2007 has been an exciting year of change for Nepean Clinical School.

This year we welcomed 52 Year 1 students, an increase of 50% over the previous years. These kept our Education staff on their toes, co-ordinating teaching, exams and special events for Years 1-4 and PRINT.
The Nepean Education Centre officially opened in October. A very successful opening of both the Research Laboratories and Education Centre was held, with Professor Bruce Robinson, the Dean of the Faculty of Medicine and members of the Faculty and Office of Medical Education attending. Ms Cathie Whitehurst represented Professor Steven Boyages at the opening, highlighting the partnership between Sydney West Area Health Service and The University of Sydney.

The Nepean Education Centre is in full swing and with the Education staff located there, the Centre is proving to be the asset we knew it would be.
We have also welcomed members of the Ambulance Service who are completing a training program for Paramedics, in conjunction with Sydney West Area Health Service and Nepean Clinical School.
The growth in Nepean Clinical School is ongoing. I look forward to 2008 and would like to thank the staff of the Clinical School, tutors and students for making Nepean a great place to work and study.

Wishing Everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Professor Michael Peek
Associate Dean and Head of School
NEPEAN CLINICAL SCHOOL
NEW FACILITIES STRENGTHEN NEPEAN CLINICAL SCHOOL

Today, the Chief Executive of Sydney West Area Health Service, Professor Steven Boyages, the Dean of Medicine at the University of Sydney, Professor Bruce Robinson, has joined the Head and Associate Dean of the Faculty’s Nepean Clinical School, Professor Michael Peek, announced the opening of the new research laboratories and Education Centre at Nepean Hospital.

The establishment of the new laboratories and education centre which further strengthens the University’s Nepean Clinical School - based at Nepean Hospital - as a key medical education and research organisation.

“Nepean Hospital has been a University of Sydney teaching hospital since the early 1990s as part of the Western Clinical School. It became a separate clinical school of the Faculty of Medicine in July last year and we see Nepean as having a growing role in the education of our students,” said Professor Robinson.

“The Nepean Medical Research Foundation has been extraordinarily generous. It has provided much appreciated funding for scholarships, research students, research grants and laboratory equipment. Its Nepean Philanthropists program is the only one of its kind in the Faculty of Medicine and, I believe, in the University,” he said.

“It is a measure of our commitment to its future as a centre for high quality research and education that we have made seven new academic appointments, including in paediatrics, obstetrics, psychiatry and geriatrics, to the School in the past year,” he said.

Nepean Hospital has become increasingly important in the education of University of Sydney medical students. The number of students based at the hospital has more than doubled in three years. The expanded education facilities, including new tutorial rooms and a clinical skills laboratory, means the School can continue to provide the best possible education for its rising student population.

The new facilities have increased laboratory space by 50 per cent, reflect the growing research strength within the Nepean Clinical School groups. Among those using the new facilities are Professor James Wiley’s haematology group, whose research has focused on leukemia and other blood disorders; and Professor Jack Wall’s thyroid group.

“To provide the best sustainable healthcare, you need three equally important ingredients – top line clinical services, research and education,” said Professor Peek.

“The University of Sydney, in partnership with Nepean Hospital and Sydney West Area Health Service, is strengthening all three. It is increasing academic clinical staff and students, it is building better research and education facilities, it is providing local healthcare providers with greater educational opportunities and is providing enhanced patient care,” he said. “Such initiatives will help draw further health staff and provide better health services to the people of western Sydney.”

SWAHS Chief Executive, Professor Steven Boyages, says this Clinical School will lead to improved health care through education by providing high quality medical graduates into the fastest growing areas of western Sydney.

“Medical school for students from the west for the west” said Professor Steven Boyages.

Media contacts:
SWAHS Ph 4734 1960
Professor Bruce Robinson: 02 951 6570
Professor Michael Peek: 02 4734 3732
Prof Bruce Robinson speaking at our opening, in our new education seminar room

Our new clinical skills room
Well not literally the world but Nepean students are over-representing in the medical students society’s stakes. This suggests that the medical world is most definitely experiencing a shift to the west (about time too!).

Let’s start with the North American Students Society (NAMSA), a society dedicated to the interests of, lets face it, most of our international students which include getting into a program back home, paying back immense amounts of debt and introducing the tradition of Halloween properly for medical students (with lots of candy and not many clothes).

The President of NAMSA Brandon Baraty is a Nepeanite. The Vice President of NAMSA Bryan Schnabel, again a Nepeanite. And rounding this up with the Secretary, Nicholas Wu and IT Officer, Nilay Goktekin, who are both from Nepean.

Well, I hear you say, that’s just International students. Let’s turn to Sydney University Medical Society (MedSoc) which represents ALL medical students studying at Sydney University.

The President? Paula Conroy, Nepean.
3rd Year Vice President? Ineke Wever, Nepean.
Director of Functions? Andrew Caterson, Nepean.
1st Year Council Rep? Jas Kambo, Nepean.
1st Year Rep? Jan Kokavec, Nepean.

Still not convinced?
How about we go Rural?
Multidisciplinary Interest in Rural and General Health Education (MIRAGE) is Sydney University’s Rural Health club for medical and allied health students and runs fantastic events such as rural high school visits, Indigenous and Rural Health nights and conference funding. The Co-President? You guessed it, Erin Stalenburg from Nepean.

So Nepeanites, what are we going to do tonight?
The same thing we do every night,
TRY TO TAKE OVER THE WORLD.

An Ode to the Westies

Nepean is the Best in the West
Much better than all the rest.
If we didn’t have Maz,
Wê’d all be totally spaz.
Stuart with his English charm,
and the barbed tattoo on his arm (That’s roo-biish!).
Super smooth is our Bill,
He must be on a chill pill,
Biren with his cheeky grin,
He must have had an Ebay win.
Lynne brings us coffee and cake,
Happy students she does make.
Sarah’s always close to the phone,
just incase we’ve been left alone (Thanks Westmead…)
Leta to the rescue with the IT,
So the lecturer we can see!
What a champ is Bernard,
he makes us work really hard.
Stephen Fuller the king of blood,
from him, the knowledge doth flood (must be von Willebrand’s…)
Louise is our sub dean,
because of her we’re a lean mean learning machine.
And to all the others who gave so much of their time
We’re sorry we just couldn’t find the right rhyme
…Nepean Rulz 4Eva!!

Ineke Wever, Erin Stalenberg and Bryan Schnabel
And the Combined effort of Nepean Med2 in post-OSCE lockdown.

NEPEAN STUDENTS TAKE OVER THE WORLD!
The visit to the country-based clinical schools has become a regular event for the Nepean Clinical School delegates in the past few years. These visits are either to Orange or Dubbo. On this occasion the visit was to Orange. The students at Dubbo, travelled to Orange for this visit.

These visits comprise a 2-day intensive tutorial period with tutorials covering obstetric as well as neonatal topics, tutored by the visiting specialists (Prof Peek, Prof Nanan and Dr Klimek below). The venue for most of the teaching is at the local clinical school which is well equipped for this purpose.

The students (above left) find the sessions stimulating and useful, and the lunch provided by the clinical school is great, welcome and rapidly devoured (remnants above right).

Visits to the country schools is tied in with a visit by the same students to the Nepean Hospital where they receive a two-day tutored programme covering neonatal, obstetric and gynaecological topics, plus they have an opportunity to visit the Nepean NICU and see some of the preterm babies and conditions currently in the unit at the time. They also get a chance to practice resuscitation on the models (below centre and right) specifically kept for this purpose in the NICU.

Overall, this outreach programme appears to be working well, but this is thanks to the organisers of the respective clinical schools that co-ordinate this, these being Rhonda Willis (Nepean), Nicole Lockwood (Orange) and Julia Wild (Dubbo).

By Dr Jan Klimek

Final PBL (September 2007)
The grand finale.

Who ever said that PBL’s aren’t fun? Okay, this did happen to be the last of the year’s scheduled PBLs for this group, so maybe there was a reason for the celebrations. Despite the munchies, however, the session continued as usual.

Pictured left to right: Caroline, Daniel, Jan, Linda and William. Absence of a number of other members of this group due to placements in other hospitals.

Now it’s off to the new rotations: yipppeeeeee !!!!!

Penrith Auxiliary Donation

The Penrith Auxiliary donated $2,200 towards an examination couch for the NEPEAN CLINICAL SCHOOL for ultrasound examination.

If you have any further enquiries please contact Zoe Bootle on 4734 1357.
The Nepean Clinical School held a teaching and research retreat in Wollongong on the 27th and 28th September. The meeting was chaired by Dr Louise Cole, Prof Michael Peek (below) and Prof Jim Wiley at the Novotel Northbeach Hotel.

The University of Sydney is currently undergoing a curriculum review for the Graduate Medical Program. In line with this, Professors Kerry Goulston and Kim Oates were guest speakers at the conference, presenting the results of the review and talking about how Nepean can roll out the new curriculum.

The hotel is situated a few metres away from the beach which itself offers a great variety of outdoor opportunities. One aspect of going to a conference is getting away from the day-to-day routine and seeing something new.

On the Thursday evening the participants were treated to a great dinner and drinks in one of the hotel's many function rooms, with many informal chats between colleagues including Michael, Kerry and Kim as pictured above relaxing.
Above left is Professor Peek making a speech prior to the commencement of the evening’s events.

Clearly, the evening was of a jovial nature and included networking at various levels.

The next morning started off early for those that could wake up early enough to participate in the Tai-Chi/Yoga session or a simple beach walk. The second day concentrated on the current issues surrounding research and began with an overview by Professor Jim Wiley, Sub-Dean Research. There were also two presentations. The first by A/Professor Hans Peter Dietz followed by A/Professor Duque.

What a great way to discuss the current and future University issues, get hot updates from various great speakers on their research topics, and get stimulated to “go out there and change the world”.

A great big thank-you to all the organisers, the hosts, the chairs, the presenters, but also to all the participants for making this a truly memorable occasion. There is no doubt that we are all looking forward to next year’s event.
The tradition of the Nepean Scientific Day continued in 2007. This year the day was a joint effort being organised and sponsored by the Nepean Hospital Medical Staff Council and The Nepean Clinical School.

Guest speakers were Professor Richard Lindley who presented on Stroke Management in the 21st Century and Professor Simon Finfer who presented on Hyperglycaemia in Acute Medicine.

An update on Ethics and Research at Nepean was jointly presented by Professor Michael Peek, Dr Ian Seppelt and Professor James Wiley.

Presentations on the day were excellent, covering a wide range of subjects. This highlights the diversity of research happening at Nepean Hospital, something everyone can be proud of. This also places Nepean in an excellent position for research in the future.

The prestigious Nepean Medal was presented to Dr Ben Tang by the Nepean Medical Staff Council. Other prize winners on the day were Leon Wescombe for Best Emerging Researcher presented by Bateman Battersby Solicitors. Bronwyn Roy was awarded Best Poster Presentation by the Nepean Medical Research Foundation and Dr Clara Shek the Best Poster or Oral Presentation by a Registrar or Resident by the Medical Staff Council.

Nepean Clinical School Teacher of the Year 2007

As in the past two years, students in the Graduate Medical Program for the University of Sydney were asked to vote for “Teacher of the Year”. There was a great response from the students and the voting was fairly close. Dr Stuart Lane received a double award being voted Teacher of the Year for Years 1 and 2. Dr Bernard Champion for Year 3 and Dr Karen Fisher Year 4. A further highlight to the awards was the presentation on the curriculum review by Professor Bruce Robinson, The Dean of Medicine.

Michael Peek
A/Prof. Gustavo Duque

Dr Gustavo Duque attended medical school at the University of Caldas (Colombia). Following medical school he completed an internal medicine residency at Javeriana University in Bogota (Colombia) followed by a two-year fellowship in Geriatric Medicine at McGill University. After completing his fellowship, Dr. Duque completed a PhD in Experimental Medicine at McGill University with the thesis entitled “Molecular Changes of the Aging Osteoblast”. He joined the faculty at McGill University Medical School in 2003 as a member of the Division of Geriatric Medicine. His work on mesenchymal stem cells differentiation has provided new evidence to the understanding of senile osteoporosis including the toxic role of bone marrow fat and the potential trans-differentiation between bone and fat cells. His experiments using vitamin D in bone cells have demonstrated a new anabolic effect of vitamin D on both osteoblasts and differentiating mesenchymal stem cells. His Research Program has developed collaborations with major academic institutions worldwide. He is currently funded by major agencies both in Canada and Australia. He has published extensively on the biology of aging bone and the effect of vitamin D on bone formation. Additionally, he has pursued some clinical studies on vitamin D deficiency and falls prevention in older adults. Dr. Duque has served as a member of several peer-review panels at the Canadian Institutes for Health Research and the Quebec Health Research Funds and as a member of the American Society for Bone and Mineral Research-Publications Committee. He has been invited as ad hoc reviewer for multiple journals in the field of bone and geriatric medicine and as a member of the board of directors of Osteoporosis Canada.

A/Prof. Martin Krause

I was born in Nordrhein-Westfalen - the mining state of Western-Germany. At the age of three my family moved close to the Mercedes Capital – Stuttgart - at the door steps of the black forest. After I finished school I had to do a 20 months service either in the army or community. Since I didn’t like the army, I served for severely disabled persons and went to some of the poorest countries of the world. Ever since then I wanted to become a physician.

I enrolled at the Medical School of the famous Heidelberg University (the oldest in Germany and second oldest in the world) in which I completed my medical training. My postgraduate training was done as well in the university clinics Heidelberg, which is a conglomerate of many hospitals in one location employing around 1000 physicians. My thesis concerned diagnostic accuracy in radiology, yet the more I trained the more my interest was drawn to Intensive Care Medicine and Neurology. Heidelberg runs one of the largest Neuro-Intensive Care Unit in the world, which was build up by Prof Werner Hacke, who is one of the leading stroke experts. As a junior doctor I met the inspiring Prof Volker Tronnier who was the first neurosurgeon in Germany to implant Deep Brain Stimulators and involved me in his research. Under the supervision of Prof Hans-Michael Meinck (best known for his research in Stiff-Man Syndrome) I completed an intense Movement Disorder and Neuropsychology Training and became a consultant of Neurology in 2005. In 2006 I spent a sabbatical with Prof John Morris at Westmead Hospital, whom I met at a Movement Disorder Meeting in New Orleans. He was an inspiring researcher, teacher and lecturer. This sabbatical raised the wish to come and work permanently in Australia.

My research is mainly concerned with Movement Disorders and especially Deep Brain Stimulation. We discovered that Deep Brain Stimulation is the first successful therapy for generalized Dystonia - a mostly inherited, progressive, severely disabling Movement Disorder. Eventually I was involved in building up a German research network - the Parkinson Competence Network. This network grew to the most successful research network in Germany conducting several large multi-centric trials.

I was appointed to an academic position at the Nepean Clinical School in September, and would like to build up a similar research network in Australia. I am looking forward to working as a teacher and researcher at Nepean and I am grateful to all the people, who made this possible!

Two studies are important to me at the moment and I would be grateful to get some thoughts from others as well as patients who might participate in the trials:

1. Dopaminergic therapy in Parkinson’s disease causes motor complications like fluctuation or dyskinesias. There are three invasive treatment options for motor complication: Deep Brain Stimulation, Apomorphine, and now recently introduced to Australia DuoDopa pumps. None of these treatments options are evidence based and they have not been compared. The aim of our study is to compare the efficacy and safety of these treatment options with regard to Quality of Life. We obviously need a larger number of centres Australia wide and we need support with referral of suitable patients.

2. Impulse control disorders like pathologic gambling, hypersexuality, or compulsive medication use seem to be rather common in Parkinson’s disease and might be attributed to treatment. Together with A/Prof Vladan Starcevic I would like to investigate this comorbidity. We try to assess the frequency of impulse control disorders and try to identify the underlying risk factors.

If you are interested I would be very happy to send you further information. Please contact me on mkrause@med.usyd.edu.au.
$35,000 Raised for Charity

The second Mayoral Charity Ball held recently was again an outstanding success raising $35,000 for the Nepean Medical Research Foundation. A cheque for $30,000 was handed to the charity on the night but since then, final figures have been determined and the charity has now received a cheque for $35,000.

Penrith City’s famous generosity came to the fore once again with sponsors and ticket holders contributing much needed funds that will help benefit the health care of our community by providing much needed support to researchers at Nepean Clinical School, Nepean Hospital.

The night proved to be one of the social events of the year and Council would like to publicly thank those sponsors and supporters who contributed to such a worthwhile cause. Sponsors and supporters included Penrith Lakes Development Corporation, SITA Environmental Solutions, Delfin, VISY Recycling, Panthers, Leonard Holt Robb, Pioneer Road Services, HIX Group, Jorga James Giftware, The Good Guys, Penrith and Pioneer Travel.

Group continues to give

Not one to rest on his laurels, John Bateman has set a new goal for the Nepean Philanthropists, Katherine Fenech reports. NEPEAN Philanthropists was established to raise money for the Nepean Medical Research Foundation, which would flow onto the University of Sydney’s Nepean Clinical School. The clinical school has been run out of Nepean Hospital for the past 15 years, conducting medical research into areas of need such as cancer, depression, coronary disease and diabetes. When he formed the group in September last year, Mr Bateman wanted the number of members to grow to 50 in nine months. Mr Bateman’s plan was for each of the members to donate $2500 annually for five years. He reached that goal in just three months.

“An exciting moment in the life of the group came when a professor committed Sydney University to matching the contribution of 45 philanthropists. It means that the group will raise over $1 million for the school over five years. Now Mr Bateman, a former Penrith mayor, is aiming a bit higher. He wants to have 75 philanthropists by June next year. Mr Bateman wanted the number of members to grow to 50 in nine months. Mr Bateman’s plan was for each of the members to donate $2500 annually for five years. He reached that goal in just three months.

“The intent was to get likeminded people who had been successful in Penrith to make a commitment to giving money back not just once but on a recurring basis,” he said. “Penrith people are real giving people – it’s a giving place and if someone gets into trouble or falls on hard times my experience is that it is a community that gets together and really assists others in need.”

An exciting moment in the life of the group came when a professor committed Sydney University to matching the contribution of 45 philanthropists. It means that the group will raise over $1 million for the school over five years. Now Mr Bateman, a former Penrith mayor, is aiming a bit higher. He wants to have 75 philanthropists by June next year.

“I understand that some of the people won’t be able to continue that commitment for longer than five years,” he said. “So I just considered that if we want to keep the funding going we need to look at starting to attract even more philanthropists.”

He is well on his way to reaching that number, with 57 individuals and business owners, who call themselves Nepean Philanthropists, joining the group so far.

Details: John Bateman, Nepean Philanthropists, johnbateman@batemanbattersby.com.au or 4731 5899
Courtesy of Penrith City Star
Nepean Philanthropists Dinner a great success

NEPANE PHILANTHROPISTS CELEBRATE GIVING OVER $250,000 TO NEPEAN MEDICAL RESEARCH FOUNDATION THIS YEAR!

150 of Penrith's local business owners, politicians and community supporters gathered at the Great Hall of the University of Sydney to celebrate the Nepean Medical Research Foundation’s Inaugural Nepean Philanthropists Dinner. The Nepean Philanthropists is the brain child of local businessman and Vice President of the Nepean Medical Research Foundation, John Bateman, who explains to the gathered philanthropists his mission for the Nepean Philanthropists was “to approach those people in our city that Penrith had been good to and ask them to make a commitment to give to a local organization who’s work will be of benefit to the entire community.” It says something about Penrith and the people that live here that in just 76 days last year 50 local business owners had committed to giving $2500 per year for five years, guaranteeing $62,500 in funding over the next 5 years. With the pledge made by the University of Sydney to match dollar for dollar the first 40 philanthropists, that ensures that medical research at Nepean hospital with be able count on up to $1,000,000 in funding over the next 5 years.

Special guest speaker for the evening was the Honorable Tony Abbott, the Federal Health Minister, who despite his current schedule during the election campaign, spent the entire evening with guests putting politics aside, saying research is about people. When a community like Penrith gets behind its local researchers, the achievements are even more significant and help to keep Australia at the forefront of medical research.

His Worship the Mayor Greg Davies CR took the podium to thank Mr John Bateman for his community minded spirit, involvement and achievements in the community with a Community Service Award.

The Nepean Medical Research Foundation along with the support of the Nepean Philanthropists support has been able to fund this year over $104,000 for much needed equipment for the expanding research laboratories at Nepean Hospital as well as a further $101,000 in research grants for local researchers to continue their ground breaking work.

Nepean Medical Research Foundation's PHD Student, Dr Ben Tang addressed guests with a personal account of why he decided to undertake a career in research and his achievements during this time. His work has been recently published in the respected medical journal The Lancet, which again puts research conducted in Penrith on the world stage.

Dr Benjamin Man Piu Tang
My PhD project on Functional Genomics has been supported by the Nepean Medical Foundation.

The main focus of my PhD research has been the study of a highly lethal disease called “sepsis” with the aid of powerful genetic techniques. Sepsis affects millions of people worldwide each year and so far our understanding of this disease remains limited. Based on the work over the last four years, I have identified a number of molecular pathways implicated in sepsis, which have led to a much greater understanding of underlying process of this complex disease. My work was recently published in the highest ranking intensive care medicine journal in the world; the American Journal of Respiratory and Critical Care Medicine (Oct 1, 2007). It is regarded as pioneering work in the field of sepsis research and is believed to have paved the way for future development.

I have recently completed a Master degree in Clinical Epidemiology. The extensive analytical and statistical training I received from this degree has allowed me to undertake research in the area of meta-analysis. Meta-analysis has long been regarded as the pinnacle of evidence-based medicine. It is a specialised area of research in which investigators use very sophisticated statistical methods to combine results from many studies in order to summarize all the research in a particular field. Findings from meta-analysis are highly regarded and are often used to formulate public health policy and clinical practice guidelines. Research using meta-analytic technique therefore plays a very significant role in medical research.

I have undertaken several meta-analyses over the last two years. Two of which are now published in the most prestigious medical journals in the world (see publication record). My most recent publication is a ground-breaking study that has found strong evidence supporting the effectiveness of calcium as a way of preventing osteoporosis and related bone fractures. The study, published in The Lancet (one of the most prestigious medical journals in the world), is by far the largest and most exhaustive meta-analysis ever undertaken on calcium. It has drawn significant international attention and has appeared in The New York Times, The Guardian, United Press International, Science Daily and ABC radios.

I received the Nepean Medal for 2007 at this year's Nepean Scientific Day, at Nepean Hospital and I am a reviewer for the Medical Journal of Australia and Critical Care.
It is with mixed emotions as I reflect on my past eight years as a Research Fellow at the Nepean Clinical School and look to my new appointment as Senior Lecturer in Cell and Molecular Biology at the University of Wollongong. My time at the School has afforded me the opportunity to work in the excellent research team of Prof. Wiley, Department Medicine (Haematology). Our research on the role of the P2X7 receptor in red and white blood cells has resulted in a number of important findings in tuberculosis, autoimmunity and red cell biology. During this time I have published some 27 research articles, attracted close to $1 million dollars in external funding, and seen the successful completion of four Honours and one PhD student. All of which I would not have been able to achieve if it wasn’t for the support of my esteemed P2X7 colleagues and the School. Moreover, I have had the privilege of working with a number of other school members including Dr. Guy Eslick, Assoc. Prof Antony McLean, Dr. Marek Nalos and the late Prof. Christopher Martin. Along the way I have made good friendships with many staff and students which have enriched my life in so many ways.

As I leave I am encouraged by the recent recruitment of high quality national and international staff to the School, the ongoing presence of several high calibre and energetic research groups, recent purchases of state-of-the-art equipment, expansion and modernization of the school’s laboratories, the rising success of the Nepean Medical Research Foundation and the generous support of the Penrith community, the tireless efforts of the School’s laboratory manager, Susan Dowd, and the leadership of Prof. Michael Peek. I look forward to ongoing collaborations at the School with Prof. James Wiley, Dr Ben Gu, Dr Stephen Fuller, Dr Leanne Stokes and Kristy Skarratt which will not only allow me the opportunity to continue researching the role of P2X7 in health and disease, but also the chance to visit the School for many years to come.

Ron Sluyter
November 2007

It was in 2005 that I joined Professor Jack Wall’s research group as a Research Officer. My time at the Department of Endocrine with Professor Wall has not only been memorable, but an extremely productive period. I was fortunate to be part of some novel and exciting research that was carried out in the field of thyroid associated ophthalmopathy, which led to the publication of numerous scientific journals by our group. I have learnt a lot not only from my own group members but also from other staff and students here on level 5. There have been numerous friendships that I have formed on this level and ones that I hope to continue long after I have left. I have enjoyed being involved in the supervision of postgraduate students and in the tutoring of undergraduate students, which I found to be both a rewarding and enriching experience. As I leave to take my position as Postdoctoral Research Fellow at the Westmead Millennium Institute, I reflect on the wonderful opportunities and experiences that I have gained here at Nepean, which has not only enhanced my professional career but also my personal life.

Junichi Tani

After getting my PhD from Tohoku University, Japan, I worked as a physician for a few years in Japan. But as I wanted to do research on Thyroid diseases, I looked for a good place. One of my senior associates who had worked with Jack told me he was looking for someone who could work with him as a postdoctoral fellow. I contacted Jack, and here I am.

When I moved to Geelong with my family 3 years and 4 months ago, Jack told me we were going to Sydney a few months later. So we had to move twice in 5 months. When I return to Japan, I am going to be a Senior Lecturer of the Endocrinology and Metabolism Division of Kurume University. Prof. Yuji Hiromatsu, the Professor of this division, is one of the Japanese researchers who worked with Jack in USA and Canada. He was interested in what I did here and asked me to work with him. I am going to do research which is associated with what Jack and I did here as well as other work. I will also teach medical students and see patients. There will be a lot to do there, but I believe it will help to develop myself.

I would like to give my appreciation to everybody in Nepean Hospital. With your help, my family and I had a meaningful and delightful stay here in Australia.

Junichi
The Nepean Centre for Perinatal Care

The Nepean Centre for Perinatal Care (NCPC) has recently been established within the Nepean Clinical School and comprises the disciplines of Obstetrics and Gynaecology and Paediatrics. NCPC will be focussed on research whilst also providing opportunities for education and training in Perinatal Care.

The Centre welcomes Jasmine Lynden as part-time Administrative Officer. Part of Jasmine’s role will be to coordinate educational courses/workshops for general practitioners, midwives, nurses, sonographers, specialists in Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Paediatrics and Radiology. Jasmine brings a wide range of experience in both public and private sector employment, including experience in coordinating clinical education for General Practitioners in Western Sydney.

NCPC's first educational event ‘Women and Children’s Health Update’ was held on 29 November. Professors Michael Peek and Ralph Nanan, and Associate Professors George Condous and Peter Dietz presented relevant information on management of miscarriage and ectopic pregnancy; common maternal medical and fetal disorders; urogynaeology and jaundice in the newborn.

NCPC is located on Level 5, South Block, Nepean Hospital. Jasmine can be contacted on 4734 3205.

OZWAC 10th Anniversary Ball

A date for your diary! Advance Notice: OZWAC - Australian Women & Children’s Research Foundation will be celebrating its 10th Anniversary with its Annual Ball to be held on Saturday 29 March 2008. The theme for the 2008 Ball will be /Carnivale! Over the past 10 years Ozwac has raised hundreds of thousands of dollars to fund research projects. It is hoped that this gala black tie event, whilst providing an enjoyable evening of entertainment and fine food, will help Ozwac reach the magic $1million dollars in research funds.

Tickets are $140.00 each. Each ticket price includes a $100.00 tax deductible donation to the Ozwac Charitable Trust. Corporate tables are also available.

Please contact Jasmine Lynden on 4734 3205 (Monday to Wednesday) or Mobile 0402 739 129 to purchase tickets or to make a donation to this very worthwhile cause.

Jasmine Lynden
Admin Officer - OZWAC

Li Zhang

Li Zhang (Lee), Professor in the Division of Gastroenterology, in the Second Affiliated Hospital of Nanhua University, Hengyang, HuNan Province, Peoples Republic of China came here as a Visiting Scholar in the Division of Gastroenterology, Department of Medicine, Nepean Hospital to study and research for one year. She came here to learn advanced science and technology, studying together with Drs Kalantar and Eslick in the field of diseases relative to H.pylori or gastric-intestinal cancers, and gain experience in clinical medicine.

This was to help establish a good relationship with the Department of Medicine at Nepean Hospital and the University of Sydney, and to continue communication in the future. For Li it was a great chance to learn English well, so she can communicate with people worldwide. Li performed experiments in the first nine months of the year and took part in clinics in the last 3 months.

In her time here, she completed a clinical paper and taught techniques to co-workers as well as learning the technique of endoscopic sterilization and observing the hospital administration system here.

She travelled around Australia for 3 weeks in August while her husband and daughter visited and enjoyed it very much, saying that Australia is a very beautiful and richly endowed country and the people are very friendly and kind".
EXTENDED CARE PARAMEDIC PROGRAM COMMENCES

On 22 October the Ambulance Service of NSW Chief Executive Mr Greg Rochford opened the Extended Care Paramedic (ECP) program on the initial day of training of what will be a twelve month proof-of-concept occurring in Sydney’s west. The program established 12 new positions to service the Nepean Hospital catchment area covered by Springwood, Warragamba, Colyton, Tregear, Richmond and Penrith ambulance stations. ECPs will be operational in the local catchment area from the “go-live” date, 22 December 2007.

ECPs will be working as single responders attending a wide variety of emergency and non-emergency cases. The program focuses on low-risk presentations where the emergency department may not necessarily be the most appropriate provider of the care required. ECPs will identify patients with low-risk presentations and will provide extended care (where needed) and referral to an appropriate care provider. Importantly, the program will offer increased choices for patients following an encounter with Ambulance.

Core training at the University of Sydney Nepean Clinical School is nearing completion. Ongoing training will be provided throughout the year as the program continues. The Clinical School has made a major contribution to the ECP education program and remains a major supporter of this new model of care. The Ambulance Service of NSW is grateful of the contributions of the clinical school and looks forward to maintaining our relationship as the program continues. The ECPs have greatly enjoyed the lectures, tutorials and clinical placements.

The ECPs are looking forward to commencing their operational role and working within the Area Health Service to provide better care for patients who access healthcare through the Ambulance Service. For further information please contact Project Manager Dr Jason Bendall on (02) 9320 7741 or via email (jbendall@ambulance.nsw.gov.au).

The Extended Care Paramedics are: Lyndon Baker, Roger Bowen, Steven Cachia, Lauren Cowgill, Hannah Freitas, David Long, Cassandra Loughman, Wayne Lucas, Christian Mortensen, Bernadette McCabe, Ben Southers, Grahame Stansfield

We are very, very grateful for the clinical schools help from Prof Peek down. Everyone has been wonderful.

Cheers

Jason
Electrophysiology equipment

Dr Leanne Stokes was awarded $57,000 from the Faculty of Medicine Research Infrastructure (Major Equipment) Scheme 2007 for 2008. This money will be combined with $15,000 from internal sources to a total of $92,000 to purchase electrophysiology equipment. The equipment will include a HEKA patch clamp amplifier, a fluorescent inverted microscope, anti-vibration table and Faraday cage, micro-manipulator, rapid solution changer for fast agonist application, a micro-electrode puller and an osmometer.

She was also awarded $20,000 off Nepean medical Research Foundation in August and a Ramaciotti Foundation Establishment Gift totaling $24,600 for the project entitled "The influence of genetic polymorphisms in the P2Y2 receptor gene on inflammatory cytokine release from human monocytes and macrophages"

New Student Faces :

Hilman H. Tjiang – Summer student in Medicine
Brian Wise – Summer student in Medicine from Canada
Olivia (J Uddin) – MB BS in Medicine

Students News :

Mr Ryan Stevenson, BAnVertBioSc (Hons) – Haematology
Passed with 1st Class Honours and received The University Medal
Thesis title: The P2X7 receptor of erythrocytes and leukocytes from canines and humans
Supervisors: Dr Ronald Sluyter and A/Prof Rosanne Taylor

Mr Jimmy Tran, BSc (Vet) (Hons) - Haematology - Passed with 1st Class Honours
Thesis title: The P2X7 receptor and the skin immune system
Supervisors: Dr Ronald Sluyter and A/Prof Rosanne Taylor

Miss Binu Thampan, MBBS (Hons) - Haematology
Thesis title: Circulating interleukin-18 levels and a loss-of-function P2X7 polymorphism in heart failure
Supervisors: Dr Ronald Sluyter and Dr Guy Eslick

Department News and Publications:

• Under Prof. Jack Wall, our Medicine laboratory will be the Central Lab for calsequestrin and collagen XIII antibody testing for a British Multi centre Thyroid Eye Disease treatment Trial, organized by collaborators at Moorfields Eye Hospital London, UK.
• Jack is also now Honours coordinator for University Medicine.
• Nick Talley was awarded the University of Newcastle Convocation Medal for Professional Excellence in 2007.

New Publications:

Osteoporosis in Older Persons - Pathophysiology and Therapeutic Approach Gustavo Duque, Department of Geriatric Medicine, Nepean Clinical School, University of Sydney, Australia; Douglas P. Kiel, Institute for Aging Research, Hebrew Senior Life, and Harvard Medical School, Boston, MA, USA (Eds.) Published by Springer

The book summarizes recent advances in the elucidation of the mechanisms involved in senile osteoporosis as well as its potential treatment, bringing an integrated approach from the bench to the clinical practice. A unique aspect of this book is its emphasis on the application of translational research in the field of osteoporosis and falls which make it useful not only to biologists but also to clinicians and epidemiologists. The chapters are complemented with color figures showing the basics of bone biology, bone phenotypes and falls prevention interventions and also include tables and flowcharts.

Written by investigators (clinicians and basic scientists) in the field of aging bone research, this is a reference guide to geriatricians, gerontologists, endocrinologists, rheumatologists and bone biologists, medical trainees as well as other health professionals (pharmacists, physiotherapists, etc).

Gastroenterology and Hepatology: A Clinical Handbook (Editors: NJ Talley, I Segal and M Weltman)

A new first class, short textbook from the Nepean GI Unit has been published by Elsevier

Ben Tang’s recent publications are:


The Use of Gene-Expression Profiling to Identify Candidate Genes in Human Sepsis Tang B, McLean AS, Dawes I, Huang SJ, Lin CY.


**New Faces:**
- Assoc. Prof. Martin Krause - Medicine
- Assoc. Prof. Gustavo Duque – Medicine
- Jasmine Lynden - The Nepean Centre for Perinatal Care
- Dr Tomasso Bignardi, Associate Lecturer - Obstetrics and Gynaecology
- Dr Dalya Mubarak from Bahrain, Fellow in Gynaecology

**Departures:**
- Dr Ron Sluyter – Haematology
- Dr Bamini Gopinath – Medicine
- Dr Junich Tani – Medicine
- Mrs Paula Townier - Surgery

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