On Boxing Day in 2004 Chyntia Aryani was at her family home near the harbour in Banda Aceh, a small city on the north-western tip of the Indonesian island of Sumatra. It was a Sunday morning, but the suburbs were fuller than usual with visitors in town for the holidays. “At 8am, we felt the earth quake”, Aryani says. “Fifteen minutes later the wave came. Everyone ran, it was really crowded and no-one had any idea what was happening.” The tsunami killed both her parents and destroyed her home. “I lost half of my memory there,” says Aryani, who has lived in Banda Aceh, the capital of the Aceh province, since she was a child. Aryani now lives with her two brothers and two sisters in a home further inland, near Syiah Kuala University, where she studies architecture.

Aryani is speaking in the forecourt of the University of Sydney’s Faculty of Architecture, where she is sitting with three of her fellow architecture students from Syiah Kuala. They have just come from an intensive design studio class where they have been poring over plans for dormitories, small shared houses, clinics, mosques and sports fields. They are all draft designs for a Rotary Youth Centre (RYC) that will be built some 8km from Banda Aceh, on what is now a large rice field. The project will go a small way to rebuilding Aceh, the district which bore the brunt of the tsunami’s devastation, and where hundreds of thousands either perished or were displaced. Schools were destroyed, teachers went missing and thousands of children were orphaned.

As the Australian students present their ideas for the village in the studio workshop, the Indonesian students fill them in about the appropriate shapes for roofs in that part of Indonesia, the right orientation to ensure a mosque faces Mecca, and the need to keep male and female bedrooms separate.

“I wasn’t sure how it would work, but everyone’s been really happy to speak up and learn from each other,” says Peter Armstrong, the lecturer who is overseeing the project. Dr Armstrong has been involved for nearly a decade in aid and reconstruction projects in South-East Asia, including schools in Cambodia and other projects in Laos and Timor. Getting students involved in real-life projects is a great “teaching vehicle”, he says.

The project was initiated by the Turramurra Rotary Club in Sydney, which chose a design by final year University of Sydney architecture student Nicole Bowller to be the site’s masterplan. Her plan extends the single natural water channel through the site by creating a circular series of canals that would diffuse any sudden rush of water. “I designed it so the impact of a [future] tsunami would be lessened,” says Nicole. “Using the soil that I dug from the waterways as landfill also means I can put the buildings on higher levels so they can be protected, without having to bring in expensive in-fill.”

Rotary has so far raised more than $1 million towards the project. It has also sponsored the students’ visit to Australia.

“Everyday we learn something different about how people live here, how they study and learn architecture,” says Aryani’s friend Vida Asrina.

Aryani, who now lives with her four brothers and sisters near her University in Banda Aceh, says she hopes she will be able to work on the centre when she returns home and graduates. She’d also like to see it become not just a home for Indonesian students, but for students from other countries who want to experience her culture.

Photograph: Ted Sealey
**Staff News**

Congratulations to Peter Armstrong on his promotion to Senior Lecturer. This good news followed on another recent announcement regarding Peter who has been invited to receive a prominent civil award in Japan in recognition of his extensive contributions to building links with Japan. He is one of only eight people to receive it this year, and will receive the award from the Crown Prince.

Professor William J Mitchell, Visiting Professor to our Faculty and former Dean at MIT, will be awarded an Hon DScArch in 2007. The date of the ceremony will be announced later.

Our newest academic member of staff, Greg Castillo joined us in October for three weeks, before commencing here fulltime in 2007. Greg will be joining us from the University of Miami and will be lecturing in Architectural History, Theory and Criticism.

It is a pleasure to welcome four new adjunct appointments to the Faculty - all who have been appointed to three years terms commencing in August 2006:

- **Lawrence Nield** - Adjunct Professor, Architecture and Allied Arts
- **Paul Jones** - Adjunct Associate Professor, Urban and Regional Planning
- **Paul Pholeros** - Adjunct Professor, Architecture and Allied Arts
- **Elizabeth Farrelly** - Adjunct Associate Professor, Architecture and Allied Arts

All four appointments are leaders in their chosen fields and our students will benefit from the exposure to their knowledge in the theory and practice of Architecture and Urban and Regional Planning. In combination with the two recent three year Visiting Professor appointments in Allied and Architecture Arts, Professor Elizabeth Grosz and Professor Terry Smith, we have enhanced our capacity in research and teaching.

Some other recent honorary appointments, including renewals are

- Alan Obrart - appointed as Honorary Senior Lecturer in Building Services for a three year term working with the Architectural Science Discipline
- Lindsay Asquith - appointed as a Honorary Associate for one year. Working with Gary Moore, Lindsay will initiate and conduct new research on space use and claim, concerning the interaction between family and home-based work
- Ferg Fricke re-appointed as Honorary Associate Professor
- Peter Smith re-appointed as Honorary Associate Professor.

**Alumni Association News**

**Faculty Name Change**

At the Faculty Board meeting held on 25 October, it was resolved by vote to suggest to the senate of the University a name change for the Faculty. The meeting voted as follows on a choice of name: Faculty of Design: 19 votes, Faculty of Architecture, Design and Planning: 37 votes

This vote includes all absentee votes received. The Dean will now write to the University Senate advising it of the Faculty’s wishes. The Senate will make a final decision on this matter. Thanks to all who participated in the debate and the thoughtful arguments presented.

**Architecture Alumni Association Annual General Meeting**

It was with great regret that the Alumni Council farewelled Peter McDonnell and David Turner as they stood down from Council membership at the AGM held on 19 October. Both have had a huge influence on the Council and its direction and will be sorely missed. Peter was a founding member of the Alumni Association, and helped draft the Constitution. David has worked tirelessly as the secretary of the Council for the last 2 years and has managed many new projects for the Council.

The Council is very pleased to announce the appointment of two new Councillors – Brian Griffin and Ken Woolley. Brian offered a lot of assistance to the students researching the history of the Architecture Students’ Revue. Ken is well known, having designed many buildings in Sydney including Fisher Library. Welcome to both of you!

**Do you know where these alumni are?**

We value our alumni and are keen to be in contact with as many as possible. However, we have lost contact with some of them and are asking you for your help.

Could you check the list at http://www.arch.usyd.edu.au/documents/alumni/lostarchaddress.pdf and either:

- contact the alumni and ask them to update their own details at www.usyd.edu.au/alumni or
- send their details to alumni@arch.usyd.edu.au and we will contact them to verify their details.

We are very grateful for your assistance.
Central to our successes are the individuals who are the Faculty, both students and staff. Many of the Faculty have been recognized nationally and internationally, including many receiving significant prizes. Genevieve Blanchett, Lucy Humphrey, Julien Gouric, Alex Nicholls and Jo Turner all won RAIA prizes; Dr Anna Rubbo received the 2006 Marion Mahony Griffin Award; and Dr Peter Armstrong, was awarded a civil honour in Japan in recognition of his extensive contributions to building links with Japan. Col James was awarded the University Alumni Award for Achievement in Community Service, nominated by our Alumni Council. Dr Duanfang Lu’s book on Chinese urbanism has been greeted with wide critical acclaim. The Planning Research Centre continues to inform and illuminate with numerous publications, the latest of which is Dialogues in Urban Planning.

Colleagues in the Faculty have put tremendous effort in to the development of research this year; this has resulted in the award of over $1.1 million from the Australian Research Council (ARC). I am particularly pleased that these awards have been well distributed across the whole Faculty, including Architecture, Design Computing and Planning. This success reflects the tremendous collaboration that is exhibited on a daily basis in teaching and student activities. The past four months have been particularly busy with a very large number of lectures, exhibitions and celebrations. The Opera House Model has been resident of lectures, exhibitions and celebrations. The past four months have been particularly busy with a very large number of lectures, exhibitions and celebrations. The Opera House Model has been resident on a daily basis in teaching and student activities. The past four months have been particularly busy with a very large number of lectures, exhibitions and celebrations.

As we approach the close of the year, it is gratifying to reflect on the many successes that have been achieved. Thank you all for your part in a busy and exciting year.
Public-Private-Partnerships have taken on an ugly meaning in the wake of the Cross City Tunnel. But we need not throw out the baby with the bath water in dealing with present or future PPPs.

Why PPPs for a Strategic Plan?

PPPs are as old as governments themselves. No one knows who issued the first PPPs but surely the Romans used them to build ships and bridges to support their vast empire. So, the idea of the PPP is very old. Today, the PPP has new meaning because governments at all levels are strapped for cash to finance new infrastructure out of current tax collections. It is much easier for the government to have someone else collect the tax in the form of a toll than to impose a new tax on homeowners.

What can and does go wrong?

Governments like car leasers are merely leasing the new infrastructure when they do a PPP. In a PPP, just as in any lease the government and the lender have to be certain that the fees are paid for the full period of the lease arrangement. Here is where the trouble starts. First, in too many instances the finance company or lender—investment banker—is more interested in getting the deal than making sure the fees are paid. The reason for this is that the investment banker gets fees for putting the contract together, not in managing the project for its full life. In fact, the investment bankers sell the project to superannuation funds or foreign investors as soon as deal is made. As a result, the investment banker makes money no matter whether the project is good or bad for the government or the people. In many cases the government takes a fee too for doing business with the investment banker.

How does the government project itself?

Although the latest inquiries and reports on PPPs focus on the operators of the project, this is not the issue; the real problem is the financial structure of the project. When the project is entered into the feasibility study must be done by an independent advisor. The second component is equity or back up funds to secure the project. That is, the government should have a pool of funds to act as a guarantee or a reserve to cure potential defaults or even purchase insurance for such eventualities. The root cause of poor PPPs is poor financial structure and lack of independent advice on the shape and quality of the deal.

Here are four simple actions that need to be taken in any PPP deal.

1. Have an independent board review all PPP options before they are undertaken.
2. Insure that the feasibility of the project is done by external independent contractors and not a consultant hired by the investment bankers.
3. Make sure there is a sinking fund, equity or pool of funds to cover the debt service ratio and protect against default for all projects.
4. Enter into projects that are part of a longer term strategy such as the City of Cities Strategy and are also part of a bi-partisan long term compact to protect the State’s future assets from political maneuvering. Western Australia has done this quite well.

Why we need good PPPs for the Metropolitan Strategy now?

The future is here for the Sydney Metropolitan Strategy. Even if Sydney does not grow in population, our current infrastructure is old and tired. We need new schools, better parks, faster trains and buses and a long term water supply. Even conservation and recycling strategies will call for cash to pay for them. If we are to be a competitive City of Cities it will take investment in more places in the metropolitan region and not less funds. PPPs are a good device to get what we need today and pay for it from the rising wealth future generations will create tomorrow. Most of us do this when we invest in a home. We also know, if we are prudent homeowners that we have to save for a new roof or for illness or other unforeseen circumstances even while the house is technically an asset of the bank from whom we borrowed the money.

So, the government has to be a prudent financial manager and save and invest using
PPPs for good new assets like schools, senior centres, roads, rail and parks to make sure future generations inherit a better, safer and wealthier Sydney metropolitan region. If the government follows the four rules above, very little can go wrong and we can make a stronger and better set of cities in the process with PPPs to secure our future.

Edward J. Blakely is the Chair of Urban and Regional Planning at the University of Sydney and Director of the Planning Research Centre. He is the former Chair of the Sydney Metropolitan Plan. He is familiar with PPPs as an advisor and consultant and author of two best selling Sage publications Planning Local Economic Development and Financing Local Economic Development that cover PPPs in some detail. He was appointed Vice Chair to run the Presidio Trust by President Bill Clinton. The Trust is one of the most innovative and well managed PPPs in the United States.

Tony Gilmour is Research Policy Manager of the Planning Research Centre at the University of Sydney which he joined in 2005 following an Investment Banking career in London. His previous employer, N M Rothschild & Sons, have been at the forefront of privatization initiative since the 1980s and have pioneered the development of PPPs in the energy, health and education sectors.
After reading about long queues at Palestinian-Israeli border crossings, and the frustrations and even deaths that can occur as people wait for medical care, a University of Sydney student decided to create mobile phone technology to solve the problem.

After entering your personal details, the reason for your visit and your time of travel into your phone Amal Abdo’s program tells you which checkpoint to go to. It will even give you a unique code to use when you get there.

“The phone tracks your GPS location to know which checkpoint is closest to you,” says Abdo, who created the work as part of a final year design project set by new media lecturer Andy Dong.

Her design gives “Israelis the security they want, but at the same time minimises disadvantage to the Palestinians,” she says.

Another project, by Mark Kwanten, is designed to let San Salvadorean street kids compose collaborative rap songs.

“The application allows people to express their feelings through rap songs and see whatever other people are feeling,” he says.

‘Rapper Experience’ lets users choose beats that can be recorded over with words and sent to a server, where it can either be listened to or added to by other users. Using the technology to create a kind of communal diary is a good fit for street kids in San Salvador, who often share one phone between three or four people, he says.

To create their mobile phone applications the students are combining a range of technologies - including Java, Flash Lite, Bluetooth, RFID (radio frequency identification) and GPS (global positioning system).

Student Leon Spencer has created a system of networked links that would allow messages to be sent without being monitored - a function he created with citizens of repressive states in mind.

Noelene Fajardo, originally from the Philippines, has developed a program that would allow Filipino fisherman to use SMS to create a huge database that would contain information about the best fishing spots, catching methods and fishing times.

Other projects range from a program for people looking for jobs such as letter writing and childcare in China, a phone technology that would allow Sherpas and trekking companies to communicate with each other in Kathmandu, and mobile phone news systems for communities of elders in Cape York.

The students couldn’t just invent their communities, says Andy Dong: “they had to go out and do their research.”

Kath Kenny, (courtesy of uninews)
Celebrations for Emeritus Professor Jack Cowan AO

Hearth, Wilkinson Building, September 2006

Professor Gary Moore

Col James and Professor Kvan

Professor Tom Kvan

Professor Tom Kvan with Louis and Anna Challis

Dr David Gunaratnam and E/Professor Cowan

Hon A/Professor Peter Smith and Honor Morton

Cast of Architorture with Grahaeme Bond

Claire McCaughan and Theo Bowering

Jan McCredie and Esther Hayzar

Brian Griffin, Professor John Gero, Barry Wollaston, Professor Tom Kvan

Michael Neustein and Michael Kirkman

Michael Day and friends
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www.arch.usyd.edu.au/web/general/profdevelop.html

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