

# SYDNEY ALUMNI

Magazine

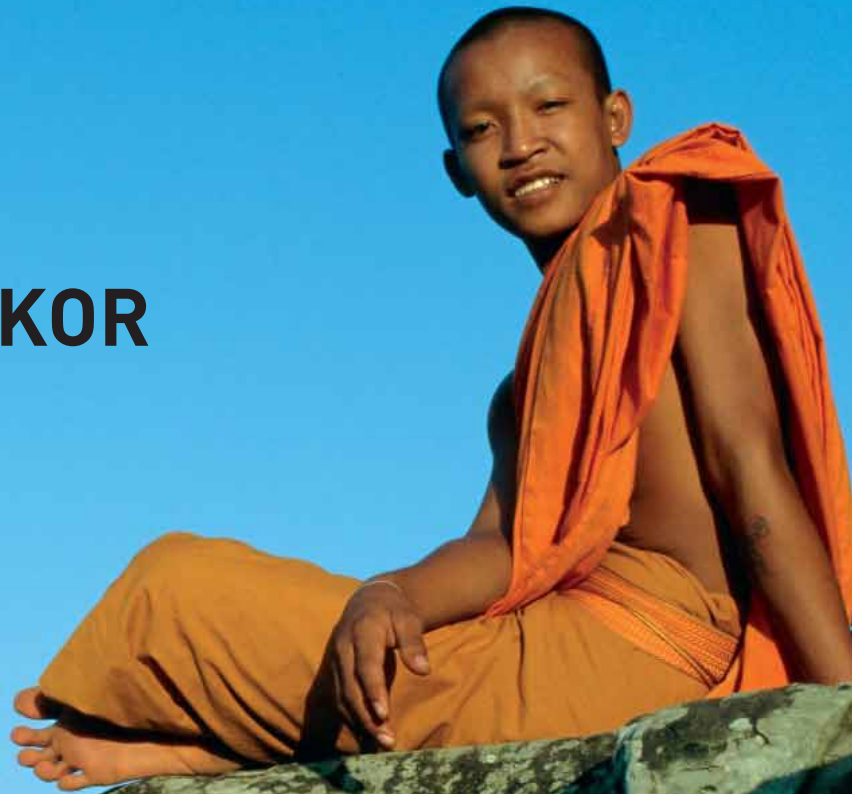
Winter 2006



The University of Sydney

## THE END OF ANGKOR

Climate change to blame



### TIME LORD

How a 25-year-old theorist is re-writing evolutionary history

### OUR MAN IN WASHINGTON

Former ASIO head Dennis Richardson settles in as US ambassador

### THE VALUE OF INTELLIGENT DESIGN

Simple answers never looked so good





## Leading the World ...

Did you know ?

Sydney University's Faculty of Health Sciences is leading the world in:

- Setting up the **only international** physiotherapy research database
- Carrying out **the world's biggest study** of acute lower back pain
- Helping to give a **healthy start** in life for children of parents with learning difficulties
- Working to **find a cure** for stuttering
- Finding out more about **how phobias occur**

And more ...

Did you know that the Faculty of Health Sciences:

- Is the largest health science faculty in Australia
- Has academic staff with international acclaim in research and teaching
- Enrolls 5,000 students per year
- Has 10 disciplines
- Has three self-funded research centres
- Offers a ground-breaking health sciences degree, preparing students for almost any career within the health care industry
- Provides preparation for 14 health science professions
- Has 15 inter-Institutional links across the world
- Houses 17 labs, a specialised Health Services, Library, and a state-of-the-art sports centre?

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- Physiotherapy
- Sports Management
- Health Information Management
- Nuclear Medicine Technology
- Occupational Therapy
- Clinical Vision Sciences
- Radiation Therapy
- Radiography
- Rehabilitation Counseling

Or lead to a career in

- Dentistry
- Medicine
- Nursing and Midwifery
- Pharmacy?



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Addresses can be updated online at [www.usyd.edu.au/alumni](http://www.usyd.edu.au/alumni)





## Volcanic Greer

Congratulations on the *Sydney Alumni Magazine* (Autumn 2006). The text was interesting and challenging, and the graphics clear and attractive. The cover picture of Germaine Greer (MA '63, DLitt '05) showed, through her eyes, the volcanic fires that burn within.

**Nigel H. Scott-Miller (BA '73)**  
Burradoo, NSW

## Dogmatic Greer

I was disappointed the inaugural edition of *Sydney Alumni Magazine* (Autumn 2006) chose such a controversial figure as Germaine Greer for the front cover. I can think of a considerable number of alumni better suited to be thus honoured.

The alleged quote "God does not exist, and if he did he'd be a fascist ----" is dogmatic, rude and arrogant and

does not accord with the thinking of some of our greatest intellects, for example Charles Birch. Presumably the blank space in the quote contains a socially unacceptable four letter word. Was the Doctor of Letters, honoris causa, a doctorate of four letter words?  
**Norman McMaster (MA '91)**  
Swansea NSW

## Breathtaking Greer

The new *Sydney Alumni Magazine* (Autumn 2006) is spectacular. Greer on the cover is breathtaking regardless of what you think of her opinions. It all makes one proud of the old alma mater.  
**Ken Cullen (BA '80)**  
Sydney, NSW

## Birthday Greer

Thank you for my copy of the *Sydney Alumni Magazine*, which I have read from cover to cover. Congratulations on the format, and on the cover piece. Germaine Greer was once in my house for a son's birthday party; there were two rather muscular students in attendance with her, and when I asked my son about this he said they were there to restrain Germaine from any 'unusual activity' while she was in our home.

**Sir Keith Jones (MBBS '33)**  
Bayview, NSW

## Laughable concerns

I found it amusing to see the lengthy article concerning the impact of VSU on University Sport in the *Sydney Alumni Magazine* (Autumn 2006). I found it even funnier with the picture of the University of Sydney

boys celebrating their rugby victory with the sponsors name plastered all over their jerseys.

The rugby and cricket that is depicted in the article is the domain of elite sportsmen. I played the same level of sport for other Sydney clubs (regularly beating the University) during the '70s and '80s. I can't recall 18,000 people contributing to our fortunes, it was up to the club to secure sponsors and raise funds.

No doubt many students could rightly ask why they should fund elite sportsmen, many of whom have never been further east on campus than Wallace Theatre, as opposed to fees supporting broad-based sport and recreational activities for all students to access regardless of ability.

**Ken Shelston (BA '75, MBA UTS '85)**  
Bexley North, NSW

## Violence and identity

I enjoyed reading the articles by Professor Furedi and Dr Evers in the *Sydney Alumni Magazine* (Autumn 2006), but I did not find them persuasive.

Both articles assumed that violence is the product of (the lack of) identity, but it could equally be that identity is a product of violence. The development of strong team brands for Australia's various football teams (football being, by most measures, quite a violent sport) is a good example of this, as is the emergence of trade unions during the industrial revolution.

Further, 'public' political meanings might best be seen as an outworking of 'private' interpersonal concerns – if the forms of violence prevalent in society

**Letters to the editor should include contact details, degree and year of graduation if applicable.**

Please address letters to: The Editor, *Sydney Alumni Magazine* C/- Publications A14, The University of Sydney NSW 2006. Letters may also be sent by email to: [dogrady@publications.usyd.edu.au](mailto:dogrady@publications.usyd.edu.au)

Opinions expressed on these pages are those of the signed contributors or the editor and do not necessarily represent the official position of the University of Sydney.

Space permits only a selection of edited letters to be published here. Visit us online at [www.usyd.edu.au/alumni](http://www.usyd.edu.au/alumni) for more.

change, then the answers given by political elites to questions of meaning will inevitably become outdated. Finally, it may be that the significance of family has changed (partly due to feminism) from being a source of violence to being a defence against violence.

If so, then the current political emphasis on family values, however questionable or limiting this emphasis may be, is far from being a sign of political exhaustion or meaninglessness. **David Ball (BA '94, LLB '96)**  
Naremburn, NSW

**Style and substance**

I am writing to compliment you on both the look of the new *Sydney Alumni Magazine*, and its contents.

The new design has good use of colour and illustrations, and even some negative space!

You have managed to include a number of informative, provocative articles, while still addressing the requirements of an alumni publication.

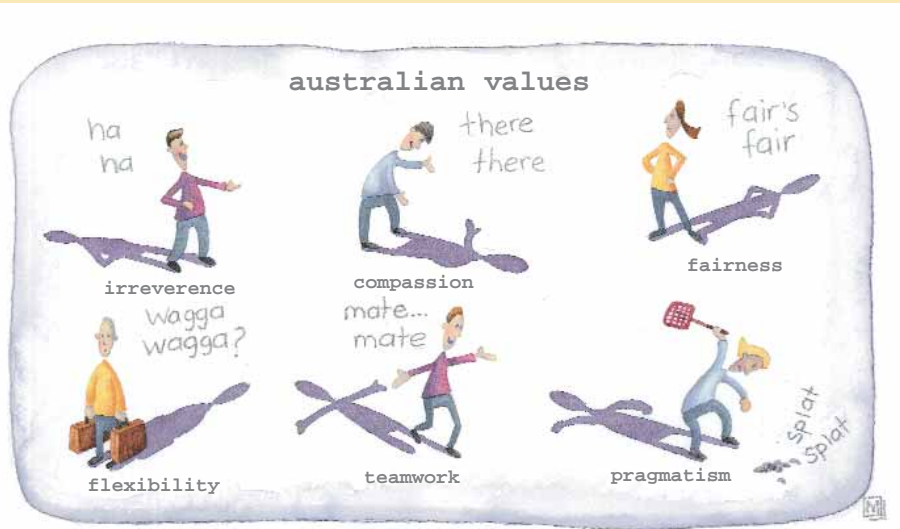
Bravo. Keep up the good work.

**John Mott (BSc '84)**  
Los Angeles, CA

**American historians**

I am seeking information about a group of American historians who taught at the University of Sydney during the years 1943 – 1948. They were: Allan Nevins, Dixon Wecter, Ralph Gabriel and Avery Craven. I have their US papers but there is very little about the courses they taught, their time in Sydney or their views of Australia. Does anyone have any reminiscences of any of these men? Lecture notes? Photographs?

All help will be fully acknowledged in a book to be entitled *The American Discovery of Australia 1941 to 1950*.  
**A/P George Parsons (MA '67)**  
c/ Modern History,  
Macquarie University  
North Ryde, 2109



**Six Australian values**

Congratulations on the updated look and approach of the *Sydney Alumni Magazine*. In response to Frank Furedi's claim (Autumn 2006) that "it is difficult to point to any values that are distinctly Australian," I nominate the following:

- 1) **Irreverence.** We don't take ourselves too seriously, or our various leaders. This is a healthy trait.
- 2) **Compassion.** Australia is among perhaps five nations in the world where the social contract calls for workers to shoulder a very large tax burden, in order that nearly everybody has access to reasonable living prospects, including universal education and health care, and we manage to do this in an economically sustainable way. Australians are also relatively high on the world donation and volunteer work league tables.
- 3) **Fairness.** Australians are passionately committed to fairness.
- 4) **Flexibility.** How many other countries have so comprehensively remodeled their societies in the past 50 years, or their economies in the last 25 years, as has Australia?
- 5) **Teamwork.** Australians are remarkably adept in working in teams. This is perhaps most apparent in sport, but in my observation also applies in business, government, and society at large.
- 6) **Pragmatism.** Relative to most other societies, we seem particularly skilled at achieving good outcomes without a lot of fuss and bother. An observer of the Australian armed forces relative to our Western allies, or Australian business people and public servants relative to most other countries, is often struck by this pragmatism.

**Charles Littrell (MEc '98)** Wombarra, NSW



Vice Chancellor Professor Gavin Brown.

## Working Together

It's not that we're ungrateful for government support, but private benefactors make a world of difference, writes **Vice-Chancellor Professor Gavin Brown AO.**

**T**hanks to a generous gift from Michael Hintze, (BSc '75, BE '77) the University has been able to launch a new initiative, the creation of a centre for international security studies. This will take a broad view of the field, for, in addition to consideration of diplomacy and foreign relations, the centre will draw upon expertise in public health, in veterinary science and in international law to provide courses and lead research in the many areas which today influence a nation's security.

We are fortunate that Alan Dupont, currently research fellow at the Lowy Institute, has accepted the inaugural chair and will drive the new venture.

Professor Dupont, who studied under Robert O'Neill at Duntroon and served in the Australian Army, has a wide experience in diplomatic posts, journalism and academia. He speaks with great enthusiasm of this opportunity for a personal leadership role in

developing a centre of intellectual excellence which will also provide outreach to society in an area where there is contemporary need.

It is this capacity for contribution to the general good which encouraged Mr Hintze to channel his benefaction in this way. He is a modest man with a keen sense of obligation for the success he has achieved. The creator and sole shareholder of a high-performing and impressively large hedge fund, Michael Hintze has made multi-million dollar gifts to the Victoria and Albert Museum, the Vatican, hospitals and theatre.

He gives precious time to our alumni body in the UK and is leading by example by becoming our greatest living benefactor. I am particularly delighted that, despite his natural diffidence, Michael is willing to allow us to record his gift in a very public way. The point, of course, is that others may follow him.

## Join the celebration!

All alumni and friends are invited to our gala dinner in MacLaurin Hall, to celebrate 100 years of Physical Education and Health Education at Sydney Teachers College and Sydney University.

Special guests include the Vice-Chancellor and former staff and students such as Brian Booth, Joan Fitton and Jack MacLellan.

100 years of Physical and Health Education at the University of Sydney  
Thursday 12 October  
MacLaurin Hall  
6.30 for 7pm

Cost: \$75, includes dinner, drinks and entertainment

Please note graduates from Sydney Teachers College are now also University of Sydney Alumni – you never know who you might see there!

For further information, details and tickets, contact Meg Pickup on 9351 6374 or [m.pickup@edfac.usyd.edu.au](mailto:m.pickup@edfac.usyd.edu.au), or register your interest at [alumni@edfac.usyd.edu.au](mailto:alumni@edfac.usyd.edu.au).





He and I agree that even public universities cannot be dependent on government support when it comes to striving for excellence. Not only should the University (and I mean the wide university family including our alumni and friends) take responsibility for its own destiny but we should also expect from government mostly that it should refrain from detailed regulation of our affairs.

Recently the picture has been very different. As government contribution has contracted as a percentage of our budget, regulation and control has increased significantly. This paradox, common to both sides of politics, is not difficult to explain. The less we receive from the taxpayer, the more we must engage in entrepreneurial activities and the more pressure there is upon us to evaluate programs in terms of their popularity and viability. The government response is to police these matters more closely and to attach collateral conditions to such funds as we do receive.

That is why Michael Hintze's support is so important and liberating. We are deeply grateful for what it allows us to do but we value also its powerful symbolism.

That is not to say that the University fails to believe that we should be fully accountable for our actions, nor are we ungrateful for government support.

Michael Hintze's support is important and liberating. We are deeply grateful for what it allows us to do but we value also its powerful symbolism.

Indeed the Federal Minister for Health recently announced the result of competitive bids for a special round of public health initiatives. From a total of \$9.8 million available all but \$600,000 was awarded to teams led by University of Sydney researchers.

There is something of a squabble between the Commonwealth and NSW over the distribution of tax revenues and the phasing out of certain state taxes. In this climate our State Government is insistent that university funding is Canberra's responsibility and, as a result, we are disadvantaged relative to universities in Victoria and Queensland. We are working patiently

with the NSW Government to change this and to develop research infrastructure for our State. It is, of course, important that we have resources to bring to the table for this cooperation rather than be mere supplicants. This is yet another reason why the University seeks private support.

Finally, as a pure mathematician, let me note that Michael Hintze majored *inter alia* in pure mathematics and employs PhD pure mathematicians at the core of his business enterprise. Never let us be seduced by simple calls for conventional 'job-ready' graduates. The university experience is deeper and more mysterious.

## Missing Chemistry Alumni

Did you graduate with a major (or two) in Chemistry? If you answered yes, and you have not been receiving our Chemistry Alumni Newsletter, then we do not have your contact details.

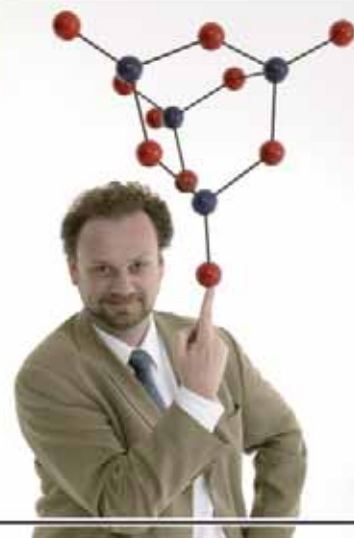
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Web: <http://alumni.chem.usyd.edu.au/>

or update your details by registering online today: [www.usyd.edu.au/alumni](http://www.usyd.edu.au/alumni)



## Alan Dupont heads International Security Studies

ONE of Australia's leading security specialists, Professor Alan Dupont, is the inaugural holder of the University's new Michael Hintze Chair in International Security Studies.

Professor Dupont will establish a centre which will bring together experts from a range of disciplines to study the security challenges facing the nation and the Asia-Pacific region.

A well-known academic, media commentator and strategic analyst, Professor Dupont was most recently a senior fellow at the Lowy Institute. He has worked for more than three decades on defence and security issues in government, the university sector and policy institutes. He has a PhD in international relations from the ANU and is a former director of the Asia-Pacific Security Program.

"I will be linking with leading universities, policy institutes and think tanks as well as drawing on the wide range of expertise at the University to advance the centre's research agenda," Professor Dupont said.



Michael Hintze and Professor Alan Dupont ... strategic advice on regional security challenges.

"Any meaningful analysis of international security today must incorporate consideration of issues such as environmental degradation, climate change, disease, food, energy and water scarcity, terrorism and transnational organised crime as well as defence and military conflict," he said.

The International Security Studies

Centre is Australia's first interdisciplinary group providing academic research and strategic policy advice on international security. It is funded by a significant donation from University of Sydney graduate Michael Hintze (BSc '75, BE '77), the founder and chief executive of CQS Management, one of Europe's leading hedge fund companies.



US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice ... 'history will prove us right'.

## Sydney campus visit

US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice visited the University of Sydney in March, speaking to more than 300 students from across New South Wales at the Conservatorium of Music.

"Growing up in Birmingham, Alabama with segregated schools, the Ku Klux Klan and white supremacists, it was hard for me to believe in democracy. But in my life the situation in Alabama and the USA has been transformed," she said.



## Jim Peacock becomes Chief Scientist



photo: NewsPix

Chief Scientist Dr Jim Peacock ... leader in the field.

THE president of the Australian Academy of Science, Dr Jim Peacock (BSc '58, PhD '63), is Australia's new Chief Scientist.

As the former head of CSIRO Plant Industry, Dr Peacock is head of a laboratory widely regarded as a leader in the field of plant molecular biology and its applications in agriculture. As Chief Scientist, he will be required to provide advice on science, technology and innovation issues to the government.

Dr Peacock has specialised in the genetics of Australian flora. He was appointed to the position of Chief Scientist earlier this year by the

Minister for Education, Science, and Training, Julie Bishop.

The appointment is part-time and Dr Peacock will continue, part-time, in his role as a senior science leader in CSIRO.

Dr Peacock founded the GeneShears Biotechnology Company for CSIRO and he set up the GrainGene initiative and the HRZ Wheat Company linking research with the production of new wheat varieties for Australia.

"Dr Peacock is an outstanding scientist with a record of academic excellence and is highly respected by the science, engineering and technology industry and community," Ms Bishop said.

## for US Secretary of State

"Fifty years after the second world war in Europe, it is almost impossible to imagine there could be war between France and Germany.

"Similarly, I hope that in 50 years time people will also find it difficult to imagine there could have been war in the Middle East," she said.

Dr Rice lived up to her promise that she wanted a dialogue, fielding numerous questions about Guantanamo Bay and Abu Ghraib, democracy in Russia, nega-

tive public opinion in Australia towards US foreign policy, terrorism in the Middle East, AIDS policy and foreign aid.

There was also a noisy protest outside the venue by anti-war protesters – proof, said Dr Rice, that democracy was alive and well at the University.

Speaking about Iraq, Dr Rice said it was too early to judge the success of the American intervention, adding: "I am confident history will demonstrate that it was the right decision."

## University lifts Asia Pacific profile

THE University of Sydney is entering a new phase of international engagement, designating the next two years as an International Biennium.

The University's Strategic Directions 2006 – 2010 document sets out Sydney's ambition to be Australia's premier university, one of the top five universities in the Asia Pacific region and among the top 40 in the world.

Professor John Hearn, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (International), said the Biennium activities would include a program of overseas graduations and alumni events, a quarterly international forum, and stronger ties with Australian and foreign universities, industry and government.

The Biennium also coincides with Vice-Chancellor Professor Gavin Brown's presidency of the Asia Pacific Rim Universities (APRU) and the completion of his presidency of the Academic Consortium (AC) 21. As part of its internationalisation drive, the University is seeking to engage more actively with its current students through student associations, and with graduates through its alumni chapters.

The University held several major events in Beijing last year, including a presentation ceremony and an alumni reception and dinner.

"Beijing provided the University with an opportunity to develop links and agreements with Chinese universities, the government and the press in a way that will increase the status of the University and its alumni in China," Professor Hearn said.

The University will expand its overseas program this year, holding events in Kuala Lumpur (19 – 20 September), Singapore (27 – 29 September), Shanghai (30 – 31 October) and Hong Kong (2 – 3 November).

Further information is available online at [www.usyd.edu.au/overseasevents](http://www.usyd.edu.au/overseasevents)

# The End of Angkor

The collapse of a great city such as Angkor suggests that environmental miscalculations can spell doom for even the most highly engineered urban landscapes, writes Richard Stone.

**C**rouching in the bottom of a gully in Siem Reap, Cambodia, a University of Sydney archaeologist traces with his finger the bevelled edge of a pitted, greyish-red rock that helped support the medieval civilisation of Angkor. The carved block fits snugly in a groove in the block below. "It's a fancy piece of work," says Associate Professor Roland Fletcher.

In excavations begun last year, Professor Fletcher and a team of fellow archaeologists discovered that the half-metre-long block is just one piece of a dilapidated platform extending 20 metres underground in either direction. The platform appears to be the remnants of a massive spillway used to disperse floodwaters unleashed by monsoon rains.

"Nobody had ever seen a structure of this kind here before," Professor Fletcher says.

The discovery of this spillway helps resolve one debate. It shows that the majestic waterworks of Angkor were designed for practical purposes as well as religious rituals. But this singular piece of medieval engineering may also offer clues to a more profound riddle, not because the spillway exists, but because it was destroyed.

Ever since Portuguese traders in the late 16th century described the lotus-shaped towers of Angkor Wat rising from the forest canopy, people have wondered why the once-gilded temple devoted to Vishnu and the city connected with it were abandoned about 500 years ago. The list of suspects includes marauding invaders, a religious change of heart, and geological uplift. But in a provocative new interpretation of Angkor's demise, Professor Fletcher and colleagues have new evidence that the grandeur of Angkor's complex plumbing left it vulnerable to collapse.

Professor Fletcher is co-director of the Greater Angkor Project (GAP), a five-year survey and excavation effort funded through the Australian Research Council.

The \$1 million GAP project draws on the expertise of Sydney-based specialists Michael Barbetti and Daniel Penny, as well as Ros Borath, a deputy director general of the Cambodian agency that manages Angkor (known as the APSARA Authority), and Christophe Pottier of the French Research School of the Far East (EFEO). Pottier is one



photo: Getty Images

Abandoned 500 years ago ... climate change may be the reason for Angkor's demise.



This singular piece of medieval engineering may offer clues to a profound riddle, not because it exists, but because it was destroyed.

of several key-note speakers at an international conference on Angkor hosted by the University of Sydney in July 2006 (see panel).

Aerial views of Angkor have revealed the extensive waterworks that sustained the city. These allowed the growth of a vast urban complex: a low-density patchwork of homes, temples and rice paddies. The importance of consistent rice yields meant that Angkor's water system was the wellspring of power for its rulers.

The spillway uncovered by the Greater Angkor Project excavations presents a conundrum because its meticulous construction is badly damaged, and most of the spillway's blocks lie in a jumble under sandy soil.

"It was torn apart," says Professor Fletcher. It's possible, he says, that an engineering flaw caused the spillway to give way. But Angkorian structures were built to last, which propels the associate professor toward a different conclusion. "It seems they ripped the spillway out themselves," he says. "Perhaps something had gone wrong."

Professor Fletcher hypothesises that the structure was damaged by flooding, and then later dismantled for its materials. "We know that something was going wrong, mechanically, with their water system," he says. The more complicated and delicately balanced the system grew, the harder it would have been to compensate for unusual events, such as extreme flooding or drought. Add the possibility of climate change to this volatile mix, and you have a recipe for disaster.

The obvious lesson to be learnt by developed nations about the Angkor story is that climate change, population pressures, and over-use of natural resources can bring sophisticated societies to an end. It's a lesson that becomes gloomier each time it is re-learnt.

*Adapted and modified with permission from Stone, SCIENCE 311: 1364-1368 (2006)  
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[www.sciencemag.org](http://www.sciencemag.org)*

## University hosts public symposium on Angkor

The University of Sydney and the Asian Arts Society of Australia hosts a public symposium at the University on 22 July 2006 as part of an international conference, *Angkor - Landscape, City and Temple*.

The public symposium, *Angkor - from artefact to empire*, presents an overview of the past decade of research at Angkor. It provides public access to a collection of Angkor scholars who are unlikely to congregate in Sydney again.

Angkor Conference speakers include Professor Christophe Pottier, the director of EFEO - Siem Reap; Dr John Miksic from the National University of Singapore; Dr Ang Choulean from the Royal University of Fine Arts, Phnom Penh; and Madame Tan Theany, Secretary General of the National Commission for UNESCO.

*Angkor - Landscape, City and Temple* runs at the University of Sydney from July 17 - 23, 2006. Visit <http://conferences.arts.usyd.edu.au>

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Your donation or bequest to the Medical Foundation at the University of Sydney will enable our scientists to continue researching for cures and better treatment for people suffering from disease. Our programs are wide-ranging and include research into: adolescent medicine, Alzheimer's, asthma, cancer, eye diseases, heart and vascular disease, liver disease, lung and respiratory diseases, paediatrics and child health, transplantation research, and the effects of cancer genes, environment and behaviour on disease risk and outcome.





# Time Lord

The work of 25-year-old researcher Simon Ho is overturning established ideas about the pace of evolution and human development, writes Chris Rodley.

Like many 11-year-old boys, Simon Ho (BSc '03, MSc '04) loved dinosaurs. He drew pictures of them, visited dinosaur exhibits at the museum and collected every book on the subject he could find.

When he ran out of books to read, he decided to write his own. The result was a meticulously detailed volume in which the fifth-grade student catalogued and classified more than 500 species, from the common *Triceratops* to the esoteric *Zigongosaurus*, *Vulcanodon* and *Scipionyx*.

Fourteen years on, that childhood passion for understanding nature has taken Simon Ho to Oxford University's Department of Zoology, where the 25-year-old has published a paper that is sending shockwaves through the scientific community.

The paper's story begins three years ago, when Ho was completing his honours thesis at the University of Sydney. There, working under supervisor Dr Lars Jermiin, he helped settle an argument that had kept palaeontologists and molecular biologists at loggerheads for more than a decade.

By examining the underlying assumptions of key studies, Ho was able to demonstrate that most modern lineages of animals might have emerged at the beginning of the Cambrian period from 545 to 560 million years ago – rather than up to 1,600 million years ago as many molecular biologists had argued.

After receiving a perfect score of 100 for his work, Ho moved to Oxford to join the same team of molecular biologists whose work he had recently debunked (“My team has taken on board my changes now,” he smiles). There he began work on a PhD study that would have an even more dramatic impact on our knowledge of evolutionary history.

Biologists are able to put dates to certain events – such as when an animal emerged – by measuring the time since two species diverged from their shared ancestor. The method, called the “molecular clock”, compares corresponding DNA sequences from two existing species and counts the differences that have accumulated between them.

“The more differences there are between two DNA sequences, the longer ago they had a common ancestor,” Ho explains. “So if you know how long ago they had an ancestor, you can actually calculate how fast the DNA is mutating. If you



Revising the molecular clock ... Simon Ho's research re-writes the evolutionary timeline.

see 10 differences in the DNA between two individuals and you know they diverged 1 million years ago, then the mutation rate is five every million years.”

According to the molecular clock theory, which has been widely used by scientists since the 1960s, the DNA mutation rate stays constant over time. But by carefully examining the DNA of various birds and primates, Ho discovered that the mutation rate appeared to slow down as he looked further back in time. The idea that the rate of mutation can change over time is revolutionary because it means many of the dates we have for events in the history of human and animal evolution will need to be revised.

“It has massively wide implications, especially for events in

the past 2 million years,” says Ho, whose theory was made public last year in the journal *Molecular Biology and Evolution*. “I didn’t realise that at first, although my supervisor told me that many people would not be happy about it.”

One important field of study affected by Ho’s work is the search for the common female ancestor of all humans, sometimes called “mitochondrial Eve”.

## “Scientists don’t like people highlighting the inadequacies in their work.”

“Using the molecular clock theory, which looks at the split between humans and chimpanzees, you get estimates of a common human ancestor evolving at about 150,000 to 200,000 years ago,” Ho says. “But correcting for the change in the rate of mutation, the result is significantly more recent than that, probably less than 100,000 years.”

Other events that must now be revised include the date when humans first migrated out of Africa and the date when animals were first domesticated. Ho’s theory may even have implications for medical science by giving us a better understanding of when viruses such as HIV first emerged in humans.

In fact, so wide-reaching are the effects of Ho’s study that years of research by many hundreds of scientists around the world may be now in doubt. It is not surprising that his theory has its fair share of opponents.

“That’s the way of science,” Ho responds. “There has been a lot of criticism from people who like to use the traditional methods, and it does mean that their published work is invalid. But more people agree than disagree.”

Dr Jermiin, an evolutionary biologist at the University of Sydney and Ho’s former supervisor, believes some scientists may take years to fully accept the groundbreaking theory: “Scientists don’t like being moved out of their comfort zones, and they don’t like people highlighting the inadequacies in their work.”

According to Jermiin, it is no surprise that Ho is responsible for such an influential study so early in his career. Even as an undergraduate, his supervisor could see he was drawn to tackling fundamental ideas. “Simon would work with a degree of rigour that you don’t often see in the rest of the scientific community,” he says. “He would not only analyse data, but understand that the methods used to analyse data are based on assumptions, and that those assumptions may themselves be violated by the data.”

Apart from his brilliant, rigorous mind, there has been another element that has been critical to Ho reaching Oxford and attaining his current success: his childhood passion for palaeontology.

As a third-year student, Ho asked Professor Rick Shine if any research projects were available on dinosaurs. Instead, he was offered a project on the evolution of snakes with Dr Jermiin. As the two worked together, it quickly became clear they shared a common interest in examining fundamental ideas about evolution. The young scientist had found his niche.

As Ho puts it: “It has all come full circle, from when I was young to where I am now.”

## Creationists and cranks

Since the publication of his controversial paper on DNA mutation, Simon Ho has found himself championed by a most unlikely group: the intelligent design lobby. He says he regards intelligent design as creationism in disguise.

Relying on the genealogies set out in the Old Testament, advocates of creationism say the world was created about 6000 years ago, rather than the figure of 4.5 billion years accepted by scientists.

Because Ho’s theory has moved the estimated date of the appearance of the first human closer to the present day, proponents of creationism have leapt on his findings as evidence that the time for the evolution of humans is shorter than previously thought and will eventually settle on an age of 6000 years.

Ho says he is alarmed by the rise of intelligent design in the United States and Australia. Unlike creationism, which makes claims that directly refute scientific discoveries, intelligent design claims to be a valid scientific theory, yet is impossible to disprove because its claims cannot be tested by experiments.

“Recently, a creationist museum has opened in the United States,” Ho says. “There, you can go and see animatronic dinosaurs playing alongside human children, which is what the Biblical literalists believe. That really disturbs me.”

But dealing with pseudoscientists is all in a day’s work for the Oxford biologist, who says he receives letters from cranks around the world.

“We do get a lot of requests to clone dead pets and relatives,” he laughs. “And we had a woman from New Zealand who thought her family was descended from the gods, and wanted us prove it by analysing all their DNA sequences!”



Literal beliefs ... were dinosaurs and kids good playmates?



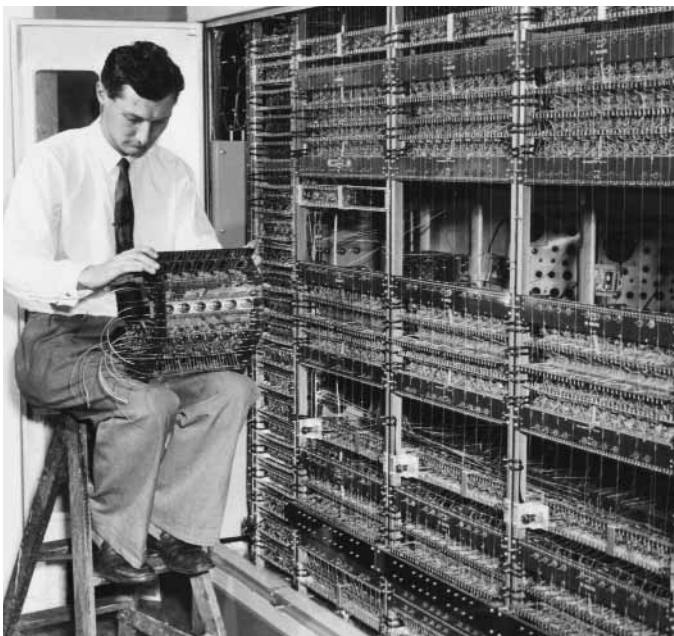
# LOVE AT FIRST BYTE

The computer revolution in Australia began 50 years ago at the University of Sydney, thanks to a charismatic professor and a Melbourne Cup winner called Delta. Marie Jacobs talked to the remarkable people who made it happen.

In 1956, armed with one man's vision and £50,000 of race winnings from a generous benefactor, the University of Sydney helped launch Australia into the computing age. The 50th anniversary of the building of Australia's first electronic computer, called SILLIAC (Sydney's Illinois Automatic Computer), will be celebrated at the University in September.

One of the most advanced computers of its era, SILLIAC was built at the University thanks to the inspiration of the head of the School of Physics at the time, the charismatic Professor Harry Messel (MSc '87, DSc '92), a Canadian-born scientist who moved to Australia after completing his PhD in Ireland. Carrying out complex calculations on the fluctuation theory of nuclear particles and cosmic ray air showers, he realised he needed an electronic computer for his work. The most advanced then available was the ILLIAC (Illinois Automatic Computer), designed and built at the University of Illinois.

Mechanical genius at work ... Professor Harry Messel (top right) and colleague Peter Aplin (below) fine-tune Australia's first computer.



Faced with what he describes as a "great lack of enthusiasm", Messel was determined to raise the money to build it. He knew computers were the way of the future, but the University, government and business disagreed. "I was told to stick to my slide rule," he says. "I needed [a computer] for my own research but what was more important, I thought this was the coming thing of the future and would be a great jump forward for Australia."

Using his contacts in the US, Messel managed to arrange for two scientists from Australia to help upgrade the ILLIAC. But he needed £50,000 to build it – about \$2 million in today's terms.

"When I mentioned this, everyone started laughing," he says.

Fortunately, Messel was introduced at a "very posh luncheon in town" to Adolph Basser, an owner of racehorses and Saunders jewellery store. "I put forward the idea he might be willing to support the construction of the first major computer in an Australian university. He had the common sense and vision to see this might be an exciting and wonderful thing for Australia. He then gave the University the £50,000" – later doubled to £100,000. One of Basser's horses, Delta, had won the 1951 Melbourne Cup and he donated the prize money. The computing laboratory was named in Adolph Basser's honour.

Messel's team approached Standard Telephones and Cables Pty Ltd (STC, now Alcatel Australia), and SILLIAC was built in the School of Physics using STC components in 1955 and 1956. The first scientific calculation was performed on 4 July 1956, and the computer was launched by Sir John Northcott, the governor of New South Wales, on 12 September 1956.

Despite SILLIAC's bulk, it had a tiny memory, in today's terms, of about 5 kilobytes. To program it, operators had to type the instructions directly on to paper tape. The mainframe, which contained nearly 3000 old radio valves, reached from floor to ceiling and consisted of a closed cabinet in which chilled air circulated to cool it. Occupying a whole room in the physics faculty, it used so much power it had a separate room





Illustration: Gregory Baldwin

for power equipment and an enormous cooling plant downstairs. Keeping it maintained and adjusted required a team of full-time engineers. Even turning it on was a major exercise.

But its design made it about 40 times faster than anything else around. Other designs minimised the number of electronic components for simplicity, but at the expense of performance. SILLIAC was based on John von Neumann's fast design from the US, in which everything operated in parallel rather than a bit-by-bit serial design.

"A remarkable group of people were involved," says John Deane, a computer historian who has written a book on SILLIAC that will be launched during the celebrations. Construction was directed by Brian Swire, whose team included engineers Barry de Ferranti and Peter Aplin. Its software was written by John Bennett, who taught people how to use SILLIAC. "Somehow he made them think this was easy," Deane says.

"John Bennett was a marvellous man," says Elizabeth Johnston, one of SILLIAC's original operators. "No one knew anything about computers at that stage. It was another language."

Its first operator was Judy Ogilvie, who married Chris Wallace from the physics school. Ogilvie became an author and Wallace a world expert in computer techniques. With many enthusiastic young men and just a handful of women working on SILLIAC, it was no surprise there were four marriages in one year, says Elizabeth Johnston.

"It was an exciting and demanding time," says Barry de Ferranti, now chair of the ICT [Information and Communication Technology] Pioneer and Leaders Events Committee running the anniversary event. "We were a team and we worked hard. My intended bride would stand outside the window and ask when I was coming home."

When sustenance was needed, "Peter, Brian and I would go up to the Newtown pub, order some prawns and chips and work through until 10 or 11 at night. Then Brian would say, 'I'm thirsty' and he'd reach down to the bottom of SILLIAC, where there was just enough room in bottom drawer for two bottles of beer where the cold air came in. It was an ideal refrigerator."

In the mid-1950s it was not obvious what a computer was good for, other than number crunching. But SILLIAC became a workhorse and a vital part of the physics faculty and other University departments. It also became a way of introducing computing to business and the rest of the world outside the University. "SILLIAC and the people around it were able to introduce problem solving as the key use of a computer as opposed to the whizbangery of giant electronic brains, the concept at the time," says de Ferranti.

The physics faculty ran courses, training heads of companies and computing departments. The Snowy Mountains Scheme was initially designed using SILLIAC and a program was devised

**"I thought this was the coming thing of the future and would be a great jump forward for Australia."**



“SILLIAC was the springboard  
for the IT revolution.

It's vital we recognise that  
pioneering and leadership role.

It's a real milestone.”

to produce payrolls for post offices. It was used by Australian and New Zealand computer departments, government and industry for projects including helium physics, cosmic ray air shower analysis, X-ray diffraction data processing and aircraft design. It was also used in Australia's first networking experiments.

One of SILLIAC's more quirky applications was its ability to play music through an attached loudspeaker. On Open Day in 1956, before its official unveiling, it played *Happy Birthday* and *Yankee Doodle Dandy*. It was the University's principal computer until 1964, when the English KDF 9 was installed. In a moving ceremony in 1968, SILLIAC's power was turned off as it played a Chopin funeral march.

Did the people involved have any idea to what extent computers would be part of our lives 50 years later? Barry de Ferranti knew that when people asked him questions related to problem solving, “we were doing more than just mucking around with binary digits. We were handling information, and this is at the heart of every decision. Information and the processing of information is vital.”

Harry Messel is delighted that 50 years ago he “helped launch Australia into this amazing age we live in today”. Now in his 80s, he is busier than ever, concentrating on travelling, fly-fishing, writing recommendations and reports. He is just as enthused today as he was 50 years ago and is still a computer user. “You can control them mostly these days but they can still drive you round the bend,” he says.

“SILLIAC was the springboard for the IT revolution,” says de Ferranti. “It's vital we recognise that pioneering and leadership role. It's a real milestone.”

*The 50th Anniversary of SILLIAC will be celebrated with the ICT Pioneers and Leaders, Information and Communication Technology Symposium and Celebration Events (12–13 September 2006). For more information visit [www.silliac.org](http://www.silliac.org)*

*The SILLIAC 50th Anniversary Celebration Dinner will be held on Tuesday 12 September 2006. For more information please contact Alison Thorn on:*

*+61 2 9036 5194*

*Fax: +61 2 9351 7726 or Email: [a.thorn@physics.usyd.edu.au](mailto:a.thorn@physics.usyd.edu.au)*



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**SILLIAC**, the first supercomputer built in Australia, began its life right here in the University of Sydney, 50 years ago. This year we celebrate its creation in a two-day gala event. We look back to see how far we have come since that momentous day, and look forward to see *what will the next 50 years in ICT bring?*

This is a unique opportunity to see where it all began! Meet the pioneers behind the first Australian supercomputer.

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The University of Sydney



CONTACT DR MICHAEL CHARLESTON: E-MAIL: [SILLIAC@USYD.EDU.AU](mailto:SILLIAC@USYD.EDU.AU) PHONE: +61 (2) 9351 4459

For further information go to <http://www.silliac.org>

# THE LOVE AFFAIR CONTINUES

The trailblazing spirit of SILLIAC endures in two current IT ventures: photonic communication and smart computing.

As with the revolution that started with SILLIAC, research currently being carried out by CUDOS (the Centre for Ultrahigh bandwidth Devices for Optical Systems) will change our world, says its director, Professor Ben Eggleton. Funded by an Australian Research Council grant, five universities and more than 80 researchers are investigating the leading-edge science of photonics – the science and technology of sending, controlling and processing information with photons - and its use in the next generation of optical communications.

Optical physics and photonics have already produced communication systems from the laser to the optical fibre. “We now have an incredibly efficient way of communicating through the internet and cell-phones,” says Eggleton. “It’s one of the breakthroughs of the 20th century.”

CUDOS is researching two main ideas in the field of nanophotonics (the behaviour of light in nano scale dimensions): controlling light in small structures and light-by-light switching. Combined, these ideas could create a photonic chip, a microprocessor that relies on photons or light beams.

Currently, information can be transported with photonics, which has given us the internet. But electronics still does much of the processing or information control. An electronic switch relies on an electrical current to turn a light beam on and off, and this is a slow process. CUDOS’s solution uses another optical beam, called light-by-light switching, to do this and is 1000 times faster.

Eggleton says the University of Sydney is leading the world in photonics, bringing together Australia’s top researchers and working on problems that will produce the next generation of optical communication systems.

“It’s fundamental science right now ... a leading-edge and ambitious program that’s about solving problems in 10 to 25 years,” he says. “It’s strategic science to make sure Australia is in the lead.”

## Embedded computing

A separate research group known as the SMART Internet Technology Research Group aims to build smart personalised spaces for the future when computers are more embedded in everyday objects.

“We are looking at a future where computers are closer to personal assistants, where they help you communicate and

keep in touch,” says Associate Professor Judy Kay, co-leader of this group in the School of Information Technologies.

Their first idea, called Keep in Touch, aims to make inter-generational communication easier, so that, for example, grandparents can keep in touch with their grandchildren. Its technology is easy and natural to use and is embedded in the environment. “It could be used by a frail, elderly person or a pre-literate child,” says Professor Kay.

A touch screen shows pictures of people in your closest circle. Touching someone’s picture allows you to send them a message whether they are in your home or another home. The message is delivered a bit like an SMS or email. The system tells the recipient they have a message, they touch the message and it is played. A small child could tell grandma what they did that day.

Another area of research is known as the magic mirror, an exploration of an unobtrusive, “invisible” computer system. When inactive, it looks like a mirror in a frame and is literally “part of the furniture”. But when a member of the family comes up to it and waves, the screen becomes active.

“Because it’s a mirror, you don’t want to touch it but we want people to be able to wave to play and record messages,” Professor Kay says.

*Associate Professor Judy Kay presents a free public lecture, Hidden Intelligence in Pervasive Computing, on Wednesday 25 October 2006 as part of the Sydney Science Forum. The venue is the Eastern Avenue Auditorium, University of Sydney, at 5.30pm. Phone (02) 9351 3021 for more information. Bookings essential.*



Associate Professor Judy Kay ... making computers appear part of the furniture.

Photonics research will change our world, says Professor Ben Eggleton.



# Our man in Washi

Dennis Richardson's integrity and appetite for hard work have taken him through an outstanding career as a public servant all the way to the ambassador's residence. **Melissa Sweet** reports.

**W**hen the new Australian ambassador landed in Washington last year, he came with a wealth of contacts accumulated over the course of an impressive career spanning more than 35 years in the public service, including nine years at the helm of the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation.

Dennis Richardson, (BA '69), AO, arrived with the reputation of a traditional public servant. Those who know him were not at all surprised the Howard Government would choose for its most important diplomatic posting someone who had once worked for Bob Hawke. "It's a measure of the person: that he is a very trusted and trustworthy person," says a senior political journalist.

Richardson, 58, and his wife Betty also brought with them, at some considerable cost, their two Rottweilers, Henry and Annabel.

"They have settled in very well," Richardson says. "Henry wasn't always friendly with everyone in Australia. He's taken to the diplomatic life very well. He's a very clever dog and he's picked up very quickly on the need to be friendly in this job."

Asked if the ambassador is identifying with his dog or vice versa, Richardson laughs. "I think he's seen Betty and I doing things differently and he's thought, 'I will get into the swing of that'."

He is clearly delighted by his posting, particularly the challenge of a task so different to his former role at ASIO.

"In this job I am paid to be nice to people," he says. "In my last job I wasn't. In this job I am paid to have a horizontal depth of knowledge. In my last job it was vertical depth of knowledge."

It is difficult to imagine anything could be tougher than his previous gig, in which Richardson saw ASIO through one of Australia's biggest security challenges – the Sydney Olympics – as well as the aftermath of September 11, 2001, the Bali bombing, the attack on the Australian Embassy in Indonesia and many other high-profile incidents.

Close friends saw the toll that job took on him. "He was under great pressure, you could see that. He looked tired," says one of Richardson's regular lunch companions from his Canberra days.

But the Washington circuit is not all cocktails. He has stepped into large shoes: his predecessor, Michael Thawley, is a tough act to follow, having been described by one foreign policy analyst as "one of our most successful ambassadors ever in Washington".

Richardson's first few months in the job coincided with Hurricane Katrina, when the Australian mission came under criticism for being slow to retrieve Australians from New Orleans. Richardson was quick to point out on radio the frustrations and difficulties involved, including authorities' refusal to allow Australian officials access to the devastated city.

Richardson's appointment also coincides with difficult times for the Bush Administration, whose foreign policy in Iraq and elsewhere is attracting sustained criticism, domestically and abroad. The ambassador acknowledges the US is sensitive about its international standing.

"They are a superpower," he says. "Not everything they do makes everyone else happy. They sometimes have to make choices and not everyone is happy with their choices. They have faced some very difficult decision making in recent years.

"They had 3,000 people going about their daily lives who were murdered one fine autumn day. That had a generational psyche effect on Americans. Americans are still, and understandably so, emotional when they talk about that, and lots of things have unfolded from that. Americans are conscious of the fact that they are not liked everywhere. But you can't go through life determining your actions by whether they will make you popular, either as an individual or a country."

Richardson points out, however, that it is not only our shared security interests that make Australia's relationship with the US so vital.

"If you take into account two-way trade and two-way investment, it is by far and away the biggest economic relationship we have globally," he says. "Whatever direction trade with China or other countries goes ... it will be a long time before we develop a two-way investment relationship with another country of the same size."

# ngton

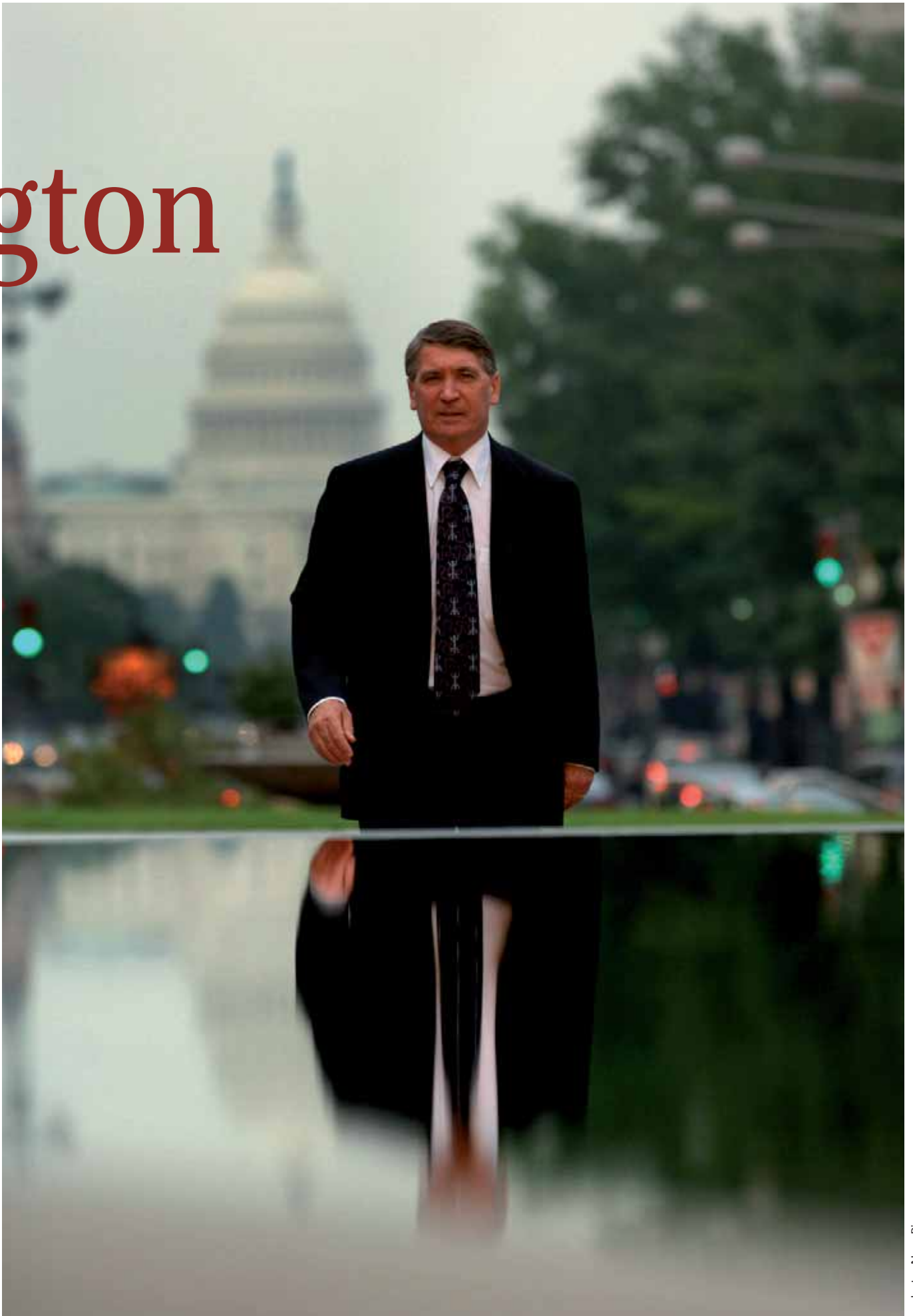


photo: NewsPix

Australia's ambassador to the US, Dennis Richardson ... 'most things in life happen by accident'.





photo: NewsPix

Ambassador at work ... 'There is a kind of low-key ease about his style', says former teacher Neville Meaney.

Indeed, according to Dr Alan Dupont, a former senior fellow at the Lowy Institute for International Policy and now holder of the University of Sydney's Michael Hintze Chair in International Security Studies, one of the ambassador's most pressing tasks will be to balance our sometimes competing relationships with the US and China, especially in light of the tensions surrounding Taiwan.

He will also have the challenge of maintaining Australia's high-level access in Washington after the departures of George Bush and John Howard, Dupont says. "He's got to be thinking about how the whole dynamic of the relationship could change, what's going to keep Australia being relevant in Washington."

He would be well advised, Dupont says, to play upon Australia's regional expertise. "The one thing the Americans respect us for is our knowledge and our connections in Asia, especially south-east Asia."

It is not only Richardson's tenure at ASIO that will come in handy here: his links with Indonesia date back to the early 1980s, when he spent four years there with Foreign Affairs.

## University connections

In the mid 1960s, a country boy with little understanding or expectation of the world arrived at the University of Sydney on a teacher's scholarship to do a Bachelor of Arts. Like many of his generation, he was the first in his family to go to university.

Few could have predicted that he would one day be profiled by *The Bulletin* magazine as "one of the most powerful people in Australia".

Dennis Richardson was born in Kempsey but spent most of his childhood in Albury, where his father was a railway shunter. The junior Richardson was a sports nut – he competed in swimming and athletics and played cricket, Australian rules and rugby league – and was not renowned at school for an academic bent.

But university opened up new possibilities. While many contemporaries were protesting against the Vietnam War, Richardson applied himself to his studies and made friendships that would last a lifetime. "My memories of Sydney Uni are very fond," he says.

Mike Phelps, who went on to become president of the Law Council of Australia, boarded with Richardson, sharing an enclosed veranda at a house in Haberfield. He came to know his room-mate as diligent and happy to share a robust debate.

"His analytical skills are as good as any I've ever seen in a lawyer," says Phelps, who now runs a law firm in Canberra. "His power in putting or defending a position was evident in those early years."

Richardson eventually abandoned his teaching plans and asked one of his lecturers in the history department, Neville Meaney, to supervise his honours thesis.

Meaney suggested he might like to work on Edmund Leolin Piesse, who was Australia's chief of military intelligence during World War I and so impressed his superiors that he was subsequently appointed head of the Pacific branch of the Prime Minister's Department. Piesse believed policy should be based on knowledge and was critical of the White Australia Policy for damaging relations with Japan.

Meaney, who still works part-time at the University and is still in contact with Richardson, enjoys the coincidence of his protegee's thesis subject and his subsequent career. "It [the thesis] does have some relation possibly to his later career," says Meaney. "It may be that it helped him think about Australian foreign policy problems, especially with respect to Asia."

Richardson credits Meaney as a significant influence, especially for suggesting he apply to the Department of Foreign Affairs. He was one of the 1969 intake, which became famous for producing so many high achievers. They included John Dauth, who became ambassador to the United Nations, Ric Smith, who would run the Defence Department, Sandy

## “Power does not seem in any way to have corrupted his personality.”

Hollway, who would run the Sydney Olympics, Miles Kupa, who would be ambassador to Thailand, Bill Farmer, who would become ambassador to Indonesia, and Allan Gyngell, who would be foreign affairs adviser to former PM Paul Keating.

Meaney was initially drawn to Richardson by his “commitment to hard work and fair mindedness” and is impressed that he has retained those qualities.

“There is a kind of low-key ease about his style in which he listens to what you have to say and does so in the most amiable way; that has not changed one iota from the time I first knew him,” says Meaney. “Power does not seem in any way to have corrupted his personality, as far as his dealings with me anyway. There’s nothing of pomposity or pretentiousness. There’s a certain simple kind of quality to his personality. It’s very deceiving for some people when they first meet him.”

In other quarters, however, Richardson is known for being tough, exacting and not suffering fools.

“The moment you meet Richardson you get the impression he’s not someone to be messed with,” the journalist John Lyons once wrote. “He’s one of those rare people who seems more intimidating when he smiles than when he’s earnest.”

Another journalist once picked up his phone to cop a 45-minute barrage from the head of ASIO, who was not at all impressed by a story he had just read. The experience left the reporter shaken; Richardson knew just how to prey on his weak spots. He was stunned when Richardson suddenly ended the phone call, saying he had to go because the football had just started.

Some time later, the journalist received another phone call after writing a tough piece about an ASIO slip-up. This time, Richardson was ringing with congratulations for a well-researched, straightforward piece. The experience left the journalist with the impression of a tough but fair-minded operator.

### ASIO transformer

Richardson earned widespread respect for his transformation of ASIO, which grew in influence, staffing, funding and legislative power under his leadership. Some observers also credit him with increasing the agency’s accountability.

Ironically, Richardson had previously been responsible for major cutbacks to the agency resulting from a 1992 review of intelligence services that he carried out for the Keating government.

“Dennis has been by far and away the most effective and formidable head of ASIO in the organisation’s history,” says Dupont. “He is one of the most outstanding public servants we’ve seen for a long time.”

The editorial writers at *The Sydney Morning Herald* were similarly impressed, writing last year that “Mr Howard and Australia have been so well served by Mr Richardson at ASIO that the only question mark over his shift to Washington is whether he can satisfactorily be replaced.”

Phelps says those who don’t know Richardson might be surprised by some of his views. “He’s very deeply concerned about human rights issues; he’s not right wing at all on any of his views. He’s very, very concerned about the rights of individuals and the disadvantaged and things like that. So I find it ironic

when people who don’t know him criticise him for wanting to bring in these draconian laws. They don’t know the individual.”

Richardson says one of the things he enjoys about the US is that “it is a country in which ideas are constantly debated”. He also admires its history of philanthropy which, he says, makes Australian universities envious. “There is a tradition of giving in this country which doesn’t exist anywhere else in the world,” he says.

He says his latest appointment came as a complete surprise. “Most things in life happen by accident,” he says.

Nor is he making long-term plans about what might be the next entry on his CV. Asked what he would like to be doing in 10 years’ time, he laughs and answers in what seems to be typically forthright style. “I am buggered if I know,” he says. “One, I’d like to be alive. I’d like to be able to drink some good Australian red wine. I’d like to have a good set of relationships within the family.

“Essentially, I have been in the workforce since 1969 and I have been paid to do a hobby. I continue to love it and I would hope that anything I am doing in 10 years time, I am continuing to enjoy.”

*Ambassador Richardson addressed a University of Sydney alumni reception in Washington DC on March 16 this year, and is the keynote speaker at the Sydney University Graduates Union of North America (SUGUNA) annual conference on August 3 – 6, 2006. More details page 30.*

### CV in brief

2005 appointed Australian ambassador to the USA

2003 made Officer of the Order of Australia (AO)

1996-2005 director-general, ASIO

1993-1996 deputy secretary, Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs

1992-1993 first assistant secretary, social policy division, Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet

1992 head of the Review of the Intelligence Community

1990-1991 principal adviser to the prime minister

1988-1990 first assistant secretary, international division, Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet

1987-1988 assistant secretary, foreign affairs branch, Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet

1986-1987 assistant secretary, refugee and humanitarian branch, Department of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs

1969-1986 various positions in Department of Foreign Affairs including in Nairobi, Port Moresby and Jakarta.

1969 Bachelor of Arts with Honours, The University of Sydney



# THE VALUE OF INTELLIGENT DESIGN

Junk science it may be, but we have much to learn from the popularity of intelligent design.

Last year when Brendan Nelson (then Federal education minister) proclaimed that intelligent design should be taught in science classrooms in schools alongside evolution if parents wish it, Australia was drawn into a debate that was already raging in the United States and Europe among politicians, in the popular press and even in the courts. Christian fundamentalists had begun to push for the doctrine of intelligent design to be included in the school science curriculum as an alternative to evolutionary theory, typically viewing it as a way to reinterpret creationism by dressing it up in scientific rhetoric and reasoning. But as with any contentious issue, what lay beneath this seemingly straightforward question of promoting free thought and “choice” in the classroom was

a much more complicated set of historical contexts and meta-physical claims.

Intelligent design is based on the idea that so-called “blind” evolution cannot explain the natural world. The complexity of organisms is taken as evidence that there must have been some sort of cosmic “designer”. One of the earliest exponents of such a view was the English theologian William Paley, who used the now infamous analogy (which entered pop culture through Richard Dawkins) of the watchmaker. As Paley wrote in the early 1800s, if we were to find a pocket watch in a field, we would immediately conclude that it had been produced by a designer with intellectual abilities similar to those of humans, rather than having been produced via natural processes acting



## The success of intelligent design points to a critically important issue facing us today: our understandings and expectations of science.

blindly or randomly. More generally, he argued that the natural world contains plentiful evidence of a supernatural creator. This basic argument came to be known as the “argument from design”, and held sway until the theories proposed by Charles Darwin in his 1859 *Origin of Species* began to become widespread. The *Origin* provides detailed evidence to support evolution by natural selection, and Darwin argued for it in part based on a sort of principle of unification, which held that this theory was most likely to be correct, as otherwise it would be difficult to explain why a false theory could explain so many disparate types of facts.

According to modern versions of Darwinism, the action of evolution is a combination of random mutation and natural selection. Usually, random mutations are bad, even lethal, for organisms; more rarely, a random mutation to the genome can result in a trivial positive change to an organism's functioning and hence its survival. The new, slightly improved type of organism is likely to become more common in subsequent

generations, reflecting the action of natural selection. If you imagine this process repeated incrementally over billions of years, you can begin to see how organisms that are extremely well adapted to their environments, to the point where they look as though they were designed, might have emerged (but also how various, now seemingly ill-adapted organisms might have arisen as well).

Today's proponents of intelligent design are not biblical literalists, unlike the creationists who often co-opt their views for their own purposes (and heavily fund so-called research into the claims of intelligent design). They often remain agnostic as to what or who the designer might be, and clearly do not hold that the universe was created in six days, that the Earth is only 10,000 years old or that the fossil record was deposited during the flood in Noah's time. Neither do intelligent design theorists reject the notion that some evolutionary change has occurred during the history of life on Earth. The intelligent design movement's primary claim is that living organisms are



illustration: Doris Unger



too complex to be explained by any natural causes or “mindless” processes. Instead, the design we find in organisms can be accounted for only by invoking a very clever designer of indeterminate nature. They rely on a series of examples, such as the human eye, to illustrate the idea that it is extremely difficult to imagine how complex organs and organisms could have arisen simply through evolution.

For instance, one of intelligent design's main scientific advocates, the biochemist Michael Behe, focuses on the idea that cells are complex not just in degree but in kind, as they contain structures that he claims are irreducibly complex. To explain irreducibility, Behe typically provides the simple example of a mouse-trap. A mouse-trap has a number of different components: a base, a spring, a catch, a hammer and bar to hold down the mouse. All of them have to be present in the right place for the mouse-trap to function: if you remove one piece, it isn't the case that the mouse-trap works less well; it simply doesn't work. So if you consider even relatively simple biological structures such as the bacterial flagellum, you find that 30 to 40 different proteins are required in a particular arrangement for the flagellum to motor around. Since the flagellum needs all its parts to function, it is impossible to imagine it having been built up via gradual mutations combined with selection. Behe thus argues that irreducibly complex cells arise the same way as irreducibly complex devices such as mouse-traps: they must have been designed by someone.

As logical as this argument seems, it fails to consider that perhaps indirect paths to outcomes could explain them: extremely elaborate natural structures may be produced and selected over time for various reasons that change with environmental and other alterations and later prove to be well adapted for yet other reasons. A mouse-trap missing some of its parts might be useful as a tie clip, and the base of a mouse-trap on its own could be useful as a doorstop.

If intelligent design relies on weak arguments and analogies, why has it been relatively successful in the past few years at getting a serious airing, not only among conservatives but more generally in the public sphere even here in Australia, where religious fundamentalism is much less prevalent than in the US? The success of intelligent design points to a critically important issue facing us today: our understandings and expectations of science.

First, even relatively robust critiques of intelligent design often fail to convince us because they do not capture the actual complexities inherent in scientific theory and practice. For instance, consider the frequent claim that the theory of evolution by natural selection has been conclusively proved. This sort of argument reflects sloppy language and reasoning that even an undergraduate student of the philosophy of science would immediately recognise. Most accounts of scientific success hold that no theory can ever be conclusively proved or verified. Our best theories are those that provide explanations of key phenomena that were not provided by earlier, competitor theories.

Scientific theories must be capable of being checked against positive evidence through having testable consequences and hence can be proved wrong (or falsified). Some claim that they should be able to make predictions not just of things that arise directly from the theory itself, but of discoveries that might not be imagined (although it may not be possible to extend this requirement to certain kinds of science that are historically based). Others would argue that the best scientific theories provide more unification of diverse phenomena. The core concepts in the theory of evolution by natural selection have not been cast into doubt as new evidence has been gathered.

In contrast, critical problems arise when one attempts to assess the theory of intelligent design using these principles. It presupposes an invisible causal element that is, by definition, not detectable – the intelligent designer – to explain the observed natural world, an element that cannot be rigorously assessed using the usual scientific methods. Even if the theory of evolution by natural selection were shown to be false, the next best contender would not be intelligent design. But those

who argue against intelligent design often assume that those they are trying to persuade are not clever enough to make these sorts of distinctions, and instead rely on an impoverished, polarised view of what science is, leaving

evolution by natural selection woefully vulnerable to criticism.

Much of today's intelligent design movement is far from rationally scientific and apolitical. The term “intelligent design” was coined in the late 1980s by the law professor Philip Johnson, who described intelligent design as a “wedge” (of the sort used to split a log at its weakest points) to be used as part of an overall strategy to advance a more scientific version of creationism. He clearly recognised that as long as a Bible/science dichotomy was the cornerstone of the debate, science would be the victor for many people. To garb creationism in the cloaks of rationality and science would make it much more compelling for those seeking alternatives, and would liberate science from the grip of “atheistic naturalism” and a “materialist worldview”. He was correct about our needs and fears: we tend to worship science (or, more precisely, a thin caricature of science) as an unrivalled idol worthy of our blind faith, yet it often seems to be failing us.

At a deeper level, the recent popularity of intelligent design underscores disquiet in society about our relationship with science.

For many, science has become our modern, secular saviour, giving us direct access to the cosmos and the mysteries of life. But more recently science has become inaccessible and distant. Increasingly we must rely on experts to tell us what to believe and have stopped thinking and making judgements about what counts as good science. In addition, our often blind faith in science has been shaken. The pay-offs from promissory notes about the miracles of science, particularly medicine, seem distant indeed: the war on cancer seems less likely to reach a satisfactory end any time sooner than the Iraq conflict. For some, the increasing commercialisation of science has changed it from a unique, knowledge-seeking activity to merely another

It is not surprising that we search for options and choices, particularly in our market-driven culture.

big business. It is not surprising that we search for options and choices, particularly in our market-driven culture.

We are often encouraged to think of religious faith in polar opposition to science: to be truly rigorous and scientific, some claim (often implicitly) you must be an atheist. There is an old (and mistaken) association frequently made between Darwinism and atheism, disproved by the example of numerous major scientists since Darwin's time and of course Darwin himself, which nonetheless remains popular today, not in the least thanks to many scientists. This type of fundamentalism is unappealing to many, who turn away from science in search of some meaning. Once again there is a deep cultural need that has been recognised and exploited by those who wish to promote intelligent design and which often is not fully appreciated by its critics.

The intelligent design literature often claims that Darwinism is a thinly veiled attempt to foist a secular replacement for religion, a sort of materialism, onto our modern culture. But as the philosopher Michael Ruse has observed, "It is simply not the case that people take up evolution in the morning, and become atheists as an encore in the afternoon." Although the implications of evolution by natural selection might well influence one's fundamental religious beliefs, they need not change them in a particular defined way.

It is important that we begin to develop more critical attitudes towards science that are grounded in good philosophical principles as well as realistic ideas about what science can give us and how it evolves over time, even sometimes being shown later to be wrong. Intelligent design is not just bad science; it is pseudoscience or junk science. But it is powerful precisely because it seems to give us answers that are simple. Its advocates have been politically and culturally savvy enough to make certain it is compelling to the average listener, not just to those who can follow research articles in *Nature* or *Science*.

It is true that intelligent design does not have an empirical research program, that its scientific supporters have not published data in peer-reviewed journals and that it fails to exhibit the hallmarks of what makes a field or theory scientific. But its advocates in Australia provide a free video featuring trustworthy people in white coats, an authoritative narrator and clear, accessible examples to support its claims, something that often is lacking even in the best science documentaries on television. Science cannot merely be what scientists say it is: science requires public support not only for its financing but for its very survival. But in an era when we all need something to trust, much science is failing to live up to its promises. Intelligent design provides an important lesson: successful science must engage the public, starting in the school classroom, so we can all make intelligent choices about what to believe and who to trust.



*Dr Rachel Ankeny is a University of Sydney senior lecturer in the Unit for History and Philosophy of Science. She is also coordinator of the Sydney Bioethics Program.*

# think future



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## books

# Novel Approach Wins Brooks the Pulitzer Prize

A University of Sydney graduate's love of a classic novel inspired a Pulitzer winner, writes Susan Wyndham.

Geraldine Brooks's nine-year-old son, Nathaniel, summed up her reaction to winning the 2006 Pulitzer Prize for fiction when he told a caller, "Mum can't come now. She's just won the Pulitzer Surprise."

Brooks is the first Australian to win the award. She received the news when a former colleague at *The Wall Street Journal* rang to congratulate her after

the winners were announced in April. "I blew him off and said, 'Pull the other one'," the author of *March* said from Harvard University, where she and her American husband, Tony Horwitz, are on fellowships.

Brooks, who is a former *Sydney Morning Herald* journalist and University of Sydney graduate (BA '74), joins the highest league of US literature, among previous winners such as Edith Wharton, Ernest Hemingway, Toni Morrison and Annie Proulx.

It's easy to say now that Brooks's whole life has led her towards winning the 2006 Pulitzer Prize for fiction. "I took out US citizenship when it became possible to do so without renouncing

my Australian citizenship," she said from her home in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

"I'm living in both places as much as I can and I have a heritage in both places."

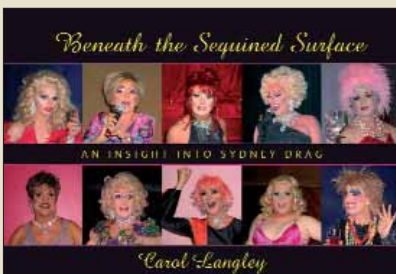
An Australian law change made dual citizenship possible in 2002, but Brooks has always been half-American.

Although she grew up in suburban Sydney, her late father was an American singer who took his name from the swanky clothing company Brooks Bros and worked as a proofreader for Australian Consolidated Press.

Her mother, Gloria, a journalist and radio announcer, gave 10-year-old Geraldine a copy of *Little Women*, the 19th-century classic by Louisa May Alcott.

"Read this," she said. "But take it with

## alumni bookshelf — recently published books by graduates



### **Beneath the Sequined Surface – An Insight into Sydney Drag**

**Carol Langley (BSc '78)**  
Currency Press

Drag is an integral part of Australian culture, and Sydney drag – highly creative and immensely professional – is said to be the best in the world. *Beneath the Sequined Surface* captures the colour and vibrancy of this art and gives a rare insight into the reality of this often-stereotyped scene.

### **The Bohemian Bourgeois**

**David Myers (BA '62 PhD '66)**  
Central Queensland University Press  
The neo-Gothic Great Hall of the University of Sydney is the catalyst in

transforming Benjamin B. from a leather-studded yobbo into a well-read poseur and accidental philanderer. But neither in the loves of bohemia nor in the pseudo-security of the bourgeoisie does he find ultimate solace.

### **Goodnight Bobbie**

**Marilyn Dodkin (MA '90)**  
UNSW Press

Letters between Captain Bobbie Puflett and his parents, Bob and Ethel, reveal one family's experience of life in wartime Sydney and of service in the allied forces before the fall of Singapore.

### **The Imperial Sublime: A Russian Poetics of Empire**

**Harsha Ram (BA '86)**  
University of Wisconsin Press

Examines the rise of the Russian empire as a literary theme, and the creation and evolution of Russian poetry between 1730 and 1840 – a century during which poets defined the central questions facing Russian literature and society.

### **The Memory Book: everyday habits for a healthy memory**

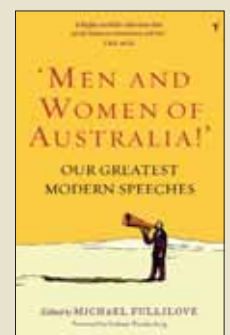
**Janet Wiles (BSc '83, PhD '89) and Judith Wiles, ABC Books**

Memory is our greatest asset and its momentary lapses cause much anxiety. This is an easy-to-read book giving scientific details of normal memory lapses and what to do about them.

### **Men and Women of Australia – Our Greatest Modern Speeches**

**Edited by Michael Fullilove (BA '94)**  
Random House Australia

A collection of the finest Australian speeches delivered since Federation. Each one is a time capsule, a window onto a debate or controversy from our history. Foreword by Graham Freudenberg.



# Pulitzer Prize

a grain of salt. Nobody on earth is such a goody-goody as that Marmee."

Brooks loved *Little Women*, which is about a family of girls cared for by their patient mother while their father is absent at the Civil War. But as an adult Brooks looked into Alcott's life and found the novel was based on her less saintly and more interesting family. So she wrote *March*, the fictional story of Mr March at war. The narrative is based on the journals and letters of Amos Bronson Alcott, Louisa's pacifist father, with a large dose of Brooks's personal idealism.

*Reprinted with permission from the Sydney Morning Herald.*



photo: aap image

Author Geraldine Brooks ... the first Australian to win the Pulitzer.

## The Social Sources of Financial Power

**Leonard Seabrooke (PhD '03)**

Cornell University Press

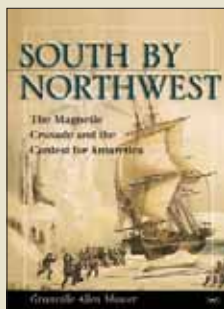
A state's financial power is built on the effect its credit, property, and tax policies have on ordinary people: this is the key message of Leonard Seabrooke's historical investigation, which turns the spotlight away from elite financial actors and toward institutions that matter for the majority of citizens.

## South by Northwest

**Granville Allen Mawer (BA '66)**

Wakefield Press

A re-examination of the forces that have driven



Antarctic exploration

over the past 160 years.

For many, Antarctic history begins and ends with the 1911 race between Scott and Amundsen for the south geographic pole. In reality,

their contest was a brief distraction from the search for the south magnetic pole.

## Travellers' Tales

**Edited by Michael Wilding (DLitt '96)**

and **David Myers (BA '62 PhD '66)**

Central Queensland University Press

An anthology of traveller's tales, with over 30 writers featured including Luke Slattery, Christina Stead, Tom Shapcott, Carmel Bird, Susan Kurosawa, Mark Twain, and Inez Baranay

## Wild Amazement

**Michael Wilding (DLitt '96)**

Central Queensland University Press

From a traditional magic mushroom Australian Christmas, to filming a television documentary in the pastoral

heart of England, Michael Wilding's novel in the form of an autobiography, or autobiography in the form of a novel, is a magnificent panorama of how we have come to live the way we live now.

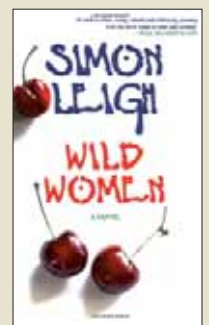
## Wild Women

**Simon Leigh**

(BA '60)

UKAPress

A Sydney couple, Stephen and Eddie Butts, arrive in New Brunswick, Canada, where everything that can go wrong does. Stephen races cars, while his new wife Eddie launches her modern dance company on the locals.



Contributions to this section are welcome. Please send a brief synopsis along with details of the author, degree and year of graduation, title, publisher, release date, and a high res jpeg of the publication's cover to the *Sydney Alumni Magazine* editor (see pg 1 for contact details).



## Gamble's pitch pays-off

In the spring of 1950, Sydney University graduates were sent the first ever issue of a magazine specifically published for them. **Julia Horne** traces the history of the University's alumni publications.

Various literary magazines and newsletters funded by student and graduate bodies, such as the short-lived *Sydney University Magazine* (1855, 1878 - 79), *Hermes* (1886 - 1969), *Honi Soit* (first issue, 1929), and the *Union Recorder* (first issue, 1921) were published by the University of Sydney from the mid-19th century onwards, but it was not until 1950 that graduates received their first-ever newsletter intended to keep them informed about the University as a substantial civic institution.

This new magazine was a significant undertaking. By 1950 the University of

Sydney had thousands of graduates and a broad population outside its gates, most of whom knew of 'the University', even if they rarely thought about it.

The decision to publish the *Gazette* is not recorded in the Senate minutes, nor do we know who made the suggestion, nor why, so we have to speculate about how the idea may have come about.

The year 1950 itself was significant for the University, being the centenary year of the parliamentary Act that created the University, and, as a result a committee had been established to explore how to celebrate this moment of foundation.

We can imagine that an idea for a magazine to keep the public, particularly graduates, informed about the University would not have been out of place, especially as the University had recently become interested in the idea of public relations.

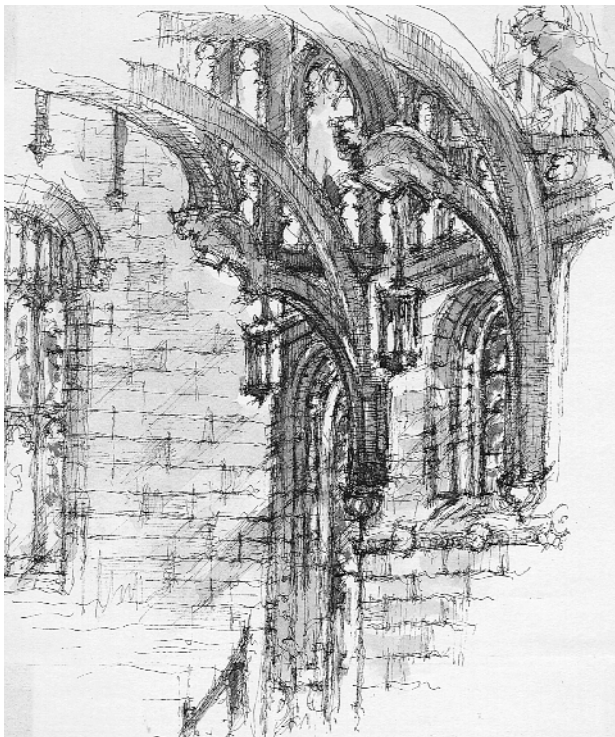
Allan Gamble, one of the longest-serving editors of the magazine (1952 - 1972), though first appointed to the University in 1945 as a senior lecturer in Architecture, explained in a 1976 interview that the creation of the Information and Public Relations Services in 1951 came from concern that the University had become too detached from the public affairs of

Sydney, was perceived as an ivory tower of irrelevance, and that this did not bode well for its future. The usefulness of public relations was on the mind of the University's then Vice-Chancellor Professor Stephen Roberts when he asked Gamble to extend his sabbatical, taken in the first part of 1950, to look at public relations activities in American universities.

The title of the new magazine – *The Gazette* – had been widely used in large towns in Britain and Australia for publications containing official dispatches as well as local news. A number of British universities also had university magazines called the *Gazette*, as did the University of Melbourne, which first published theirs in 1945. The title was seen to convey a sense of regular communication.

The Vice-Chancellor wrote the introduction to the first issue of the University of Sydney's *Gazette* explaining that while the purpose was to inform people about University activities and trends – the “positive achievements” alongside the “difficulties and worries” – he also recognised that such a magazine could do much more. Roberts believed in the inspirational possibility of intellectual inquiry. He explained, “it is our intention to publicise challenging and provocative statements by local and visiting experts. ... discerning analysis of trends and problems that ... constitutes the primal academic heritage under which it is our main duty to train the mind wheresoever the conclusions may lead.”

He continued: “If that were not the



Detail from Allan Gamble's sketch of the Great Hall ... reminders of the past.



case ... instead of producing a vibrant cross-section of University activities, we would be reducing the *Gazette* to a colourless hand-out of material best recorded, and indeed buried, in Minutes of Proceedings”.

The purpose of the magazine as a town crier was to provide news about everyday activities. Yet with the University's mighty graduate base, it might also be an important conduit of some of the University's scholarly endeavours.

The first few issues were more like newsletters filled with brief items of interest, but in 1952, with Allan Gamble as editor, the magazine began to take off. Alongside the town-crier segments, the eighth issue also had opinion pieces about university education in America, and about the importance of a general education. In the ninth issue, the professor of Anthropology A. P. Elkin, wrote an article titled *Race Relations in World Perspective*. By 1954, the magazine was occasionally illustrated with sometimes striking black and white photographs, and included works by professional photographers such as Max Dupain, who photographed the ebb and flow of university life in the early 1950s. In the early 1960s Allan Gamble, a skilled draughtsman, illustrated the magazine with his own ink drawings of the University's nineteenth and early twentieth century buildings, a reminder of the past at a time when multi-storeyed modern buildings were changing the appearance of the University.

The quality of the magazine was not always even – perhaps because the new



Past *Gazette* covers ... reflecting the vital role universities play in society.

editor was learning about magazines on the run – yet there was much to interest and intrigue, including, for instance, an article about the swinging voter in the new area of electoral sociology by the professor of Government and Public Administration, R. N. Spann, and an article about nuclear science and engineering by the professor of Electrical Engineering D. M. Myers which began:

The dropping of two airborne atomic bombs on Japan in 1945 not only destroyed two cities, but also demonstrated to the world the immense significance of Einstein's equivalence relationship:

$$E=mc^2$$

The challenge for alumni magazines, as

they're now called, is to achieve the right balance between newsletter and magazine of ideas. They are based in public relations, yet have great potential for communicating detailed scholarly enquiry accessibly. Even a quick browse through a backlist should provide a sense of the vital role universities play in a society and their contribution to their well-being. The new *Sydney Alumni Magazine*, successor to the *Gazette*, has a solid base to build upon.

*Dr Julia Horne is the University Historian and author of The Pursuit of Wonder: how Australia's landscape was explored, nature discovered and tourism released (Miegunyah Press 2005). She is currently working on public universities and the rise of a liberal meritocracy in Australia.*



The University of Sydney

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## Making connections for life

A reinvigorated alumni committee aims to build life-long partnerships with University of Sydney graduates. **Chris Rodley** reports.

**T**he University of Sydney is set to strengthen ties with graduates as part of a major initiative by the Standing Committee of Convocation (SCC) to involve alumni in the life of the University.

Last year, the Standing Committee – an alumni body established over 60 years ago – responded to the University's growing recognition of the importance of their alumni by developing new strategies to help provide a voice for alumni and represent their interests.

Reinvigorated with representatives from a range of alumni associations and faculties, the SCC's mission is to bring about a life-long partnership between the University and its former students.

"We know from speaking to alumni that there is a real desire out there to become more involved – whether that means joining an alumni association,

attending a lecture held by their faculty or simply keeping in touch with old classmates," explains the new SCC president, Dr Barry Catchlove (MBBS '66). "To help foster these relationships, the Standing Committee has agreed on a number of key priorities for the year ahead."

The first step for the SCC will be to open up the lines of communication with alumni who are no longer in touch with the University. Assisting with a range of strategies developed by the Alumni Office and enlisting the help of Australia Post, the committee aims to find contact details for these 85,000 'lost alumni'.

Another important objective for the committee is to introduce current students to the alumni network from their first day on campus.

"We want to make every student aware of the powerful array of social and professional connections they will gain once they graduate," Dr Catchlove says. "What we are doing will also help students to become ambassadors for the University in the community, promoting its reputation in social, business and professional circles."

"If we treat students as future alumni

from the day they come to the University we will go a long way to beginning this life long partnership", he said.

To achieve this, students and alumni will be brought together in a wide range of settings. For example, students from Beijing and Shanghai about to begin a degree at the University were recently brought together with alumni living in China for a briefing on what to expect from their Sydney experience. A new alumni mentoring program due to be rolled out over the next 12 months will give students the opportunity to receive advice and career guidance from alumni in their discipline. The Medical Graduates Association and other alumni groups are helping students with overseas electives by putting them in touch with expatriate alumni.

The SCC will also boost its support for various alumni associations – the faculty, regional and internationally based groups of alumni. Existing associations will be strengthened and collaborative opportunities developed, while new groups will be created to service the large number of alumni overseas and within Australia.

A Central Western NSW association, serving more than 2,000 alumni in that part of NSW will be launched in 2006.



### UPCOMING UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY ALUMNI EVENTS IN THE ASIA-PACIFIC REGION

Place them in your diary now!

**Kuala Lumpur**  
Malaysia Alumni Reception  
Tues 19 Sept, 6.30-8.30pm

**Singapore**  
Singapore Alumni Reception  
Wed 27 Sept, 7.00-9.00pm

**Shanghai**  
China Alumni Dinner  
Mon Oct, 6.30-8.30pm

**Hong Kong**  
Hong Kong Alumni Dinner  
Wed 1 Nov, 7.30-10.00pm

For further details please visit [www.usyd.edu.au/overseasevents](http://www.usyd.edu.au/overseasevents) or telephone +61 2 9351 2673





Dr Barry Catchlove ... recently elected president of the Standing Committee of Convocation.

Over 100 alumni attended their first event, a presentation in Dubbo by noted science reporter Dr Robin Williams (DSc '88).

"A presentation by Justice Geoffrey Robertson QC (BA '67, LLB '70) organised by the UK Alumni Association in late 2005, is another great example of the way associations provide alumni with access to the intellectual life of the University long after they have graduated," says Tracey Beck, director of Alumni Relations.

The Standing Committee will work towards increasing participation in the prestigious Alumni Awards program, which recognises service to the community by alumni in areas such as creativity, dedication and leadership. Past recipients of an award include Bell Shakespeare Company founder John Bell AM OBE (BA '63, D Litt '96), architect Louise Cox AM (BArch '63 Dip TCP '71) and social commentator Hugh Mackay (BA '62).

"Strengthening the awards program gives us the opportunity to highlight the diverse contributions made by University of Sydney alumni throughout society," says Ms Beck. "Alumni are one of the University's most valuable assets, and they play a vitally important role in our success into the future."

For further information about the SCC or to get involved with your alumni association, contact the Alumni Relations Office on 61 2 9036 9222, [alumadmin@vcc.usyd.edu.au](mailto:alumadmin@vcc.usyd.edu.au) or visit [www.usyd.edu.au/alumni](http://www.usyd.edu.au/alumni)



Henri Szeps entertains guests at the 2006 Physics annual dinner.

### Physics gathering

The 2006 Physics Dinner was held on March 30. Over 130 staff, students, alumni and supporters of the School of Physics enjoyed fine food and good company in the dining hall of the University's Women's College.

The winner of the 2006 Messel Award for excellence was Dr John O'Byrne (BSc '81, PhD Sc '87, Cert Ed Stud '04). Emeritus Professor Harry

Messel addressed the guests in his inimitable style.

Renowned actor and physics alumnus Henri Szeps (BSc '64, BE Elec '66) gave the after-dinner address, speaking on topics as diverse as the essence of humour, the overlap of the sciences and the arts, and the evolutionary basis for our species' tendency towards environmental destruction.

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### Chinese Studies marks 50th anniversary

This year marks 50 years since the University of Sydney began teaching Chinese Studies (resuming a tradition that began before the Second World War).

To mark this important anniversary, all alumni and friends of the Department of Chinese Studies are invited to attend a reunion gathering in the Woolley Common Room, Woolley Building, University of Sydney, on Friday 11 August from 6pm to 8pm.

The evening will provide an opportunity to meet current staff, students and alumni and to hear about the diverse research and teaching in the Department. Guest speaker is Dr Mabel Lee (BA '62, PhD Arts '66), a distinguished member of the alumni community.

For further information contact Professor Jocelyn Chey on (02) 9351 2878 or send an email to [jocelyn.chey@arts.usyd.edu.au](mailto:jocelyn.chey@arts.usyd.edu.au).

# alumni updates

## Economics & Business hosts networking events

Over 100 guests gathered for the first Sydney-based Economics and Business Alumni and Friends function at the Union Club in Sydney on April 5, 2006.

The Dean, Professor Peter Wolnizer (MEcon '76, PhD Econ '86) and John Egan, chairman of the Faculty's advisory board, welcomed graduates. Guests enjoyed catching up with friends and hearing about the diverse fields which alumni have entered into, ranging from senior business positions in Australia and internationally to world leaders within the United Nations and World Bank.

The Faculty also hosted students completing their studies in 2006 at a "farewell BBQ" and welcomed them to alumni community. Guests heard from recent graduates about their career

experiences and from some of the leading professional business associations including CPA Australia about the value of building professional and business networks.

For more news and events from the Faculty of Economics and Business, please contact Veronica Pardey (ph: +61 2 9036 6271 or [v.pardey@usyd.edu.au](mailto:v.pardey@usyd.edu.au)).

## SUGUNA conference

The Sydney University Graduates Union of North America (SUGUNA) Conference will be held from August 3 – 6, at the University of California in Berkeley.

The keynote speaker is Australia's Ambassador to the USA, Dennis Richardson (BA '69). Sessions will be presented on a diverse range of topics of interest to alumni, from Early



Vice-Chancellor Professor Gavin Brown with Australia's Ambassador to the US, Dennis Richardson, and Deputy Vice-Chancellor Professor Don Nutbeam, at an alumni reception in Washington DC on 16 March 2006.

Australian Art and the Archibald Prize to an astrophysics lecture on The Accelerating Universe. Social activities include golf and tennis and a tour of the newly built De Young Fine Arts Museum of San Francisco.

Further details will be posted online at [www.usyd.edu.au/alumni/suguna](http://www.usyd.edu.au/alumni/suguna)

## What legacy will you leave?

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The University of Sydney



### Dubbo reception hits the mark

Over 100 alumni in Central West NSW attended an inaugural alumni cocktail reception on March 15 at the School of Rural Health, Dubbo Campus, to hear science journalist and host of the ABC's Science show, Dr Robin Williams AM (DSc '88).

It was a very entertaining evening and alumni enjoyed meeting new alumni and old friends.

Building on recent support by a core group in Dubbo, graduates were advised that a new alumni chapter in Central West NSW will be established in 2006.

Dr Williams said alumni have been a great source of support to him throughout his career and that it was wonderful that an alumni chapter was being established in the region.

To keep informed of future University of Sydney alumni events and activities in your area, visit the University of Sydney Alumni Web Community at [www.usyd.edu.au/alumni](http://www.usyd.edu.au/alumni) and ensure your contact details are up-to-date.

### Honorary degrees for alumni

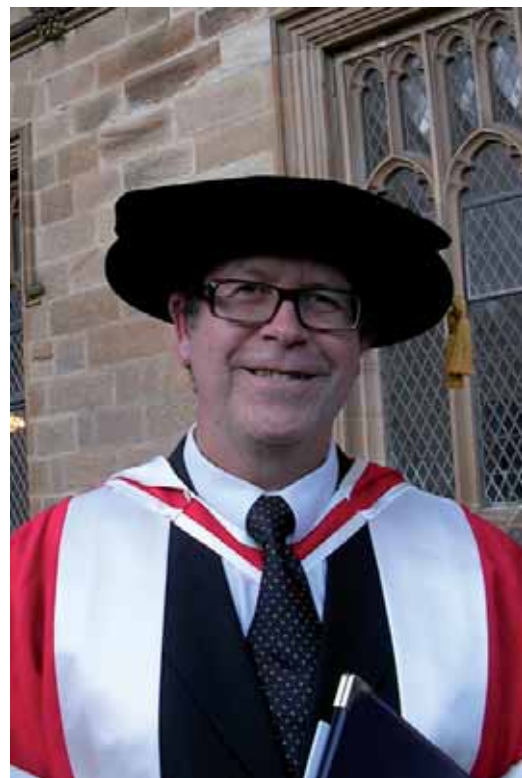
Theatre director Neil Armfield (BA Hons '77), human rights barrister Justice Geoffrey Robertson QC (BA '67 LLB '70), and historian Dr Jill Ker Conway (BA '58) were awarded honorary degrees at the University recently.

Justice Robertson was awarded an honorary degree of Doctor of Laws, while Neil Armfield was awarded an honorary Doctor of Literature. Dr Jill Ker Conway was conferred the honorary degree of Doctor of Letters.

Justice Robertson has practiced human rights law in jurisdictions across five continents, and presented the BBC and ABC series, *Hypotheticals*.

Neil Armfield began directing plays for Sydney University Dramatic Society, and since 1984, has been most strongly associated with the work of Sydney's Belvoir Street Theatre.

Dr Ker Conway gained a doctorate in history from Harvard University, and has written three autobiographical books, *Road from Coorain*, *True North: a memoir* and *A Women's Education*. She was the first woman to be appointed



Director Neil Armfield ... honorary Doctor of Literature.

chair of the Lend Lease Corporation, in 2000, and is a visiting professor at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.



Dean of Law, Professor Ron McCallum ... travelled unique pathways.

### Breakfast connections

Over 110 alumni and guests were entertained by the University of Sydney's Dean of Law Professor Ron McCallum's presentation, *My Life and the Law*, at the Graduate Connections Breakfast in March at the QVB Tearoom, Sydney.

Becoming visually impaired in his pre-teen years, Professor McCallum spoke of the unique pathways that led him to become an expert in industrial relations law.

Professor McCallum spoke of the positive impact of information technology, particularly for the visually impaired. He also spoke about new developments in the Law Faculty including the capital campaign for the new Law Building on Eastern Avenue of the main campus. He said the new building offers Law undergraduates the opportunity to experience campus life and benefit from interdisciplinary activities. He said the Philip Street building in Sydney will continue to be

used for postgraduate students and alumni engagement activities.

Upcoming speakers for the Graduate Connections Breakfast series at the QVB Tearoom include IBM Pharmaceutical and Life Sciences general manager Caroline Kovacs, speaking on September 12, and IAG chief executive Michael Hawker (BSc '83), speaking on November 1. More information available at [www.usyd.edu.au/alumni](http://www.usyd.edu.au/alumni)

### Applications open for Health Sciences award

Applications are sought for the Faculty of Health Sciences annual Graduates Association Award, offered to members of the association. Application forms are available from the Faculty office on (02) 9351 9572. Additional information is available from Helga Pettitt (Dip Comm Nurs '79, Dip Adv Clin Nurs '91) on (02) 9988 0079, or Dr. Jeffrey Miller AM (BA '57, M Ed '62), PO Box 4057 Gerroa NSW 2534.

## 2000s

**Anthony Christie (BA '01)** taught English at a school in Kaiping, China, from September to December 2005. There were 500 students at the school, 40 teachers and excellent facilities. Anthony reports that he had a wonderful experience (not bad for an 80-year old without a degree in English).

**Julianne Kelly (MBBS '01)** was at Sancta Sophia College from 1997 to 1998. She gained FRACGP in 2005 and is now happily living in Melbourne and working in general practice. In February 2006 she married Dr Colin French (UQ).

**Adam Wand (BA '00 LLB '02)** has worked for the NSW Attorney General's Department in Sydney, as a

foreign lawyer at Anderson Mori Attorneys in Tokyo, and with Freshfields Bruckhaus Derringer, the world's third largest law firm in London. Whilst in the UK, Adam achieved a Masters in International Relations as a Sir Arthur Simms Travelling Scholar at the London School of Economics and a Bachelor of Civil Law (Law Masters) with Distinction at St Edmund Hall College, Oxford. Adam recently returned to Sydney and was appointed policy advisor to the Hon Cherie Burton MP, NSW Minister for Housing. Adam has also been elected to the National Committee of the Australian Republican Movement.

**Kar Yeo (MBBS '01)** has been a specialist registrar in radiation oncology (Townsville and Brisbane) since 2004. He has attended and presented at major

national and international radiology and radiation oncology conferences. He is currently living in Brisbane.

## 1990s

**Matthew Bieniek (BMus '99 MMus (Comp) '02)** is a composer. In 2003 he represented Australia at the International Society for Contemporary Music World Music Days 2003, and won a worldwide competition. He was commissioned to write a piece which premiered at the Gaudeamus Music Week in Amsterdam in September 2005.

**James Chegwidan (BA '99 LLB '04)** teamed up with another University of Sydney graduate, Gareth Tilley (BA '01 LLB '04) in the Oxford University Moot Competition sponsored by Shearman & Sterling. Forty Oxford teams participated in the sudden death competition, on a question of restitutionary damages. Fortunately, James and Gareth won! The final was against Brasenose College, Oxford and was judged by Justice Paul Walker of the High Court on 11 February 2006. James and Gareth are now both studying for the degree of Bachelor of Civil Law (BCL) at Oxford.

**Marilyn Dodkin (MA '90)** graduated with a PhD at Macquarie University in 2001. Since then she has published three books. They are: *Brothers: Eight*

*Leaders of the Labor Council of New South Wales* (UNSW Press 2001); *Bob Carr: The Reluctant Leader* (UNSW Press 2003); and *Goodnight Bobbie: One Family's War* (UNSW Press 2006).

**Rebecca Duncum (née Joseph) (BSc '98)** has achieved a Diploma in Horticulture, State Medal and a Graduate Diploma in Education. She is currently employed as a Ranger at Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park.

**Kevin Hiscutt (MEd '95)** founded a private tutoring business partnership with his wife Angela in 1995 in Bass Hill, Sydney. They moved to Denham Court, Sydney in 2000, and are establishing a business tutoring centre there.

**Jeffrey Looi (MBBS '92)** was a Fulbright Visiting Scholar in 2005. He continues as a visiting professor at the Laboratory of Neuro Imaging, Department of Neurology, UCLA School of Medicine, and remains based in Canberra. He will conduct further MRI neuro imaging research at the Karolinska Institute in September 2006.

**Melissa Maimann (BN '99)** completed a Graduate Diploma in Midwifery at the University of Newcastle in 2000. She is living in Sydney, studying her MBA full-time at the Australian Graduate School of Management.

## SHARE YOUR NEWS

University of Sydney alumni are invited to share their news in this section of the *Sydney Alumni Magazine*.

We're interested in hearing news of your career, academic achievements, community involvement, or other events.

Please send your news via email or post to the *Sydney Alumni Magazine* editor. Full contact details are listed on page 1.

You can also update your details and search for classmates online by registering with your Alumni Web Community at [www.usyd.edu.au/alumni](http://www.usyd.edu.au/alumni)





## 1980s

Linda King (née Leung) (BSc '87 BE (Chem) '90) is a life coach helping people create the lives they want to live and helping people move smoothly into their retirement.

Chris Mansell (BEcon '76) recently published her long awaited collection of poems, *Mortifications & Lies*. It includes *Lies* (winner of the Queensland Premier's Poetry Award) and *&* (a winner in the subversive awards).

Mark Nicholl (BEd (Second) (Hum) '88) is working as Rusty the Robot, a character clown, in *The Jollybops Science Shows*. Together with Trevor Atkinson (BEd (Second) (Sc) '91) he has combined the creative arts and science disciplines in a wacky science show for K-6 primary schools. They tour Australia, making science fun through explosions, loud pops and all sorts of colourful, chemical reactions.

Yvonne Sum (BDS '86) advises that her initial dental career led her to working with families with apprehensive and phobic children, and facilitating parenting programs. She hung up the drill seven years ago to enter the field of corporate training, coaching and facilitation. She says her experience shows how a bachelor's degree is never wasted, it's a launch-pad for those in pursuit of their true purpose in life.

## The key to life

### What I know about music ...

**Dagmar Roberts may be the oldest surviving student** of the Sydney Conservatorium of Music, but she is no shrinking violet. "I'm proud of being 95 – I'm not at all reticent about it," she says. The former concert pianist, examiner and teacher has been in the limelight for more than 70 years.

A child prodigy, Roberts began learning the piano at the age of three and won her first competition at the Drummoyne Eisteddfod only five years later.

"I had a great aunt who was a wonderful teacher ... she made me go and play the whole [exam] program in the dark," she says.

"It's a wonderful idea because now I'm nearly blind and I can play.

"I handed that on to a lot of other teachers because you see people groping around looking for notes. You have to play by feel."

Roberts went on to win every competition she entered.

"I know now that I was a child prodigy – I never realised it until I was about 80 – and I thought I must have been good if I played those things. I can't play them now!"

Roberts began her studies at the Conservatorium high school in 1922 and began the music diploma class in 1925. Earlier she took violin lessons but wasn't enthralled by the instrument, finding the posture required to play it "unnatural".

At the age of 17 she was, at the time, the youngest student in New South Wales to obtain a performer's diploma.

At the Con, Roberts encountered Dame Nellie Melba shrieking at a conductor during rehearsals and another star performer snoozing under the grand piano before a performance.

In 2001 she was a guest of honour at the opening of the new Conservatorium, as the oldest surviving student of the school and tertiary institution.

Although her international career was cut short by World War II, Roberts had no regrets "once the babies started coming".



Pianist Dagmar Roberts ... "I'm proud of being 95".

She has four children, nine grandchildren and one great-grandson. She had a long teaching and examining career with the Australian Music Examinations Board while she raised her children. She retired as an examiner at the age of 70.

She recalls many career highlights, such as receiving tributes from Dame Mary Gilmore, and more than a few hair-raising moments. There was the infamous conductor who lost his place ("he wasn't very musical"), sheets of music disappearing moments before a packed encore performance and those stomach-sickening nerves that plague the artist to this day, even when she plays for visitors.

"Another time the lights failed in the middle of one of my solos in a country town in Queensland. I just went on playing. That was when learning to play in the dark was a great help."

A self-confessed crossword addict, Roberts now spends her time reading and playing her glossy grand piano, which fills a decent proportion of the lounge room of her Newport home. She is surrounded by cut flowers and piles of CDs, the birds visit and three chooks have a home on her back verandah.

"I sometimes wish there was more music," she says. "I do believe that if there was more music the world would be a better place."

Claire O'Rourke

## 1970s

**John Byrne (BA '71)** recently moved to the Dandenong Ranges outside Melbourne after an international career in dance spanning 35 years – as a dancer, teacher, writer and examiner. Highlights included his appointment as artistic director of the Royal Academy of Dance, London. In 2002 he was made a Fellow (FRAD) of the Royal Academy in recognition of services to dance. He continues to work freelance in Australia and abroad.

## 1960s

**John Blount (BA '69)** recently retired as deputy principal member of the Refugee Review Tribunal, a position he held since the beginning of 2003. He hopes to pursue a number of interests in retirement, including public policy, history and travel. John was active in campus affairs as a student between 1965 and 1971. More recent involvement with the University has included member of the Standing Committee of Convocation (1994-2005) and secretary of Sydney Union Foundation since 1998.

**Jennifer Fletcher (BPharm '69)** has retired after 20 years as a pharmacist; her two sons graduated recently, from the University of New South Wales and from the University of Technology, Sydney. Both sons received first class honours.

**Peter Groenewegen (BEcon '61 MEcon '63)** advises his manuscript on the history of the Faculty of Economics (1920 – 1999) is complete, and will be published in late 2006 or during 2007.

**Frank Lumley (MBBS '61)** is almost retired and has moved to Orange. He is working one day a week in the Community Mental Health team, and enjoys being in a team of competent and dedicated people.

**Robert Murray (BA '64 PhD (NYU))** recently celebrated the release of his 8th book *Raising an Optimistic Child* (McGraw-Hill) which he co-authored with his wife Alicia Fortinberry. Robert and Alicia are busy writing their next book for McGraw-Hill about handling difficult dialogues in all areas of life.

**Chris Rath (BA '69, CertArts '05)** received a Graduate Certificate in Arts (Creative Writing) in 2005 and he has recently published his sixth book of comical, poetic, dramatic monologues, *The Satirical Satyr*. A production error in the previous edition of *Grapevine* meant the title of his earlier book, *More Cock and Bull*, was spelt incorrectly.

**Vicki Riette (BA '63)** is an aged pensioner and regularly attends the School for Seniors in Launceston, Tasmania. She gives two classes in French for people over 60, and follows photography, scrabble, cryptic crosswords and mah jong. Vicki also writes poetry and goes to the readings of the Launceston Poetry Society.

**Ross Steele (BA '60)** is an honorary associate professor of French at the University of Sydney, in the School of Languages and Cultures in the Faculty of Arts, and is honorary treasurer of the Sydney University Arts Association. He was awarded an AM (Member of the Order of Australia) in the 2006 Australia Day honours “for service to tertiary education, particularly the promotion of French language and culture in Australia, and to the community through support for a range of arts organisations.”

**Anne Tischlinger (BPharm '64)** nee Alexander, has lived in Vienna since 1970. She learnt German, and worked as a translator and medical proofreader. She runs a small school of English, teaches at the Japanese School, and with two other expatriates has established a non-profit organisation called ADAPT ([www.adapt.at](http://www.adapt.at)) to address attention deficit and hyperactivity disorders.

## 1950s

**Douglas Emery (MBBS '55)** was a resident at Lewisham Hospital from 1955 to 1956. From 1958 to 1967 he was a general practitioner in Holbrook and from 1967 a general practitioner in Tamworth. He retired in 2001.

**Pauline Haldane (BA '54)** has moved to a new house with no stairs. She is enjoying the University of the Third Age, as well as craft, travel and grandchildren, not to mention internet and email.

She thinks retirement is wonderful.

**Paul Hockings (BA '57)** has become the first British Dean of a mainland Chinese university in over 60 years. He is Dean of Humanities and Social Sciences at International College, set up by the Hong Kong Baptist University in Zhuhai, a city next to Macau.

**David Morris (Mat Med 1955)** writing as David Mulligan, launched his latest book *Angels of Kokoda* earlier this year in the officers' mess at the Victoria Barracks. General Peter Cosgrove did the honours. Published by Lothian Books, *Angels of Kokoda* has a foreword written by the Governor General and is the first book written for young people 10-16 about the 1942 Kokoda campaign.

**John G Mulford (BEc '51)** has written the official history of the New South Wales Rugby Union. *The Guardians of the Game* is published by ABC Books. John is a former SUFC player, president of the Sydney Rugby Union, and senior vice president of New South Wales Rugby. He is the foundation archivist for the Australian Rugby Union.

**Roger Vanderfield OBE AO (MBBS '52 HonFellow '91)** was a member of the Faculty of Medicine (representing RNSH) from 1973 to 1991. For the past 20 years Roger has been actively involved with the Royal Rehabilitation Centre Sydney, which is an affiliated teaching hospital of the University. He was chairman



of the board for 10 years, and helped establish three professorial units in rehabilitation medicine, nursing and developmental disabilities. He is still chairman of the Medical Appointments and Credentials Advisory Committee and the Rehabilitation Research Foundation.

## 1940s

**Frederick Dobbin AM (BSc '43 DipEd '44)** was a student of the New England University College of the University of Sydney from 1940 to 1943. In February 1944 he commenced duty at the NSW Department of Education. In December 1982 he retired as foundation principal of the Canobolas High School, Orange. He was alderman and mayor of the City of Orange from 1968 to 1974. In 1982 he was elected honourable life member of the Council of NSW High School Principals and in 1978 he was elected honourable life member of the NSW Teachers Federation. In 1998 he became a fellow of the Australian Numismatic Society, and in 1983 he was admitted to membership of the Order of Australia for Service to Education and the Community.

**Diana Encel (née Hovev) (BSc '48)** has become a biographer and fiction writer in her retirement. Her book *Jewish Country Girls* was published in 2005. She also has short stories included in anthologies published by the Company of Writers.

**Jean Newall (BA '45 DipEd '46)** was

## Natural chemistry

### The Lamberton legacy: continuing support for plant-based research.

**John Lamberton (BSc '46, DSc '69)** was born in Casino, New South Wales, in 1925. After completing a BSc Hons at the University of Sydney he moved to the University of Queensland as a demonstrator in physical and organic chemistry. He completed his PhD at the University of Melbourne, where he developed his life-long interest in plant alkaloids and was awarded a DSc by the University of Sydney in 1969. He retired in 1986.

The legacy of John Lamberton and other natural products chemists in Australia is evident in the large-scale screening of natural products derived from Australian native plants. It is also evidenced by the many synthetic chemists working on the synthesis of natural products identified as having medicinal application.

The University of Sydney's Faculty of Science has established a series of scholarships known as the John A. Lamberton Research Scholarships, made possible by a generous donation from Dr Lamberton's widow, for which the University is very grateful. The scholarships are in the area of Dr Lamberton's interests: the chemistry of natural products, the understanding of the relationship between chemical structure and biological activity, and the chemical understanding of brain function and malfunction.

The first John A. Lamberton Research Scholarship winners are Katie Cergol and Joshua Fischer from the School of Chemistry; and Renee Granger, Michelle James, and Katherine Locock from the Discipline of Pharmacology.



John and Dorothy Lamberton ... research scholarships continue John's interests.

awarded an OAM in this year's Australia Day Honours. She was recognised for her many years of community work in the field of local history, particularly for Armidale's New England Girls' School (NEGS) and St Peter's Anglican Cathedral. Jean was the first woman president of the Armidale and District Historical Society, of which she has been made a life member. The archives centre which she founded and maintains at NEGS was recently renamed the Jean Newall Archives Centre.

**Jack Plewa (BA '46 DipEd '47)** was awarded the Order of

Australia Medal (AM) in the 2006 Australia Day honours list. The award was presented in recognition of outstanding service and commitment for over 60 years to education and young people, to the Goulburn district, and to the wider Australian community. Jack is a former teacher and headmaster at Goulburn High School, and served in the Second AIF during World War 2.

## 1930s

**Margaret Cleghorn's (MBBS '39)** medical positions after graduation

were: junior RMP at Queens Victoria Hospital, Melbourne (1939 – 1940); medical supervisor at Forster Hospital, Sydney (1940 – 1941); senior RMO at St George and District Hospital, Kogarah in Sydney (1941 – 1942); and general practice in Roseville, Sydney (1942 – 1945). In 1945 Margaret married Reverend Alan Cleghorn (BA '37). She has been a widow since 1960. She turned 92 in May 2006. Margaret now lives at Balwyn in Melbourne with her son, Reverend John Alan Cleghorn (BA '68 (Syd) BD DipEd AMusA (Melb)). She has three sons and one daughter.

# diary

**UNTIL JULY 28**

**On The Inside:  
Anatomy and  
Learning, Macleay  
Museum.**

In just 150 years, medical science's knowledge about what our insides look like and how they work has expanded at a phenomenal rate.



Anatomical display ...  
Macleay Museum  
examines life on  
the inside.

**JULY 12**

**United Kingdom Alumni Association  
Summer Reception**

Royal College of General  
Practitioners, London  
Contact: Kerrie Botley  
Phone: +44 (0)207 201 6882  
Email: usukaa@cqsm.com

**JULY 29**

**Medicine Class of 1956 –  
50 Year Alumni Reunion**

Contact: Judy Williamson (Phone: 02  
6367 738) or Ray Hyslop (4976 2466)  
Email: alumniadmin@usyd.edu.au

**AUGUST 3 – 6**

**Sydney University Graduates Union  
of North America annual conference**

University of California – Berkeley  
Campus Contact: Michael Challis  
Email: MDChallis@aol.com

**UNTIL DECEMBER 31**

**Unearthed Tales II**

At the Nicholson Museum  
Discover the secret history of many of  
the artefacts in the Nicholson Museum.



London reception ... July 12 gathering  
for UK-based alumni.



Leslie Wilkinson's San Marco, Venice,  
July 1906 On loan from a private  
collection, © the artist's estate.

**UNTIL JULY 21**

**Leslie Wilkinson In Europe**

At the University War Memorial Art  
Gallery. Architectural drawings and  
watercolours from 1906 by Leslie  
Wilkinson, later to be appointed the  
first Professor of Architecture at the  
University of Sydney.

**AUGUST 4**

**2006 Blue and Gold annual  
sports luncheon**

Featuring Adam Spencer's panel of  
sporting celebrities. Contact: Donna  
McIntyre (02) 9351 4969 or email  
d.mcintyre@susport.usyd.edu.au

**AUGUST 20**

**Sydney University Graduate Choir**

Great Hall, 3pm. An all – Mozart  
program celebrating the 250th  
anniversary of the composer's birth.  
Tickets are \$35 from MCA Ticketing.  
Phone 1300 306 776 or visit  
www.mca-tix.com

## Celebrating 150 years of the Faculty of Medicine

**JUNE 13**

**Faculty of Medicine  
150th anniversary ceremony**

Great Hall, 4 – 6pm  
Launching the Faculty of Medicine's  
150th celebrations. All members,  
alumni and students of the Faculty  
of Medicine are welcome.

**JUNE 14**

**Faculty of Medicine symposia:  
Horizons in Cancer Control**

MacLaurin Hall, 9am – 12.30pm  
Experts discuss developments and  
challenges for cancer research and  
treatment. All welcome.

**JUNE 14**

**Faculty of Medicine symposia:  
Immunity & Infection**

MacLaurin Hall, 1.30pm – 5pm  
From bubonic plague to bird flu, learn  
about the latest research and prevention.  
All welcome.

**JUNE 14**

**Faculty of Medicine's  
Lambie Dew Oration**

Great Hall, 6.30pm  
All welcome.

**JUNE 15**

**Faculty of Medicine symposia:  
Tissue, Cell and Gene Replacement**

1.30 – 5pm  
MacLaurin Hall, 1.30 – 5pm  
Join experts to discuss  
developments in tissue, cell  
and gene replacement.  
All welcome.

**JUNE 15**

**Faculty of Medicine 150th  
anniversary musical performance**

Conservatorium of Music, 8pm  
Musical medicos give a special  
performance, with Simon Tedeschi as  
soloist. All welcome.

**JUNE 15**

**Faculty of Medicine symposia:  
Brain & Mind**

MacLaurin Hall, 9am – 12.30  
Join leading brain and mind experts  
to discuss advancements in their  
field. All welcome.

Visit [www.medfac.usyd.edu.au/150years](http://www.medfac.usyd.edu.au/150years)  
for more information on  
the Faculty of Medicine's 150th  
anniversary celebrations.







The University of Sydney

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The University of Sydney

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## new international study tours

The University is developing an exciting Alumni Study Tours Program, based on our successful Centre for Continuing Education programs and offering discounted, focussed alumni study tours:

*China* In the footsteps of Marco Polo - along the Silk Road

*India* Alumni Writing Retreat in Darjeeling, the city of inspiration

*Ancient Egypt* A thousand miles up the Nile

*Italy* The 21st-Century pilgrim - on the ancient path from Sienna & Assisi to Rome

TO LEARN MORE contact the Alumni Relations Office via tel +61 2 9036 6458 or email [alumniadmin@vcc.usyd.edu.au](mailto:alumniadmin@vcc.usyd.edu.au).