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NEEDEDLY CUMBERSOME?
Clyde Long (Letters, Summer ’09) quotes dates as CE and BCE. I presume this is meant to mean “common era” as a politically correct nod in the direction of the atheists/agnostic/anti-Christians or whatever.

Who is the era common to? Not to Jews, Muslims, Hindus, Chinese, pre-Tsarist Russians, Zoroastrians and probably others. The era therefore is only common to Christians so why not call it for what it is. To date the others have accepted this definition as a practical convenience.

To support the substituting of CE for AD due to the demise of Latin literacy among the general public, but it needs to be accepted for what it is. It is inevitably Christian since the year zero of the world’s calendar is taken as the arbitrary date of the birth of Christ, for want of a better definition, even though astronomers took as the arbitrary date of the year zero of the world’s calendar is taken as the arbitrary date of the birth of Christ, for want of a better definition, even though astronomers have been born in 4BC.

Therefore let us call BC “Before Christ” and CE “Christian Era”. BCE is needlessly cumbersome.

John B Walker (MBBS ’51)
Edgecliff, NSW

TUBULAR BELLS
I thoroughly enjoyed reading “For Him The Bells Toll”, [SAM Summer ’09]. It is fantastic to see traditional instruments and musicians being given the spotlight for a change. I’m also from Hong Kong, and have played a similarly traditional instrument, the pipe organ, since high school. Like the carillon, the pipe organ is large with different sounds and extensive pedals, quite different from the piano in structure and complexity.

Why not feed your curiosity by visiting some organ concerts? You may come to appreciate something that you may have missed all your life. Concerts are often advertised on www.sydneyorgan.com and are regularly held in the Great Hall. Some are even held in conjunction with carillon concerts!

Arthur Lee (BCom ’04 LLB ’05)
Bexley North, NSW

IRRATIONAL ATTITUDES
We were warned long ago, in a poem by Ogden Nash, that “he who attempts to tease a cobra is soon a sadder he and samba”. So when a small cobra tried to enter my suburban kitchen I did not tease it, but killed it with a spade. It fought hard, reminding me that it had a built in, genetically determined instinct to fend off danger.

The same applies to the ancestors of all contemporary species of sentient organisms, including Homo sapiens. Our remotest ancestors must have had the cobra’s determination to survive and the genes required for it.

However, our ancestors became more and more intelligent and as the eons rolled on, and at some stage they realised that the imperative within was to avoid death. Later, perhaps, they realised that no individual could avoid it. There was thus a conflict. Then came resolution! There is another life after death, for our souls.

It seems likely that the concept of the soul developed very early in our evolution. Winwood Reade, in The Martyrdom of Man, suggested that a villager, dreaming of a dead chief, might have concluded that he was still alive in some other dimension, and had returned to convey a message or an order.

In present-day Taoism there are common beliefs and practices (of ancient origin) that accord with Reade’s idea. In a very recent case in Malaysia, the soul of a man, who had died tragically, appeared in a relative’s dream to request changes in the arrangements for his funeral. That, at least, was how the dream was interpreted, and acted upon.

The genetically determined instinct to reject death may lie behind some of the more irrational attitudes to abortion, euthanasia and even suicide.

The pathological depression commonly preceding suicide can, as we now know, be treated medically. We were not always so wise. In 19th century NSW attempted suicide was a crime. One man who tried to cut his throat failed in his intention; his wounds were sewn up and he was then hanged, successfully, for the crime.

I cannot give a source for this story, which I read many decades ago. I should be grateful to anyone who could. The tale is instructive, reminding us yet again of Schiller’s pessimistic remark: “With stupidity the gods themselves battle in vain.”

G.F.J. Moir (BSc ’49)
Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

EYES AND GRACES
Having just completed a story about “unseen presences”, ghosts, etc, including one on the Eyre Peninsula, I opened SAM [March ’10] to find someone else who appreciates that wonderful place.

We were returning from a visit to Lincoln National Park and decided to camp for the night at Carapee Conservation Park, an inselberg south of Kimba. As I lit the fire my wife walked off into the reasonably dense bush for an evening stroll. She was back in record time without saying a word. I then took my turn and after turning up a small gully I decided it was time I returned to the camp without delay. We packed up early next morning and it was not until we returned to Adelaide that we confessed to each other that there was some very strange feeling about the area and that we were not welcome by whatever presence there was there.

During our time in the Solomon Islands we had lived in so called haunted houses where others had strange experiences but at no time did we feel unease. So we considered we were not “switched on” to such unseen presences.

But do not let our experience stop you from visiting the beautiful Peninsula.

James LO Tedder (BSc ’51)
Stuarts Point, NSW

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR
Letters to the editor should include: full name, address (not for publication), degree(s) and year(s) of graduation where applicable; daytime phone number and/or email address.

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

Space permits only a selection of letters to be published. Letters may be edited so please keep them concise.

EINSTEIN FACTOR
It would be interesting to know where Bob Hinchcliffe (Letters, SAM March ’10) found his quotation from Albert Einstein, since, although it is frequently quoted, it is difficult to track down the source. Einstein actually said, “I do not believe in a personal god and I have never denied this but have expressed it clearly”. He went on to say, “The word ‘god’ is for me nothing more than the expression and product of human weakness, and the Bible a collection of honourable but still purely primitive legends which are nevertheless pretty childish”. It is difficult to reconcile these authenticated quotes with the views that seem to be conveyed in Bob Hinchcliffe’s letter, although Einstein was known to take a wide view of the meaning of the word “religion”, and this has perhaps caused some confusion amongst theistic apologists.

Bruce Hyland DipTCP ’60 ASTC
(Hons) MRP [Cornell]
Dalesy Point, NSW
GREENHOUSE GAS

I couldn’t agree more with Duncan Ivison’s proclamation [SAM, March ’10] that graduates should be able to “write a decent sentence”. Having spent the past five years trying to convince Sydney Uni’s physics students that good writing skills are essential for a career in pretty much anything, I’ve often wished that academics in all fields, not just humanities, placed more emphasis on the quality of writing. In my experience, only about one in three second-year science students is capable of correct spelling, grammar and punctuation, to say nothing of good style.

Humourously [sic], just after his proclamation about writing skills, Ivison wrote, “Our student body needs to be diverse and accessible to of ability and potential”, which just goes to show how fiendishly difficult it is to write well.

Cliff Kerr (BSc [Hons] ’05, PhD Physics ’10)
Camperdown, NSW

The egregious error of the missing word mentioned by Dr Kerr is all mine, whereas the misspelling of humorous is all hist – Ed

RUBY REMEMBERED

I shared Caroline Baum’s story of the biography of Ruby Payne-Scott (SAM March ’10) with my father, Les Clague, now 94 and living in retirement in Mudgee, NSW, whose working life was spent as a Technical Officer with the Radiophysics Division of CSIR/CSIRO.

He remembers Ruby Payne-Scott well - she was his boss in the 1940s - and he made the same progression from wartime radar work to post-war radio astronomy, as did she. Perhaps he could throw some light on biographer Miller Goss’s unanswered question as to why she became so involved in earlier years and simply needed radar technology was fermenting in earlier years and simply needed a champion to pitch for the radio astronomy program and its ongoing funding at CSIRO after the war.

The champions of the radio astronomy program were clearly successful at the time. The world-leading research of Payne-Scott and the other outstanding scientists at the Radiophysics Laboratory, then and since is the legacy of that commitment. It certainly did my father no harm: he spent some 35 years working there, much of the time with the radio astronomy teams interspersed with periods working in the cloud physics program.

The Radiophysics Laboratory in the grounds of the University was a very family friendly workplace, at least in the 1940s and early ’50s. I well recall successive annual Christmas parties where we children would receive gifts of toys made in the basement workshops. It was certainly the kind of place where the secret of Payne-Scott’s marriage would be kept by any colleagues aware of it.

As to Goss’s other unanswered question as to how and why she left the Communist Party of Australia, there may be little mystery in that, although there are others better qualified than I to account for the divisions and decline of the CPA, particularly among its members in Sydney in the 1950s. There were certainly a number of women of Payne-Scott’s intellectual stature in the CPA in Sydney in this period, some of whom were my wife Joyce’s mentors after she arrived in Sydney from a NSW north coast Aboriginal reserve in the 1950s and who were leading members of the Aboriginal Australian Fellowship and supporters of FAATSI.

Colin Clague (DipSW ’65, BA ’75)
Maclean, NSW

GOOD OLD DAMOCLES

Gregory Thiele’s argument for the existence of God (Letters, SAM, March ’10) is based in part on a misconception of what Science claims to do (“how can it be proved empirically that we should only believe things that we can prove empirically?”)

Science never claims to have proved any positive assertion about the natural world. It seeks to explain how the natural world works by the following iterative process:

1. A parsimonious and testable explanatory hypothesis is advanced that fits an observed phenomenon.
2. Predictions are made from the hypothesis regarding what phenomena should be observed under different conditions if the hypothesis is true.
3. Those predictions are tested by experiment and the hypothesis is promptly discarded if the predictions are not borne out.

When a hypothesis has stood for sufficient time without being thus disproved it comes to be adopted as part of orthodox scientific thought.

That is a far cry from its having been proved empirically to be true.

Thus, the sword of Damocles hangs forever over the head of every scientific principle. No scientist can ever be absolutely certain that a so-called “law of nature” will never be disproved by hitherto unseen and unforeseen observation.

That said, it may be thought then that, since the hypothesis of the existence of an omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent God has stood without being disproved for a long time, it ought to be adopted as orthodox scientific thought. The problem with that idea is that the hypothesis is inherently un-testable. Whether you espouse the resurrection of Jesus or an afterlife for each of us, no rational experiment can be devised that will test your hypothesis. The God hypothesis is also far from parsimonious. We do not need such an elaborate hypothesis to explain our existence. Isn’t it far simpler and more satisfactory to say that the natural world has a continuous existence and we, as individuals, have brief lives within that world?

Gregory Thiele may cling to a belief in the existence of God as a matter of faith, if he wishes, but that is all it is – a matter of faith.

Michael O’Callaghan (BSc [Hons] ’66 MSc ’69, PhD [Maths] ’77)
Eurowa, NSW

MONKEE BUSINESS

Gregory Thiele (Letters, SAM March ’10) proposes that if God exists we can only know him by how he reveals himself to us. In Mr Thiele’s own words “all recourse to human reason as the ultimate arbiter of truth in the matter” (God’s existence or non-existence) “is futile”.

It would appear that Mr Thiele’s thought process runs somewhat as follows: a lack of empirical evidence in support of a belief that God might exist can only be proof of his non-existence if that higher authority [God] had revealed to us that he does not exist. That is clearly absurd therefore God must exist.

That Mr Thiele and his fellow believers can base their conviction of belief on revelation alone untroubled by logic or reason or empirical evidence is their concern. It is however, incumbent on them to explain how it is they can presumably, religiously apply logical reasoning and empirical evidence to all other aspects of their existence but arbitrarily dismiss these essential reasoning factors when they relate to what one must believe is, for them, the most important and central aspect of their lives.

In the final analysis, if anyone has to prove anything it is the believer who has to justify his/her belief. The atheist does not have to prove that God does not exist any more than he/she has to prove that leprechauns, fairies or elves don’t exist. If anyone thinks they do, only reasoned argument and the application of empirical methodology would be sufficient to convert others to their belief.

Richard Birrell (BA ’57)
Waitara, NSW

WINNING LETTER

This issue’s prize-winning letter is from Cliff Kerr of Camperdown.

The prize is a copy of Dr Ken Woolley’s splendid Reviewing the Performance – The Design of the Sydney Opera House, reviewed on page 34. Warmest thanks to Watermark Press for their generosity.

SAM July 2010 3
Magis mutat, magis manet

The University's new logo has been controversial for some alumni. Those who believe it is a departure from a long and important tradition might be comforted to know that since the University was given its Grant of Arms in 1857, there have been many redesigns and tweaks to the original crest with its curlicues. A small selection of these designs is reproduced here (courtesy of the University of Sydney Archive).

For everyday use, the simplified logo is now standard issue. In order to reinforce the importance of our history, the University has reverted to using the original 1857 coat of arms for ceremonial purposes, and the Latin “Sidere mens eadem mutato”, is still very much the University’s motto: it is referred to proudly – and legibly, with explanatory text for those who have not studied Latin – wherever appropriate.

Meanwhile, the Chancellor’s Committee reports that a range of memorabilia carrying the old coat of arms is still available at discounted prices. Website: sydney.edu.au/ccs.

It is not surprising that Neil Radford was annoyed by the apparently insensitive adoption of a modern logo to facilitate online and media communication for the University (Letters, SAM March ’10). As a former University Librarian (1980-1996), Neil has continued his support of the University by endowing a staff development scholarship scheme for library staff. Also, in the beautifully produced Fisher Library Centenary 1909-2009, Neil is credited with providing much of the text. “His long association with the University and its libraries provide him with an insight that is unique.”

The Senate adopted the Grant of Arms to the University of Sydney from the College of Heralds, London on May 14, 1857. The logo may retain all the heraldic components required under the Grant of Arms, but not the Latin motto Sidere mens eadem mutato (”Though the stars are changed our spirit is the same”), which implies that the tradition of ancient universities will be continued in Australia. (The University of Sydney 1850-1975, G.L. Fischer, University Archivist, 1975). It is a pity that the computer age cannot continue this tradition.

Thank you, Neil Radford, for speaking for the traditionalists among us.

Many thanks to Neil Radford for his criticism of the University’s new logo. I agree. Before “alumni” and “campuses” migrated from Rome via the USA, there was no campus at the University of Sydney. Here, to quote the old song, “Grads and undergrads of Arms in 1857, there have been many redesigns and tweaks to the original crest with its curlicues. A small selection of these designs is reproduced here (courtesy of the University of Sydney Archive).

Meanwhile, the Chancellor’s Committee reports that a range of memorabilia carrying the old coat of arms is still available at discounted prices. Website: sydney.edu.au/ccs.

Having been associated with the Nation’s first Teaching Hospital (Sydney), and seen it dismembered by the politicians, I am distraught that the first University should want to “modernise” its logo. A young country like ours (an adopted one for a “refo” like me) should, in my view, try to preserve what traditions it has built up over its short (modern) history. Was a survey or referendum of Alumni done before this momentous, and, I presume, irreversible step was decided on? If so I missed it. Could a retrospective survey still be done to know people’s views?

Alex B.L. Hunyor
(MBBS ’64 BSc [Med]’61)
McMahons Point, NSW

Dr Radford was rightly concerned about money being spent on changing the University’s coat of arms into a logo at a time when academic departments are suffering financially (Letters, SAM March ‘10). Marian Theobald’s response opened by offering the red herring of aesthetic differences. It may well be “that this project was carried out as economically as possible”, as one would expect, but it need not have cost even one cent! Unlike the charges and tinctures, the actual shape of the coat of arms is not determined in the grant by the College of Arms. If no one in the External Relations section was able to draw a shape differing from that previously used, then a quick visit to the University Library would have provided standard books illustrating different designs.

If the Library no longer holds such a book, then perhaps External Relations could have donated one?

Edward Reid-Smith (EdD ‘02)
Wagga Wagga, NSW

Coats of arms through the ages from the 1850s to the present...
China connections

For many good reasons, the eyes and ears of the world are currently turned toward China. Thirty years of dynamic development has turned China into a thriving economy. In that short period the country that was once regarded as a threat is now our most important export partner, one which is investing heavily in its education and university sectors.

Trade is growing so rapidly that China will soon eclipse our third, fourth and fifth next largest markets combined. Of course, China is also the source of many international students. In fact there are more Chinese undergraduate students in Australia than in the US.

There are those who warn of a possible downside to us being too close to the great dragon. But the University cannot be accused of being a new or fair weather friend. Our relationships and links with China are long-standing and exist on a number of different levels. Our deep and historic ties go back nearly 100 years and we now have more than 10,000 alumni in China. We were the first university in Australia to teach Chinese language and culture, and one of the first in the world to welcome Chinese students after the Cultural Revolution. In that time, we have observed transformative change in China and its impact on the world. But we are not just an observer.

Today we are one of the world’s universities most engaged with China’s next generation: with 5000 Chinese students on campus and many exchange and research collaborations involving some 90 of our leading researchers across all the University’s academic activities.

Our partnerships are in areas such as medicine and public health, engineering, finance, culture, music and education. In Shanghai we have close links with Fudan University where we have established the Sydney-Fudan Master of Education program, and with Shanghai Jiaotong University where we have established a curriculum development program for clinical and basic medical science teachers. At Nanjing University our experts from the Australian Centre for Microscopy and Microanalysis are working with their Chinese colleagues who are the world leaders in spintronics research, collaborating to produce the next generation of computers and electronic devices.

We have also provided top-level executive training to Chinese government and business leaders for many years.

A number of our recent visitors, such as Mr Wang Yingfan, a member of an influential government think-tank, the Foreign Policy Advisory Group; and a group of senior officials from the western province of Sichuan where we have research and education links with Sichuan University, illustrate the depth of our connections.

On my recent trips to China I have been pleasantly surprised by the level of interest shown in Australia and in our University. On two occasions, in both Shanghai and Beijing, I’ve received extensive prime time TV coverage. It is hard to imagine a mainstream network here devoting time to a visiting university president.

It was against this background that we took our strategic decision to become a sponsor of the Australian Pavilion at the Shanghai World Expo. It is entirely appropriate that we are the only university to be a gold sponsor, alongside major companies such as Rio Tinto and ANZ, as this represents a continuation of our long-term relationships and partnerships with China, for the benefit of both our countries.

In the Australian Pavilion over the six months of World Expo we are hosting a series of academic symposia, roundtables with government and business, and contributing some of our leading musical performers from the University’s Conservatorium of Music for the Expo cultural program.

As a further sign of our long-term commitment to China and to build enhanced, cross-disciplinary partnerships into the future, in 2011 the University will establish a China Studies Centre. This is an important initiative involving major Chinese, Australian and global partners and it was recently endorsed by Australian Foreign Minister Stephen Smith in a speech at Fudan.

The China Studies Centre is another major commitment for the University, but one which I believe will pay great dividends. As well as being a hub for cross-disciplinary education and research, it will provide a network for deeper and broader engagement with government, business and civil society, with a focus on China beyond Beijing. Importantly it will provide a voice for commentary, dialogue, informed discussion and outreach to Australian and Chinese societies, to help each know the other better and to prosper together.

Unless we come to a better understanding of one another our relations with China risk being seriously undermined by misperceptions and neglect.

We need to think strategically about the country that is more likely to determine our prosperity and national security than any other in this century. SAM
Eternal optimist

By Sara Donald

Leaving the security of a large company and starting up a business has been a huge undertaking for Kate O’Reilly (GradDipPAdmin ‘06 MPAdmin ’07). Previously a Deloitte director, O’Reilly was part of the Deloitte Inspiring Women Program. She was a winning finalist for the Deloitte Business Woman of the Year 08/09 and was also appointed to the Deloitte Emerging Leaders Council.

“It’s been a huge risk,” she admits, of her new venture: Optimiss Consulting. “But for me, the numbers of women in senior management and on boards is just dire – the numbers are actually decreasing and that’s really unacceptable. Best practice isn’t working and Optimiss is about creating new practice. It’s about doing things differently to get different results.”

Women make up 45 per cent of the workforce in Australia and nearly 60 per cent of graduates are female, yet the S&P/ASX 200 listed companies have women holding only 8 per cent of board positions and 10.7 per cent of executive management positions.

Sex Discrimination Commissioner Elizabeth Broderick was recently quoted in The Australian newspaper discussing the importance of the proposed new ASX corporate governance council guidelines on diversity. “They will require listed companies to disclose their diversity policies and objectives, report against these objectives and disclose annually the proportion of women in management and on the board,” she said.

O’Reilly started Optimiss to offer advice to companies on how they can achieve this, optimise their gender balance program and offer a competitive advantage and better business results.

Completing her Masters in Public Administration has been “invaluable” to O’Reilly’s career and she pays tribute to her alumni connections. “My Masters degree gave me the opportunity to explore real life issues, events and best practice in Government and the private sector,” she explains. “The strong alumni network has also allowed me to retain strong connections with experienced practitioners in the ranks of the senior public service and the private sector.”

O’Reilly continues to contribute to the life of the University as an Honorary Associate with the Graduate School of Government in the Faculty of Business and Economics as well as putting an enormous amount of time and energy into her new business.

“I have been working very long hours – until midnight most evenings and also on weekends. My husband has been very understanding and supportive but very neglected! He tells me that I’m always looking to put things on my ‘to do’ list and he’s always looking to take things off. But it’s the first time I’ve had my own business and you can’t say, ‘I’ll just do it later.’ No one else will do it if you don’t, so you just stay at the computer and keep working.” Aged 39, O’Reilly doesn’t have children. “My thirties have been all about my career,” she reflects.

Originally from the UK, O’Reilly came to Australia on holiday in 1997. “I fell in love with the country. When I came here I felt like I’d just arrived home.” O’Reilly is hoping to launch Optimiss in the UK. “I’m going over later this year and hope to have established operations there within a year.”

More info: www.optimiss.com

Vet clinic
24 hours

Good news for pets whose people live within reach of the University’s Veterinary Teaching Hospital at Camperdown. The Faculty of Veterinary Science has announced the opening of the Sydney After-hours Veterinary Emergency Service (SAVES). The service now operates 24 hours a day and on weekends and public holidays.

Dr Graham Swinney, the Teaching Hospital’s veterinary superintendent says, “Just like a human emergency department, we treat our cases based on an assessment of most urgent need. Although it does help if a pet owner calls ahead to give our vets some idea of what they can expect.”

Operating as a pilot program since January, the service has treated well over 200 animals, including dogs, cats, rabbits, other small pets and wildlife. “Our vets have dealt with a wide range of cases from poisonings, gastrointestinal problems and accident victims to difficult births and neurological emergencies,” Dr Swinney says.

The Emergency Clinic: Sydney University Veterinary Teaching Hospital, 65 Parramatta Road, Camperdown. Car park entrance: 500m west on Parramatta Road from Ross Street gate and intersection; 24-hour Emergency Service (02) 9351 3437.
Strings attached

The viola da gamba and Jenny Eriksson (SCM ’82) are inextricably and happily linked. Eriksson is the director of the Marais Project, formed in 2000 to perform the works of French composer and gambist Marin Marais (1656-1728). The latest step for the Project is a CD, *Love Reconciled*, which features pieces by Marais and a new composition by Stephen Yates.

“Everyone involved in the CD is a graduate of the Con and/or the University,” says Eriksson. “And the fact that we have ended up performing such rare music is a tribute to the nature of our undergraduate education.”

Marais is little known outside France, although Gerard Depardieu portrayed him in Alain Corneau's highly regarded 1991 movie, *Tous les matins du monde*. The imaginary bio-pic is threaded through with Marais' music in a narrative about his mentor (the composer M. de Sainte-Colombe) and his love life (Marais and wife Catherine had 19 children).

*Love Reconciled* continues a musical journey begun by the group's first recording, *Viol Dreaming*. Violinist Fiona Ziegler and harpsichordist Chris Berensen now augment the original ensemble of two violas da gamba, theorbo and soprano voice. This richly detailed and beautifully recorded CD is a delight.

*Love Reconciled* is distributed by Move Records: www.move.com.au

On a sunny, chilly May morning the University awarded an honorary doctorate to former Principal of its Women’s College, now Australia’s first woman Governor-General, Quentin Bryce AC. Chancellor and NSW Governor, Professor Marie Bashir AC GVO conferred the Doctor of Laws in the Great Hall, after a citation read by Vice-Chancellor Dr Michael Spence.

Dr Spence paid tribute to Ms Bryce’s career and time at the University. “Throughout her career she has been a role model for Australian women. She practiced what she preached and managed to balance commitments to her family, workplace and the community.

“As principal of Women’s College at this University, Ms Bryce made a personal and lasting impact on the lives of hundreds of young women who resided there,” Dr Spence said.

Photo: Ted Sealey

Be a student mentor

Within a few days of going live on AlumniOnline in May, hundreds of students had responded to the Online Mentoring program. “The enthusiasm of the response indicates that students are very receptive to this kind of help in their career planning and development,” says Director of Alumni and Community Engagement, Tracey Beck.

Mentoring pairs have already been established and more mentors are needed, says Ms Beck. “This program gives alumni a wonderful opportunity to support our students one-on-one in a very meaningful way, and I would greatly appreciate it if more alumni would register as mentors and enjoy the benefits – for their student mentees and themselves.”

To become an online mentor (no previous experience required), please activate your account in AlumniOnline at sydney.edu.au/alumni

Photo: AlumniOnline
**TUESDAY 7 SEPTEMBER**
Join us for a special healthy breakfast in the third of the 2010 series, with

**PROFESSOR IAN CATERSON AM**
BSc (Med) ’69 MBBS ’72 PhD ’81
Boden Professor of Human Nutrition
Director Institute of Obesity, Nutrition and Exercise

**TUESDAY 9 NOVEMBER**
Join us for the final ‘electrifying’ breakfast in the 2010 series, with

**GEORGE MALTABAROW BE (Elec) ’74**
Managing Director of EnergyAustralia

**Venue**
The Tea Room, Queen Victoria Building
**Time**
7.15 – 8.45am
**Cost**
$45 for alumni, staff and students of the University
$50 for friends or guests
$320 for a table of eight
**RSVP**
Tuesday 31 August & Tuesday 2 November respectively
**Enquiries**
+61 2 9036 9278

Online registration sydney.edu.au/alumni/breakfast

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**COMEDY DEBATE**

**ALUMNI VS STUDENTS**

Adam Spencer, the Vice-Chancellor and other guests challenge top Sydney student debaters: ‘Shakespeare would have Tweeted’.

**Tuesday 5 October 2010**
6pm to 8pm

Great Hall, Quadrangle
The University of Sydney

Admission is free, book online to secure your seat

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Thursday 30 September 2010
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Calling Colombo Plan alumni!

The University is organising an Alumni Reunion in SE Asia of alumni who studied under the Colombo Plan in the ’50s and ’60s.

The plan was so called after a Commonwealth Conference of Foreign Ministers met in Colombo, Ceylon (now Sri Lanka) in January 1950. It established a Committee to promote international cooperation and raise living standards for the people of the Asia-pacific region. Originally intended to run for six years, the Plan was extended until 1980 when it was decided to make it open-ended; it continues to this day.

The Colombo Plan brought many students to study at Sydney, however the records of the time are sketchy and not on the alumni database. If you are a former Colombo Plan student, or know of one, please contact Andrea Besnard, International and Regional Chapters Officer, Alumni Relations Office: +61 2 9351 1963; or email: andreabesnard@sydney.edu.au.

We will keep you updated on plans for your Reunion!

Entertain the thought

Recently, alumni volunteers have entertained some 70 local and international students as part of the “fun, fare and future alumni” program. These gatherings are an opportunity for students to meet and engage with their peers and alumni families, to share academic, professional and social experiences as well as foster new friendships. Students from over 17 countries have been paired across 6 faculties, bringing new perspectives to each others lives.

Leena Barretto from India is currently completing MEd in Educational Management and Leadership and was invited to lunch at home with the Pettitt family Medicine and Nursing graduates. She said, “It was the most enriching experience I have had in my association with Sydney University. My hosts shared their history, experiences and family which were not only interesting to listen to but full of life lessons.”

Dr Andrea Avolio (MBBS ’07) said of her guests: “The students were extremely interesting and interested in learning about each other and were articulate and asked questions about Sydney University. We plan to reconvene same time next year to see how everyone is doing.”

Gatherings have ranged from a day visit to Goulburn to a cocktail party in Woollahra. The generosity of alumni ensures the success of the program, which will continue in 2011.

Become involved: sydney.edu.au/alumni/support

Above: Chief Superintendent Gregory Moore APM (DipCrim ’86) entertained students Adrian Lambert, Jieje Chen and Ami Khaira at a BBQ lunch at his home in Goulburn, and also took the students on a tour of the Police College; below: Kelly Chen, Jin Ooi, Jenny Fan, Gordon Pettitt (MBBS ’48) and Helga Pettitt (DipAdvClin Nurs ’71, DipCommNurs ’79) at a luncheon in Turramurra.

GOT A GOOD STORY?
TELL YOUR CLASSMATES WHAT YOU’RE UP TO NOW:
EMAIL THE EDITOR
diana.simmonds@sydney.edu.au
Thinking is key

The successful Sydney Ideas Program continues in the second half of 2010 with a full program of events to suit all tastes. The program will start with a very special event. Poet, essayist, short story writer, novelist and alumna Kate Jennings (BA (Hons) ’70) takes the stage with her brother Dare to discuss a subject close to their hearts: entrepreneurship. Dare made his name as founder of the clothing company, Mambo, on turning 50 he sold up and his new venture, Deus Ex Machina, combines his love of motorbikes, surf, clothing and art. Kate is the author of a number of highly regarded works of fiction and non-fiction; the latest is Trouble: Evolution of A Radical. It charts her journey from ratbag feminist poet to acerbic expert commentator on global financial systems. Dare might be the most obvious entrepreneur but writers are entrepreneurial: every day the blank page, every day an act of invention. Kate and Dare also have in common their rural upbringing: farmers are quintessential entrepreneurs. In conversation with James Valentine, they will discuss the passion, imagination, resilience and independence of mind that it takes to make something from nothing, day in, day out.

Kate and Dare Jennings in Conversation, 30 July, 6.30pm
The Conservatorium of Music; $20 adults/$15 concs; free to University staff, students and alumni (ID required). The Sydney Ideas International Lectures series continues at the Seymour Centre. Some program highlights include: 12 August - Biography Matters: Writing Science Lives with Janet McCalman, author of Darwin: The Power of Place, and Iain McCalman, author of Darwin’s Armada, in conversation with Alison Bashford; 30 August - Italian journalist Loretta Napoleoni on “The Economics of Terrorism” ; 13 September - The Alex Buzo Memorial Lecture is another potentially fiery event; this year theatre director Wayne Harrison argues “Why the plays of Anton Chekhov should be banned.”

Then on 2 September Sydney Ideas joins with Intelligence Squared Australia and the USU to debate the motion “There is no truth worth dying for”. An event bound to generate discussion. For all Sydney Ideas advance bookings phone: (02) 9351 1740 or book online sydney.edu.au/sydney_ideas

The Key Thinkers series also returns to Wednesday nights for the second half of the year. University academics, from a range of disciplines, share their specialised knowledge in 45-minute lectures on the key thinkers who have shaped our society’s institutions and beliefs. This year’s Key Thinkers include well-known names such as economist Kenneth Galbraith and psychologist Sigmund Freud to lesser known ones such as mathematician Alfred North Whitehead and Arab-American intellectual Ameen Rihani. This series is free and open to all. For details visit sydney.edu.au/sydney_ideas

Introducing gizmo

Keen SAM cryptic crossworders will notice that, in this issue, Prof Gavin Brown is taking a break from compiling duties.

Our new tormentor – out of Machiavelli by the Spanish Inquisition – is deceptively known as gizmo (lower case “g”). More about gizmo who writes of himself: “BA Hons 2 ’69, majoring in History. Since then hippie handcrafts and other footling enterprises unworthy of consideration by gentlefolk; return to Sydney to study Education and Psychology, a hiatus-ridden career in Special Education, running our private college (Natural Therapies), academic editing, and property development in a minor sort of way. Developed an interest in cryptic crosswords during misspent days in the Union solving puzzles in the SMH (misspent, because the puzzles were so dreadful). Two firsts this year in the Times clue-writing challenge. Supply puzzles to online magazine for lawyers, Justitiam. Previously to the magazine of the NSW Writers’ Centre and the Australian Crossword Club.”

Meanwhile, pit your wits and see how you go: the prize is only a small part of the satisfaction, albeit a sumptuous and generous one.

Please send your completed crosswords to The Editor, at the address on the contents page. A scanned crossword may be emailed, if you prefer. Happy solving.

Giving peace a chance

By Caroline Baum

A peaceful revolution took place at the University when the Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies (CPACS) hosted the biannual International Peace Research Association conference at the beginning of July. Up to 500 delegates attended the four-day event, opened by the “father” of Australian Reconciliation, Patrick Dodson.

Among the program highlights was an address by the founding light of peace research, Norwegian professor Yohan Galtung, who established the Transcend network, which promotes peace through mediation, education and research. Other guests included Lawrence Wittner, author of
Confronting the Bomb and Irene Khan, the out-going Secretary General of Amnesty International.

Hosting the conference was a coup (of the gentlest kind) for CPACS, which was established in the Faculty of Arts School of Social and Political Sciences and is perhaps best known for awarding the often contentious Sydney Peace Prize (past winners have included John Pilger, Arundhati Roy and Hanan Ashrawi).

“The conference is the peak body of the discipline, and really at the cutting edge of research in this field,” says CPACS director Jake Lynch. “It was an opportunity for CPACS to be a shop window to the world, with some very prestigious names in attendance.”

The conference theme, Communicating Peace, was a subject especially close to Lynch’s heart. The British former television news producer and reporter joined CPACS in 2007 and teaches a Peace Media course as part of CPACS’ Masters degree (640 students currently enrolled).

Other topics covered include inner peace (the psychology of peace, how we respond to conflict and how people are mobilised for or against violence, racism etc), peace ecology and even peace tourism. A lot of teaching is shared with other departments including History and South East Asian studies; honorary lecturers are brought in for specialist courses including former Australian Human Rights Commissioner Sev Ozdowski. Not surprisingly, the course is proving increasingly relevant and popular, with enrollments increasing dramatically since the Centre was established in 1998.

“It’s very suitable for people who want to work with NGOs or at the UN or in government departments such as Foreign Affairs,” says Lynch, who shared the conference platform with peace media experts from the Philippines and Sri Lanka to explore ways of deepening and broadening understanding of local conflicts.

He is dismayed at the narrow focus of most conflict reporting in the Australian media. “It is puny and consensus-seeking, compared with the more creative and robust opinions expressed in the UK media,” he says.

“Of course there are individuals who distinguish themselves from the pack – people like Paul McGeough and Hamish McDonald, and occasionally Four Corners and Dateline on SBS – but most of the reporting here is supine and debate is stifled,” says Lynch.

Many CPACS students are activists with personal experience of conflict. Sharing that experience in an academic context creates a valuable teaching resource. “We have a student from Pakistan who has faced down terrorists with AK47s, another who is an Afghan refugee who was held for a time at Curtin Detention Centre, not to mention Donna Mulhearn, who was a high profile human shield in Iraq,” says Lynch, adding that, “peace researchers can’t divorce themselves from peace activists. Many go and work in the field, lobbying and writing reports on issues and hot spots.”

There are currently 800 departments teaching Peace Studies around the world, but CPACS differs in its commitment to enabling students to develop ideas of conflict from the intra-personal to the global, and its emphasis on peace with justice through analysis of the underlying structural causes of conflict, and a commitment to structural change. CPACS also offers long distance learning courses and presents intensive short courses in London (where, surprisingly, no Peace Studies department currently exists).

So if the atmosphere at the University now seems to hum with a kind of energised serenity it may be because here at least, for a while, peace will have broken out.

For information on CPACS: sydney.edu.au/arts/peace_conflict/
Dr Dhananjayan "Danny" Sriskandarajah, of the Royal Commonwealth Society at the Commonwealth Club in London, emailed this lovely photo and wrote: “I thought this picture might be of interest. It was taken at an event here last week [in June]. Michael Kirby was delivering a lecture on the future of the Commonwealth, co-hosted by Doughty Street Chambers (of which Geoffrey Robertson is head) and the Royal Commonwealth Society (of which I am head). All three of us are Sydney graduates … It’s a shame that John Dauth LVO (BA ’69 Hon Fellow ’96), the current Australian High Commissioner, wasn’t able to come as it would have been a quadrifecta!”

Energy innovation

The University’s Professor Vassilios G Agelidis (centre) and PhD candidate Nikolas Flourentzou (right) have won $50,000 and the inaugural Electrica Award in the first international innovation competition in the transmission and distribution industry. Established by AREVA T&D, it recognises the best idea combining a technical concept and business plan to help meet energy challenges.

Launched in 2009, the Electrica Award is open to participants from universities, research centres and start-ups around the world.
I have had Tourette Syndrome for more than a decade and have a reasonable idea of what goes through other people’s minds when they discover this. Responses vary from sheepish sympathy to enthusiastic interrogations about what it’s like. Or there’s the other response – the indignant “No, you don’t. You’re not swearing!”

If this happens I tell them that Amy Poehler’s character, in *Deuce Bigalow: Male Gigolo*, is a Hollywood misrepresentation to entertain a general audience. But it makes me hesitant to introduce myself and add “…and I have Tourette Syndrome!”

The trouble is, unless you’re spying on me for long periods of time, you probably won’t realise that I have “something”. That’s why attending the Careers Centre seminar with guest speaker Dr Robert Silberstein was so interesting.

Dr Silberstein is a patent attorney and a lawyer specialising in intellectual property at Allens Arthur Robinson. He is also a physician – though he currently doesn’t practice; and he is wheelchair-bound. The neuromuscular condition which affects him makes his limbs weak and the mobility in his joints poor. He can walk with the aid of callipers, but falling is an issue, so he uses his wheelchair instead.

Of his days as a medical student, when convincing people that he could achieve his MBBS was difficult, he told us, “I’ve had to deal with narrow-mindedness often.” That aside, it was the patients who were most at ease with him.

“They were sometimes inquisitive and always accepting. They seemed very receptive to the fact that I had obviously been on their side of the bed before. That was something that enabled me to get a real connection with them,” Silberstein said.

During his studies, he realised he wanted to discover more about its relationship to law and to achieve something significant in what he calls a “litigious society.” This led him to something that enabled me to get a real connection with them,

Silberstein said.

During his studies, he realised he wanted to discover more about its relationship to law and to achieve something significant in what he calls a “litigious society.” This led him to something significant in what he calls a “litigious society.” This led him to something significant in what he calls a “litigious society.” This led him to something significant in what he calls a “litigious society.” This led him to something significant in what he calls a “litigious society.” This led him to something significant in what he calls a “litigious society.”

Silberstein said.

Dr Silberstein now works in intellectual property and deals with patents on new medical technologies that assist people with impaired motor function. He has even had a hand in a few of his own inventions; an all-terrain wheelchair being his favourite.

“My disability has never been a big issue for me,” he said. “I have never felt it should impinge on what I want to do and where I want to go.”

Before going to meet a new client, he tells them of his need for wheelchair access; otherwise he meets clients in his own building. He does not get embarrassed about such things himself, though he admits it would be a fun social experiment to turn up without mentioning his need for ramps and lifts.

Making sure employers know your requirements is very important, he says. He loves his nifty pair of dedicated remotely-controlled lifts that take him directly to his office floor without the need to press buttons or swipe a security pass. Regardless of the equipment and provisions in his workplace, he makes sure to share any loads when asking for help from colleagues.

“I wouldn’t really want my physical assistance needs to weigh overly on any individual. If I did, my disability would become an issue... and it’s just not one. Although I may need help 40 or 50 times a day, I ask around. If I asked you to help me do one or two things a day, you’re not going to notice; if I ask you 20 times, then you are.”

When reflecting on his achievements, Dr Silberstein agrees that it has been challenging – even if he doesn’t say so directly.

“It’s really important for people not to allow their perceptions of potential limitations their disability may give them; and more importantly the perceptions other people may have about limitations their disability may give them to impact on their career choice. Down the track you might realise that you’re in a situation that you don’t want to be in and you’ve gone too far. I think living with regret of that nature would be a very difficult thing to do.”

As I left campus that night I thought about what the future holds for me and other students at the seminar. It is unrealistic to say that having any sort of disability is not an issue. For the individual who has one, no matter how subtle or obvious, it is ever-present. I get extraordinarily self-conscious when my Tourette Syndrome is acting up; often refusing to believe friends when they tell me I’m ever-present. I get extraordinarily self-conscious when my Tourette Syndrome is acting up; often refusing to believe friends when they tell me it’s less noticeable than in the past.

Now, however, just knowing that the University and workplace environments are conscious of such things is a real confidence-booster.
Taking back the light

Young, bright, left wing and first generation Oz, Tim Soutphommasane is the new face of Australian patriotism, writes Katrina O’Brien

Tim Soutphommasane is sipping double espresso looking over the vast playing fields of his alma mater, the University of Sydney, on a languorous sunny afternoon. The French-born, southwest Sydney-raised son of Lao parents has just returned after five years in England and is carefully considering what it means to be Australian.

“I have conversations all the time about Australianness,” he says. “And every time, someone says, ‘Look, I don’t see what the fuss is about. Being Australian is about loving sport, the beach and having a good time’. And I always say, ‘No, actually, it’s not’.”

Soutphommasane has spent much of his life considering the question of national identity. “I’ve had to negotiate [between] my own cultural distinctiveness [and] the idea of being an Australian,” says the 27-year-old. “During the 1990s, many wouldn’t have considered me to be Australian, and for a long time I had to ask myself whether I thought of myself as Australian. If we define it as cultural ancestry or heritage, then I don’t think I would qualify. But if we think of being Australian as subscribing to a set of [national] values, as belonging to a tradition, [and] aspiring to standards about how we should conduct our lives together, then I think I’m very Australian.”

Reclaiming patriotism

For five years Soutphommasane has looked deeply into the heart of nationhood. Last year he completed a doctorate on patriotism, citizenship and culture at Oxford University, which was followed by the scholar, who joined the Australian Labor Party at 15 and the speechwriting staff of former NSW premier Bob Carr at 21, releasing his first book, Reclaiming Patriotism: Nation-Building for Australian Progressives (Cambridge University Press).

It is a patriotic manifesto of sorts, targeted squarely at the left. It is time for progressives “to stand up for an Australian public culture and civic history,” argues Soutphommasane, and a moderate, “small l” liberal model of national pride.

His book comes as the nation catches its breath after more than a decade of conservative rule and a government that branded its own style of patriotism. Former Prime Minister John Howard’s 2001 election catchcry – “We will decide who comes to this country and the circumstances in which they come” – in many ways summed up the previous administration’s direction.

Justin Di Lollo, Soutphommasane’s mentor and former employer at the Labor-leaning political firm Hawker Britton says now is “a great time for a young leftie intellectual to come out with something that really challenges those of us that are a bit more rusted on in terms of the Howardesque realpolitik.

“And it’s creating some challenges,” he adds.

In Reclaiming Patriotism, Soutphommasane urges that the right has dictated the concept of patriotism for far too long, effectively shaming the left into silence. He contends many progressives saw Howard’s key policies – from introducing citizenship tests for new immigrants to the “South Pacific solution” for refugees – as a form of “dog whistling”, targeting messages to particular groups of voters that would, among the wider population, remain unheard.

“I have [had] a long, lingering frustration with the left-liberal response to Howard’s politics because they saw all indications of national solidarity as a form of dog whistling,” says Soutphommasane. “If you were to talk about citizenship, it was dog whistling; national values, dog whistling. Even the idea of [feeling] proud [about] being Australian was seen as dog whistling.”

He says many ran away from the concept of patriotism under the Howard government for fear it “would collapse into white Australian racism or cultural chauvinism”. The 2005 Cronulla “race riots” gave the left further reason to retreat.

“The Cronulla episode offered a vindication of liberal concern about patriotism,” he says. “The left vacated the field and allowed the right to claim ownership of national values. After that, patriotism became either a form of fascist narcissism – the idea of draping yourself in the flag, tattooing your flesh with the Southern Cross – or a neo-conservative patriotism, associated with a right-wing America that celebrated militarism.”

National identity

Cronulla, he contends, could have been an opportunity for the left to bring often-fraught issues of national identity and race into the open and back onto temperate ground. Instead, progressives remained silent. “It’s similar to what happened with the Tampa affair,” he says. “The left had no response.”

In Reclaiming Patriotism, Soutphommasane urges progressives to champion a positive patriotism – with all its symbols, including the flag – as its own. His model does not turn its back on Australia’s history – acknowledging the bad with the good – and it aims to build national solidarity through core values of mateship, fairness and egalitarianism. It thrives on unity, not divisiveness, or a sense of superiority. It also embraces some of the cornerstones of Howard’s patriotic emblems.

“National myths are important and Anzac can be a powerful metaphorical story for Australians,” he says. “It doesn’t have to be about whether your grandparents were there. My grandparents were in Laos on the banks of the Mekong when World War I was fought. In fact, they would have been excluded from Australia by
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the White Australia policy. But I still think Anzac can be a very powerful unifying myth.”

Soutphommasane’s notion of patriotism also demands a great deal from its citizens. “I don’t think civic responsibilities extend to just turning up to your local school on a Saturday every few years and voting,” he says. “They go further than that. They involve a tolerance of citizens’ preparedness to deliberate on questions of public concern and a readiness to make sacrifices for others.”

And while many would regard dual citizenship as one of the “wins” of multiculturalism – new immigrants equally aligned to their country of birth and their adopted one – Soutphommasane argues that true patriots need to be citizens of a single country.

In Reclaiming Patriotism, he cites the example of the 2006 bombing of Lebanon, where 25,000 Australians, many dual Lebanese-Australian citizens, awaited evacuation. Commentators at the time expressed concern that some were “bearing Australian passports not out of loyalty but out of convenience,” he writes. “People are fond of regarding the status of citizenship as conferring only rights but there is a flipside to it too,” he says. The responsibilities of Soutphommasane’s more engaging form of citizenship are “demanding for a citizen [even] when they belong to one community alone. When they belong to two, I wonder whether it becomes impossible.”

Serious citizenship

Soutphommasane himself had the chance to apply for French citizenship at 18, but opted not to. “I like to think I practise what I preach.”

Soutphommasane was born in 1982 in Montpellier, the only son of mother Chanthavone and father Thinh. His medical student parents had fled Laos, then part of French Indochina, in 1975 following the Communist Pathet Lao takeover. Although his mother’s first language was French and she had relatives in France, his parents, who today both work as registered nurses in the same western Sydney hospital, “never really felt that they could belong [to] French society,” says Soutphommasane. The family migrated to Australia in 1985 and within three years were naturalised. The Soutphommasanes, says their son, took their citizenship very seriously. “I was taught very early that I was an Australian citizen,” says Soutphommasane, who grew up in Canley Vale and Bonnyrigg Heights and attended a primary school where “90 per cent of students came from Asian-speaking backgrounds.”

The self-confessed perfectionist went on to the selective Hurststone Agricultural High School – “I was always very bookish . . . a model immigrant child”. It was around this time, as “the only Asian kid at school”, that his politicisation became practical.

Political awakening

John Howard’s 1988 statement expressing concern about the rate of Asian immigration was an early political awakening. “The sting my parents felt from Howard’s comments was all very real,” he writes in Reclaiming Patriotism. He joined the Mount Pritchard branch of the ALP.

Soutphommasane went on to study government and international relations on a scholarship at the University, earning a first class honours Economics degree. While there, he worked as a junior associate at Hawker Britton. The company’s general manager and director Justin Di Lollo recalls “a deeply impressive young man who was clearly ahead of his time.” At 20, Soutphommasane had the “social and interpersonal skills and scholastic aptitude of somebody five to 10 years his senior,” Di Lollo says.

At just 21, the high achiever joined Bob Carr’s speechwriting staff. In 2004, he moved to Oxford and in 2006 earned a Master of Philosophy degree, graduating with distinction, before studying for his doctorate. While there, the keen cricketer edited the Oxonian Review of Books, wrote for The Guardian and Financial Times and captained the First XI for Kim Beazley’s old college, Balliol.

“We never managed to win a trophy while I was there,” Soutphommasane rue.

After watching the Cronulla riots unfold with a “sense of shame, a sense of indignation,” Soutphommasane felt compelled to return to Australia to work for change. In 2007, he joined Kevin Rudd’s prime ministerial campaign office as a “lowly” researcher officer.

“For some, [Cronulla] amounted to a good excuse to stay away from Australia,” he says. “For me, it really meant that I had to come back and do my part.”

Not content to revel in the left’s fallback position of “indulgent despair”, Soutphommasane is determined to present a “positive vision” and feels optimistic about the future of nationhood and the Australian left.

“Julia Gillard’s rise to the prime ministership creates an opportunity for Labor. If it wins a second term at this year’s election, Labor will have a chance to offer a renewed nation-building program in government. But the real challenge is for progressives to build a reform agenda supported by a vision of citizenship,” Soutphommasane says.

For now, Soutphommasane is doing his bit. He recently joined Monash University’s National Centre for Australian Studies as a research fellow, is a senior project leader at the Sydney-based Per Capita think tank and writes a weekly column on political philosophy for The Weekend Australian.

Multicultural patriotism

Earlier this year, he was invited by to give a keynote speech as part of the Alfred Deakin Lectures in Melbourne, where he debated philosopher Peter Singer on patriotic ethics and climate change. He is also co-editing a book, All That’s Left: Ideas for a Progressive Australia, which will be published later this year.

“When people think of patriotism, they think of Cronulla, they think of Southern Cross tatts, of Australian flags draped over your shoulder,” he says. “But there is another patriotism out there being lived by many Australians on a day-to-day basis: a multicultural patriotism that is reality in contemporary Australia [and] that hasn’t always been conveyed in public debate.” And that is why he has returned to his country of choice.

“I wanted to come back and be a patriotic agent, for want of a better phrase,” he says. “This is where home is and this is where I want to contribute over the long term.”
A
fter five days on the road and 2000 kilometres on the clock, the Simpson Desert finally stretches before us. We are on the land of the Wangkamadla people and I am riding with Mark Lithgow, Reserve Manager for Bush Heritage’s Cravens Peak property, when the first dune appears.

“Hold on tight,” he says. We are halfway across a kilometre-wide swale. He puts his foot down and we speed towards the rising wave of red. For a moment I think we won’t make it, but we nudge over the paper-thin crest to see an endless vista of red dunes, like a perfectly formed set of waves rolling towards an unknown shore. We are in the lead and two more University Hiluxes follow in close succession. We’ve made it, but the roller-coaster ride into main camp is only just beginning.

Ecology Professor, Institute of Wildlife Research Director and founder of the Desert Ecology Research Group (DERG), Chris Dickman says, “Once you get red sand under your skin it pulls you back irresistibly. You don’t have much say about it.”

When Dr Glenda Wardle, Botanist, Senior Lecturer and fellow DERG leader, first came to the University she thought Dickman “must be mad to work in the desert”. The prospect of spending three weeks sleeping on the ground, enduring flies and 40C+ daytime temperatures did not fill her with enthusiasm. But after just one April day in 1998, she knew she would be back.

“I don’t ever conceive of a time that I couldn’t be returning, which makes me think there must be something magnetic about the desert,” Wardle says.

But it’s more than the sand and sky that draws the DERG back to the Simpson Desert three to four times a year. It is a place where the depth and processes of biodiversity continues to intrigue and surprise scientists with each visit.

When Dickman first set out in 1990, he thought they’d know all they could about biodiversity in Australia’s arid dry-zone in five or six years. That was 20 years ago. After hundreds of collective visits, the head scratching continues. “On every trip we see something we haven’t seen before,” says Dickman.

Bobby Tamayo (BSc ’95), Operations Manager for the DERG and a veteran of 50 desert expeditions, knows how important their work is. “It has become clear,” he says, “that learning and understanding even more about the arid zones, which make up 70 per cent of Australia, will be vital to the future of Australia.”

While the Simpson Desert is only one part of the continent’s vast arid zone, it covers more than 17 million hectares of central Australia. The parallel dunes, running southeast to northwest, extend for up to 200kms, aligned with the dominant wind direction when they were formed during the Pleistocene epoch, about 80,000 years ago. Like the still water between waves, the swales lie between the shifting masses of red – either as wind-polished gibber pebbles or mineral encrusted clay pans.

DERG works mainly within Queensland’s Diamantina Shire channel country area on Bush Heritage Australia’s Ethabuka and Cravens Peak reserves as well as the Carlo and Tobermorie cattle stations in the Northern Territory.

For Dickman, the dunes and swales are an environment where the diversity of life is “in your face.”

Desert of

Gemma Deavin reports on a unique
“There’s a richness that hasn’t been greatly affected by human activity,” he says.

Four-time volunteer, David Nelson (BSc Adv (Hons) ’08), refers to a common misconception about life in the desert. “So many people think there aren’t a lot of animals out here,” he says. “But really, the desert is home to so many amazing creatures and plants.”

And as 95 per cent of desert mammals are nocturnal, it’s when the sun sets that life really gets going.

“You only need to walk along the top of a dune to see the footprints of a dozen species that have been active the night before,” says Nelson.

You may not think it, looking across the quiet landscape, but in the Simpson Desert there are 17 small mammal, more than 150 bird, four types of frog and 54 reptile species. In fact it is home to the most diverse reptile population of any arid zone in the world. It’s also the animals themselves, from the Hairy-footed Dunnart to the Water-holding frog – emerging with the rain – that keeps the excitement high during these trips. The Mulgara, a small marsupial with a tail sporting a distinctive crest of short black hairs, seems to be on everyone’s “favourite” list.

“Mulgars are little packets of ferocity,” says George Madani (MA AppSc ’06), wildlife ecologist and six-time desert returnee. “They’re full of spunk and attitude and their size belies their strength.”

But most impressive is the animals’ ability to adapt: an inhospitable environment such as the Simpson Desert has its challenges. For four-time volunteer, Henry Cook (BSc ’05 MA (AppSc) ’06) the Rufous Crowned Emu Wren, one of Australia’s smallest birds, wins the resilience prize.

“They’re so improbable; they only weigh three or four grams. They’ve got little wings that are hopeless for dispersal so they hop between spinifex clumps. But they still persist.

“Without burrows or the ability to store a lot of fat they have learned to thermo-regulate in extreme climatic conditions, from near zero to 50 degrees,” says Cook.

Says DERG Research Assistant and 29-time returnee, Aaron Greenville (BSc Biology (Hons) ’01), “I have experienced flooding rains and dry dust storms. This has highlighted to me how amazing the environment of arid Australia is and how reptiles, mammals, birds and plants cope under what we would consider extreme circumstances.”

For Tamayo the most thrilling part of the desert is having a front row seat. “We get to see some of Australia’s most interesting wildlife in conditions that not many other people will experience,” he says.
The Simpson Desert is an ancient landscape, one with relatively few signs of human presence. This, says Wardle, is what allows scientists to look at how an ecological system works in total.

“I hope to live long enough to complete the picture but the more questions answered by the combined research team, the more we’re bringing in new blood and exciting them about a range of more complicated questions,” she says.

This “new blood” represents the many Honours and Doctoral students – past and present – who have spent time in the desert helping unlock its mysteries. Nicole Hills (BSc (Hons) ’08), a PhD student looking at the complex predator-prey interactions of goannas and small vertebrates in arid Australia, is one of them. She fell in love with the desert after one trip. “It’s unique and I enjoy pushing myself and working with animals that haven’t had a lot of research done on them.”

Tony Popic (BSc (Hons) ’08), another PhD student, is working with Wardle, “When you start doing the really long term studies you have a large data set and are in a better position to answer questions and know how systems work,” he says. And according to Wardle, “the DERG’s is among the longest and most comprehensive arid zone research projects in Australia.”

Since he first went on a DERG trip in 2004, Madani puts down learning so much about the arid zone to good-natured teachers.

“They are interested, excited and enjoy what they do so they want to share it with other people,” he says. He is
referring principally to Dickman and Wardle, the desert gurus, who both have troupes of loyal followers.

Having joined in with desert studies 12 years ago Wardle says she has enhanced but not changed what Dickman first started. “I think I would give credit to Chris’s personality,” she says. “He is definitely key and pivotal to the successes of this desert program.”

One of the first PhD students to work with Dickman in the desert was Martin Predavec (BSc (Hons) ’91 PhD ’94) who, from 1991, clocked up 20 desert visits. Now an ecologist for an environmental consultancy, he says Dickman’s love for science is infectious. “He is a true scholar and gentleman in every sense of the word,” Predavec says. “He is what drew me into doing work on mammals in the desert.”

Errol Nye (PhD ’04) also completed his PhD at the University under Dickman and attributes much of what he has achieved professionally to Dickman’s supervision, mentoring and friendship. “He is a truly great man among men,” Nye says.

Tamayo, another “desert guru”, who has worked closely with Dickman for years, says, “He’s like the Pied Piper of ecologists. So many people just want to follow him and do as he does because he’s such a good mentor for not only myself but a lot of other people.”

It’s not only biology students who are led into the desert, there are also hundreds of volunteers who’ve been infected with the red sand syndrome.

“There is an intimate interdependence among people. You negotiate what you’re going to cook each day, where you’re going to get firewood and who is going to fetch the water,” says Wardle. And more than anything, there’s time. “Just being able to look into things is a pleasure for an ecologist,” she says.

“I hope to live long enough to complete the picture...”
From the 7th to the 16th centuries the Indochina region witnessed the rise and fall of remarkable civilisations. We are proud to present a unique 15-day tour which includes extended visits to three UNESCO world-heritage sites: Sukhothai, Luang Prabang and Angkor. This has been carefully balanced with the opportunity to enjoy the lush landscape and to cruise the Mekong, the 'mother of all rivers'.

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Dr Milton Osborne

is an internationally-recognised expert on the Mekong River basin. He has over five decades of experience working, travelling and writing about the region. He has published numerous books on the Mekong and led several tours there. He is a visiting fellow of the Lowy Institute.

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several capable cooks among us. The fresh veggies are gone in the first week but we eat stir-fries, pastas and curries. One night, there’s even chocolate pudding, made craftily by Nic Hills.

Without running water, toilet facilities or electricity, the desert offers everyone a chance to, literally, get back to nature. On arrival, we sit down to an informal “desert orientation”, covering hydration, work schedules and the all-important “poo dune” etiquette.

“Tie the pink flagging tape up, take a shovel, head on over and dig a good hole,” says Madani. “Burn everything.”

There is a complete disconnect from the outside world but for two hours of satellite phone connection in the evening. This simple way of life is a welcome change.

“There’s a sense of relief when you get out there,” says Cook. “Your phone stops working, you don’t have to answer emails and what we do is relatively simple.” For researchers and volunteers who go regularly, the desert, or “five million star hotel”, becomes a second home.

Wardle agrees. “If you go four times a year for three weeks you’ve actually lived three months of that year, in the desert.” Looked at this way, over 20 years, Chris Dickman has spent roughly five years on the sand.

Their current work is focused on two Australian Research Council (ARC) funded projects. The first, “The renaissance predator: complex predator-prey interactions and vertebrate diversity in arid Australia”, investigates the effects of predators like the Red fox and Sand goannas on the broader prey community in arid Australia. The second, “Dynamic networks in a patchy landscape: will species interactions adjust to increased climatic extremes?” seeks to probe and extend current theory about how ecological systems, including plant-pollinator interactions, respond to extreme events, and provide the first insights into the mechanisms that drive change.

For these projects, Nature could not have organised a better weather event than the 2010 February/March inundation of Western Queensland. In a good year the Desert can expect around 150mm of rain. On March 1, more than 185mm fell on Bedourie, roughly 160kms from the main research site. The Bureau of Meteorology estimates that during the 10-day period ending March 3, 403,000 gigalitres of rain fell on the Northern Territory and Queensland. And that was not the last of it. The 2010 rains have been saturating enough to bring on what the scientists call a “boom period”. Wardle expects the germination of the annual plants from the seed banks and an explosive flowering of perennial trees and shrubs. But it’s not just the plants that benefit from the usually dry land’s inundation. “Six months from now we’ll expect the productivity of plant resources to flow into the animals.”

In 2010, a year of rain, it is also a year for bridging communication gaps between scientists and local community. While the DERG has built relationships with many of the Bedourie townpeople, explanations of their research have never extended beyond a chat over a beer at the pub. On July 1, however, the DERG arrived in Bedourie, after three weeks in the desert, to present an evening to share what it is they actually do in the desert. This initiative forms part of the Iconic Landscapes Study, funded by the Institute of Sustainable Solutions, aiming to connect scientific research with communities.

On my last day, I see a flock of dancing Brolgas. They leap into the air, bouncing as if on a trampoline; their wings spread wide. Within seconds, they are a gliding flock of silver in the sky. After 10 days on the road and in the desert, I’m also about to fly home. The others will drive back to Sydney in a week.

It’s 3pm. I’m sitting at the Simpson Desert Oasis bar talking to Gary, Bedourie’s carpenter. I gabble about my experience and ask him what he thinks of the desert. He says the thing he likes most about being in Bedourie is the people. “It’s about community.” It strikes me then that I’ve only scraped the surface of what makes this part of the world so special. Then I’m in the big sky of big sky country and can see the dunes laid across the land we charged over in 4WD convoy. From the air, the fluidity of the channel country and the way it bleeds colours, textures and shapes resembles an ever-changing abstract canvas. It reminds me of the words Chris Dickman spontaneously recited when I asked him about the desert landscape months before: “And the sun sank again on the grand Australian bush – the nurse and tutor of eccentric minds, the home of the weird, and of much that is different from things in other lands.” Henry Lawson had it right in The Bush Undertaker. 

SAM July 2010

Gemma Deavin (BA (Media&Comm ’09) is the Iconic Landscapes Study’s project officer and a freelance journalist.
We have a professed cultural aversion to full-scale praise. I say professed because, of course, we all love being praised. But propriety sets a limit, and only a limited number of cultural contexts condone a lengthy public meditation on the virtues of our peers (e.g., a retirement speech, a eulogy, an introduction to a guest speaker). There is also an expectation that the laudand (the one being praised) cut short or undercut the sentiments expressed in their praise (“Don’t believe a word”). Praise can be a tricky thing. Too lengthy an encomium can reflect poorly on both the speaker and his subject.

It was not quite so in antiquity. Formally constructed praise was an art form, and comprised part of the third main division of rhetoric; this was called epideictic, or demonstrative oratory. The other two were forensic oratory (treating things that were) and deliberative oratory (treating things that will be). Demonstrative oratory was all about showing the speaker’s skill. Praise was in more practical terms the bread and butter of many an inventive poet and orator. The lyric poet Pindar (born c. 518 BC), for instance, travelled around the Mediterranean from regime to autocratic regime, extolling the virtues of his patrons and inventing divine genealogies for newly-installed tyrants, some of whom had barely had time to clean up after their coups. The ancients were naturally alive both to this transformative power of praise – Pindar’s knack of turning small beer into champagne – and its utility for the silver-tongued. Consider Artotrogus, a sycophant from Plautus’ (born trad. 254 BC) comedy, *Miles Gloriosus* (*The Braggart Soldier*). In the middle of lavishly extolling the...
But Pliny’s praise is ultimately important, both because by Pliny’s day every reasonable criterion for praising a head of state had been explored; and Pliny moreover knew that he was caught in an insoluble rhetorical problem, because he couldn’t fully acknowledge the insincerity of past praise without casting doubt on his present words. We see some of this conundrum when he tries to prevent his audience from interpreting his praise as ironic: “There is no danger now that if I call him ‘down to earth’ he will think I mean ‘arrogant’, or if I call him ‘financially conservative’ he will think I mean ‘ruinously extravagant’, or if I call him ‘forgiving’ he will think I mean ‘cruel’.”

In fact there was every danger (and hence the disclaimer). Roman audiences had long been trained under the empire to sniff out the faintest whiff of irony in praise, and there was, by Pliny’s day, no cordonning off a tribute from its own potential to be read as an ironic allusion to an emperor’s worst traits. Clearly, previous emperors had been satirised through extravagant praise, accompanied by a knowing glance to a select audience that knew better.

In publishing his speech in praise of Trajan, Pliny achieved for himself a strange version of immortality: he created a new literary genre out of the standard protocols of the Roman senate. He was remembered in late antiquity as the father of Latin prose panegyric, a genre which flourished in the third and fourth centuries and exerted considerable impact upon subsequent court cultures, such as those in 17th century England and France (the Panegyricus was, for example, widely disseminated, translated, and read at the court of Louis XIV). Pliny was himself forever associated with the extravagant praise he offered ‘Trajan in 100 AD and was at the same time instrumental in defining an emperor who has been lauded in his own, Plinian, terms ever since. SAM
The grounds of Sydney University during the inter-war period were described by former student Sir Norman Cowper as “like goat walks or builders’ yards… made worse by neglect or mistreatment”. It was a time when few were concerned about urban design yet it was to be the highpoint in the landscaping of the University. Remarkably, the transformation came about almost by chance.

Eben Gowrie Waterhouse (BA (Hons) ’01), who lectured in French at Sydney Teachers College, was keenly interested in the aesthetics of public and domestic design. After taking the Chair of German at Sydney University in 1925 he showed great interest in the development of the University grounds.

He had built a house – Eryldene – at Gordon in 1913 with the visionary architect William Hardy Wilson. Waterhouse’s feeling for scale, harmony and form was to result in “the most exquisite place in the country” according to Peter Watts, former director of the Historic Houses Trust. Although self taught as a landscaper he was a man of refinement and curiosity, yet above all, he possessed an unerring eye for creating superb spaces.

Waterhouse’s design talents came to the attention of the University when he was asked to care for the inner garden or Pleasaunce at the University Union when someone went on leave. He reconstructed the garden, putting form into a previously unconnected collection of plants. The Vice-Chancellor, Professor Mungo MacCallum, noticed his success and asked him to lay out a garden in the Vice-Chancellor’s courtyard. Years later, after the garden had matured, Gwen Meredith writer of the long running radio serial, Blue Hills, wrote in the Sydney Morning Herald, “The Vice-Chancellor’s Court is now worthy of the title. It reminded me of a little secret garden tucked away behind high walls… It is a very charming and inviting place. It makes one forget for a moment that one is in the heart of a busy city.”

Sir Norman Cowper felt the University authorities were uneasy about turning an amateur loose on the grounds but nevertheless, whenever money was available, Waterhouse was given free reign. Often he would move grown trees donated by friends into the grounds. His aim was to bring order and beauty to the University where before there had been ugliness. His view was that the University had a duty to the younger generation to make it aware of the design possibilities in a large institution.
Students were not always responsive to his attempts to educate them. Three times he planted a young jacaranda tree in the Quadrangle only to have it removed by exuberant students. He finally overcame the problem by planting and staking down a large tree and this survives today.

One who remembers Waterhouse’s work was Richard Clough, a student who went on to be Professor of Landscape Design at the University of New South Wales. He recalls, “I observed him at work and that really was the high point in the landscaping of Sydney University. While he was able to use his influence and see that the plants were shaped and controlled in the way that his taste dictated, those parts of the University were very good. The personal touch was there and in moving from the main quadrangle, into the Vice Chancellor’s quad, into Science Road, through the Union, into the Pleasaunce is much the same as walking through the garden at Eryldene.”

In 1931 he was invited to design the area in front of the McMaster Laboratory. A record of his proposal shows his thoughtful approach and his concern to achieve harmony and refinement. The first paragraph sets the tone:

“The building presents a simple façade in red brick of pleasing colour on a foundation of creamy yellow sandstone. The lay-out envisaged preserves this simplicity and uses this colour in association with pleasant textures of green.”

He also designed a walkway in adjacent Victoria Park leading up to the University, a project which added interest and form to the park but which sadly no longer exists. In addition he replanned the garden at nearby Royal Prince Alfred Hospital as well as undertaking design work at the University of New England.

His talents were rewarded when he won a Carnegie Scholarship to study the layout of university campuses in America. He had been travelling in Europe in 1934 where, through his connections to the Goethe Institute and the Dante Alighieri Society in Sydney, he met Mussolini in Rome and Hitler in Berlin, leaving him uneasy about the future. The scholarship enabled him to return home through America where he visited 29 educational institutions.

Waterhouse was influential well beyond the University. With figures such as Professor Leslie Wilkinson, architect John Moore and other forward thinkers of the day, he played a key role in changing the fussiness that pervaded house and garden design in Sydney. Eryldene became a lively centre for discussion where artists, architects, designers and photographers met.

His horticultural expertise meant he was regularly consulted by many people and organisations among whom was the Governor’s wife Lady Hore-Ruthven. When Sir Alexander became Governor-General, Professor Waterhouse spent a weekend at Yarralumla pottering in the garden with Lady Hore-Ruthven, pruning and tending the plants.

On his retirement from the University in 1945 his life was full of activity. He was a Trustee of the Art Gallery of New South Wales; he founded Camellia Grove Nursery at St Ives; in 1962 he was made an OBE and in 1975 a CMG. At 80 he began the study of Japanese.

A great achievement was his research into the camellia and through his efforts its return to popularity in Australia. He founded the Australian and New Zealand Camellia Research Society and was a long time member of the International Camellia Society, even travelling to London to preside at a board meeting at the age of 94.

He summed up his devotion to beauty in his surroundings saying, “I have not studied botany, have taken no course in landscape design but have had always sensitivity to beauty and form about me”.

Professor Waterhouse’s sensitivity to his surroundings can be seen at his camellia garden at Eryldene. Now owned by the Eryldene Trust, the garden includes his garden study, an oriental tea house, a temple and a charming pigeon house, all designed by William Hardy Wilson. Together with the house, the property is the embodiment of all that Professor Waterhouse believed was important in design.

Eryldene is open regularly through the year. Details can be found at www.eryldene.org.au
Where are you in life?
I live with my partner Joanne (Jo) and our son Andre who was born on my birthday in August last year. The birth of Andre has been the most wonderful thing. I really enjoyed being pregnant and apart from the lack of sleep I am loving being a mother. I’d wanted to have a child for a long time but I decided to get my studies out of the way first. Jo also studied at Sydney Uni, completing a Bachelor of Arts. She now supports us financially, working at the University in administration and she also writes an investing blog – investinginspiration.com; that’s her passion. We’ve been together for eight years.

What medium do you specialise in?
I started off as a painter but I am also a photographer and I make video and sound art. My main area of focus is using paint as a sculptural medium. I set up conditions whereby the artworks create themselves. In 1893 the French writer, Alfred Jarry, invented a new science called Pataphysics – a theory of the workings of the universe focusing on its accidental phenomena. My art is created within the pataphysical tradition: emphasising the role that chance plays in the production of art. The same process is used for each one, though the results are always different.

How did the 2005 Frank Packer Bursary help you when you were studying?
My artwork is experimental in nature. At times it’s akin to scientific experimentation. I had been making a major work for my Honours year and after investing quite a bit of money in materials, it didn’t work out as I had intended. I was quite desperate with less than a month to go before the graduation exhibition. I went to financial services and due to my good academic record I was awarded the Frank Packer Bursary. I am eternally grateful as I was able to invest the money into new materials and create an artwork for the show using experimental methods that worked.

How did you feel when you found out that you were the recipient of the 2006-7 University Post-Graduate Award?
It was an honour to be acknowledged by the University.

What were your expectations when you graduated?
My goal was to be a full-time artist. I am not quite there yet but working on it. My solo exhibition at Iain Dawson Gallery in 2008 was my first exhibition in a commercial gallery. The timing however was a bit unfortunate as it was the week the GFC shook the globe and buying art was the last thing on people’s minds.

What do you like about being an artist?
It is endlessly satisfying to create. It is quite an amazing experience to tap into the creative energy of the universe. I am particularly fascinated by universal processes and through my art I make sense of the world around me. My ultimate goal is to be represented by galleries both here and overseas.

What does your family do for recreation?
We love to go bushwalking in national parks. Astronomy is another big passion of mine.

What does the future hold for your family?
Andre is still very young and dependent on me so there is not a lot of time at the moment to devote to my work. Nothing can quite prepare you for the sleepless nights with a newborn. I feel like I’m just coming up for air now and that everything is starting to settle down. Jo is very supportive of my art and since having Andre I’ve decided that I’d like to get back into painting with acrylics. I take inspiration from Del Kathryn Barton, the Archibald Prize winner who has three young children. I am a firm believer in “where there’s a will there’s a way”.

Angela with Andre and Jo. Above: works from the Pataphysical series
Barbecues during orientation week, college informals and long celebrations after completing exams are some memorable moments from Peter Boulden’s days at University but his most resonant memory was entering the Great Hall – for the first time – when he received his degree in Civil Engineering back in 1993.

Choosing to study at Sydney was a natural choice for Boulden. “It seemed to be a more academically focused course,” he says. He agrees that the Uni’s prestige and good reputation was also an attraction for him.

Now 39, Boulden is working for AECOM – a global provider of professional, technical and management support services – as an Associate Director (Rail).

Highlights of his career so far include contributing to large infrastructure projects “some of which I actually use,” he says. These include the Eastern Distributor and the North Sydney Station Upgrade in Sydney.

Prior to working for AECOM, Boulden and his wife Jennifer spent two years working in the United Kingdom. Boulden believes that working overseas benefited his career enormously. “It gave me exposure to a different working environment and culture and it seemed that the engineers in the UK were much more focused on the technical challenges of job. I learnt a lot from them.”

This year has been a big one for the Boulden family. Peter’s wife Jennifer gave birth to their third child a daughter, Elisabeth Rose, in February. They also have two other children: Hugo (5) and Abby (3).

Managing the demands of work and three young children can be problematic – Elisabeth had difficulty settling when she first came home from hospital, which meant many sleepless nights - but Boulden is upbeat about day-to-day life.

“With a very supportive and hard working wife we are able to attend to most daily challenges. It helps to have nearby family, friends and church to provide a safety valve of support and guidance. We had to call upon our extended family to help us with getting Hugo to and from school when Jen came home from hospital with Elisabeth and I went back to work,” he says.

A much-debated topic for the family has been the question of Hugo starting school this year. Sending boys to school “early” can be a divisive issue and Hugo is considered young because he only turned five in April this year. After much discussion with family and friends they decided to send him.

“The opinions of others were heard but not necessarily followed,” Boulden explains. “Principally it was our own intuition – Jen is a primary teacher and I went to school at 4½ also. The recommendation from his preschool teachers was that he would not gain much from another year at preschool. Hugo has a very logical, precise and process-driven thinking pattern and he was already reading and writing.” Boulden is hopeful that Hugo will steadily build confidence to be able to read and write and to “form friendships that he can carry through to year 6.”

When asked about the possibility of part-time work in order to be more involved with the operational demands of running the family, Boulden says it is something he has not considered.

“It would be impossible to work part-time in the job that I have. I need to be available to my clients from my office during the day and after hours if necessary,” he explains. “The possibility of Jen returning to work in the short-term is not likely but in the medium to long term she will go back to teaching - probably part-time. The hours are generally family-friendly and it means she’s home in the school holidays.”

Boulden makes exercise a priority. He’s a member of a local cricket club and he’s regularly out in the backyard kicking a soccer ball around with Hugo. “While life is hectic,” he smiles, “we find that having a regular routine helps to stay sane and maximises family time – the most precious commodity.”

Peter with Abby and Hugo

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By gizmo

The prize is a copy of Dr Ken Woolley's splendid *Reviewing the Performance – The Design of the Sydney Opera House*; reviewed on page 34. Warmest thanks to Watermark Press for their generosity.

**CONGRATULATIONS!**

First correct entry out of SAM’s hat for the March Prize crossword is Jean V Leyendekkers (DSc '90) of Caringbah NSW.

Honourable mentions to: Caitland Baker (BA ‘06) Greymouth NZ; Anne Bryant [Douglas] (BA ’74) Artarmon NSW; Jo Cox [Clarke] (BE ‘67 MBBS ’78) Atticus Cox (BA [Hons]’06) Cheltenham NSW; John Ford (BSc Hons ’93) Leeming WA; Dinah Hales (BSc ’65) Beecroft NSW; Hilary Hayes (BA ’55) Warners Bay NSW; Peter Macdonald (BSc [Hons] ’64 MSc ’65) Gentilino Switzerland; Jerry Perkins (BPharm ’79) Seaford NSW; John Samios (LLB ’70) Coffs Harbour NSW; Helen Somerville (BA ’59) Wahroonga NSW; David Standen AM (BArch ’52) Kelmscott WA; David Turner (BArch ’71 MDesSc ’97) Paddington NSW.

SAM MARCH SOLUTION

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Answers in next issue of SAM, send your entries to The Editor
Amazon woman

Zoë Tryon (BA ’05) is saving the rainforest, one Toxi Tour at a time. By Lauren Smelcher

In April 2010, when British Petroleum’s Deepwater Horizon oil platform exploded off the coast of Mexico, the world sat up and took notice. In 1989, when the Exxon Valdez spilled 40.9 million litres of oil in Alaska, we watched in horror as Prince William Sound was polluted. Yet few know that in 1964, Texaco (now Chevron) began extracting oil in Ecuador and, on withdrawing 20 years later, left behind a gargantuan toxic mess. And few know that a battle to remedy its consequences is still being fought in the courts – and on the ground in Ecuador – and Zoë Tryon is in the thick of it.

The Hon Zoë Tryon (her mother was the late Lady Dale Tryon of Melbourne and the UK) studied anthropology at the University and, after graduating, she was invited to San Francisco for an environmental sustainability conference, led by influential US fundraiser and environmental activist, Lynne Twist. Twist runs Pachamama Alliance, an organisation dedicated to preserving the Amazonian rainforest by empowering its traditional custodians.

Going back was not simply about anthropology, however. It’s about Big Oil. In Ecuador, the Achuar and their land have been systematically poisoned by toxic oil spills over the past 40 years and, in 1993, a class action suit was filed against Texaco by 30,000 Ecuadorians. (Chevron inherited the case in 2001, when it merged with Texaco.) The plaintiffs, counselled by lawyer Pablo Fajardo, allege that 18 billion gallons – nearly 70 billion litres – of poisonous water has been dumped into the marshes and rivers of Ecuador. The environmental impact is colossal, but the repercussions to health are even worse.

Tryon says that seeing the devastation of the world’s greatest rainforest is reason enough for Chevron to be held accountable, but adds, “Nothing can really prepare you for the emotional impact. Seeing the physical impact on the environment is challenging enough, one can feel so hopeless and impotent in the face of such devastation – the contamination is in the ground water, earth, rivers, animals, people, everywhere. But it is the personal stories of those living with the effects of contamination that are the most heartbreaking and harrowing – mothers who have had miscarriage after miscarriage, only to have children die as a result of bathing in and drinking contaminated water.”

After working with Amazon Watch – with indigenous people across the Amazon – and for which she is now an ambassador, Tryon launched Toxi Tours three years ago. On each tour, Tryon leads a group of filmmakers, photographers, journalists and socially and environmentally aware “names” – including Daryl Hannah, Trudie Styler, Bianca Jagger, Caroline Kennedy and James Cameron – to see for themselves the true extent of the devastation on a journey that charts the lawsuit against Chevron. There are visits to the lawyers who work on the case, and to the courthouse where the battle has been waged. Most importantly, they visit some of the 953 open, unlined pits of toxic waste and crude oil. Chevron built these
Polluted water is an unavoidable fact of Achuar life; centre: leaking oil and drainage pipes tower over the villagers; below: soil pits continue to leak and pollute 40 years on; Tryon with lawyer Pablo Fajardo and the documents relating to the 17-year lawsuit treatment, let alone treatment for cancers."

The lawsuit against Chevron – now in its 17th year – is finally drawing to a close. In 2008, a court-appointed independent expert recommended, in a 4000-page report, that Chevron pay up to $US27 billion in damages. The court is not required to follow the expert’s advice. The case has been dragged out for so long that each new judge who takes over has about two years’ reading to do before he or she can begin. Still, Tryon is confident that there will be a judgement in the coming months, and that ‘Toxi Tours has helped people understand Chevron’s accountability.

“This is the biggest environmental lawsuit in history, so it is incredibly important, if only to warn other multinational corporations that violating human rights and destroying the environment is unacceptable and that unless they operate with high environmental standards they will pay for it dearly.”

Meanwhile, Tryon is focussed not merely on publicising the problems Ecuadorians face at the hands of Chevron, but also on reminding people why these places and people are worth fighting for.

“I remember the Australian Aboriginal leader Lilia Watson saying, ‘If you have come to help me, you are wasting your time. But if you have come because your liberation is bound up with mine, then let us work together.’ We in the modern world have a great deal to learn about life, each other and how to treat our planet from people whose worldview is entirely informed by the environments in which they live.”

For more information:
www.chevrontoxico.com
REVIEWING THE PERFORMANCE: THE DESIGN OF THE SYDNEY OPERA HOUSE

Ken Woolley
The Watermark Press, $60

Country-NSW based Watermark Press is to be congratulated on a book they correctly describe as “probably the most important book ever written about the Sydney Opera House.”

The author is one of Sydney’s most distinguished architectural alumni and one who has made a significant mark on the built landscape as a thinker and maker of buildings. His interest in the House is profound and he approaches it, in this book, from the inside out in terms of function and form.

The highlight of the recent ceremony in the Great Hall where Woolley was awarded an honorary doctorate ceremony was the speech* he made in which he observed, inter alia, “The great irony is that the foundation philosophy of modern architecture albeit rarely achieved, simplistic and probably impossible was that form follows function. That is not to argue for functional determinism, but it is incontestable that a building should perform the activity for which it is intended.” He wasn’t referring to the House at that moment, but he could have been.

The recent NSW government announcement of $152m funding for “improvements” to the House is a bitter-sweet pill to swallow for anyone familiar with the building and with Dr Woolley’s views on it. His proposal, first seen in 2009, for a dedicated and fully functioning opera theatre, adjacent to the current building, would have been a truly visionary way to spend $152m (as a down payment on the final cost). Unfortunately, modern state governments are not known for their Joe Cahills and the band-aid solution will prevail.

To fully understand why so many books have been written about the House and why it fascinates and charms successive generations, despite its cock-eyed malfunctions: Reviewing the Performance is illuminating, peppered as it is with Max Dupain’s sublime photographs and Woolley’s own drawings.

(*The full text of Dr Woolley’s speech is available on the SAM website.)

THE UNKNOWN NATION – AUSTRALIA AFTER EMPIRE

James Curran & Stuart Ward
Melbourne University Press
$39.99

While Australia snuggled up to the sheep’s back and basked in the benign sunshine as a child of Empire, the ground of its identity were shifting. The winds of change had blown through Africa and after initial indignation, Britain began taking back its flag and saluting new ones with undignified haste. And still Australia dreamed of “home”.

This book, recently launched by well known republican Malcolm Turnbull (BA ’77 LLB ’78), examines Australia’s curious position, post-Empire, as it obstinately clung to the hem of Mama’s gown while she tried, politely, to shake it off and walk away.

The dilemma for Australia’s blurred identity continues and Curran (Senior Lecturer in History at the University and 2010 Fulbright Scholar) and Ward document and examine the conundrum of how we got here from there – or not – and why the aging Anglo-Australian rump is so reluctant to grow up.

Says Curran: “The task of remodeling the national image touched every aspect of Australian life where identifiably British ideas, habits and symbols – from foreign relations to the national anthem – had grown obsolete. But how to celebrate Australia’s past achievements and future aspirations became a source of public controversy as community leaders struggled to find the appropriate language and rhetoric to invoke a new era.”

ANGLO-CATHOLIC IN RELIGION: TS ELIOT AND CHRISTIANITY

Barry Spurr
Lutterworth Press £25

The author is Associate Professor of Eng. Lit. at the University and the book brilliantly combines his special fields of interest and expertise: poetry, biography and religious literature.

Few Eliot biographers have successfully tackled his relationship with religion. American-born, Unitarian-raised, Eliot moved to Britain after Harvard; Converted to Anglicanism and UK citizenship in in 1927. Spurr analyses how these crucial factors influenced the poetry, prose and plays until his death in 1965.

Eliot remains one of the most read and significant poets of the 20th century. Les Murray, winner of the 1996 TS Eliot Award, has said of Spurr’s earlier Studying Poetry (Palgrave Macmillan), “You can’t teach poetry unless you love it. Barry Spurr clearly does. He knows not to demean or exploit it. Poetry taught me poetry, but it was a teacher who turned me on to it and gave me the initial orientation I needed. This book suggests that Barry Spurr is another teacher of that rare kind.”

The same can be said of this wider-ranging and more ambitious book, in its illumination of the fundamentals that informed the life and work of TS Eliot.

PUBLIC RELATIONS CAMPAIGNS

Edited by Mark Sheehan and Robina Xavier
Oxford University Press, $66

Although Sheehan’s (MPA ’01) book is intended as a teaching text, anyone who is ever likely to be on the receiving end of a professional PR campaign could do themselves a favour and become familiar with it, and a bit of Sun Tzu and Machiavelli too.
THE FAILURE OF FREE-MARKET ECONOMICS

Martin Feil, illustrations John Spooner
Scribe, $35

With the world economy in continuing flux and as economic pundits continue to give themselves indigestion as they swallow previous profundities, Feil (BA ’69 BEc ’73 MEc ’76) is a poacher turned gamekeeper in the field of Australian economics. He freely admits this in a most entertaining, enlightening and accessible book on the greatest mystery of our time, which was, as HM the Queen so succinctly put it, “why did nobody notice?”

From the time Feil enthusiastically joined the economic workforce, government after Australian government has come under the spell of the small government/market forces thinking espoused by Smith, Friedman and Hayek (Friedrich, not Salma). Rather than creating a dynamic export-oriented manufacturing sector, however, it actually caused the gradual gutting of Australia’s manufacturing capacity. Feil also notes that while overseas corporations were declaring their commitment to Australian manufacturing, they were simultaneously pulling a swifty on politicians and bureaucrats alike.

Feil is not a nostalgist, though. Finally, he proposes ideas for rejuvenating industry policy: dump free-market economics, stop relying on consumer imports and regenerate manufacturing by value-adding here rather than shipping out our raw materials. Our new national motto should be: “Australia is not a quarry.”

Free-market ideologues and disciples of unrestrained capitalism risk apoplexy, or worse, by delving into Feil’s book, so I commend it to them without reservation.

MONSTER, MYTH OR LOST MARSUPIAL?

Graham Joyner
Hayes UK & Thomas
GPO Box 1791
Canberra, ACT 2601

The subtitle of this idiosyncratic and interesting book is “the search for the Australian Gorilla in the jungles of History, Science and Language.” In other words: yowies, yahoos and yetis – everything you ever wondered or needed to know about these phenomena from an historic, anthropological and scientific point of view, in a scholarly and entertaining overview by Graham Joyner (BA ’59).

THE RAINBOW BEACH MAN THE LIFE AND TIMES OF LES RIDGEWAY, WORIMI ELDER

John Ramsland
www.brolgapublishing.com.au
$29.99

Ramsland OAM (MEd ’72) is a prolific writer whose books on aspects of film history, sports history and Aboriginal-European relations have been well received. His latest is a celebration of one of the best-known elders of the north coast area of NSW, Les Ridgeway, was born into the Great Depression when adversity was universal and, for an Aborigine, all-pervasive; yet he went on to become one of Charles Perkins’ recruits to the new Commonwealth Department of Aboriginal Affairs. Les’s eventful life and family ties are colourfully documented in words and photos, including his ancestors Billy Ridgeway, “King of Port Stephens” (on a colonial breastplate), and Mary Ann Bugg – Captain Thunderbolt’s companion.

THE BIG END OF TOWN

WR Widerberg
Otford Press, $29.95

Bill Widerberg (BA ’55 DipEd Psych ’56) is perfectly positioned to write a noir-ish thriller about murky big biz. A blurb tells the would-be reader, “David Preston’s big chance comes when offered a job running one of Sydney’s big breweries. Success comes at a price. Unwilling to be drawn into corrupt financial dealings, David resigns, then makes a takeover bid for the company. Suddenly, not only is his career at stake, but also his life.”

The thing is, Widerberg was the man who took the Queensland brewery Toohey’s from also-ran to the position where most Australians seemed to “feel like a Toohey’s or two”. And subsequently, he also got to see Bond Corporation from the inside until he was fired “due to differences with the board.” All this undoubtedly accounts for the authenticity Big End’s world within a world – where the law and due diligence are for other people and the higher up you are, the greater your sense of entitlement and impregnability.

THE AFTERLIFE OF LUMBER

It smells like honey the boy says, opening the door and breathing in what the furnace is breathing out.

These offcuts I’m burning, I guess. Felled trees redeemed and lathed and felled again. Laid waste, they burn like saints.

And though they smell like afternoon tea to a hungry boy, they smell like the sweet hereafter to me – late on a winter’s day.

Mark Tredinnick
(LLB ’86 BA ’84)
The man who invented AFL

By Greg de Moore

The introduction of an AFL team into western Sydney is regarded by some as an invasion. But Tom Wills might disagree. In fact one could say that, when the new AFL team takes root in western Sydney and Israel Folau kicks his first goal, the game of Australian Rules football – our great and unique contribution to world sporting culture – will simply return to the family “home” of the man who started it all.

When Rugby Union’s Karmichael Hunt and Rugby League player, Folau, pull on their boots to play Australian Rules football next year, observers might regard this as unusual. But anyone who knows a little about Australian history would disagree, for Rules football and the Rugby codes are closer than many know: Tom Wills, the man who more than any other created the game of Australian Rules, learnt his football at Rugby School in England.

Our first great cricketer, and instigator of Australian Rules football, was not a conventional man. Sometimes, however, it is the peculiar individual who tilts, ever so slightly, our view of the world, and so affords us an opportunity to see patterns and meaning where previously we had seen none. Wills was one such person.

He was a “Sydney” man, or so he sometimes boasted. His mother was a student at the Female Orphan School in Parramatta and his father, a newspaper editor – of the Sydney Gazette.

Wills was born in 1835, near the township of Queanbeyan in NSW. His family overlanded to the new Colony of Port Phillip and from the age of four he grew up among the Djab wurrung people in the Grampians, northwest of Melbourne. At the age of 14 his father, Horatio, despatched him, alone, on a five month voyage to England. For the next five years he boarded at Rugby School in the English Midlands.

Wills wrote detailed notes on how he played cricket; others wrote how they saw him as a footballer. But it was as a cricketer – captain of the Rugby XI – that he attracted most attention. Reporters from The Times and various sporting papers commented on the adolescent Australian. All noted his prowess, but nevertheless, the captain of the Rugby cricket team was not a batsman of great delicacy.

To the eye of the seasoned observer, his lack of grace singled him out as an unfinished product. If he was just a little freer in his actions, he might have been counted among the best gentlemen cricketers in England. But style counted for a great deal, particularly for a gentleman in Victorian England; and Mr Thomas Wills Esquire, captain of the Rugby XI and, an Australian, was in need of some polish, if he was to meet with approving eyes when he stepped on to the lush turf of Lord’s Cricket Ground, where a vulgar lift of the bat raised more eyebrows than failing to score.

It was at Rugby that Wills learnt how to feint and duck and his clever moves made him known to the English press. One had to sparkle, to entertain, to attract notice and Wills was always noticed. Sometimes he ran with the
mass of forward players, shoving the football towards the goal line; but more impressively he was a “dodger” – the name given to back-players who flitted and deceived the opposition.

In 1856, at the age of 21, Wills returned to Australia bringing the rules of Rugby School football to Melbourne. This schoolboy game underwent modifications in Melbourne until a new code – Australian Rules – was born. Tom Wills was its chief architect in the first three years.

Many factors shaped the game and the period 1857-1860 were the critical years. Three major influences shaped the mind of Wills and could be argued as important in his writing of the earliest rules: one was the football rules he had learned as a schoolboy in England; the second was Victoria itself, a colony buoyed by gold, the intellectual and cultural centre of a developing land; and thirdly, the nationalistic mindset and language bequeathed to him by his father, in the letters and diary Horatio wrote in western Sydney in the years before Tom was born.

Horatio wrote of his desire that men born in Australia – The Native Born – think and create for themselves, and not to consider themselves inferior to men born overseas. Tom Wills set about creating a new game; the lessons of his father were learned well.

In 1861, 26-year-old Tom Wills left Melbourne, and travelled with his father to central Queensland to take up a new family property. On the afternoon of 17 October of that year, Aborigines murdered his father and 18 other men, women and children. It was the largest killing of European settlers by Aborigines in this country’s history. Wills, who had been sent by Horatio to collect supplies, survived the attack. His father’s death had a profound impact upon Wills and three years later he told his sister of his wild dreams about “blacks” attacking the Queensland station. Today we understand this as a feature of a Post-Traumatic Stress Syndrome, but in 1861, there was no understanding in the Queensland bush.

Nevertheless, five years after the attack, Wills carried out perhaps the most astonishing act in Australian sporting history, capturing a team of Aboriginal cricketers from western Victoria, and led them on to the Melbourne Cricket Ground on Boxing Day 1866 to the applause of some 10,000 spectators.

Tom Wills – the white captain of a black team – enchanted and confronted the colonies. The team came to Sydney and their base was Manly Beach. From there they travelled to Newcastle, Wollongong, Campbelltown and Parramatta. A year later, this team (minus Wills), left Australia to play against teams in England – more than ten years before the first white cricket team did so.

By 1870, the first blemish of alcohol dependence could be seen in Wills’s reddened cheeks. In the early afternoon of a Melbourne day in 1880, as autumn came to a close, Wills committed suicide. In the midst of delirium tremens – the consequence of withdrawing from alcohol – he stabbed himself in the heart with a pair of scissors. He was buried in an unmarked grave; the funeral was kept private. His younger brother, Horace, wrote many years later that Tom was the “sweetest” man he ever knew.

Greg de Moore, is a clinical lecturer in psychiatry at Westmead Hospital. His recent book Tom Wills: His Spectacular Rise and Tragic Fall (Allen & Unwin) was shortlisted for the 2009 National Biography Award among other literary honours.
ACROSS THE DECADES

1940s

SRC 1947-48 REUNION [Above]
Friday 21 May 2010
A celebratory afternoon tea was held following the graduation at which Emeritus Professor Edward McWhinney was awarded an Honorary Fellowship of the University.

Many months beforehand, The Hon Adrian Roden QC had produced a photograph of the 1947/48 SRC, with McWhinney sitting in the front row. Sixty-two years later, five of his former colleagues on the SRC attended the graduation ceremony and the reunion afterwards.

Not surprisingly, connections with the University remain strong. Roden had married the former Rose Wicks, mother of Associate Professor John Watson, Associate Dean (Clinical Development) and grandmother of a current student. Emeritus Professor Rex Olsson’s daughter Annabelle is undertaking a PhD in the Faculty of Veterinary Science. Dr Val Rundle (née Patterson) has long been an interested supporter of the Australian Archaeological Institute at Athens which is based at the University. Ruth Lucas (née Harvey) was also able to attend.

Also attending the afternoon tea were David Turner, President of the Alumni Council, and the Deputy Chancellor Alan Cameron AM. Alan was SRC President in 1967-68. Investigations accounted for 12 of the 20 in the 1948 photo, but eight remain ‘missing’. They are David Doyle, David Ritchie, Harry Trinder, Mike Lazar, Ruby Hudson, Joan Roberts, Jill Crichton and Rosemary Cowper.

1950s

PETER BOWLER (BA ’56, DIP ED ’57) has had another book published in 2010, increasing his total published output to eleven, with a further one on the way. Bloomsbury UK have published an omnibus volume of his three books about the outer limits of language under the title The Completely Superior Person’s Book of Words, and this is available in Australian bookshops through Allen & Unwin. It received the accolade of being non-fiction “Pick of the Week” in the Sydney Morning Herald’s weekend Spectrum supplement. And his new novel, The De Reszke Record, a dark comedy thriller about high-end record collecting, is due for release towards the end of this year. Peter has recently been appointed to the Board of the Abbey Museum, a little-known treasure house of antiquities, art and archaeology located on the northern outskirts of Brisbane. He can be contacted at pbowler@answ.quik.com.au for more information about any of the above.

MIRJAM GERBER nee STIEL (MBBS ’59) turned 75 on April 15 and is still working as a consultant in Columbus Ohio, an Aussie forever.

1990s

PROFESSOR SAMY A AZER (PHD [MED] ’95) During my work on my PhD at the Faculty of Medicine as a full-time student, I enrolled at the University of New South Wales to undertake a Master of Education. These two degrees helped me to join the Department of Pharmacology, Kansas Medical Centre as a postdoctoral fellow. Back to Australia, in 1997 I joined the School of Medicine, as a Senior Lecturer of Medical Education and worked with Professor Ann Sefton, Associate Professor Jill Gordon and Professor Michael Field on the establishment of the new medical curriculum, and the new summative assessment. In 1999, I joined the newly established Medical Education unit at the University of Melbourne. At that time, the School of Medicine under the leadership of Professor Richard Larkins was moving to an integrated curriculum. I played a significant role in the development of the new integrated problem-based learning curriculum and the establishment of integrated summative assessment. During my work at Melbourne, I wrote two textbooks on medical education, created an interactive CD-ROM on the liver, and contributed to numbers of research papers. In 2006, I joined the University of Toyama in Japan as a Visiting...
Professor of Medical Education, and helped the team there in establishing a medical education unit. In 2007, I moved to the Universiti Teknologi MARA in Malaysia as the Professor of Medical Education and the Chair of Medical Education Research and Development Unit. I played a significant role in the revision of the curriculum, the integration of the first two years and the improvement of the summative and formative assessment. In 2007, my textbook, Core Clinical Cases in Basic Biomedical Sciences was translated into Japanese and published by Elsevier Japan. In 2009, I was invited to join the editorial board of BMC Medical Education, and MedEdWorld in the UK, and the membership of the policy committee of the Association for Study of Medical Education in the UK. I am also on the International Advisory Board of Kumar and Clark Clinical Medicine since 2006. Late in 2009, I was invited to lead Medical Education at the King Saud University in Saudi Arabia. I have also received many invitations from universities in Southeast Asia, and the Middle East as an external examiner and to give lectures on my books, research in medical education and the recent trends in medical education.

2000s

DR ROBYN HANSTOCK (BA '03)
On 9 April 2010 I graduated with a PhD from the University of New England for my thesis “Learning Journeys in Women’s Organisations: Adult education outside conventional settings”. I continue to have speaking engagements with the voluntary organisations included in my research, such as Zonta, Quota and the Country Women’s Association. They are particularly interested in a quilt that I made to visualise the research of my thesis and its outcome. My finding was that a surprising level and diversity of learning, formal and informal, takes place in such organisations. (Pictured above with Sylvia Ransom, my former Faculty Librarian at UNE, who is now working at the Royal University of Bhutan).

DR JONATHAN P GERBER (BPSYCH (HONS) ’01) is moving to Boston, Mass, to work as an assistant professor of psychology at Gordon College; accompanied by wife Alison [BA ’04] and son Ralph Gatsby.

ERIC KNIGHT (BA/LLB ’07) is a Rhodes Scholar completing a DPhil at Magdalen College, Oxford and currently preparing to swim to France for charity before returning home next year.

HELEN H WU (LLM ’07) After I received my degree, I continued work in private practice as a lawyer in the Commercial and Disputes Resolution team at DLA Phillips Fox. I then joined the in-house legal team at EYE Corp, owned by Network Ten, before finding my way to my current position as Corporate Counsel for HotelClub, owned by Orbitz Worldwide. I am enjoying the challenges and rewards of working for a dynamic, international and online company with people who are enthusiastic about hotels and travel.

ANTHONY ZEHETNER (BPHARM ’96 MBBS ’01) has been awarded the 2010 Wiley-Blackwell New Investigator Prize for his paper “Iron supplementation for breath-holding attacks in children: A Cochrane systematic review”. The Prize is awarded for excellence of hypothesis, scientific merit and oral presentation (at the World Congress of Internal Medicine). Dr Zehetner is a Medical Fellow in General Paediatrics and Deputy Chief Resident Medical Officer at The Children’s Hospital, Westmead. He is interested in Paediatric Neurodevelopmental and Behavioural Disorders, and recently authored a chapter on “Psychopharmacology – The Use of Medication to Treat Challenging Behaviour in Children and Adolescents”. He is also a Consultant Pharmacist and Clinical Associate Lecturer for the Sydney Medical School.

NOT RECEIVING OUR MONTHLY ELECTRONIC NEWSLETTER – ESYDNEY?
SIMPLY EMAIL US AT alumni.office@sydney.edu.au

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diary

4 AUGUST
Annual Michael Hintze Lecture
Centre For International Security Studies
Great Hall, 6.30pm
John Mearsheimer, Professor of Political Science at the University of Chicago will speak on “A Gathering Storm: The Asian Balance of Power and U.S. Foreign Policy”. $20/$15 concessions. Further information and bookings: sydney.edu.au/business/ciss/events

12–14 AUGUST
SUGUNA
The SUGUNA Annual Conference will be held in Chicago, Illinois, this year. Further information and bookings: sydney.edu.au/alumni/suguna

19 AUGUST
Women in Business Dinner
Women’s College, 6.30pm
Co-presented by the Faculty of Economics & Business and The Women’s College, with guest speaker Linda B Nicholls AO. For further information, visit the events pages at www.thewomenscollege.com.au

2 SEPTEMBER
IQ2 Debate
Great Hall, 6.30pm
An Intelligence Squared Australia debate at the University of Sydney. Motion: “There is no truth worth dying for”. For more information, visit sydney.edu.au/sydney_ideas

7 SEPTEMBER
Graduate Connections Breakfast with Professor Ian Caterson AM
Tea Rooms, QVB, Sydney
7.15 – 8.45am
Join us for a special healthy breakfast with Professor Ian Caterson AM, Boden Professor of Human Nutrition and Director, Institute of Obesiy, Nutrition and Exercise. $45 alumni, staff and students of the University; $50 friends or guests; and $320 for a table of eight. Further information and bookings: sydney.edu.au/alumni/breakfasts

29 SEPTEMBER
Materia Medica Reunion, 1952
Morning tea, luncheon, guided tours and more. For further information, contact Bob Dash on 02 9449 5153 or at bobdash@ozemail.com.au

1 OCTOBER
Materia Medica Reunion, 1960
Morning tea, luncheon, guided tours and more. For further information, contact Margot Machliss on 02 9327 5497 or at machbm@ozemail.com.au

5 OCTOBER
The Comedy Debate
Mark you diary for the year’s most popular slouch: the great Alumni v Students Comedy Debate. See page 8 for details.

7 OCTOBER
The Faculty of Pharmacy 10 year Anniversary Dinner
MacLaurin Hall, 7pm
Join the Dean, fellow alumni and staff for a sit down dinner to celebrate 10 years of the Faculty and 111 years of Pharmacy education. For further information, contact Jo Bilous on 9351 7829 or at jo.bilous@sydney.edu.au

19 OCTOBER
One Just World Forum
Seymour Centre, 6.30pm
A discussion on the World Vision Child Health Now campaign. For more information, visit sydney.edu.au/sydney_ideas

23 OCTOBER
China Alumni Event & Reception
Intercontinental Shanghai Expo
3 – 5.30pm
Music and the Cosmos Spectacular followed by an Alumni Reception. Visit the events page at alumni.sydney.edu.au/shanghai2010

25 OCTOBER
Hong Kong Alumni Reception
Hong Kong Club, Central, 7 – 9pm
Visit the events page at alumni.sydney.edu.au/hongkong2010

28 OCTOBER
10th Anniversary Charles Perkins Oration and Memorial Prize
Great Hall
Further information: sydney.edu.au/koori/news/oration
Register your interest via alumni.rsvp@sydney.edu.au

9 NOVEMBER
Graduate Connections Breakfast with George Maltabarow
Tea Rooms, QVB, Sydney.
7.15 – 8.45am
Further information and bookings: sydney.edu.au/alumni/breakfasts

12 NOVEMBER
Alumni Awards Presentation
The 2010 Alumni Awards celebrate the outstanding achievements of our alumni. Admission is free, but bookings are essential. See page 16 for details.

22 NOVEMBER
Faculty of Education and Social Work 100th Anniversary Alumni Dinner
Great Hall, 7.30pm
Tickets and further enquiries:

Above: SS ‘Orara’, Byron Bay HP83.60.2210, Macleay Museum Collection. All photos 1890-1915.
Established by Charles Kerry in 1890, Kerry & Co was one of the largest commercial photographers in Sydney, operating from 310 George Street from 1898 until about 1917. Postcards became big business as people took up this new speedy communication.
Jan Brazier, curator of the History Collections at the Macleay Museum, says they were the “SMS of their day”. The images are a reminder of the optimism in rural Australia compared with today when many small towns struggle for survival. They also capture a long gone moment in time and place. All images in the exhibition are labelled but mystery surrounds many.
“We are keen to learn more about the images and hope visitors to the exhibition will be able to help,” says Brazier.

Maria Bruzzeze at maria.bruzzeze@sydney.edu.au or (02) 9036 5074.

ALUMNI REUNIONS
There are numerous Alumni Reunions being 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 events.assistant@sydney.edu.au

40 SAM July 2010
A decision to include a bequest to the University of Sydney in your will can create a legacy for generations to come and help make a better and brighter future for all. You can establish scholarships, fund research, or find your own preferred way to direct much needed resources to this internationally renowned institution.

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A DAY IN THE DEATH OF JOE EGG

THE LIST OPERATORS FOR KIDS
5–9 OCT

A BRILLIANT BLACK COMEDY
21–30 OCT

CHUNKY MOVE
GLOW
13–16 OCT

SYDNEY CHILDREN'S FESTIVAL