A VISION COMES TO LIFE
INVITATION TO ALL
LEBANESE HERITAGE SYDNEY UNIVERSITY ALUMNI
A UNIQUE & EXCLUSIVE OPPORTUNITY

المؤسسة الأسترالية اللبنانية في جامعة سدني

The Australian Lebanese Foundation is organising a unique event on the 5th November for the occasion of the first visit of his Beatitude Patriarch al–Rahi to Australia.

Besides the opportunity to meet and greet Patriarch Rahi and attend his public lecture, we trust that the event will help reacquaint you with alumni from your discipline and the broader Lebanese Australian community.

The public lecture will be followed by an exclusive dinner.

Please register your interest at alf.alumni@sydney.edu.au

For further details visit sydney.edu.au/alf

www.facebook.com/australianlebanesefoundation

Photo: Dany Lahoud - Paroisse Mastita
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where will you live while you study?

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A time when Australia grapples with some of the most significant higher education reforms of our generation, it is clear that while government will always play a role in supporting universities, public funding is not enough.

Our future – and the future of all universities – relies upon a range of funding sources which help to make the difference between a good and a truly great institution.

We are committed to providing a world-class education to all of our students. If we are to honour this commitment and remain on an even playing field with our international counterparts, we need to find ways to make up the funding shortfalls that recent government proposals will impose upon us. This must include the possibility of greater contributions to the cost of their education from students who can afford to make them.

As we argue for additional funding, universities have an obligation to ensure that they do not leave bright young Australians behind. The University of Sydney already spends more than $60 million a year in scholarships and under the new regime this would need to increase considerably.

In addition to making important decisions over the coming months about whether to increase student fees generally or in specific courses, we need to find ways to diversify and increase our discretionary revenue streams. And we need to focus on our strategic priorities, doing more with what we have and making sure we use our limited resources on people and work of the highest quality.

This is where philanthropy comes in. The generosity of our donors gives us the power to go beyond the realm of government funding and pursue the margin of excellence.

Through philanthropy, we are able to create and sustain a community in which researchers and students can thrive. Philanthropy helps to make a University of Sydney education attainable for all promising students, whatever their social or cultural background.

And philanthropy enables our people to be at the forefront of some of the world’s greatest discoveries. From bionic ears to the black box – the University has a long history of alumni undertaking groundbreaking work that contributes to the world around us. Discoveries like these are made possible by our donors, who from our earliest days have played a critical role in our ability to change the world in which we live.

Today, with the combined support of industry, government, and individual philanthropists, we are giving our researchers and students the opportunity to explore new frontiers of knowledge and inquiry. The multidisciplinary and cross-University work we have set in motion, such as through the Charles Perkins Centre, means we can bring our people together in new ways to deliver real-world solutions in areas of national and international importance.

Our multidisciplinary centres represent more than just new approaches to research and teaching. They are living, breathing examples of how the University community – students, researchers, donors, alumni and staff – are working together to transform lives within our local community and around the world.

At the heart of any great institution is a team of dedicated staff, and I am pleased to tell you about three very important appointments for the University.

First, our new Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education), Professor Pip Pattison, and Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Registrar), Professor Tyrone Carlin, will play vital roles in our efforts to deliver an outstanding education and overall university experience for our students.

Professor Pattison has been Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) at the University of Melbourne since 2011. A quantitative psychologist by background, she began her academic career at Melbourne, and has previously served as president of its Academic Board. As Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education), Professor Pattison will lead our strategy and vision for teaching and learning and our students’ educational experience.

Many of you will be familiar with the significant contribution Professor Carlin has already made to the University in his most recent roles as Pro Vice-Chancellor (Education Operations) and Co-Dean of the University of Sydney Business School. In his new role as Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Registrar), Professor Carlin is responsible for how we manage and develop each student’s relationship with the University, from their first enquiry to their graduation.

Finally, Professor Greg Whitwell has accepted our offer to become Dean of the Business School. Joining us from a position as Senior Deputy Dean of the Australian Business School at the University of New South Wales, Professor Whitwell’s academic experience and stature will be a welcome addition.
Period of vibrant progress

WORDS
BELINDA HUTCHINSON AM
CHANCELLOR

What a vibrant and inventive institution is the University of Sydney. Even a passing glance at our year thus far shows a sweep of research, teaching and activity that is unrivalled in Australia. Dig deeper and you will find such enterprise reveals the true extent of our dynamism, patronage of the arts, connections to business, financial strength and our recognition by others as a place of ideas.

Consider first the University’s role as a founding partner for the $100 million Westpac Bicentennial Foundation, the single largest private education scholarship program in Australia’s history—100 scholarships each year, every year, forever.

By helping universities pursue ideas that shape our world, Westpac will assist our University to remain at the forefront of teaching and research worldwide, and seek discoveries that will benefit all Australians. With Westpac’s support we will continue to be a place of exceptional scholarship, world-class facilities and brilliant students.

In February, International Monetary Fund (IMF) managing director Christine Lagarde visited the University to film a special edition of ABC Television’s Q&A program at the Seymour Centre. Madame Lagarde is a pioneer; the first woman to lead an international law firm, the first female trade minister of France, and the first woman to be a finance minister of a G8 economy.

Now, as head of the IMF, she is challenging fellow global leaders with her emphasis on environmental issues, economic equality and gender inclusion. At the University, Madame Lagarde urged governments to invest in education and health. We can only agree.

In March, the inaugural Chancellor’s Concert at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music was spectacular. The students in the Con’s Symphony Orchestra demonstrated their passion and talent as they played Sibelius, Mozart and Brahms. They were joined on stage by world-renowned American forte pianist, Steve Lubin, who has appeared as a concerto soloist and recitalist in the great halls of the world across a dazzling 30-year career. We were honoured to have Steve at the Con. Its amalgamation with the University of Sydney has allowed both institutions to generate broader support for the study of the arts and culture in Sydney.

Also in March, the University for the first time received an Aa1 rating from leading global credit rating agency Moody’s, reflecting our sound financial performance and prominent market position in Australia.

The Aa1 rating will support the University’s borrowing agenda and enable our $2.5 billion campus improvement program to create a world-class environment that meets all the needs of our University community. This investment in infrastructure will further boost the University’s ability to attract and retain top academics, researchers and students, and deliver on our academic strategy.

To celebrate International Women’s Day this year, the University of Sydney Business School joined forces with the UN Women National Committee Australia to promote gender equality at senior levels of Australia’s public, corporate and not-for-profit sectors.

Our partnership includes funding an MBA scholarship and industry placements for two Business School undergraduate students. The scholarship is a tangible way to empower women by developing their leadership skills, and the placements will allow two students to promote women’s interests. Managing diversity, promoting gender equality at work, and advancing more women into leadership roles are critical issues for Australian business.

More recently, I had the pleasure of celebrating the official launch of Sancta Sophia Graduate House. This new building is the first purpose-built accommodation for postgraduates to open on the University campus. Delivered on time and on budget, Graduate House will add much to the fabric of what Sancta Sophia College has been to generations of young women since 1926.

Finally, many of you would have heard of Advance, the largest network for Australians living abroad. In this year’s Advance Global Awards, University alumni won three of the eight awards, including the Advance Global Australian of the Year Award 2014, which went to Chris Boshuizen. Chris is a physics graduate who became Innovator in Residence at NASA’s Ames Research Centre before co-founding Planet Labs, a company that manufactures shoebox-sized satellites equipped with Earth-watching cameras to create a constant photographic map of the Earth.

There is also the University study which discovered links between high birth weight and heart disease; the University hosting a major forum on food security in the 21st century; and the University researchers who examined a unique way to identify people at risk of stroke, using an ECG test delivered by pharmacists via a smartphone.

As we enter one of the most exciting phases in our 150-year history, it is important that we acknowledge just how much happens at our alma mater every month, and how it is made possible by our talented staff and the support of our alumni.
VALE JOHN McLenaGan

The alumni community has been saddened by the passing of former president of the Alumni Council, John McLenaghan (BEc ‘59) in April, after a short illness. John was president of the Alumni Council in 2012 and deputy president from 2008-11.

John worked with the International Monetary Fund in Washington for more than 30 years, during which time he became involved in the Sydney University Graduates Union North America (SUGUNA). When he returned to Sydney with his wife in 2004, he was asked to represent SUGUNA back home. In 2006 John was appointed to the Alumni Council as a Vice-Chancellor’s nominee, after which he became deputy president.

Current president of the Alumni Council, Annie Corlett, paid tribute to John: “I will miss his wise counsel.” Barry Catchlove, another former president of the council and now Patron of the 1850 Society, said: “I was personally delighted when John agreed to become the Alumni Council President succeeding David Turner. He was a thoughtful and diligent president.” Barry is working with the University to establish a fellowship in honour of John and his contributions. Anyone wishing to make a gift in memory of John can call the University Gift Hotline on 02 8627 8818.

YOUR FAVOURITE TEACHERS

Responses have been flowing in thick and fast for the SAM Favourite Teacher project. Elizabeth Sofatzis (PhD ’13) (pictured above) has captured the passion and gratitude that all respondents have conveyed.

“I am indebted to Dr Bruce Gardiner for his untiring support, tactful criticism, and insightful suggestions: from the acuity of his mind I learnt the art of finding ingenuity in a research topic, from conversations with him I gained an extensive vocabulary, and from his wit further developed a love of humour.”

In the next edition, the magazine will publish a special feature with your responses. So there is still time to nominate your favourite lecturer, tutor or supervisor, together with a short description of what made that teacher so special, and their impact on you.

Please send your nominations, together with brief description (maximum 150 words), with the words FAVOURITE TEACHER on the header line, to: michael.visontay@sydney.edu.au

SAM’S NEW iPad EDITION

Each print edition of SAM now has an iPad version (which is free), with an exciting array of extra features – photos, video, audio and more – for you to download and consume at your leisure.

HOW TO ACCESS THE iPad EDITION

1. SAM for iPad can be downloaded from the App Store. Search for SAM (Sydney Alumni Magazine).
2. It is best to be connected to Wi-Fi Internet, however SAM for iPad can be downloaded over 3G.
3. Once SAM for iPad has finished downloading, open the app from the Newsstand.
4. The final step is to download the July issue by tapping the cover’s icon.

EXCLUSIVE iPad CONTENT FOR JULY

Each iPad edition of SAM will feature exclusive content. In the July edition, we present:
- Video: Guided tour of the new Charles Perkins Centre
- Audio: Glenda Sluga’s public lecture on WW1 and internationalism
- Photos: Images from the Book of Remembrance
- Photos: Lucy Humphrey’s public art works
The annual Golden Graduates luncheon in April attracted 280 alumni to celebrate and share their memories of studying here. Alumni Council President Annie Corlett was Master of Ceremonies. Before the event graduates were invited to send in their happiest memories of their University experience. Here is a sample of their responses:

**Dr Ruth Fink Latukefu (BA ’54 MA ’56)**
The Colombo Plan students who came to Sydney in the 1950s were a very important trigger for better attitudes to people of other nationalities. They broke the insularity and showed the falsity of the “white Australia policy”. We had an active International Club and at its social functions Australians and Asians began to accept and befriend each other.

**Professor Katherine Georgouras (MBBS ’55 DipDermaMed ’63)**
University was a liberation from the restriction of school. I could do as I pleased, join debating (and always get beaten by the law students!), sing with the Sydney University Musical Society at St James church. I was free! However, I quickly realised that with freedom came responsibility to my family and fellow human beings. During the medical course I was taught that “more is missed by not looking than by not knowing”, a principle that I have applied almost every day of my life.

**Stanley Gibbs (BA ’49 DipEd ’50)**
It was 1946. I was a shy, awkward boy from the country and the first of my family to go to University. It was exciting to come in contact with some of the great minds of the mid-century: Anderson in Philosophy, Trendall in Classics, Elkin in Anthropology, War and McDonald in history, and Waldock in English. I can remember clearly being crowded into the new Wallace Theatre with hundreds of others. There was a hush when Waldock entered. We were back in the 18th century. Some of his words are still in my mind: “Let us consider Moll Flanders, ladies and gentlemen, a stricken deer torn from the fold.” He was mesmerising. One day a dog trotted in and sat in front of the lectern. Would Waldock notice it? The dog decided after a while that the 18th century was not for him and trotted out. There was no laughter. We were still in the 18th century and the lecture rolled on. University changed my life.

**Mrs Elaine Goggin (BSc ’44)**
My most vivid memories are from first year. Professor ‘Charlie’ Fawcett was lecturer in Inorganic Chemistry. Tall, thin, always in a black suit, he used the same notes he had used for years, in the naked lecture hall in the old Chemistry building. He had a seating plan on his lectern so when an alarm clock rang or Jaffas were dropped from the back row, he hardly drew breath before telling ‘Mr So - and - So’ to leave the room. Lectures ran exactly from seven minutes past the hour until seven minutes to the hour, by the clock above the door, which was closed at seven minutes past.

**Anne Powles (BA ’61 LLB ’64)**
My experiences at Sydney were very enjoyable. Some were inspiring. Others were momentous, such as when Professor Julius Stone played, live on the radio at a lecture, President John Kennedy’s speech during the Bay of Pigs crisis. But most clearly I remember some of the steps we made in the feminist field. We sometimes defied orders and wore trousers not skirts (often rolled up under an academic gown at dinner). All the women who did Law at that time will remember the turned-off, but not removed, urinal in the women’s common room at the Law School in Phillip Street. After all, women doing Law was only a fad!

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**QANTAS UK PRIZE**
Sarah Ramwell (BA ’05 LLB ’07) has won the 2014 Qantas Australian Woman of the Year Award in the UK for her corporate social responsibility work focusing on pro bono, volunteering, environment and diversity as well as women’s rights. She is also studying for a Masters in Sustainability Leadership at Cambridge University.

**ALUMNI AWARDS**
The annual Alumni Awards and Graduate Medals will be presented in a ceremony in The Great Hall on Friday 17 October.
NEW FOUNDATION WILL HELP NURTURE OUR FUTURE LEADERS

The University of Sydney is a founding partner of Westpac Bicentennial Foundation, the single largest private education scholarship program in Australia’s history. In April Westpac announced a one-off contribution of $100 million to fund approximately 100 scholarships every year in perpetuity, as part of the bank’s 200th anniversary in 2017.

The foundation was launched by Westpac CEO Gail Kelly and Westpac Chairman Lindsay Maxsted at a gala luncheon in Sydney, with the Universities of Sydney and Melbourne both announced as founding partners.

Dr Michael Spence, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Sydney, welcomed the announcement: “By helping universities to fund the pursuit of ideas that will shape the world in which we live, Westpac will help universities like Sydney remain at the forefront of teaching and research worldwide, and pursue discoveries that will benefit all Australians.”

Scholarships and awards will roll out from 2015, while the programs are expected to be fully operational by 2017. The University of Sydney will offer three of the five available scholarships and awards programs through the foundation, including Future Leaders, Best and Brightest and Asian Exchange.

Gail Kelly emphasised the link between the new foundation and Westpac’s long history of supporting communities: “We strongly believe that as a vital part of the Australian community, Westpac has a responsibility to play a role in ensuring we capitalise on every opportunity to help nurture future leaders.”

The scholarship programs expected to be on offer at the University of Sydney include:

- **Future Leaders scholarships** of up to $120,000 per recipient. These will be awarded to new or recent graduates for postgraduate study at a prestigious global institution. Recipients will come from a wide range of disciplines, with preference given to Australia’s relationship with Asia, and technology and innovation.
- **Best and Brightest scholarships**, which will provide awards to postdoctoral researchers in Australia’s leading research universities. Recipients will be selected based on their research work, which will focus on enhancing Australia’s competitive position in technology and innovation, or strengthening Australia’s ties with Asian economies. Successful applicants will each receive $330,000 over three years.
- **Asian Exchange scholarships** of up to $10,000, which will provide the opportunity for Australian undergraduate students to spend a semester at a leading Asian university, with a focus on increasing the number of Asia-literate graduates in Australia.


ALUMNI SCOOP OVERSEAS AWARDS

Three Sydney alumni were recently recognised for leading the way in their respective fields at the Advance Global Australian Awards, which celebrate Australians living overseas who exhibit exceptional talent that stamps them as future leaders and innovators in their chosen field.

The overall winner and recipient of the Advanced Manufacturing award was Dr Christopher Boshuizen (BSc Hons ’01 PhD ’07). Christopher was recognised for his work while at the NASA Ames Research Centre, and more recently the creation and success of the start-up Planet-Labs.

Other graduate winners include Sir Jonathan Mills (BMus ’98) who received the Creative Industries award. Sir Jonathan has been the Director and Chief Executive of the Edinburgh International Festival since 2006. Previously, he held a host of cultural leadership roles in Australia.

Andrew Tanner (BE Mech ’04 BCom ’04), who received the award for Clean Technology, is a professional engineer who helped start the Australian solar energy company Ausra from a garage in Sydney in 2002. As a project engineer, he worked in Singleton, in regional NSW, for four years to build Australia’s largest solar thermal installation. [advance.org/](http://www.advance.org/)

Gates scholarships

Two Sydney alumni have been awarded Gates Cambridge Scholarships for 2014. Pepe Clarke and Stephanie Mawson were among 95 applicants who were awarded the prestigious full-cost scholarships, which are awarded to outstanding applicants from countries outside the UK.

Pepe Clarke (LLM ’10), the Chief Executive Officer of the Nature Conservation Council of NSW (NCC), has been accepted to study a Master of Philosophy in Conservation Leadership. Stephanie Mawson (BA Hons ’10), whose research interest is the early modern Spanish empire, has been accepted for a PhD. The Gates Scholarship program aims to build a global network of future leaders committed to improving the lives of others. [gatescambridge.org/](http://www.gatescambridge.org/)
LOST PORTRAIT RECOVERED

A portrait of the renowned doctor and sex researcher Norman Haire has been returned to the University after being “borrowed” for 50 years. News of the portrait came to light after historian and alumna Diana Wyndham received a Norman Haire Fellowship and wrote his biography, Norman Haire and the Study of Sex, which Sydney University Press published last year.

Wyndham says she received an email from a man who worked at the University in the 1960s. He told her that at the time the University library was housed in MacLaurin Hall, and in the transition to the new Fisher Library, many documents were stolen, including the portrait, which was taken by one of his colleagues.

The culprit went overseas for what was expected to be a brief period and asked Wyndham’s informant to mind the portrait. The man who “borrowed” the portrait never returned and died overseas. Wyndham’s book gave the portrait-minder the perfect opportunity for the portrait’s return: author and minder met and Wyndham arranged for the handover.

David Ellis, Director of Sydney University Museums, says the painting’s greatest value to the University is its connection to a significant researcher who graduated from Sydney, and generously left a large bequest and his papers to the University. After graduating, Haire went to London in the 1920s, setting up a medical practice in Harley Street, where he promoted contraception, ran free birth control clinics for the poor and pioneered sexual reforms. Haire spoke charismatically and wrote lucidly in his bid to save the world from sexual misery.

The portrait - which was painted in 1938 by the society portraitist Cathleen Mann, the Marchioness of Queensberry - is set to go on display in Fisher Library this month.

Making a difference, one call at a time

Five nights a week, rotating groups of current students and graduands set up their calling stations from the University’s Development Office. Depending on the day and the week, the callers dial thousands of phone numbers in the hope of reaching you and having a meaningful conversation.

The University of Sydney’s annual telephone program has two main goals; reaching out to alumni and friends to reconnect and engage with alumni, and to highlight how supporters of the University can make a difference by making a small contribution towards various scholarships, research initiatives and faculty projects.

Lucy Anderson, a second-year student completing her Bachelor of Arts, has been a student caller for two years and is grateful for the opportunity to hone her skills. “It’s so important to listen carefully to what someone is saying and be in tune to what they’re feeling to be able to continue the call, and that can sometimes be quite challenging,” she says.

With more than 5300 people giving through the telephone program in 2013 alone, there are certainly many positive experiences to share. “My favourite part of calling is getting to hear people’s stories of studying at Sydney and how, or if, it relates to what they’re doing now – some graduates are doing some pretty cool things,” Lucy adds.

“I remember talking to one engineering grad who was working on developing a way of putting out fires more effectively from the air. He was so positive about his time at Sydney and where it had got him.” Another time, Lucy was lucky enough to make an exciting personal connection. “I got to speak with someone who had studied with my grandfather!”

When asked what she would most like alumni or friends to know about the telephone program, Lucy responded: “We want everyone to feel connected and to get involved financially if possible, but it is about participation and building up the community, not large amounts of money.”

The Sydney Development Fund would like to thank all alumni and friends who have shown their support through the telephone program.
Initial findings have been released of a study that tracked the careers of the 1988 graduating class of the Sydney Law School, providing insights into career development and areas including family, income and job satisfaction. The report was based on data from an online survey, which included 191 of the 260 graduates in the cohort. The 1988 group was chosen because it was one of the first to have an almost-equal gender split.

The research, jointly sponsored by the University of Sydney's Business and Law schools and supported by Ashurst and Towers Watson legal firms, provides the first insights into how the careers of male graduates of the Law School have differed from those of their female colleagues and how variables including academic motivation, level of achievement, initial career destination, parenting and partnering, and care-giving responsibilities impacted career decisions and outcomes.

At an event held in February to launch the initial findings, the Vice-Chancellor Dr Michael Spence congratulated the research team (Professor Marian Baird, Business School; Professor Greg Tolhurst, Law School; Professor Catharine Lumby, Macquarie University Media Studies; Dr Nicole McWilliam, UTS Research Fellow; Dr Adam Hall, Towers Watson and Kate Cato, Head CSR Ashurst) and said the research was significant on three levels: for the University; the Law School and the legal profession.

The majority of respondents (61 percent of females and 59 percent of males) began their careers in large private firms but, 25 years later, males were about three times more likely to still be in large private firms than females. The data also provides valuable insights into family formation (with males more than twice as likely as females to have more than two children), hours worked, impact of mentoring, remuneration outcomes and overall satisfaction levels across the cohort.

The next stage of the research will examine triggers for key career decisions and correlations between longer-term career success within and outside the legal profession.
A VISION COMES TO LIFE
Last month marked a pivotal moment in the Charles Perkins Centre story, when members of the University community came together to celebrate and usher in a new collaborative approach to confronting some of the world’s greatest health challenges.

The official launch in early June capped off a month of special launch events for students, staff, friends and donors. These events celebrated the arrival of the $385 million state-of-the-art research and education hub (which occupies 49,500 square metres – almost twice the surface area of the Sydney Cricket Ground), an innovative academic strategy, and the appointment of more than a dozen new professorial chairs who will steer the centre’s research efforts.

Hundreds of University staff and students shared in those celebrations, enjoying a sneak peek inside the remarkable research and education hub at an open day in May. Staff and students were treated to healthy food and fun fitness activities, including DIY smoothies powered by pedalling on an exercise bike.

In early June, donors, VIPs and University staff heard more about how the Charles Perkins Centre vision has been brought to life at two separate launch events – a small preview dinner and an opening cocktail party celebration.

In true Charles Perkins Centre spirit, these events were underpinned by a theme of collaboration: from culinary delicacies created by renowned Adelaide chef Jock Zonfrillo in consultation with the nutritional experts of the Charles Perkins Centre, to the sweet notes of a beautiful musical partnership between award-winning singer/songwriter Megan Washington and our students. This partnership was enhanced by the string arrangements of conductor George Ellis – a distinguished graduate of the Sydney Conservatorium of Music.

As a tribute to the centre’s namesake, Charles Perkins, guests were treated to a performance by the Ltyentye Apurte (Santa Teresa) Aboriginal men’s dance group, which travelled from his country, Arrernte in Central Australia.

One of the most outstanding performances on the night was from the Charles Perkins Centre itself; the building shone as its spectacular interior was illuminated by brilliant multi-coloured projections.

PROFOUND SHIFT IN NUTRITION

During the formal proceedings, the centre’s Academic Director, Professor Steve Simpson, explained to guests the profound shift in modern human nutrition that underscores the centre’s work. “For the first time in history, more people are experiencing diseases of overnutrition than diseases of undernutrition, and that’s what the centre is about.

“Internationally, the model we have developed for the Charles Perkins Centre is unique. It is not a stand-alone institute but rather serves to enable success across the University and its affiliates by providing new collaborative research and educational opportunities that cross disciplines and boundaries. The aim is to improve the health of individuals, communities and the nation.”

The centre is facilitating collaboration between researchers and practitioners in
COVER STORY

health and medicine and experts from many other disciplines. These include arts and social sciences, architecture, business studies, education and social work, engineering and information technology, and the physical, life and environmental sciences.

“We now have all 16 faculties of the University engaged with the Charles Perkins Centre. It is transforming the University,” Professor Simpson adds.

In his closing address, the Vice-Chancellor, Dr Michael Spence, reiterated that sense of change and momentum. “We have already inspired a belief in our mission in people who share our bold vision: people who have seen this research and teaching hub come out of the ground, as teaching began at the beginning of this year, as researchers move into these world-class facilities, and hear from Steve Simpson and his colleagues about the impact their collaborations are already having.”

RESEARCH PROJECTS

The centre has established 24 research project nodes, Professor Simpson says, and projects now underway provide a strong sense of the centre’s multi-disciplinary character. They include the following.

Pre/early conception cohort study
Led by Professor Simpson, the Preconception, Pregnancy and Childhood Cohort Study is a flagship project which aims to better understand the mechanisms occurring before and during pregnancy that contribute to obesity, diabetes, cardiovascular disease and related conditions. A prospective observational group will follow parents and their offspring, from preconception and early pregnancy to the first years of life.

E-health and avatars
Led by Professor Stephen Twigg, Professor of Endocrinology, and Professor David Cook, Professor of Physiology, this project investigates the potential for creating lifestyle coaches using artificial intelligence agents. For example, a prototype for an avatar named Sunny has been produced, and it is designed to encourage users to achieve their health and wellness goals. Sunny continually offers suggestions for users to modify their thoughts and behaviour around eating and exercise patterns, self-image, motivation and ambitions.

Health literacy network
While there is a large body of research showing the relationship between lower health literacy and poor health outcomes, there has been a lack of high-quality research evidence to support this link. Under the leadership of Associate Professor Kirsten McCaffery from the School of Public Health, this node aims to take potential solutions for improving health literacy and test them rigorously to inform public policy decisions.

Paddock to plate
Led by Professor Salah Sukkarieh, Professor of Robotics and Intelligent Systems, this node aims to develop a complete systems understanding of the food production and delivery cycle. Using one grazing system (beef cattle) and two horticultural systems (apples and almonds) as key examples, the research employs robotics and intelligent systems to measure and control the nutritional benefits of these commodities. One aim is to give every piece of fruit, vegetable, grain and animal its own ‘life story’ — from paddock to plate.

FREE WEEKLY LECTURE PROGRAM

As part of its educational vision, the centre has launched a program of weekly public lectures by the new University professorial chairs and other high-profile researchers. To date, the series has featured speakers including Professors David Raubenheimer (speaking on nutritional ecology and human health), Steve Simpson (the geometry of ageing), David James (systems biology), Robyn Gallagher (weight management in heart disease and diabetes), Adrian Bauman (sitting versus standing), Charles Mackay (diet and Western lifestyle diseases) and Associate Professor Andrew Holmes (gut microbiome).

Upcoming speakers include: Professor Paul Griffiths (evolution and biomedical research), Dr Kyra Sym (CPC Cohort Study: the first 1000 days), Professor Salah Sukkarieh (robotics for food systems), Professor Deborah Schofield (health economics and chronic disease) and Professor Margaret Allman-Farinelli (personalising preventive health with technology).

PODCASTS, VIDEOS AND FULL DETAILS: sydney.edu.au/perkins/
World-first research by the Charles Perkins Centre has found that the interaction between calories has enormous significance for our health.

Within weeks of its hub opening for research and teaching earlier this year, the Charles Perkins Centre hit the headlines with groundbreaking research into the impact of protein, fat and carbohydrate on diet and nutrition.

The world-first research was conducted by Professor Steve Simpson (pictured above), the centre’s Academic Director, and his colleagues Professor David le Couteur (leader of the Project Node in Translational Gerontology) and Professor David Raubenheimer (the centre’s Nutrition Theme Leader) as part of the translational gerontology research node at the centre. They found that restricting calorie intake had no benefit on lifespan, in mice at least.

The results of their research, which examines the effects of the balance of protein, fat and carbohydrate on metabolic health, ageing and longevity in mice, were published in March in the prestigious scientific journal *Cell Metabolism*. Their work showed that:

- A high-protein, low-carbohydrate diet resulted in reduced body fat and food intake but also led to a shorter lifespan and poor cardiometabolic health.
- A high-carbohydrate, low-protein diet resulted in longer lifespan and better cardiometabolic health, despite also increasing body fat.
- A low-protein, high-fat diet provided the worst health outcomes, with fat content showing no negative influence on food intake, leading to obesity.
- Food intake is regulated primarily by dietary protein and carbohydrate, and not by the number of calories consumed.

“To the extent that this research on mice reflects the situation in humans, it has enormous implications for how much food we eat, our body fat, our heart and metabolic health, and ultimately the duration of our lives,” said Professor Simpson. “We have shown explicitly why it is that calories aren’t all the same. We need to look at where the calories come from and how they interact.”

Co-author Professor David Le Couteur added: “this represents an enormous leap in our understanding of the impact of diet quality and diet balance on food intake, health, ageing and longevity. We now face a new frontier in nutrition research.”

By examining mice fed a variety of 25 diets, the research team used an innovative state-space nutritional modelling method developed by Professors Simpson and Raubenheimer to measure the interactive effects of dietary energy, protein, fat and carbohydrate on food intake, cardiometabolic health and longevity.

The results suggest that lifespan could be extended in animals by manipulating the ratio of macronutrients in their diet – the first evidence that pharmacology could be used to extend lifespan in normal mammals.

Although mice were the subjects of this study, Le Couteur said the results from the study aligned with previous research in humans, but with a much larger number of dietary treatments and nutritional variables.

“Up until this point, most research has either concentrated on a single nutritional variable, such as fat, carbohydrate or calories, so much of our understanding of energy intake and diet balance is based on one-dimensional single nutrient assessments,” he said.

“The advice we are always given is to eat a healthy balanced diet, but what does that mean? We have some idea, but in relation to nutritional composition we don’t know terribly well. This research represents an important step in finding out.”

In terms of practical advice, the researchers predict that a diet with moderate amounts of high quality protein (15-20 per cent of total calorie intake) that is relatively low in fat and high in good quality complex carbohydrates will yield the best metabolic health and the longest life.
Nutrition is the X-factor in food security. A recent University forum examined ways to improve food quality, not just quantity.

How to grow enough food to feed ourselves is a challenge humans have grappled with for more than 10,000 years. But after decades of research and development in agriculture, which have led to dramatic improvements in crop yields, a new problem has arisen. Now that the world can grow enough food, why are so many people still undernourished?

“The problem is that we haven’t been able to ensure the right nutrient yield,” says Associate Professor Robyn Alders, a veterinary scientist who studies food security at the University’s Charles Perkins Centre. “So we are not necessarily getting better health from better food production.”

In fact, people who live where food is abundant can sometimes be among the worst off because their diet centres on a single, staple grain with a poor nutritional profile. For example, says Associate Professor Alders, some of the highest rates of undernutrition in Zambia are found in the heart of the nation’s corn belt. Up to 53 per cent of children there suffer from stunted growth, which can permanently impair their health and intellectual abilities.

Tackling this enigma was the focus of the inaugural forum on food security held at the University in March, which was jointly hosted by the Charles Perkins Centre, the Marie Bashir Institute for Infectious Diseases and BioSecurity and the Sydney Southeast Asia Centre. It united experts from across the University and around the world to discuss ways of ensuring people in developing and developed countries can access nutritious food.

According to Associate Professor Bill Pritchard, a geographer from the School of Geosciences, the main issue is a disconnect between agricultural policies and the needs of undernourished people. He cites the example of India, where heavy government subsidies for wheat and rice have resulted in massive surpluses of grain. “When we do surveys of the poor in India, we find that’s not the food they need more of,” he says. “They need more vegetables, and more iron and protein-rich foods like chickpeas and lentils.”

To fix the problem, he says we need to look at it through the eyes of the world’s 870 million undernourished people. Solutions will vary according to the needs of specific communities. They could include providing subsidies for farmers to grow more of what local people require, or offering assistance to families to start kitchen gardens, or helping them develop new income streams to buy more nutritious food.

Robyn Alders takes a similar, bottom-up approach in the project she is launching in Zambia and Tanzania, with funding from the Australian International Food Security Centre. To help subsistence farmers get more of the protein and micronutrients their diets are missing, her team will be assisting women to raise healthy, free-range hens for eggs, and to grow and store green leafy vegetables.

Targeting women in particular is key to the initiative, explains Dr Brigitte Bagnol, an anthropologist from the University of the Witwatersrand in South Africa who is collaborating with Alders. “Many women in Southern Africa who are subsistence farmers do most of the preparation and conservation of food, the water and sanitation activities,
and the caring for children and the sick,” she says. Yet while women hold most of 
the responsibility for providing food in 
their families, they often don’t have the 
knowledge to do so effectively. According 
to the Food and Agriculture Organization 
of the United Nations, only five percent of 
global farmer education and information 
programs end up reaching women; their 
project aims to change that.

Empowering women is vital because 
it’s usually women and their children who 
are most undernourished, says Dr Bagnol. 
By ensuring pregnant and breastfeeding 
women and children receive enough 
nutritious food, stunted growth can be 
prevented and the intergenerational 
cycle of poverty can be broken. However, 
women’s ongoing economic control of 
village poultry is not assured, she points 
out: “It has been reported that when an 
activity becomes lucrative, men who 
previously were not involved take over 
from women. So nothing is easy.”

While many of us think of 
undernutrition as a problem confined to 
developing countries, several speakers 
at the forum emphasised that it is also 
a critical issue for wealthy nations. 
Paradoxically, a lack of nutritionally-
balanced food is driving the obesity 
epidemic in Australia, says nutritional 
ecologist Professor David Raubenheimer 
from the Charles Perkins Centre.

“Obesity is often considered to be a 
problem of gluttony and sloth,” he explains. 
“In fact, it results from a shortage of a 
particular nutrient, namely protein.” In his 
world-renowned research with biologist 
Professor Steve Simpson, Professor 
Raubenheimer has shown how our craving 
for protein can drive us to overeat when 
faced with foods that have low protein 
levels and high carbohydrates and fats.

Our tendency to keep eating until 
we satisfy our appetite for protein can 
explain the soaring rate of obesity 
in Australia’s socioeconomically 
disadvantaged communities, says 
Professor Raubenheimer. Because high-

Obesity is often 
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nutrient, namely protein.

protein foods are more expensive, people 
fill up on cheaper foods that are high 
in carbohydrates and fats, and end up 
overeating. It should be noted, however, 
that Professor Raubenheimer’s research 
suggests it is also unwise to eat too much 
protein, which is associated with a lower 
lifespan: “Balance is everything,” he says.

So how do we help people in 
industrialised nations like Australia to 
eat a more balanced diet? One popular 
strategy is health promotion and food 
labelling, such as the star rating system for 
food currently under review by the federal 
government. But while such efforts can 
be valuable, they’re only one piece of the 
puzzle, according to Shauna Downs, a PhD 
candidate at the Menzies Centre for Health 
Policy. “It’s upstream where we can make 
the huge difference,” she says.

For example, farmers could be given 
incentives to diversify their crops, while 
food processors could be encouraged or 
required to reformulate products to make 
them more healthy. Policies at the retail 
level could range from restricting the 
zoning of fast food restaurants to offering 
fruit and vegetable vouchers, a scheme 
now underway in New York City. Ideally, all 
these policies should be integrated. A good 
example, she says, is Illawarra’s regional 
food strategy, which spans everything from 
community education to providing council 
land for public vegetable gardens, fruit 
trees and new food enterprises.

There is one more tactic which could 
help humans gain better access to 
nutritious food wherever they live around 
the world: thinking about it as a human 
right. The concept of a right to food is 
already being used to drive positive 
changes, explains Bill Pritchard. In India, 
a peak civil society organisation took the 
Government of India to the Supreme Court, 
arguing that it had not upheld the right 
to food. And in Brazil, a range of policies, 
from urban agriculture projects to a social 
security safety net have been driven by a 
right-to-food approach. “This kind of right 
may sound hollow, bringing to mind people 
on expense accounts waxing lyrical in 
Geneva,” he says. “But the right to food is 
starting to move from an abstract concept 
to something practical.”
Louise Herron has found a challenge big enough to match her passion: breathing new life into the Sydney Opera House.

Louise Herron recalls her time studying languages and law at Sydney with great fondness. So when she says her current job is “more like being at university than any other job in my life”, she is paying it the ultimate compliment.

Two years ago Herron was appointed Chief Executive Officer of the Sydney Opera House, a role she says brings out her “inner explorer”. It’s a challenge she has thrown herself into with relish. “The Opera House is a symbol of modern Australia. It has transformed the identity of a nation. I feel privileged to be a custodian of that identity, and we are exploring how to enhance and enrich it.”

As if to underscore her enthusiasm, she insists on taking me outside her office at the iconic building to sample the panorama. Behind us the Harbour Bridge stands majestically and at the end of her balcony she points to the sails, almost close enough to touch, yawning skywards in geometrical perfection. “This is my favourite view.”

The famous facade symbolises the challenge confronting Herron: ‘renewal’ of the building, a word encapsulating both the physical skin and cultural life of the Opera House. “We have 15 months to get the renewal plan ready. It is our number one project. We need to make some very large investments to maintain this amazing building and ensure it meets the needs of 21st century artists, audiences and visitors. That’s a mammoth task in itself. But renewal is far broader. It extends to everything we do.”

Herron has worked quickly to build the infrastructure to make renewal a success. She has developed a philanthropy program called the ‘Idealists’, engaging 100 high-achieving ‘visionaries’ to deliver financial
support, and to act as mentors to senior staff and the organisation as a whole.

While her corporate connections have played a large role in this process, so, too, has her personal dynamism. She invited her old French professor from Sydney, Ross Steele, to join the Idealists, and made the same offer to her orthopaedic surgeon shortly after he had given her a hip replacement. Herron beams at her memory of the moment: “He said to me: ‘I am honoured that you asked me!’” She pauses before adding: “My job is to give people a choice to give back.”

The invitation to her professor hints at the impact Herron’s university education had on her. The legacy runs deep. Herron explains that the way she immerses her life in the Opera House role is built on the same drive to ‘lose myself in a task’ that made studying languages (BA ’86) and law (LLB ’82) so rewarding.

“I moved around the world during my school years, and had been at school in Switzerland. So I loved studying languages, especially French (two professors stand out: Ivan Barko, as well as Ross Steele) but also German and Italian. The way we studied film and poetry from the same era in French, Italian and German ... drove me wild with excitement. I loved poetry, especially hermetic poetry.”

However, her father told Herron she needed a calling card beyond languages and encouraged her to study law as well. “I did not enjoy studying law while I was on campus for the first three years of my degree. I wanted to quit all the time. It was only after I finished studying languages and went to the Law School in the city that I could lose myself in law, and began to enjoy it.”

She says university was significant because “it’s about transformation from being a child into a thinking and creative adult. I did not know what I wanted to be when I started university. In my view, university is non-vocational. You do not want to know what you are going to do.” She has passed this message on to her own sons: “Do what you love. If you find you’re doing something that you don’t love, don’t do it.”

As the first woman to be appointed CEO of the Opera House in its 40-year history, Herron also believes that university helped shaped her view of women’s capacity to excel in public life. “I was amazed at how well women did in law from an early age. It actually stunned me. My year had Julie Ward, now a judge (NSW Supreme Court), Herron also believes that university helped shape her view of women’s capacity to excel in public life. “I was amazed at how well women did in law from an early age. It actually stunned me. My year had Julie Ward, now a judge (NSW Supreme Court), Sharon Cook, now Managing Partner at Henry Davis York Lawyers, and Anne Britton, also a judge (Federal Court).

“I looked around and saw women doing incredible things and found that very inspiring. It actually surprised me that I could do things. I had thought: ‘that’s a boys’ game’. I had grown up with two brothers, and always in a very male-dominated world. University showed me that it was not only blokes who can achieve great things; women can, too.”

In my view, university is non-vocational. It is about transformation from being a child into a thinking and creative adult.

After graduating, she spent 20 years as a corporate lawyer (including a decade at Minter Ellison) and then a corporate adviser. During this second period she joined the board of the Belvoir Street Theatre Company. “I was not a natural theatre person in my youth. I loved music and sang with the University Madrigal Choir when I was on campus. But theatre was not my thing.”

However, her friend Anne Britton was already on the Belvoir Street board. “One day, when our five-year-old sons were at gymnastics together, she asked me if I would like to join. I thought: ‘wow’! I saw it as an ideal way to use my knowledge of the corporate world to ‘give back’ to the community.” Herron also honed her philanthropy skills through this role, eventually becoming chair of the Belvoir board, which in turn became a powerful credential for the Opera House job.

Through all of these career twists and turns, Herron returns to the theme of herself as an explorer. “Someone once asked me to boil myself down to just one essential thing. My answer was that I am an explorer. I loved to explore the connection between French, Italian and German poetry of the same era. I love taking the less travelled path.

“I did that as a lawyer at Minter Ellison in establishing a practice in outsourcing and information technology when that wasn’t really a well-known area. I built it up with a great team. When I felt the task was completed, I thought: ‘I’ve done this now.’ And that was when I left. Now, this...

Under the umbrella of renewal, Herron has initiated a number of innovations since taking over: these range from All About Women, a festival of ideas launched by the Opera House in April last year, to addressing issues of access, having recently instituted a ‘Meet Your Seat’ program for children with autism. Children are brought in to get acquainted with their seat a month before going to see a performance. Another new initiative is training up volunteers to accompany blind people going to a show. During breaks or the intermission, the ‘Audio Describers’, as they are known, will explain to their designated patrons what has happened on stage.

Herron clearly loves the totality of her job, the big picture and small detail. Indeed, she claims each of her previous roles was a stepping stone to this one, all-encompassing challenge. When she says “I love to throw myself into it”, you get the feeling she’s still back at university, learning French poetry.
Getting better all the time

On the second anniversary of the launch of the University’s Wingara Mura strategy, there are tangible signs of progress.

WINGARA MURA
The Wingara Mura – Bunga Barrabugu strategy makes the promotion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation, engagement, education and research a core Sydney objective. Its aim is to make the University a place where Aboriginal people are able to pursue academic interests, careers and contributions that are of intrinsic personal and academic pride, craft and purpose.

INCREASED ENROLMENT
About 48 percent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students with an ATAR greater than 80 (and who applied through UAC in 2013) listed the University of Sydney as their first preference. In 2014 we have 183 commencing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, including 101 undergraduate and 82 postgraduate students, and 19 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander PhD students.

THE SUMMER PROGRAM
This initiative in January brought together 13 faculties in a single program that gave more than 200 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students nationally a taste of the University’s educational opportunities and potential: three days for Years 9-10 and five days for Years 11-12. The program left a strong imprint on the students: 98 percent of participants felt more motivated to achieve at school and 98 percent saw university as a genuine option for them.

VIDEO:

PREPARING FOR THE HSC
We have established a program to encourage the most promising Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to commit themselves to a great HSC result and to look to Sydney as the natural fit...
for their ambitions. About 40 will visit the University in 2014 to participate in workshops that provide talented Year 12 students with intensive support as they prepare for their HSC. Hundreds of others will receive online support through our Get Prepared initiative.

**BREADWINNERS PROGRAM**
The University has established a program that will support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who want to study but have had to let go of their dream of a university degree because their families rely on their salary. Breadwinners offers scholarships to these students in their last two years of study. The first breadwinners scholarships will be awarded this year.

**STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES**
There has been an increase of more than 40 percent in the student uptake of tutorial support and a 160 percent increase in contacts with students following the expansion of Aboriginal student support service staff from two to seven, aided by the creation of an academic adviser network.

**CULTURAL COMPETENCE**
Two staff have been appointed, with more recruitments to come, for the National Centre for Cultural Competence (NCCC), the first academic unit of its kind in the country. Partnerships are currently being negotiated with Georgetown University in the United States and the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies. The NCCC, which has received more than $5.6 million from the federal government, will work across learning and teaching, student outcomes and research and scholarship.

**INDIGENOUS DESIGN**
The Faculty of Architecture Design and Planning engaged final-year Master of Architecture students in an innovative studio to design the NCCC building, an exercise about how they incorporate Aboriginal cultural perspectives in the functional design and aesthetic. An Aboriginal architect shared teaching responsibility during development of the studio. An additional studio called Finding Country was held for second-year students, a design exercise that focused on building understanding of and engagement with traditional land management practices and values. Finding Country was led by a Torres Strait Islander architect.

**VISITING THINKER PROGRAM**
Eminent academics from the US and New Zealand were among a panel of experts who met last year to create the Wingara Mura Visiting Thinker program, which will kick off later this year with the appointment of two indigenous figures to short-term residencies.

**MERIT APPOINTMENT SCHEME**
The implementation of this scheme has led to the advertising of 19 positions and the filling of 13 of them, lifting the number of Aboriginal people employed at the University.

**FACULTY DIVERSITY**
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students are now enrolled in every faculty across the University.

Professor Shane Houston is Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Indigenous Strategy and Services).
Raewyn Connell has reshaped the field of sociology through her groundbreaking research into educational inequality, gender relations and much more.

A striking black and white photo has pride of place to the right of Professor Raewyn Connell’s desk. It’s of her great aunt, Maude Connell, a member of the first generation of Australian women to go to university. She later became headmistress of a girls’ school in Perth.

Like her great aunt, Professor Connell is a groundbreaker. Over the past 45 years her body of work has reshaped the study of sociology and made her a world authority in the field. As she prepared to retire from her position of University Chair in the Faculty of Education and Social Work this month, she could reflect on a career of transformative achievement, which the University will acknowledge with a symposium on her work.

Firstly, Professor Connell was a pioneer in sociology teaching as foundation professor of sociology at Macquarie University (1976-91). Here she did influential research on inequality in schooling, and developed a theory of gender relations which emphasised that gender is a large-scale social structure, not just a matter of personal identity.

Professor Connell is also a founder of the research field relating to the social construction of masculinity, making her mark internationally with her book, *Masculinities* (1995, 2005), which is the most cited in the field. (It has been translated into nine languages.)

She is also a world authority on the global sociology of knowledge, emphasising that intellectual activity is a form of work that involves global divisions.
of labour. Her other areas of research include poverty and education, sexuality and AIDS prevention, ways to reduce violence against women, class dynamics and labour movement strategy.

The list goes on and on, yet sitting in her office in the Education building at the University, where the walls are covered in political posters which form a chronology of her own life, she appears resolutely humble.

Her journey began back in the early 1960s, when she was an undergraduate student at Melbourne University, studying history and psychology, when widespread political activism was beginning.

Professor Connell was in the front line as a graduate student at Sydney, taking part in demonstrations against the Vietnam War and in student movements to democratise universities and support Aboriginal communities.

“I wasn’t arrested on any of them...I don’t have that particular badge,” she laughs. “My most militant moment was at the height of the Vietnam war involvement... we at one point occupied the headquarters of the Liberal Party and sat in overnight and were eventually expelled by police action.”

With “the world going up in flames” around her she decided she wanted to work in areas which she thought mattered. “I’ve tried to construct knowledge projects that produced information and understanding about the world which would be useful to people who are trying to change it, especially people trying to change it in the interests of social justice,” she says. This began with the student-led Sydney Free University in 1967 and has continued in a formal academic career.

From the start Professor Connell could see she needed to make international links and networks. So, following her PhD at the University of Sydney (1966-69), she spent her postdoctoral year at the University of Chicago. Professor Connell remembers taking part in the March on Washington in May 1970, following what became known as the Kent State Shootings, when 100,000 people demonstrated against the Vietnam War and some unarmed student protesters were killed by the Ohio National Guard.

“Pam and I got a whiff of the best quality federal tear gas,” she says, speaking of her partner Pam Benton, an activist in the women’s movement, and psychologist, social researcher, writer, and public servant, who died in 1997 from cancer. Professor Connell points proudly to a photo of their daughter, Kylie, who is now doing her masters in anthropology in New York.

Professor Connell was first employed at the University as a lecturer in government in 1971-72, and returned in 1996 as professor of education. In 2004 she was appointed University professor. Her other appointments have included time at Ruhr-University in Bochum and a year as professor of Australian studies at Harvard, as well as three years as professor of sociology at the University of California, Santa Cruz.

During 50 years of university life, Connell was going through her own personal journey.

Over the past 15 years she has deliberately shifted focus away from the United States and Europe, developing connections around what she calls “the rest of the global periphery. That produced my book Southern Theory (2007), which is largely about social thought from the post-colonial world,” she says.

But during these 50 years of university life, Professor Connell was going through her own personal journey. A transsexual woman, she made what she describes as a formal transition late in life. “It is important to know that transition is not ‘sex change’, it is more about recognition of something that has always been the case. The issue is how do you deal with this deep contradiction in your life,” she explains.

“At a certain point some people say, ‘OK I need to make a transition to be recognised as a woman’. So that’s what I did relatively late in life, having dealt with the situation in different ways earlier in life.”

She says she was lucky in that the University was a safe place to do this, with her boss and colleagues extremely supportive. “Transsexual women are subject to a lot of violence in many parts of the world and a lot of family rejection. There’s quite a high suicide rate. The University saw it as a kind of human rights, anti-discrimination issue and said, ‘Fine’. I’ve never had the slightest institutional hassle.”

Connell adds that she was also lucky to receive family support. She was named Robert at birth and known as Bob, with most of her earlier work published under the gender-neutral name RW Connell. She wanted to keep these initials and after discussing the subject with her family, her elder sister found the name Raewyn, which reflects her heritage. Since 2006 it has appeared above all her written work.

Professor Connell has attempted to clear some of the confusion in the current debate about men and violence. Writing recently in The Conversation, she pointed out that a huge body of data shows men as a group and women as a group are psychologically very similar. This is an example of “getting solid academic knowledge into practical situations” but although we’re now more inclined to treat boys and girls on the same basis than we were, “it’s still a battle”.

While there have been changes over the years in methodology and other areas of her discipline, there have also been huge changes in the way universities work. Professor Connell is deeply concerned that the collaborative and shared nature of academia, in what she describes as “one of the wonders of our civilisation,” is being put to the test.

She made her thoughts public in an open letter to the Vice-Chancellor in March last year regarding the industrial action that was taking place at the University, gaining wide circulation on social media.

“I’m winding up my career at a time when I don’t think it’s a happy time for universities,” she says. “We’ve fallen into a culture of hyper-competitiveness where universities are regarded by their managers and governments essentially as competitive firms, competing against each other for resources, rather than what’s the reality, which is a knowledge system based on co-operation and sharing.”

This latter value is one she hopes to maintain with the doctoral students she will continue to supervise after she stands down. With a host of international research and activist projects on the boil, plus 22 lectures in “five or six different countries” just for 2014, Professor Connell sees many years of work ahead. “I’m still going to be in that struggle,” she declares.
Lucy Humphrey’s award-winning sculpture has captured the public imagination. The architect and public artist is full of other groovy ideas.

WORDS
CAROLINE BAUM
It’s hardly surprising that Lucy Humphrey is obsessed with water; she lives at Tamarama and spent family holidays at Hawks Nest near Myall Lakes, a few hours north of Sydney. Nor is it unexpected that she has chosen a creative career, combining her work as an architect with site-specific public art. Her mother (who started an architecture degree at Sydney) is a painter and her stepfather a sculptor, the perfect algorithm of nature and nurture to foster her talent. “I had my own version of the Tin Sheds at home,” she jokes, referring to the University’s on-campus art gallery.

The link continues with her father, Michael Humphrey, who is Professor of Sociology at Sydney and her sister, a graphic designer, also an alumna with whom she collaborates occasionally.

Graduating as an architect in 2007, Humphrey describes her student experience as being part of a close-knit year with a strong emphasis from faculty on art and electives that emphasised craft. “We also had great alumni who came and taught us. People like Tom Heneghan, who is now in Tokyo, was a mentor. We had contact with (architectural) practitioners like Glenn Murcutt, Richard Leplastrier and Peter Stutchbury, so it was not all just theory.”

Last year Humphrey won the Sculpture by the Sea Peoples’ Choice award for Horizon, her deceptively simple water-filled sphere. (She had previously won a now defunct award for her Alchemy entry in 2009.) Both playful and sophisticated, the work was inspired by a water-filled bouncy ball she was given on a visit to Venice. “When I looked at it near the water I noticed the water was upside down in the ball and subconsciously I began to plan a sculpture that would embrace the laws of physics by creating a lens that refracts light and inverts what we see,” she explains.

Supported by a Helen Lempriere Scholarship, Horizon gradually took shape over 10 months. Many prototypes later, its complex engineering, courtesy of specialised polymer manufacture in Colorado, proved a photogenic crowd-pleaser, the acrylic acquarium filled with 1800 litres of tap water. The public quickly adopted the work, calling it The Crystal Ball.

“I knew they would. The best thing about their reaction was the support I got. People encouraged me to do more work like it. I have been asked to repeat that piece over and over, and am still considering whether I might make a smaller-scale limited edition of it as well as perhaps a single larger version,” she says.

Wherever possible, she prefers to work with a single material. “I like the purity and boldness of working with a limited palette,” says Humphrey, a keen swimmer who spends a lot of time in the ocean near her home. “I love trying to capture the sense of scale of nature.”

She also appreciates the drama of installation. “Horizon was delivered straight to the site, which was slightly nerve-wracking, because that meant I saw it very late in the process. Its arrival was a public spectacle in itself, on a rainy Bondi morning. I had a large crew of professional riggers lifting it into place out of the crate and over the handrail. I was nervous it would roll away,” laughs Humphrey, who is not entering Sculpture by the Sea this year.

“The installation was risky but fortunately I cope quite well with stress. Unlike other more fragile works, I knew it would resist the weather but I was worried someone might spray paint or scratch it,” says Humphrey, who has since sold the work to a private client who installed it in their garden. “I do worry that because it is a magnifying lens, it creates a hot spot and could, in certain conditions, start a fire,” she adds.

Public art is a perilous, unreliable career path, but Horizon made Humphrey’s reputation and gave her an instant profile. Despite being a solo work, at least in its conception if not in its execution, Humphrey is temperamentally a natural collaborator. In 2011 she partnered up with Claire McCaughan, a friend from university, to found the ironically titled Archrival, a not-for-profit organisation whose core team of between five and ten creatives are dedicated to working away from the strictures of commercial practice.
Despite its name, Archrival tries to set aside the often bitter competition which characterises architecture to generate interdisciplinary work and invite contributions from a broad spectrum of experts. Often large scale, these not only require the support of professionals but frequently rely on an army of 30-40 volunteers, gathered up via social media shout-outs.

**FORMIDABLE COMMISSIONS**

Together, the duo have already earned prestigious commissions for the Venice Biennale of Architecture, Carriageworks, Mercedes Fashion Week, the Sydney Fringe and Sydney Festivals, establishing a reputation for projects that are in tune with or ahead of the zeitgeist. They include interactive installations, workshops, and pop-up exhibitions. The public is a key ingredient in Archrival’s approach, activating their work through participation and feedback. With social media savvy, their Facebook page is a rich source of images, ideas, opinions and clips that capture their youthful curiosity and questioning of everything.

“Our mantra is that outcomes are better when you are not working solo,” explains Humphrey. “We draw on experts in lighting, engineering and even set designers for specialist knowledge.”

Her commercial practice, Lucy Humphrey Studio, is attracting residential projects as well as groovy inner-city bars and cafes (including a semi-permanent one in a disused shipping container at Homebush) for whom they also supply fit-outs, custom furniture and murals. “We like that kind of work because it’s fun and allows us to be audacious,” says Humphrey, adding guilelessly: “With Archrival we are still learning to do work that brings in actual income. We are quite proactive in seeking work because in this town if you wait for clients, you wait forever. We pitch to councils and developers all the time.”

Humphrey is upfront about her principles: “When it comes to sustainability, I don’t talk about it, it’s just inherent. I try not to give people the choice. So, for example, I have an anti-air conditioning stance,” she explains, which is demonstrated by the sweltering heat on the day we meet at Lucy Humphrey Studio’s premises in a former clothing factory in Surry Hills. She is a big fan of bamboo as a renewable locally grown material.

Not surprisingly, she cites Australian humanitarian architect (and fellow Sydney alumnus) Paul Pholeros as a source of inspiration for his sensitive and respectful approach to Indigenous and third world housing through his Healthabitat practice.

Humphrey plans to use the rest of her Lempriere scholarship to fund a residency at the Cent Quatre public cultural centre in Paris, culminating in an exhibition. Together with Archrival, she has also applied to the Istanbul Biennale. “It’s ambitious, but worth a shot,” she shrugs. “I’ve been obsessed with cities since I was small; I love them as landscapes. I like to put nature into a man-made environment and I have a spatial brain that reads the void and notices details, edges and layers, especially since I am a big walker.”

The experience of travelling to Spain and Portugal in her early teens had a profound influence. “The problem is that you can grow up here without valuing art so we have not developed a mature culture. My favourite audiences to talk to are kids, and we need to give them more early exposure to art, not wait until they go overseas after school or uni. Sculpture is still a niche interest apart from Sculpture by the Sea. That needs to change,” she declares, signalling yet another frontier for expanding horizons.
Alumni receive a 10% discount on enrolments with the Centre for Continuing Education. To participate, register your membership at cce.sydney.edu.au/alumni or call us on 02 8999 9608 (please have your alumni membership number ready – you’ll find it on the SAM mailing sheet).

For more information, head to cce.sydney.edu.au/alumni
The capacity for science to make positive changes to both our personal and business lives has inspired University of Sydney alumni Hugh and Anne Harley (pictured below) to make a $500,000 donation to the University. Their gift is supporting the research of Associate Professor Michael Biercuk in his pursuit of a new generation of advanced quantum technologies that could revolutionise everything from encryption to energy distribution.

Hugh and Anne first met Professor Biercuk at the launch of the University’s INSPIRED fundraising campaign last year. Throughout the event Professor Biercuk shared details of his research programs, which are focused on the discovery of new physics through control of matter and light at the quantum, or subatomic level. His work at the University’s Quantum Control Laboratory is focused on developing a new class of specialised computers exploiting the laws of quantum physics, called Quantum Simulators.

“These devices work in a manner similar to a model aircraft in a wind tunnel – we’re building quantum scale models of much more complex systems. With these models in hand we are hoping to unlock some extraordinarily important but elusive questions about the behaviour of exotic materials known as superconductors. If we succeed, there is a possibility we can transform clean energy generation and distribution in quite fundamental ways,” explains Professor Biercuk.

After meeting at the event, Professor Biercuk invited Hugh to visit the lab to take a closer look. “I was enormously impressed with the lab. I think that so much of recent and likely future human history has really been driven by progression in computing. To see this idea of quantum computing, which had theoretically been thought about for quite a long time but is only now really getting up and running, was remarkable,” says Hugh.

The Harleys’ belief in the University of Sydney and the capabilities of its researchers cemented their decision to make their donation to the Quantum Simulation Project. “In a globalised world, Australia is going to rise and fall by the quality of its institutions, and the University of Sydney ranks very highly. This specific opportunity came a little out of the blue, but we’d been thinking about the right way to contribute for a while,” explains Hugh.

With a background in banking, quantum computing wasn’t a completely new subject area for Hugh, who is Financial Services Leader for PwC in Asia and Australia. Although he is familiar with areas such as trends in encryption, he had little knowledge that the University was making such progress in the field.

“Certainly, one thing that has piqued my interest is the area of semiconductors. There’s been discussion for a long time about the potential for semiconductors to be...
able to transport energy very efficiently and we just haven’t been able to unpack that.”

Anne adds: “for me, the idea of quantum computing was quite new but Mike was very enthusiastic about communicating to us what he did. I certainly understand a lot more about this area than I did and it’s very exciting.”

Securing funding for projects such as the Quantum Simulation Project poses a challenge. “After visiting the lab, Mike and Julia Tauber (Associate Director of Development for the Faculty of Science), expressed how pleased they were with the progress in the work and their excitement about where it could go. They explained that they had obtained funding for things like premises and equipment and people. But they said there were challenges in getting funding for the day-to-day expenses, the stuff that helps with getting people to international conferences, and hiring more junior people on a part-time basis,” Hugh explains.

Although Hugh’s father was involved in medical research, theoretical science is the area that Hugh and Anne chose to support. “Civilisation has really been driven by two things – accumulation of knowledge and the harnessing of energy. Initially, it was solar energy through agriculture and more recently, fossil fuels for industry. The beauty of this research is that potentially it goes to both those drivers of civilisation.”

Hugh also makes a broader point. “I am surprised that more and more we read in the global media about ‘bankers vs science’. It’s something that we really need to knock on the head pretty quickly. The very origin of the Industrial Revolution was entrepreneurs harnessing the explosion of scientific knowledge.”

Hugh and Anne’s commitment to science is also evident in their interest in farming, where they place a particular focus on sustainable improvements in soil and water quality. “What we do there is an expression of the practical importance of science.”

For Professor Biercuk, the gift demonstrates a trust and belief in the potential of science. “It is exceptionally moving to see this kind of personal dedication to science. This gift represents a recognition that investment in science can have tremendous benefits for our economy and society.

“Using only our most basic understanding of quantum mechanics has given us the modern information era – PCs, mobile phones and the internet – and we are only now becoming able to harness and exploit the full range of phenomena predicted by quantum theory. This gift will support our group’s efforts towards engineering a new technological future enabled by the strange laws of quantum physics.”

The Harleys have a long history with the University, even meeting each other at a party on Lawson Street near the Camperdown Campus. Following graduation, Hugh began his career teaching economics at the University of Sydney, before starting his banking career as an economist with the Commonwealth Bank in 1987.

“I had a grandmother who was at the University in the early ’20s studying English. My Dad studied medicine after the Second World War and then did his MD in the early ’60s. The University was my first permanent job – a humble half-time tutor but none the less very helpful in getting me started.”

Hugh is also an Adjunct Professor at the University of Sydney Business School, a member of the INSPIRED Campaign Board and President of the Business Alumni Network.

With such strong affiliations with the University, Anne and Hugh appreciate the impact of philanthropy on the institution’s progress and the importance of a diversified revenue stream for a successful future, “All successful institutions, academic or not, need a diversity of revenue and for universities, philanthropy really has to be part and parcel of that. Australia doesn’t do too badly on the philanthropy stakes overall but we’re certainly off the pace relative to traditions in some countries like the US.

“In an environment where government finance and the public purse is going to be increasingly strained, then universities have to be looking for different sources. “It was a great honour to be asked to join the Campaign board. There’s clearly a need for the University to be thinking about broader sources of funding and I’m pleased to have the opportunity to be able to contribute.”
Who were the first Australian servicemen to die in the Great War, and where did they die? You may be surprised to discover they weren’t at the Gallipoli landings, nor did they fight in the trenches of the Western Front.

Able Seaman William Williams and Captain Brian Pockley – a medical graduate of the University of Sydney – were shot within minutes of each other in New Guinea on 11 September 1914 – seven months before the first Anzac Day.

They were members of the Australian Naval and Military Expeditionary Force which landed near Kaba Kaul on the island of New Britain and unexpectedly encountered enemy soldiers defending what was then a German colony.

When Williams was shot through the stomach, Pockley went to his aid. Knowing the sailor’s only chance of survival was to be evacuated from the battlefield, Pockley handed over his Red Cross armband to another seaman, Stoker William Kember, ordering him to wear it as protection while he carried Williams to safety.

Soon afterwards Pockley, no longer identified as a medical officer, was himself shot. He was 24. Both Williams and
Pockley died aboard HMAS Berrima later that afternoon.

So Captain Brian Colden Antill Pockley, educated at Sydney Church of England School and St Paul’s College, became the first Australian officer to be killed in the First World War. His heroism in protecting “another man’s life at the price of his own” was noted by the campaign’s official historian.

On 11 September, the centenary of Pockley’s death, the University of Sydney is launching an innovative research website, the Book of Remembrance Online. Its noble ambition is to track down and acknowledge everyone connected to the University who played some part in the First World War – in or out of uniform.

It will provide a tool to explore the war’s impact on the University and the University’s impact on the war.

In doing so, it will provide scholars and the wider public with a remarkable interactive tool to explore not only the war’s profound impact on the University, but its own impact on the war and on the post-war rebuilding of Australian society.

Associate Professor Julia Home, University Historian and Senior Research Fellow, is one of the key drivers of the project. She explains that, unlike other conflicts in which Australians fought, the Great War involved an unprecedented number of tertiary-educated men and women.

“The Australian government realised certain academic expertise and professional knowledge was crucial,” she says. “They needed doctors, engineers, geologists – even people who had studied the humanities: linguists who could speak German, for example.

“The government began pleading with the universities to look among their students, graduates and staff members for suitable volunteers. The same thing was happening in Britain and Germany.”

The first attempt to acknowledge the University’s broader contribution to the First World War was the publication of the Book of Remembrance in 1939 – ironically on the eve of the Second World War.

Supported by a generous grant from the Chancellor’s Committee, the Book of Remembrance Online has been in the making since 2012, and is a rich research source, containing the service details of 2092 people connected with the University who served abroad in either the Australian or British armed forces.

But it does not include those civilians, also connected to the University, who contributed to the war effort through their research and intellectual endeavours, particularly in science and medicine.

Only 23 women are named in the Book of Remembrance, for example. Most served as doctors, pathologists or field nurses, though there was also a dentist and a woman who had completed the University’s massage course (now physiotherapy). Pathologist Emma Albani Buckley-Turkington worked in London, researching a strain of dysentery isolated during the Gallipoli campaign, while Elsie Jean Dalyell OBE spent part of the war in Syria in an infectious disease hospital. But there were also other female students, graduates and staff members whose connection to the war effort was less formal and so went unacknowledged.

Continued next page
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The 1939 Book of Remembrance also only listed basic facts such as the school, degree and service record of each entry. Yet the University had collected an enormous trove of more personal biographical material that has never been mined – until now.

“University Archives holds 16 boxes of research files which were donated to the University on the understanding the original documents would remain with the University,” explains Horne. Both the residential colleges and the faculties have separate records. “With such a rich wealth of archival resources, it seemed crazy not to do something.

“We have journals and letters relating to the war, but also photographs, family correspondence, personal letters and diaries that relate to what happened to these people after the war.

“The ‘after war’ story is what makes the Book of Remembrance Online different to the websites of the National Archives of Australia and the Australian War Memorial, which largely contain material relating to a soldier’s war service. We have designed this project to complement those other databases, not compete with them.”

Horne points out that for many Australian servicemen and women the war continued long after the first Armistice Day on 11 November 1918. It took up to 18 months to ship them home.

“The Commonwealth government realised returning veterans had to be reintegrated into society. This university led the way in creating a program to admit veterans to University, relaxing the entry qualifications for ex-servicemen.

“And this university, unlike Melbourne University, always had from the 1880s a higher proportion of students coming from state schools, and from regional and rural areas. We had a broader social base.”

If you have any information or queries, contact the Reference Archivist at university.archives@sydney.edu.au or phone (02) 9351 2684


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CHOIR TO DEBUT
AUSTRALIAN WAR REQUIEM

Despite Australia’s experience at Gallipoli and the Western Front, the First World War has not yet inspired a major classical music work. This gap will be filled on 10 August, when the Sydney University Graduate Choir premieres An Australian War Requiem, by Christopher Bowen OAM.

This major composition by its Music Director, a distinguished composer (and Honorary Fellow of the University), has been commissioned by the Graduate Choir and is timed for the centenary of the start of the war. It will be performed in the Sydney Town Hall by soloists, orchestra, large choir and children’s choir.

The text by Mr Bowen and librettist, Pamela Traynor, has been inspired by letters exchanged between mothers at home and their sons at the front, and the Stabat Mater, which describes the sorrow of the Virgin Mary at the loss of her son, Jesus.

The soloists are Celeste Lazarenko and Ayse Goknur Shanal (sopranos), Andrew Goodwin (tenor) and Adrian Tamburini and Christopher Richardson (basses).

The composer and the librettist have received assistance from the Australian War Memorial in sourcing this material. Support for the performance has also come from the University, the City of Sydney, the RSL, Westfield, the Turkish community and the Belgian and German governments.

Date: 3pm 10 August; Venue: Sydney Town Hall.
Tickets: Seymour Centre 9351 7940; Ticketmaster 1300 723 038

Favoured recruits

Academics played a key role in the wartime discussions of a League of Nations as a necessary foundation for a postwar peace, thanks to their close connections with key male political figures. During the war, classicists and historians, and some geographers, were the favoured recruits of the Great Power governments, especially Britain, France and the US, as advisers on the terms of an anticipated peace. While women were less likely to be the academics or politicians in this mix through gender discrimination, middle-class women were also crucial to this story, because of their place in these league networks and their activities on the fringes of academia and politics.
‘It will be a happy day when we come home’

Nyree Morrison shines a light on some personal vignettes from the Book of Remembrance.

EMMA ALBANI BUCKLEY-TURKINGTON, NEE BUCKLEY (MB 1911)
Emma worked at the Lister Institute in London in 1916. When you think of medics during the war, you think of them working directly behind the lines or with patients in hospitals – not working in laboratories looking for serum to cure the dysentery and typhus which were rife in all fighting fronts during the war. Emma was working with rabbits, injecting them with a serum to cure the dysentery cases from Gallipoli. In a letter to the Dean of Medicine, Sir Thomas Anderson Stuart (5/2/18), she writes:

“It seems too bad also that we cease to be Australian citizens when we come away. They would not let any of us vote and they will not give us equal chances of work with the AIF, so we are neither one thing nor the other. The RAMC give us women positions in their hospitals but the AAMC casts us off. Still Australia is the best place on earth and it will be a happy day when we all come home again.”

ELSIE JEAN DALYELL (MB 1909 CHM 1910) OBE
Elsie Dalyell, also a doctor, worked in a 500-bed fever hospital in Skopje, Serbia treating patients with the typhus, diptheria and dysentery that Buckley was trying to find serum for. In a letter to Professor Welsh (31/5/15) she writes:

“It has been a revelation to see this place blossom into a clean, healthy, attractive hospital under the influence of our splendid nurses...their assistants are all Austrian prisoners, recovered from typhus and all hopelessly ignorant and inefficient to begin with but they turn themselves into admirable helpers.

Elsie was given £125 to spend on equipment for the laboratory - the microscope cost £23 and the autoclave £19. She shared her equipment with the American Sanitary Commission, which “proved equal to the strain”.

ELIZABETH ISABEL HAMILTON BROWNE (MB 1909 CHM 1910)
In a letter also written to Anderson Stuart, Elizabeth writes: “I have seen Dr Dalyell, who is hoping to go back to Serbia soon, but have not an opportunity in seeing Dr Buckley who is still at the Lister Institute I believe.”

We know that brothers, cousins, fathers and sons were involved in the war but to find out that three women, from the same family with connections to the University dating back to 1852, all volunteered to help out is fascinating. The book only mentions three Windeyes and all of them are women.

MABEL FULLER WINDEYER (NEE ROBINSON) BA 1890, mother of MARIAN FULLER SIMPSON (NEE WINDEYER) (1893-C1986-87), ARTS III and LOIS ELWOOD WINDEYER
Mabel left Sydney on 25 July 1914, to take her naval cadet son to Osborne. She qualified as VAD (Voluntary Aid Detachment) nurse in 1915 and returned to Australia in 1918. Marian also sailed with her mother and brother to England, and was also a nurse. She married in 1917 and never returned to Australia. Lois sailed in May 1915 to join her mother in London. She was a driver for the VAD and the British Red Cross. She returned to Australia in 1920.

Of the 2092 biographical entries in the Book of Remembrance, 23 are women, and two of them are masseuses: MYRIL MCDougall LLOYD (NEE BOWMAN), BA 1910 (1887-1987) and ROSLYN NEWEL RiORDAN (NEE RUTHERFORD). The benefits of massage (which changed its name to physiotherapy in the 1930s) were being seen in hospitals before the war. But it gained prominence during and after the war in the rehabilitation of returned veterans. Myril and Roslyn trained in a special massage course at the University and both enlisted with the Almeric Paget Massage Corps in England.

One recurring theme in the files is the amount of letters or ephemera offered by families that their family member sent from the front before they died. In their grief they wanted their memory kept and their story to be told.

WILLIAM HAY
William Hay was in his third year of engineering at Sydney University when war broke out...He was in the first landing party at ANZAC on 25 April 1915...He was invalided twice from Gallipoli...served in France...until badly gassed...sailed for Sydney via America four days after the Armistice...did not return to University but went on the land, first at Euralie, Yass, latterly at Inverlockie, Harden...He died very suddenly in Sydney from heart disease brought on by strain during the years of War, on 18 November 1937, in the 44th year of his age.

From Mrs Hay (mother) 10/3/38.

Nyree Morrison is The University Research Archivist.
I tend to stay within my comfort zone and do the same thing more than once, which is not always a good thing,” says Allison Grech, “so this experience has helped me be a bit clearer with how I think about my career.”

The experience Allison is referring to is the inaugural intake of the Leadership Mentoring Program devised by the Faculty of Health Sciences. Offered for the first time last year, the innovative program matched 12 ‘leadership material’ students with prominent professionals from the health, disability and community services sector. Nine of these 12 industry professionals are University of Sydney alumni.

To help inspire, encourage and support these future health leaders, the mentors were asked to guide final-year students through discussions about career progression, setting and achieving goals, developing and using support networks, and workplace dynamics. The mentors were senior, influential leaders in their field who understand the importance of mentoring.

Faculty of Health Sciences Deputy Dean Professor Michelle Lincoln found the process of choosing mentors and creating the program challenging but rewarding. “We approached eminent leaders in the health, disability and education sectors, in government positions and in non-government, and asked them if they’d be interested in mentoring our very best students,” she says. “The response was overwhelmingly positive.”

Having selected the mentors, the next step was finding the right students. Final year, undergraduate and postgraduate students were encouraged to apply if they could demonstrate leadership achievements in the faculty, the University or within their community.

“A lot of those who successfully applied had been leaders among their peers,” Lincoln says. “Some had been on University committees or led sporting groups, while some had been school captains.”

Students then got to meet and shadow their mentors three to four times over a three-month period. “We asked mentors to discuss their journey, the kinds of skills they’ve developed along the way, and to help students appreciate the kinds of leadership roles that are available in their sector,” says Lincoln.

Some of the mentors took their mentees to surprising places. “One of our students went up onto the 10-metre diving board with [Olympic diver] Matt Mitcham and talked to him about coaching leadership,” recalls Lincoln.

Allison Grech, who is undertaking a Bachelor of Health Sciences, says she found the program particularly helpful. As a mentor herself to first-year students in the Health Sciences faculty and a student ambassador for the University, Grech says applying for a spot in the program was an easy decision for her.

She was paired with Paula Caffrey (BAppSc (SpeechPath) ’87), the Chief Allied Health Officer at the Ministry of Health and Director of Allied Health for Sydney Local Health District. Grech says her time with Caffrey opened her eyes to the overarching benefits of the program.
“To have the opportunity to meet and spend time with someone in such a great position and who has had so many valuable experiences in their career was amazing. Paula helped me to think about the decisions I was making and how they would form the building blocks of my career. I got to know myself a little bit better and [think about] how I could best make decisions to make sure that I was both progressing in my career and being happy and fulfilled.”

While Grech and Caffrey completed numerous work-based activities, it was spending one-on-one time that Grech found most helpful. “The diversity of things Paula does was most surprising” Grech says. “Her position is something that you don’t learn about necessarily and upper management positions aren’t understandable until you’re within the system. Getting an insight into that is really rare for a student.”

An important element of the experience was matching mentors and mentees across disciplines. “When you get into high level roles, you have to leave behind your disciplinary perspective because you’re leading everybody,” says Lincoln.

This was certainly the case with Grech and Caffrey. “Paula comes from a different background to me,” says Grech, “but we had similar personalities in a way that was a good match. It didn’t have to be exactly the same field to be really helpful.”

Caffrey agrees. “It was a good pairing because we’re not dissimilar type of people and that’s one of the strong things that came out. I could see some things that could be challenges for Allison in the future and areas that I have grappled with in my career and it was really good that we were able to explore those challenges.”

While the program is beneficial for students, Caffrey also found her time with Grech valuable. “I really enjoyed it,” she says. “It was an opportunity to work with a young person and to help them think about where they are now and where they want to go in the short and long term. It gave me an opportunity to reflect on my journey too. This is the future workforce and it’s really important that we invest in the careers of young people for the future of health care in Australia.”

Asked if she would come back for another round of the program, Caffrey was enthusiastic: “I’d definitely do it again. It was a really positive experience.”

Similarly, Grech’s advice to students interested in applying to the program was highly encouraging. “Go for it!” she says. “It was a great opportunity and I learned a lot. Just make sure you consider what you would like to achieve throughout the experience and what you could use those skills for in the future.”

This year’s program, with an expected intake of 20 students, will commence in August and run through to November. Having been so successful first time around, Lincoln is eager to welcome a new batch of students. “We’ve matched these students with wonderful leaders and they wouldn’t have had that opportunity otherwise,” she says. “Students can walk away from this having learned a lot.”

**SECOND LOOK**

**SAM brings you interesting articles from other University publications.**

**BIG DATA MEETS BOTANICS**
Leaves, herbs and the modern discipline of data mining might not seem like complementary subject areas, but two researchers at the School of Information Technologies are linking these seemingly disparate fields, with exciting results.

sydney.edu.au/sam/second-look

**BREAKING BAD NEWS**
We know that the way doctors communicate bad news has a major impact on patients’ health. Often though, we underestimate the impact of giving bad news on the doctor’s health, says Stewart Dunn, Professor of Psychological Medicine.

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**THINK LIKE AN ECONOMIST**
The University of Sydney inspired Besa Deda to achieve extraordinary success in the banking industry, but dedication and good fortune also helped her along the way.

sydney.edu.au/sam/second-look

**CINEMA AND ANTIQUITY**
Ever since it emerged as a new technology more than a century ago, filmmakers have long been drawn to the ancient world. Professor Maria Wyke discusses the timeless appeal of antiquity.

sydney.edu.au/sam/second-look

**Volunteer as a mentor**

Email Maria Humphreys: maria.humphreys@sydney.edu.au
They are either former or current academics from the Sydney Law School and they all have a strong interest in human rights. However, the strongest connection Professors Mary Crock, Gillian Triggs and Ben Saul have are their personal experiences meeting refugees and asylum seekers.

It’s a common bond that enthuses and drives their work, as lawyers, public advocates and researchers. They have spoken out publicly on Australia’s asylum seeker policies. As lawyers, they all have sound arguments for why the current and former government policies on asylum seekers fails to meet basic human rights. But perhaps their more persuasive arguments lie in the personal stories, photos and conversation snippets that they share.

The story that moved Triggs, former Dean of the Sydney Law School (2007-12) and current President of the Australian Human Rights Commission, was that of an 11-year-old Afghani girl who was detained on Christmas Island.

“She came up to me as happy and bright as my own daughter,” says Triggs. “In her short life time she had witnessed incredible tragedy. She’d seen members of her family killed, experienced incredible deprivation and stress. She also had these big infected sores on her arms that weren’t healing because of the tropical conditions on Christmas Island.”

“Despite all she had been through, she was very calm. The only time she became upset was when she was telling me that she had not been to school in eight months. This really affected her because she knew that education was going to give her an opportunity for a better life.

“It was at this point that I nearly lost...
As an academic we have two important functions. The most important is to teach the next generation, the other is to engage with public policy through our research.

my professional cool. She had put up with so much without complaining. What she wanted most was an education and she just wasn’t getting that on Christmas Island.”

For Saul, Professor of International Law, it was a three-month stint working as a student for the UN High Commissioner for Refugees in Nepal that opened his eyes. “I was able to see the importance of international law in action, after a people’s own government has persecuted them,” Saul says. “Without it, around 100,000 people would have been stranded in a foreign country without basic survival rights (such as food, water, shelter and health care), education for thousands of children, or the legal protections we take for granted as citizens of a stable country.”

Saul is now working in the Sydney Law School alongside Professor of Public Law, Mary Crock, his lecturer in refugee law when he was a university student himself. They are collaborating on an AusAID-funded research project into refugees with disability that has seen them visit refugees in Malaysia, Indonesia, Pakistan and Uganda.

“Refugees with disability are the forgotten refugees,” Crock says. “The World Health Organisation estimates that 10 to 15 percent of people in the general population have a disability, yet in refugee populations it is only one percent.”

“When they are being processed they aren’t being asked the right questions. Instead assessors are relying on visual cues or self-identification to identify if a refugee has a disability. They need to ask functionality questions. So instead of asking someone: ‘can you hear?’ they should instead change the question to ‘how well can you hear?’

“When we went to the camp in Uganda to conduct interviews, we knew it would be very basic, so we photocopied 300 of the questionnaires to take with us. By the time we got to the camp and people started to find out about our research, we were inundated.

“Somehow in this basic camp with very few facilities they had managed to make more copies of the questionnaire. By the time we left we had over 1000 responses. It just goes to show that there are many more people with disability than is being recorded by UNHCR, the UN refugee agency.”

The professors all categorically reject the government’s policies of mandatory detention and offshore processing. During a radio interview in February Crock called the policies a ‘grotesque breach of human rights law’. In an opinion piece published in The New York Times this year, Saul compared Australia’s indefinite detention of refugees to human rights abuses in Guantanamo Bay.

Public opinion is with the government. A nationwide opinion poll published in January and conducted by UMR Research shows that 60 per cent of Australians wanted the Abbott government to “increase the severity of the treatment of asylum seekers”.

So when public opinion is against them, how do these public advocates maintain the rage? They give the proverbial heart strings a strategic tug. Triggs focuses on the harsh treatment of children in detention. As the head of the Australian Human Rights Commission, this year she initiated, and is leading, the National Inquiry into Children in Immigration Detention 2014.

“It will be a challenge to shift public opinion, but I’m up for it,” Triggs says. “With my presidential power, I deliberately decided to hold an inquiry into the plight of the children in detention. It will give us a better chance to shift public opinion.”

Her argument is reinforced by the conditions of children in detention, especially on Christmas Island, which she has visited a number of times. In an interview with Fairfax media in March, Triggs said: “if we saw these children in Australia, we would be reporting them to Department of Community Services.”

But by taking such public stances against the government and in speaking out so strongly in support of human rights, the trio has attracted criticism.
Saul has been accused of “legal bitchness” by The Australian columnist Janet Albrechtsen for his comments questioning the human rights credentials of Tim Wilson, the newly appointed HRC Freedom Commissioner.

Triggs has been publicly criticised by conservative columnist Andrew Bolt and Attorney-General George Brandis for her opposition to the government’s proposed amendments to the Racial Discrimination Act.

So is being a public advocate worth it? Triggs replies: “I am encouraged by the changes I have seen the government make on their views of the Racial Discrimination Act. They’ve released an exposure draft which I think will give them some wriggle room. I think in the end they will compromise.

“My role and the role of the commission is to help moderate government policy and add our voice to the many others. We’re not an ideological body, we use evidence-based research to support our arguments. That’s what gives our arguments credibility.”

Saul argues that it is not only worth the effort, it is also incumbent on experts in the field to speak up, especially if the government is failing.

“Australia has repeatedly and seriously breached the international law obligations it voluntarily committed itself to by ratifying international human rights and refugee law treaties,” Saul says. “There is a role for academics with expertise in these areas to hold the government to account.”

It is a sentiment echoed by Crock. “Bad things happen when we say nothing,” she says. “I want to stand up for future generations. As an academic we have two important functions. The most important is to teach the next generation, the other is to engage with public policy through our research.”

Asked about her biggest professional wins, Crock provides a humble and simple answer: her students. She points to the efforts of former student Professor Jane McAdam in spearheading a campaign for “complementary protection” laws as a big win for human rights. The laws enacted less than two years ago prevent the Australian Government from deporting people back to places where they may be at risk of being tortured or killed.

On the flipside, one of the biggest disappointments Triggs has faced in her new role is the apathy Australians show towards human rights. “I have been disappointed by the little understanding the Australian public has about human rights and what the Australian Human Rights Commission does. I think it is because we don’t have a bill of rights.

I deliberately decided to hold an inquiry into the plight of the children in detention. It will give us a better chance to shift public opinion.

“Human rights is part and parcel of everyday life, we need to view our laws through the human rights prism. Because the public doesn’t understand what human rights are, they tolerate things they wouldn’t otherwise. They allow the detention of children, they tolerate changes to the Racial Discrimination Act. They tolerate reductions in social benefits. That’s why education about human rights is so important.”

Saul believes that academics can be the key to bridging this gap in understanding by utilising the media. “We have little political power and we don’t have advertising budgets, but we enjoy the goodwill of the media,” he says. “We can also help to give a voice to invisible people, such as the eight-year old Congolese girl I met in a refugee camp in Uganda, who was nearly burnt alive when rebels torched her family’s hut; or the many refugee boys from Congo who were sexually abused by government soldiers.

For Crock, Triggs and Saul, public comments only scratch the surface of their commitment to human rights. Their fight for the protection of human rights is also about individual cases. Saul and Crock have both represented asylum seekers in their fights to stay in Australia.

Saul is currently representing 51 refugees who are being held indefinitely because they failed security checks. They all come from ethnic minorities who fled to escape persecution in their homelands of Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Kuwait and Afghanistan and they’ve been found to be genuine refugees. Yet according to the United Nations Human Rights Commission they are now being illegally held by the Australian Government in cruel and inhuman conditions.

Crock recounts the story of a woman from Ethiopia whose case failed in the High Court. Crock took up her fight and made representations to the Minister for Immigration. When the Minister intervened and granted the woman permanent residency, Crock says the sense of relief was palpable. “These cases restore my faith in humanity. It reminds me of what people can endure and achieve.”

In the short time Triggs has been at the Human Rights Commission, it has brought the cases of 200 individuals to the attention of the Department of Immigration. The commission has worked collaboratively with the department and the Minister for Immigration to help these individuals, from getting them glasses to medical treatment.

Crock’s connection to refugees is also deeply personal. She informally adopted two children who came to Australia seeking asylum. Now adults, Pheap was a refugee from Cambodia and Riz was from Afghanistan. “They’ve made me more connected to the refugee communities, they’re my eyes and ears,” Crock says. “Seeing what they’ve been able to achieve is phenomenal.”

Having spent the past two decades fighting Australia’s mandatory immigration detention laws, is Crock still hopeful of a change?

She is defiantly optimistic: “If the Berlin Wall can fall, we can stop this nonsense.”

Gillian Triggs

38 JULY 2014 SAM
UNDER THE MICROSCOPE
The story of an Australian Medical Pioneer
Professor Earl Owen
Vintage $34.99

Radiotherapy was brand new in Sydney in 1933 when Earl Owen was given an excessive dose for a birth defect. He spent months of his childhood undergoing operations and recovering alone in a dark hospital ward. From this experience he knew he would one day become a surgeon with compassion and the skills to make a difference to the lives of newborns.

Owen, who passed away in May, devoted his life to medicine and medical research. During an astonishing career he has pioneered work in microsurgery, vasectomy reversal and the first hand transplants, and trained doctors worldwide in the skills he perfected. Amazingly, he has also met with some surprising obstruction and opposition.

Owen’s sharp mind and creative skills have made him a great innovator and inventor. A gifted pianist, table tennis champion and golfer, Owen also designed replacement seats for the Sydney Opera House. He invented the prototypes for microsurgical instruments and the microscopes which, hands free, allowed the most delicate surgical operations to be performed on newborn babies.

Now retired, Owen will continue to inspire others through this book, skilfully compressing his full and remarkable life so that the pace of this autobiography is gripping from start to finish.

ANZAC’S LONG SHADOW
The Cost of our National Obsession
James Brown
Redback $19.99

This frank investigation of Australia’s obsession with the Anzac legend is timely. With the centenary of Gallipoli around the corner, James Brown fearlessly challenges our nation’s long-held values and myths about soldiers and officers, along with their portrayal in the media.

A former army officer and now defence analyst, Brown questions our ability to address future military challenges when we have learnt little from past wars and even recent operations. It’s sobering to discover that while we are obsessed with the Anzac soldier, it was experts at US Marine Corps Base Quantico who analysed the military errors at Gallipoli.

The business of keeping the Anzac spirit alive may also contribute to a widening gap between civil and military worlds and explain why many soldiers returning from Afghanistan feel shame rather than pride. Brown says that in this new kind of war the best days are the uneventful ones. The enemy is no longer in front but all around and ill-defined. Death is more likely to be accidental than from bravery in combat.

This book questions how we, as a nation, can learn to be proud of our military forces in a relevant, modern way removed from the shadow of the Anzac myth.

ON CRINGILA HILL
Noel Beddoe
University of Queensland Press $29.95

It begins abruptly. This is going to be a crime novel, present tense, disjointed. As the novel unfolds it becomes a beautifully composed synthesis of places, cultures and characters consumed by the daily challenges of simply existing in the poor migrant suburbs near the Port Kembla steelworks. The beach and the water become a refuge from Cringila Hill, a place where small-time criminals started to face the dangers of the drug trade. The descriptions of the landscape are poetic, the characters hover between hope and despair.

Noel Beddoe has first-hand knowledge of the community. For 12 years he was principal of Warrawong High School, whose student population spoke more than 63 languages in their homes. He understands the family and racial complexities of this society all too well.

Beddoe witnessed the emergence of gun crime in the area and this novel tells the important story of what it’s like to live in the intensely multicultural satellite suburbs of Wollongong. Teenagers are caught up in this crime evolution and the police face difficult moral decisions. Do they toe the line or turn a blind eye and lend a helping hand? It’s impossible to second-guess these characters, and this makes for a compelling narrative.
ARTS/ SOCIAL SCIENCES

INVENTING THE INTERNATIONAL
Professor Glenda Sluga, Professor of International History, is directing a five-year project investigating the historical legacy of internationalism. The origin of globalisation is one of the most important debates in the social sciences, yet we still understand it as mainly an abstract force. Professor Sluga will map the changing course of international life since the early 19th century, providing a genealogy of how economics and politics intersected to construct the modern global world.

SUSTAINABLE FISH
Professor Elspeth Probyn, Professor of Gender and Cultural Studies, leads a three-year project that analyses the crucial role of fish and fishing in feeding a growing global population. This project will provide the first in-depth cultural account of the complex entanglement of the economy, the environment and the humans involved in fish and fishing. The project addresses changing consumer tastes, new State, Commonwealth and international regimes of marine governance, and adapting fishing communities to new forms of livelihood.

EXPLAINING SYSTEMATIC HETEROGENEITY
Dr Agnieszka Tymula is investigating whether and how the observed behavioural differences in behaviour relate to structural changes in neuroanatomy. Her recent work has examined how aging affects individuals’ rationality and consistency in choice, as well as preferences for known and unknown risk. Her ultimate goal is to relate the insights from her research to organisational and incentives design, policy interventions, finance, political economics, and marketing.

SHAKESPEARE IN OUR SCHOOLS
Associate Professor Liam Semler, from the English Department, leads a study to find out how 21st century school students cope with more imaginative approaches to the 16th century writings of Shakespeare.

MIGRANTS AND SPIRITUAL LIFE
Dr Laura Beth Bugg is examining controversies over proposals to set up Islamic schools and a Hindu temple in three largely Anglo-Australian residential areas of Sydney. These proposals were eventually refused because they were allegedly not compatible with rural character, landscape or land uses. Dr Bugg has conducted interviews with urban planners, residents and members of the immigrant groups, and an analysis of planning frameworks. She argues that citizenship does not guarantee belonging at the neighbourhood level, and that planning controls reinforce particular understandings of who belongs and who does not.

ENGINEERING AND IT

SMART ENERGY
Unlike other resources such as gas, water and food, electricity cannot easily be stored. Professor Tony Vassallo, from the School of Chemical and Biological Engineering, is conducting research as part of Future Grid Cluster, a major recent initiative with CSIRO which aims to improve our ability to store electricity. Professor Vassallo will lead a team to further our understanding of the impacts of different loads, generation sources and energy storage on system security.

INJECTABLE BIOMATERIALS
PhD candidate Ali Fathi specialises in chemical and biomolecular engineering. Under the supervision of Associate Professor Fariba Dehghani, Ali’s research involves collaborating with a team of experts from molecular bioscience, pharmacy, medicine and engineering on the regeneration of cartilage in knee joints. They have engineered and synthesised a multi-block polymer that can chemically bond with natural proteins. The polymer works as a cell carrier system to deliver native cartilage cells to defective sites through injection.

EPILEPSY INTO SOUND
A team led by Dr Alistair McEwan, from the School of Electrical and Information Engineering, has developed a process called sonification, which converts electroencephalogram (EEG) brain wave signals of people living with epilepsy into sound. The team’s audio method enables the non-expert to distinguish between seizures and some common sounds with a high level of accuracy after only several hours of training. This offers an exciting possibility for a person living with epilepsy or their carer to collect information about their condition. Dr McEwan and his team hope to eventually develop a portable EEG system.
ROBOTICS AND FARMING
Professor Salah Sukkarieh, from the Australian Centre for Field Robotics, is investigating how robots can be used to autonomously gather information about objects in outdoor environments. “The robots can collect vital information, estimate yield and identify pests, weeds and diseases. They can be controlled or monitored remotely by farmers using an iPad or phone,” he says. The research team is refining the ability of robots to perform tasks such as applying fertilisers and pesticides, watering, sweeping and mowing.

EARTHQUAKES AND EXPLOSIONS
Dr Luming Shen, senior lecturer in the School of Civil Engineering, is leading a study to develop mathematical models that can help in reducing rock fracturing and soil liquefaction caused by natural or man-made disasters. Dr Shen says the study is breaking new ground in the field of geotechnical earthquake engineering and could hold the key to solving a number of issues associated with seismic damage of underground structures.

SCIENCES
DEEPWATER REEF FOSSIL STUDY
Dr Liz Abbey and Dr Jody Webster, from the School of Geosciences, have led the first deepwater fossil study on the Great Barrier Reef. The team is the first in the world to document and analyse the response of a deepwater reef community to millennial scale environmental impacts, and examine how the reef responds to global sea-level rise and environmental changes.

WILDFIRE PREDATOR IMPACT
Professor Chris Dickman, from the School of Biological Sciences, is researching wildfires that deplete food and shelter resources for many native vertebrates, exposing them to invasive predators such as the red fox and feral cat. Focusing on the fire-prone spinifex grasslands of central Australia, this project identifies the role of specific refuge habitats that provide native species with protection after fires, and then proposes an experimental program to quantify and mitigate predator impacts.

WHEAT RUST GENE FOUND
Rusts significantly reduce crop yields and, in the case of stem rust, can destroy entire crops causing food supply disasters. For the past 24 years Professor Robert Park has conducted research to find genetic solutions to rust control in cereals. His research has made major impacts on understanding genetic variability in all cereal rust pathogens. He is also involved in the global effort to tackle a new race of stem rust in eastern Africa.

ENERGY SOLUTIONS
Professor Thomas Maschmeyer, from the School of Chemistry, has started a company which focuses on the conversion of biomass to refinable bio-oil and renewable chemicals. It is currently engaged in an engineering design study as a precursor to a biocrude plant with 125,000 barrels per year capacity. The technology now has a commercial demonstration plant at Somersby in NSW, producing oil from brown coal and woody waste at scale – a world first.

MEASURING CARBON SOIL
Researchers at the Soil Security Laboratory have developed the soil carbon bench, which can determine carbon levels from much larger samples, with greater accuracy and lower cost, than any existing technology. The first results were presented a year ago at the International Union of Soil Sciences Workshop in Wisconsin. The research team consists of Robert Pallaser, Associate Professor Budiman Minasny and Professor Alex McBratney.

PHAR LAP’S DNA
The University is leading an attempt to sequence the DNA of Phar Lap. The Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, which has the horse’s skeleton, has agreed to allow a 60mg piece of tooth to come to Sydney to unravel his genetic history, says team leader Dr Natasha Hamilton. Professor Claire Wade will be in charge of the genetic analysis, which will be performed at the Australian Centre for Ancient DNA, at the University of Adelaide, before being analysed at the University of Sydney. “The DNA sequence will tell us if Phar Lap’s genetic make-up looks like star racehorses of today, including whether he is a sprinter or a stayer (genetically better suited to running long distances),” Dr Hamilton said.
One of the main talking points about visiting China these days is the sheer number of tourists at the Great Wall. The wait can be overwhelming and many tourists feel reduced to lemmings. Ann Sefton can proudly say that on her first visit to the landmark, there was no one else to be seen.

Of course, that is not the only fact of life that has changed since Sefton travelled there in 1952 as part of a delegation from the National Union of Australian University Students. But it is one that has stayed vivid in her memory ever since. “The day we went to the Wall, we were the only people. These days, you can hardly see it there are so many people on it,” recalls Emeritus Professor Sefton, who went on to have a distinguished career in Medicine (BSc Med ’57 MB BS ’60 PhD ’66 DSc ’90 HonFellow ’13), and was also an active member of the Alumni Council for several years in various capacities.

“We were having lunch with the British and we snuck out when we weren’t supposed to, in a 4WD they loaned to us,” Sefton says. “You needed a 4WD in those days just to get up there: it was winter, there was snow all around, and the roads were not good enough for a normal car anyway.

“At the time we were in a group of just four, and we were the only people there. At one point I thought I was going to die, it was so cold. I looked like a furry bear [in padded winter clothing]. But that one moment – alone at the Wall – as far as I was concerned: that was heaven.”

The delegation, which included eight students from different universities across Australia, was given a one-month tour of the newly Communist China by the All-China Students Federation. Sefton, a junior medicine student at the time, was the only woman among them. “I was very excited. I had never travelled overseas before.”

Sefton does not know why she was asked, although she suspects it was related to the fact that she had been active on the Sydney Students’ Representative Council and broader student affairs, which gave her a degree of prominence. “One of the Sydney students pulled out because he was instructed not to go by his priest. A few others turned down the offer as well,“ she recalls.

It was definitely their loss. “The Chinese government gave us two interpreters in their mid-20s, who spoke very good English. They were very warm and friendly, and had a good sense of humour.”
The guides took them to a broad range of universities and specialist areas within them, to offer a window on the state of schools, medical education, public health, the legal system and courts, and other staples of the new regime that had been established after the 1949 Communist Revolution.

“We were there in mid-winter. It was freezing, well below zero,” says Sefton. “When we arrived, they insisted on giving us good clothing – very big padded clothes to protect us against the bitter cold. That broke the ice (no pun intended).

“The clothes not only kept us warm but they came in handy when our interpreters took us ice-skating at an open-air rink. I had never gone ice-skating before and found it hard to get the hang of it. I was down on my backside a lot and was grateful for the padding. Otherwise it would have been quite scary.”

Sefton was less intimidated by other aspects of the local culture. She liked Chinese food and had no reservations about trying the local fare. “It was very good but not everyone was game enough to try it,” she smiles. “We split down the middle: four of us tried Chinese food and ate it all the time; the other half stuck to standard European food.”

The group travelled around the countryside and major cities mainly by train because of the long distances between cities, and also because the road network was basic.

Whenever the group was seen out on the streets, Sefton says they were treated “a bit like curios by the locals, all dressed in Mao suits, who crowded around us at every city and looked at us like exotic objects. We did not see many other visitors or tourists during our visit.

“They definitely saw us not just as Europeans, but as Australians,” she adds. “They enjoyed hearing our broad Aussie accents and were very interested in the Australian way of life.

“One young boy in Shanghai took me by the hand and dragged me through his house, and showed me where he slept, and all his toys. He chatted away in Chinese, which I couldn’t understand. But the friendliness was unmistakable.”

The official report written up by the Australian delegation echoed Sefton’s impression: “Although opinions differed on what we had seen, not one of us felt that our insight into the new regime had not been sharpened. But on one thing we were unanimous: the generosity of our hosts. We thank them for making this trip possible and so enjoyable,” the report’s author wrote.

The trip left a huge impression on Sefton. “When we came home, I knew I wanted to go back.” And she did, a half dozen more times in the next 60 years, mainly in academic contexts – to lecture, learn or as part of a university delegation.

In the 1970s and 1980s, Sefton says she noticed the obvious signs of progress: more people around, more English spoken, better public transport and roads. On her last trip, about a decade ago, the gap had closed substantially.

But as anyone who has travelled to a profoundly foreign place can attest, that first trip is the one that lingers in the heart and memory. Sefton declares that it “was certainly the most interesting thing I ever did”. 
1960s

STEPHEN SKINNER (BA ‘69) has just been awarded his PhD (Classics) by the University of Newcastle, for a thesis on the evolution of magical techniques from Ancient Egypt to Europe via Byzantium. Although he studied English and Geography, Stephen then explored more alternative fields. He has written 37 books on such diverse subjects as geomancy, mediaeval magic and classical Chinese feng shui. He migrated to London in 1972, where he became CEO and MD of several publishing companies. One of the magazines he launched in 1999 earned him a nomination for the UK PPA ‘Publisher of the Year’ award. His books have been translated into 19 languages and several made the best seller lists. He also wrote the first English book on feng shui in the 20th century in 1976, long before the popular rush. He now lives in Singapore, where he runs a small publishing company.

1990s

KATRINA RETALICK (BA ’94) starred in the recent production of RUTHLESS! The Musical at the Seymour Centre. A prominent member of the Sydney University Dramatic Society during her student days, Katrina has forged a successful career as a leading lady of the Australian musical theatre stage. She has appeared in musicals around the world, and won awards for her performances in Dirty Rotten Scoundrels and The Addams Family.

2000s

HUGH WHALAN (BCOM ’07) has been appointed as CEO of Persistent Energy Ghana, which is focussed on developing energy access businesses serving low income households in Africa. Hugh had earlier founded a non-profit organisation called Energy in Common, which eventually grew into Impact Energies, which later merged with an American company. Hugh says he expects that the new entity will enable him to significantly expand the opportunities for low income households in Africa to have access to clean, affordable solar energy.

SIR ZELMAN COWEN UNIVERSITIES FUND PRIZE
For Discovery in Medical Research

The Sir Zelman Cowen Universities Fund Prize for Discovery in Medical Research is awarded in alternate years at the University of Sydney and at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. It recognises discovery in medical research by a researcher under 45 years of age who has made a major contribution to the understanding or treatment of disease. The inaugural award was made in 2006 at the University of Sydney.

The Trustees of the Fund are pleased to announce the 2014 award of the Prize is shared by:

Associate Professor Anthony Gill and Associate Professor Ostoja (Steve) Vucic

A/Professor Gill, Associate Professor, Sydney Medical School, University of Sydney and Senior Staff Specialist, Dept of Anatomical Pathology Royal North Shore Hospital was nominated for his contributions to a better understanding of a number of gastrointestinal and renal cancers. This includes the discovery of hereditary components which some of these cancers have and the establishment of a low cost widely available screening program which has resulted in hundreds of individuals with a hereditary cancer syndrome being diagnosed early (before they develop cancer) and at a stage where early intervention is highly likely to lead to cure and new treatment strategies.

A/Professor Ostoja (Steve) Vucic, Senior-Staff Specialist (Neurology), Westmead Hospital, and Clinical Academic, University of Sydney, Westmead was nominated for his discovery of a unique mechanism underlying amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS), a fatal neurodegenerative disorder that carries away one Australian every day. His pioneering research has resulted in a significant advance in understanding ALS leading to formulation of novel therapeutic approaches which are being translated into clinical trials. Professor Vucic also co-invented a much needed diagnostic technique for ALS currently being commercialized under the trade name MAGEXCIT with commercial partner Magstim. This invention enables earlier and more definite diagnosis of ALS so currently available neuroprotective therapies can be instituted earlier in the disease process, potentially improving survival and quality of life in this disorder.

The 2014 award of the Sir Zelman Cowen Universities Fund Prize for Discovery in Medical Research is sponsored by The Schwartz Foundation.

Sir Zelman Cowen Universities Fund
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DIARY

THURSDAY 7 – SUNDAY 10 AUGUST
SUGUNA Annual Conference
Dearborn Inn
Detroit Michigan
A three-day program of fun and fascinating talks and social activities.

FRIDAY 22 AUGUST
Canberra Alumni Drinks
Brassey Hotel, Barton,
Canberra, 6–8pm
Registration and enquirers,
alumni.canberra@sydney.edu.au

SATURDAY 30 AUGUST
Open Day 2014
9am – 4pm
Interested in undergraduate or postgraduate study at the University of Sydney? Explore campus life, get career and academic advice, attend mini-lectures, talk to current students and alumni, and more at Open Day. Visit sydney.edu.au/openday

THURSDAY 4 SEPTEMBER
Insights lecture series
Nicholson Museum and General Lecture Theatre 1, The Quadrangle, University of Sydney
The project of European Unification and the case of Greece, presented by Professor Vrasidas Karalis. Enquiries and registration 02 9351 7454 and sydney.edu.au/alumni/insights2014

WEDNESDAY 17 SEPTEMBER
Launch of the 2014-15 Health Sciences Leadership Mentoring Program
Law School Foyer, 6-8pm

WEDNESDAY 8 OCTOBER
Chancellor’s Committee Morning Tea
Men’s Courtyard,
Old Teachers College
10-11.30am

SATURDAY 11 OCTOBER
Shanghai Alumni Reception
Kerry Hotel, 7pm

THURSDAY 16 OCTOBER
Annual Dr Charles Perkins Memorial Prize and Oration
The Great Hall, 6 – 8pm
Join us in celebrating the life and achievements of Dr Perkins and the achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians.

FRIDAY 17 OCTOBER
Alumni Awards Presentation
6-8pm The Great Hall
This prestigious awards program features a wide range of awards to recognise outstanding achievements by alumni locally and overseas in community service and professional fields.

Visit sydney.edu.au/events for details

KEEP UP TO DATE
There’s always lots going on in and around the University – too much to fit it all in here. So stay up to date with alumni events and more via our online event calendar: sydney.edu.au/events
You can also keep in touch via our alumni pages: sydney.edu.au/alumni.
Also, make sure that we have your latest contact details (you can do this online at sydney.edu.au/stayconnected) so that you receive our monthly eSydney email newsletter, as well as invitations to events in your local area.
Ph +61 2 9036 9222. Email alumni.office@sydney.edu.au

ALUMNI REUNIONS
Numerous alumni reunions are held throughout the year. Please visit the event pages at sydney.edu.au/alumni for more information.
If you would like help arranging your own reunion, contact us at alumni.office@sydney.edu.au.

Above: CHARLES PERKINS travelling home from the University of Sydney on the Freedom Ride bus, 1963. Photograph © Robert McFarlane.
Tell us a little bit about Veritasium
Veritasium is a science video blog which I started about three years ago. I wanted to communicate science to everyone and make science really beautiful and accessible. Since then it’s grown to be a YouTube channel with more than a million subscribers. It is ranked about eighth in Australia and it is one of the only really big science channels in Australia, or even globally.

What did you like about science at school?
I did all three sciences and I loved the way they helped me understand the world. Science was so clear; you could work out whether things were true or not. That was important to me. There’s something about fundamental solid truth that I find appealing.

What did you study at university and why did you choose that?
I grew up in Canada and for my undergraduate degree I studied engineering physics at Queens University (in Kingston, Ontario). This involved a lot of courses with the engineers and mechanical-type labs. I chose engineering physics because I thought it was a challenge but I felt it was also practical. These two sides appeal to me.

What made you come back to Australia to do your PhD?
Eastern Canada was very cold, so after all of those winters I decided to come back to Australia (where I was born). As well as science, I had always been very interested in education. I was also really interested in video-making and media, and I wanted to make all these things interact. So I ended up doing a PhD here in the School of Physics (2008) on how to make films that communicate science effectively.

I discovered that just saying the correct things and showing the best real-world examples doesn’t really result in much learning, especially for novices. To communicate with people who have never understood the subject, you need to engage them on their level. Often that is not even a zero starting point.

Often people come in, at least in physics, with ideas which are not scientific. I found that incorporating these alternative ideas, or misconceptions, into the videos, significantly boosted the way in which students watched the video and also the ways they learned from it.

That made me realise that when we go out there to try to change opinions, we need to start with incorrect information. You can’t just avoid it; teaching that way doesn’t work.

What was your experience of studying physics at Sydney?
I studied a few of the graduate units here - advanced quantum mechanics, and relativistic quantum mechanics, general relativity, which were quite challenging. They were taught by great lecturers and I really enjoyed learning from them. A lot of what I did here at Sydney was independent research and that’s what I spent most of my time doing.

What lessons did you draw on for Veritasium?
The PhD has influenced dramatically what I do with Veritasium. For one thing, a lot of my videos focus on a misconception, areas where people think they know what’s going on, but they don’t. Doing the PhD helped me understand how to communicate with those people (to correct those misconceptions).

What do you do outside of Veritasium?
I like to play soccer, go running, go to the beach and I also read a lot about science. I like to speak about science, I like to talk to teachers about what they’re doing. I feel like my life is totally encapsulated with this mission of getting to the truth of matters. And when I’m not thinking about the truth of science, I’m thinking about the truth of other things.
For the benefit of generations to come, Dr Betty Chaar (BPharm ’83, MHL ’99, PhD ’08) is investing in scholarships for pharmacy students through a generous bequest.

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CULTURAL TOURS JANUARY 2015

Sri Lanka: A journey through the Holy island
January 9-26, 2015, from $6,740 pp
Tour leader: Dr Julian Droogan
Ancient Buddhist sanctuaries, outstanding wildlife and scenery plus the old-world charm of Sri Lanka’s colonial heritage make for a compelling travel experience.

Paris in the Wintertime
January 11-24, 2015 from $6,695 pp
Tour leader: French social historian Dr Michael Adcock
Get an insider’s view of the world’s greatest art city through history walking tours, extended gallery visits and explorations of some of Paris’ most charming neighbourhoods.

London music and theatre
January 15-27, 2015 from $7,990 pp
Tour leader: Music educator Robert Gay
An outstanding line up, including two new productions with star singers at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, all four major London Orchestras, the Royal Shakespeare Company and more.

New York: Music, theatre, art and food
January 15-27, 2015 from $8,970 pp
Tour leader: Robert Veel
Enjoy a private viewing of MoMA, the Met Opera, Carnegie Hall, Broadway, architectural walking tours, lunches in some excellent restaurants and a trip to art sites in the Hudson River Valley.