Gippsland boost to ease rural doctor shortage

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Anderson, Chair of Physiology for over a decade and the Founding Head of the School of Biomedical Sciences, has been appointed as Chief Executive Officer of the National Health and Medical Research Council. This is a major leadership position at Federal Government level in medical research in Australia, and again it is an outstanding honour for Professor Anderson to have achieved this extremely influential appointment. While it is a huge regret to lose two such outstanding colleagues, all in the faculty will join me in wishing them the very best in their important new roles in the years ahead.

As old friends leave, new staff members join us, and a number of new colleagues have joined the faculty in recent times. Shane Thomas has been appointed as a Research Professor in the School of Primary Health Care, Collette Browning is the new Research Professor in Healthy Ageing Research, and Helen Kelleher is the Head of the new discipline of Health Sciences based at Peninsula. Jeff Rosenfeld has accepted an appointment to the Chair in Surgery at the Alfred Hospital, and Peter Gibson to the Chair of Medicine at Eastern Health at Box Hill Hospital. Michael Berndt, Deputy Dean (Research) in the faculty for some time, will take over as Chair of the Department of Immunology at the Alfred Hospital. A number of additional senior appointments are in progress and I welcome these outstanding colleagues to their new positions.

One of the main developments in the faculty in recent times is the exciting new teaching developments. The Peninsula Health Precinct is now well established as the home of a number of new important Health disciplines including Physiotherapy, Occupational Therapy, and Health Sciences. Major appointments have been made in all areas and courses established. The morale at the campus is extremely high, and it is already clear that this is going to be an outstanding academic development in health sciences. All involved in these new courses are to be congratulated, as the amount of work done over the last twelve months to take them to fruition has been phenomenal. A full accreditation exercise was recently completed by the Physiotherapy discipline. The Peninsula Health Precinct is going to be a jewel in the crown, both for the faculty and for Monash University, for the foreseeable future.

Other developments in education relate to the medical degree. The Malaysian medical course is now well advanced in its development, with significant building projects underway, both in Kuala Lumpur for the basic medical sciences, and at Johor Bahru at the Sultanah Aminah Hospital site, where a clinical school has been established.

We welcome readers’ contributions to this newsletter. If you have news you’d like to share with your colleagues please forward hard copy to:

Leanne Cutler
Medical Foundation
Building 64
Monash University, Wellington Rd
Clayton, Victoria 3800

or email: alumni@med.monash.edu.au

Contributions should be no more than 200 words and should be relevant to the interests of the Faculty of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences, its students, graduates and staff.

Whilst every effort will be made to run readers’ contributions, we reserve the right to evaluate content for suitability, and to edit content where necessary.

John Howard, Prime Minister of Australia, recently announced the award of a significant number of new medical places to Monash University to commence a graduate medical school in Gippsland. We will develop a graduate entry program in parallel with our existing undergraduate entry program, to commence in 2008. This will have a small stream in inner Melbourne with a predominant regional stream. This is an exciting development for the Gippsland area and will improve health care throughout regional Victoria. As our Malaysian and Gippsland schools are developed, we will ensure close integration with existing medical training structures. Medical training at Monash in the years ahead will be second to none. We have recently completed an extensive review of the scientific basis of medical practice content in the course and this has led to a number of improvements in scientific content in the first two years.

The medical faculty has enjoyed outstanding relationships with our affiliated teaching hospitals and with our partnerships, both with hospital and community-based educators. We will continue to ensure that we are graduating medical doctors who are well prepared for their ongoing postgraduate training.

Research activities in the faculty continue to grow, and a number of exciting announcements have been made recently. The establishment of a stem cell collaboration with the University of California, San Diego is a major international collaboration for that university, and will involve the establishment of sister laboratories in the two institutions. This will consolidate Monash University’s role as one of the leading universities in the world in stem cell research. Our main work in Australia is done in collaboration with the major national centre for biotechnology, the Australian Stem Cell Centre.

The Victorian Government recently announced the award of a $35 million grant to form an Australian Regenerative Medicine
40 new medical student places to boost rural doctor numbers

Monash University Vice-Chancellor Professor Richard Larkins has welcomed the announcement of 40 Commonwealth-supported places and $5 million to further develop the Monash Medical School, to help address the rural doctor shortage.

In April, Prime Minister John Howard announced Monash would receive 40 new places for regional doctor training and $5 million, to be matched by the State Government, to fund facilities and equipment for the new school to be located at the university’s Gippsland campus in Churchill. The school is expected to open in 2008.

Professor Larkins said the extra places would help address the chronic shortage of medical practitioners throughout regional and rural Victoria.

“This funding means that Monash will be able to use its established expertise in medical education, particularly in rural health education, to establish a new medical school located in rural Victoria,” he said. “This school will provide an opportunity for students to train in rural Victoria with world class curriculum and staff to equip them with the skills to address rural doctor shortages in the country.”

“A recent study by the Australian Medical Workforce Advisory Committee showed that there needed to be an additional 400 general practitioners added to the medical workforce in Australia each year to address the current shortage of medical practitioners and the likely increased demand associated with an ageing population,” he said.

“The shortage is particularly marked in rural Australia. In addition we have been too dependent on doctors trained overseas and given medical workforce shortages in other countries we cannot continue to rely on doctors from other countries.”

Monash University Pro Vice-Chancellor Gippsland Professor Brian Mackenzie said the announcement was a double win for the Gippsland region.

“First, it is a major win for the region to have locally educated medical graduates, who will be more likely to stay and work in the region,” he said. “Second, the graduate entry medical program will attract more students and researchers to come to study and work here, making the Gippsland campus even more of a major university presence in the region.”

There are a number of organisations which rank universities worldwide, and one of these, the London Times educational supplement ranking is based on a combination of research output and international reputation. On this scale, our biomedical activities improved from ranking 37th in the world two years ago, to 28th last year. We were one of the few universities established within the last half century to have a top 30 ranking. Medical and health research at Monash University continues to improve rapidly, in both quality and quantity. I have no doubt that Monash will be Australia’s leading medical research university in the years ahead, and one of the top twenty medical and health science research universities in the world. We are fortunate in having fantastic academics in the faculty and our progress to date has been through their efforts. Currently there is an attitude of great excitement about the research activities in all the schools of the faculty, and the determination that each school and department will either continue or develop a high position nationally within their discipline within the next few years. The University generally, under the leadership of Professor Richard Larkins, is going ahead in leaps and bounds.

The faculty collectively has a high determination to ensure that our reputation is such that current students are proud to be affiliated with us, and that our alumni take pride in the achievements of their alma mater. I commend to you the contents of this newsletter which will tell you something of the other happenings in the faculty in more detail.

Best wishes to you all.

Edward Byrne AO
Dean

Faculty news
2006 Federation Fellow announced

Professor Jamie Rossjohn from the Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology has received a Federation Fellowships in the 2006 round of the federal grants.

The Australian Research Council grant aims to enable outstanding internationally renowned researchers to continue their work in Australia.

Professor Rossjohn’s research is centred on understanding bases of infection and immunity, specifically host recognition, responses developed by the pathogen and drug design to modulate and/or counteract these events. The fellowship was recognition of his team’s, colleagues’ and collaborators’ achievements at Monash and throughout Australia, he said.

Professor Rossjohn’s research team and collaborators have provided seminal insight into the processes linked to infection and immunity, publishing more than 90 research papers in this area.

The recipient of the Science Minister’s Prize for Life Scientist of the Year in 2004, Professor Rossjohn will be a main user of the synchrotron to be based at the Monash Clayton campus.

Professor Anderson departs to head the NHMRC

On 7 June, Professor Warwick Anderson commenced as Chief Executive Officer of the National Health and Medical Research Council.

The Dean of the Faculty of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences, Professor Edward Byrne said Professor Anderson’s contribution to the department, school, faculty and university had been outstanding over a long period.

“He will be sorely missed by his colleagues here. He has given absolutely outstanding service to Monash University,” he said.

“Our regrets at his leaving will be tempered considerably by the knowledge that the NHMRC management will be in outstanding hands over the next five years. I have passed on to Warwick the congratulations of the whole faculty on this extremely prestigious appointment.”

Honour board to medical school founders unveiled

Monash Medical School has a proud tradition in innovation and excellence in teaching and research. Since its first intake of students in 1961, the school has produced outstanding graduates who have made untold contributions to human health and advances in medical science.

In no small measure, the reputation and success of the school rests with the people who were there at the beginning; the people whose foresight and determination paved the way for the institution we have today.

An honour board was unveiled in March, to commemorate the professors who were there at the start, and those who established disciplines along the way. It now hangs in the faculty as an ongoing tribute to their vision.

Professor John Murtagh and Emeritus Professor Graeme Smith officiated at the unveiling on 17 March.

Professor Smith told those gathered that the Medical School’s founders faced many challenges, but rose to overcome them.

“Other Medical schools have not achieved the breadth that this faculty and its associated institutes have. This is the legacy of our Founding Heads, whom we are now able to honour. The challenge is to move forwards with focus and strength,” he said.
Farewell Founding Director... welcome Governor

MIMR has said goodbye to its Founding Director, Professor David de Kretser AO.

On March 31, he left the institute to take up his new role as Governor of Victoria. His farewell celebrations included the unveiling of his portrait, painted by Peter Byron.

With David's family, friends peers and MIMR staff present, accolades and speeches paid tribute to the man who not only founded MIMR, but who has had a profound impact on men's health at an international level. His longstanding colleagues, Lynda Foulds and Associate Professor Mark Hedger, summed up the spirit of the man.

"I was offered a position to work with David's research program in 1978, which focused on the hormones inhibin, the activins and follistatin. How could I resist the opportunity of working with a man with such impressive side burns!" Professor Hedger said.

"David has supervised 14 Honours and Bachelor of Medicine Science students, 40 PhD students and employed 36 Post-Doc fellows, and innumerable Research Assistants... from all over the world. As a result of David's great loyalty that he has shown towards his staff and students, 14 of these people are still working with him today, with a combined total of well over 225 years of service to David, the institute and the university.

"On behalf of all those who have worked with you over the years, we thank you David for your motivation, inspiration and integrity, and for all the opportunities you have presented us on both a professional and personal level. We wish you good luck, good health and great happiness in your new life as Governor of Victoria."

On becoming Governor of Victoria, Professor de Kretser will leave behind one of his most innovative creations, Andrology Australia – the Australian Centre of Excellence in Male Reproductive Health.

Administered by the Monash Institute of Medical Research, Andrology Australia is a Federal Government initiative committed to better educating the community and health professionals about male reproductive health.

The idea for a national male reproductive health centre occurred to Professor de Kretser when he saw there was a lack of information available to men living with conditions such as prostate cancer. He put forward a proposal to the Government; the Centre was established in 1999, and is now in its second round of funding.

The high level of demand for resources and information from the general public has exceeded expectations. The website www.andrologyaustralia.org receives in excess of 600,000 hits each month. Also, thousands of requests are made every year for information on prostate disease including prostate cancer, erectile dysfunction, male infertility, testicular cancer, and low testosterone levels.

Although Professor de Kretser has stepped down as inaugural Director, his interest in Andrology Australia will continue as he has accepted the role of Patron for the organisation.

"...the man who not only founded MIMR, but who has had a profound impact on men’s health at an international level."
New intensive care research unit

A new research unit to promote and coordinate research in intensive care has been established by the Australasian and New Zealand Intensive Care Society – Clinical Trials Group (ANZICS-CTG). The NHMRC ANZIC Research Centre is based in the Monash University Department of Epidemiology and Preventive Medicine, adjacent to the Alfred Hospital. It is initially funded by a five year NHMRC enabling grant.

The Centre held an inaugural symposium at the Alfred Hospital in February to introduce the ANZICS Clinical Trial Group and welcomed specialists in intensive care and acute medicine from all over Australia. Professor Jamie Cooper and Professor Rinaldo Bellomo are managing the centre, together with the national Board of Directors. Ms Lisa Higgins has been appointed as the Executive Officer, while Dr Daryl Jones is the inaugural Senior Research Fellow.

2005 Staff Attitude Survey results

Staff in the Faculty of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences have recorded a satisfaction rate of 65.4 per cent. That compared to a satisfaction rate of 64.9 per cent of all staff who responded to the first ever such survey conducted by Monash last year. Our faculty was the third highest performing faculty after pharmacy, although there were no statistically significant differences in the satisfaction scores.

No statistical significance was recorded between the results of academic and non academic employees within the schools.

The survey measured our staffs’ priorities, perceptions of performance and concerns in relation to 36 survey questions.

The top three priorities staff identified in the survey were that they
- are treated with courtesy, dignity and respect;
- have sufficient skills to carry out current duties competently; and
- their work gives them a sense of personal accomplishment

In the highest performing questions category, staff believed that:
- they have sufficient skills to carry out current duties competently;
- the campus/ work unit provides a safe work environment; and
- they understand the relationship of their work to their team/ area objectives

The three main concerns were identified as follows:
- Proper attention be given to the workload implications for staff when tasks are allocated.
- Staff believe their work area’s objectives are achievable with the resources provided.
- Their faculty/ division/ work unit values employees.

In order to follow up on the outcomes of his survey the faculty has estimated a Staff Attitude Survey Steering Committee comprising the dean, faculty manager, and representatives of each school. The steering committee will develop a communications strategy and establish consultation groups to follow up on the concerns raised by the survey.

New school structure launched

The School of Psychology, Psychiatry and Psychological Medicine’s new structure was officially launched at a late afternoon celebration for staff and colleagues. The Head and Deputy Head of School, Professor Grahame Coleman and Professor Bruce Tonge thanked staff for their contributions to the restructuring process.

The dean congratulated the school on bringing together the disciplines under one school and the opportunities this opened for collaboration. He said the joining of these disciplines in one school was unique in Australian universities.

The new structure replaces the previous Department of Psychology and Department of Psychological Medicine with a school administered by activity Directors of Research, Postgraduate Studies, Undergraduate Studies, and Clinical and Professional Services. These would bring together school staff across all of the Monash campuses and hospitals.
New regenerative medicine institute

Monash University will establish a new regenerative medicine institute as part of a $103 million capital investment in its biomedical research capabilities. The new institute will lead national initiatives into one of the most promising areas of medical science.

The Australian Regenerative Medicine Institute, which received $35 million funding from the State Government as part of the $230 million Healthy Futures initiative, will bring together Monash's expertise in stem cell and biomedical science and engineering.

An important role of the institute will be to provide world-class training for young scientists in the field of regenerative medicine through the ‘Future Scientific Leaders Program’.

Regenerative medicine is an emerging field of research that uses cells, genes or other biological building blocks, along with bioengineered materials technologies, to repair and replace tissues and organs.

The institute, to be based at the Clayton campus's Science Technology Research and Innovation Precinct, will focus on healthy ageing, heart disease, kidney disease, immune disease, diabetes and cancer.

It will integrate world-class regenerative research in Victoria and will build on key links with centres around the world.

Ageing research initiative

The Faculty of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences, along with others at Monash University, has considerable existing research addressing a number of ageing-related issues. Given the significance of population ageing in Australia and the research strengths at Monash in this area, ageing as a multidisciplinary research theme has been proposed by the Faculty of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences. With the support of all other faculties and the administration the issue is being developed as a university-wide scheme.

The ageing research university-wide initiative aims to focus the broad range of capabilities at Monash on the issues of ageing by enhancing existing research activities and facilitating novel interdisciplinary collaboration across all faculties and campuses. It will also provide an avenue for community involvement in ageing research activities at the university and facilitate more effective interactions between the relevant policy makers, industry and service providers and the Monash researchers.

The development of this new ageing research initiative has been bolstered by the recent appointment of Prof Rosemary Calder as interim director for 2006. Professor Calder has extensive experience in the ageing sector in state and federal government, sees the development of a university-wide approach to ageing research at Monash University as a unique opportunity to address a number of important issues for the ageing population in Australia and internationally, that will ultimately improve the quality of life of older people.

The Research Program and Development Unit of the faculty is providing project and research support during the establishment phase of the initiative.

New centre to combat child abuse

Abused Australian children will be given a voice through a new centre designed to reduce child abuse in the community.

The National Research Centre for the Prevention of Child Abuse is a collaboration between Monash University and the Australian Childhood Foundation.

The centre was launched on May 1 at BMW Edge Theatre at Federation Square in Melbourne. The aim is to develop innovative new programs for preventing child abuse and evaluating the effectiveness of public policy in preventing child abuse.

More than 250,000 incidents of child abuse and neglect are reported in Australia every year. Despite a government system that tries to keep children at home, the number of children in out-of-home care increases by about 1000 every year.

Centre director and head of the Department of Social Work at Monash, Professor Chris Goddard, said despite the high incidence of child abuse in the community there was no uniform way of defining the problem and no national standard for dealing with it.

“In our view this is a national scandal because the downstream costs of child abuse are catastrophic for our society both at the personal and economic level,” he said.

“This centre is attempting to give children and young people a voice in the research, to give priority to the rights of children and to provide new insight into the problem of child abuse.”

Australian Childhood Foundation Chief Executive Officer Dr Joe Tucci said the centre would play a critical role in advocating for better government, institution and community responses to child abuse.

“The combination of the extensive research capacity of Monash University and the direct experience of the foundation in its work with vulnerable and traumatised children will produce important outcomes about how to more effectively prevent abuse before it occurs,” he said.

“The partnership will enable us to seek out and incorporate the feedback from children about their experiences of abuse and the systems designed to protect and support them.”

Professor Chris Goddard
New findings on treating obesity

A Centre for Obesity study has found Lap-band surgery is more effective in reducing weight and improving health and quality of life than non-surgical weight loss programs.

The study, published in the latest issue of the Annals of Internal Medicine, found surgical patients lost an average of 20.5 kg, or 87.2 per cent of excess weight, while the non-surgical group lost an average of 5.3 kg, or 21.8 per cent of their excess weight.

The study also found that patients who had undergone surgery were less likely to suffer metabolic syndrome, a condition where insulin levels are too high, putting people at greater risk of problems such as Type 2 diabetes and hypertension.

The surgical group was treated with a laparoscopic adjustable gastric band (Lap-band), which involved placing an inflatable band around the upper part of the patient’s stomach to reduce feelings of hunger.

The non-surgical program was overseen by specialist physicians and included increased exercise, a low calorie diet and professional support.

Thirty-eight per cent of all study participants had metabolic syndrome when the study started. But by its end, three per cent of surgery patients and 24 per cent of non-surgery patients had the condition.

The study assessed the weight loss and health implications of 80 mild to moderately obese adults (with a body mass index of 30 to 35) after non-surgical weight loss programs or bariatric (weight-loss) surgery.

Professor Paul O’Brien, Director of the Centre for Obesity Research and Education at Monash, said the study was the first rigorous, randomised controlled study measuring Lap-band surgery against traditional methods of weight loss. He said it focused on mild to morbidly obese people, who normally would not receive surgery.

“Currently, the generally accepted practice is to perform bariatric surgery only on the severely and morbidly obese,” he said.

“But these results suggest that physicians should re-examine the guidelines for bariatric surgery to determine if they should be expanded to include mild to moderately obese patients.”

The study found that weight loss was equal for both groups after six months, but that those on traditional weight loss programs regained weight while surgical patients continued to lose weight.

Knocking out malaria

Department of Microbiology researchers have found that removing a single gene from the malaria parasite could prevent the most severe forms of the disease and save millions of lives.

Dr Brian Cooke and his microbiology team have found that by “knocking out” the SBP1 (skeleton binding protein-1) gene from the malaria parasite, infected red blood cells could no longer stick to the inside of blood vessels and block blood flow in vital organs, causing severe disease and, frequently, death.

The team is now trying to develop a drug that could target the protein.

Between 300 and 500 million people suffer from malaria worldwide. Each year, more than two million people, mostly young children, die from the disease.

“...more than two million people, mostly young children, die from the disease.”

Monash joins forces with University of California on stem cells

Scientists from Monash University and the Australian Stem Cell Centre will work with a leading Californian university to create a powerful new international collaboration in stem cell research.

The collaboration, with the University of California, San Diego (UCSD), was announced by Victoria’s Minister for Innovation, Mr John Brumby. It will bring together more than 300 leading scientists in regenerative medicine and stem cell science.

Under the initiative the institutions will jointly host workshops, develop grant applications, establish clinical trials and commercial developments, share equipment and materials and organise scientific exchanges.

Proposed areas of cooperation include work on basic human embryonic stem cell biology, neurological disorders, treating blood disease and transplant tolerance, cardiac regenerative medicine, and the treatment of diabetes – through pancreatic regeneration – and lung disease.

Considering returning to study?

The Faculty of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences continues to grow and diversity. We offer a wide range of postgraduate programs in areas such as medicine, biomedical science, nursing, psychology, medical imaging and radiation sciences, paramedic and ambulance studies and social work.

Our postgraduate programs include both research and coursework programs which are offered on-campus, off-campus or multimode (a combination of the two) to cater for the busy professional.

For full information on all our postgraduate programs and our electronic postgraduate brochure please visit us at:

www.med.monash.edu.au/pgrad/

For courses available by off-campus distance education please see:


If you require further information or would like to receive a hard copy of our postgraduate brochure please contact us:

Faculty of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences

Research and Graduate Programs Office

Phone: +61 3 9905 3926 (coursework)
       +61 3 9905 4313 (research)

Email:

graduate@med.monash.edu.au
(postgraduate coursework)

research.degrees@med.monash.edu.au
(research degrees)
Mollie Holman Medal for Excellence

Dr Marc Kamke has been awarded the Mollie Holman Medal for Excellence for the best PhD thesis in the Faculty of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences in 2005. The award was presented at the April meeting of the School of Psychology, Psychiatry and Psychological Medicine where he and his supervisor Professor Dexter Irvine, were warmly congratulated by colleagues. Dr Kamke’s thesis “Role of the auditory thalamus and cholinergic basal forebrain in lesion-induced plasticity in the adult auditory cortex” aimed to explore the mechanisms underlying plasticity in the adult brain, and employed state-of-the-art methods to investigate the contribution of the auditory thalamus and the cholinergic basal forebrain to plasticity associated with hearing loss.

The theoretical significance of this work lies in the valuable addition made to our limited understanding of the mechanisms underlying plasticity in the adult auditory system. In a practical sense, a better understanding of such mechanisms has implications for how we respond to insults to sensory structures.

Dr Kamke submitted his dissertation as a thesis by publication combining published work arising from his PhD studies with more traditional chapters. To date, he has published three peer-reviewed papers arising from his PhD studies. One of these was published in the journal Neuron, which is ranked in the top five Neuroscience journals. Currently, he is a Post-doctoral Research Fellow in the Cognitive Neuroscience Laboratory in the School of Behavioural Science at The University of Melbourne. He heads the transcranial magnetic stimulation (TMS) laboratory, and is investigating visual attention. This work is somewhat different to that undertaken in his PhD, but in the near future Marc hopes to use TMS to investigate plasticity in the human brain.

Meanwhile, Dr Helen Kelsall from the Department of Epidemiology and Preventive Medicine has been awarded the Vice-Chancellor’s commendation for doctoral thesis excellence for her thesis ‘Respiratory and neurological health, symptoms, medical conditions and chronic fatigue syndrome in Australian Gulf War veterans’. The Vice-Chancellor’s commendation is awarded where the judging committee feels that in any other year the nominee could have been a successful Mollie Holman Medal recipient.

Helen’s supervisors were Associate Professor Malcolm Sim, Associate Professor Andrew Forbes and Professor Michael Abramson.

Distinguished alumni medals are awarded each year to Monash graduates who have demonstrated outstanding professional achievements, inspirational leadership and exceptional human qualities.

The 2005 Distinguished Alumni Awards will be presented at a gala dinner in Melbourne in August.

Distinguished alumni award winner Dr Susan Lim

Ground-breaking surgeon, Dr Susan Lim (MB BS (Hons) 1979) is one three winners of the Monash University Distinguished Alumni Awards for 2005.

Born in Singapore, Dr Lim studied medicine at Monash, graduating with first class honours in 1979 and performed Singapore’s first ever successful liver transplant.

In 1984 she became a Fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh, and she received a gold medal as the most distinguished candidate in General Surgery for that year.

In 1988 she completed her PhD at the University of Cambridge, and in 1989 she returned to Singapore, where she is now based.

Distinguished alumni medals are awarded each year to Monash graduates who have demonstrated outstanding professional achievements, inspirational leadership and exceptional human qualities.

Dr Susan Lim submitted her dissertation as a thesis by publication combining published work arising from her PhD studies with more traditional chapters. To date, she has published one peer-reviewed paper arising from her PhD studies. One of these was published in the journal Nature, which is ranked in the top five Neuroscience journals. Currently, she is a Post-doctoral Research Fellow in the Cognitive Neuroscience Laboratory in the School of Behavioural Science at The University of Melbourne. She heads the transcranial magnetic stimulation (TMS) laboratory, and is investigating visual attention. This work is somewhat different to that undertaken in her PhD, but in the near future Marc hopes to use TMS to investigate plasticity in the human brain.

In 1984 she became a Fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh, and she received a gold medal as the most distinguished candidate in General Surgery for that year.

In 1988 she completed her PhD at the University of Cambridge, and in 1989 she returned to Singapore, where she is now based.

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Awards and alumni

Dean’s Awards for Excellence

In late 2005, and in accordance with the university’s objective of promoting and rewarding excellence in teaching, research and administration, the Faculty Executive approved the introduction of a number of Dean’s Awards for Excellence.

The following awards are now offered:

- Dean’s Award for Excellence in Administration (one award)
- Dean’s Awards for Workplace Excellence and Equity (two awards)
- Dean’s Awards for Excellence in Education (two awards)
- Dean’s Awards for Excellence in Research (two awards)

Prior to the decision to offer seven awards across a broad range of functions, the faculty had offered a Faculty Teaching Award and a Faculty Research Award.

Nominations were called for in late 2005, with winners in each category being presented with their award at either the first or second meeting of Faculty Board in early 2006.

Winners for 2005 are:

Dean’s Award for Excellence in Administration
Mr Graham Allardice, School of Rural Health

Dean’s Awards for Workplace Excellence and Equity
Ms Margaret Dooley, Department of Microbiology
Ms Lynette Fortington, Department of Pharmacology

Dean’s Awards for Excellence in Research
Dr Karen Moritz, Department of Anatomy and Cell Biology
Dr Tim Stinear, Department of Microbiology

Dean’s Awards for Teaching Excellence
Ms Caroline Wright, Department of Medical Imaging and Radiation
Associate Professor Ramesh Rajan, Department of Physiology

Australia Day honours for medical faculty, and more

Two senior Faculty of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences academics made the Australia Day Honours list earlier this year.

Faculty Dean, Professor Ed Byrne, received an Officer in the Order of Australia medal for his services to neurology as a clinician and academic, and in recognition of advances in mitochondrial muscle disease.

Professor Uwe Proske of the faculty’s Department of Physiology received an Order of the Medal of Australia for his services to physiology, particularly in the areas of neuroscience, and to medical research.

Meanwhile the Director of the Prince Henry’s Institute of Medical Research, Professor Evan Rutherford Simpson has been elected as a Fellow of the Australian Academy of Science.

He is recognised as a world leader in the field of oestrogen biosynthesis and his work has influenced the development of new drugs for the treatment of breast tumours.

Professor David Copolov has been awarded the Organon Senior Research Award, presented by the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists.

It is awarded to the Fellow or Fellows who have made the most significant contribution to psychiatric research in Australia and New Zealand during the preceding five years.

and we thank Mr Paul Grubb and AMA Financial for their support.

After a hotly contested game victory went to the following:

Winning Team
Stephen Watty, Joel Fanning, Seamus Jones, Tristan Crowe

Nearest the Pin – 2nd Hole
Male: Bruce McClure
Female: Patricia Garlick

Longest Drive – 18th Hole
Male: Paul Grubb (Sponsor)
Female: Linden Smibert

Special Awards
International: Odette Tait
Interstate (NSW): Brendan Pattison

Ricky Ponting Winners
Peter Cowen, John McKenzie, David Senini

MMADoGS III played on Monday, 27 March 2006 at the Melbourne Metropolitan Golf Club in Oakleigh. Melbourne turned on an unexpectedly lovely day for what is fast becoming one of Monash Medical Alumni highlights on the annual event calendar. The field comprised 80 players and it was wonderful to see some medical students participating again. AMA Financial sponsored the day

Mr Paul Grubb, Chief Executive Officer, AMA Financial Services

Professor Edward Byrne

Professor Uwe Proske

Mr David Proud Monash University Medical Student
Federation Fellow joins faculty to further wellbeing focus

One of Australia’s leading medical anthropologists, Professor Lenore Manderson, has joined the School of Psychology, Psychiatry and Psychological Medicine to further her research into community health.

Professor Manderson, who received an inaugural Federation Fellowship in 2001 while at the University of Melbourne, joined the school at the beginning of this year, with several research staff and graduate students. She said she was attracted by the university’s commitment to innovation and creativity and its support of cross-faculty collaboration.

As part of her fellowship, Professor Manderson is exploring the resilience with which people adapt to major medical challenges. Her work focuses on mobility limitation as a result of severe illness or injury, as experienced by Australians and people in Southeast Asia, and aims to minimise the inequalities that affect individuals with poor health and disability.

Professor Manderson is also investigating chronic health problems experienced by women in regional and rural communities; how individuals with visible and invisible signs of disability view themselves and how they participate in and take advantage of community programs; and the impact of changes to the body on self-image.

Professor Manderson said Monash had a critical mass of researchers working in a range of healthcare areas including disability, depression, wellbeing and general healthcare, and said she was looking forward to working with researchers from across the university.

Before receiving her Federation Fellowship, Professor Manderson was Director of the Key Centre for Women’s Health in Society at the University of Melbourne. She is a Fellow of the Academy of Social Sciences, the Royal Anthropological Institute (UK), the Australian anthropological Society, the Society for applied anthropology (US) and the World Academy of Art and Science.

Rural Health School appointments

Senior general practitioner and expert in rural healthcare, Dr George Somers has been appointed to the Monash University School of Rural Health, Bendigo Regional Clinical School.

Dr Somers, who has worked in healthcare for more than 25 years, completed his PhD at Monash last year. In his PhD he looked at different approaches to understanding medical students’ attitudes to rural health careers.

He has also worked as an honorary lecturer in the faculty of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences at Monash.

Meanwhile, Professor Mark Oakley-Browne has been appointed Director of the Centre for Multi-Disciplinary Studies in the School of Rural Health.

Professor Oakley-Browne has been Professor of Rural Psychiatry at Monash and Director of Clinical Services (mental health) at Latrobe Regional Hospital for the past five years.
Events calendar throughout 2006

Dean’s Public Lecture Series 2006

The Dean’s Public Lecture Series scheduled for 5pm start on the second Tuesday of each month until November (subject to change, so please check at www.med.monash.edu.au/alumni/deans-lectures.html). These free public lectures will showcase some of the leading research given by leaders in their fields.

June

Tim McArdle Scholarship Presentation Ceremony
The Courthouse, Warrigal
13 Dean’s Public Lecture Series
Professor Els Meeusen
“From Parasites to Pregnancy and Asthma: Immunological connections”
South 1 Lecture Theatre, Building 64, Monash University Clayton
5 – 6:30 pm light refreshments will be provided

July

11 Dean’s Public Lecture Series
Professor Bryan Williams
Director of Monash Institute of Medical Research
“Application of RNA Interference to Fight Cancer”
South 1 Lecture Theatre, Building 64, Monash University Clayton
6 – 7:30 pm light refreshments will be provided

August

18 Vivian Bullwinkel Memorial Fund Gala Dinner
Guest Speakers – General Peter Cosgrove, Lt Georgeina Whelan, Professor Margaret O’Connor
7 pm till late
Melbourne Museum – Black Tie
19 MBBS 1971 35 Year Reunion

23 Rod Andrew Oration
Professor Barry Marshall – 2005 Nobel Prize Winner
“Helobacter Pylori and its role in gastritis and peptic ulcer disease”
South 1 Lecture Theatre, Building 64, Monash University Clayton
5 – 6:30 pm light refreshments will be provided

September

5 Indigenous Health and Education Lecture
Mr Noel Pearson
Alexander Theatre, Monash University Clayton
6 – 7:45 pm

12 Dean’s Public Lecture Series
Professor Claude Bernard
Head Neuroimmunology Laboratory
“Toward a Cure for Multiple Sclerosis: Understanding susceptibility, pathogenesis and regeneration”
South 1 Lecture Theatre, Building 64, Monash University Clayton
5 – 6:30 pm light refreshments will be provided

October

7 MBBS 1986 20 Year Reunion
Brighton International, Brighton
7 pm till late
10 Dean’s Public Lecture Series
Professor Jenny Keating
Head Physiotherapy
“Low Back Pain: Specific treatment or one size fits all”
South 1 Lecture Theatre, Building 64, Monash University Clayton
5 – 6:30 pm light refreshments will be provided

November

11 MBBS 1966 40 Year Reunion
Stokehouse Restaurant, St Kilda
14 Dean’s Public Lecture Series
Professor Patrick Sexton
Professor of Pharmacology
“The Evolving Complexity of Family B G Protein-coupled Receptor Function”
South 1 Lecture Theatre, Building 64, Monash University Clayton
5 – 6:30 pm light refreshments will be provided

Monash University Medical Foundation events
Special events are an important part of the foundation calendar. There are tours of departments and laboratories, cocktail functions for special awards, gala dinners, special visiting lecturers, alumni reunions and much more. Keep an eye on the website www.med.monash.edu.au for more information and additional events.

Keep us informed

Have you moved, or are you about to move? Keep us informed of your new contact details so we can continue to deliver this newsletter.

Simply photocopy this page, fill in the information and fax to (private fax) 03 9905 0750, or go to www.monash.edu.au/alumni/faq/address.html to update your details online.

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Year of graduation ___________________________

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Postcode ___________________________

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