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Professor Liz Deane with a yellow-footed rock wallaby

SIRIUS
MACQUARIE UNIVERSITY ALUMNI MAGAZINE
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Access and Equity

The 35th Annual General Meeting of the Convocation was held in June. Many significant changes have occurred since the inaugural meeting, such as the introduction of named degrees at bachelor and higher degree levels, internationalisation of the student population, establishment of links with industry, and greater encouragement of research.

Access and equity have always remained high priorities in the University’s academic plan. In the early 1970s Macquarie was one of the first universities to offer mature age people access to university education by preparing themselves via a limited HSC study program.

Since then other avenues have been developed, such as the Lighthouse and MACCESS schemes, which give consideration to special circumstances and disadvantage. The University has also encouraged the enrolment of Indigenous students by providing courses to meet their particular community needs, and through external study opportunities.

The Federal Government’s May budget announcement relating to higher education reform has drawn, it would be fair to say, a mixed response in the community. While the strengths contained in the Minister’s Report, “Our Universities: Backing Australia’s Future” can be acknowledged, some weaknesses in the proposals have been identified as having serious implications for less well-off and disadvantaged students.

The Standing Committee will continue to work with the University in any initiative to preserve fair access and equity at the tertiary level. Convocation currently funds three prizes, two valued at $2500 each and one at $1000, and provides an undergraduate scholarship worth $15,000 over three years. However, whatever the Committee is able to do rests very much on income from the sale of items and donations. With donations last year amounting to around $2500, I see fund raising to support deserving students as a major focus for the Standing Committee in the coming years.

To do this we need the support of a vital resource: our own members, who now number more than 73,000. Please keep in touch and if possible provide a contact email address. We look forward to hearing from you.

Pamela Kenny
BA(ANU) DipTertiary Ed(NE)
Master of Arts1997

Alumni are major stakeholders in Macquarie University and deemed part of it, as defined under Section 14 of the Macquarie University Act 1989. Supportive alumni can dramatically enhance the University’s success and reputation. Both positive statements and practical support are very helpful.
ALUMNI profiles

Four alumni tell us about their Macquarie experiences and career progress ...

On 4 July a Macquarie graduate made history as the first recruited fire officer to become Commissioner of the NSW Fire Brigade. At 44, he’s also the youngest.

Greg Mullins, Commissioner, NSW Fire Brigade

Commissioner Greg Mullins graduated Master of Management in 2000, having studied part-time over two years at the MGSM while also holding the post of Assistant Commissioner and Regional Commander. He has received international acclaim for his outstanding emergency management and executive skills, and completed elite training in the United States and the Oxford Strategic Leadership Program.

I’ve been involved with fire fighting most of my life. My father’s been a volunteer for half a century and as a teenager so was I, before I joined the Brigade in 1978. I couldn’t do the job of Commissioner the way I think it should be done without my experience through the ranks. As a fire fighter I’ve been very fortunate in my opportunities to study and gain experience. In 1996 I also won a Churchill Fellowship to visit North America, the UK and Europe, looking at bushfire control systems.

As I progressed I realised I needed formal management education to round out my technical training, and there’s
no doubt my management degree was a major contributor to my current appointment.

What most swayed me to choose the MGSM was the diversity and interest in the study choices. It turned out to be a wonderful experience.

I was impressed that course leaders continually asked for our feedback and then acted on it. Units were very practical and the changes I made at work were a direct result of what I learned, especially in human resources.

An enduring benefit has been networking. My fellow students were highly motivated managers with strong opinions and we shared in a lot of small group work and assignments – visiting companies, analysing performance and preparing reports.

Greg Mullins: “My Macquarie management degree was a major contributor to my appointment.”

Coincidentally, in 1998 I was on a 12-month secondment to BOC Gases, which helped in applying what I learned in both a private and public sector context. BOC was my first experience of the private enterprise ethos. I’d assumed the profit motive would drive everything, but it didn’t. The staff were dedicated, often working unpaid overtime in emergencies.

The company was also innovative in HR and industrial relations. I applied some of their ideas when I was asked to restructure the Brigade executive team, creating our first posts of HR Director and Safety Coordinator.

As you’d expect, our safety practices are ‘gold standard’ when it comes to fire fighting operations. But we were ‘switching off’ outside emergencies and having a lot of minor accidents at stations. I applied my BOC experience and Macquarie studies in finding ways to reduce these.

The HR and leadership modules have been a great help to me in improving our internal communications and the Brigade has a more collaborative culture now. Our high-tech communication systems and the buddy tradition are big assets in fighting fires, and we must be in command-and-control mode during an emergency, but beyond that we have to be less rule-bound.

As Commissioner I want to build a confident, outward-looking organisation. I see effective communication and being ‘out there’ as the keys to management success. I’ll be going into operational areas asking officers for feedback – their ideas often lead to great innovations.

I also want to know what the public expects from us. Community education is a top priority for me. We live in a fire-prone country but fire is survivable if you know what to do. We have very effective partnerships with Juvenile Justice and the children’s hospitals to teach kids about the risks of fire.

After the disastrous 1994 Sydney fires we began a Community Fire Unit program – a street based approach to training residents to protect their homes. We now have 230 units throughout the state and volunteers receive training from their local fire station crews. In the 2002 Lane Cove fires we lost no homes, whereas in 1994 we lost 17. We think that’s a direct outcome of the program.

Bush fires are ‘high profile’, but preventable urban fires kill a lot of people. Effective smoke alarms – located and working properly – can save many lives. We call smoke the ‘silent killer’. One of the hardest experiences for a fire fighter is to discover a body untouched by fire where death has been caused by smoke inhalation.

During an emergency you’re on auto pilot – your training gets you through. It’s afterwards that can be tough. We have debriefing teams, but each of us copes differently. There’s a lot of ‘gallows humour’ and peer support, and talking about experiences is encouraged.

We don’t know what’s up ahead so it’s important to be flexible and innovative. A few years ago we didn’t know we’d be involved in anti-terrorism and we’ve had to re-think many aspects of our modus operandi. But we had a head start in anti-terrorist training prior to the 2000 Olympics and now we’re among the top three or four worldwide. We’re also world leaders in road accident rescue, and the only fire service in the world to achieve ISO 9000 accreditation for our Hazardous Materials section.

The profile of fire fighters is changing. Many recruits now have work experience and degrees and they’re better communicators. I’m pleased we have the largest proportion of women fire fighters in any state or territory, but we need to attract many more. We’re also working hard to recruit Indigenous people, and 13 new Aboriginal recruits will soon commence training. The demographics of the fire service need to resemble more closely those of our communities.

We have a terrific bunch of fire fighters, support staff and volunteers. I’m very proud of them and feel privileged to be in this job.

NSW Fire Brigade Facts:
Founded 1884
7th largest urban fire service in world
6400 + firefighters
300 support staff
338 fire stations
3500 volunteers
Budget 2003-04: $439.7m

WINTER 2003 Sirius
Husband and wife Maria and Chris Doogan, graduates of Macquarie’s external Legal Studies degree, occupy contrasting roles in the legal system. Maria is a Magistrate in the ACT Magistrates Court, while Chris is the Chief Executive and Principal Registrar of the High Court of Australia. Both have fond memories of Macquarie.

Maria Doogan was the first person from a non-English speaking background to be appointed to judicial office in the ACT. In 1999 she was chosen as the Telstra ACT Business Woman of the Year.

Although I didn’t graduate in law until 1988 I’d been interested in it since I left school. I completed a year of a BA/LLB in 1965 and had a second shot in 1967 when I studied for the Barristers Admission Board. I had to discontinue that course when I was transferred with the Australian Taxation Office to Canberra in 1970.

By 1985 I’d established an interesting career in the Department of Trade and Industry. I had an extremely busy life, holding a senior job while caring for my young children and travelling regularly. But I was still keen on resuming law studies. My husband Chris had recently done very well in the Macquarie Legal Studies degree while in a demanding job, and encouraged me to enrol.

Macquarie was the only law school at the time offering external mode, but it wasn’t for the faint-hearted. Students were shown the door if they failed any subjects. I took a part-time load for the first couple of years, but really wanted to finish in the shortest possible time.

Despite my commitments I persuaded Macquarie to let me take a full-time load so I could complete in 1988.

Now that I look back, it was incredibly tough juggling work, children and a big study load and sometimes I felt like quitting. But Macquarie was fabulous and I had a wonderful time. The approach was very innovative. The Legal Studies program was one of the earliest to use computers, and even in the mid-80s selected external students could contact each other online, which really minimised our isolation.

Staff in the external studies office also bent over backwards to provide the resources I needed. I could fit study into my own time, often working on assignments after midnight when my children were asleep.

My present job as a Magistrate is so ‘full on’ that I often have to write judgments at home, where I can get time to think through the issues. I still sometimes work very late as I did when a student – some bad habits die hard.

After finishing my degree, I made a complete career change, working for several years as a prosecutor in the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions. I was exposed to the full range of criminal offences and many other areas of the law. I also assisted in coronial inquiries, and was appointed a member of the ACT Community Law Reform Commission.

In 1998 I was appointed an ACT Magistrate. It’s non-stop work at the ‘sharp end’ of the law. With no District Court in the ACT, the Magistrates Court has a higher jurisdiction than in some other States. We handle general criminal cases, civil cases, workers compensation, children’s cases, mental health, guardianship, domestic violence protection orders and restraining orders.

Applications for domestic violence and restraining orders are a big growth area in the Court. More and more, people go to courts looking for a magical way to regulate human relations or restrain certain human behaviour. Some cases are very trivial and a gross waste of Court time and money. Other cases are serious and tragic. Most people try to represent themselves.

Sadly, there’s a lot of human misery around the Court. People’s situations are rarely simple or straightforward. The dynamics of human relationships mean that sometimes you have to make allowances for what might be regarded as appalling or unacceptable behaviour.

All ACT Magistrates sit on a variety of tribunals. I’m a Presidential Member of the Mental Health and Guardianship and Discrimination Tribunals. This work can be very rewarding and helps me understand the myriad issues behind court appearances. For example, changes in mental health policy sadly have turned many sick people into clients of the criminal justice system rather than the mental health system.

Unlike in most other jurisdictions, ACT Magistrates also serve as coroners. If a serious event happens when we are on duty, such as a plane crash or a home invasion resulting in the death of a person, which have both happened in my case, we are called to inspect the scene.

I was on duty when the disastrous ACT fires erupted last January, so I’m the coroner presiding over the inquest into the loss of life and property that resulted. A coronial inquiry is inquisitorial not adversarial – the job is to find out and report what happened and make recommendations.
As you might expect, it’s a huge investigation. Four persons died, many were seriously injured and some 500 homes were destroyed. Farms, animals and infrastructure (such as Mt Stromlo Observatory), forests, fauna, flora, were damaged or lost.

I find being a Magistrate challenging but also satisfying, being involved daily with often very difficult human relations and criminal issues, on which you try to adjudicate often within a highly charged environment. There are the daily tragedies of the victims, the offenders, the mentally ill, the drug addicted, the incapacitated and the unfortunate. As the Magistrates Court deals with more than 90 percent of all matters which end up in court, it makes for a busy time packed with adrenalin.

Whatever I do in future, I know I’ll look back on my life and be glad I made the choices I did because each one has had its own challenges and rewards.

Chris Doogan

Chris Doogan is in his second five-year term as Chief Executive and Principal Registrar of the High Court of Australia.

I started my legal studies at Macquarie in 1980 while working as a Director in the Department of Defence. Like many others, I enrolled in the degree because of its flexibility - I could do it externally while holding senior jobs and travelling a lot.

My interest in administrative law began when I majored in administration and political science in my first degree and intensified when I was in public sector management. In 1983, while holding a Defence Fellowship, I combined my honours thesis in administrative law with writing a book on the subject for administrators whose decisions might be challenged.

Administrative law is enshrined in the common law and the Constitution, but only began to be codified and put into plain English in Australia in the 1970s, through the Ombudsman’s Act, FOI legislation, and establishment of the Federal Court and Administrative Appeals Tribunal.

This so-called ‘new administrative law’ made people nervous – it was partly fear of the unknown, but in truth fear of public accountability. It’s been a good development for standards in public life.

I’ve had senior jobs in a range of public organisations, including the Commonwealth Ombudsman’s Office, the Export Inspection Service and Australian Customs Service. In the last two I was appointed to new executive teams asked to ‘clean up’ poor practices after adverse public findings on their operations.

I was also a partner for some years in Canberra’s largest law firm, Macphillamy Cummins and Gibson (now part of Minter Ellison). But I’ve always enjoyed the variety of management roles more than the repetition of legal practice. The ideal opportunity to combine them arose in 1994 with my appointment to my present job.

The High Court is Australia’s highest court, established in 1901 by Chapter 3 of the Constitution to resolve constitutional disputes and to be the nation’s final court of appeal.

During the last five years we’ve experienced a big increase in workload, the most dramatic rise being in Constitutional writs. In 2001/02 there were 300, almost all concerning immigration matters. By 2002/03 there were around 2100.

For appeals to be heard the Court must have granted leave or special leave to appeal. Applications for special leave are rising, especially from self-represented litigants whose chances of success are extremely small. The proportion of self-represented litigants has risen from 5% a decade ago to 40% today. Yet only 19 self-represented litigants seeking special leave were successful over the last decade (0.7% of all applications), and of these only 9 appeals were allowed.

There are complex reasons behind the trend but we do appear to be a more litigious society where it’s rapidly becoming the norm to seek someone to blame for every adversity.
The requirement that litigants be represented by counsel was removed 15 years ago in the interests of making justice accessible to all – a good principle, but having no disincentives means that in practice a lot of hopeless cases are brought, mostly by people of limited means exempt from fees. Where there is evidence of a case to argue, Bar Associations provide pro bono assistance. The challenge is to ensure access to justice for deserving applicants while addressing these problems.

People who imagine the High Court as a Canberra enclave somewhat removed from ordinary life hold a distorted view. We have registries in all capital cities, and more than half of staff time is taken up dealing with self-represented litigants. Staff are also subject to an increasing number of abusive appellants. People can become consumed by their cases and refuse to give up, despite being advised their chances are almost nil.

The Court is self-administering with an annual allocation by Parliament. We have to live within our means and, like other Budget-funded agencies, are subject to efficiency dividends. As Principal Registrar I’m responsible for case management and legal issues. My broader role includes being Chairman of the Board of Law Courts Ltd and Secretary to the Council of Chief Justices of Australia and New Zealand.

What I like most about my work is being at the apex of the Australian judicial system. It provides wide exposure to the most pressing issues of the day. I work with my counterparts in the courts of all states and territories, and I’m also involved with other national institutions such as the Parliament, and frequently host international visitors.

At present I’m immersed in planning our Centenary in October. The main focus is education, including programs to improve children’s understanding of the High Court’s place in our society.

The Court will have a ceremonial sitting in Melbourne on 6 October, a hundred years to the day after the first three High Court judges sat in same courtroom. Later that week we will host a unique Centenary Conference, which is attracting Chief Justices from around world as well as eminent members of the legal profession.

The High Court is a very attractive place for young lawyers to work, and we are able to choose our associates from among men and women holding first class honours degrees. Most go on to the Bar and become senior counsel and later judges.

I made friends for life during my Macquarie studies. The catalyst was the residential component in the external course. Living together in a hothouse environment even for short periods forged deep relationships, which in my case have lasted over 20 years.

Tracy Xie

Tracy (Xue) Xie recently returned home to China after completing the very demanding Master of Applied Finance degree. We asked her how she came to study at Macquarie and for her impressions of life as a student.

My first degree was a Bachelor of Economics from East China Normal University in Shanghai. I chose Macquarie because I wanted to do a postgraduate program in finance, and Macquarie is the best university in Australia specialising in the field.

When I first started the Master of Finance I found it very, very tough. English language wasn’t a problem for me, but before I went to Australia, I had no background in finance at all, either academically or practically. To catch up with the fast pace of the program, I had hardly five hours sleep a night! But I would definitely recommend the program to others - the lecturers are highly experienced and professional.

I completed my first degree in 1995, so re-experiencing campus life was very exciting and refreshing. I loved the live bands and market stalls beside the library, and the way students sit and chat on the lawns here and there. Macquarie’s a great place to study. Most people are patient and helpful with international students who don’t speak good English, but a few are not.

Before I came to Macquarie I worked for Chori (Shanghai) Ltd, a wholly-owned Japanese trading company in Shanghai. My title in Japanese was EIGYO, which means sales representative. However I functioned as both a purchaser and key account sales specialist,
specialising in Japanese-invested companies in China. I dealt with the whole process of international trading, including quoting, sampling, contracting, ordering, supervising manufacturing, shipping and insuring, and collecting payments.

I started this job without any knowledge of the textile industry but by self-study and training, became highly professional. I made frequent presentations in Japanese or Chinese, explaining raw materials, manufacturing processes and selling procedures. The challenges lay not only in the professional knowledge but also in dealing with complaints and claims.

When I worked for Chori Shanghai I was the only female EIGYO. I became very familiar with Japanese culture and built and maintained excellent relationships with suppliers and buyers. The biggest reward was that some of my clients became my personal friends and we stayed in contact during the whole time I was in Australia.

I took the Finance degree because I wanted to find a job in a foreign bank in China, but I’m very flexible and am looking for any position requiring fluency in English and Japanese. With my broad knowledge of finance, international trading and logistics, I should be suitable for a wide range of positions, whether in finance or not.

I want to continue my career progression with a big American or European company offering challenges and learning opportunities and promotion prospects. The Macquarie degree not only proves my knowledge in finance, but also my fluency in English and familiarity with western culture. Since my fellow students were from all over the world, I also gained more experience of working with people from different cultures.

I’m in touch with some fellow students – networking is very important and any assistance from Macquarie would be welcome. Macquarie could also help international alumni a lot in their careers by providing an alumni album.

The Macquarie Masters program in Applied Finance, led by Professor Bill Norton, is by far the world’s largest program in its field, with over 900 students. It is taught in Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, Hong Kong, Singapore and Tokyo.
In each issue of Sirius, the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Di Yerbury, shares insights into a feature of Macquarie’s recent directions. Here, she speaks about latest developments in Indigenous education and employment.

You mentioned some exciting developments this year.

There certainly have been. Macquarie increased the number of qualified Indigenous teachers at early childhood level by 300 percent when it graduated 12 mature age Indigenous graduates in the Bachelor of Teaching (Early Childhood Services), a professional training program for people with experience in early childhood. Four more students will graduate in September.

The graduation ceremony, with Indigenous musicians providing a triumphant background for each graduate crossing the stage, and Dr Lowitja O’Donoghue AC giving the Occasional Address, was unforgettable.

Where do the students come from?

Of the initial graduates in April, 6 came from Queensland, 11 continued working with children, and one worked with her child at home. The flexible and culturally appropriate study arrangements draw students from across the whole country, because they can participate while carrying out their responsibilities at work and in their communities. They attend residential block release periods, where they live and study with other Indigenous students, staying at Dunmore Lang College.

It’s terrific to see several men completing the program: the impact on Indigenous youngsters can’t be overestimated.

So you see this unique program as already having proved its worth?

Of the 16 graduates this year, several are planning further studies; 14 are now in supervisory roles, 10 are Managers/Directors; 10 have already been promoted as a result of their qualification; and one has won a scholarship for postgraduate study in early childhood education. The outcomes speak volumes.

What support is Government providing?

The program requires ‘backfilling’ funds, so that students already in employment, usually in very small preschools and day care centres, can be replaced by others when the students attend the residential components. I witnessed three very impressive students persuasively putting the case to the Minister of Education, Dr. Brendan Nelson, who was inspired to help us obtain the ‘backfilling’ funds from the Department of Workplace Relations and Small Business.

One of our Indigenous staff in Warawara, Bevan Cassady, who played a pivotal role, also advocated the program to other government agencies to obtain funding, including Abstudy for travel and accommodation, and ATAS funding for local and on-campus tutors and mentors.

Tell us more about Warawara.

It’s our Department of Indigenous Studies and the Indigenous students’ support unit. The staff receive the sort of student ratings that most of us can only dream about!

We’ve welcomed a new Director this year, Associate Professor Michael McDaniel, who’s really ‘hit the ground running’. Our popular Advanced Diploma of Community Management is being developed into a Bachelor degree for 2005; he’s introducing Indigenous Studies units for Study Abroad students; he’s exploring a new BA (Indigenous Studies); and he’s planning a much stronger Indigenous arts focus on campus.

Do you see Macquarie as increasing the number of Indigenous students?

Definitely. We hope our plans to become a major provider Australia-wide through Open Learning Australia (OLA) will be of interest to Indigenous students.

Also, we’ve introduced a special School Partners Program in Broken Hill. We’ve been exploring with Michael a special entry program. And we’ve announced new annual scholarships in the form of HECS exemptions available to Indigenous students in Broken Hill schools, targeting the BA, BCom, BSc and BEd(ECE).

Does Macquarie plan to employ more Indigenous staff?

Lindsay Stanford is doing a great job as our Manager, Indigenous Employment. We currently employ 16 Indigenous staff, and are targeting 40 by 2006. I’ve just given the go-ahead to Lindsay’s proposal for Indigenous traineeships, which will combine vocational training with varied work experience in, say, three different areas on campus.

It’s enormously rewarding for me to witness these developments during my time as Vice-Chancellor, and to know that so many staff, students and friends of the University support these achievements and our plans for the future.
Lasers work magic

Macquarie’s Centre for Lasers and Applications (CLA), established in 1988 as a national Centre of Excellence, has applied its expertise to everything from Olympic torches to treating varicose veins.

Laser research and development is an expensive business, but over 15 years Director Professor Jim Piper and his colleagues have been very successful in attracting large funds. The CLA is now one the biggest and most respected centres of laser knowledge. With partners from other universities and industry, it has recently won grants worth more than a million dollars for equipment and facilities. Three recent successes also tell part of the story.

CLA’s Laser Micromachining Services (LMS) are in huge demand in manufacturing miniature mechanical and electronic components for biomedical, aerospace and industrial products. In its most recent application LMS was used to make holes a fraction of the width of a human hair through which to view some of the most distant objects in the universe. This allows astronomers using the Anglo-Australian Telescope at Siding Springs to observe up to 50 different stars or galaxies at once and boosts the telescope’s productivity 25-fold.

In March, the ‘Magic Wand Laser’ invented by Jim Piper and Dr Helen Pask was named among the 10 most innovative Australian inventions at the KCA Commercialisation Forum and Fair of Ideas in Sydney. The laser produces a unique yellow light absorbed by red blood cells and can quickly and painlessly treat common skin and eye problems such as glaucoma, retinal detachments, spider veins, port wine stains and birthmarks.

Finally, there’s the potential of lasers in dentistry. Although lasers have been investigated as an alternative to the dentist’s drill since the 1960s, unwanted side effects have not been overcome. This is set to change. The CLA’s Associate Professor Judith Dawes has been developing laser dental techniques for several years, working with fellow physicists from the ANU and Swinburne University of Technology and with dentists. With funding from the Australian Dental Research Foundation, her latest work on the use of ultra-short-pulsed lasers (called femtosecond lasers) has come up with a really effective technique in treating cavities.

It could be some time before your local dentist offers you this type of treatment, but the team is already investigating ways to bring costs down and design equipment that is both user-friendly and suited to specific dental problems.

Healing our rivers

Geomorphologist Professor Gary Brierley likens the job of restoring south-eastern Australia’s rivers to nursing a wounded soldier back to health.

River degradation has been in the headlines a lot recently but as a national problem it’s been around for decades. The damage has been profound, and now Gary Brierley and his team have won an ARC grant of $1.28m over five years to study one of the most damaged river systems in NSW – the Hunter.

Gary is Chief Investigator for the Upper Hunter River Rehabilitation Initiative (UHRRI), an experimental rehabilitation program for an 8-kilometre stretch of the Upper Hunter between Muswellbrook and Denman. The research team of geomorphologists, ecologists and other scientists aims to answer critical questions on how we should be managing our rivers and to provide a template for river recovery across Australia. A big challenge is ensuring the various sciences involved mesh together. The project is unique in the high level of collaboration achieved between Macquarie, government organisations, industry representatives, and community and Indigenous groups.

The business end of biology

The Australian Proteome Analysis Facility (APAF) at Macquarie is Australia’s largest and best equipped biotechnology research facility, thanks to major
infrastructure funding from the Commonwealth, NSW and SA governments.

APAF is an international leader in the booming field of proteomics, which takes up where genomics left off. Last year it received $16.25m from the Commonwealth Government, while the NSW government provided a further $2m and the SA government $1m. The expanded organisation includes the universities of Sydney and NSW, and SA biotechnology company TGR BioSciences.

APAF also has a new Director and Chief Scientific Officer – distinguished scientist Professor Mark Baker, who has also taken up the new Chair of Proteomics. Mark completed his BSc Hons (First Class) and PhD study in free radical biochemistry at Macquarie and has won several research honours.

Proteomics is the study of proteins of humans, plants, animals and bacteria. Proteins provide the critical link between genes and disease – proteins produced by genes are responsible for all processes that occur within a cell. As Mark Baker says, “Genes are just the road map. Proteins are the business end of biology.”

Global reach for spin-off company

Macquarie’s newest spin-off company with a big future, FLUORotechnics, develops, manufactures and commercialises unique fluorescent compounds for labelling and detection in the global biotechnology and diagnostics industries.

FLUORotechnics grew out of 10 years’ research by the Fluorescence Research Group, two of whose members hold the positions of CEO (Professor Duncan Veal) and Science Director (Associate Professor Peter Karuso).

A year ago the company received a $250 000 grant from the Federal Government’s Biotechnology Innovation Fund and $100 000 from the NSW Government BioFirst scheme to develop new products and scale-up production of Beljian Red – a new family of fluorescent labels with wide applications in biotechnology. The first product is Lightning Fast, a fluorescent protein gel stain now being trialled in laboratories in the Europe, US, Asia and Australia.

More than the sum of its parts

Macquarie’s new Biotechnology Research Institute, under the leadership of Professor Peter Bergquist as Director, holds the key place in the University’s approach to biotechnology and aims to lead the Asia-Pacific region in research, education and postgraduate training in this fast-growing field.

It includes researchers from other Australian and NZ universities and has been designed to be ‘virtual’, providing access to facilities and technologies and holding workshops and seminars. It also offers PhD scholarships to outstanding local and overseas students. Institute members have already won major research funding for microbiological testing and a gene function analysis facility, in partnership with companies and other universities.

Research partnerships look to the future

The year has shaped up as a pleasing one for research partnerships in leading edge science. Macquarie is a major partner in two Australian Research Council (ARC) Centres of Excellence for the period 2003-07: the ARC Centre of Excellence for Quantum Computer Technology and ARC Centre of Excellence for Ultrahigh-bandwidth Devices for Optical Systems.

Macquarie is also a partner in two new Cooperative Research Centres announced at the end of last year. It will be a major research provider for the CRC for Environmental Biotechnology, which will concentrate on producing value-added products from agricultural wastes, bioengineering systems for wastewater enhancement and biosensors. Professors Duncan Veal and Peter Bergquist will each lead two of its three projects.

Macquarie researchers will also contribute significantly to the $24.5m CRC for Innovative Grain Food Products, which aims to increase the value of Australian grain through the development of grain products with therapeutic benefits for individuals at risk of cardiovascular disease and diabetes.

Mapping our Roos

Macquarie researchers led by Professor Des Cooper, Head of Biological Sciences, are to collaborate with ANU and Melbourne University colleagues in a new ARC Centre for the Kangaroo Genome.

The Centre will receive $2.6m to begin sequencing the Tammar wallaby genome. That’s a healthy beginning – enough to pay for around 10 percent of the work involved. Now there are hopes that the US National Institute of Health (NIH) will adopt the Tammar as the next species to be completely genetically sequenced – largely as a result of a ‘genome street directory’ of the wallaby completed by Dr Kyall Zenger for his Macquarie PhD last year.

Des Cooper believes the project will allow an insight into evolution orders of magnitude greater than our current understanding, due to the Tammar’s unique makeup. Potential benefits of the research include deeper understanding of human genetics, particularly genetic diseases.
Powered by Sun

Technologies provided by Sun Microsystems, a company involved in space exploration worldwide, are powering a new state-of-the-art research and teaching laboratory in Macquarie’s Australian Centre for Astrobiology (ACA), Jim Hassell, Managing Director, Sun Microsystems Australia, said the company was delighted to be working with the ACA, not only to aid efforts to find the origins of extra-terrestrial life, but also help pioneer technologies for educational, commercial and industrial applications.

Making the most of the Internet

CSIRO and Macquarie University’s Internet Innovation Centre, launched last year, has advanced research and development capabilities to help organisations build innovative Internet services and technologies.

As one of its services the Centre hosts monthly Technology Trends seminars at Macquarie on emerging ICT and Internet technologies that will power the next wave of Internet products and services. The seminars are presented by leading CSIRO and Macquarie researchers. More information: internet.csiro.au/ Tel: 02 9325 3227 Email: tom.mcguinness@csiro.au

Tackling Australia’s science and technology shortfall by degrees

Professor Liz Deane* knows what it’s like to start a major project from scratch. One of her earliest jobs was to set up a brand new department in biological science. As head of that department and later of the School of Science at UWS, her interest in teaching development blossomed. Now she has seen one of her dreams come to fruition.

When she joined Macquarie in 2000 as Dean of the Division of Environmental and Life Sciences, Liz brought with her a DEST science lectureship grant to develop a postgraduate science teaching program, envisaged as a partnership among several universities, to combat the nation-wide decline in science learning at school and university level.

In response to this decline, a new postgraduate Science Education program taught by five universities – Macquarie, Charles Sturt, Murdoch, New England and Western Sydney - will be offered from 2004 in distance education mode at Master, Graduate Diploma and Graduate Certificate level, and will include industry experience.

Supported by the Commonwealth Department of Science, the program aims to provide professional development for secondary science teachers in leading edge science. The tertiary sector should benefit through a flow-on of better educated and larger numbers of science students, as should the wider community through improvements in general scientific literacy.

More information: Ms Dale Scott Tel: 02 9850 8976 Email: dscott@els.mq.edu.au

*Liz Deane’s first post-doctoral job in science research more than 20 years ago was with Macquarie Professor Des Cooper on his marsupial immunology research, an area in which she continues to work while Dean of ELS.

Biotechnology is one of the fastest growing industries world-wide. Australia and New Zealand are in the top 10 biotechnology-capable economies in the world with their investment expected to double by 2006, while Asian countries are increasingly investing in the industry.

In response, from next year Macquarie is to offer a new Master in Biotechnology degree, distinguished by a strong multidisciplinary basis and - unique in Australian biotechnology degree programs – by units in both entrepreneurship and ethics. A Graduate Certificate level program is also being planned. The Masters degree is expected to attract a majority of international students, as well as local students seeking to upgrade their knowledge.

More information: Associate Professor Helena Nevalainen Tel: 02 9850 8135 Email: hnevalai@els.mq.edu.au

Australia’s production of graduate engineers remains low by international standards, and is only a half to a third that of many Asian countries. Macquarie will aim to help reduce this shortfall by offering a new degree starting in 2004.

The Division of Information and Communication Sciences (ICS) will offer the new Telecommunications Engineering bachelor degree - the only degree of its kind in the northern suburbs region of Sydney. Special features will include flexible entry and 12 weeks’ industrial experience. Professional accreditation will be sought from the Institution of Engineers Australia.

More information: Program Director, Associate Professor Graham Town Tel: 02 9850 9063 Email: gtown@elec.mq.edu.au

Acknowledgement: material for these stories was taken in part from articles published in recent issues of Macquarie News and Staff News.
Sirius presents the first two articles in a new series featuring Deans of the nine academic Divisions of the University.

Division of Society, Culture, Media and Philosophy

It’s been dubbed the “Happening Division” – energetic, edgy and in rude health. What’s going on in the Division of Society, Culture, Media and Philosophy? Professor Mitchell Dean, who runs it, is happy to tell.

A university is not a university if it’s not dealing with controversial issues in a sophisticated and scholarly way.

In an age when knowledge is treated as a commercial product, the mission of our Division is to work at the social, cultural and aesthetic edge – as the ‘balance’ of the University.

We couldn’t do this unless our financial operations were sound. The time I spent as Head of Sociology studying budgets, sources of income and paying attention to detail has paid off. The Division took control of its budget in the first five years by running a very lean operation.

I initiated business planning in all departments this year and now our Division leads the University in this respect. We have financial credibility and are in a position to expand. We’re paying for ourselves, attracting funding and adapting to the entrepreneurial environment.

But we’re also the Division that deals with difficult issues. We tackle everything from gender studies to gerontology and globalisation. Early this year we ran the pre-Iraq war forum. In April, the Critical and Cultural Studies Department mounted the Body Modification Conference, attracting leading people in the field internationally. The presentations included Dr Nikki Sullivan’s analysis of the public persecution of Michael Jackson, whose changed face has been claimed as evidence of an unbalanced psyche.

I’m an interdisciplinary sociologist by temperament – I’ve written on history, theory, politics and contemporary cultural studies. I’m interested in the whole range of our Division’s work and as Dean I’ve tried to be an effective facilitator.

One of our core goals now is to strengthen our interdisciplinary programs. In teaching, these include the new Bachelors of Creative Arts and Social Science, and several Division-wide units.

A lot of high-powered scholarship has been brought together in this Division and our combined strengths are formidable. With support from the Vice-Chancellor’s Millennium Fund, last year we set up the Centre for Research on Social Inclusion as a cutting-edge research concentration.

Our biggest achievement this year has been funding the expansion of Indigenous programs in Warawara, which supports Indigenous students across the campus and off campus in remote locations. We’ve just celebrated the tenth anniversary of the successful Associate Diploma in Community Management. The excitement we feel about Warawara’s potential is the greater for having Associate Professor Michael McDaniel as the new Director.

Our departments are at different stages of evolution.

The Philosophy department has emerged as a consummate blend of deep scholarship and entrepreneurship. It deals effectively with universal issues in contemporary contexts and is enormously popular with students right across campus. Philosophy provides packages on critical thinking and teaches professional ethics to students in other disciplines. It’s on track to become the best and perhaps the largest philosophy department in Australia.

Sociology is a department in transition. It’s had an excellent research tradition and has contributed much to generic skills developments. It’s in a rebuilding phase, planning several new appointments and a renewed focus.
on big issues such as refugees, globalisation, and class and ethnicity in urban contexts.

Anthropology has also been through a time of renewal. It has an exciting staff profile of emerging research leaders. Staff work on urgent issues, including drugs and HIV/AIDS in South East Asia, human rights and refugees. I’m deeply impressed by the interaction of theory and fieldwork in Anthropology and its connections with international bodies such as UNESCO.

Media is a cosmopolitan department breaking new ground. It’s exploring new media arts and the internet culture and has great outreach capacity. Its monthly Media Central forums on topical media issues attract large audiences at a city venue. The hugely successful film My Mother India was made by associate, Safina Oberoi. One staff member has just returned to the department after making a $3.5m feature for the SA Film Corporation. Another has made a documentary for the ABC’s Australian Story.

Critical and Cultural Studies is a beacon of all-round excellence – notable in research, outstanding publication record, very healthy student numbers, high postgraduate enrolments. The demand for the BA in Media and Cultural Studies is very high. The department is also home to our restructured Women’s Studies Institute, where external enrolments are increasing.

This great variety is reflected in our student body. At undergraduate level there’s a good mix of non-fee students and an increasing share of international exchange and study abroad students. Students from the US and Europe, especially, seek out first year units in Aboriginal Studies and Sociology.

Our chief source of international full-fee postgraduate students is the Centre for International Communication. Its students come from all over the world to take the Master in International Communications. It has built a strong profile over ten years and is still expanding.

If I were to sum up, I’d describe the Division as a series of networks - this is our modus operandi. We’re connected to ‘multiple communities and publics’.

I hope our alumni think of themselves as part of our networks. They’re carrying into the community the experiences, orientation and intellectual development they gained from being students here. We’re interested in our alumni and want to develop specialised events for them. Suggestions will be welcomed!

Division of Linguistics and Psychology

First she was a local mother, enjoying visits with her children to Macquarie. Later she gained her PhD there, becoming a noted scholar and teacher in applied linguistics. Since 2000 she’s been Dean of the Division of Linguistics and Psychology, and is also a member of University Council. Professor Anne Burns reflects on the challenges and rewards of leading a highly successful, expanding Division.

I was fortunate to take over as Dean from the late Rod Power, who was so respected and admired. He was a mentor without parallel and I benefited enormously from that in the months before I started.

The biggest challenge at first was simply getting on top of ‘systems’. You can’t be an instant expert, and I appreciated the support from staff in the University-wide offices as well as in my Division.

My basic approach is to forge positive relationships and build strong teams. I’ve also found the informal peer network of Deans extremely helpful.

We have many groups who work together. On the academic side I rely on our capable heads of department, and in administration I try to facilitate a Division-wide perspective. The Divisional administrative and IT groups I established have been very productive in developing efficient and cost-effective systems. We occupy at least six buildings scattered around campus, so we need good communication across the Division.

Things are really moving here – in fact, most areas are expanding. Our public clinics in audiology, speech therapy, child anxiety, and psychology are flourishing, while professional doctorate programs in clinical psychology and applied linguistics are contributing to growth in research training.

In teaching, undergraduate programs in psychology are well subscribed and several postgraduate linguistics programs, for example, translating and interpreting, are showing strong growth. The Masters degree covers seven languages and includes Australian Sign Language, AUSLAN. Demand for our fully accredited postgraduate speech therapy program is also very high.

Top quality research and research students are essential to our long-term survival. The Division is already very strong in research - the Macquarie Centre for Cognitive Science (MACCS) is an outstanding example - but I want to expand our capacity further through our other
research centres – the National Centre for English Language Teaching and Research (NCELTR), the Speech Hearing and Language Research Centre (SHLRC), the Dictionary Research Centre (DRC) and the Centre for Language in Social Life.

The Nelson plan for Australian universities, however it’s applied, will force us to seize opportunities and make faster decisions, adapting programs to new agendas. An example is attracting more higher degree students in professional communication and social health.

Things are really moving here – we’re expanding in most areas.

We must also explore ways of attracting more international higher degree students. Linguistics is well respected internationally, having offered distance education for over a decade. But to hold our leading place we must expand our niche.

We have an effective Divisional Research Committee, which now plans joint interdisciplinary functions, such as the student-organised Divisional Research Festival in November. It will support the work of our research students, giving them a chance to present their research to an academic audience, at whatever stage it’s at, and receive helpful feedback.

We’re already involved in interdisciplinary research but I’d like us to do even more. There are natural ties between linguistics and psychology, and good research links have existed for some time between MACCS and SHLRC.

Outside the Division, we collaborate with academics in the School of Education on pre-service teacher training programs for the Malaysian Government, while Linguistics staff have worked with ICS colleagues on computational linguistics. Researchers from Psychology also work with academics from other disciplines, such as biology and education.

I see flexibility as the key to future success in teaching. We should offer the widest possible modes to fit with students’ commitments, while technology should be a tool that adds value, not a replacement for interactive learning with others. My own philosophy of teaching is to link theoretical concepts and tasks with students’ daily experiences and work. Problem-based learning is a vital ingredient of postgraduate education in applied linguistics.

Across the University, I see a need for more effective teaching approaches with international students, as well as better service and facilities. We need to be more student-focused, to recognise a diverse student body is a reality of modern universities and to adjust accordingly. I’m a member of a new University-wide working party on this issue. Students’ experience of Australian education should be high quality and seamless, from initial contact, to enrolment, teaching and learning.

Our Division is at a challenging but also exciting stage. We have capable younger teachers and researchers as well as established high profile international scholars. And we have many flexible and highly competent staff prepared to foster an open-minded collaborative culture.

I think Macquarie’s success stems mostly from its long-standing culture of breaking with tradition, being more willing than many institutions to open up to students, not leave them to fend completely for themselves.

Macquarie’s been important in my life for many years. As a mother, newly arrived in Australia, I often came here with my two young children. As a student, I found there was so much going on. That hasn’t changed. I urge our alumni to make use of all Macquarie has to offer, educationally and culturally. I’d like to see them return for events such as our Research Festival. They can enrich their professional lives through keeping up with research, current practice, interesting initiatives and, most powerfully, by networking.
Retirements

Three long-serving Macquarie staff, familiar to many alumni, retired recently.

**Bob Lawton** has retired after more than 30 years’ service as Executive Officer of the Sports Association (MUSA). When he joined MUSA in 1971 he was determined to open up sport to all and established many new clubs. He fought for and usually won the best in facilities and equipment and raised Macquarie’s national and international profile in winter sports. An excellent all-round sportsman, Bob never gave up his own sporting interests – especially skiing.

His skills in sports administration led to many external appointments, including General Manager of the 1992 Australian Winter Olympics Team. He was an Executive Member of the NSW Olympic Council and, during the 2000 Olympics, National Olympic Committee Assistant for Canada. MUSA made Bob Lawton an Honorary Life Member in 1991, while Macquarie awarded him a Silver Jubilee Honorary Fellowship in 1992.

**Australian English expert David Blair** speaks with authority when he describes Macquarie as a special place and a groundbreaking, innovative university from its very first days – he was there at the start and has been on campus ever since. After a distinguished 35 years as an academic, including a decade as Head of School and later Dean, he is not so much retiring as stepping sideways – a ‘translation’, as he calls it.

Having retired from his post as Dean of the Division of Humanities, as Senior Research Fellow David will continue his long-term work on the Macquarie Dictionary (which he joined as one of four foundation editors in 1970) and the Australian National Placenames Survey, a national research project of which he is Director. (See page 19 for details of his guest lecture on this topic on 9 October.)

Also ‘there at the start’ was **Associate Professor Joan Kirkby** – the very first student to enrol at Macquarie in 1966 for a PhD, and in 1970 the University’s first doctoral graduate. Originally from the USA, for 37 years she has pursued an accomplished academic career at Macquarie, with research interests spanning feminism, Australian women writers, US culture, Australian-US relations, and refugees. Joan Kirkby will remain a Senior Research Fellow in the Department of Critical and Cultural Studies, continuing research on the poet Emily Dickinson, for which she won a major ARC grant.

**Vale Ken Maddock**

Colleagues and former students of Emeritus Professor Ken Maddock were saddened to learn of his death on 2 June. Ken joined Macquarie in 1969, after coming to Australia from New Zealand to do postgraduate fieldwork on Indigenous culture. He became a leading figure in Aboriginal studies and contributed enormously to his discipline, supervising a number of postgraduate students who have since made their mark. Ken’s whole teaching career until he retired in 1995 was at Macquarie and he was awarded a Personal Chair on the basis of his distinguished publication record.

**External Appointments**

**Professor Alan Hayes**, Dean, Australian Centre for Educational Studies, has been appointed Chair of the Australian Council for Children and Parenting. **Alex Malley**, Senior Lecturer, Department of Accounting and Finance, is the new NSW President of CPA Australia.

**New Director for Warawara**

Macquarie recently welcomed Associate Professor Michael McDaniel as the new Director of Warawara (Department of Indigenous Studies). Macquarie currently has about 50 enrolled Indigenous students and Michael aims to increase their representation across all discipline areas and in postgraduate studies. Encouraged by Macquarie’s collaborative culture and a strong show of goodwill, he also intends to create more effective approaches to student support and staff development, and to raise the profile of the Department and of Indigenous culture.

**Indigenous teachers graduate**

The first 12 students of Aboriginal and Islander background to complete the degree of Bachelor of Teaching (Early Childhood Services) graduated in April. An inspirational Occasional Address was delivered by long-time Aboriginal welfare campaigner, Professor Lowitja O’Donoghue.

Established in 1998, the degree targets Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people working in early childhood settings. During their studies the 12 graduates travelled to Sydney from all over the country four times a year for intensive teaching periods on campus. The program now draws students from four states and is studied part-time over a five-year period, allowing students to continue working.
April Graduations

Some 3700 students graduated at the April graduation ceremonies, and eight University medalists were honoured: Sydney Birchall (Law), Sharon Cameron (Speech and Hearing Sciences), Nicola Casule (Ancient History), Sandy Fitzgerald (Sociology and Politics), Arthur McCulloch (Law), Nishen Naidoo (Chemistry), Barbara Nevicky (Accounting), and Wayne Warburton (Psychology). At the same ceremonies, four academic staff received Outstanding Teacher Awards: Dr Kevin McCracken (Human Geography), Joseph Macri (Economics), Dr Ayshe Talay-Ongan (Early Childhood) and Dr Daniella Tilbury (Environment).

Faraday Lecture by Professor Paul Davies

Professor Paul Davies, Professor of Natural Philosophy, Australian Centre for Astrobiology, gave the Royal Society’s prestigious Michael Faraday Award Lecture in London in late January. The lecture received significant publicity, notably in the Guardian and Telegraph newspapers. Professor Davies won the award – one of the most prominent in UK science – in recognition of his worldwide reputation as an outstanding communicator of contemporary physics.

Bob Carr biography

Bob Carr: the Reluctant Leader

Bob Carr biography

Bob Carr, the Reluctant Leader, published this year by UNSW Press, was written by Macquarie Councillor and PhD graduate Marilyn Dodkin. To research her book Marilyn gained exclusive access to Bob Carr’s diaries. UNSW Press describes the book as an ‘honest, frank account of a politician’s career with all its ups and downs, spiced with Carr’s own humour, opinions and frank discourse with his State and Federal colleagues’.

It was not Marilyn’s first excursion into the world of political biography. UNSW Press has also published Brothers: Eight leaders of the Labor Council of NSW, which began as research for her PhD thesis in politics.
Family Orientation Evening
In March the Committee took part in the popular Family Orientation Evening, organised by the Macquarie Transition Program – a highly successful approach to introducing students and their families to the new University environment.

Prize Awards 2002 Ceremony
The Macquarie Foundation funds three substantial undergraduate prizes for students, each highlighting the achievements of some of Macquarie’s best students. A Prize Awards Ceremony was held in the first week of August. Members of the Foundation and Convocation Standing Committee warmly congratulate the winners for 2002: Ms Nu Nu Win (Kathryn Murphy Memorial Prize); Ms Karen Taylor and Mr Glenn Blundell (Raymond Powys Memorial Prize – shared); and Wayne Warburton (Science Prize).

Bachelor of Technology Scholarship winner
Congratulations to third year student Ben Baker, the 2003 recipient of The Macquarie Foundation BTech scholarship.

Macquarie Alumni Program 2004 – Bigger and Better
Don’t miss the February 2004 issue of Sirius for details of the exciting 2004 events program planned by new Alumni Office staff, Mark Herndon and Sandra Harrison. Functions will include reunions, dinners, lectures, special events, field trips, and plenty more. They will be a great opportunity to catch up with other alumni, enjoy yourself, and – whether your interest is professional or personal – learn about groundbreaking developments at Macquarie. Be surprised. Be entertained. Be there.

Convocation AGM
The Annual General Meeting of Convocation on 18 June was followed by a fascinating presentation by Dr Christiana Köhler of the University’s Australian Centre for Egyptology. Dr Köhler heads a team of Macquarie staff and students excavating in the necropolis of ancient Egypt’s first capital city, Memphis. The research has already made considerable progress towards its aim of reconstructing the early history and culture of Pharaonic civilisation.

In the formal part of the AGM, four Standing Committee members were re-elected. For 2003-04 the Committee comprises: Russell Agnew, Li-An Baker, Geoff Berry, Marcus Connor, June Donovan, Ruth Duckett, Pamela Kenny, John Lamaro, Dr John Lincoln AM, Richard Lucas, Tania Mihailuk, Anthony Pleticos and (ex officio) Deputy Chancellor Malcolm Irving and Vice-Chancellor Professor Di Yerbury.

Where are they now?
After positions with National Parks, UWA and the Norfolk Island Government, botanist Naomi Christian (Gillett) (BSc 1997) now works for the Australian Correspondence Schools in Queensland.
Economics graduate David Gallagher (BSc 1996) has completed a Masters degree and PhD and is a Senior Lecturer at UNSW.
Science graduate Louise Hayward (BSc 2000) is employed as Environmental Projects Officer at Ku-Ring-Gai Council.
Psychology graduate Dr Fe A Hidalgo (MA 1975 PhD 1987) works with the Philippines Department of Education.
Heidi Knorr (BSc 1998 MChiro 2000) is opening her own practice in Perthshire, Scotland.

Business graduate Helena Lundberg (BBHT 2002) is the Swedish marketing representative for Sydney’s International College of Tourism and Hotel Management.
On graduation, history graduate Lt Colonel John Moore (MA 1980) embarked on a research, lecture and writing program which has covered many diverse areas of military history.
Author and playwright Sue Murray (MA 2000) has just published her latest book The Parents’ Survival Guide to Year 12. She is part of an enthusiastic group of graduates of the Creative Writing degree who still meet regularly to discuss their latest written work.
Vivienne Neary (BA 1989) is a script editor and currently lives in London.
Psychology graduate Dr Fiona Papps (PhD 2001) is now Assistant Professor in the Department of Psychology at the University of Prince Edward Island, Canada.
Thursday 9 October, 6.30pm
Venue: Mason Theatre, Building E7B
Lecture: Naming Places and Placing Names
Speaker: David Blair, Director, Australian National Placenames Survey and former Dean, Humanities Division

The settlement of Australia has been, in part, a process of naming its places. The Indigenous inhabitants and later arrivals had systems for bestowing placenames that now reflect the history and culture of this continent. Many, however, are obscured by the mists of time. We know what Parramatta means, but how did Dee Why get its name? David Blair, Director of this major research project based at Macquarie, will describe the nation-wide detective work it takes to document the origins and meanings of our Indigenous and introduced placenames.

2-4 November
Hong Kong and Singapore Graduation Ceremonies – Alumni Functions

In conjunction with these ceremonies, the Alumni Office and its local chapters will host functions in these cities. Alumni from all disciplines are warmly invited to attend. Further details: alumni@reg.mq.edu.au

Thursday 20 November, 6.30pm
Venue: Mason Theatre, Building E7B
Lecture: Life on a little known planet
Speaker: Associate Professor Michael Gillings, Department of Biological Sciences

Scientists now realise that less than one percent of the species on our planet have been discovered. Mammals, birds and plants are fairly well known, but there are enormous gaps in our knowledge of marine organisms, insects, fungi and bacteria – the very groups that are most important to maintaining nutrient cycles, the atmosphere and food production. Mike Gillings will describe some of the most bizarre organisms and take us on a journey to where they live: in radioactive hot springs, desert caves, the deepest oceans, and the solid rock beneath our feet.

Parliament House Luncheon
Monday 27 October, 12 noon for 12.30pm
Venue: State Parliament, Macquarie Street Sydney
Bookings essential. Cost: $55 per person
Guest Speaker: Professor Paul Davies, Australian Centre for Astrobiology, Macquarie University, will talk on Astrobiology – Life’s Cosmic Dimension

Is life a bizarre, chemical fluke restricted to Earth, or will it emerge wherever there are Earth-like planets? How, where and when did life on Earth begin? Scientists at the Australian Centre for Astrobiology are studying the earliest traces of life on Earth for clues about life’s cosmic connection. This is a great opportunity to hear internationally acclaimed physicist, writer and broadcaster, Professor Paul Davies, speak on some of the biggest of the Big Questions of Existence, which help frame our understanding of our place in the grand sweep of the cosmos.

GSE graduate Patricia Pepena (MEnvSt 1997) returned to Papua New Guinea to work for the government as a Senior Resource Scientist.

Sheryn Platts (BA 1979) is now teaching student enrolled nurses at TAFE.

Arts graduate Sandra Purser (BA 1986) is Assistant Director in the Federal Attorney-General’s Department.

Having recently graduated, Nova Imelda Rumondang (MComBus) 2002 is working in Jakarta as a Trade Finance Associate.

Jesper Sentow (MBA 1995) is Chief Financial Officer for Evans & Tate in Western Australia.

Catherine-Marie Tamayo (Stanton) (BecLLB 1988) is currently the Director, Financial Audit in the Tasmanian Audit Office.

Dr Ronald Ward (MBA 1976) is Director of his own company, providing expert witness services to law firms.

GRADUATE grapevine

One of Macquarie’s first graduates, Dr Margaret White (BAdipEd 1972), was recently awarded an OAM in recognition of her work in cross-cultural understanding in education. After further studies through Armidale CAE, she embarked on her EdD at UWS, jointly supervised by retired Macquarie lecturer Professor Neil Baumgart, for which she was awarded the NSW Institute of Education Research Award for Outstanding Educational Research 2001. Margaret considers Macquarie’s encouragement of mature age students in her early studies (“faith in us oldies” as she puts it) was one of the key inputs into her long academic career.

Dr Andrew Parker (PhD 1996) is currently the Royal Society University Research Fellow in the Department of Zoology, Oxford University, researching structural colours in nature. His new book, In the Blink of an Eye, was published earlier this year.
THEN and now

It’s the same place on campus, only 30 years apart. There’s the Library on the left. Building C5C (Economic and Financial Studies) now occupies most of the open space. Today you can barely glimpse E7A through the trees.

Change on a growing campus may be the norm – but the distinctive circular noticeboard remains intact.