Shining a light on rural champions
The Lumen masthead is derived from the University of Adelaide motto “Sub Cruce Lumen” meaning ‘light under the [Southern] Cross’.

Today, almost 140 years since our establishment, the University of Adelaide community is united in its quest for discovery and the light of new knowledge.

Welcome to this edition of Lumen which has a distinctly rural feel. The University of Adelaide has enjoyed strong links with rural community, and with agricultural research and education, since its establishment in 1874.

Today that connection is as vibrant as ever and will receive a tremendous boost through the largest investment in agricultural crop production and animal research in Australia’s history.

Earlier this year, the University announced it would commit more than $50 million from its endowment to create six new research professorships at the Waite and Roseworthy campuses, a new animal research centre at Roseworthy, new postdoctoral fellowships, and to purchase new research equipment.

What does this mean for our rural and regional communities? And for farming in Australia?

It means a great deal. At a time when our agricultural sector is facing critical challenges at home, global issues of food security, climate change and natural resource management present an alarming threat to communities across the world.

Herein lies an opportunity to make a difference for the University of Adelaide. We will take a leading role in helping to drive solutions to these grand issues; to address the needs of agriculture today through targeted research while producing the next generation of outstanding scientists. And we will do this in collaboration with industry and local communities.

This year is also significant as we mark the centenary of Peter Waite gifting his estate at Urrbrae to the University. Elevating the profile of the Waite precinct together with our partners in agricultural research and development is a key ambition in the University’s Strategic Plan 2013–2023 Beacon of Enlightenment. In November we will be holding a centennial dinner to celebrate the Waite, and I look forward to sharing more details on this initiative in the coming months.

As alumni and friends of the University, I hope you enjoy reading the diverse stories in this special edition of Lumen.

Professor Warren Bebbington
Vice-Chancellor and President
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Front cover image:
Professor Stefan Hiendleder at The University of Adelaide Roseworthy campus
Photo by Chris Tonkin

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$50-million boost for animal and plant research

The University has announced the largest ever investment in university-based research into animal and crop health and production in Australia. *Lumen* takes a look at what this means.

The University of Adelaide has ambitious plans for research at its Waite and Roseworthy campuses: a Waite Campus that’s likely to become one of the most powerful concentrations of agricultural, food and wine research in the world; and Roseworthy, as the most significant research hub for food and fibre animals in Australia.

These visions were brought a step closer this year with the announcement of a $50-million investment in animal and crop health and production research using funds from the bequests of JAT Mortlock and JS Davies.

University Vice-Chancellor and President Warren Bebbington outlined the creation of six new research professorships at the Waite and Roseworthy campuses, a new animal research centre at Roseworthy, new postdoctoral fellowships, and the purchase of new research equipment.

“These initiatives will make a major contribution to international research in agriculture and animal production, and confirm Adelaide as the leading centre for animal and agricultural research in Australia,” Professor Warren Bebbington said.

“It’s now a century since Peter Waite made his extraordinary gift of his Urbrae estate to the University.

“Today Waite is the focus for key major research organisations, and we plan to help the Waite achieve global prominence as an agricultural science research consortium. Not since Peter Waite have we seen an investment even close to this magnitude for agricultural science research in this country.”

The $50-million endowment fund comes from the gifts of two benefactors, JAT Mortlock and JS Davies, whose express wishes were to support these fields.
“We are extremely proud to be able to honour their memories in a way that will not only support South Australia’s farming community, but also address global issues of food security and climate change adaptation,” Professor Bebbington said.

At the Roseworthy campus, the University will establish:

> The JS Davies Animal Research Centre—building on existing strengths with a focus on production, global food security, biosecurity and animal welfare;
> Two professorships—the JS Davies Chair in Animal Health and the JS Davies Chair in Animal Production—to take leading roles in the new Centre, including research equipment and research infrastructure and post doctoral research and technical support staff.

These two new professorships will supplement the existing JS Davies Chair in the area of epigenetics and genetics, currently held by Professor Stefan Hiendleder.

“This is a very significant investment in the future of animal based research at the Roseworthy Campus,” said Professor Iain Reid, Executive Dean of Roseworthy Campus. “It will allow us to continue to build the campus as a focus of animal science in Southern Australia.”

Professor Reid said this latest boon came on top of the investment of more than $50 million in capital works for the School of Animal and Veterinary Sciences since 2008 – over $32 million by the University, $15 million by the Federal Government and $5 million by the State Government.

“This investment in Roseworthy has revitalised the campus and we are seeing tremendous growth in student and staff numbers, both academic and professional,” said Professor Reid. “Together with this latest investment, and closer relationships with our collaborative partners on campus, Roseworthy will be leading research and education in animal sciences into the foreseeable future.”

Professor Kym Abbott, Head of the School of Animal and Veterinary Sciences, said the expansion of research at Roseworthy would strengthen links with the South Australian Research and Development Institute (SARDI).

“These links, recently consolidated in pig and poultry research, will now be extended to ruminant livestock as talks continue on the ways that the two organisations can best combine their strengths and resources to create an outstanding research community at the Roseworthy campus,” Professor Abbott said.

At the Waite campus the University will establish:

> The JAT Mortlock Chair in Agricultural, Horticultural and Pastoral Science, who will also be Director of the Waite Research Institute;
> Three further professorships—the JAT Mortlock chairs in Plant Stress, Crop Protection and Crop Improvement – supported by research staff in crop epigenetics, stress response biology, plant–pest interactions, genetics of resistance, reproductive biology and crop performance.

Waite Research Institute Director (and new JAT Mortlock Chair) and Head of the School of Agriculture, Food and Wine Professor Mike Wilkinson said: “The Waite Campus is increasingly focusing on two global grand challenges: food security and food production for healthier outcomes.

“In the next 40 years, the world must increase food production at rates higher than ever in history and this must be done through increasing yields, not area of production, and sustainably. It also needs to be done in the face of climate change and with a need to increase quality of food, not just quantity.

“The Waite campus intends to be at the forefront of research and education to meet these challenges. And to do that, we need to attract the best researchers to our campus, to adopt the latest, most sophisticated scientific technology, and to build on our existing partnerships and create new ones.

“This investment in research is a major step towards this vision. It will help us develop the critical mass of specialist researchers we need for the Waite Campus to lead the way in agriculture, food and wine research to secure our agricultural industries and to help feed the world.”

Professor Bebbington highlighted the impact that philanthropic giving can have on university research. “We take donor intentions very seriously, because philanthropy can make a major contribution to the University’s ability to develop research for the growth of the economy of our State and nation,” he said.

**The benefactors**

The new $50-million endowment has been made possible by the generous bequests of John Andrew Tennant Mortlock and John Stanley Davies.

JAT Mortlock (1894–1950) was a successful pastoralist and stud Merino breeder and great philanthropist. During his life he made significant donations to agricultural research. On his death, his estate passed to his wife Dorothy who, in turn, followed his wishes with the bequest of the family property, Martindale Farm at Mintaro, to the University of Adelaide for use in connection with the University's Waite Campus (then known as the Waite Agricultural Research Institute).

Pastoralist JS Davies (1889-1968) spent his working life improving strains of beef cattle and made his stock some of the best available in the country. He never married and, on his death, bequeathed part of his estate to the University of Adelaide and part to Prince Alfred College in a 5/6 to 1/6 share. He asked that the trustees carry on farming activities on the properties, Munduney at Spalding, and Moralan Station north of Hawker, for 20 years. He wished to promote research into cattle and beef production.

The net proceeds to the University of $50.7 million from the sale of the three properties completed last year have been used to establish an Endowment Fund to continue the research focus on crop and animal health and production.

Above: John Stanley Davies

Photo courtesy of University of Adelaide archives
An animal science legacy
The legacy of JS Davies is already being seen in the work of Roseworthy campus’ Professor Stefan Hiendleder with great potential benefits for animal production and quality.

Professor Hiendleder came to Roseworthy from the highly regarded Gene Centre of the Ludwig-Maximilian University in Munich. He was attracted to the University of Adelaide because of the world-leading researchers in pre- and post-natal development (he is also a research leader in the Robinson Institute’s Research Centre for Reproductive Health) and because of the JS Davies funding that enabled him to establish a unique bovine tissue bank at Roseworthy, allowing him to do this exciting work.

“This is an extremely valuable resource,” Professor Hiendleder says. “No-one else in the world has anything like we have here.”

He leads the JS Davies Epigenetics and Genetics Group with four PhD students, one post-doctoral research fellow and a shifting population of Honours and Veterinary Sciences students.

Head of the School of Animal and Veterinary Sciences, Professor Kym Abbott, says: “The School already has a number of outstanding animal scientists who have worked in the areas of genetics, nutrition, food and fibre production of ruminants for over a decade.

“The more recent arrival of Professor Stefan Hiendleder, with his exciting and groundbreaking work on epigenetics in beef cattle, has expanded and strengthened the School’s position as a leading research provider in these fields.

“The expansion of the JS Davies bequest will now facilitate the appointment of at least two more eminent researchers and the creation of a centre for research in the areas related to food animal production, health and welfare.

“Within five years we expect this unit will be the most significant research hub for food and fibre animals in Australia, including, as you would expect in a vibrant research institution, a large body of postdoctoral scientists and PhD students.”

P rofessor Hiendleder came to the University of Adelaide in 2005 as the JS Davies Professorial Fellow.

His work in the field of epigenetics and genetics promises tremendous advances in animal breeding.

Epigenetics, Professor Hiendleder explains, is the science “on top of genetics”, referring to heritable changes in the ways our genes are expressed. These modified genomes follow different patterns of inheritance than the classic mendelian genetics we all learn about in school.

“My group is interested in determining which traits are affected by these non-classical genetics,” says Professor Hiendleder. The research group is identifying genetic markers for specific genes under epigenetic control. To date, there are virtually no data on this in farm animals.

“We are using bovine models to generate outcomes in epigenetics that will be of great benefit to the beef industry and beyond, including human medicine,” he says.

Current breeding programs in animals do not take these epigenetic effects into account. For example, models used today suggest that fertility has a very low degree of heritability. But there is increasing evidence that when individual components are investigated, for example ovulation rate in cattle, epigenetic effects are playing a much larger role than previously thought.

“By identifying these non-mendelian modes of inheritance for genes that have important production and quality outcomes, we can better understand the genetic architecture of quantitative traits in animals and humans.

“For beef producers, this means more accurate estimates of the breeding values of animals,” Professor Hiendleder says. “That leads to increased efficiencies – we can select for particular characteristics more efficiently; we can produce with less inputs and produce higher quality.”

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Left: Professor Stefan Hiendleder at The University of Adelaide Roseworthy campus

Photo by Chris Tonkin

story by Robyn Mills
Tony Rathjen’s lifetime of agricultural research has had hundreds of collaborators: the farmers, scientific colleagues and students themselves who have benefited from his findings.
After studying and working at the University for more than 40 years, Professor Rathjen ‘retired’ in 2012 – although he is still active in a number of areas.

Professor Rathjen grew up on a property near Birdwood, and studied Agricultural Science at the University of Adelaide before completing a PhD at Cambridge.

In 1965 he returned to Adelaide to begin his academic career as a lecturer in plant breeding. But it was hardly the career of an academic who sat in their office or in the laboratory all day.

“I think I was very fortunate to be on the scene when there was a huge change in agriculture technology, particularly from the 1970s onwards,” he said.

“It was obviously good in lots of ways: farmers could grow their crops more efficiently with better yields. But there was a downside, too: because it was more efficient it meant fewer farmers were needed and it led to a kind of breakdown of the community structure which revolves around farming in Australia.”

Professor Rathjen places enormous value on the role the farmers themselves played in driving his agricultural research.

“At a personal level, because I grew up on a farm, farming is what I know and I consider a lot of the farmers I’ve worked with mates,” he said.

“By developing those personal relationships, I think that helped my science and my research. I was able to talk to the farmers and gain an insight from them about what was happening on the land.

“They were in the best position to understand the environment that they were working in, and many of them were very astute observers about practices and processes, about what worked and what didn’t work, and about unusual things they’d noticed.

“It’s one thing to be in the lab all day, but it’s another thing to be on the land with these people and learning about agriculture where it actually happens, and then applying that knowledge to your research.”

Dr Rathjen’s career achievements are many:

> Co-founding the Crop Science Society of South Australia, an active organisation of farmers, consultants and scientists which provides a forum for the exchange of information and research into crops and crop production;

> Developing and releasing numerous varieties of bread and cereal wheats, including the widely grown bread wheat resistant to the pest cereal cyst nematode. His Yitpi bread wheat variety has been widely used across Southern Australia (at its peak, the variety accounted for 35% of all wheat grown in South Australia and 70% of Victoria’s);

> Initiating critical research into plant breeding including investigation of crown rot disease in durum, and the impact of high levels of soil boron on cereal growth;

> Applying his ‘hands-on’ research philosophy to his teaching, with many agricultural science students describing his field trips as highlights of their undergraduate studies; and

> Being patriarch of a high-achieving and academic family, with all five children receiving PhDs (with one, Peter, now Vice-Chancellor at the University of Tasmania).

Quietly, Professor Rathjen has given back to the education system which launched his career.

With the royalties from the commercialisation of the Yitpi grain, he has also set up the Yitpi Foundation. The foundation encourages and promotes research and education in the fields of crop science, particularly in relation to the wheat industry in southern Australia.

The foundation’s other focus is close to Professor Rathjen’s heart, as it formed the basis for the career of his late wife, Cynthia: linguistics of Australian languages, and studies of the cultures of Aborigines, particularly in relation to land usage.

“It’s been gratifying to see my research end up having real application on the land, but also that I’m able to put the proceeds from that towards things I’m passionate about,” he said. 😊

Left: Professor Rathjen harvesting durum wheat in 2010. Picture by Paula Thompson, courtesy of the Stock Journal.

Waite Arboretum – for Science and Solace

Peter Waite’s far-sighted gift of his Urrbrae estate specified that the western half was to be held in perpetuity as a park or garden for the enjoyment of the public.

The Arboretum, established in 1928, is more than a beautiful, tranquil green space: it is a 30-hectare experimental collection of plant species from around the world being trialled for suitability to our soils and climate and providing a valuable resource for scientific research and teaching.

The collection of more than 2300 labelled trees includes many species endangered in the wild and a heritage-listed Elm Avenue. Special collections include oaks, ornamental pears and dragon trees.

The trees are grown without watering after establishment, demonstrating which species perform well under rainfall alone and informing better species selection for our urban forests of the future.

Interpretive signs, koalas, birds, stunning sculptures, a labyrinth, a watercourse and shady seats enrich the visitors’ experiences.

The Arboretum is open and free, dawn till dusk, every day of the year and free guided walks are held on the first Sunday of every month. It is supported by the Friends of the Waite Arboretum and a group of dedicated volunteers.

For more information visit www.waite.adelaide.edu.au or contact the Director, Dr Jennifer Gardner on +61 8 8313 7405.
In this edition, Lumen looks at the contribution the University’s graduates make in rural towns and communities across Australia.

The relaxed country lifestyle is hard to forego, and for these graduates, returning to live and work in the rural setting in which they grew up has seen them contribute in many ways to the growth and wellbeing of the towns as well as to the advancement of the residents.

Doctors Martin and Fiona Altmann, who run a family general practice in Murray Bridge, have been making an impact in their community for the past 20 years. Their work was recognised in 2012, when they were jointly awarded the Telstra RDAA Rural Doctor of the Year Award.

“We both love the challenge and rewards of working in a tight-knit community and no doubt our terrific undergraduate years at the University of Adelaide set us up to then gain the postgraduate experience we needed to pursue our special interests,” Martin said.

“Although we are GPs, Fiona does a lot of anaesthetics and I, obstetrics. We are now delivering the next generation of babies,” he said.

Martin and Fiona believe that the biggest challenge facing rural towns is equity of access to all services, especially in health.

“There are a lot of studies that show an early positive experience in rural medicine increases the chance of medics returning to the country, we hope we can play a part in the future that way,” Martin said.

Our graduates are contributing to a bright future for regional, rural and remote Australia in many ways. Read how their innovation and determination are making a difference and inspiring others across the country. ▶

For almost 140 years, University of Adelaide graduates have made an impact not only across the world, but just as importantly, at a local and community level.

Reaping the rewards in regional Australia

Above: Doctors Martin and Fiona Altmann
Rural roots beckon for Martin

Medical graduate and former Mount Gambier resident Dr Martin Downs counts himself among ‘the lucky ones’ to have studied Medicine at the University of Adelaide.

Currently in his third year of psychiatric specialist training, Martin’s ultimate goal is to become a consultant Psychiatrist in the Rural and Remote division of mental health servicing country South Australia.

Martin was the recipient of a Medical Rural Bonded Scholarship throughout his undergraduate degree, which includes a commitment from him to service a rural area for six years upon becoming an independently practising specialist.

“Having grown up in country South Australia, moving to Adelaide was a challenging prospect practically, emotionally and financially,” Martin said.

“I hold many memories of growing up in Mount Gambier that I can best describe as idealistic!

“Football on Saturdays was a true family day, throughout my childhood. My sister and I would finish our games of footy and netball, and Nanna would have her egg sandwiches packed in a bag with more sweets than we could handle. Grandpa and Dad, William ‘Billy’ Downs (B Ed 1971), were always involved with the Football Club so it was like a second home for me really. I loved it,” Martin said.

Moving to Adelaide to study medicine was not something that Martin had considered at length throughout his schooling in Mount Gambier. But a love of learning, combined with encouragement from his parents and grandparents to question the world around him led Martin down his chosen career path.

“It was difficult at times in high school to maintain the relevance of learning and university, when the culture is not so aligned with this goal. I later discovered this to be more of a common goal in many city schools.

“I think this cultural difference in the normalisation of a tertiary education is one of the pervasive challenges facing rurally-based teenagers,” Martin said.

After nearly 10 years away from ‘home’, Martin hopes to soon spend some time working in the South East to give back to the rural communities that gave him such a treasured upbringing. A move back to Mount Gambier would allow Martin to work more closely with his mother, South East Regional Director for Country Health SA, Jayne Downs.

“The tyranny of distance remains a challenge, especially for those looking to further their education to a tertiary level."

“With medicine, the training involves not only six years of study, but another six or so years towards postgraduate qualifications. This is a long time to be away from a community, especially if your family has firm roots in a rural area,” Martin said.

“The tyranny of distance remains a challenge, especially for those looking to further their education to a tertiary level.

“I guess rural areas are caught in a bit of a bind, between developing links to the metro areas they have always been so far from, and maintaining the localism that has always defined them as unique and special places.”

Right: Dr Martin Downs
Madeleine is undertaking a graduate program with BHP Billiton Iron Ore, working as a mining engineer in the Pilbara region of Western Australia, and says she honestly loves her job.

It was chance rather than family tradition that led Madeleine down her chosen career path, being among the first generation of her family, along with her brother, to choose a career in the resources industry.

“I picked mining engineering based on several factors: it sounded the most interesting in terms of job prospects and workplace, there would be jobs available when I graduated, and there was a distinct opportunity for travel both interstate and internationally,” she said.

“My first field trip to Prominent Hill, Olympic Dam and Whyalla was my first real look into what my job would involve… and I was hooked.

“For someone who, four years ago, wouldn’t have been able to tell you what a mining engineer did, I believe I have found my ideal job,” she said.

When asked about her experience working in a male-dominated industry, Madeleine says she has never considered herself to be in the minority or unsuited to the job simply because she is female.

“There have been times when I have felt perhaps that others underestimate my ability to work hard or withstand the conditions on a mine site. My method of dealing with this is to take every opportunity to work hard, learn quickly and fit into the workplace well. People soon realised that every book cannot be judged by its cover,” she said.

Madeleine feels that the need for sustainable development in rural mining towns is an important issue affecting the resources industry today.

“Towns should be developed to service mining areas only if the development is for the long term. This may involve investing in local agriculture, training local people to work in the mine or other associated jobs, or providing long-term accommodation and facilities for a rural hub,” she said.

Having grown up on a small hobby farm in the Adelaide Hills, Madeleine considers herself extremely fortunate to have been raised in a rural area.

“My brothers and I were very lucky to have enough animals, motorbikes, paddock cars and space to endlessly entertain ourselves. We hardly ever played with video games or toys indoors, we were outside as much as the weather allowed.

“Growing up in a rural area teaches you the value of hard work and a sense of responsibility, to be looking after something other than yourself. I hope one day to give my children the same upbringing.”

Above: Madeleine Iles

They say you can take the girl out of the country, but for Madeleine Iles, completing a Bachelor of Mining Engineering at the University of Adelaide has seen her land firmly on her feet in the resources industry, right back in rural Australia.
King of the crops

In 1980, Peter Kuhlmann left Roseworthy Agricultural College with an Associate Diploma in Farm Management and within a year he was running the family farm.

The third-generation farmer from Mudamuckla, on the west coast of Eyre Peninsula, continues to overcome the challenges his ancestors have faced for over 100 years – that of low rainfall and difficult soil conditions.

“Studying at Roseworthy gave me a wide ranging set of farm management skills to complement my on-farm experience,” said Peter.

Using these skills to make the most of this challenging environment saw Peter named 2012 Australian Farmer of the Year and Australian Grain Grower of the Year.

“The flavour of my application was that marginal growers, the ones on the edge, are good farmers as well.”

Peter said he was humbled by the win.

“There are lots of great farmers out there—I feel a bit embarrassed to look across and see this ‘Australian Farmer of the Year’ plaque sitting there and realise that’s me.”

The award has thrust Peter into the limelight and he has found himself in demand by the media for his comments, invited to give presentations and attend special events.

“Since I’ve won that award I’m the expert on everything from live export of cattle to anything else,” he jokes.

But this recognition as an outstanding farmer is well deserved, with Peter considered to be at the leading edge of the industry in his use of innovative technologies.

With his farm receiving an average yearly rainfall of less than 300 millimetres, Peter needs to optimise grain production in whatever way he can in this marginal environment, where he annually plants around 6,500 hectares of mostly wheat, plus some barley and canola.

Through conservation farming practices such as stubble retention and no-till farming, Peter is able to minimise soil disturbance and maximise every drop of rain that falls.

He is one of a handful of farmers on the Eyre Peninsula using liquid fertiliser in the form of phosphoric acid, which allows him to get more value out of his fertiliser in difficult calcareous soils.

And as an early adopter of precision farming techniques, Peter uses GPS technology to adjust the input of seed and fertiliser in his soil.

He admits that adopting new technology in a very dry area is risky but his decisions and changes have been incremental over the years and are ultimately aimed at maximising his production.

Peter says that going to university taught him how to research and challenge information and he continues to be passionate about professional development and sharing his knowledge.

He is a graduate of the Australia Rural Leadership Program, a Fellow of the Australian Institute of Company Directors, and a former Board member of the Eyre Peninsula Agricultural Research Foundation and the South Australia Grain Industry Trust.

Sustaining the family farm into its third generation, Peter has seen many tough times and faces constant uncertainty when choosing the right tactics to keep the operation viable.

“Farming is all about compromise; you’ve got to choose a path at the time of sowing which is very critical – whether to sow crops dry, some a bit early and which paddocks later, as well as juggling a herbicide strategy and variety selection.

“It’s a lot of trial and error – you weigh up the options and have a go.

“My life has been farming, that’s what I like doing, despite all of its challenges.”

King of the crops

The University of Adelaide | Alumni Magazine
Raising a glass to Mary

Since spending her childhood on her family’s fruit block in South Australia’s Riverland, third-generation viticulturist Mary Retallack has become one of the most influential women in the wine industry, and has even rubbed shoulders with royalty.

Mary, who earned three of her five tertiary qualifications from the University of Adelaide and is currently a PhD student at the Waite Campus, says that viticulture came naturally to her after spending her childhood years doing all of the practical jobs on the vineyard.

After leaving the family home at age 16 to study to become a park ranger, she eventually fell back into the wine industry just as it was taking off in the mid-1990s.

At age 21, Mary helped start the viticulture and wine studies program at the Onkaparinga Institute of TAFE. This involved teaching people how to grow wine grapes and prune and train vines.

Mary's career has seen her work in a range of vineyard management, technical, consultancy, research, training and extension roles across Australia and overseas over the past 18 years.

She gained national recognition for her hard work and dedication to her craft when she was named the 2012 RIRDC Rural Woman of the Year, an experience Mary describes as “empowering”.

“The award is a fantastic platform to celebrate the contribution women make to rural industries throughout Australia,” she said.

“I am constantly amazed by the opportunities the award presents and the doors it opens. I was recently invited to present the keynote opening address at the National Rural Women’s Conference in Canberra in front of 400 influential women; this was a real highlight.”

The award has given Mary the once-in-a-lifetime opportunity – while at a Primary Industries and Regions SA (PIRSA) function held to showcase South Australia’s best produce – to meet Charles, Prince of Wales and Camilla, Duchess of Cornwall, during their visit to Australia.

“It has been quite an experience for someone who is most at home getting their boots dirty in a vineyard,” she said.

Mary currently splits her time running her own viticulture consulting business, studying towards her PhD, volunteering her time in industry, and helping to raise awareness of the Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation (RIRDC) Rural Women’s Award. She is an inaugural member of the steering group that established the University of Adelaide Wine Alumni Network and continues to play an active role.

“I have been working towards formalising some of our existing informal networks and bringing rural and regional wine industry women together. I am in the process of developing a not-for-profit association and one of the first offerings will be a central meeting place and information sharing hub, in the form of a website. This is a great way to overcome the tyranny of distance.”

Mary is passionate about encouraging more women to enter agricultural industries in a range of roles, especially the non-traditional ones.

“It is important that we ensure rural women are supported and encouraged to ‘put their hands up’ for opportunities, so they reach their full potential.

“My studies have shaped my life by providing the opportunities to excel at something I love doing, allowing me to adapt and remain up to date with the latest knowledge and to forge lifelong friendships. It has been my ticket to discover the world, reach my full potential and share this knowledge with others.”

Left: Mary Retallack
Photo by Robb Shaw-Valzen
www.bygeorge.com.au
Since graduating with his MBBS in 1988, eye surgeon Dr James Muecke AM has made it his life's work to fight avoidable blindness in the developing world.
The South Australian ophthalmologist and founder of Sight For All has been recognised for his outstanding work with an Order of Australia (AM) and Rural Doctors Workforce Agency Rural Community Health and Wellbeing Award.

James is passionately committed to blindness prevention in Asia and the Aboriginal communities of Australia, and the vital role he plays in training Third World doctors is producing remarkable results.

“Eighty per cent of blindness in the world is avoidable – so it’s entirely treatable or preventable,” says James.

James and the Sight For All team are bringing eye care to areas most in need, with their main focus on the Asia-Pacific region where nearly half the world’s blind population resides. Through the provision of research, education, health promotion and infrastructure support, Sight For All has made significant steps towards eliminating avoidable blindness.

“We carried out a childhood blindness survey in Myanmar (formerly Burma) and discovered that half the kids who are blind in that country were needlessly blind with diseases that could have been treated or prevented,” James says.

“That gave us the incentive to bring over a young eye surgeon from Myanmar and train him for a year at the Adelaide Women’s and Children’s Hospital.

“He went back as the first paediatric eye surgeon in his country of 60 million people. We then set him up in the first paediatric eye unit with all the appropriate diagnostic equipment and surgical instruments.

“He’s been back for two years now, and we’ve recently heard that there’s been a 15-fold increase in children’s eye surgery performed in the country as a direct result of his work.”

This is just one example that strongly demonstrates the powerful impact and sustainability factor of Sight For All’s approach – the eye surgeons trained in Adelaide are able to return to their own country to treat patients and then pass skills and knowledge on to their colleagues.

Another graduate of Sight For All’s fellowship program has just become Bhutan’s first glaucoma specialist in her country, returning home after 12 months of intensive training in three centres by some of the leading glaucoma specialists in the world.

And in Vietnam, Sight For All has just finished its first ‘reverse fellowship’ where Australian and New Zealand paediatric eye surgeons have travelled there to conduct the training ‘in-country’.

As a specialist in the childhood eye cancer, retinoblastoma, James and his team recently spent time looking at how this disease was handled in the leading eye centre in Hanoi and what they found was disturbing.

“I was absolutely sideswiped,” says James.

“A third of the kids were going to die because of mismanagement; a third of the kids were blind as a result of mismanagement; and a third of the kids were just plain lucky to have got through without dying or going blind. This is quite simply due to the fact that there is nobody in the country trained to manage this complex disease.

“To see that was heartbreaking.”

Within that week James says they were able to completely change the approach to retinoblastoma through some very simple techniques that he taught the doctors.

Sight For All is soon to start training Laos’ first paediatric ophthalmologist and future reverse fellowships are planned for Cambodia, Bangladesh and Myanmar.

And while the main focus is on Asia, avoidable eye disease is still a major problem in the Indigenous population of our own country.

James has been heavily involved in campaigns to raise awareness about eye health in Aboriginal communities, where diabetes is the fastest growing cause of vision loss.

Using novel approaches such as a music clip featuring an Aboriginal rapper, an animated video which can be dubbed over with different Indigenous languages and a short film that takes away some of the mystery surrounding the eye treatment process, Sight For All is raising awareness in these communities and hopes to increase the capture rate of patients who require surveillance or surgery.

Passionately committed to making a difference, James finds it hard to pinpoint where his humanitarian spirit came from.

“I always wanted to be a doctor from my earliest memories, and I can’t exactly say why – it’s something innate, I loved the idea of being able to help people,” he says.

And although memories of his student days revolve mainly around the significant demands of medical school, the terror of exams and sleepless nights, he recalls a lot of fun times and is grateful to the University for his medical school training and experiences as a student here.

“It has been without doubt the biggest impact on my life.

“It was because of the University nurturing and educating me to a high level that I was able to build my career and as a result, to help people, not only patients but colleagues and people all over the world.”

Eighty per cent of blindness in the world is avoidable – so it’s entirely treatable or preventable.“

Above and left, Dr James Muecke AM in Vietnam.
"Photos by Sarah Martin, The Australian."
Harry Medlin
A remarkable man, a remarkable life
Harry Medlin was born at Orroroo in country South Australia on 2 January 1920. He attended school in Adelaide and studied at the South Australian School of Mines and Industries from 1936 to 1939, while working at the Adelaide Electric Supply Company.

He enlisted in the Australian Army in 1938, was commissioned in 1939 and rose to the rank of captain at the age of 20. He was a prisoner of war of the Japanese in Timor and Java from 23 February 1942 to 23 September 1945, and was awarded the Efficiency Medal and five campaign stars and medals.

On leaving the Army in 1946, he commenced studies at the University of Adelaide under the Commonwealth Reconstruction Training Scheme. He graduated Bachelor of Science in 1949, took Honours in 1951, and completed his PhD on X-ray crystallography in 1956. He was appointed a Lecturer in Physics at the University in 1951, gaining promotion to Senior Lecturer in 1960 and Associate Professor in 1974. He retired in 1985, but remained a strong and lively presence in the University community, especially the Alumni Association, which he helped found, becoming the Inaugural Chair.

Harry Medlin was an active and loyal supporter of the University in many ways. He served for many years on the Education Committee, and was inaugural chair of its Executive Committee from 1980 to 1982. He contributed actively to the governance of the University through membership of the Senate Standing Committee from 1985 to 1980, and the University Council from 1967 to 2003.

He was Deputy Chancellor of the University from 1978 to 1997, and was awarded the degree of Doctor of the University in 1987, and the Centenary Medal for his creative and productive involvement in all aspects of the work, life and culture of universities in 2001.

His wider interests in the University community included the University of Adelaide Staff Association and the Federation of Australian University Staff Associations, the University of Adelaide Theatre Guild, the Adelaide University Union (the students’ association of the University), and many more groups and causes. He held executive positions in many of these associations over the years.

He was especially active in the alumni affairs of the University in South East Asia, where he maintained many lifelong friendships, and travelled widely to develop contacts with graduates and establish alumni chapters.

“The dedication and love in Dr Medlin’s Alumni work will be long remembered.”

Dato’ Lee Yee Cheong AO, Distinguished Alumni Award 1996

Harry Medlin
Asia Scholarships
Program

If you wish to memorialise the contribution of Dr Harry Medlin to the University of Adelaide through a major gift to establish a scholarship in his name, please contact Paul Finn, Acting Director, Fundraising and Development on 0405 036 941 or email paul.finn@adelaide.edu.au

Main image: from left, Dame Roma Mitchell, Dr Harry Medlin and Professor Kevin Maryjibanks.

Above left: From left to right, Dr Gerald Laurence, Dr Harry Medlin, Professor Graham Nerich, Dr George Mayo, and Professor Donald Stranks, Vice-Chancellor, at a Theatre Guild production.

Above right: From left to right, Datuk Dr Sam Abraham, Dr Harry Medlin, Giam Choo Huat, Dr Siew Muay Yung, Dr Richard Hin Yung. Alumni Dinner, Singapore 1994

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story by Kate Husband
The University of Adelaide was founded with a noble goal: to prepare young leaders for South Australia shaped by education rather than by birth or wealth.

“Over the years, generous donors have supported this ideal by enabling scholarships that transform the lives of outstanding young people who may otherwise not have the opportunity to access a tertiary education”, said Vice-Chancellor and President, Professor Warren Bebbington.

Grateful scholarship recipients Christopher Smith, Rosalie Hoff and Christina Theodore-Smith exemplify the talent and commitment of students who benefit from this generosity.

Christopher and Rosalie both travel for several hours to get to university each day and all three students come from families who are financially struggling to support their study.
Christopher is thankful for the opportunity to attain his dream of becoming a vet. “The scholarship will be a big help to my family’s financial circumstances,” says Christopher.

“I have been relying on my parents to cover the costs associated with my study, such as text books, protective clothing, transport costs, as well as my other financial needs. Now that I have this scholarship, I will be able to help them with these costs.

“It will also give me a greater incentive to succeed in my studies, as I feel more motivated to do my best and show that I am worthy of the scholarship,” Christopher says.

Rosalie, who is studying for her Bachelor of Science (Honours) in High Performance Computational Physics, says her scholarship will ease the cost of travel and help to purchase learning resources and tools to boost her studies.

Christina, a medical student, is grateful that she will be able to commit herself to the demands of her degree without having to find work to support herself.

“It will assist me with living expenses, fees and costs associated with university and I can focus on studying and adjusting to the transition,” says Christina.

The University’s belief in providing educational opportunities to financially disadvantaged students is demonstrated through its well-established pathway programs and donated scholarships.

“But to rekindle our founders’ commitment to a democratically broad student body, the University needs to double the number of scholarships it offers to disadvantaged students,” says Professor Bebbington.

At the end of 2012, the University committed to a new 10-year plan, Beacon of Enlightenment, with the goal of recapturing the bold vision of the University’s founding era, which put the University at the forefront of higher education internationally.

This year sees the launch of the University of Adelaide Appeal which will contribute towards realising this ambition. The Appeal focuses on four key priority areas, including supporting disadvantaged students.

“Donors can provide invaluable support to students such as Christopher, Rosalie and Christina and play an important role in ensuring these students continue to gain access to a university education, regardless of their financial circumstances,” Professor Bebbington says.

Another priority area of the Appeal is to support the University’s research objectives.

Research has always been a cornerstone of the University of Adelaide. Five multi-disciplinary Research Institutes have been established to support the most innovative and immediate research advances, and in 2010 all became associated with Excellence in Research for Australia’s top 5-rated disciplines.

As well as in a multiplicity of medical fields, the University is a leader in vital work in climate change and water management, food security and sustainable agriculture, the environment and renewable energy, and a host of other scientific, social and humanist fields.

But the costs of research are never fully covered by grants from government or industry. Donations to the Appeal will help fund research staff and students, their laboratories and equipment, sustaining critical work for the future of Australia and its region.

This year’s Appeal also invites donors to support the Barr Smith Library to continue to expand its collection and also contribute towards urgent conservation work on one of Australia’s finest concert halls, Elder Hall.

“By supporting the Appeal, donors will be contributing towards areas of greatest need within the University,” says Professor Bebbington.

“These gifts may be directed towards assisting needy students, to increasing our research staff and their capability, to helping improve our campus, or towards the University’s highest priorities.”

To find out more about the 2013 University of Adelaide Appeal, or to make a donation, phone +61 8 8313 5800 or visit www.alumni.adelaide.edu.au/university_appeal

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Support the Barr Smith Library by adopting a book

The Barr Smith Library holds many early printed and rare books collected largely through generous donations. A working collection, these unique and valuable resources support and stimulate the University’s extensive and varied teaching and research programs.

Many of these items, now housed in Rare Books and Special Collections, are in need of repair and restoration to ensure the works are available for the continued benefit of future generations of scholars.

The work required can vary from full rebinding to the making of a protective box, and the cost can range from a few hundred to several thousand dollars.

This body of work is beyond the means of regular Library funds but offers an opportunity for friends and supporters of the Library to make a donation to the program, or to adopt a particular book of interest to them or their family.

One of the Library’s most popular rare items, John Gerard’s 1636 The Herball, or General Historie of plantes, and both copies of the South Australian treasure, Fanny de Mole’s Wildflowers of South Australia (1861), have already been restored by conservator Anthony Zammit.

Adopt-a-Book now and help the Barr Smith Library continue its vital restoration work.

Phone: +61 8 8313 5224
Email: cheryl.hoskin@adelaide.edu.au
Anna writes her own success story
Rejection by traditional publishing companies did not deter Anna Solding from her goal of becoming an author – instead, she and two fellow graduates started their own publishing company.

And Anna’s belief in another Adelaide alumnus, James Roberts (aka Zanesh Catkin) helped him to realise his own dreams of being a published writer when she put his first novel on the shelves last year.

In 2011, despite Anna’s book The Hum of Concrete being shortlisted for multiple awards, it was still not being picked up by publishers.

Anna lamented the constant rejections with good friend, Mathematics and Computer Science graduate and entrepreneur, Dr Ross Williams, who suggested they start their own publishing company and together with another alumnus, Peter Cassidy, they formed MidnightSun Publishing.

“We know there are plenty of fabulous manuscripts about unusual topics floating around, but publishing new and unknown writers poses a big risk. MidnightSun is prepared to take that risk,” says Anna.

“The large publishing houses are quite conservative today which is understandable as these are very tough times for traditional publishing with the demise of local bookshops and the rise of self-publishing. Even though printing costs surrounding by a huge, supportive group of people at the SA Writers’ Centre. “Standing on the stage at Writers’ Week seeing my first novel The Hum of Concrete take flight has had the most profound impact on me, as that was truly a childhood dream come true,” she says.

“Every time I see my novel on the shelves of a library or a bookshop, my heart does a little dance.”

As one of her biggest supporters, Zanesh, also a graduate from the University’s PhD in Creative Writing, says he is keen to see Anna’s success continue.

“I am proud of Anna for having the courage to start a publishing company in this climate of gloom and doom in the book world,” he says.

“She backed her belief in the quality of her writing and mine, when we had both been knocked back by mainstream publishers. The fact that both our books have been longlisted for the Commonwealth Book Prize is a confirmation that her judgement is sound. “Getting my PhD novel published was the biggest highlight of my life post-university.”

Zanesh’s exegesis of his first novel, The Ludic Mode of Pangamonium, is the third title published by MidnightSun and he is currently working on his second novel, The Troubadour – an adaptation of his Honours thesis for which he won the Driftwood Manuscripts Prize.

“It is always exciting to get the recognition of your peers, and since writing can be solitary it does remind you that there are others out there who appreciate your craft,” says Zanesh.

Working full-time as Series Producer with Australia Network, the ABC’s International Broadcasting Service, Zanesh says that the best he can hope for is an hour a day of writing time. “The best part is when the writing flows easily and you don’t want to stop. The challenges are working through flat spots and avoiding the scourge of rejection letters,” he says.

Anna also attests to the challenges and rewards of being a writer and although she has put her writing to one side while she focuses on the publication of MidnightSun’s latest novel, she has tentatively started work on a new book.

“Sitting down and actually putting pen to paper is always the biggest challenge. The distractions are endless…for most writers I know, writing doesn’t actually come easily – it’s a long, hard slog.”

“But at the same time, it is the most rewarding and wonderful thing you could ever do.”

Left: Zanesh Catkin and Anna Solding in the Barr Smith Library
Photo by Keturah de Klerk
Scientific pioneer ahead of her time

For decades, botanist Constance Eardley was something of an Adelaide institution.
Known as 'Con' or 'Miss Eardley', she was a familiar sight at both the University of Adelaide's North Terrace Campus and the Waite Institute, where she was curator of the herbaria and, later, lecturer in Systematic Botany. A curiosity to some, a mentor and source of inspiration to others, Eardley was one of Adelaide's pioneering women scientists. Eardley was born in Adelaide in 1910 and lived her entire life on Wattle Street, Fullarton. Her father, Frederick Eardley, was the University's Assistant Registrar from 1911, and Registrar from 1924. It is likely that from him she inherited a capacity for organisation and systematic thinking. The same qualities that he applied to University administration, made for her own success as a taxonomist. Eardley attended Walford House School, taking Leaving Honours in 1927. Her final-year botany notebook survives and reveals a young woman with an obvious flair for the subject. Following her matriculation and encouraged by her parents to pursue further education, she entered the University of Adelaide as a science student.

She seems to have thrived at university, being awarded the John Bagot Scholarship and Medal in Botany in 1929 and, on completion of her Bachelor of Science a further scholarship to undertake Honours. Her thesis, 'The Occurrence of Mycorrhiza [root fungus] in the Plants of South Australia', was supervised by the young lecturer in botany, Joseph Wood. Wood shortly afterwards became the nation's first Australian-born Professor of Botany, and he and Eardley shared a close working relationship over the next three decades.

In 1933, Eardley was hired by the University as curator of the Adelaide and Waite Institute herbaria. In recognition of her growing expertise she was asked to lecture in Systematic Botany at North Terrace and also the Waite Institute from 1938 and 1943 respectively. Her first decade in charge of the Adelaide and Waite herbaria saw a considerable expansion in their size with the incorporation of several private collections. In the mid-1950s, Adelaide's various collections of plant specimens were consolidated in the State Herbarium, but in the meantime a large portion were overseen almost single-handedly by Eardley.

In the late 1940s, Eardley was conferred a Master of Science following the completion of a thesis titled 'Comparative studies of some Australian and extra-Australian floras from an ecological aspect'. In 1950, she was appointed Systematic Botanist, a full-time position with the University. Lecturing, collaborating on research projects, leading field trips and supervising postgraduate students, she remained in this position until ill health forced her to retire in 1971. Apart from various articles in newspapers and magazines, her most widely-known work was the reference manual Wildflowers of Adelaide Hills, published shortly after she retired. During her career, however, Eardley produced important studies of the flora of arid regions including the Simpson Desert and the University of Adelaide's Koonamore Vegetation Reserve. She also published botanical studies of other regions of South Australia including Eight Mile Creek and Kangaroo Island. The data she collected during her regular field trips to Koonamore in particular have continued to be of value to researchers across a number of disciplines.

Her standing among fellow scientists was reflected in her election to fellowship of the Royal Society of South Australia and, later, the Linnean Society, London. She was also an active member of the International Association for Plant Taxonomy, ANZAAS and a number of conservation groups.

Eardley was in many respects ahead of her time. Most obviously, she was an independent woman with an academic career in an era in which space for women in the public and professional spheres was extremely limited. It is difficult to say whether she would have considered herself a feminist as such, but we know she was frustrated by the stark choice between marriage and work – a dilemma faced by well-educated young women at this time.

Eardley was also a passionate conservationist throughout her life. As someone whose work was deeply connected to the natural world, she had an intuitive sense of the dangers to our wellbeing of wholesale habitat loss. As a young woman, she helped form a group called the Tree Lovers Civic League, one of the forerunners of the contemporary environment groups. She spoke about conservation issues to groups of young teachers, and among her papers is a draft of a message to botany students, a prescient plea for "courageous and wise voices" to make the case for national parks. She wrote: "inviolate areas are of the greatest scientific and often practical importance; they are the Australian heritage which we could easily lose and never replace. Few Australians realise their value, even in terms of tourist attractions". Eardley was also an early advocate of native gardens and one of the first to develop guidelines for estimating the value of vegetation in national parks.

When she died in 1978, she was remembered for her meticulousness and dedication to her work. Her service to the University over 40 years, including involvement in the Women's and Graduates' Unions, and the goodwill she fostered in the broader community through her plant identification service, was recognised with the naming of a reserve and prize in her honour.

Those who knew her also spoke of her generosity with her time, and her many acts of kindness, particularly to international students. When her friend and colleague Joseph Wood died suddenly in 1959 she wrote an extended obituary that concluded: "his life has been a very full one, to the great benefit of his University, his country, and the science of botany...But much more than a distinguished botanist, he was modest, kindly, tolerant and wise". Perhaps she would have objected, but this is an equally fitting characterisation of the life of Constance Eardley herself. ☛
A life changing legacy

Sometimes two lives intersect with no obvious link but the repercussions are felt far and wide.
uch is the tenuous connection between the late Veronika Sacco – a Hungarian immigrant and self-made woman – and a young South Australian researcher by the name of Jacqueline Noll, who is dedicating her life to helping cancer patients.

On paper, the two have nothing in common.

Veronika died in March 2010, aged 94. Her life story was a remarkable one. Despite excelling at school in her native country and mastering seven languages, her early days in Australia were character building, to say the least. Newly divorced and with a young child to support, she was forced to walk the streets of western Sydney lugging suitcases of soap which she sold door to door.

Through sheer will, intelligence and a head for finances, Veronika put herself through university and gained an accountancy qualification, which paved the way for a stimulating career and opened many other doors – to culture, music, art and business.

Education changed Veronika’s life. In death, her legacy will no doubt make a difference to countless others.

In her will, Veronika left a generous sum to the Florey Medical Research Foundation in honour of the University of Adelaide’s most famous alumna.

“She researched thoroughly where she chose to give and she was very impressed with the work of Howard Florey and his Nobel Prize,” said her good friend and executor of her will, Fred Bennett.

“Just the possibility of another Nobel Laureate arising out of her bequest was also compelling,” Mr Bennett said.

For young scientist Jacqueline Noll, being the first recipient of the Veronika Sacco Clinical Research Fellowship under the auspices of the Florey Medical Research Foundation is “an absolute honour”.

The 27-year-old researcher, who has a First Class Honours degree in Biomedical Science and a PhD from the University of Adelaide, will spend the next three years investigating new treatment strategies for a type of bone marrow cancer known as multiple myeloma.

Multiple myeloma occurs where abnormal plasma cells in the bone marrow multiply too fast and prevent the normal production of other blood cells, such as red and white cells.

The disease causes bones to break down, resulting in excruciating pain, fractures, recurrent infections and kidney failure.

About 15 per cent of patients die within three months of diagnosis and even with treatment, the average survival rate of multiple myeloma sufferers is approximately five years. There is no cure.

Dr Noll’s research is focused on learning more about how the cellular composition of bone marrow is altered by the presence of multiple myeloma tumours.

“If we can identify key changes in the bone microenvironment we may be able to develop novel treatment strategies to limit the progression of the disease,” Dr Noll said.

“Approximately 1400 people are diagnosed with multiple myeloma in Australia each year, an increase of 44 per cent in the past 25 years. Despite recent advances in treatment strategies, the 10-year survival rate is only 17 per cent,” Dr Noll added.

The Florey Fellowship will enable Dr Noll to establish herself as an independent researcher in a field of cancer research which has not traditionally received much attention.

“I have always been interested in cancer research and I hope that one day my work will lead to better and improved therapies for cancer patients. The work of Howard Florey is incredibly inspirational and this is a wonderful opportunity for me to strive towards greater things,” she said.

Chairman of the SA Division of the Myeloma Foundation, Ian Driver, who is currently in remission from the disease, said the work of researchers such as Dr Noll was critical to patients.

“Dedicated scientists like Dr Noll are doing some wonderful research, both to find a cure or just make our lives more bearable. Finding a cure is a long process but we are hanging in there,” he said.

About the Florey Medical Research Foundation

The Florey Medical Research Foundation is named in honour of Nobel Prize winner and medical graduate of the University of Adelaide, Lord Howard Florey. The Foundation was established in 1992 and has been raising funds to support medical research for more than 20 years.

Achievements include the funding of numerous and diverse research scholarships, major research projects, and in 2012, the appointment of three full-time Florey Research Fellows.

The Foundation relies entirely on voluntary donations and it is thanks to our generous donors that many young researchers are not only realising their own goals but working to make a lasting difference to the lives of everyday people – helping them lead healthier and longer lives.

Together we can make a difference - please help us to continue our work

A bequest, or gift by will, no matter how large or small, is an effective way of providing a permanent legacy – a gift that creates something of everlasting significance and importance. The Florey Medical Research Foundation welcomes bequests of all sizes and these may be directed to a specific area of research.

For a confidential discussion please contact the University of Adelaide’s Planned Giving Officer, Mrs Sue Fox on +61 8 8313 3234 or email: susan.fox@adelaide.edu.au

If you have already planned a gift, we encourage you to let us know about it so that we can recognise your intentions during your lifetime.
Building a Thai life

John Anderson’s advice to today’s university students could not be clearer: there is much to gain by experiencing life far away from Adelaide.

The BE (Hons, 1990) graduate has spent the past 19 years in Thailand, where he is now Director of a company (Meinhardt) which has 300 staff and completed more than 1600 projects.

Some of the projects he’s worked on in that time include designing Bangkok’s second-tallest building, the 74-storey ‘River Condominium’, and four 50-storey residential towers known as the ‘Millennium Residence’.

It seems a long way from the stately plains of the Barossa Valley, where Mr Anderson grew up.

After attending Nuriootpa Primary and High schools, not attending the University of Adelaide was unlikely – both of his parents, as well as his twin sisters, all graduated from the institution.

After graduating, Mr Anderson worked in North Queensland and Adelaide for four years. In 1994, he received five days notice that he was headed to Bangkok to work on a large oil transfer project in the Gulf of Thailand.

“The prospect of going to Thailand was pretty exciting,” he said. “I hurriedly had to arrange things like my visa and inoculations. I was pretty clueless about what to expect when I got there or the project that I would be working on.

“I spent six months in Bangkok, working almost seven days a week, on this job. It gave me a taste of real, large-scale engineering. I was hooked on big projects and also realised that I wanted to be overseas. I returned to Adelaide briefly before heading to Hong Kong – six months after that I moved permanently to Thailand, which has been home pretty much ever since.”

Mr Anderson is currently splitting time between Bangkok and Myanmar (formerly Burma), where he is heading up his company’s new office in its largest city, Yangon (Rangoon).

“After decades of military rule, Myanmar is now opening up to the outside world and revealing both opportunities and challenges”, Mr Anderson said.

“Yangon is a fascinating place, but it is quite a step-back in time, having been isolated from the world for so long”, he said.

“There are many old heritage buildings that were built during the height of the British Empire that now need to be restored.

“Right now I am working on restoring the Myanmar Railway Administration Building, which will become the Yangon Peninsula Hotel.

“It is a great project and has probably been one of my biggest challenges yet in my career. The entire building is to be underpinned and strengthened, and will form the centrepiece of an ambitious 275,000sqm development consisting of four new high-rise towers and a shopping centre.”

Mr Anderson’s career path and subsequent achievements were, in many ways, accidental – but he said the ‘risk’ of leaving Adelaide and Australia was more than outweighed by the value of living and working in another country.

“I think students of today would greatly benefit from spending some of their undergraduate degree time aboard studying at another university, preferably in Asia,” he said.

“This will help them to understand the business environment and culture outside Australia.

“In my case, I came to Asia pretty much by accident, but was lucky enough to have done so early enough in my career when I was prepared to take a few more risks.

“Unfortunately too many Australians come to Thailand and only ever view it as a holiday destination – they never get to see the enormous industry and opportunities that are here.”

“I was hooked on big projects and also realised that I wanted to be overseas.”

Left: Bangkok’s second-tallest building, the ‘River Condominium’, which John Anderson helped design.

Above: John Anderson

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Alumni on the move

If you have recently celebrated a promotion or career achievement, a change of jobs or won a major prize, we want to hear about it! Share your good news with your fellow alumni by emailing us your story, including your name, graduation year and degree.

Send it to alumni@adelaide.edu.au or call +61 8 8313 5800

Karyn’s passport to success

Tourism directly contributes about $35 billion to Australia’s economy each year, accounting for eight per cent of our total exports. It’s a staggering figure, underlining just how important the industry is to the country.

These are statistics which economics graduate Karyn Kent knows by heart. The challenge for the newly appointed South East Asia Manager for Tourism Australia is to ensure the sums keep multiplying – for her region at least.

Three of the countries under her responsibility – Singapore, Malaysia and India – were in the top 10 tourism markets for Australia in 2012 and another – Indonesia – is nipping at their heels.

Since taking over the reins from her predecessor, Maggie White, last December, Karyn has been based in Singapore, developing tourism marketing strategies for the region, which also includes Vietnam and the Gulf Countries.

“The potential is huge,” she said. “Asia’s share of inbound arrivals is expected to account for 45% of total visitors by 2021–22.”

Much of this will hinge on airline capacity and one of Karyn’s key priorities will be to ensure that Australia is serviced by the right mix of full service and low-cost carriers.

“It is also important to align our strategies to suit individual countries so we are hitting the right markets,” Karyn said. “For example, there is a significant focus on digital advertising in Singapore, whereas television is a big part of the brand campaign for India. The maturity of the market very much comes into play.”

The overarching challenge is to convert Australia from a ‘wish list’ to a ‘must do’ for travellers around the world.

“Our research tells us that there is a great desire to visit Australia because it offers so many unique experiences, but we need to create a sense of urgency among travellers to make that a reality.”

Karyn draws on 20 years of experience in the tourism industry, both within Australia and abroad.

Her most recent role, as Director of Sales for the South Australian Tourism Commission (SATC), involved negotiating complex commercial partnerships both domestically and internationally.

Prior to that she worked in SATC’s Los Angeles office for a spell—her first real break in the tourism industry.

But like so many others in the travel industry, she fell into it almost by accident.

“I grew up on a farm in the upper Limestone Coast region of South Australia and while I always wanted to go to university I really wasn’t sure what direction to pursue,” Karyn said.

After completing an economics degree at the University of Adelaide she considered studying law, but ended up applying for a Diploma of Tourism at Adelaide TAFE instead—and the rest is history.

“It’s such a great privilege to promote Australia to potential visitors around the world and Tourism Australia has done some fantastic strategy planning in recent years. Hopefully, this is all going to come together in the next decade,” she said.
2010

- Helen Ujvary (MBA 2012) has joined ISIS Innovation, the technology transfer company of the University of Oxford, as Australian representative for the Isis Enterprise consultancy business.
- Dr Omid Kavehei (PhD (Electronic E) 2012) was awarded the 2013 Postgraduate University Alumni Medal.
- Philipp Allgeuer (BE (Mechatronic) 2012, B MA & Comp Sc, 2012) was awarded the 2013 Honours Alumni Medal.
- Dr Michael Llewellyn-Smith AM (Ph D (Arch) 2010) was appointed a Member of the Order of Australia (AM) for significant service to local government.

2000

- Dr Danielle Moreau B E (Mechatronic) 2005, PhD (Mech E) 2010), a Research Associate in the Flow and Noise Group at the University's School of Mechanical Engineering, is this year's Fulbright Scholar for South Australia. Dr Moreau will go to Virginia Polytechnic Institute in the United States for three months to study noise generation by airfoils (wings, rotor blades and fins).
- Dr Stephen Warren-Smith B Sc 2005, B Sc (Hons) 2006, PhD (Physics and Astro) 2011), ARC Super Science Fellow in the School of Chemistry and Physics and the Institute for Photonics and Advanced Sensing, was awarded the University of Adelaide Faculty of Sciences, Science and Technology Award.
- Daniel Kiley (B Ma & Comp Sc 2007, LL B 2009) has been named winner of the Hostworks Online Achievement Award in the Channel Nine Young Achiever Awards.
- Quentin (Quincy) Grant's (PhD (Mus) 2009) opera Ode to Nonsense was premiered by the State Opera of South Australia in April 2013.
- Kate Gunn (B Psych (Hons) 2008) won the prestigious Premier's Young Achiever of the Year Award for South Australia as well as the Rural Doctors Workforce Agency Rural Health Award in the Channel Nine Young Achiever Awards.
- George Young B E (Mechatronic) 2007, B Ma & Comp Sc 2007, B Ma Sc (Hons) 2008 has been named a co-winner of the Porter Ogden Jacobus Fellowship, Princeton's top honour for graduate students. The fellowships support the final year of study at Princeton and are awarded to students whose work has exhibited the highest scholarly excellence.
- Quentin Angus (Cert Mus (Lv 4) (Jazz) 2004, B Mus (Perf) (Jazz) 2007, B Mus (Hons) 2008) has been awarded the Coffee Club Arts Award in the Channel Nine Young Achiever Awards.
- Nigel Smart (MBA 2008) has been appointed Chief Operating Officer for the Adelaide Football Club.
- Dr Michael Findlay (MBBS 2006) was the inaugural recipient of the James McWha Award of Excellence.
- Emma Knights (Adv Dip Mus (Perf) 2004) is currently working around Australia as a freelance musician. Her new musical production company will bring its first opera production Space Encounters to primary schools in South Australia.
- Dr Mario Ricci (B HSc (Hons) 1998, PhD (Med) 2004, current staff) is one of just seven tertiary educators throughout Australia and New Zealand to be appointed an Apple Distinguished Educator (ADE) in 2013.

1990

- Alexandra Blood (M Env St 1999) has become the first woman, and the first South Australian, to be named the Environment Practitioner of the Year by the Environment Institute of Australia and New Zealand.
- Anna Goldsworthy (B Mus 1995, B Mus (Hons) 1996) has returned to Adelaide to take up a position as Research Fellow and Coordinator at the J.M. Coetzee Centre for Creative Practice.
- Dr Tom Tilley (B Sc (Ma & Comp Sc) 1998) has won first prize in the Tethered Robots category of the AFRON “10 Dollar Robot” Design Challenge with his “Suckerbot.” Suckerbot is essentially a modified Dualshock-like USB joystick with wheels, a Chupa-Chup bump sensor on one thumbstick, and a line sensor patched in to the other thumbstick.

1980

- Professor Neil Dear (B Sc 1984, B Sc (Hons) 1985) has been appointed the inaugural Director, Research and Biomedical Services at the South Australian Health and Medical Research Institute (SAHMRI).
- Professor Andrew Beer (BA 1983, BA (Hons) 1984), Director of the Centre for Housing, Urban and Regional Planning, School of Social Sciences, has been elected Chair of the Regional Studies Association.

1970

- Professor James Paton (B Sc 1975, B Sc (Hons) 1976, PhD (Sc) 1979) has been elected as a Fellow to the Australian Academy of Science. Professor Paton, who is the Director of the Research Centre for Infectious Diseases in the School of Molecular and Biomedical Science, has made major scientific contributions to the field of pathogenesis and prevention of bacterial infectious diseases.

1960

- Valmai Hankel PSM (BA 1967) has been awarded the Royal Geographical Society of South Australia’s highest award, the John Lewis Gold Medal, for geographical achievements through scholarship.
- Justice Bruce Lander (LLB 1968) has been appointed South Australia’s first Independent Commissioner Against Corruption. Justice Lander was admitted as a barrister in 1969. He became a Supreme Court judge in 1994 and was appointed to the Federal Court in 2003.
- Professor David Walker FASSA FAHA (BA (Hons) 1968) has been named the inaugural BHP Billiton Chair of Australian Studies at Peking University.
It has been a very busy first half of the year with alumni events being held nationally and internationally. Professor Warren Bebbington, Vice-Chancellor and President, has presented the University’s new strategic plan to alumni across the globe, generating lively discussion and receiving positive feedback. Snapshots of these gatherings, plus the Alumni Golf Tournament and some of our newest Alumni Fellows, have been captured on these pages. More photographs are located on our Flickr site at www.flickr.com/photos/adeelaidealumni/

The Strategic Plan 2013-2023: Beacon of Enlightenment, can be downloaded at www.adelaide.edu.au/VCO/beacon/

1. Representing the three countries competing in the Alumni Golf Tournament at the Singapore Island Country Club – Singapore, Malaysia and Australia – Australia being the victors for 2013. Left to right: Tan Sri Yong Poh Kon (Malaysia), Dr Richard Huebl (Australia), Peter Moorfield (Australia), Ping Shih Lee (Singapore).
It’s not every day a wine scores three trophies from three different wine shows.

But then, this 2010 Willunga 100 Shiraz Viognier from McLaren Vale isn’t an everyday wine. With generous blackberry succulence meeting dark chocolate, plum and white pepper, it’s a real special occasion delicacy...and we’d like to offer University of Adelaide Alumni a couple of bottles FREE on the purchase of any dozen.

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Freight of $7.50 per 14 bottles applies
University of Adelaide students Anthony Martynuk, Emma Greenwood and Mandy Bowling are the first recipients of the Ronald J. Lienert Memorial Scholarship, an initiative awarded annually by the SA pig industry.

It is given to support the study program of an Honours student researching pig production at the University’s Roseworthy campus, and is named after Ronald John Lienert OAM.

Mr Lienert is remembered by the Australian pork industry through his contributions to the management of state and national industry agro-political issues, his membership on numerous industry boards and committees, his agribusiness interest through Lienert Australia and his impact on the genetic improvement of the Australian pig herd.

His son, Nick, presented the 2013 scholarship to Mandy Bowling at the SA Pig Industry day at Roseworthy earlier this year.

“Our family is honoured to have a scholarship named after my father which benefits students and the industry that he was passionate about,” he said.

For Mandy, the scholarship will help her pursue her research interest in pig production, based at the Roseworthy campus’ 300-sow piggery.

“The scholarship encourages students to undertake research in areas such as pig welfare, nutrition, reproduction or genetics and allows them to investigate their ideas,” she said.

“It’s going to help me by giving me opportunities to meet people in the pig industry, receive mentorship throughout the year and get exposure to different areas of pig production.”

“Our family is honoured to have a scholarship named after my father, which benefits students and the industry that he was passionate about.”

For further information on the Ronald J. Lienert scholarship, or other scholarship opportunities, please email: development@adelaide.edu.au or call +61 8 8313 7193.

Above: Mandy Bowling
Inset: Nick Lienert
Photos by Chris Tonkin
The University of Adelaide Merchandise

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Ladies only red, black and white 95% cotton, 5% elastane

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Charcoal Lightweight Zipped Jacket
Ladies and Mens – navy and charcoal 80% cotton, 20% polyester

Navy Embroidered Hoodie
Ladies and Mens – navy and grey 80% cotton, 20% polyester

Yellow Jacket.
Unisex – navy/red trim or navy/grey trim, latex material, shower proof

Navy Vest.
Ladies and Mens – navy/grey. Reversible, logo on navy side only. 100% polyester

Scarf
Unisex – navy and charcoal 100% acrylic

To view more items in the official merchandise range please visit www.alumni.adelaide.edu.au/merchandise

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