled to the John Makepeace School for Wood Design in England in 1978.

The evolution of his work has been strongly influenced by the physical and visual environments Toby or his clients are exposed to.

Toby has exhibited throughout Australia and is represented in many national collections including The Powerhouse Museum.

He is currently working on a new boardroom table for the Hawthorn Football Club.

Bringing the outside inside at Cradle Coast

The work of nature is a force as powerful as that of art. Toby Muir-Wilson and Patrick Grieve’s art is a window to that power, a portal to the raw and hypnotic energy of the land. Each piece is a mosaic of the landscape that has been divided by agricultural development. The snaking lines dividing the tables are rivers running north into Bass Strait. This is supported by sandblasted grey legs, the eucalypts that dominate the foreground view from the boardroom.

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