

# Adelaidean

Volume 11 Number 8

News from the University of Adelaide

September 2002

I N S I D E



**\$8.7 million research grants**

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**Drop of white for vines**

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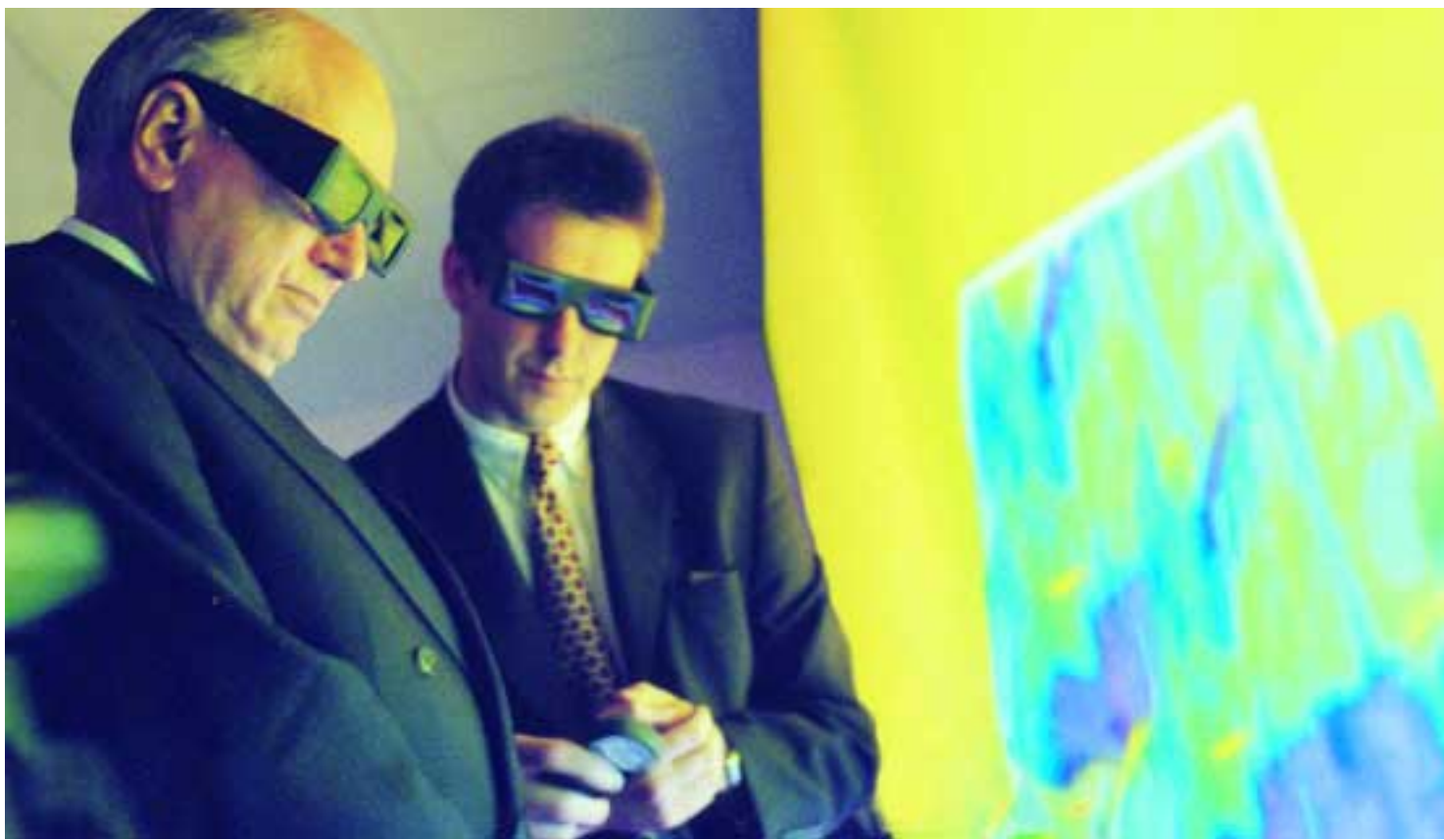


**Uni Games ready, set**

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## PM sees \$25m vision of future



John Howard (left) views a demonstration of 3D visualisation equipment at the new Santos Petroleum Engineering Building. Photo: Ben Osborne.

**PRIME Minister John Howard has praised the generosity and forward thinking of Australian energy company Santos at the recent opening of the University of Adelaide's new Santos Petroleum Engineering Building.**

The new building, officially opened by the Prime Minister on August 23, is home to staff and students from the University's School of Petroleum Engineering and Management, which began teaching this year.

Santos is providing \$25 million over 10 years to the University for the school. This includes funding for the new building, provision for scholarships, specialised teaching equipment, and a professorial position, held by the school's Head, Professor Peter Behrenbruch. The Federal Government has also contributed \$1 million towards an additional professorial chair, the Reg Sprigg Chair, and further funding to the school.

The \$25 million gift by Santos is believed to be the largest single corporate contribution to

any Australian university. The building itself, including specialised equipment and facilities, has cost around \$7.5 million.

"The opening of this new building represents the next major stage for staff and students of our school," said Professor Behrenbruch.

"It is a purpose-designed home, a base from which we will provide an innovative curriculum with state-of-the-art facilities, and provide the best in research and consultancy to industry," he said.

"The school is focused on the practical needs of the international oil and gas industry, and already we have seen great support from other industry leaders such as BHP Billiton and Woodside Petroleum."

The University's Vice-Chancellor, Professor James McWha, said the new School of Petroleum Engineering and Management was destined to become the pre-eminent school for the South-East Asian region.

"The international focus of the school has already been established in its first year, with

staff recruited from Australia, North America and Europe, and students from South-East Asia and India already studying beside the first intake of Australian undergraduates," Professor McWha said.

"The quality of the facilities in the new building, the level of teaching and research are all outstanding, and this is one example of where the University and industry are working closely together to produce real outcomes for the State and the nation."

The opening of the new Santos Petroleum Engineering Building was attended by senior staff from the University, industry and government, including South Australian Premier Mr Mike Rann and Prime Minister Mr John Howard.

Mr Howard praised Santos for its "remarkable act of corporate philanthropy", and said the school was an impressive example of corporate Australia working with government and academia. He said the Santos gift of \$25 million to realise industry opportunities was both generous and far-sighted.

With the opening of the new building, the University of Adelaide is now seen as the centre of education for Australia's \$16 billion oil and gas industry.

The building is the new home of the National Centre for Petroleum Geology and Geophysics (NCPGG), which has relocated from the University's Thebarton campus to the main campus on North Terrace. The NCPGG is co-located with the petroleum school as part of an integrated training and services hub in Adelaide for the petroleum industry.

Santos Ltd's Managing Director, Mr John Ellice-Flint, said the University's School of Petroleum Engineering and Management would play a major role in easing a critical shortfall in petroleum engineering professionals needed throughout Australasia.

He said there was an "urgent void" in the specialised field, with recent data showing the average age of geoscience professionals in the industry was now 47 years, and trending older.

"There are currently only 35 undergraduate students studying petroleum engineering in Australia—25 of whom commenced first-year studies in March this year at the University of Adelaide as a direct result of this new school," Mr Ellice-Flint said.

"Overall, these numbers are insufficient for the industry's growing needs—but this school can now help redress that shortage.

"The establishment of this school is a long-term investment in the petroleum industry in Australasia—with South Australia at the hub of that learning opportunity."

Mr Ellice-Flint said the opening of the new school this year was timely for the industry.

"By 2030, the American Association of Petroleum Geologists predicts a 30% growth in world demand for oil and gas.

"Against this trend is the fact the number of petroleum professionals is declining to a level where there soon will be a severe shortage of petroleum engineers to service the expanding global industry.

"Our young people must have the opportunity to train in the disciplines that the petroleum industry can count on—and that is exactly the opportunity this school can now service."



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## From the Vice-Chancellor

# First Impressions

My first few weeks at the University of Adelaide have been a wonderful opportunity to learn more about Adelaide and, no doubt, for the university to learn more about me.

Within these few weeks I have managed to visit all of the faculties, attended three graduation ceremonies, experienced Council, Academic Board and a number of committees, met the Premier, Mr Rann, and the Prime Minister, Mr Howard, and attended a number of launches and openings. I've even experienced my very first University of Adelaide student protest!

My first impressions are of a university with enormous research activity and huge commitment from its staff. Another striking feature is the quality and enthusiasm of the students. All of these characteristics have been evident during my various visits, on the occasions I have had to talk to staff around the campus, and especially on Information Day, when staff and students were talking with great enthusiasm with members of the community and potential students. That event, I thought, epitomised the underlying sense of excitement around the university about our academic programs and the research that underpins those programs.

I am a little surprised to find that many of our physical facilities are somewhat run down and in need of care and maintenance. However, this is something we can remedy, though given the extent of the problem it is likely to take a while.

I was also a little surprised at the apparent lack of student accommodation at the lower end of the price range. As the number of international students continues to increase, and as we see increasing numbers of out-of-state students, it will be important for us to have realistically priced accommodation into which those students can be welcomed.

A great surprise, though, has been the university's North Terrace campus. I had expected it to be the usual inner city campus, full of concrete buildings and with very little personality. What I have found, however, is a beautiful campus that, with some work, can be made an even more pleasant working environment. I can think of no other university campus so convenient to the city centre that has at the same time retained so many beautiful features, notably including some space around the buildings.

In my next few weeks I hope to visit the Waite, Roseworthy and Thebarton campuses and to begin a round of visits to departments and schools. I have learnt so much already, but I am looking forward to learning more.

Judging by the reception I have received, the community really wants us to succeed and prosper. I am grateful to everyone who has welcomed me here to the university and the city.

PROFESSOR JAMES A. McWha  
Vice-Chancellor

# INTERVIEW

## PROFESSOR MIKE INNES

The University of Adelaide has several new senior staff, including new executive deans of the various faculties.

This month we present an interview with the new Executive Dean of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Professor Mike Innes.

Professor Innes is no stranger to the University of Adelaide, having been an academic here in the Department of Psychology from 1975-1991. Since then he has spent five years as head of Psychology at James Cook University and the last five years at Murdoch University as the head of the School of Psychology.

Professor Innes, who describes himself as an "Arts-oriented social psychologist", has now returned to Adelaide as a senior administrator. He spoke to the *Adelaidean* about his role and the future of his faculty.

*Why come back to Adelaide?*

I have strong personal reasons for being here. The University of Adelaide is a very good university and I'm very pleased to be here. I like Adelaide as a place to live, so I've got many positive reasons for being here other than just the job.

I was at this University for a long time. The reason I left was in order to get a [professorial] chair. In those days you didn't get a chair internally, the only way to get advancement was to go elsewhere, and that's why I left, otherwise I would have happily stayed with Adelaide.

I had a long time here with a lot of really excellent students—I can easily say that of all my time as an academic the students at Adelaide, both undergraduate and postgraduate, were the best I've ever had. So I'm coming back to an institution that I have a lot of fond memories of in terms of the quality of the students, and I'm expecting to see that continue.

*What do you see as the key issues in your new role?*

My major, number one priority is to make sure that we are getting the best students in the State, we're training them well, we're producing graduates who've got a strong disciplinary base but also have a broad training in generic attributes, and that they're ready to go out into the world.

I want to think of our graduates as highly educated people who are ready to make many possible job changes in their lives. They need a range of skills, and we are equipping them to make the kinds of multiple job changes that the modern knowledge economy demands of a university graduate.

So at the undergraduate level, teaching is where we have to excel. There's a very good, strong base across the entire spectrum of the Humanities and Social Sciences here, some really excellent staff, and we've got to maintain that.

The maintenance and facilitation of research in Humanities and Social Sciences is also very important, so one of my priorities will be to help people within the faculty continue to do excellent research. There's a very good track record here that needs to be facilitated and supported, and I believe we can also move on and do better.

With the new research training scheme instituted by DEST (Department of Education, Science & Training), Humanities and Social Sciences can be seen as being disadvantaged by the formula. We have got to make a concerted effort to overcome that and to maintain research training in these disciplines as a prerequisite of our future health.

*What developments can we expect to see in the near future?*

Media is obviously an area that is going to be important in the future, and we want to look to that opportunity as much as we can to provide students with training not only in cultural



Professor Mike Innes.

studies but also in journalism and related fields; I think that will be a very exciting development.

As well as new areas, there are many great areas of strength here already that have to be maintained—obviously geographical and environmental studies, history, Asian studies, philosophy, politics, languages are all very strong, and music is now within the faculty. So I'm looking to support the entire faculty. Adelaide has such an excellent reputation in the humanities, and that reputation will only get stronger.

*How much of the way a faculty is run has to do with the personality and priorities of the individual, and how much has it to do with the political climate?*

I think it's mostly got to do with the climate. I think the best deans, the best administrators, are those who adapt their personal needs and aspirations to the needs and requirements of the organisation.

As an administrator, I see myself as having two major clients. First and foremost there's the students, and we have to service their needs both undergraduate and postgraduate, to make sure they're getting the best possible education we can give them. But my job is also to facilitate the abilities of the academics to provide that education. So my personal feelings and needs are to do that.

I've been an academic for a very long time—I've been teaching students since 1965—so I know what it's like to teach a large first-year class, I know what it's like to take first-year tutorial groups, I know what it's like to supervise hundreds of honours students, so I know what it's like at the coal face to get that work done. My job here now is to help the academics to the best at what they're doing.

*Humanities and social sciences traditionally do not earn as much as many other areas in research. What are your thoughts on how research in your faculty can be boosted?*

A priority is to boost the amount of research that's being done and the amount of research dollars that come in. There's a limit to what you can do with the humanities because a little can go a long way, you don't have the same scale of equipment demands and the like.

*Continued on page 10*

# Adelaidean



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## Coming Events

Please send all coming events to the editor at the address below. There is no charge for coming events, but they must be University related.

## Deadline for next issue: September 19.

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# LETTERS

## STUDENT-STAFF ALIGNMENT

I was very interested in the Vice-Chancellor's good article in the August *Adelaidean* [written by outgoing Vice-Chancellor Professor Cliff Blake].

This is just a comment on his remark that "the university has sought to better align the numbers and distribution of academic staff with the pattern of student enrolments".

Fair enough but only up to a point. Only a few students are clever enough to do mathematical physics, for example. So there is a danger that the most intellectually

demanding subjects will have reduced staff and the softer subjects will have very much the more staff.

Too much alignment of staff numbers with student numbers may reduce the average intellectual hardness of the academic staff. I use the example of mathematical physics though I remember the abolishing of the great department of mathematical physics when Professors Green and Hurst retired as a great tragedy.

*Emeritus Professor J.J.C. Smart*

# PM tours stem cell facilities

WITH stem cell research on the national and international agenda, Prime Minister Mr John Howard was pleased to accept an invitation to tour the University of Adelaide's state-of-the-art Molecular Biosciences facilities.

Mr Howard was in Adelaide recently to open the new Santos Petroleum Engineering Building, which meant the timing was right to see what the University is also doing in the field of stem cell research.

A tour led by the Faculty of Sciences Executive Dean, Professor Peter Rathjen, showed the PM the multi-faceted approach taken to research and education at the University.

Mr Howard interacted with undergraduate and postgraduate students and saw first-hand the results of stem cell research. As well as teaching and research, the commercialisation activities of the Department of Molecular Biosciences were on display.

Among those to meet with the Prime Minister were PhD students Philippa Davey and Nathan Harvey, and research assistant Kathryn Hudson, who told Mr Howard that stem cell research was very important to her personally because her sister has diabetes. Diabetes is among the many conditions that scientists believe may one day be treated thanks to stem cell research.

Mr Howard reacted enthusiastically to the tangible results of the University's research, using microscopes to view different stages of stem cell growth. He was able to see for himself how stem cells from mice can fully develop into neurons. Theoretically, healthy nerve cells derived from stem cell research could be used in transplantation to target diseases such as Multiple Sclerosis, Parkinson's disease, stroke and motor neuron disease.

—David Ellis



Professor Peter Rathjen (left) takes the PM on a guided tour. Photo: Ben Osborne.



PhD student Philippa Davey shows Mr Howard some of her research. Photo: David Ellis.

## Joseph Fisher Lecture

5.30pm Monday, September 30  
Lecture Room 102, Napier Building  
North Terrace campus

"The Role of Natural Resources in Economic Development"  
by Professor Ed Barbier

John S. Bugas Professor, University of Wyoming Department of Economics and Finance

Professor Barbier has more than 20 years experience as an environmental and resource economist, working mainly on the economics of environment and development issues. He has served as a consultant for a variety of national, international and non-governmental agencies, including many UN organisations and the World Bank.

For more information about the lecture phone (08) 8303 5672.

## Claire Corani Lecture

"Physics and its Masters: echo of Eureka on the streets of today"

Free Public Lecture  
by Associate Professor Lidia Morawska

7.30pm Monday, September 16  
Union Hall

A brief journey through physics over the centuries and the physics of today as seen through the experience of the presenter.

Presented by the Australian Institute of Physics SA and Women in Physics.

# It's Show time!

SHOW time in Adelaide is always a busy time for University of Adelaide staff and students involved with agricultural education and research.

This year, many student participants will be assessed while they are in action in the public arena.

The renowned Roseworthy Dairy Team will make Wayville their home away from home, working and living full-time on the showgrounds for the full 10 days of the Royal Adelaide Show. Students will also be exhibiting steers in the led steer competition for the first time this year.

This intensive experience provides an important opportunity for students to put their training into practice, tending and showing cattle in a highly competitive environment where every detail counts.

The Faculty of Sciences has also worked for a second year with the Royal Agricultural and Horticultural Show Society of SA and industry advisers on the Golden Grains Pavilion, focusing this year on barley.

The University's long-standing and internationally renowned role in barley research is recognised through the input of leading plant scientists in the development of the 2002 display, which will showcase aspects of the industry and agricultural hi-tech.

The Golden Grains Pavilion also features a careers area. The Faculty of Sciences has

teamed up with TAFE, Employment National, the Show Society and sponsors United Grower Holdings to provide information about agricultural career and study choices on the stand.

The display will be manned at peak times by staff from these agencies and on the Fridays and Saturdays of the Show it will also be the venue for a series of brief talks on aspects of agricultural research activity presented by students from the Waite campus. For the full program of talks, check out the homepage at: [www.adelaide.edu.au/sciences/](http://www.adelaide.edu.au/sciences/)

The display will also provide access to 'Planet e', the new website devoted to agricultural careers information developed by the University in partnership with PIRSA and launched earlier this year.

Over in the Ridley Pavilion, the Faculty of Sciences will participate in displays on wine education and research along with the National Wine Centre and industry representatives.

University of Adelaide student Jane Schulz and graduate Carolyn Brokus will participate in the Farm Expo series during the Show, presenting personal insights into careers in agriculture. The session will be led by Peter Angus, Agricultural Societies of Australia Rural Ambassador, on Friday, August 30 at 2pm in the Elders Pavilion.

It sure is Show time!

— Lee Welch

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### Excellence in teaching

The Stephen Cole the Elder Prizes for Excellence in Teaching have been awarded to four outstanding academic staff. The prizes recognise and reward excellence in teaching at the University of Adelaide. Each recipient is awarded \$5000 to help them with the further development of their teaching activities.

The winners for 2002 are: Dr Wayne Cristaudo (European Studies and General Linguistics), Associate Professor Patrick James (Geology and Geophysics), Dr Holger Maier (Civil and Environmental Engineering), and Dr Michael Roberts (Physiology).

A high commendation was awarded to Dr Anna Chur-Hansen (Surgery).

### Hollamby awarded Farrer medal

Associate Professor Gil Hollamby, former leader of the University's wheat breeding research team, will be presented with the prestigious Farrer Memorial Medal this month.

The medal is given annually to provide encouragement and inspiration to Australian agricultural scientists.

Professor Hollamby has made a significant contribution to the wheat industry in Australia, having been involved in breeding wheat varieties since 1961.

### Scientific achiever

An Adelaide researcher has been awarded the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries & Forestry Australia Award for scientific achievement.

University of Adelaide PhD student Sven Delaney was one of 17 young Australian researchers to receive an award at a ceremony at Parliament House in Canberra recently. He was recognised for his research using green fluorescent proteins in cotton genes to improve cotton quality.

### Review of Computer Science

The University is currently undertaking a Review of the School of Computer Science. The primary term of reference is to evaluate the quality and possible future directions of the school and its academic programs, in the context of both the strategic plans and educational principles of the University, and the requirements of the information technology sector.

The Review Committee is now calling for written submissions. The terms of reference can be obtained at [www.adelaide.edu.au/DVCE/reviews/](http://www.adelaide.edu.au/DVCE/reviews/) or by contacting Tim Scoop, Planning & Reviews Officer, on (08) 8303 5902. The deadline for submissions is Friday, September 27.

### A Play of St George

The Adelaide branch of the English Association is presenting *A Play of St George* by John Masefield as a rehearsed reading at the Barr Smith Library on Thursday, September 5 at 7.30pm.

Those taking part in the reading include guest actors, past and present members of the English Department and some gifted Elder School of Music students.

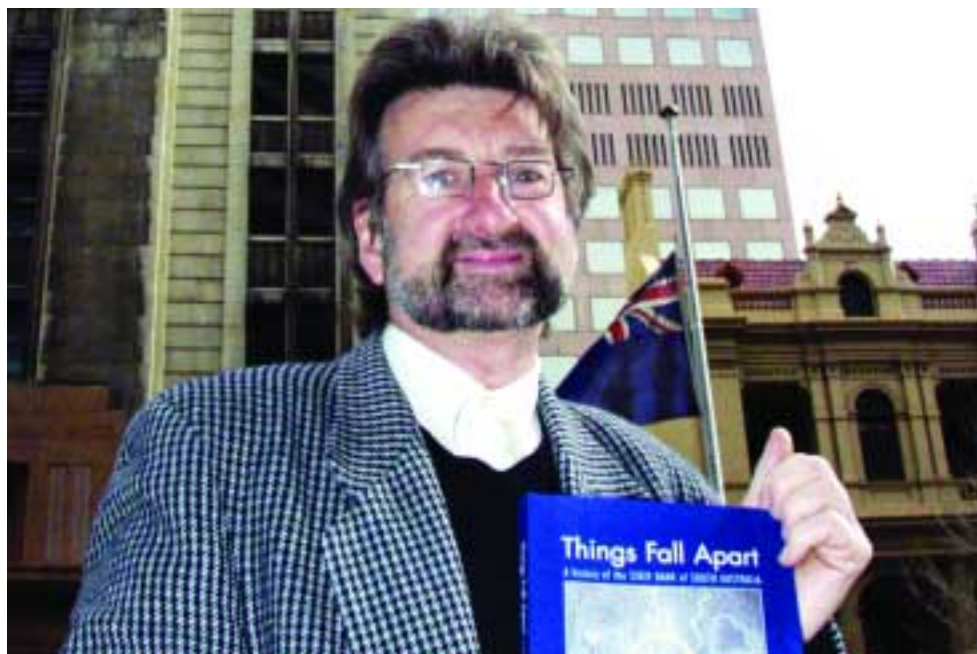
The reading will be held in the Ira Raymond Room. Admission is free.

### Wood revisited

An exhibition of wood art, "Wood Revisited—A Second Chance", is being held at Urrbrae House, Waite campus, until September 8.

The exhibition, by the Wood Group SA, is open daily from 11am-4pm. Admission is free. For more information phone (08) 8303 6904.

## New book provides insight into State Bank collapse



Dr Greg McCarthy. Photo: David Ellis.

**THE financial collapse of South Australia's State Bank in 1991 was primarily caused by the bank turning its back on its community-based roots rather than poor handling by the then Labor State Government, according to the most comprehensive book on the State Bank disaster ever written.**

The new book, *Things Fall Apart - A History of the State Bank of South Australia*, is the result of 10 years' work by lecturer in Politics at the University of Adelaide Dr Greg McCarthy.

Described as a "post-mortem" of the disaster, the book provides a greater understanding as to how and why the bank collapsed by delving into the bank's history, including the earliest days of the Savings Bank of South Australia and the State Bank of South Australia.

Both banks, established in the 1800s, had their roots firmly planted in community service and put profit making as a secondary objective, Dr McCarthy said.

"There was an old-style morality about the institutions. Following their merger, and with the changes in global culture and the deregulation of the banking market in the 1980s, the old model was jettisoned for one based on 'doing the deal'.

"At the time it wasn't much different to what everyone else was doing, it's just that many of the deals being made were doomed to failure.

Almost overnight the bank had become a 'greed is good' bank, and it didn't have the backing or the know-how to make that work," Dr McCarthy said.

He said the blame for the \$970 million collapse (later revised to \$3.1 billion in nominal terms) landed unfairly on the shoulders of the Bannan State Government, when "much more responsibility lay at the feet of those people doing the day-to-day deals".

For *Things Fall Apart*, Dr McCarthy was given exclusive access to the records of the old Savings and State banks of South Australia. The book also takes a detailed look at the Auditor-General's reports and the Royal Commission.

"Although these events happened a decade ago, it's clear that the lessons from the State Bank collapse have still not been learned," Dr McCarthy said.

"Had the bank been more aware of its own historical strengths and weaknesses, it may have been able to make the transition into the global environment much easier. The same can be said of other Australian companies and industries that today are trying too hard and too fast to make their mark."

*Things Fall Apart* is published by Australian Scholarly Publishing.

—David Ellis

## Microchip testing facility opens

ADELAIDE'S reputation as a burgeoning centre of IT capability has received a further boost with the recent opening of a hi-tech microchip testing facility at the University of Adelaide.

The first of its type in Australia, the testing facility will enable defence, research and development organisations and the manufacturing industry to test and prototype the latest microchip designs. It was opened by Dr Jane Lomax-Smith, Minister for Science and Information Economy.

The facility is one of five around the nation which form the National Networked Tele-Test Facility for Integrated Systems (NNTTF), with the others to be opened soon in Perth, Brisbane, Sydney and Melbourne. The central NNTTF "node" is based at Edith Cowan University in Western Australia.

The Adelaide facility is based at CHiPTec, the University of Adelaide's microelectronics research centre. CHiPTec director Dr Cheng-Chew Lim said the NNTTF was an important development for Australia, enabling industry to remain technologically advanced by being able to use the very latest microchip technology when developing new products.

"The NNTTF will be of benefit to both industry and the University of Adelaide, as we no longer have to send chips we design at CHiPTec overseas to be tested," Dr Lim said.

"By testing them here, it reduces turnaround time quite substantially, and also safeguards CHiPTec's intellectual property."



Dr Cheng-Chew Lim and Dr Jane Lomax-Smith.

A unique quality of the NNTTF is that the chip testing is actually conducted over the internet, with the prototype chips sent to the central node at Edith Cowan. CHiPTec researchers then use the internet and webcams to conduct the tests themselves.

The NNTTF was established with the support of a \$4.75 million grant from the Federal Government, through its Major National Research Facilities fund. The South Australian node was funded by the State Government and the University of Adelaide.

—Ben Osborne

## New VC awarded PhD



Professor James McWha and wife Lindsay at the August graduations. Photo: David Ellis.

**THE NEW Vice-Chancellor, Professor James McWha, has been awarded a PhD (ad eundem gradum) at the recent graduation ceremonies.**

Rather than being awarded "in recognition of his future contributions" to the University, as was reported in the mainstream media, in fact the degree recognises his past achievements.

The awarding of a degree ad eundem gradum (the Latin is part of its full title) is a tradition that allows the University to recognise individuals who have a degree "at the same grade" or level as our own. The University has had the power to award such degrees since its establishment in 1874.

In the Vice-Chancellor's case, he has a PhD from the University of Glasgow. The PhD (ad eundem gradum) from Adelaide recognises that his Glasgow PhD is of equivalent level to Adelaide's own PhD.

The awarding of such a degree ensures that Professor McWha's connection to the University of Adelaide will be a continuing one. The former Vice-Chancellor, Professor Cliff Blake, was also a recipient of a PhD (ad eundem gradum).

Due to the large number of stories in this issue of the *Adelaidean*, our graduation photos will be held over until the next issue.

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## Good bacteria in fight against fatal disease

A NOVEL technique for treatment and prevention of severe gastrointestinal infections has resulted in a \$450,000 grant being awarded to a team of University of Adelaide researchers.

The development grant, from the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC), provides funding for three years to further develop an already successful technology.

The funding goes to a team from the University's Department of Molecular Biosciences comprising Professor James Paton, Dr Adrienne Paton and Dr Renato Morona.

The team has been developing "good bacteria" that can survive in the gut, and are capable of protecting the host from harmful microorganisms and the toxins they produce. These bacteria are like the so-called "probiotic bacteria" except that they are engineered to target specific gut pathogens.

As a prototype, the team developed a bacterium capable of preventing life-threatening infections caused by Shiga toxin-producing *Escherichia coli* (STEC), the bacterium responsible for the so-called Garibaldi food poisoning outbreak in Adelaide in 1995.

"Our strain adsorbed and neutralised the Shiga toxin produced by STEC bacteria with extraordinarily high efficiency," Professor Paton said.

In laboratory testing, mice that were given an otherwise 100% fatal dose of STEC were completely protected by the team's bacterium.

The team has patented their technology and is now refining their "good" bacterium to make it suitable for human trials.

"This technology has very broad applications in both the clinical and veterinary setting," Professor Paton said.

"The NHMRC development grant will enable us to apply our probiotic approach to the treatment and prevention of other gastrointestinal infectious diseases in humans.

"In the first instance we will be addressing infections such as antibiotic-associated colitis (caused by *Clostridium difficile*), cholera and traveller's diarrhoea, which are highly prevalent and for which an at-risk target population can be easily identified.

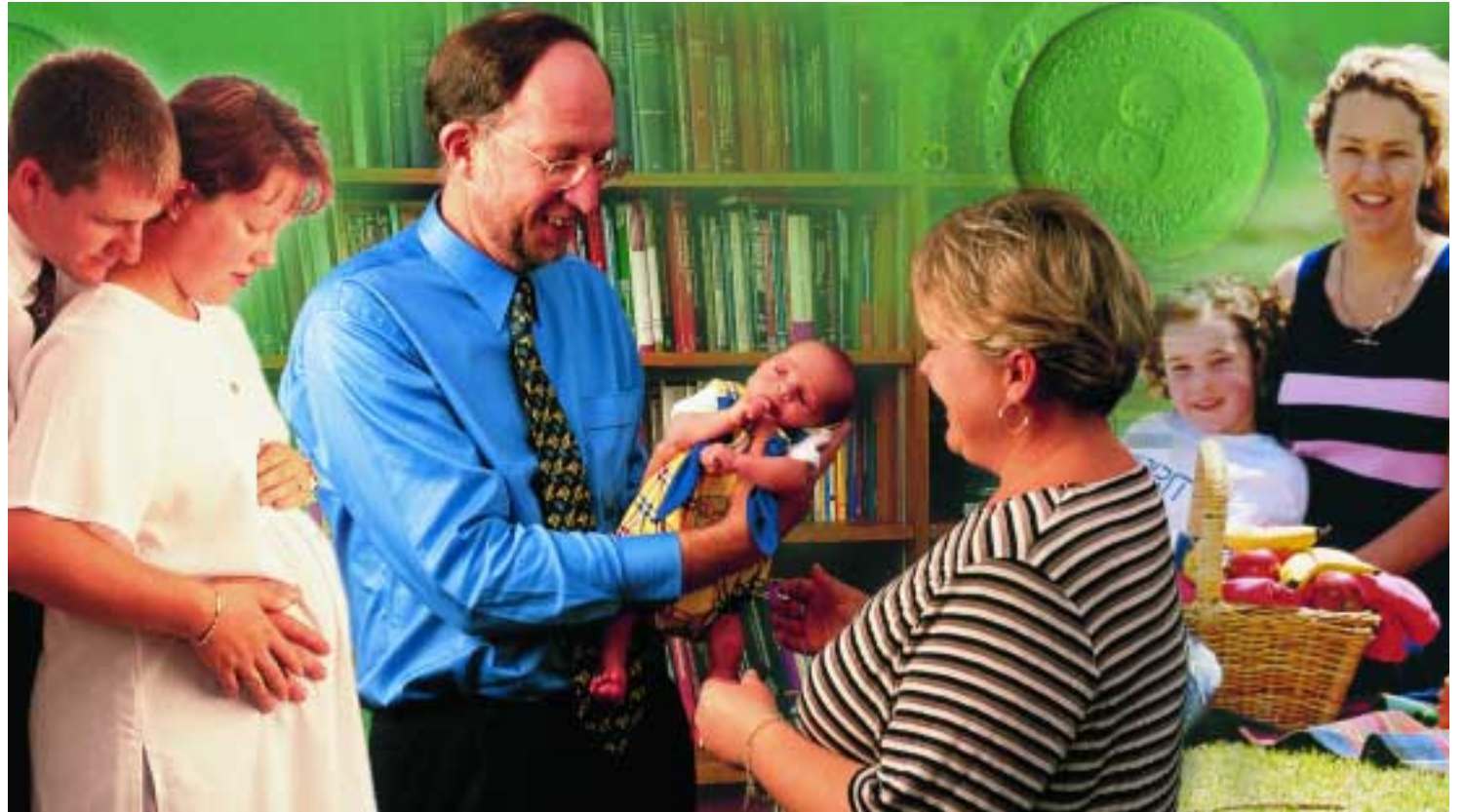
"There is a large potential market for such products, and the benefits to people around the world from our technology could be great," he said.

"We have also begun working on other bacteria capable of preventing oedema disease and colibacillosis, which cause significant morbidity and mortality in piglets."

Professor Paton said the Adelaide team had recently formed a strategic alliance with Neose Technologies, a US biotechnology company.

—David Ellis

# Reproductive health researchers win \$8.7 million grants



Professor Rob Norman (pictured holding baby) heads one of the best research teams in Australia—and the world—in reproductive health.

**A TEAM of University of Adelaide researchers has been awarded a program grant of \$8.3 million over five years by the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) to investigate women's reproductive health.**

The team from the Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology has also been awarded \$480,000 over three years for a separate project to help develop a new product for human IVF (in vitro fertilisation).

The latest NHMRC funding is yet another big win by the department—last year, a program grant of \$4.5 million over five years was awarded to the Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, in conjunction with the Department of Physiology, for a project examining the fetal origins of adult disease.

The team involved in this latest research project, based at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, comprises some of Australia's leading researchers in the field of reproductive health. They are Professor Rob Norman (team leader), Professor David Armstrong,

Dr Ray Rodgers, Dr Sarah Robertson and Dr Jeremy Thompson.

"We are thrilled by this investment that recognises the quality research being undertaken by the group and the potential the team has in delivering major research outcomes in the area of reproductive health in women," Professor Norman said.

"Infertility affects one in six couples, and women today face major challenges balancing careers, lifestyle choices and having children. The Federal Government is concerned about the decline in the fertility rate in Australia. Establishing a career, or the selection of some lifestyle choices such as diet or smoking, can delay or impede pregnancy establishment. We wish to work closely with policy makers and provide them with basic research information about why such factors affect fertility, and provide some solutions."

The grant was awarded for basic research, focusing on how eggs within the ovary prepare for fertilisation, how early embryos develop after fertilisation and how a successful

pregnancy is initiated, especially from an immunological perspective.

"It is particularly pleasing to be able to secure the future of our present researchers and to have the opportunity to attract new post-doctoral fellows and students to this fascinating area," Professor Norman said.

"A feature of the bid made to the NHMRC was the close clinical and commercial connections the team has already created. This makes the transfer of our research findings into real treatments much easier and increases the chance of success.

"Through the Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, the University of Adelaide has created the clinical reproduction service, Repromed, and is about to create a new company, focusing on reproductive medicine technologies and diagnostics. None of this would have been possible without the assistance of others, especially the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, which has given us great support over the past 40 years."

—John Drislane

## Free public forum

**Christian-Muslim  
Reconciliation in Australia  
6pm Friday, September 6  
Union Hall**

With the first anniversary of the September 11 terrorist attacks approaching, the University of Adelaide's Islamic Students' Association has organised an open public forum.

The event will also feature four key speakers:

**Dr Arthur Saniotis**—Reconciliation among Muslims and Christians in Australia, some practical steps

**Dr Abul Farouque**—The history of Muslims in Australia

**Imran Lum**—What Muslims say about Christians

**Anisa Buckley**—Women in Islam and in Christianity

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# Study targets eating habit link to illness

A PUZZLING illness that affects the digestive systems of thousands of Australians is now being studied by researchers at the University of Adelaide.

The condition, called functional dyspepsia, is believed to be suffered by at least one in every 50 Australians.

While about a quarter of the population suffers some form of digestive symptoms, up to 10% of those are believed to suffer from functional dyspepsia.

Symptoms include nausea, bloating, feeling full, and in some cases, vomiting—and the symptoms are frequently related to food ingestion. The ongoing discomfort caused to sufferers can be extremely disruptive to their lives. It can also be frustrating, as the cause of the problem is relatively unknown, despite many sufferers having undergone tests from their GPs and specialists.

The University of Adelaide's Department of Medicine is now seeking sufferers of the condition to take part in a major study that compares the relationship between eating habits and their condition.

The first of its kind in Australia, the study aims to shed some light on the potential causes of the illness, and provide insights into how it might be treated.

The principal researcher of the study is Dr Christine Feinle, assisted by research officer Dr Rosalie Vozzo, a recent graduate of the University of Adelaide with a PhD in appetite physiology. Both are from the University's Department of Medicine, based at the Royal Adelaide Hospital.

"We're looking for people from metropolitan Adelaide aged anywhere between 18 to 70 years for the study," said Dr Feinle.

"We're especially keen to recruit people who have already undergone tests for their condition within the last 18 months, but those tests have been inconclusive," she said.



Dr Christine Feinle (left) and Dr Rosalie Vozzo. Photo: David Ellis.

Dr Feinle, who is a leading figure in this field, said many sufferers of functional dyspepsia continue to put up with their conditions without seeking ongoing medical help.

"This is our chance to encourage sufferers to do something for themselves, and also for other sufferers like them."

Participants in the study will need to keep a diary of what they eat, how much, and provide

other information such as how the food is prepared. They will also use the diary to keep track of their symptoms over the same period of time, enabling researchers to look at any potential correlations.

"We hope our study will be able to identify, or at the least discount, some of the potential relationships between eating habits and this very uncomfortable condition," Dr Feinle said.

"One of the areas we will be most keen to look at is the amount of fat in a person's diet and its correlation with their symptoms."

Participants should not have any other significant illnesses, such as cardiovascular disease or diabetes, Dr Feinle said.

For more information or to take part in the study, participants should call Dr Rosalie Vozzo on 8222 5073.

## Drop of white the right stuff for vines

IT'S NOT quite turning water into wine, but it's close.

According to the latest research from the University of Adelaide, milk and other dairy products are as effective as some conventional fungicides in controlling powdery mildew in vineyards.

A disease which attacks grapevine leaves and fruit, powdery mildew currently costs the Australian wine industry about \$30 million a year, mainly in control measures.

Peter Crisp from the University's Department of Applied and Molecular Ecology is examining novel control methods of powdery mildew for his PhD, and has already attracted interest from the wine industry with his preliminary findings.

He has found that, in accordance with a gardening "old wives' tale", milk really does have a positive impact on grapevines.

"A lot of people are already using milk on their household potplants to make the leaves shiny—but now its benefits are being formally recognised," Mr Crisp said.

"For the first part of the study, I looked at 30 or 40 different treatments, some of them 'snake oils' or 'old wives' tales', that are in circulation for treating powdery mildew.

"Not surprisingly, most of them ended up having no basis, but milk and whey, and also a canola oil-based product, were the ones that really stood out as being comparable to current powdery mildew treatments."



PhD student Peter Crisp. Photo: Ben Osborne.

The most successful treatments Mr Crisp has trialled so far are milk and whey (the liquid waste from cheese production).

The milk is diluted to 1/10th of its normal strength, and the whey 1/3rd. The solutions are then sprayed onto the grapevine leaves and immature grapes.

The solutions work well on most grape cultivars and, importantly, don't appear to affect the quality of the grapes and hence the finished wine product, although this needs to be evaluated scientifically.

"Making sure that the quality is not diminished is very important for the commercial wineries—obviously they don't want to put anything on their grapes that will reduce the quality of their wines, and subsequently reduce the price and reputation the wines can achieve," Mr Crisp said.

The implications of Mr Crisp's research are biggest for organic winemakers, those who don't currently use synthetic fungicides and herbicides for disease and pest control.

"Sulphur is the main form of fungicide against powdery mildew, and is used by most organic and conventional wineries, with the conventional wineries using synthetic fungicides as well.

"Sulphur has been used for 150 years and is pretty effective, but it could be on its way to being restricted for organic growers to use, and they'll need to find another way that will be cheap and efficient.

"The milk and whey treatments are, at this stage, looking very promising, and even the conventional wineries are interested, given that many would also prefer to use more naturally based fungicides on their crops."

Several organic wineries are already involved with Mr Crisp's research, notably Temple Bruer in Langhorne Creek. The CEO of Temple Bruer Wines, David Bruer, was formerly in charge of the Oenology Department at the University's Roseworthy campus before becoming a full-time vigneron and has generously allowed Mr Crisp to use a portion of his vineyard for trials.

Other wineries involved in Mr Crisp's project include Glenara and Mountadam. The project is supervised by Dr Eileen Scott, of Applied and Molecular Ecology, and Dr Trevor Wicks, of the South Australian Research and Development Institute. It won the prize for the best research project at last year's Inaugural Organic Agriculture Conference in Sydney.

—Ben Osborne

# Antarctic adventure for Adelaide student



Her diving also came in handy during her research at the University of Adelaide. For the past four years the British student has been studying sediment produced by organisms that live on seagrasses along the South Australian coast.

"My main survey point was West Island near Victor Harbor—I spent about two months out of every year there," Ms Brown said.

"I've been diving right along the South Australian coast, from Streaky Bay down to Robe. I've done tropical, temperate, Arctic and now I'll be doing Antarctic diving, so I feel very lucky," she said. "I'll be down there scuba diving every day of the year, if I can."

Ms Brown's research has combined elements of marine geology and biology, and her new position will move her further into the marine biology field.

The research involves looking at the damage caused by icebergs as they scrape along the sea floor. This process, known as "grounding" or "berging", destroys flora and fauna on the sea floor.

"We'll be looking at how the organisms down there survive in those conditions, and how fast they recover.

"The overall scope of that project is that with



An increase in icebergs from global warming is one reason why research is needed.

**GEOLOGY student Kirsty Brown is leaving Adelaide, Australia to spend three years in... Adelaide, Antarctica.**

**Adelaide Island to be exact.**

A PhD student, Ms Brown has been awarded a highly sought-after position working with the British Antarctic Survey. In Antarctica, she'll be working with a team of researchers looking at the impact of icebergs on animal and plant life at the sea floor.

The new position will put her scuba diving skills to good use. Ms Brown has been diving for the past seven years, including off the coast of Greenland.

increases in global warming, the number of icebergs produced will increase. It's possible the animals and plant life may not be able to survive with increased rates of berging," she said.

Ms Brown will use some of her time off in Antarctica to write her PhD thesis.

"Hopefully at the end of all this I'll come back to Australia to work. Antarctica is exotic, but I think Australia has just as much to offer scientifically," she said.

For more information about the British Antarctic Survey, visit the website: [www.antarctica.ac.uk](http://www.antarctica.ac.uk)

## Marine biologist gets fresh with media



PhD students Paris Goodsell (right) and Meegan Fowler-Walker.

**A UNIVERSITY of Adelaide marine biologist was among the top young scientists chosen Australia-wide for the recent Fresh Science event in Melbourne.**

The Fresh Scientists are among the best young researchers in their fields, chosen because of the high quality of their work. Each of the young scientists is taught how to communicate their science to the media, and Adelaide PhD student Paris Goodsell had her turn in the spotlight.

Ms Goodsell, from the Department of Environmental Biology, has used marine forests to show how rare species can be maintained when habitats are broken up and destroyed.

"Because most Australian cities are on the coast, finding ways to conserve marine diversity becomes a huge issue for Australians," Ms Goodsell said.

"When habitats are removed or split apart, animals remain in isolated patches of habitats and can soon run out of food and suitable mates. Our challenge is to understand how we can preserve diversity in these patchy environments."

Ms Goodsell has studied the diverse communities of marine animals that live on the floor of seaweed forests inside "holdfasts", where marine plants attach to rock.

She found that rare species were most at risk when the number of habitat patches around them dwindled and became further apart from one another.

"This means that not only do we need to consider how many remaining habitat patches can be left in an area, but how far apart they are becomes an issue if there are only a few habitats left," Ms Goodsell said.

"Reducing the number of habitats dramatically changed the patterns of diversity, but this effect was not as great when neighbouring habitats were close together. And the differences in diversity were mostly because of the reaction of rare species rather than the common ones."

Habitat fragmentation is a significant cause of species loss and extinction, but is hard to study scientifically because of the ethical and practical issues of deliberately destroying habitats for the purposes of an experiment. By using small-scale systems, Ms Goodsell was able to observe how communities reacted to habitat fragmentation, without causing irreversible damage.

"The holdfast at the base of each plant forms a discrete mini-habitat, which can be easily and cheaply manipulated," she said.

Ms Goodsell said the experience of participating in Fresh Science was invaluable.

"To be able to excite people about what you do is fantastic," she said.

"Conserving biodiversity and the habitats upon which animals rely is hard work in the marine environment because of the 'out of sight, out of mind' barrier. It feels great to reach everyday people to let them know that as we continue to live and use our coastline, we are damaging the marine environment, but that there are a number of people dedicated to finding practical solutions to preserve all the amazing life forms of the sea.

"The skills I have learnt at Fresh Science are invaluable tools to promote marine research and achieve a greater awareness of the problems, dangers and solutions we face in our efforts to protect biodiversity."

Ms Goodsell's work is just one example of how the University of Adelaide is leading the field of marine biology research in South Australia, according to Professor Russell Baudinette, Head of Environmental Biology.

"The University of Adelaide has a unique position, as the strongest research university in the State, to provide students with real learning opportunities in marine biology. It is one of the areas that we do very well, but surprisingly is little known in the community," he said.

For more information about studying marine biology at Adelaide, phone the Student Centre on (08) 8303 5208.

# "Smart pills" under microscope in new study

**CAN a herbal tablet improve your memory and intelligence?**

That's the question being put to the test by University of Adelaide and CSIRO scientists in a new trial of the herbal supplement ginkgo biloba.

Made from the extracts of leaves of the maidenhair tree, ginkgo biloba has been used for thousands of years in Asia and is among the most commonly prescribed drugs in France and Germany.

Ginkgo is said to relieve many conditions common in ageing, such as difficulties of concentration, memory loss, absent-mindedness, confusion, lack of energy and tiredness. It has also been assessed for its usefulness in Alzheimer's Disease.

Despite recent results from the US claiming there is little benefit from the herb, Adelaide-based scientists believe there's still much to investigate. Researchers from the University's

Department of Psychology and the CSIRO's Division of Health Sciences and Nutrition want to put some of those theories about ginkgo to the test—in young people.

Nick Burns, lecturer in Psychology at the University of Adelaide, said the new study would involve 100 healthy young men aged 18 to 40.

"Participants will need to take tablets three times daily, containing either the herbal supplement or an inactive placebo. After 12 weeks, we'll conduct tests to see if there are any changes in cognitive performance," he said.

"While we remain healthily sceptical about the effects ginkgo might have on people, the potential benefits should not be ignored, which is why we're conducting the study.

"We also need to put the herbal supplement to the test, so that consumers have a better understanding of what they're buying."

—David Ellis  
—Kerry Statham



Dr Janet Bryan (CSIRO) and Dr Nick Burns (Psychology) with a ginkgo tablet.

## COMING EVENTS

September 2002

### MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 2

**1pm Departments of Social Inquiry and English "Reconciliation, Citizenship and (Auto)biography" Seminar:** "How to write a biography? Looking at Catherine Martin" by Associate Professor Margaret Allen (Social Inquiry). Seminar room 420, Level 4, Napier Building.

**1.10pm Geographical and Environmental Studies Seminar:** "Impact of cultural and religious norms on reproductive behaviour: a complex demographic reality in tribal communities of north-east India" by Mr Uday Sankar Saikia (Flinders University). Room 918, Level 9, Napier Building.

**1.10 Student Workshop:** "Meditation". Counselling Centre, ground floor, Horace Lamb Building

### TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 3

**3.15pm Anthropology Seminar:** "Ironic Images: Landscape and History in the Local Poetry of the Scottish Borders" by Associate Professor John Gray (Anthropology). Seminar Room 1, 4th floor, Tower Building (10 Pulteney Street).

### WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 4

**12.30pm Clinical Nursing Seminar:** "The Association Between The Critical Illness Sedation Scale (CISS), Independent Clinical Judgment and The Bispectral Index of EEG for the Assessment of Sedation of Ventilated Patients in an ICU" by Judy Magarey (Clinical Nursing). Room 36, level 3, Eleanor Harrald Building.

**4.10pm Physiology Seminar:** "The principle of Laplace and scaling of ventricular wall stress and blood pressure in mammals and birds" by Professor Roger Seymour (Environmental Biology). Numico Seminar Room, Level 5, Medical School North.

### THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 5

**12.05pm Psychology Seminar:** "It's 'just' a social construction: Discursive psychology, relativism and the connections between ontology and language" by Dr Keith Tuffin (Massey University). Room 526, Hughes Building.

### FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 6

**1.10pm Elder School of Music Lunch Hour Concert:** "A Century of Jazz Part Two – The Later Years (From Bop to Fusion) featuring. John Aué (double bass), Bruce Hancock (piano) Laurie Kennedy (drums) Bob Jeffery (saxophones) Warren Heading (trumpet) James Bailey (vibraphone) and Keith Hempton (narrator). Elder Hall, admission \$4.

**4pm Obstetrics and Gynaecology Seminar:** "Placental restriction of fetal growth increases growth rate and sensitivity to anabolic hormones

in the neonatal lamb" by Mr Miles de Blasio (Physiology). Seminar Room, Level 6, Medical School North.

### MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 9

**1pm Colgate Australian Clinical Dental Research Centre Seminar:** "An in-vitro evaluation of the surface protective properties of Fuji VII on enamel and dentine" by Dr Mulyani Dalidjan (Dentistry). CACDRC Board Room, 2nd Floor, Adelaide Dental Hospital.

**1.10pm Geographical and Environmental Studies Seminar:** "Do we fit on the planet? Sustainability, overshoot and the Ecological Footprint" by Ms Sharon Ede (Department for Environment and Heritage). Room 918, Level 9, Napier Building.

**1.10 Student Workshop:** "Meditation". Counselling Centre, ground floor, Horace Lamb Building

**2.10pm Departments of Social Inquiry and English "Reconciliation, Citizenship and (Auto)biography" Seminar:** "Reading Autobiography: A Guide to Interpreting Life Narrative" by Professor Sidonie Smith (University of Michigan). Room 618, Level 6, Napier Building.

### TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 10

**3.15pm Anthropology Seminar:** Topic to be announced by Dr Andrew Dawson (University of Hull). Seminar Room 1, 4th floor, Tower Building (10 Pulteney Street). Dr Andrew Dawson

### WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 11

**4.10pm Physiology Seminar:** "Plant sterols in foods: panacea or problem?" by Dr Peter Clifton (CSIRO Health Sciences and Nutrition). Numico Seminar Room, Level 5, Medical School North.

### THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 12

**12.05pm Psychology Seminar:** "The impact of work stress on health and wellbeing in University Staff" by Mr John Hapuarachchi (University of South Australia). Room 526, Hughes Building.

**1pm Chemical Pathology Seminar:** "Adolescent Experimental Drug Use" by Janice Ough (Youth Health Service). Seminar Room 1, 4th Floor, Reiger Building.

### FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 13

**1pm Centre for the Molecular Genetics of Development Seminar:** "Cortical lies: neuronal origins, layering and branching" by Associate Professor Seong-Seng Tan (Howard Florey Institute, Melbourne). Seminar room 1.02, Molecular Life Sciences Building.

**1.10pm Elder School of Music Lunch Hour Concert:** Elder Conservatorium Chamber Orchestra featuring Keith Crellin (conductor), Leila Kelleher (viola), Lauren Turton (viola), Sarah McCarthy (violin) and Melanie Radke (violin)

perform works by JS Bach, Telemann and Corelli. Elder Hall, admission \$4.

**4pm Obstetrics and Gynaecology Seminar:** "Developmental biology of the adrenal gland" by Dr Cathy Coulter (Physiology). Seminar Room, Level 6, Medical School North.

### MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 16

**1.10 Student Workshop:** "Meditation". Counselling Centre, ground floor, Horace Lamb Building

**7.30pm Australian Institute of Physics Public Lecture:** "Physics and its Masters: echo of Eureka on the streets of today" by Associate Professor Lidia Morawska (2002 AIP Women in Physics national lecturer). Union Hall, free admission.

### TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 17

**1.10 Student Workshop:** "Developing A Solution-Focused Mindset". Counselling Centre, ground floor, Horace Lamb Building.

### WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 18

**10.10am Centre for Biomedical Engineering Seminar:** "Spectrum Licensing in Asia" by Dr Matthew Sorell (Electrical and Electronic Engineering). Room S112, Engineering South Building.

**12.30pm Clinical Nursing Seminar:** "Sedation following Coronary Artery Bypass Graft Surgery (CABG); A National Survey" by Stephanie Creed (RAH). Room 36, level 3, Eleanor Harrald Building.

**4.10pm Physiology Seminar:** "Gender and developmental regulation of scavenger receptor CD36 - implications for cholesterol and fatty acid uptake in the liver" by Professor Graham Mayrhofer, (Molecular Biosciences). Numico Seminar Room, Level 5, Medical School North.

**5.30pm Centre for Biomedical Engineering Seminar:** "Biomechanics of mastication in wombats and kangaroos: placental and marsupial herbivores compared" by Professor A.W. "Fuzz" Crompton (Harvard University). SG15 Hone Lecture Theatre, Ground Floor, Medical Building South.

### THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 19

**1pm Chemical Pathology Seminar:** "Trends in Cord Blood Transplantation and Banking" by Colin Story (Women's and Children's Hospital). Seminar Room 1, 4th Floor, Reiger Building.

### FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 20

**1.10pm Elder School of Music Lunch Hour Concert:** Horingo Ensemble featuring Jim Bailey (director/drums), Nick Parnell (vibraphone/marimba), Tim Irrgang (vibraphone/marimba) and Lyndon Gray (acoustic bass) perform works by Elder Conservatorium Chamber Orchestra

featuring Keith Crellin (conductor), Leila Kelleher (viola), Lauren Turton (viola), Sarah McCarthy (violin) and Melanie Radke (violin) perform works by Chick Corea, JS Bach, Dave Brubeck, George Hamilton Green and Rimsky Korsakov. Elder Hall, admission \$4.

**2pm Centre for Asian Studies Seminar:** "Australia's Arm Purchasing Policies" by Dr John Bruni (Asian Studies). Room 518, Ligertwood Building.

### MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 23

**1pm Colgate Australian Clinical Dental Research Centre Seminar:** PhD report by Dr Geoff Knight. CACDRC Board Room, 2nd Floor, Adelaide Dental Hospital.

### TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 24

**7.30pm Musicological Society of Australia South Australia Chapter Seminar:** "Sound Recordings and the Musicological Subject, Part Two" by Mr Steven Knopoff (Elder School of Music) and "Waon Orchestra: Japanese Traditional Music and the Live Club Scene in Tokyo" by Ms Marika Leininger Ogawa (PhD candidate, Elder School of Music). Room 1107, Level 11, Schulz Building. Admission: gold coin donation.

### THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 26

**1pm Chemical Pathology Seminar:** "L Carnitine - Pharmacology, Pharmacokinetics and Impact on Haemodialysis" by Dr Allan Evans (University of South Australia). Seminar Room 1, 4th Floor, Reiger Building.

### FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 27

**1.10pm Elder School of Music Lunch Hour Concert:** Seraphim Piano Trio featuring Helen Ayres (violin), Timothy Nankervis (cello) and Anna Goldsworthy (piano) perform works by Polglase and Beethoven. Elder Hall, admission \$4.

**2pm Centre for Asian Studies Seminar:** "Zen and the Bomb" by Dr Brian Victoria. Room 518, Ligertwood Building.

**4pm Obstetrics and Gynaecology Seminar:** "Sequencing, Transcript Identification and Quantitative gene expression profiling in the breast cancer loss of heterozygosity region 16q24.3, reveals three potential tumour suppressor genes" by Dr Gabriel Kremmidiotis (Bionomics Ltd). Seminar Room, Level 6, Medical School North.

### MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 30

**5.30pm Joseph Fisher Lecture:** "The Role of Natural Resources in Economic Development" by Professor Ed Barbier (University of Wyoming). Lecture Theatre 102, Level 1, Napier Building. Enquiries, phone (08) 8303 5672.



# Scientists angry over proposed GM moratorium

ADELAIDE scientists are speaking out against what they describe as misinformation in the community about genetically modified (GM) crops.

They're also concerned about moves by some politicians to place a moratorium on GM crops.

The scientists say some South Australian Members of Parliament who supported the moratorium had ignored offers of more information about the scientific facts surrounding GM crops.

The group of scientists includes Australian and world leaders in their fields, from the University of Adelaide, the Cooperative Research Centre (CRC) for Australian Weed Management and the CRC for Molecular Plant Breeding.

On July 17, South Australian Democrats MLC Mr Ian Gilfillan introduced a Bill to State Parliament for a five-year moratorium on GM crops.

The Adelaide scientists, led by Professor Peter Langridge (Department of Plant Science, University of Adelaide, and CRC for Molecular Plant Breeding) and Dr Rick Roush (CRC for Australian Weed Management), have issued a statement to Parliament countering what they described as misleading information about GM crops.

"We believe that public policy should be made on the basis of facts and not scare campaigns, such as the campaigns supported by Ian Gilfillan and others," Dr Roush said.



Dr Rick Roush (left) and Professor Peter Langridge. Photo: Leon Mead, courtesy of *The Advertiser*.

The statement to Parliament sets out many of the scientists' concerns about the proposed moratorium.

"We believe the legislation is ill-conceived and potentially damaging to South Australia's future economy," the statement said.

"The damage that a moratorium would bring to SA comes from three key directions.

"First, it creates the expectation in farmers

that there is a large GM-free market, but surveys and analyses that have been conducted in Australia and overseas show this is simply untrue. We would risk sending producers off chasing illusory market benefits while precluding them from reaping the gains from an emerging technology.

"Second, GM technology offers some major advantages over current technology and these have been well studied and documented.

"Third, the application of any technology is a slow and meticulous process. New varieties need to go through extensive field testing and analysis. If we turn our backs on a valuable technology now, precluding its evaluation for five years, we cannot expect to introduce it rapidly later when the misinformation from the recent tour campaign has died down."

The statement referred to the recent visit of a Canadian farmer, Mr Percy Schmeiser, who claimed that his canola crops were the victim of GM cross-pollination.

The Adelaide scientists say some politicians have been readily accepting of Mr Schmeiser's claims, despite locally available expertise on GM crops, and canola in particular. This expertise includes the publication, in a recent issue of the journal *Science*, of the world's largest study of pollen flow in canola.

"Despite scientific facts showing that the risk of pollen flow and hybridisation is extremely low, and despite a ruling by the Federal Court of Canada on the issue, Mr Schmeiser had continued to receive support from Mr Gilfillan and organisations such as Greenpeace and GeneEthics," Dr Roush said.

The Canadian court's decision in the Schmeiser case can be found here:

<http://decisions.fctcf.gc.ca/fct/2001/2001fct256.html>

A group of scientists from the CRCs and the University of Adelaide has since been invited to speak to State Cabinet on the issue.

—David Ellis

## Eureka prize to Adelaide science journalist

SCIENCE communicator and former University of Adelaide science journalist Dr Rob Morrison has been awarded the \$10,000 Australian Skeptics Eureka Prize for Critical Thinking.

The prize was one of 18 Eureka's handed out by the Australian Museum in Sydney last month.

The Prize for Critical Thinking is awarded for investigation into beliefs that owe little or nothing to the rigours of scientific method.

Dr Morrison won for an article called *Trust Me, I'm a Science Communicator*, a study examining how the mechanics and requirements of successful science communication differ sharply from those of formal scientific research reports, and so bias science communication towards the sensational, speculative, hyperbolic and even fanciful.

Dr Morrison wrote the article while working as a Science Journalist at the University of Adelaide last year. An edited version of the winning article was printed in the *Adelaidean* last October.

The full version of his prize-winning article can be found on the University's website: [www.adelaide.edu.au/pr/media/releases/2002/morrison\\_paper.html](http://www.adelaide.edu.au/pr/media/releases/2002/morrison_paper.html)

## Canola study sheds light on GM issue



Gene flow is one of the major issues of debate surrounding the introduction of GM food and crop legislation in Australia, with some farmers fearing cross-pollination from GM crops into their GM-free crops could hinder their earning capacity.

Dr Rieger's research used canola that was not genetically modified, but instead was a herbicide-resistant crop variety that had been developed by standard breeding techniques.

However, the implications of her research translate well to GM crops as the pollen spreads exactly the same way, primarily through wind or insects, she said.

"What we found was that pollen could spread quite a distance, up to 2.6km, from

a GM crop to a non-GM crop," she said. "But the amount of gene flow that occurred was minimal—even if the crops were right next to each other.

"We tested this across 63 commercially sized fields in South Australia, New South Wales and Victoria, and collected 48 million seeds—so it's a very large and comprehensive survey with extremely important implications, worldwide.

"One of the key implications is that non-GM canola grown in Australia is not in any danger of being excluded from international markets on the basis of containing unwanted genes."

—Ben Osborne

WITH the debate about the introduction of genetically modified (GM) crops becoming a serious political issue, a research project led by the University of Adelaide has made a timely and informed contribution to the topic.

Dr Mary Rieger, a researcher from the University's Department of Applied and Molecular Ecology, conducted a year-long trial into canola and its GM implications for the Cooperative Research Centre for Australian Weed Management (based at the University's Waite campus).

In a finding recently published in the prestigious American journal *Science*, Dr Rieger established that the risk of "gene flow" between GM and non-GM crops was so small as to be near negligible, and well under the 1% level prescribed by the Australian Government.



Dr Mary Rieger. Photo: Ben Osborne.

# Jamie qualifies for national finals, wins \$4000

**TALENTED** University of Adelaide percussionist Jamie Adam has added another credential to an already impressive list after he qualified for the final of the Symphony Australia Young Performers Award in Brisbane last month.

Jamie, an Honours student at the University's renowned Elder School of Music, was the only South Australian to compete in the qualifying event, and also won \$4000 for being the night's best performer accompanied by the Queensland Symphony Orchestra.

Jamie was selected from the final 16 of Australia's most outstanding young classical musicians as winner of his category. The final will take place later this year.

His supervisor, senior lecturer Mr Jim Bailey, said Jamie's achievements highlighted the continuing success of Elder School of Music percussionists.

"It's a great honour for the School and also for percussion performance and teaching at the School," he said.

"Jamie is one of our most talented musicians and has a very promising musical career ahead of him."

Jamie's success in the competition follows that of fellow Elder School of Music percussionist Nick Parnell, who reached the last 16 of the competition in 2000 and 2001.



Jamie Adam.

Jamie has also recently won the inaugural John "Slick" Osborne Scholarship, a \$5000 performance scholarship which rewards outstanding talent in the field of jazz drumming and classical percussion.

Last year he was the first winner of the David Galliver Memorial Award, the traditional end-of-year awards given by the University to reward its most outstanding students. The awards were renamed in honour of the late Professor David Galliver, former head of the Elder Conservatorium and Elder Professor of Music.

## Percussionists beat the national competition

**IN the Australian Percussion Eisteddfod held in Sydney last month, 11 University of Adelaide percussion students took on their counterparts from conservatoriums and music schools throughout the country.**

Undaunted by the challenge, the Elder School of Music squad went on to win or be placed in eight of the 14 categories entered. Collecting five firsts, four second and five third-placing awards, the Adelaide team successfully wiped the competition off the board.

The two-day Eisteddfod featured an intensive series of competitions open to primary, junior, intermediate and senior music students nationally. Musicians took part in a series of solo and ensemble competitions featuring all percussion instruments from marimba to snare drums.

The winning Adelaide team, all aged between 17 and 26, are: Rachel Rodwell, Nick Parnell, Katie Seaman, Ryan Simm, Jamie Adam, Luke Hague, Paul Butler, Aaron Austin, Nicole Weepers, Fleur Green and Andrew Buchan.

Masters student Nick Parnell collected two firsts for the Senior Multiple Percussion and Open Solo Keyboard events.

Newcomer on the scene, 17-year-old single studies student Luke Hague, made his competition debut and won a first in the Intermediate Solo Keyboard.

Jamie Adam, a double winner in last year's Eisteddfod, repeated this success with two firsts in the Open Solo Keyboard with Four Mallets and the Open Snare Solo. Jamie also went on to win a second prize in tandem with Andrew Buchan and a third with Paul Butler in the Open Mallet Duet.

## Elder School Open Day

Friday, September 13, 10.30am-3.00pm

Goodman Crescent (in front of Elder Hall)

The Elder School of Music throws open its doors... with Choral, Jazz, Orchestral and Chamber Music performances plus Music Technology. Hear a preview of the Three Choirs Concert, observe ensembles and workshops in action.

Come behind the scenes and meet the staff and students, see the new building plans, and find out about the future of the new Elder School of Music.

For more information phone (08) 8303 5272 or email: alan.mills@adelaide.edu.au

## Choral splendour Annual jazz awards concert

**THE Elder School of Music presents a magnificent program of choral works on Saturday, September 14 at 8.00pm in Elder Hall as part of its Evening Concert Series.**

This concert will debut three new choirs: Elder Conservatorium Chorale, Adelaide Voices (ex-Chamber Choir) and Bella Voce (ex-Women's Choir), all of which evolved from the former choirs of the Elder Conservatorium and the Flinders Street School of Music.

The program will include *Chichester Psalms* (for choir, organ, harp and percussion) by Leonard Bernstein and *Rejoice in the Lamb* (for choir and organ) by Benjamin Britten.

Carl Crossin, well known to audiences in South Australia as founder and director of the Adelaide Chamber Singers, will conduct the program.

Tickets: \$22 Adult/\$14 Conc/\$8 Student at BASS outlets or at the door (University of Adelaide staff at concession prices).

It's not too late to subscribe to the last four concerts, see brochures available from BASS outlets or at [www.music.adelaide.edu.au](http://www.music.adelaide.edu.au), or contact the Coordinator, Evening Concert Series on (08) 8303 5925 (Tues/Thurs) or mobile: 0402 120 478.

**THE annual Jazz Awards concerts have won a well-deserved reputation for showcasing the best talent from the Elder School of Music's Jazz Studies in one venue, giving Adelaide jazz followers a once-a-year opportunity to spot the stars of tomorrow.**

Adelaide business and corporate sectors have once again rallied to recognise the talents of the high achieving award winners by sponsoring cash prizes:

Adelaide City Council Award for Most Outstanding Postgraduate (Adam Lee, guitarist); Adelaide City Council Award for Most Outstanding Undergraduate (Chris Martin, pianist); Baron Partners Award for Second Most Outstanding Postgraduate (Shane Ellery, pianist); dB Magazine Award for Top Undergraduate - Jazz Guitar (James Brown); Envestra Limited Award for Top Undergraduate - Saxophone (Derek Pascoe); and John Reynolds Music City Award for Top Undergraduate - Drums (Hugh Harvey).

**Annual Jazz Awards Concert  
8pm Wednesday, September 4  
Scott Theatre, University of Adelaide  
Tickets \$10 and \$5  
Bookings: (08) 8303 5925**

## Interview: Mike Innes

*From page 2*

But I think what we need to be doing—and the faculty's already doing it, I'm just going to help facilitate it—is looking at much more of the linkage type of grant with community, governmental and industrial organisations. The research we do in these areas will be good, theoretically based research, but it's also going to deliver a product to the community. We can provide good-quality research to help understand the problems that are prevalent in society.

I'm bringing my attitudes towards research with me, even if I'm not actually going to be running a grant or running a laboratory. Nevertheless I can see a way in which a background in social psychology, which is my discipline, is going to be able to help the humanities and social sciences to strengthen what is already strong.

Part of the secret also is to create multidisciplinary teams of people who might otherwise not have thought of working together in the past, so that they can bring their different skills to bear on research projects. These multidisciplinary, collaborative groups can generate further funding for research, which then also has benefits for younger researchers and students.

*What is your message to students who might be thinking about studying at Adelaide next year?*

It's really to emphasise what I was saying before. That in the modern knowledge economy, jobs are going to change, people are going to need to move from job to job across disciplines, working in teams, working with a variety of people from other disciplines, and I want to send the message that a training in the humanities and social sciences is an excellent way of being given those initial skills that equip them for the future. They not only get a basic training in the disciplines, but also in teamwork, communication skills... all of these generic skills are most important.

An example is my own son who graduated from the University of Adelaide a number of years ago with an Arts degree, a training in psychology, and he is now an information analyst with Deutsche Bank in London. He doesn't do any psychology, but he's working in a team with an economist, a mathematician and information technology specialists. That's the future, people who have these kinds of flexible skills so that they can take on a number of different roles and careers, and that's what the humanities and social sciences can give you.

# Sports stars are ready, set, go for Uni Games



**MORE than 6000 competitors are expected to converge on Adelaide for the nation's biggest university sporting festival, the Australian University Games.**

This year the games are being co-hosted by three South Australian universities—Adelaide, Flinders and UniSA.

The Governor of South Australia, Her Excellency Marjorie Jackson-Nelson—herself an Australian sporting legend—will officially open the games at a ceremony at the Memorial Drive Tennis Centre on Sunday, September 29.

Admission to the opening is free, and all participants and members of the public are welcome to attend. Entertainment starts at 6.30pm, with the ceremony starting at 7pm.

The week-long event will celebrate 10 years of the Australian University Games and see some of the nation's best young stars competing in their fields.

The games will feature 23 sports: athletics, Australian rules football, badminton, baseball, basketball, cricket, cycling, diving, hockey, judo, kendo, netball, rowing, rugby union, soccer, softball, swimming, taekwondo, tennis, touch, ultimate frisbee, volleyball and water polo.

The Australian University Games will run from September 29 to October 4 at various venues around Adelaide, including the University of Adelaide's own grounds and facilities. Player registrations will take place in the Union Building.

The good news for locals is that teams from the University of Adelaide will feature strongly at the event.

"Adelaide University has been highly successful in the preliminary rounds and I am glad to say that most of our University teams have qualified for the games," said Michael Headland, Projects Officer with the Adelaide University Sports Association.

"In fact we are anticipating that up to 500 students of the University of Adelaide will take part in this year's Australian University Games."

In the host qualifying rounds held in April, Adelaide scooped the pool with 20 teams already qualifying for the games. Those few teams that are yet to qualify will be put in a wild card entry, to be decided closer to the event.

"This is an exceptional result for the University of Adelaide and the Sports Association is rapt in the results achieved. Well done to all the teams involved."

The Adelaide University Sports Association became an affiliated chapter of the University of Adelaide Alumni Association in February this year.

For more information contact the Adelaide University Sports Association at (08) 8303 5403 or visit their website at [www.adelaide.edu.au/sport/sports\\_assoc.html](http://www.adelaide.edu.au/sport/sports_assoc.html)

For more information about the Australian University Games, visit: [www.unisport.com.au](http://www.unisport.com.au)

Left: University of Queensland student Melanie Kleeberg, who was among Australia's 4x100m relay team to compete in the Commonwealth Games in Manchester, is one of the many young sports stars to line up for competition at the University Games in South Australia this month.

## Rhodes scholar off to Oxford

**OUR latest Rhodes Scholarship winner, Law/Commerce graduate Ben Allgrove, has now left Adelaide to begin his studies at Oxford University.**

One of the world's most prestigious scholarships, the Rhodes Scholarship is again accepting applications from South Australian university students.

The Rhodes Trust offers nine scholarships in Australia each year, one awarded in each State and three for Australia at large.

Ben Allgrove continues a long history of University of Adelaide students to win the scholarship. At Oxford he will be studying for a DPhil (PhD) in Law.

Ben graduated with First Class Honours in Law and was a University Medallist.

As with all Rhodes scholars, he was not selected for academic achievement alone. During his time at the University he was also heavily involved in extra-curricular activities, including Vice-President of the Adelaide University Union, Orientation Coordinator, playing rugby, and coaching rowing for the Adelaide University Union Boat Club.

Since graduating, he was an Associate to the Honourable Justice DeBelle of the Supreme Court of South Australia, and was also research assistant to the Solicitor-General for South Australia, Mr Brad Selway, an Adjunct Professor of the Law School.

Rhodes scholars receive a generous stipend



Ben Allgrove.

and all tuition fees at Oxford are paid by the Rhodes Trust. The trust also assists successful candidates with their travelling expenses to the United Kingdom. Scholarships are awarded for two years (with the possibility of extension to a third year).

Applications for the 2003 Rhodes Scholarship close on Monday, September 2.

For more information, potential South Australian applicants should call (08) 8303 4701.

## ALUMNI NEWS

### Alumni convention

The 2002 Australian Universities International Alumni Convention is being held in Melbourne on Friday and Saturday, September 6-7. New Vice-Chancellor Professor James McWha will be chairing a session on the Friday, "Communities in the Asia Pacific". For more information visit the official website at: [www.auiac2002.com](http://www.auiac2002.com)

In conjunction with the convention, the University of Adelaide Alumni Association will be hosting a networking event in Melbourne on Thursday, September 5 at the Melbourne Museum from 4.30-6.00pm. This event provides an opportunity for the University's alumni, both internationally and locally, to build new friendships, meet past acquaintances and keep abreast of current events at the University. All University of Adelaide alumni who will be in Melbourne on that day are invited to attend. Please register your interest with Rosslyn Cox at +618 8303 3692 or email: [rosslyn.cox@adelaide.edu.au](mailto:rosslyn.cox@adelaide.edu.au)

### Travel grants

Applications are now available for the September round of the Mutual Community Postgraduate Travel Grants.

Two travel grants of up to \$2500 each are available to assist University of Adelaide doctoral candidates. More information can be found at the Alumni website [www.adelaide.edu.au/alumni](http://www.adelaide.edu.au/alumni), or contact Kim McBride: (08) 8303 3317, [kim.mcbride@adelaide.edu.au](mailto:kim.mcbride@adelaide.edu.au). Deadline for applications is 5.00pm Friday, September 20.

### Spring luncheon

Graham Abbott will reveal some of his trade secrets at a Spring Luncheon in the University of Adelaide Club during his stay in Adelaide to conduct *Don Giovanni* for the State Opera. Organised by the Cornell Chapter, the luncheon will be held on Wednesday, October 9 at 12.30pm. Further details can be obtained from the Alumni, Community Relations and Development office: (08) 8303 3196.

### Barr Smith Library appeal

Professor Tom Shapcott will be the guest speaker at a thank you event for the sponsors of the Barr Smith Library Appeal 2002 and the launch of the Friends of the University of Adelaide Library. The event, at 6pm Friday, September 20, will be held in the library's renowned Reading Room. For more information contact Nicole Stones: (08) 8303 3234.

radio.adelaide.edu.au

September 2002

**SUV Radio Adelaide 101.5FM**

**Rural Men**  
A Radio Adelaide series for Adult Learners Week  
Monday - Friday, September 2-6, 7.45am

Recorded with men from towns on the Yorke Peninsula - where well over 25% of residents are over 65 - this series explores the impact of difficult economic times and job uncertainties on older men in rural Australia. Still the 'archetypal Aussie' in advertising stereotypes, the reality is big changes in what it means to be 'a man'. With societal pressures that dictate that men should 'tough it out, no matter what', many men are struggling to make sense of their world and their work. Or to face up to loss of work or retirement. Their stories are realistic and challenging.

**Bookmarks** Sundays, 9am  
Highlights from Writers Week 2002  
produced & by Clare Littleton, presented by Simon Gill

**Sun / 1 Sept** Why I write . . .  
Authors including Brenda Walker, Brian Castro, Stephanie Johnson & John Birmingham explore the reasons behind how they chose writing as a profession.

**Sun / 8 Sept** Claire Tomalin  
Informative & entertaining stories of how she came to write 'An Invisible Woman' based on the lives of Nelly Ternan and Charles Dickens.

**Sun / 15 Sept** Michael Ondaatje  
The writer of the acclaimed book & film 'The English Patient' discusses forms of writing he's tackled, from poetry to memoir, prose & film.

**Sun / 22 Sept** Sean Williams  
This South Australian Science Fiction writer (who's found commercial success in the USA & in Oz) unravels the myths behind writing in this genre.

**Sun / 29 Sept** Geraldine Brooks  
Brooks talks about her transition from foreign correspondent to novelist & discusses the origins of her novel 'Years of Wander', tale of the spread of the plague in a Derbyshire town.

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## New writer wins national HQ prize



AFTER years of "writing in my head", Rebekah Clarkson produced her first short story last year.

She wrote it as an assignment for the Creative Writing program at the University of Adelaide, where she is a Masters student, and followed it with a second, *The Blue Suitcase*.

Last month, *The Blue Suitcase* was chosen from 1300 entries as the winner of one of Australia's most prestigious literary prizes, the HQ Short Story Competition. Another story by Ms Clarkson, *Morning Tea*, was awarded fourth prize.

"It has been very affirming," she said. "It is saying: you can write, so keep going."

"I've been writing in my head forever but couldn't find that necessary sense of validity to actually put it on paper. Enrolling in the Creative Writing course was a way of pushing myself to do it. There's nothing like a word length and a deadline and a HECS debt to make you write."

The idea for *The Blue Suitcase* took shape after Creative Writing lecturer Dr Eva Sallis suggested to students that they think about producing an anthology of Christmas stories. Ms Clarkson said the guidance of Dr Sallis and Professor Tom Shapcott had been invaluable in her development as a writer.

"Working under Tom and Eva is a kind of gift. They are both so genuinely enthusiastic and serious about the work of their students. I've slowly made the realisation that I am a writer and that's what I want to do—to write. I've got hundreds of stories swarming around, and I just want to get them out. And the course is intensely practical in terms of learning about the publishing industry and getting those stories out there."

Ms Clarkson's award is the latest in a series of successes for postgraduate students on the Creative Writing program. Other students who have won recognition recently include: Ken Bolton (International James Joyce Foundation Suspended Sentence Award), Corrie Hosking (2002 Festival Awards), Gabrielle Hudson (2001 Bundy Prize, joint winner), Stefan Lashchuk (SA Writers' Centre Short Story Prize), Cath Kenneally (2002 Festival Awards, National Poetry Prize), Jim Roberts (2001 Driftwood Manuscripts Prize), Samantha Schulz (2002 Colin Thiele Youth Arts Scholarship), and Ray Tyndale (2002 High Beam Festival Poetry Award).

*Forked Tongues*, an anthology of food-related stories by Creative Writing students, will be published by Wakefield Press in November. It has been edited by Rebekah Clarkson, Gabrielle Hudson, Samantha Schulz, Kerrie Harrison, Lisa Jedynak and Dr Eva Sallis.

—John Drislane



## NEWSMAKERS

The need for medical students to gain rural experience was emphasised by **Dr Jonathan Newbury** in interviews with the *Port Pirie Recorder* (July 30) and the *Whyalla News* (August 5).

In *The Stock Journal* (August 15), **Professor Peter Langridge** expressed concern about the "enormous" levels of public misunderstanding regarding gene technology, while on *5CK's Country Hour* (August 5), **Dr Steve Jefferies** spoke about the efforts of wheat breeders to solve sodic soils and salinity.

**Dr Greg McCarthy's** new book on the State Bank collapse attracted coverage in *The Financial Review* (August 8) and *The Australian* (August 9) as well as on

*5UV Radio Adelaide* and *5DN* (August 8).

**Dr Margie Ripper** was interviewed by *Triple-M* and *SAFM* (August 22) about the ACT Parliament's decision to decriminalise abortion.

A panel discussion on pokie machines on *891 ABC* (August 7) included a contribution from **Dr Paul Delfabbrio** on the psychology of gambling addiction.

**Dr Peter Gell** was interviewed on *Triple-M* and *SAFM* (August 14) about strategies for removing toxic weed from the Port River and West Lakes.

On *Channel 10 News* (August 2), **Dr David Paton** spoke about the future of the Coorong and the need to dredge the Murray.

**Dr Roger Clay** told *891 ABC* (August 17) about the University's new degree in space science and astrophysics.

**Professor Peter Behrenbruch** was interviewed by *5DN* (August 23) about the official opening by Prime Minister John Howard of the new building for the School of Petroleum Engineering and Management.

*Channel 7 News* (August 3) featured an interview with **Elizabeth Goble** on her research into people suffering from post traumatic stress order. The study also featured on *5DN*, *Triple-M*, *891 ABC*, and *SAFM*.

**Professor Ted Nettlebeck's** research into intelligence testing was quoted in *The Advertiser* (August 8) in a feature article on *Channel Nine's The National IQ Test*.

On *891 ABC* (August 6) Philip Satchell spoke to **Professor Charles Bodman Rae** about his life as a composer and music administrator, and played some of his favourite pieces of music.

**Hugh McClelland** was interviewed on *5DN* (August 16) about the opportunities offered by Rhodes Scholarships.

Strong media interest was generated by the announcement of a joint University/CSIRO study exploring the mental effects of the herbal supplement ginkgo biloba. **Dr Nick Burns** gave interviews about the research to *Channel 7 News* (August 20), *The Advertiser* (August 22), the *Mt Barker Courier* (August 14), *5CK* (August 23) and *5AA* (August 20).