Paramedics to the rescue!

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The start of a new university year is always an exciting time as staff return to work reinvigorated after the holiday break, and we have welcomed new students into our many courses in health at Monash University. The last few years have been exciting ones for the medical and health sciences at Monash and there is no reason why this trend should not continue well into the future. The research base of the university in the medical sciences has continued to grow, and it is now not only one of Australia’s leading research universities in this sector but is also having an increasing presence internationally.

The question legitimately comes up as to how far a university like Monash can go in the health research stakes. When one thinks of the new developments that the next year or two will see, including the opening of the national synchrotron adjacent to the Clayton campus, major new research building developments with completion of the STRIP 2 and 3 research buildings, further research consolidation of Monash Medical Centre and at The Alfred Hospital campus, and closer collaborations with CSIRO and industry, it is clear that Monash has a long way to go still in medical research and the probability is high that it will consolidate a position as Australia’s leading health research university in the years ahead. National leadership is not the major issue, however, but more the contributions that can be made at an international level to improve human health. Monash now has all the ingredients for this with outstanding scientists, increasingly well-organised platform technologies and good collaborative links across large-scale programs. Binding all this together is a high level of ambition to do really well.

We are in the midst of major developments in education in the health sciences at Monash. Last year saw Australian Medical Council accreditation for the Malaysian branch of our medical school and full accreditation for the whole medical school until 2012. This was a stellar development reflecting an enormous amount of hard work by many people, but especially by Chris Browne, Anuar Zaini, Ben Canny and their various teams. Planning under Chris Browne’s leadership is well-advanced for the Gippsland Medical School. There is no doubt that Monash will have stellar degrees in medical education in the years ahead, with each of the three branches of the school having their own identity, but with a sharing of resources and educational ethos that will bring the whole school together. The international, regional and metropolitan dimensions are unique in our part of the world and will give special advantages in medical education. The northern Victorian initiative, which represents a unique collaboration with the University of Melbourne in medical education, led by Geoff Solarsh, also warrants special mention and is progressing extremely well.

It seems amazing that it was only a few years ago that plans were begun for a health education and research precinct in the Mornington Peninsula, and this has developed outstandingly well with very successful Departments of Physiotherapy, Occupational Therapy and Health Sciences, already established, complementing nursing and paramedic training on that campus. These new departments will undoubtedly go from strength to strength in both teaching and research in the years ahead, and have given the university enormous opportunities in interdisciplinary education which will be taken advantage of to the full.

Monash University is now one of the world’s great universities in all aspects. Each great university has its own ethos, and Monash’s ethos is very much one of encouraging individual staff members at all levels to fulfil their potential to the full. Its ethos is one of freedom, but with an expectation that it will continue to perform increasingly well in both research and education. It is a truly marvellous institution and I have been honoured to be a small part of it in recent years. As I move on from the Faculty of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences, I know that it is in good shape. I would particularly like to acknowledge Janet Kemp as a wonderful faculty general manager and also the help given by Donna Cohen and her team in planning for many of our new major projects in recent times. Leon Piterman has been an outstanding senior deputy dean, and Michael Berndt and Tony Luff have provided leadership for the research and educational profiles. Chris Browne, leading the MBBS developments, has been a wonderful colleague. This leadership team is in place to work with the new dean and I am confident there will be no loss of momentum with the change in leadership coming up this year.

My best wishes to all students and staff members for an exciting and productive 2007.

Professor Ed Byrne
Dean

Monash Praxis
The word praxis has its origins in Ancient Greek. The Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary explains the word praxis as: 1a: exercise or practice of an art, science, or skill b: customary practice or conduct or 2: practical application of a theory.

This newsletter is published by the Monash University Medical Foundation on behalf of the Faculty of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences.

Find an online PDF version of Monash Praxis at:
www.med.monash.edu/foundation/

Enquiries: + 61 3 9905 9329 or alumni@med.monash.edu.au

Photo: Alumni Ben Fisk and Edwina Gallagher
New Centre for Human Anatomy Education opens

Monash University’s new Centre for Human Anatomy Education (CHAE) will provide gross anatomy education in a dynamic and contemporary manner to more than 300 medical students per year.

The director of the centre is Associate Professor Nigel Wreford and the deputy director is Associate Professor Tony Buzzard. The director of the centre reports to the chair of the Department of Anatomy and Cell Biology and an advisory board drawn from senior members of the medical community.

The centre also supports anatomy teaching for students in science, biomedical science, radiography and medical imaging, physiotherapy and occupational therapy.

Associate Professor Nigel Wreford said gross anatomy was now taught using lectures supplemented by practicals which use contemporary images, plastic models, surface anatomy and dissection to provide a structural basis for understanding the function of the human body.

He said all practical classes were held with a facilitator who is normally a hospital medical officer on rotation from a Monash-associated hospital.

“The time allocated to gross anatomy, per se, in the medical program at Monash has been increased to 100 hours, which is consistent with best national and international practice,” Associate Professor Wreford said.

“Students also study applied aspects of anatomy in Patient Centred Learning and clinical skills sessions which complement gross anatomy teaching.

“Content is defined by an extensive syllabus which is covers all required knowledge.”

Anatomy will be taught over two years as follows:

- **Semester 1**
  - Introduction to general principles of anatomy;
- **Semester 2**
  - The muscular-skeletal system;
- **Semester 3**
  - Thorax, head and neck; and
- **Semester 4**
  - Abdomen and pelvis.

“Lectures are used to introduce topics,” he said. “Learning is then reinforced with student-centred practical classes held in a set of new rooms which have been constructed adjacent to the disecting room.

“The new rooms are equipped with an extensive set of anatomical models as well as computer facilities which allow access to a substantial suite of anatomical programs.

“All practical classes are linked to the dissection program which is performed by students in rotation working with their demonstrators.

“The dissection room is supervised by a newly appointed prosector in anatomy and he will supervise all dissection with a view to ensuring a high standard.

“Students will gain a well-rounded practical experience through dissection, models and computer software, including both in-house and commercially available material,” he said.

In recognising that anatomical learning is a continuing process throughout the medical program, the computer-based learning materials are available both in the Department of Anatomy and Cell Biology and on all university computers located in hospitals (where students complete the final years of their program). Some programs will also be available via the web for students studying at home.

The modified pedagogical approach and facilities will facilitate learning for the approximately 300 students who commenced at Clayton in 2007. Comparable facilities will also be established at the Malaysian and Gippsland sites as they open.

Awards

Emeritus Professor Don Metcalfe AC of The Walter and Eliza Hall Institute of Medical Research accepted the Faculty of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences’ Lifetime Achievement Award in December 2006.

Dr Deborah McIntyre (second from left) accepted the 2006 David de Kretser Award on behalf of her husband, Professor Warwick Anderson AM, CEO of the National Health and Medical Research Council. Dr McIntyre is photographed with family members. Professor Anderson was overseas at the time of the ceremony.

Counsellor Diana Asmar of the City of Darebin received two awards in late 2006. She was named Cadbury Fundraiser Volunteer of the Year by the Fundraising Institute – Australia and was awarded a Monash Certificate of Appreciation for her work in raising funds for multiple sclerosis (MS) research at Monash.

Cure Ms Inc (formerly Towards a Cure – MS) was presented a Monash Certificate of Appreciation by the Governor, Professor David de Kretser AC for its continued work in raising funds for equipment for MS research. From left to right: Members of Cure MS Inc. with the Governor – Sammi Addison, Professor David de Kretser AC, Governor of Victoria, Amanda Derham, Jennie Willmonth and Jill Wells.
Faculty news

Farewell to Ed Byrne

After three-and-a-half highly productive years as Dean of the Faculty of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences, Professor Ed Byrne, AO has taken a new role as Executive Dean of the Faculty of Biomedical Sciences and head of the medical school at University College London. These photographs are in commemoration of his contribution to the faculty.

Professor Edward Byrne AO

Students at the 2006 prize ceremony: Alex Voskoboinik, Steven Lindstrom, Professor Ed Byrne and Mario Guiseppe Zotti.

Professor Byrne in Shanghai

Parliament House, Canberra: Professor Alan Trounson, Professor Ed Byrne, 2006 Life Scientist of the Year Associate Professor James Whisstock, 2004 Life Scientist of the Year Professor Jamie Rossjohn, Professor Michael Berndt and Professor Christina Mitchell.
Faculty news

The opening of the Monash Immunology and Stem Cell Laboratories (MISCL) in February 2005: Professor Byrne, the then Chair of the Australian Stem Cell Centre Mr Bob Moses, the then CEO of the Australian Stem Cell Centre Dr Hugh Niall, Director of MISCL Professor Alan Trounson, the Honourable John Brumby MLA, the then Minister for Health the Honourable Dr Brendan Nelson, the then deputy vice-chancellor Professor Stephen Parker and pro vice-chancellor (research) Professor Edwina Comish.

Professor Ed Byrne, vice-chancellor Professor Richard Larkins AO, Prime Minister John Howard and Russell Broadbent MP – 2006 at the announcement of 40 Commonwealth places and $5 million to help address the rural doctor shortage through the Monash Medical School.

Professor Byrne with the Ruler of Sharjah, His Highness Sheikh Dr Sultan Bin Mohammed Al Qassimi in 2005 at the signing of an agreement for the Monash medicine curriculum to be implemented at Sharjah University, United Arab Emirates.

Mrs Adrienne Marshall, 2005 Nobel Laureate, Professor Barry Marshall with the Nobel Medal in hand and Professor Byrne.

Professor Byrne on a tour of the Grollo-Ruzzene Foundation Centre for Protein Structure.

Professor Byrne observes a demonstration at the opening of the Centre for Medical and Health Sciences Education in 2004.

At the inaugural David de Kretser Medal and Lifetime Achievement Award Ceremony in 2005: Chairman of the Monash University Medical Foundation Board, Mr Rod Chadwick, David de Kretser Award recipient Professor John Murtagh AM, Lifetime Achievement Award Professor Fiona Stanley AC, Professor David de Kretser AC and Professor Ed Byrne.

Professor Byrne with faculty manager Janet Kemp and personal assistant Celeste Vinay.
I remember when …

By Dr Alan S C Sandford
MBBS 1982 – intern 1983

Perhaps it is when one approaches 50, the gene for reminiscence syndrome just recently at a Monash Distinguished Alumni dinner upon being seated next to an old (figuratively only!!) med school chum, now a celebrity – Dr Sally Cockburn aka “Dr Feelgood”. This gave us a chance to have a right good natter about “I remember when”.

The Alfred Clinical School holds many fond and amusing memories for many of us. The mornings commenced with the trip from Alfred House where we had salubrious digs, across to the clinical school for the post mortem display. We would rush past the now demolished home of MUMUS bookshop where many of us had bought our cheap (ha!) textbooks and the odd MUMUS tee shirt. Some of us were more bleary eyed than others depending on whether or not we had slumbered well or whether the thud, thud of the Chevron disco below our rooms lead us to give up and spend time bopping and drinking! The pot plants in the foyer were well nourished from a urate ammonium mix supplied courtesy of the diuresis of cleansing ale or six as we returned from our early morning raging!

Once through the spectacle of the post mortem breakfast we embarked on our busy day as eager short white coated medicos. Some of us were more bleary eyed than others depending on whether or not we had slumbered well or whether the thud, thud of the Chevron disco below our rooms lead us to give up and spend time bopping and drinking! The pot plants in the foyer were well nourished from a urate ammonium mix supplied courtesy of the diuresis of cleansing ale or six as we returned from our early morning raging!

One of the more interesting attachments I had the occasion of a particularly bad breakout of reminiscence syndrome just recently at a Monash Distinguished Alumni dinner upon being seated next to an old (figuratively only!!) med school chum, now a celebrity – Dr Sally Cockburn aka “Dr Feelgood”. This gave us a chance to have a right good natter about “I remember when”.

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You are invited to forward your reminiscences to:
alumni@med.monash.edu.au

Dr Sandford is now a private management consultant in addition to being Area Chief Medical Officer for the Greater Southern Area Health Service (NSW).

Ah, remember when!

1967 MBBS alumni 40-year reunion

Graduates of the class of 1967 are invited to their 40-year reunion on 17 November at Werribee Mansion.

“We were the second graduating year and there were 68 of us,” reunion organiser Dr John Campbell said. “These first two years of the medical degree were unique.

“It was a new university and a new medical school, so staff and students knew each other well.

“We’d study anatomy, biochemistry and physiology at the Clayton campus.

“In fact, staff and students would meet for drinks at The Notting Hill Pub each week.

“There was a good feeling between the staff and students and even now if any of us bumped into each other, we would know each other and have a chat.”

Dr Campbell said that the group have held reunions every 10 years.

Please see the website for updates:
Alumni update

Reunions in formation

25-year medicine reunion
It is time to get the band back together (metaphorically speaking)! Sally Cockburn is looking for a posse of her old medicine classmates (1982) to organise a 25-year reunion in September/October this year.

10-year medicine reunion
Lior Rauchberger of the MBBS class of 1997 is looking to join with classmates for a 10-year reunion celebration on 10 November this year.

If you can help or wish to be invited to either of these reunions, please contact the Monash University Medical Foundation on 9905 5971 or email alumni@med.monash.edu.au.

1997 alumnus Dr Lior Rauchberger

These are some of the amazing photographs which have come to light through the reunions held over the past year.
Monash medicine alumnus top gun in aviation medicine

Medicine alumnus Dr David Newman is flying high when it comes to aviation medicine.

After graduating from the MBBS, he spent 13 years in the RAAF as a medical officer becoming an aviation medicine specialist.

“I have always been interested in flying, and aviation medicine enables me to combine flying with my medical training,” Dr Newman said.

“Much of my work now involves teaching and research, mainly in terms of the human performance limitations associated with flying, and how pilots can best manage them.

“In the end, it’s all about improving flight safety.”

He is a graduate of Monash University (MBBS), the Royal College of Physicians of London (DAvMed), the RAAF Institute of Aviation Medicine, the RAN School of Underwater Medicine, the RAF School of Aviation Medicine, the USAF School of Aerospace Medicine, and the University of Newcastle (PhD).

His 13 years as an aviation medicine specialist in the air force, in both Australia and on exchange in the UK, include two years as Chief Instructor at the RAAF Institute of Aviation Medicine, where he was responsible for the training of all Australian Defence Force aircrew and medical officers.

He is also a consultant in aviation medicine to the Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA) and the Australian Transport Safety Bureau.

David’s dedication to aviation medicine is equalled by his love of flying.

He is an active pilot, having flown 150 hours in high-performance aircraft including the F/A-18 Hornet and Harrier.

As well as being an international consultant in aviation medicine, David is a course coordinator and lecturer for the Australian Certificate of Civil Aviation Medicine within the Monash Department of Epidemiology and Preventive Medicine at the Alfred.

The course is one of a few in Australia and is open to all healthcare professionals.

Medical practitioners wanting to be registered medical examiners for CASA are required to complete the course.

It is held in conjunction with CASA, covering topics including the flight environment, altitude, pressure cabins, oxygen equipment, thermal stress, spatial disorientation, human factors in aviation, clinical aviation medicine and accident investigation.

Students also have the opportunity to fly a 737 or 767 flight simulator and visit Air Services Australia, the employer of air traffic controllers.

The next Australian Certificate of Civil Aviation Medicine course will be run from 18 to 29 June.

Full details can be found at www.med.monash.edu/epidemiology/shortcrs/accam.html or by calling + 61 3 9903 0588.

‘David’s dedication to aviation medicine is equalled by his love of flying.’
Physiotherapy degree gains accreditation

The new Bachelor of Physiotherapy degree that commenced at the Peninsula campus last year has received accreditation from the Australian Physiotherapy Council.

The degree had a challenging but successful roll-out, with two years of the program in operation.

While first-year students began the new curriculum, students with one year of health sciences behind them completed bridging units into the second-year curriculum and a second-year program with added first-year content.

Head of the Department of Physiotherapy, Professor Jenny Keating said that student feedback about the course was extremely positive.

“Students love the integrated curriculum,” Professor Keating said. “Learning is placed in the context of physiotherapy practice from the first day of the course and structured around stories of people facing challenges to their health or wellbeing.”

She said students enjoyed the benefits of very enthusiastic and high-quality teaching.

“The academics teaching the program are outstanding physiotherapists with research training and advanced clinical experience in the areas of cardiorespiratory, neurological physiotherapy, musculoskeletal physiotherapy, electrophysical agents and physiology, anatomy, clinical placements, education and law and ethics,” Professor Keating said.

“The program is also strongly supported by clinical partners throughout Victoria who have ongoing input into progressing the course content and program design, and delivery of clinical education.”

The Department of Physiotherapy commenced with a part-time postdoctoral fellow and a PhD student, with four additional PhD enrolments during the first year. Honours, embedded into the four-year program, will commence this year and the planning of postgraduate courses is under way.

Physiotherapy students’ race for knowledge

The Anatomy Flag Race is designed to test the theoretical, practical and clinical knowledge of anatomy that has been taught throughout the physiotherapy course.

Varying anatomical specimens are laid out as numbered stations in numerical order on a table. Students rotate around the table by spending one minute at each station answering specific questions related to each of the specimens.

Monash medico awarded East Gippsland Citizen of the Year

Director of Monash’s East Gippsland Regional Clinical School, Dr David Campbell was recently named East Gippsland Citizen of the Year.

The award is in recognition of Dr Campbell’s tireless work at national, state and local levels to develop the clinical school and in turn, for raising standards in rural health in the region.

“Rural communities in Australia remain disadvantaged with access to health services, compared to metropolitan Australia,” Dr Campbell said. “It is essential that government initiatives such as the rural clinical school program are successful and continue to receive support.

“Not only will this bring more doctors and other health professionals to rural communities, but it also contributes to the viability and growth of rural centres.”

Dr Campbell has achieved high levels of healthcare funding for East Gippsland.

He was recently granted $600,000 from the Federal Government for the expansion of the clinical school facility at Bairnsdale Hospital and assisted the School of Rural Health in obtaining a further $135,000 to conduct multi-disciplinary medical education across the region for the next two years.

In addition, in conjunction with the Orbost Regional Health Board, Dr Campbell helped obtain $500,000 in Federal Government funds for a new medical clinic which was opened in June 2005. (This clinic is a popular choice for Monash fourth-year MBBS students.)

Dr Campbell has a practice in Lakes Entrance, where he has worked for the past 23 years and is also the current national President of the Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine.
The Bland/Oakley Community Service Award

The Bland/Oakley Community Service Award was established in 2004 in memory of two paramedics, Robert Bland and Philip Oakley, who died on 2 January 2004 in a traffic accident whilst on-duty, responding to an emergency call.

A community service award was established in recognition, not only of Robert Bland and Philip Oakley’s bonds as colleagues in the ambulance service, but also of their exceptional bond of generous community service – conducted in addition to and outside of their ambulance duties.

Monash’s Department of Community Emergency Health and Paramedic Practice (formerly known as MUCAPS), the Metropolitan Ambulance Service and Rural Ambulance Victoria, with approval of both families, collaborated to create the annual award. The state branch of the national College of Ambulance Professionals is now also a co-sponsor.

The award is presented once a year to a graduating undergraduate emergency health student, but only if there is a student whose community service levels meet the criteria of the selection committee.

The recipient is the student ambulance paramedic who provided the highest level of community service outside of his/her usual professional practice.

The award has been presented twice since implementation. Diploma of Ambulance Paramedic Studies (DAPS) graduate, Ben Fisk was the inaugural winner in 2004 and Edwina Gallagher also a DAPS graduate, was the 2006 recipient. Recipients received $3000 to assist with professional development.

Ben to the rescue

The 2004 Bland/Oakley Community Service Award recipient, Ben Fisk is preparing to help in almost any disaster.

Ben has been employed by Rural Ambulance Victoria since 2001. He firstly commenced work as a student, then qualifying at advanced life support level.

Most recently, he qualified as an intensive care (MICA) paramedic and has worked mainly in Area 1 (Geelong) and Area 2 (Warrnambool).

During his initial paramedic studies at Monash University, Ben undertook extra training that led to him receiving the Bland/Oakley award for community service.

His additional training included advanced paediatric life support, remote emergency care, leader’s wilderness first aid, industrial rope access, swiftwater rescue and confined space entry. These were all conducted externally to his normal education and workplace.

“I did these courses to gain practical skills relating to remote patient access, triage, stabilisation and extrication as these are specialisations not included in the basic ambulance qualification,” Ben said.

In his final year of the Monash diploma, Ben concurrently completed a postgraduate certificate in remote health practice through Flinders University and the Centre for Remote Health in Alice Springs.

Ben said the additional studies allowed him to gain the clinical skills of suturing, plastering, x-ray interpretation, wound management and pharmacology, which may be required of a paramedic in remote areas.

Also during his time as a student, Rotary sponsored Ben to assist in teaching primary school students in Vanuatu for two weeks.

“While the focus was to assist with teaching, I took a large first aid kit which was put to good use and was depleted very quickly,” Ben said. “The experience gave me great insight into the differences in the availability of medical resources and services in remote or developing countries.

“I came away with a very strong sense that we have a great deal available to us here in Australia, that I think we honestly take for granted, and that we have a lot we can offer to communities in need.”

Ben’s next experience was in a disaster zone. In 2002, he flew to Bali within a week of the bombing with the intention of volunteering at Sanglah Hospital, staying for 10 days.

He said that by the time he arrived there most foreign victims had been evacuated and all the volunteer roles had been filled.

“In fact, one of the biggest logistical problems for the hospital was managing the well-meaning volunteers,” he said.

Not letting the opportunity be wasted, Ben was taken through the burns unit and he spoke with some of the most severely injured Balinese victims.

Ben said that attending a meeting of non-government organisation representatives was also valuable in understanding the complexities of international response to major incidents and disasters.

“For instance, a large number of crates of drugs were sent to the hospital, but many were out of date or required refrigeration and therefore were of no use as there was no storage available,” Ben said. “There was no register for the drugs, no system of accountability and no method of distribution.

“This highlighted the need for coordinated, unified and structured response to such incidents, and that good intentions can actually compound problems.”

“More than anything, this confirmed for me that to truly assist in such situations, an individual needs specific skills or knowledge which can provide a key or niche role.”

“So from this, I’ve set about trying to gain those skills and that knowledge.”
Since finishing his Diploma in Ambulance and Paramedic Studies at Monash, Ben commenced a Masters in Public Health and Tropical Medicine through James Cook University in 2005 whilst also commencing Monash’s Bachelor of Paramedic Studies – Degree Conversion.

In 2006, he deferred these after being accepted into the service-funded Graduate Diploma of Emergency Health (MICA Paramedic) and graduated as a qualified intensive care paramedic.

Not slowing down his pace or hunger for more knowledge and experience, Ben completed even more short courses. This time in avalanche safety management in New Zealand, technical rope rescue, and pre-hospital trauma life support.

“These courses also related to patient access and treatment in remote and difficult locations,” Ben said. “I used the prize money from the Bland/Oakley award to fund these courses and my travel to Queensland to complete some masters units.”

This year, Ben will continue with his studies and in July plans walk the Kokoda Track with a group of 20, including family and friends, to raise funds for children with cystic fibrosis.

“My passion is to get out there, and encourage others to get out there, and do what we can for individuals and communities in need – especially those in locations and countries that have limited opportunities, resources and services,” he said.

“We don’t have to go too far for this as there is a lot of scope here in Australia.”

“I hope to grow into a leadership role where I have the opportunity to educate and influence others in relation to health and welfare needs of rural and isolated communities, both here in Australia and overseas. I think there is a lot of scope to develop and coordinate a multi-disciplinary response model that provides needs assessments, the provision of essential services and health education in remote locations. Such a model could even play a role in, or compliment, disaster response arrangements. I do however realise the need to start small and gain more experience, but as things progress it would be great to initiate a project and see what we could make happen.”

“I’m very grateful that I was considered for the Bland/Oakley Award, and have aimed to use the funding wisely. The support from Rural Ambulance Victoria and Monash University has meant a great deal to me, and this opportunity has opened doors and provided a real stepping stone to achieving some major goals down the track.”

First PhD for ambulance and paramedic studies

The first PhD candidate from Monash’s Department of Community Emergency Health and Paramedic Practice (DECHPP), Dr Amee Morgans, graduated in late 2006.

Dr Morgans investigated how patients make decisions in pre-hospital health emergencies.

She is currently working on several other projects, including emergency preparedness for an avian influenza pandemic and paramedic’s perceptions of risk and willingness to work in disasters.

More recently Dr Morgans additional research project work included the emergency management of asthma, patterns of ambulance use for asthma in rural and remote areas and communicating with the public during disasters.

Other research areas of interest include public health, patient decision making, psychology, emergency health, and ethical issues in emergency research.

Dr Morgans is a full-time research fellow at DECHPP, teaches in the undergraduate paramedic and psychology programs and is an active Ethics Committee member.

Saving lives is a priority for Edwina

The 2006 Bland/Oakley Community Service Award recipient Edwina Gallagher’s keen interest in first aid as a surf lifesaver led her to become a paramedic.

“Actually, quite coincidentally, I got the idea of becoming a paramedic from my dad,” Edwina said. “I had been a first aid officer at the Lorne Surf Life Saving Club for about three years, and was wondering what to do with my career.”

“I finished a degree in sports science in 2000 and I was trying to work out in which direction to head.”

“My dad suggested that seeing as though I enjoy first aid so much, that I should do it on a much higher level, and get paid for it!”

Edwina now works as a senior reserve paramedic with the Metropolitan Ambulance Service, which requires her to be flexible to work at any branch in the metropolitan area, on any shift.

She graduated in November with the Monash Diploma of Ambulance Paramedic Studies.

“I was so astounded to have been nominated, and then win the Bland/Oakley award, I must have been beaming,” Edwina said.

Head of the School of Community Emergency Health and Paramedic Practice Frank Archer said that Edwina was awarded the Bland/Oakley award for her dedicated community effort to surf lifesaving.

Edwina’s contributions to the Lorne Surf Lifesaving Club over 13 years include positions of chief instructor, first aid officer, coordination of Pier To Pub Swim medical facilities, the equipping of mountain bikes for the Mountain To Surf Run including defibrillation equipment and advanced life support drugs, and the management of Bronze Camp for 50 people, mainly teenagers, undertaking their Bronze Medallion to enable them to patrol beaches, including logistical work such as rostering, activities, food and support for these new members.

As well as training future life savers in the Bronze Medallion, Edwina instructs them in the life saving certificate, inflatable rescue boat for driver and crew, and advanced resuscitation and automatic defibrillation.

Edwina is still carefully considering how best to use her award funds to support her training.

Special thanks to the Melbourne Ambulance Service and Rural Ambulance Victoria for their support in producing these articles and photos.
New Master of Medical Radiations (Nuclear Medicine)

Monash University has introduced a new Master of Medical Radiations (Nuclear Medicine) degree for 2007. The course is two years and is conducted off-campus over six semesters by means of distributed learning materials. A total of 57 weeks is spent in clinical practice and off-campus learning is supported by printed and interactive materials. This course is a first for nuclear medicine science education in Australia.

Australian practitioners are highly regarded internationally and numerous opportunities exist for employment in the UK, USA and Canada as well as in developing countries. Opportunities also exist for practitioners to work in education, business management, clinical and scientific research, industry, veterinary nuclear medicine, and with government and other regulatory bodies.

Nuclear medicine practitioners need to be comfortable and adaptable to new technologies, self-motivated, empathetic to patients, enquiring and organised. The development of advanced image processing techniques, new radiopharmaceuticals and the use of innovative cancer-targeting and cancer-killing agents means that there is and will continue to be a high demand for nuclear medicine scientists to work in both public and private nuclear medicine practices in Australia.

“We are very pleased to be able to offer this new course in nuclear medicine. It is a branch of medicine that is exciting and expanding and the course has been developed in close collaboration with the Victorian nuclear medicine profession. Students who undertake the course will make positive contributions to the wellbeing of the community,” said Liz Parkinson, coordinator for the Master of Medical Radiations (Nuclear Medicine) course.

Victorian and interstate applicants must apply directly to the Department of Medical Imaging and Radiation Sciences at Monash University to undertake the Master of Medical Radiations (Nuclear Medicine) course. Australian and international applicants can receive more information by emailing radiationsciences@med.monash.edu.au.

Monash researchers assess the safety of tank water

Monash medical researchers are collaborating with other scientists nationally to assess the safety of drinking water and in particular, tank water.

Since rainwater is the primary source of drinking water for 11 per cent of Australian households, it is normally accepted as a relatively safe source of water in the absence of a disinfected tap water supply.

However, rainwater is subject to intermittent contamination by microbial pathogens carried by birds and small animals which have access to rooftops.

The increasing proliferation of rainwater tanks in urban areas is likely to lead to increased rainwater consumption, because of the pure and natural image of this water source.

Alumna Dr Karin Leder, Head of the Infectious Disease Epidemiology Unit in Department of Epidemiology and Preventive Medicine (DEPM), is coordinator of the public health component of the research and alumna Dr Martha Sinclair is a senior research fellow on the study.

“Rigorous data on the safety of drinking untreated rainwater is lacking, so the Cooperative Research Centre (CRC) at DEPM is undertaking a double-blinded randomised trial to determine whether microbial pathogens in untreated rainwater make a significant contribution to gastroenteritis in people who consume such water,” Dr Leder said.

The study has been primarily funded by the National Health and Medical Research Council, with additional funding for the water quality testing component being provided by the CRC for Water Quality and Treatment.

Since Adelaide has the highest use of rainwater tanks in Australia, the South Australian Department of Health is also involved and is hosting the study office.

Three hundred households in and around Adelaide will be recruited and assigned either real or sham water treatment units to treat rainwater used for drinking and cold food preparation. The real units contain a filter to remove microbes, while the sham units appear the same but be non-functional. Families will record their health status in diaries for a period of 12 months, and rates of gastroenteritis in the real and sham groups will then be compared to see whether the removal of micro-organisms from rainwater affected health outcomes.

Results from the study are expected to be available at the end of 2008.

For more information about the CRC for Water Quality and Treatment go to www.med.monash.edu.au/epidemiology/infdis/crcwqt.html.
Top awards for Monash researchers

Over past months a long list of Monash researchers have won state, national and international awards. We congratulate them all. Below are some of the winners in alphabetical order:

**Professor Arthur Christopoulos**
Department of Pharmacology, School of Biomedical Sciences

**ASET Project Visitor to the British Pharmacological Society 2007**
as selected by the Council of the Australian Society of Clinical and Experimental Pharmacologists and Toxicologists (ASECT).

**Associate Professor Damien Jolley**
The Centre for Clinical Effectiveness, Monash Institute for Health Services Research

**Victorian Public Health Award**
As a chief investigator on the Victorian Lifestyle and Neighbourhood Environments Study (VicLANES). The team is researching links between obesity, local environment and purchasing habits.

**Associate Professor Pradeep Nathan**
Department Physiology, School of Biomedical Sciences

**Victorian Young Tall Poppy Award 2006**
Researching neuroscience, psychiatry, brain imaging and psychopharmacology.

**Ms Wendy Nickson**
Clinical manager, Department of Physiotherapy, School of Primary Health Care

**2006 Physiotherapy Achievement Award**
from the Australian Physiotherapy Association, Victorian Branch.
The award was presented for leadership and outstanding commitment to physiotherapy.

**Professor Gail Risbridger**
Director of the Centre for Urological Research, Monash Institute of Medical Research and an Associate Dean of Research at Monash University.

**The Asia and Oceania Medal from the British Endocrinology Society**
In recognition of her contribution to endocrinology, especially her research into the effects of hormones on the prostate gland.

**Professor Evan Simpson**
Director of Prince Henry’s Institute based at the Monash Medical Centre, 2006

**Komen Foundation Brinker Award for Scientific Distinction** from the Susan G Komen Breast Cancer Foundation, San Antonio, USA.

**Researching breast cancer and oestrogen production.**

**Professor Helena Teede**
The Jean Hailes Foundation for Women’s Health, Monash Institute for Health Services Research

**Victorian Young Tall Poppy Award 2006**
Researching diabetes, cardiovascular disease, and women’s health.

**Ms Fleur Tynan**
Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology, School of Biomedical Sciences

**Victoria Fellowship 2006**
To advance her work relating in understanding how the human body fights viral infections.

**Associate Professor James Whisstock**
Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology, School of Biomedical Sciences

**Science Minister’s Prize for Life Scientist of the Year 2006**
In recognition of insights made into the biochemistry of a special group of proteins called serpins. In particular, the discovery of how one such protein (called MENT) helps genetic material (DNA) fit into the cell’s nucleus.

Alumni awarded 2007 Australia Day honours

**Professor John Hutson, AO**
MBBS 1972, MD 1994

For services to medicine, particularly in the field of paediatric surgery as a clinician, teacher and researcher, and to the community through the Scouting movement.

**Dr Frank Cave, OAM**
GradDipFamMed 1996

For service to the community of Rockhampton as a general practitioner and through the Australian Volunteer Coast Guard.

**Associate Professor Kevin Whithear, OAM**
PhD Med 1978

For service to veterinary science and education, particularly through research, development and productions of vaccines to control major diseases in poultry.

Insomnia study

Do you have trouble staying asleep most nights?

Do you wake up and have difficulty getting back to sleep?

Does this interfere with your day to day functioning?

If you answered yes, you may be eligible to take part in a study investigating insomnia.

Our Clinical Trials Centre at Caulfield General Medical Centre is currently seeking volunteers to participate in a clinical trial for a new medication which may help with insomnia.

If you are interested, please contact Louise or Marisa on 1800 199 108 (toll free) or email louise.turnour@med.monash.edu.au.

This study has been approved by The Alfred Hospital Ethics Committee and is conducted by the NHMRC Centre in Therapeutics and Clinical Research Excellence, Department of Epidemiology and Preventive Medicine, Monash University.
Malaysian medical students begin studies at new clinical school

Fifty-two third-year medical students at Monash University Malaysia have become the first to train at the university’s new $600,000 clinical school and the prestigious Sultanah Aminah Hospital in Johor Bahru.

The students began classes on 5 February this year and will undergo training at the Sultanah Aminah Hospital and health centres in Pontian, Kulai and Segamat over the next two years.

During this period, the students will hone their clinical skills under the close supervision of doctors and specialists from the Monash School of Medicine and Health Sciences and Sultanah Aminah Hospital.

“The opening of the Monash University Malaysia Clinical School in Johor Bahru will make a significant contribution to medicine in Johor Bahru,” said the Head of School, Professor Dato’ Dr Anuar Zaini.

“The capability brought by the specialists stationed at the clinical school will contribute to the existing expertise available at the Sultanah Aminah Hospital, which is one of the oldest in the country.”

“In addition, the clinical school will also attract large movements of specialists from neighbouring Singapore, as well as other countries,” added Professor Anuar.

“Monash University’s School of Medicine and Health Sciences has a strong reputation internationally and the presence of the clinical school in Johor Bahru will attract much interest.”

First- and second-year medical students will undertake their MBBS studies at the new 12-acre Monash University campus located across from the current facility in Bandar Sunway.

Aside from being a teaching facility, Professor Anuar said research will also be carried out at the clinical school.

This, said Professor Anuar, will contribute to the quality of education provided to the medical students, as well as contribute to the development of medicine in Johor Bahru and the country.

Australian accreditation for Monash MBBS in Malaysia

The Australian Medical Council (AMC) has recently accredited the Bachelor of Medicine/Bachelor of Surgery (MBBS) course offered by Monash University Malaysia.

It is the first course fully taught outside Australia and New Zealand to be accredited by the AMC and provides an independent assessment of the quality offered at Monash University Malaysia.

This accreditation will enable graduates to work in Australia and New Zealand without having to take further tests.

Malaysian clinical placements for Clayton-based Monash students

The establishment of the Monash University School of Medicine and Health Sciences is providing education benefits for Clayton-based students by broadening their clinical experience.

Six fifth-year medical students enrolled through Monash at Clayton are currently undertaking clinical placement rotations at the Sultanah Aminah Hospital in Johor Bahru.

The students are undertaking placements throughout the hospital including emergency medicine, general medicine, women’s health and children’s health.

International Education Implementation Manager Jennifer Lindley said that all six students were enjoying their time at Sultanah Aminah Hospital.
**Alumni news**

**Our Rhodes Scholars – where are they now?**

Two of the faculty’s four Rhodes Scholars have been in touch with news, so here is an update on the activities of Dr Nathan Grills (2001) and Farnaz Sabet (2004).

**Dr Nathan Grills**

Dr Nathan Grills lives in Oxford and researches in India investigating the response of faith-based groups to HIV as part of his DPhil in Public Health. He is undertaking his doctorate in collaboration with the World Health Organisation and the Centre for Disease Control. On return to Australia, Nathan will work with Victorian Public Training. Nathan’s wife, Claire, who also graduated with a Monash MBBS in 2002, is a second-year dermatology registrar.

**Dr Farnaz Sabet**

Dr Farnaz Sabet was awarded a Rhodes Scholarship in 2004 which she is undertaking now. She said that she had a wonderful time as an intern at the Royal Darwin Hospital in 2005. She then took six months off in 2006 to study Arabic at the University of Jordan. Back in Australia, Farnaz gained a variety of experience working with the Family Protection Unit, which deals with matters of child and women’s domestic and sexual abuse, with youth programs and completing some training in the country. In September 2006, she commenced a Master of Science in Global Heath at Oxford. Her aim is to continue studies to receive a DPhil but this next stage is to be confirmed.

**The faculty boasts four Rhodes Scholars:**

- Dr Lynne Pressley (1977);
- Dr Nathan Grills (2001);
- Dr Geraldine Buckingham (2002); and
- Dr Farnaz Sabet (2004).

**Spotlight**

Would you like to know more about medical, nursing and health sciences research at Monash? Spotlight, a publication covering research innovation with the Faculty of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences can be found online at www.med.monash.edu/foundation/research-news.html.

Alternatively, you are welcome to be placed on the mailing list to receive a hard copy. Please call + 61 3 9905 9329 or email alumni@med.monash.edu.au to provide your preferred mailing address.

If you know any outstanding alumni please send news of their achievements to alumni@med.monash.edu.au.
Dean’s Public Lecture Series

Tuesday, 22 May
‘In a lifetime: A review of the New Zealand Mental Health Survey and World Mental Health Survey initiative estimates of the lifetime prevalence of mental disorders and health service use’
By Professor Mark Oakley Brown, Director of the Department of Rural and Indigenous Health
5:15 – 6:30pm
South 1 Theatre, Building 64, Monash University, Clayton campus

Wednesday, 12 September
‘Health-promoting food – all swings and roundabouts’
By Professor Peter Gibson, Director of Gastroenterology, Eastern Health
5:30 – 7pm
South 1 Theatre, Building 64, Monash University, Clayton campus
RSVPs essential as space is limited: mnhs.rsvp@med.monash.edu.au with the word ‘lecture’ and the relevant date in the subject line.

All Dean’s Public Lectures are delivered to the public, students and staff at no cost.
The podcast version of these lectures can be found online about two days after the event: www.muso.monash.edu.au/medicine

Wednesday, 29 August
‘Triggers of migraine and headache: To avoid or not to avoid, that is the question’
By Professor Paul Martin, Professor of Clinical Psychology, Department of Psychology, Psychiatry and Psychological Medicine.
5:30 – 7pm
South 1 Theatre, Building 64, Monash University, Clayton campus

Contributions
Readers are welcome to submit contributions to Monash Praxis of approximately 200 words or as discussed with the editor (Leanne Cutler, phone 03 9905 9329). Whilst every effort will be made to include readers’ contributions, we reserve the right to evaluate content for suitability and relevance to the audience, and to edit content where necessary.

Find an old classmate
Do you ever wonder what happened to that old Monash classmate that you had such a good time with? You are welcome to contact us with a name, course and year of completion. If his or her current details are on file, we’ll help you to connect you with your classmate.

This year’s reunions
To find out if your classmates are organising a reunion, please see: www.med.monash.edu/alumni/reunions-in-2007.html

Reunion news
You are welcome to send your old student photos and/or recent reunion photos for our archive and possible use in Monash Praxis.

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Change your contact details
If you’re your contact details have changed, please fill out the form on the enclosed fly sheet and return it to us or email alumni@med.monash.edu.au

Next edition
Major research innovations at Monash and more reunion news.

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