Dear Colleagues

Welcome to the newsletter for May 2012. Please send any suggestions you have for the content of future monthly newsletters.

The sections are:

1. Forthcoming events - SMS Leadership Seminars; NSW Doctors Orchestra concert; SPASM Museum and other medical museums and collections
2. Alumni and other University news - new history of the University of Sydney; research grants for Sydney Medical School staff; medical alumni and the media
3. History of medicine - First Tuesday History of Medicine Club; RACP History of Medicine Library lectures; Q Station lectures; History and Philosophy of Science Research Seminar
4. Reunions
5. Death notices and obituaries, including Struan Robertson and Wal Grigor
6. Updating your University records.

1. Forthcoming events

1.1 Sydney Medical School - Leadership Seminars for 2012

These 90-minute seminars are primarily intended for Sydney medical students but will be open to all. They will be on controversial topics with outstanding speakers who have a strong record of leadership. Seminars will be held in the Footbridge Theatre, University of Sydney. There will be time for audience participation.

Why should Australian students be internationally involved? - Tuesday, 22 May, 1pm to 2.30pm

A qualification in medicine opens up exciting possibilities for international work helping to provide services for some of the world's most needy populations. But if we do this, does our career suffer? Do we miss opportunities? How can we pay the mortgage? Here is a chance to ask people who have done it. Hear from graduates about the opportunities and experiences they have had. And come with your questions.

Chair: Dr John Whitehall, University of Sydney; Professor Bob Cumming, Professor of Epidemiology, Sydney School of Public Health; Dr James Thompson, UNSW graduate and current Urology Registrar; Dr Phoebe Williams, recent SMS graduate, founder of Hands of Help; and Dr Chris Dwyer, recent SMS graduate.
The role of the doctor in 2030. Team leader or team member? - Monday, 28 May, 1pm to 2.30pm

Medicine may be very different in 2030. What will the doctor's role be? Are other professions more suitable to take the lead in some circumstances? Are we really team players or does it only work when we are in charge? Hear perspectives of medical students who have worked as health professionals from Allied Health and Medicine who have a broad perspective on teamwork.

Chair: Professor Bruce Robinson, Dean, Sydney Medical School; Professor Mary Chiarella, Professor of Nursing, Sydney Nursing School, and former Chief Nurse, NSW Health; Ms Kerry Stevenson, Allied Health, Central Coast; Dr Andrew McDonald, MP, NSW Shadow Minister for Health; Blair Rasmussen, medical student; and Hannah Lorking, medical student.

Should doctors advocate about the medical challenges of climate change? Tuesday, 29 May, 1pm to 2.30pm

Who was it who said 'Climate change is the great moral dilemma of our time'? Is it? Should doctors become involved? What are the medical challenges of climate change? Discuss with medical graduates who have become involved in climate change about why they have done it and how climate change can influence health and disease.

Chair: Professor Michael Frommer, Associate Dean (Learning and Teaching), SMS; Dr Graeme Horton, School of Medicine and Public Health, University of Newcastle; Dr Stephen Lightfoot, Specialist Anaesthetist; Dr Ben Ticehurst, NSW representative for Doctors for the Environment Australia (DEA); and Associate Professor Peter Sainsbury, Director, Population Health, Sydney and South Western Sydney Local Health Districts and School of Public Health.

Refugees - we know the problems, what are the solutions? - Monday, 23 July, 1pm to 2.30pm

1.2 'An afternoon in Vienna', NSW Doctors Orchestra Concert - Sunday, 27 May, 2.30pm

The orchestra will perform works by Schubert, Strauss, and Mahler.

Venue: Verbrugghen Hall, Sydney Conservatorium of Music


1.3 Medicines: access, affordability and use in Asia – challenges and opportunities - Monday, 4 June, 12-1pm

The Sydney Health Policy Network and Faculty of Pharmacy will be hosting a guest lecture given by Associate Professor Anita Wagner from Harvard Medical School.

A light sandwich lunch will be provided 1:00 - 1:30pm
Venue: Lecture Theatre 351, Education Building, University of Sydney

RSVP essential by 31 May to emma.dupal@sydney.edu.au

1.4 **150 years of electrical anaesthesia** - Thursday, 14 June, 6-8pm

Dr John Hood will speak at the Harry Daly Museum Night Lecture Series. Electricity was first used as an anaesthetic in 1847 in Paris. Since then there has been regular research and use for inducing sleep, analgesia and anaesthesia in animals, humans and fish. A film of the 1967 experiments at the School of Veterinary Science at the University of Sydney in 1967 will be shown.

Drinks and snacks will be provided. The Museum and Library will be open from 5.30pm for curious visitors.


Booking is essential as limited spaces are available - $10 for non-ASA members.

For a booking or for more information, call 9327 4022 or email: asa@asa.org.au

1.5 **Putting the balance back into diet** - Wednesday, 15 August, 9am to 5pm

Keynote address: Professor Stephen Simpson, Director, Charles Perkins Centre, University of Sydney

Emerging Health Policy Research Conference

Venue: Darlington Centre       More information in subsequent newsletters.

1.6 **SPASM Museum**

The Society for Preservation of the Artifacts of Surgery & Medicine (SPASM) consists entirely of members and volunteers with an interest in history of and the preservation of moveable heritage items and memorabilia from both the hospital and non-hospital sectors of nursing and medicine.

The collection began as a teaching collection within the Department of Anaesthetics at the then Lidcombe Hospital and it grew over time to include many other items no longer used in the practice of medicine, nursing, pharmacy, pathology, general practice, surgery and anaesthesia.

As the collection grew larger and a group of volunteers became established it was decided to create an organisation that would provide protection for the collection and ensure its preservation.

The collection was begun by Professor Ross Holland (1952) in the early 1960s as a teaching collection within the Department of Anaesthetics at Lidcombe Hospital and has been
enhanced over time to include many other items no longer used in the practice of medicine, nursing, pharmacy, pathology, general practice, surgery and psychiatry. These items were donated to SPASM by individual persons and health care organizations and now number in excess of 7000 objects, documents and books.


1.7 Other medical museums and collections

These include the following: Powerhouse Museum Medical Collection; College of Nursing Archives; The Coast Hospital Museum; Royal Prince Alfred Hospital Museum; Australian Society of Anaesthetists (ASA) – Harry Daly Museum; Australian & NZ History of Medicine Society Inc; Australian Medical Pioneers Index (AMPI); Royal Prince Alfred Hospital Museum & Archives; Royal Prince Alfred Hospital Walking Tour; University of NSW Pathology Museum of Human Disease; and University of Sydney Medical Heritage Trail

For links to all these websites, see: http://www.spasmmuseum.org.au/SPASM_Museum_Collection.html

Please inform Paul Lancaster (see below) about other related museums in Sydney or elsewhere in New South Wales.

1.8 The extraordinary tales behind University of Sydney antiquities

Behind every museum artefact lies a story and a new exhibition at the University of Sydney tells some of the most riveting tales behind its vast antiquities collection, the largest in the southern hemisphere.

50 Objects 50 Stories: Extraordinary Curiosities from the Nicholson Museum has now opened and displays an array of objects from the collection, accompanied by compelling and often bizarre stories.

The exhibition starts with Sir Charles Nicholson, an illegitimate farm labourer's grandson turned gentleman. Nicholson felt his appointment as the University's first Chancellor was a chance to fulfil his dream to build a collection of antiquities. He returned from his first expedition to Egypt in 1857, armed with more than 400 artefacts. Those featured in 50 Objects 50 Stories include gruesome mummified remains, an exquisite early example of glass artisanship, and a mismatched mummy and coffin.


2. Alumni and other University news

2.1 New history examines University's role as a public institution

A new history of the University of Sydney examines Australia's oldest university's track
record as a secular institution serving the public interest and one of the colony's earliest hubs of philanthropy and social inclusion.

Author and University historian Dr Julia Horne says *Sydney, the Making of a Public University* is less an institutional history than a scrutiny of the University's evolving role as a public institution since it began in 1852. It tells a tale of how Australian public institutions have evolved in the last 160 years.

Dr Horne says the book traverses the different views of what 'public' meant in the history of NSW. Philanthropy at the University serves as an excellent example.

'Nowadays we see universities as state institutions funded by the government but this notion has really existed only since the 1950s,' she says. 'In the University's first 100 years there were long periods when philanthropic revenue outstripped that from the public purse. That's what 'public' meant then: funded directly by the public.'


*Sydney: the making of a public university*, Julia Horne (University of Sydney Historian) and Geoffrey Sherington (Professor, History of Education)

From its beginnings in 1850, the University of Sydney was created as an institution to suit the needs of New South Wales, not simply to reflect England's ancient universities. A founding principle was that academic merit alone regardless of religious beliefs or social upbringing would be the test for admission.

*Sydney: the Making of a Public University* explores the principle of public engagement and how it came into practice and was shaped by succeeding generations. From staff, students and curriculum, to sports, philanthropy, faiths and research, Julia Horne and Geoffrey Sherington probe the meaning of the first hundred and sixty years of Sydney University, one of the first public universities in the world.

Richly illustrated, *Sydney: the Making of a Public University* tells the story of the University of Sydney and its distinctively Australian character.

Publisher: Miegunyah Press ISBN: 9780522861211 Price: $40

2.2 *The health of nations: towards a new political economy*, Gavin Mooney (School of Public Health)

Taking in a broad range of international case studies - from the UK to the US, South Africa to Cuba - this provocative book places issues of power and politics in health care systems centre stage, making a compelling case for the need to re-evaluate how we approach health care globally.

Why, despite vast resources being expended on health and health care, is there still so much ill health and premature death? Why do massive inequalities in health - both within and between countries - remain? In this devastating critique, internationally renowned health economist Gavin Mooney places the responsibility for these problems firmly at the door of neoliberalism. 'The Health of Nations' analyses how power is exercised both in health-care
systems and in society more generally. In doing so, it reveals how too many vested interests hinder efficient and equitable policies to promote healthy populations, while too little is done to address the social determinants of health. Instead, Mooney argues, health services and health policy more generally should be returned to the communities they serve.

Publisher: Zed Books ISBN: 9781780320595 Price: $34.95

**2.3 New drug shrinks brain tumours in melanoma patients**

Australian researchers have reported promising results with a new drug that shrinks brain tumours in melanoma patients. Their findings are published in The Lancet (18 May 2012).

Medical researchers at the University of Sydney, Melanoma Institute Australia, Sydney's Westmead Hospital and Westmead Millennium Institute, say a new drug they have been testing to treat deadly melanoma in the body also shows, for the first time, an ability to shrink secondary tumours (metastases) in the brains of patients with advanced forms of the disease.

They say the new drug may add months to the lives of patients whose melanoma has spread to the brain. Most patients with brain metastases die within four months. The trial's results, however, showed brain tumours in nine of the 10 patients shrank within the first six weeks. All 10 patients survived beyond five months, two patients survived beyond 12 months. One patient was alive at 19 months.


**2.4 'Next Generation' cancer treatment ready for clinical trials**

A new class of anti-cancer drugs which control the growth and spread of cancers and do so with minimal side effects is being developed by researchers at the University of Sydney.

"These new agents attack a fundamental characteristic of cancer cells while leaving normal cells alone," said Professor Des Richardson, from the Bosch Institute in Sydney Medical School.

"They work by binding the iron in tumour cells, preventing them from growing. We believe they have the potential to be an effective new strategy, to be 'next generation' drugs, for a range of cancers including highly aggressive pancreatic cancer.

Because they do not act on non-cancerous cells these new agents dramatically reduce a range of distressing side effects familiar to people undergoing cancer treatments such as chemotherapy and radiotherapy.


**2.5 Alcohol's impact on babies - UN looks at Australian experience**

An Australian film depicting the life of a young boy exposed to alcohol during his mother's pregnancy was shown at the United Nations headquarters in New York on 10 May.

The documentary was produced as part of a major program on Fetal Alcohol Spectrum
Disorder (FASD), involving the University of Sydney and its partners.

It will form part of a presentation at the UN in the 11th Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues on Australian research on the disorder.

"This important UN session will discuss how local Indigenous women in the Fitzroy Valley in remote Western Australia came together to create the Lililwan Project," said Elizabeth Elliott, Professor of Paediatrics and Child Health at the University's Sydney Medical School and Chief Investigator of the Lililwan Project.

"This project is leading the way for Australia in confronting the challenges of a condition seen in both non-Indigenous and Indigenous Australians.


2.6 Responding to the needs of disadvantaged rural communities

Young children and families in the Broken Hill area will benefit from a number of new health clinics to be established as a result of federal government budget funding for the University of Sydney.

A grant of $4.7 million from the Federal Health and Hospitals Fund will enable the establishment of multidisciplinary allied health clinics to be run through public and private primary schools in Broken Hill. As many as seven health facilities will be established across the community with five new buildings being constructed and existing space in two schools will be refurbished to accommodate on-site health programs.

One of the main aims of the program is to improve child development, educational outcomes and family wellbeing for Broken Hill residents, as well as enabling clinical training opportunities for students at the University's Broken Hill Department of Rural Health.

Dr Michael Spence, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Sydney applauded the announcement. 'I commend both the Federal Minister for Health and the Department for recognising the innovative nature of this program of student-run clinics based in Broken Hill.'


2.7 New measurement tool for clinical trials to help children with Charcot-Marie-Tooth disease

An international study led by the University of Sydney and published in the Annals of Neurology has the potential to improve the design of clinical trials for the treatment of Charcot-Marie-Tooth disease, a disorder which affects the peripheral nervous system.

Charcot-Marie-Tooth disease (CMT) is among the most common inherited neurological disorders, affecting one in 2500 people. Symptoms such as leg weakness, foot pain, trips and falls develop in the first two decades of life, with some patients wheelchair bound by 21 years. Currently there is no treatment for any form of this disease, but clinical trials are increasingly occurring.
'While it is very positive that clinical trials are taking place in this area, it is vital that trials are based on appropriately selected patients and carefully chosen outcome measures,' says Associate Professor Joshua Burns, Chief Investigator from the University of Sydney and The Children's Hospital at Westmead. 'This relies on being able to measure disease severity accurately, and in turn the patient's response to treatment, which we were previously unable to do in children.'


2.8 Body clock genes unravelled

International travellers, shift workers and even people suffering from obesity-related conditions stand to benefit from a key discovery about the functioning of the body's internal clock.

Professor Chris Liddle, from the Westmead Millennium Institute for Medical Research, the University of Sydney, worked with a team from the Salk Institute based in California, to demonstrate the importance of circadian receptors found in the brain and the liver. Their findings are published in Nature today.

"The research is important as these are the first core component of the circadian clock identified that can be targeted with drugs, which could provide relief for those affected by disrupted circadian rhythms," said Professor Liddle.


2.9 Grant success for leadership-building programs

The University of Sydney has received more than $3 million in grant funding through 15 successful applications under Round 11 of the Australian Leadership Awards (ALA) Fellowships program.

ALA Fellowships are designed to develop leadership, address regional development issues and build linkages between Australian organisations and partners in developing countries in the Asia-Pacific region, Latin America, the Caribbean, Africa and the Middle East.

The largest grant, worth more than $805,000, will provide training in HIV prevention and management for 23 fellows from Botswana, Cambodia, India and Zambia. The application was submitted by Dr Shailendra Sawleshwarkar from the Sydney Medical School and is designed to provide nominated fellows with short-term opportunities for study, research and professional attachment programs in Australia.

Other major grant recipients include: Professor Bruce Robinson and Rhonda Glasson (Hoc Mai Foundation/Medicine) who receive more than $586,000 to bring 25 health professionals from Vietnam to Australia; Professor Lee Burns (Law), receives $305,000 to bring 15 Vietnamese fellows for an international tax enforcement program; and Melissa Burney (Law) receives $303,000 for a legislative drafting program for 10 fellows from Botswana, Cameroon, Kenya and Uganda.

2.10 Why do some heavy drinkers get liver cirrhosis and some don't?

The US government is investing $2.5 million in a Sydney-based study to determine the role of genetics in alcoholic liver disease. It should lead to better diagnosis and treatment of the condition - a silent epidemic that costs $3.8 billion a year in Australia alone.

The study is conceived and led by Dr Devanshi Seth, from the Royal Prince Alfred (RPA) Hospital's Drug Health Services and the Centenary Institute, University of Sydney.

'We still do not understand why only a proportion of moderate to heavy drinkers get liver cirrhosis,' said Dr Seth.

'Nothing so far has been able to explain the unpredictability of why some people get cirrhosis and others who drink equal amounts don't.'

Dr Seth and her colleagues will soon start testing the genes of hundreds of Sydneysiders and thousands of others in six countries with the support of the grant from the US National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, part of the National Institutes of Health.


2.11 Sydney alumni and the media


Brian Morris (Sydney Medical School): circumcision and Medicare - http://www.smh.com.au/opinion/the-question/should-elective-circumcision-continue-to-be-
covered-by-medicare-20120511-1yhqb.html


Michael Robertson (Sydney Medical School): traumatic stress - http://www.abc.net.au/classic/content/2012/05/10/3498903.htm


Catherine Hamlin (1946): Addis Ababa Fistula Hospital and more - http://www.abc.net.au/classic/content/2012/05/04/3493072.htm (interview recorded by Margaret Throsby in 2001)


3. History of medicine

3.1 First Tuesday History of Medicine Club - Tuesday, 5 June, at 5.30-7.00pm

Ann Sefton will conduct a tour of the Physiology Department's collection of instruments.
Yvonne Cossart will discuss the current *Rats in the realm* exhibition about plague.

Venue: Alumni Room, Ground Floor, Anderson Stuart Building (please note change of venue)

For the proceedings of the previous History of Medicine Club meetings and for her 'reading list', contact Cate Storey: cestorey@bigpond.com

3.2 RACP History of Medicine Library Lecture Series 2012

Lectures are held on Monday evenings at 6.30pm at the Education Centre, Level 8, 52 Phillip Street, Sydney. Enjoy wine and refreshments after the lecture. Entry is $10 at the door.

Monday, 4 June, Paul Lancaster - **Medical men with Mawson in Antarctica**, and a tribute to the late Peter Tyler.

When recruiting for the Australasian Antarctic Expedition that began in December 1911, Douglas Mawson appointed as medical officers two young graduates from the University of Sydney, Archie McLean and Evan Jones, and Leslie Whetter, from the University of Otago. A contemporary science graduate in Sydney, John Hunter, interrupted his medical course when he was appointed as the biologist at the Main Base. Personal diaries, scrapbooks and other records give vivid accounts of their experiences in Antarctica and their later careers.

30 July: Dr Diana Wyndham: **Dr Norman Haire and the study of sex: the birth control crusader who gave his money to Sydney University to 'upset the wowsers'**

10 September: Dr John Carmody: **The triumph of the 'Wet Brain' over the 'Dry Brain: an overview of the development of modern neuroscience**

5 November: Dr Judith Godden: **History of Crown Street Women's Hospital**

For bookings, contact the acting Librarian, David Russell, on (02) 9256 5413 or racplib@racp.edu.au

3.3 Quarantine Station Lecture Series - Sunday, 27 May, 2-4pm

These public lectures are held at the Quarantine Station, North Head, Manly.

**Fateful feast: the final repast on RMS Titanic**: Diana Noyce

**Seven miles from Sydney - and needing local care! The evolution of medical services from Manly to Pittwater**: Paul Lancaster


For bookings, or to be put on the email list for the monthly lectures, contact Kelly - tours@qstation.com.au, or call her on 02 9466 1551.

3.4 **History and Philosophy of Science, University of Sydney - Research Seminar Series 2012** - Monday, 21 May, 6-8pm
Dr. Thomas Beddoes (1760-1809): Science, Medicine and Politics in an Age of Revolutions

Speaker: Dr Trevor Levere, University of Toronto

'In the late 18th century, democracy in England was viewed as seditious and even treasonable. French science was seen as a product of French revolutionary ideology, and French chemistry in particular was distrusted by establishments. Joseph Banks was among those who sought to depoliticize science, and to maintain scientific exchanges with French scientists even in time of war. Beddoes was a chemist and physician who advocated democracy aided by chemistry, a stance that cost him a Regius Chair at Oxford and put him, along with Joseph Priestley, on a government list of seditious characters; he worked with James Watt in the application of pneumatic chemistry to medicine, and enjoyed the support of Erasmus Darwin and the Wedgwoods; he founded a research institution to test pneumatic medicine. Politics was always present: I shall look at some of the resulting tensions.'

Venue: Science Meeting Room 450, Carslaw Building, University of Sydney


Tel. 02 9351 4226 or email to hps.admin@sydney.edu.au

4. Reunions

Reunions for graduating year of:

1972 - Saturday, 29 September (weekend) 2012 - contact: Harry Merkur: hmerkur@bigpond.net.au
2002 - Saturday, 20 October 2012 - contact: Helen Benham: helenh1@med.usyd.edu.au, or Luke Murtagh: ljim@gmp.usyd.edu.au
1982 – Saturday, 27 October 2012 – contact: David Kinchington
1977 - Saturday, 3 November 2012 - contact: Tony Joseph tjoseph@med.usyd.edu.au
1987 – Saturday, 10 November 2012 – contact: Michelle Crockett: macrockett1@mac.com
1958 – February 2013 – contact: Brian Parker (date to be confirmed)
1993 – Saturday 9 March 2013 – contact Chris Jones: zen343@gmail.com
1973 - Saturday, 6 April 2013 - contact: Phil Cocks: pcocks@ozemail.com.au
1978 – (January Graduation), Saturday, 23 February 2013 - contact: Andrew Bryne: ajbyren@ozemail.com.au
1978 – (October Graduation), Saturday, 9 November 2013 – contact: Chris Ingall: cingall@bigpond.com

Please contact Diana Lovegrove (diana.lovegrove@sydney.edu.au) if your graduating year is due for a reunion and this has yet to be organised.

See also: http://sydney.edu.au/medicine/alumni/reunions/index.php
5. Death notices and obituaries (year of graduation in brackets)

5.1 Recent obituaries published in 2012 in the Sydney Morning Herald and elsewhere included:


For other obituaries of our alumni, see: http://sydney.edu.au/medicine/alumni/news/tributes.php

5.2 Death notices of alumni

Vale to other medical friends and colleagues. Death notices of medical alumni in the Sydney Morning Herald or elsewhere included (most recent first): Glen John Coorey (1957); John Justinian Byrne (1950); Bryan Wheaton Yeo (1961); Thomas Leonard O'Connell (1953); John Desmond Hehir (1954); Brian Geraghty (1986); John Solomon Indyk (1945); Keith Roland McClochan OAM (1947); Susan Catherine Mary O'Reilly (1979); Brian William Somerville (1965); Philip William Van Gelderen (1944); Gregory Aloysius Joseph McGovern (1953); Frederick William Dickes Rost (1961); Wallace (Wal) Gladstone Grigor (1953); Helen Shackfield Rushton (1948); David Charles Morton (1952); Sir Keith Stephen Jones (1933); Archie Kalokerinos (1951); Tracey Donna Robinson (1990; PhD 2003); Joy Stuart Morton (1953); and Struan Birrell Robertson (1952).

6. Updating your University records

A link has been set up where alumni can make changes to emails and addresses: http://surveys.med.usyd.edu.au/limesurvey/index.php?sid=14261

I thank Bevan Stone (1962) for informing me about SPASM, and also about the death of Tom O'Connell.

Please let me know about alumni news and activities that would be of wider interest. We would much appreciate your efforts in encouraging other alumni who do not receive the newsletters to register their email addresses (see above in section 7).

Paul Lancaster
Medical Alumni Association Council and Alumni Council, University of Sydney
Email: pallancaster@gmail.com  Tel. 02 9660 0576

21 May 2012