



ANU

THE AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL UNIVERSITY

ON CAMPUS

News from the ANU community

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Return to Stromlo



Stuart Hay, ANU Photography

Rising from the ashes: Kelly Kranz (left), Christine Thurl and David Weldrake

BY TIM WINKLER

Just three weeks after flames of 800–1200 degrees Celsius destroyed much of Mt Stromlo Observatory, staff of the Research School of Astronomy and Astrophysics (RSAA) regained the mountain top — returning to work in the Duffield and Wooley buildings.

The fires destroyed five telescopes, the heritage-listed old administration building, seven houses and workshops, but RSAA Director Prof Penny Sackett is now focused on construction not destruction.

Prof Sackett says: “Our most precious asset, our staff, emerged 100 per cent intact from the fires and if anything, this has built a stronger esprit de corps amongst an already close-knit group”.

“Returning to Stromlo was not just an important symbol of our intention to

continue to use the site for research — but it also continues to draw our 80 staff and 20 students together in a strong group.

“Mt Stromlo was important to many people. A nine year-old Canberra girl broke into her piggy bank and sent \$5 to the Stromlo Rebuilding Fund.

“Staff are putting up with more difficult working conditions and getting on with research and applications for funds.

“Siding Spring Observatory has been an important research base for RSAA for many years and research can progress even while we build a better Stromlo.

“Despite the disruptions of the past few weeks, students have been saying that they are starting to worry about their mid-year reviews, so that’s a good sign!”

On Campus — a new link across campus

The ANU is one of the most complex organisations in the nation and yet it has also been one of the few that did not have a newsletter for staff — until now.

There are approximately 3,000 staff on campus, of whom about 1,100 are academics. Do you know the name of the cleaner in your building? Are you aware of the latest research at RSES? Do you know what to do in the event of an emergency? *On Campus* is designed to let you know what is going on in your workplace.

The newsletter has been established to draw academic and general staff together, aiming to strengthen the campus community and provide information and news relevant to staff.

On Campus will be a monthly publication available on the web and provided in hardcopy format to areas where website access is difficult or infrequent.

However, *On Campus* can only succeed in its goals if it provides information which you find useful.

If it is to succeed, feedback and ideas for stories are absolutely vital.

We hope this first edition provides items of interest and takes an important step in developing a stronger ANU community.

Please send feedback to media@anu.edu.au

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE

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Honours to Law and Maths Veterans

A man who is frequently quoted in Australian courtrooms and one of the nation's most outstanding mathematicians have both been recognised in the Australia Day Awards.

Emeritus Prof Dennis Pearce was made an Officer of the Order of Australia in recognition of his service to the law as an academic and Prof Chris Heyde was made a Member of the Order of Australia for services to mathematics.

Prof Pearce wrote *Statutory Interpretation*, the first Australian book that dealt with the method by which courts place meaning on legislation in 1973 and the fifth edition is still used today.

The book is almost certainly the most frequently cited text in Australian courts. He was also recognised for his work in university administration — having served as both Dean of Law and acting Deputy Vice-Chancellor during his career at ANU from 1968 until his retirement in 1996.

Prof Pearce says: "I was delighted to be recognised".



Photo: Gavin Gilmour, Innervisions

Prof Heyde was made a Member of the Order of Australia for his service to mathematics.

In a glittering academic career,

Prof Heyde has worked in the USA, UK and Australia and currently serves not only as Professor of Statistics at ANU, but also as Professor of Statistics and Director of the Columbia Center for Applied Probability at Columbia University in New York.

He has broad interests in risk and chance in all their manifestations and has done considerable distinguished research on probability limit theory and its applications in statistics.



Photo: Annette Hughes

Student demand jumps 25%

Demand for ANU courses was very strong this year, with a 25 per cent increase in applications for undergraduate degrees above last year's level.

The combination of strong demand and little increase in funded places for students resulted in most UAI scores rising substantially — with strong demand for the Bachelor of Arts (International Relations) degree, the Bachelor of Medical Science degree and the new Bachelor of Philosophy (Hons) degree.

The professional programs offered in Law, Engineering and Commerce continued to attract strong interest from school leavers.

Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) Prof Malcolm Gillies says: "Internationally, the ANU is recognised as the nation's top university, but within Australia, we have long been regarded as the best kept secret in higher education".

"That secret is clearly out and there is a strong demand for the quality associated with an ANU degree."

ANU pioneers multi-lingual cyber access

A new window on the non-English speaking world has been opened with the establishment of the multilingual script service.

The service enables the use of non-Roman scripts including Chinese, Russian, Japanese and Korean at 1200 computer terminals across campus, including libraries, computer labs and halls of residence.

ANU is the first university in Australia to establish a service of this type across campus through a single information commons environment.

The new computer capability will make ANU even more attractive to students studying languages with non-Roman scripts, but also opens significant potential for research, with access to a greater range of internet pages and online services.

Multi-Lingual script software installed across campus will enable ANU staff to set projects for students in English, Arabic, Greek (modern and classical), Japanese, Chinese, Korean, Russian, Thai, Urdu, Vietnamese, Hindi, Sanskrit and Taiwanese.

Eventful life at ANU

From lectures to lunches, sport to sausage sizzles, the ANU hosts a wide range of events each day — but staff have often found it difficult to keep track of events across campus.

As a result, an ANU Billboard has now been established on the internet, easily accessible from the ANU staff page.

The Billboard is a database designed to provide a central information diary for all events of interest to staff on campus, replacing The ANU Events Calendar, The List, Staff News and Classifieds.

All staff are free to submit events to be displayed and are encouraged to monitor the site and participate in listed events.

Items which are posted to the Billboard must comply with University Rules and Policies, and responsibility for content is assumed by the person who posts it.

Just as *On Campus* provides a central source of information and news about university events, the ANU Billboard has been established as a central event calendar.

Young tall poppies grow strong on campus

Three ANU researchers were recognised in the ACT Young Tall Poppies awards for 2003 in a recent ceremony at the John Curtin School of Medical Research.

The Young Tall Poppies awards, organised by the Australian Institute of Political Science, recognise the contribution of young scientists to our community and aim to encourage renewed interest in the study of science.

Three of the award winners have worked at ANU:

- Dr Simon Patrick Hogan won the Frank Fenner medal for most outstanding PhD completed at JCSMR in 1997 and has gone on to pioneer the development of a new system to analyse gastrointestinal allergy. Dr Hogan is currently working on the Allergy and Inflammation Research Program at ANU.
- Dr Mark Hulett, a Senior Medical Research Fellow at JCSMR, was recognised for his work in improving understanding of cell invasion.



Barry Jones with Dr Mark Hulett

In 1999, Dr Hulett successfully cloned the gene for human heparanase, a feat which had eluded researchers for more than 20 years, creating a new opportunity to develop novel anti-cancer drugs.

- Dr Bernard Flynn last year completed an Australian Research Council Fellowship in the ANU Chemistry Department and was recognised for his work in developing new synthetic methods of discovering drugs. The methods were used to discover compounds that inhibit a very important biological target, tubulin, with applications in drugs to fight cancer, inflammation and parasites. Dr Flynn has moved to Monash University this year.

Number One

The ANU has been identified as the nation's leader in an internationally-respected independent report.

The ISI Highly Cited ranking system listed 40 Australians as leaders in their academic field — of whom 17 are ANU staff.

The ranking system identifies the most highly cited researchers within each discipline over the last 20 years.

The Vice-Chancellor, Prof Ian Chubb says: "No other Australian university comes close to matching the breadth and depth of expertise that we have at the ANU".

"The ANU staff listed in the report work in the fields of earth sciences, astronomy and astrophysics, plant and animal sciences.

"Over the past 12 months, many contributions of ANU researchers have been recognised across a range of disciplines — including recent rankings of our politics and philosophy staff amongst the world's best.

"These rankings are a vindication for staff, who have relentlessly pursued excellence for years, earning the respect of peers around the world."

Removing the bushel

There is wide consensus across campus that the work performed at ANU has remained invisible to most Australians.

There are significant changes in the way the ANU is now portrayed across the nation.

The Vice-Chancellor, Prof Ian Chubb says: "The ANU is internationally recognised as Australia's leading university. We need to let our owners, the Australian people, know that we are so good and what we can offer them".

"The new logo is vital to help drive the process of change required so that the letters ANU — and the institution behind those letters — mean something to all Australians.

"The logo incorporates the traditional ANU crest on a background of gold."

"The ANU is internationally recognised as Australia's leading university. We need to let our owners, the Australian people, know that we are so good and what we can offer them."

Following hard on the heels of the logo, new publications such as *ANU to 2005* and *ANU Profile* clearly spell out the achievements and the mission of the University to staff and to the wider public. A national advertising campaign will bring widespread awareness of our successes.

The new ANU homepage also heralds a comprehensive overhaul of the University's cyber presence.

Prof Chubb says: "We need to become better communicators both internally and externally. Because of the complexity of the university and the spread of the campus, every staff member can benefit from better internal communication — and that will flow on to better outcomes for the University as a whole".

"For example, more than 100 staff work in marketing-related roles outside the Marketing and Communications Division. For the first time, those staff have met together to look at ways to work with each other. There are huge potential benefits from cooperation and communication.

"University marketing can only be effective if it is grounded on a rock-solid track record. But even our track record is diminished if our 'owners' have never had the chance to hear about it."

Angles on ANU – ANU in the news

THE KEEN EYE OF THE FIDDLER CRAB

Foraging fiddler crabs are able to make complex assessments and calculations, according to research by Dr Jan Hemmi and Dr Jochen Zeil from the Research School of Biological Sciences.

Drs Hemmi and Zeil found that fiddler crabs are able to assess how close another crab is to their own burrow entrance, which enables them to rush back in time to protect their home from potential burrow snatchers.

The task involves measuring the distance between two objects, independent of the viewing angle, much like a football player needs to judge the distance between the ball and another player.

The research, published in the latest edition of *Nature*, also shows that the humble crab is able to solve an even more difficult problem: it can assess the distance between an object it can see — another crab — and an object it cannot see — the entrance to its burrow.

DEPRESSION LINKED TO INCREASED DEATH RISK FOR OLDER MEN

Depression has been linked with increased risk of death in older men, ANU researcher Dr Kaarin Anstey has found.

In a representative study of Australians aged over 70, Dr Anstey, of the Centre for Mental Health Research, found that older women are more likely to suffer from depression than older men, but there was a strong link between depression and death amongst the men.

The study involved more than 1,900 people and was conducted over eight years.

ASIA-PACIFIC COLLEGE OF DIPLOMACY TO TRAIN A NEW GENERATION OF LEADERS

The Federal Government and the ANU have joined forces to establish the Asia-Pacific College of Diplomacy, the first of its kind in the Southern Hemisphere.

The College aims to be the leading centre of further education for diplomats in the region and will take enrolments from mid-2003.

The College builds on the University's strengths in international relations, Asia-Pacific studies and strategic and defence studies, and will provide intensive double-degree courses to equip diplomats for the advanced stages of their careers

Prof William Maley has been named Professor and Foundation Director of the College.

ASK LLEYTON IF HE'D LIKE A RACQUET THAT IS 10 TIMES STRONGER

A new method of producing microscopic carbon tubes is set to be used to develop a new generation of tennis racquets.

Carbon nanotubes are 10 times as strong as carbon fibre, but up until now have been very difficult to produce in bulk quantities — a carbon nanotube tennis racquet would cost about \$3 million.

The new production technique pioneered at the Research School of Physical Sciences and Engineering enables the production of large

quantities of carbon nanotubes — raising the potential to use them for a range of applications, from sporting equipment to car bodies.

Dr Ying Chen says: "Ask Lleyton Hewitt or Andre Agassi if they would like a racquet that is 10 times as strong but no heavier than their existing carbon fibre racquets and I expect they would probably say yes".

SYNERGIES, 27 MARCH–27 APRIL

Synergies explores the artwork of nine contemporary artists whose work is explicitly influenced by cross-cultural engagements and circumstances. The exhibition, on display at the Drill Hall Gallery from March 27, demonstrates collaborative and convergent practices, which derive from, challenge, engage with, or displace cultural paradigms.

Curated by Geremie Barmé, Roger Benjamin, Gordon Bull, Mary Eagle, Ursula Frederick, Nigel Lendon, Ian McLean, Howard Morphy and John Stanton, the exhibition features the work of Ian Abdulla, Gordon Bennett, Kate Beynon, Robert Campbell Jr & Tony Coleing, Julie Dowling, Tim Johnson, Imants Tillers, William Yang and Song Ye. The exhibition will coincide with a major symposium: Fusions Across the Arts, held 10–12 April 2003 and is part of a year of activities exploring the concept of FUSION.

FUSION is coordinated by the National Institute of the Arts in association with the Centre for Cross-Cultural Research at ANU, in collaboration with the ANU Institute for Indigenous Australia, the National Institute of the Humanities, the National Institute for Asia and the Pacific and the Humanities Research Centre.

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