



THE UNIVERSITY OF  
WESTERN AUSTRALIA  
*Achieve International Excellence*

# Uniview

Vol. 29 No. 2, Winter 2010



Saving  
WA's  
wetland  
wonders

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# Uniview

THE UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Vol. 29 No. 2, Winter 2010

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**Cover image:** Shorebirds migrating from Siberia make their first landfall in the Kimberley's Roebuck Bay each spring (see *One of the wetland wonders of the world*). Photo: Jan van de Kam.

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GROUP OF EIGHT  
MEMBER



### Law students make their mark

UWA student Mei Koh, a fourth year law and commerce student, has won the Ciara Glennon Memorial Law Scholarship. For more Law School successes see *In Focus*.

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### In the eye of the storm

Shattered glass in Winthrop Hall, a legacy of the March storm that caused extensive damage on campus.

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UWA's Ambassadorial Council



UWA graduate members of the WA Chapter of the Ambassadorial Council initiative: Wesfarmers Energy managing director Tom O'Leary, cardiologist Michelle Ammerer and Allens Arthur Robinson partner Tim Lester (Photo: WA Business News)

Uniview's extensive mailing – our print run is now well over 60,000 – is an indication of the worldwide reach of the 'UWA Family'. From Burkino Faso to Brazil, Iceland to India, the United Kingdom to the United States, our alumni magazine is mailed to more than 6,000 graduates who live overseas or are currently working overseas.

The fact that so many UWA graduates clearly consider 'the world their oyster' is a tribute to the excellence of their training, their high aspirations and the Australian sense of adventure that has always spurred us to cross oceans and continents.

It was only a matter of time before the University decided that apart from the 'ambassadorial' role all graduates play, UWA needed a more formal body to help it communicate its achievements. The UWA Business School recently took that initiative, launching its Ambassadorial Council that aims, as graduate Tim Lester puts it, "to increase the Business School's reach, relevance and reputation".

With local, North American and United Kingdom Chapters up and running, the Ambassadorial Council counts among its members some of the University's major local and international 'movers and shakers'.

Patron of the Council is former British Airways chief Sir Rod Eddington, who is also Chair of UWA's Hackett Foundation (see page 41).

Business School Dean Professor Tracey Horton, a graduate of both UWA and Stanford University, travelled to the US to launch the Council's North American Chapter. She was accompanied by business leaders Mark Barnaba (Chair of the Business School Board) and Tim Lester (Chair of the Ambassadorial Council).

"Ensuring that the Business School maintains an international perspective across our teaching and research programs is a critical imperative," says the Dean.

"The establishment of an international Ambassadorial Council composed of prominent business leaders from around the world is an excellent complement to the substantial benefits that we gain from the advice, influence and input of our Perth-based Business School Board."

John Willinge, founder of a New York investment management firm, who followed BCom studies at UWA with an MBA (Hons) from Harvard, chairs the New York-based chapter. Chair of the London-based UK Chapter is David MacKinlay, who also has an MBA from Harvard and is an independent corporate adviser in the engineering and technology sectors.

One of the members of the New York chapter is Joel Cohen, Executive Officer of Peacekeeping Operations with the United Nations in New York who we profile in this issue (see *The challenge of global peacekeeping*).

For more information on the Ambassadorial Council, contact Executive Officer Melissa Callanan on +61 8 6488 5834 or email: [melissa.callanan@uwa.edu.au](mailto:melissa.callanan@uwa.edu.au)

Knowledge for a changing world

In 2012 the University will roll out its new course structure that will equip students for 'tomorrow's world'. The sheer momentum of change dictates that the patterns of the past no longer fit the evolving template of learning and working in the 21st century. Employers are looking for versatility; students are looking for flexible structures and everyone expects more choices, better choices.

In response, UWA is launching *New Courses 2012* that Vice-Chancellor Professor Alan Robson says in his column "will allow students to achieve their full potential".

Undergraduate Bachelor degrees in Arts, Commerce, Design, Science and Philosophy (Honours) will be offered along with postgraduate professional qualifications in areas including Medicine, Law and Engineering.

UWA's *New Courses 2012* has won approval from many distinguished graduates including Chief Justice Wayne Martin who believes that those who study Law at a postgraduate level will practise law "with a broader educational base which should enable them to better serve the community". For UWA Chancellor Dr Michael Chaney (Chairman of Woodside and National Australia Bank), the roll out of a changed course structure is a timely response to the demands of the modern world.

"Graduates need to be aware of a breadth of issues beyond their specialist knowledge – these changes at UWA respond to this need," he says.

UWA Guild President Emma Greeney is also impressed. "By engaging with education across a broad spectrum of discipline areas, the University will enable students to develop a strong foundation based on breadth of knowledge before embarking on specialised professional courses."

For more information: [www.newcourses2012.uwa.edu.au](http://www.newcourses2012.uwa.edu.au)

**In this issue**

The deaths of river dolphins last year prompted WA's Chief Scientist Professor Lyn Beazley (also a UWA researcher) to call for improved monitoring of the health of local rivers. In this International Year of Biodiversity, *Uniview's* major feature explores an ecosystem acknowledged for the diversity of its plants and animals: wetlands.

*Where have all the wetlands gone?* also illustrates the truly multi-disciplinary approach (from legal to anthropological perspectives) that characterises much of this University's research in the 21st century.

**Extension's winter treats**

UWA graduate Shaun Tan, whose award-winning illustrated books have won him an international audience, is one of many speakers in UWA Extension's winter season. The artist/author will talk about growing up in suburban Perth, about identity and belonging and a host of other themes related to his sometimes surreal illustrations. *Lost & Found: the illustrated world of Shaun Tan* is on 10 June.

On 8 July in a talk entitled *Aboriginal Art is Culture*, Barbara Matters, Assistant Curator of UWA's Berndt Museum of Anthropology, introduces her audience to a realm of art that has its origins in The Dreaming. Join her on a journey of evolving Aboriginal cultures and explore the ways in which art has become a



UWA graduate Shaun Tan (Photo: The West Australian)

visual living language used to convey knowledge, culture and lore over thousands of years.

If you think you can't sing, Winthrop Professor Jane Davidson of UWA's School of Music and the Sing for Life team have news for you. They are offering a two-day course that will teach the basics of good breathing, posture, gesture and the joy of singing.

An exciting repertoire from Bach to Broadway will involve you in an internationally recognised project exploring singing for health and wellbeing. *So you think you can't sing* is on 8/9 July.

On August 11 at UWA Claremont, two graduates who have a long association with campus theatre, Joan Pope and Bill Dunstone, will present a lecture-discussion, *The Dolphin Decades*. Joan vividly recalls opening night (50 years ago on 30 June) in the little wooden shed that became a "much-loved and workable little theatre 'home-made' by members and friends of the University Dramatic Society".

"There were no grand speeches or photos," she recalls, "We were all too busy pinning up the front curtains and tacking down the last bit of foyer carpeting," she recalls. "But over the next two decades the Dolphin hosted an astonishing range of cutting edge productions..."

Joan Pope and others involved in the first Dolphin Theatre are organising an informal 50th reunion in the UWA Guild Café on 30 June. You can drop

in around 3pm and if you wish to stay on, there's a GRADS performance of Edgar Metcalf's *With Friends like these* at the new Dolphin at 7.30pm. For more information, email: popejoan@westnet.com.au or RSVP to Karen at UWA Guild reception 6488 2296.

For details of the entire winter season, consult: www.extension.uwa.edu.au

UWA Extension is delighted at the success of its recent sustainability speaker series in partnership with BHP

Billiton. The Breakfast Club, aimed at WA's 'Top 100', heard from former Prime Minister Paul Keating, General Peter Cosgrove, Rev Tim Costello and others, in the hope of stimulating discussion on the future.

"This was a new venture for BHP Billiton and they realised a partnership with the University was going to create the audience they required for their thought leadership initiative," said UWA Extension's Director Susan Marie.

**Law students make their mark**



UWA student Mei Koh (Photo: The West Australian)

The School of Law has been much in the news recently, with the UWA team defeating six other contending universities in the Australian leg of the 2010 Jessup International Law Moot in March and with fourth year law and commerce student Mei Koh winning the Ciara Glennon Memorial Law Scholarship.

At a ceremony in the Vice-Chancellery, Mei was presented with the scholarship (sponsored by Blake Dawson Waldron) by Chief Justice Wayne Martin (a UWA graduate).

Vice-Chancellor Professor Alan Robson said Mei had made a remarkable contribution to the community as a volunteer.

"This element of the selection criteria – service to the community – reflects the wider aims of the University to serve the community and State and to encourage excellence in all we do."

Mei's volunteering includes working for Oaktree Foundation, in soup kitchens in Northbridge, in aged care homes and with UWA's mentoring program.

The Ciara Glennon Memorial was established in 1998 following the tragic death of the lawyer (and UWA graduate). Ciara's mother Una Glennon recently wrote about her search for meaning after this devastating event. *Ciara's Gift* is published by UWA Publishing and is available at the Co-op Bookshop and major book stores.

Another source of Law School pride came when graduate Jolleen Hicks was awarded the Young WA Woman Lawyer of the Year. Jolleen was educated at Karratha Senior High School, gained entry to UWA through an Excellence Award and graduated in 2006. Since then she has worked as a lawyer for Rio Tinto and as a legal officer for the Kimberley Land Council.

**Encore for swashbuckling students!**



*Cast members of the comedy La locandiera*

There's nothing like a piece of theatre featuring seduction, deception, and even some swashbuckling sword-fighting to help students hone their language skills. During April, *La locandiera* (*The Mistress of the Inn*) a classic Italian comedy by Venetian playwright Carlo Goldoni was given a spirited production at the Dolphin Theatre by the UWA Italian Students Club.

Associate Professor Luciano Pinto, in the School of European Languages and Studies, was delighted with the production which revived a tradition much appreciated by Perth's Italian community.

"From 1985 to 2004, UWA Italian students put on plays at the Dolphin, so we decided to start again this year and hope to resume yearly productions," says A/Professor Pinto. "Most of the performers and helpers are students studying Italian and their participation greatly enhances mastery of the language in all its aspects, while developing useful social and personal skills.

"The production is also aimed at the large Italian community in Perth who always take every opportunity to hear their beautiful language and appreciate their significant cultural heritage."

**Come on in!**

Every year staff and students join forces to welcome the community onto campus for Open Day. The date is Sunday 15 August and the aim is to ensure prospective students in particular get a lot out of what is also a fun day for the entire family.

Course information sessions are on offer throughout the day (10am – 4pm) and future students and their families will have an insight into how our multicultural campus operates.

After the success of last year's initiatives there will again be family friendly activities, competitions, interactive displays, sporting demonstrations, industry displays and high profile guest speakers, including award-winning landscape

architect, Winthrop Professor Richard Weller, presenting *Boomtown 2050*.

Visitors will also be able to find out more about the exciting new courses coming to UWA in 2012.

For more information and to design your own program for the day, visit: [www.open.uwa.edu.au](http://www.open.uwa.edu.au)

**Undercroft book sale**

Books, books, books! It's time for the annual Save the Children Book sale organised by the University Branch of the international body that raised funds for needy children in our State and in overseas countries. The sale opens in Winthrop Hall Undercroft on Friday 20 August at 5pm. It runs until 2pm on Wednesday 25 August (bargain box day!).

**UWA battles mine dangers and cancer**

UWA research could soon make underground mining safer following an agreement to further commercialise a mesh made from recycled scrap metal that is easy to install and has a high load-bearing capacity.

The High Energy Absorbing (HEA) Mesh was invented by Winthrop Professor Yves Potvin, Director of UWA's Australian Centre of Geomechanics. This important invention won the 2008 WA Inventor of the Year's Ready to Market category.

"The mesh will improve safety, especially where the ground conditions are rockburst prone and challenging," said Professor Potvin.

Through its Office of Industry and Innovation (OII) which advances the commercialisation of UWA research, the University will collaborate with DYWIDAG-Systems International (DSI), headquartered in Munich, to further commercialise the product.

The OII is also anticipating commercial interest from biotech and pharmaceutical companies in a naturally occurring protein that plays an important role in inhibiting tumours. Developed by an international team that includes several UWA researchers, it has performed as well as a leading cancer drug in animal trials.

Professor Arun Dharmarajan from UWA's School of Anatomy and Human Biology, said UWA and Anna University in India hold patent applications on the use of the protein as an angiogenesis inhibitor. Results of the trials were published in *The American Journal of Pathology*.



*Professor Arun Dharmarajan*

**Science showcase in Albany**

In our theme article on wetlands, we highlight the work of scientists from UWA's Centre of Excellence in Natural Resource Management. Next month, the Albany-based Centre will host Great Southern Great Science, a conference that showcases the excellent science happening in the region.

Chief Scientist, UWA's Professor Lyn Beazley, will open the conference that includes presentations ranging across medicine, agriculture, seagrass restoration, fire, climate change, the protection of fish stocks, aquaculture and Indigenous involvement in tropical river research.

The venue is Albany Town Hall. The 9 July conference is supported by the Government of WA, the Great Southern Development Commission and UWA. Tickets are available directly from the Town Hall Box Office. For more information contact Randall Jasper on +61 8 9842 0848, email: [randall.jasper@uwa.edu.au](mailto:randall.jasper@uwa.edu.au)

**More reasons to visit campus gallery**

Value-adding is being embraced by UWA's Lawrence Wilson Art Gallery. Not only is the campus gallery offering the *space-matter-colour*, Brian Blanchflower paintings from four decades exhibition, but a series of

talks provides viewers with different perspectives on Blanchflower's work.

During June, musician and educator Robert Faulkner will explore art, music and aesthetics, with an emphasis on works by the artist.

On 1 July author Terri-ann White, Director of UWA's Institute of Advanced Studies and UWA Publishing, will talk

about her writing while offering creative and speculative responses to the exhibition works.

On 25 June Professor of Philosophy Michael Levine (author of *Politics Most Unusual*) will reveal how East Asian and Indian aesthetics can provide insights into Blanchflower's art.

For the full program visit: [www.lwgallery.uwa.edu.au](http://www.lwgallery.uwa.edu.au)

### Scholars tell of Pompeii's treasures

UWA's Classics and Ancient History scholars will be on hand in June to add some fascinating and informative detail to the current WA Museum exhibition, *A Day in Pompeii*, which runs until early September.

UWA is one of the sponsors of the exhibition that presents the story of Pompeii, the Italian city entombed by the eruption of Mount Vesuvius in AD 79.

On Friday 11 June at 6pm in the State Library Theatre, Assistant Professor Glenys Wootton will talk on "*Celadus... adored by all the girls*", *Gladiators in Pompeii*.

A/Professor Wootton says war, discipline and death permeated every level of society in the ancient world. "In ancient Rome, gladiators became a focus of adulation and graffiti such as 'Celadus the Thracian, three times victor and three times crowned, adored by the girls' and other sentiments were etched on the walls at Pompeii," she says.

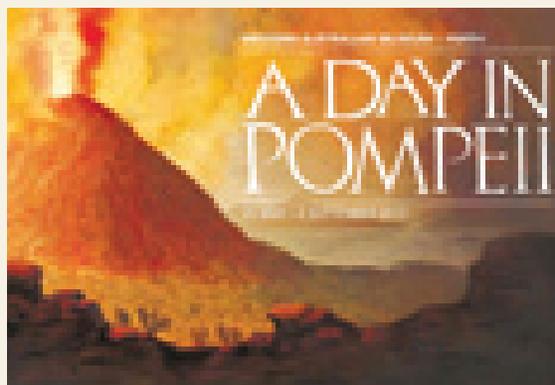
"The remains of Pompeii provide an insight into the life of gladiators. The monumental remains of the city's amphitheatre (the earliest known purpose-built structure used for gladiatorial games), together with the material remains stored in the gladiator barracks, reflect the public fascination with this most famous of all Roman spectacles."

On Friday June 18, Professor John Melville-Jones will talk on the House of the Coloured Capitals, one of the largest in Pompeii, which accommodated an extended family and household slaves.

On 28 August at 1.30pm in the Social Sciences Lecture Theatre off Hackett Drive, Professor David Kennedy's Roman Archaeology Group will present three lectures on Pompeii. A/Professor Wootton will talk about wall paintings from Roman towns that provide insights into tastes, house décor and the decoration of public buildings; Associate Lecturer Nathan Leber will explore the graffiti painted or scratched on city walls; while Professor David Kennedy looks beneath the streets to the vital infrastructure for a city.

Professor Kennedy's Roman Archaeology Group holds six half-day sessions on Saturday afternoons each year. If you would like more information about the group, visit: [www.romarchgroup.humanities.uwa.edu.au/](http://www.romarchgroup.humanities.uwa.edu.au/)

For more information on the exhibition visit: [www.museum.wa.gov.au/pompeii](http://www.museum.wa.gov.au/pompeii)



Mount Vesuvius, illustration by Darren Pryce

### Campus 'stars' in mini-series



Filming *Screentime's* mini-series *Cloudstreet* at UWA (Photo: David Dare Parker)

Students and staff alike were briefly diverted by the filming on campus of Tim Winton's acclaimed *Cloudstreet* featuring Stephen Curry, Essie Davis, Emma Booth and Lara Robinson. While the Pickles family home at No 1 Cloudstreet was recreated for the mini-series at the old Sunset Hospital, the University also became the location for shooting. *Cloudstreet* is a *Screentime* production for Showtime Australia. Readers may recall that *Screentime's* founder Rob Campbell, a UWA graduate, was this magazine's Guest Columnist in the Spring 2009 issue.

### Man of music turns 80



Professor Margaret Seares and Emeritus Professor David Tunley (Photo: Peter Stone)

Emeritus Professor David Tunley has mentored and encouraged others to make their careers in music for decades and in May the man credited with "bringing music to the community" was surrounded by well wishers celebrating his 80th birthday.

"The very fact that I am speaking at this event about aspects of baroque music is entirely down to David," says Professor Margaret Seares. "He supervised my honours thesis, then encouraged me to work on other aspects of French Baroque for my MA. I went on to work on baroque keyboard music and this stimulated study of the harpsichord, with all the pleasure and terror of public performance.

"My story is replicated by many for whom David has been an inspiration, mentor, colleague and friend," recalled Professor Seares. "His passion for bringing music to the community included establishing and directing the A Cappella Choir, The University Collegium Musicum, the York Winter Music Festival and later the Terrace Proms. And as an academic he has been prolific in retirement and is living testimony to the fact that activity, both mental and physical, keeps a person young. Being 80 going on 40, he makes the rest of us feel rejuvenated!"

**Graduate wins two major awards**

Yvette Manolas relishes her job as a senior engineer involved in the design of Woodside Energy's multi-billion dollar Sunrise LNG project. She was among *Business News'* 2010 40under40 award winners and last year was named the WA Telstra-Marie Claire WA Business Woman of the Year.

The UWA graduate says her career has been 'a journey' with unexpected and challenging turns.

"I've been happy to seize each new opportunity to see where it will take me," says Yvette – and it appears to be taking her to the upper echelons of Western Australia's oil and gas industry. Today she's one of only a handful of perforating (explosives) experts across the world.

Yvette's achievements make her an excellent role model for women in science and engineering. "One of the reasons I'm passionate about this award is that it encourages women to look beyond current boundaries and to find or create their own niche in the workplace," says Yvette. "I believe if you truly love what you do, believe in yourself and are willing to learn, anything is attainable."

While she says Woodside is hugely supportive – and is active in making equal opportunity a reality – Yvette concedes she is still 'a woman in a man's world' when operating in the global sphere, on committees or at international conferences.

"I am continually called on to prove my capabilities and that means putting yourself on the line, standing up for what you believe in and being determined to see things through. Being a woman in an area like this certainly adds to the pressure, but I've always been happy to step out of my comfort zone," she says.

"At UWA, when opportunities presented themselves I always took up the challenges. I got involved in a project sponsored by Woodside that was mechanical engineering-based but quickly became petroleum-based. That switch prompted me to take a lot of petroleum engineering units in my final year. I joined Woodside as a petroleum engineer working in design, but when an opportunity came to gain expertise in the area of explosives, I took it.

"This is a highly specialised area and while perforating technology has been around for decades, there have been recent changes in terms of international standard requirements," says Yvette who sits on the American Petroleum Institute's Perforating Committee which develops and sets international standards.

The UWA graduate also developed a new Shell software package that enables perforating technology to be assessed by engineers. The analysis and scope of the program was a world first and is used by major oil and gas companies around the world.

The 40under40 awards acknowledge young business achievers. Also named at a gala function were UWA graduates Agustin Costas, Director AME Pty Ltd; Damione Wright, owner, Wright Hardware Pty Ltd; Diana Rigg, Director, PLD Organisation; Jason Turner, Principal, World Upholstery Service; Johann Kim, Proprietor, Pidgeonhole; Michael Bennett, Senior Partner, Sovereign Bridge Capital Group; Richard Cohen, General Manager Railways, Rio Tinto; Richard Klimek, Director, Klimek & Co; Dr Tracy Westerman, Managing Director, Indigenous Psychological Services; Wade Taseff, Director, Balance Legal Pty Ltd and Fiona Crowe, Head of College, St Catherine's College UWA.



*Yvette Manolas and her husband Hamilton Stott at the 40under40 awards sponsored by Business News, UWA and others.*

**Friends 'rescue mission'**

When the March storm struck UWA (see *In the eye of the storm*) the Friends of the Grounds were quick to rescue all the plants they had been propagating from damaged glasshouses.

Good homes were found for all and a sale of plants to the campus community in May raised more than \$2,000. The Friends' Propagation Group is now busy cultivating plants for their popular Annual Plant Sale in October.

Recently this very active Friends group enjoyed a guided walk through the campus with Professor Ted Snell, Director of the UWA Cultural Precinct, and a chance to hear the Winthrop Singers in the chapel at St George's College.

"We're very much looking forward to hearing them again when they sing at the Dawn of Spring from Winthrop Tower on 1 September, followed by breakfast at the University Club," said President Rose Chaney.

The success of the 2010 Friends of the Grounds Calendar has encouraged the group to produce a 2011 calendar and postcards (on sale in August) and to launch a photographic competition for two special centenary calendars for 2012/13.

For more information on events, calendars and competitions visit: [www.uwa.edu.au/fog](http://www.uwa.edu.au/fog) or phone Judith Edwards on +61 8 6488 8541 or email: [jedwards@uwa.edu.au](mailto:jedwards@uwa.edu.au)

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# Extending our global standing



Your University continues to press ahead with its ambitious international agenda ever mindful of the need that we must measure our performance against the best in the world. International standards of excellence and global best practice must be at the heart of all we do.

By forging strong partnerships with other high-quality universities around the world we can derive institutional benefits, as well as gain from new teaching and research links. A further benefit is that our students have new chances to study abroad, learning directly from some of the best in their fields and gaining skills necessary to contribute to the global community.

To extend our global standing and to continue to develop the quality of study for our students, we have recently finalised details for our University's entry as a foundation member of a new international network of high-quality universities.

The Matariki Network of Universities is a seven-strong group comprising leading research-intensive universities across seven nations which pride themselves on the quality of their student experience. The network is aptly named: *Matariki* is Maori for the group of stars called the Pleiades, which are also known as the Seven Sisters.

Joining us are some of the oldest institutions in their respective countries:

- Dartmouth College (New Hampshire, USA; est. 1769)
- Durham University (England; est. 1832)
- Eberhard Karls University of Tübingen (Germany; est. 1477)
- Queen's University (Canada; est. 1841)
- University of Otago (New Zealand; est. 1869) and
- Uppsala University (Sweden; est. 1477).

This select group is recognised for internationally excellent practice in teaching and learning. These universities encourage students to live on and around campus to enrich their experience of student life and learning. Each focuses on a rounded education which is research-led and encourages inter-disciplinarity.

We will engage in a program of activities including exchange programs for academics, students and administrative staff, research networks, visiting fellowships, joint postgraduate programs and collaboration on major international projects, as well as social responsibility projects and cultural and sporting activities.

The Matariki network is the second significant global network in which your University is involved. In 2008, we were invited to join the prestigious Worldwide Universities Network which has also provided valuable opportunities for enriching our international engagement.

We are confident these networks will complement our bold new initiative to broaden the education we offer our students with a range of new courses designed to add breadth and depth and enhance critical thinking, research and communication skills.

And on that issue, I am pleased to report that the implementation of our new course framework for 2012 is proceeding well. Known as *New Courses 2012*, our new framework will provide a simple and flexible undergraduate structure with an explicit focus on developing communication, research and problem solving skills. Most professional qualifications (such as medicine, law, architecture and engineering) will be delivered at postgraduate level.

Many of you will already have been involved in the preparatory planning and consultation phases, and we encourage your continued involvement. The most up-to-date information on the new course structure is available on the University's website ([www.newcourses2012.uwa.edu.au](http://www.newcourses2012.uwa.edu.au)).

Our new courses will prepare our graduates with knowledge for a changing world. It will equip them with the skills and understanding to achieve their full potential.

We have received encouraging feedback on our new structure not only from our University community, but also from the wider Western Australian and international communities, including very positive comment from a number of the world's top 50 universities. And this of course is our bold ambition: to be counted among these top 50 universities by 2050.

**Alan Robson**  
Vice-Chancellor



# Where have all the wetlands gone?

**When it signed up to an international convention in the 1970s, Australia was proud to list its wetlands of international significance, so why are wetland ecologists and environmentalists lamenting the loss of wetlands today? Trea Wiltshire reports.**

Australia is blessed with wetlands that range from the coastal mudflats of Roebuck Bay on the north-western edge of the continent to the Murray-Darling Basin that stretches from Queensland's channel country to the mouth of the Murray River in South Australia.

The nation has a well-defined process for assessing wetlands worthy of protection and conservation. There is the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act of 1999, the National Plan for Shorebird Protection, the Directory of Important Wetlands in Australia and the international Ramsar Agreement.

In 1971 at the Caspian Sea resort of Ramsar in Iran, Australia was among a handful of founding nations to sign an important early international environmental treaty that highlighted the plight of the world's disappearing and drying wetlands.

Signatories to the Ramsar Convention acknowledged that the loss of wetlands across the world was unacceptable. The Convention advocated "the conservation and wise use of wetlands through local and national actions and international cooperation". It went on to identify

sites deemed to be of international importance. The Ramsar Convention is the only global environmental treaty that focuses entirely on a single ecosystem and its 159 member countries now span the world's geographic regions.

By signing up to Ramsar, nations recognise the benefits of wetlands: their role in filtering pollutants and improving water quality, in protecting shorelines against flooding and in providing a nursery for wetland species. Most importantly, key Ramsar sites across the world serve as staging posts for millions of migrating shorebirds that annually cross continents and oceans. Renowned naturalist Richard Attenborough has described these epic migrations as "one of nature's great events".

Degradation of wetlands is largely caused by draining them to accommodate encroaching urban developments and by diverting river flows to irrigate

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*Above and next page: Shorebirds migrating from Siberia make their first landfall in the Kimberley's Roebuck Bay each spring, before venturing further south. Come autumn, they return to Roebuck Bay to 'refuel' before departing for breeding grounds in the Arctic. (Photos: Jan van de Kam)*

agricultural crops. Nutrient run-off and salinity can also destroy the fragile balance of ecosystems that have their own distinctive suites of plants and animals.

Today, Australia has 65 Ramsar sites but wetland ecologists fear that some sites are so degraded they would barely qualify for listing. In Western Australia, WWF estimates that on the Swan Coastal Plain, up to 80 percent of wetlands have been destroyed and those that remain are under significant threat, including three Ramsar sites in this region. The management authority for Ramsar wetlands in this State is the WA Department of Environment and Conservation (DEC).

UWA graduate Paul Gamblin, WWF-Australia's WA Director, estimates that wetland vegetation on the Swan Coastal Plain is being lost or degraded at the rate of about two football ovals per day. This grim message came in the government's State of the Environment Report of 2007.

Greens Senator Rachel Siewart, is also concerned. The UWA graduate began championing wetland conservation as soon as she joined the Conservation Council and learned how many had been lost in the State's south-west (see *Working against wetland loss*).

UWA graduate Max Finlayson, Professor for Ecology and Diversity at Charles Sturt University, says that under Article 3.2 of the Ramsar Convention, all contracting parties should report adverse change in the ecological character of a listed wetland to the Convention. Professor Finlayson has been critical of the fact that Australia was ignoring its ethical and global obligations under the treaty.

UWA researchers are gaining a better understanding of how wetlands work and how best to protect them. Today much university research addressing national and global issues tends to span several disciplines and nowhere is this more evident than in wetland studies.

A stroll through several UWA schools and laboratories illustrates this multi-disciplinary approach that focuses on several Ramsar sites in this State.

In the Centre of Excellence for Ecohydrology, PhD student Adam Lillcrap and Research Associate Dr Vera Biermann are unravelling the complexities of the Dalyup River which flows into the Ramsar site of Lake Gore, near Esperance. Lake Gore supports the largest known population of Hooded Plovers, is an important moulting site for Australian Shelducks and is a drought refuge for other species. Some 29,000 waterbirds have been counted on its shores.

When high concentrations of aluminium were recorded in the Dalyup River, a monitoring program was set up to assess the threat to the wetland. Aluminium is common in soils but is toxic to organisms when soluble.

"We know that this was a naturally saline river system and that acidic disturbance is increased

by agriculture and is a big threat throughout the Wheatbelt and Esperance," explain the UWA researchers.

"At present we are looking at water movement in the river because there's an interesting feature in this catchment. While there is contamination and acidity in the upper catchment, a change occurs – a neutralisation of toxic elements – as the water moves towards the lake. We need to better understand this process of natural attenuation." For more about research in the Centre, see *Turning around Toolibin*.

Move on to the School of Animal Biology and you find a team of student and post-doctoral researchers led by Dr Andrew Storey. The UWA Adjunct Associate Professor has researched rivers and wetlands in East Timor, New Guinea, Indonesia and Australia and is currently looking at one of Australia's most significant Ramsar sites: the coastal wetlands of Roebuck Bay and Eighty Mile Beach near the pearling town of Broome.

Not only are these sites a magnet for tourists and bird-watchers from across the world, but they offer an incredible outdoor laboratory for the study of biodiversity.



THESE SHOREBIRDS  
FROM THE ARCTIC  
END UP IN THE MOST  
BIODIVERSE MARINE  
PROVINCE IN THE WORLD



Above left: Rare orchids from the shores of Lake Muir, a wetland that UWA researchers are studying: (l – r) Swamp donkey orchid (*Diuris drummondii*) and Pink spider orchid (*Caladenia harringtoniae*). Both orchids are vulnerable. (Photos: Dr Pieter Poot, Assistant Professor in Plant Conservation Biology)

Scientists from The Royal Netherlands Institute for Sea Research mingle with researchers from UWA, the Department of Environment and Conservation, and groups such as Birds Australia.

While relatively unscathed by the degree of development that has degraded wetlands in the south of the State, this important site faces threats from an algal bloom that appears to be getting worse each year (see *One of the wetland wonders of the world*).

A/Professor Andrew Storey’s research has brought him into contact with UWA anthropologist Professor Sandy Toussaint whose research sees her move between the School of Social and Cultural Studies and the Centre of Excellence in Natural Resource Management. Both have worked closely with Indigenous communities and appreciate the linked ecological and cultural values of the plants and animals of wetlands and rivers, and their spiritual importance. Their work was done in collaboration with Indigenous groups along the Fitzroy River and its tributaries.

Professor Toussaint, a UWA graduate, says that while water research has traditionally been dominated by the physical, engineering and natural sciences, that approach is changing (see *Putting people and culture into the environmental equation*).

In the nearby Law School, Associate Professor Alex Gardner, one of Australia’s leading water law experts, is studying some of the challenges the Federal Government faces in relation to its Ramsar obligations. Focussing on the critical situation in the Murray-Darling Basin, he predicts that battles over water could be headed for the courts (see *Our Ramsar obligations*).

Wetland-related research is not limited to the UWA campus. At the Centre of Excellence in Natural

Resource Management in Albany, Dr Barbara Cook heads a group involved in the development of the Ecological Character Description (ECD) for the Muir Byenup Ramsar site and wetlands of the Lower Blackwood River.

When a wetland is listed as a Ramsar site, an ECD describes the critical components, processes, benefits and services of the site at the time of listing. The Centre has assisted the Department of Environment and Conservation with the writing of ECDs for the two wetlands.

“The Muir Byenup wetland contains a number of significant orchid species as well as the threatened Balson’s Pygmy Perch and the near-threatened black-stripe minnow,” says Dr Cook.

“The tributaries of the Lower Blackwood have been proposed for designation under the Ramsar Convention. In addition to including large sections of near pristine river reaches, this site supports vulnerable, endangered and critically endangered species such as the Orange and White-bellied Frogs, the Western Ringtail Possum, the Malleefowl, and the Long-billed, Red-tailed and Short-billed Black Cockatoos.”

Students engaged in wetland research are passionate about their work because they know it is a topic that generates wide community interest. Professor Toussaint mentions the number of community groups now engaged in saving a wetland or an area of the iconic Swan River.

As Paul Gamblin observes in his Guest Column, “Wetlands are oases that give untold pleasure and respite to urban and rural dwellers.”

The UWA graduate is a great example of how involvement as a volunteer can lead to a career. He was a volunteer ‘tagger’ of endangered turtles at Ningaloo Reef when he learned of development plans at the reef that seemed “unsustainable and anachronistic”.

“After a baptism by fire as campaign spruiker, WWF offered me a job running their marine advocacy program in WA. I’m still there, now managing a diverse terrestrial program,” he says.

“A decade in conservation has made clear to me that many of the toughest problems that face the environment are not exclusively those of the natural sciences, but at their core, matters that can also usefully be described by the social sciences, so in hindsight I see a sort of logic in the path I’ve taken – that began with a commerce degree at UWA and that ends up we me working in conservation. Not that I’d claim any prescience when I started out!”

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For more information on the many schools mentioned in this article, visit the UWA website: [www.uwa.edu.au](http://www.uwa.edu.au)



# Our Ramsar obligations

*The unfolding saga of the Murray-Darling Basin sets major irrigators on vast holdings against environmentalists and tourism operators alarmed at drying wetlands and dwindling populations of waterbirds. UWA's Alex Gardner ponders the nation's obligations in relation to our disappearing wetlands.*

Today, experts are concerned Australia is not meeting its international obligations. That is certainly the opinion of Associate Professor Alex Gardner of the Centre of Mining, Energy and Natural Resources Law in UWA's School of Law.

While the Federal Government's Water Act of 2007 established the facility for buying water entitlements to meet environmental needs, Associate Professor Gardner says many of Australia's terrestrial wetlands face a critical shortage of water into the future.

When he addressed an international colloquium on environmental law in China last November, the UWA water law expert highlighted some of the challenges the Federal Government faces in relation to its Ramsar obligations. He particularly focused on the critical situation in the Lower Lakes of the Murray-Darling Basin, in his paper *The Legal Protection of Ramsar Wetlands and Migratory Bird Habitat: Australian Reforms*.

The Basin contains 16 internationally significant sites that provide habitat for migratory birds. However, human consumptive water use in the vast river system is estimated to have increased five-fold in less than a century and insufficient environmental

flows have seen a dramatic decline in wetland health.

"The Lower Lakes are a Ramsar site and are also the habitat of a number of migratory birds we need to protect under international legal obligations such as the China-Australia Migratory Bird Agreement," says Professor Gardner. "These lakes have been sources of irrigation and domestic water supplies, have supported riverine fisheries and been a prominent area for tourism and recreation. The decline in freshwater levels not only threatens all of these values; it threatens to expose sulfidic soils to acidification that could further degrade the ecosystem."

Countries signing up to Ramsar accept that providing water for their wetlands is crucial to their conservation. As Professor Gardner says the Federal Government's Water Act of 2007 took an important step towards meeting this obligation when it established the Murray Darling Basin Authority. The Authority is charged with preparing a Basin Plan to "provide for limits on the quantity of water that may

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*Above: Sunset at a saline wetland in the northern Wheatbelt (Photo: Jess Lynas)*

be taken from the Basin water resources as a whole". The Act defines an "environmentally sustainable level of take" as one that does not compromise the environmental assets of the water resource or the functioning of the ecosystem.

The Basin Plan currently being prepared will need the approval of the Commonwealth Minister for Water and will likely require, at least, New South Wales and Victoria to reduce their water entitlements. One of the factors in determining the sustainable take will be meeting the Commonwealth's obligations in relation to the Ramsar Convention.

As he watches this complex scenario unfold, A/Professor Gardner ponders the potential for future battles over water that might end up in State or Federal courts.

What if environmental groups or agribusinesses challenge definitions of "an environmentally-sustainable take" and are prepared to test in courts their assessment that too much water is going to either irrigation or the environment? Could the Plan's determinations be reviewed by the Federal or High Courts? And could there be an argument that the Commonwealth in fact lacks the power under the Constitution to set such limits? Could the Ramsar Convention's guidelines be applied by the Courts to determine whether the provisions of the Basin Plan are reasonably appropriate and adapted to

giving effect to the Convention's obligations in a drying climate? And how will Australia's international obligations interact with the aim of securing water to meet critical human needs?

"Interestingly, the Water Act suggests that, while the Basin Plan needs to meet 'critical human needs', this does not limit its obligations to also honour Australia's international agreements. In times of severe water shortage, it's difficult to see that the two will not conflict," he says.

State water law reforms are also important for meeting international environmental obligations and tackling the problem of over-allocation. In most states, the water law reforms have transformed old water licences into new tradable water access entitlements. While these entitlements are perpetual, they are only for a share of the varying annual water available after first allocating water for the environment.

"In reality, that is not happening enough at the moment in New South Wales and Victoria because both states have added discretionary powers into their legislation," observes the UWA researcher. "As a result, New South Wales and Victoria continue to allocate the bulk of water to consumption, giving the residue to the environment. They simply don't have the political commitment to tackle the over-allocation that's the core of the problem."

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Meanwhile, the Federal Government is making headway in acquiring additional water for the environment. Buying water entitlements from willing sellers to meet core environmental needs is part of the Commonwealth's 10-year *Water for the Future* plan.

Besides the water buybacks, there have been some reductions in allocations achieved by joint Commonwealth and State action. In his paper on the legal protection of wetlands, A/Professor Gardner cites a High Court case that saw Australia's largest agribusiness, ICM Agriculture, take the Commonwealth and New South Wales governments to court, arguing it had not received fair compensation for the acquisition of its property affected by cuts to its entitlements.

The Court ruled against the plaintiffs, holding that the reductions in the entitlements did not affect an acquisition of property by the governments. The verdict is seen as a significant loss to irrigators. Legal experts say the verdict sets a precedent for the Government to convert the old water licences in a way that greatly reduced entitlements without compensating irrigators.

"Despite this verdict", concludes A/Professor Gardner, "I think the Federal Government will find it very hard to make future climate change induced reductions of water rights for environmental flows without paying compensation.

"The current national policy, as legislated in New South Wales and Victoria, is that the risk of reduced water availability from climate change falls solely on water rights holders. In my view, that is just too hard politically.

"My suggestion is that the Australian Government should establish a strict no-fault liability scheme for compensation by which Australia's greenhouse gas emitters contribute to a fund that pays compensation to those who suffer climate change harm, including water access entitlement holders. Such a fund and compensation process could be established by legislation associated with mitigating climate change. It would also make it easier for Australia to fulfil its international environmental obligations in respect of Ramsar wetlands and migratory birds."

Over the past 15 years Australian parliaments have undertaken a national program of fundamental law reform towards the management and sharing of water resources. Legislation passed is the product of what Professor Gardner describes as "the most significant reforms since water resources statutes were first enacted over a century ago".

A/Professor Gardner's research interests encompass natural resources law and environmental law and he has taught graduate courses in Water Law at both the Australian National University and UWA. He is also teaching at the International Water Centre, a joint venture bringing together the expertise of four leading universities, UWA, Monash, Griffith and the University of Queensland.



## WILL FUTURE WATER BATTLES END UP IN STATE OR FEDERAL COURTS?

A/Professor Gardner is the principal author of *Water Resources Law*, published last July. This definitive study is proving to be an invaluable resource for practitioners, academics, environmentalists and students. The co-authors are Professor Richard Bartlett of UWA and Ms Janice Gray from the University of New South Wales.

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The International Water Centre:  
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Above: Milligans Lagoon, a billabong on the floodplain between the Ord and the Keep Rivers (Photo: Dr Andrew Story, School of Animal Biology). Inset: Associate Professor Alex Gardner



# One of the wetland wonders of the world

*Roebuck Bay and Eighty Mile Beach – coastal wetlands that annually host close to half a million migratory shorebirds – are among the world’s most important Ramsar wetlands, with biodiversity of benthic marine organisms at the site ranking as the highest in the world.*

Few locations in the world boast ten metre tides that inundate expansive mudflats not once but twice daily. That’s the key to this exceptional Ramsar site close to the pearling town of Broome in Western Australia’s north-west. It has been described as “one of the wetland wonders of the world”.

Here the magical synergies of tropical moisture, sunlight and carbon dioxide create a rich web of life. Tiny single-cell organisms appear as a green wash on the intertidal mudflats and these diatoms and algae help sustain a diverse suite of invertebrates that in turn feed hungry birds making their first Australian landfall after an epic migration from Siberia.

While Arctic breeding grounds are snowbound, the migrants moult, eat and soak up the sunshine from November through to April, as torrential downpours fill our northern freshwater wetlands and lakes. This monsoonal inundation also attracts an influx of waterbirds from drying inland wetlands.

When the monsoon wanes and northern hemisphere breeding grounds are once again

attractive habitats, the migrants refuel on the abundant food sources, then take to the sky on their return trip just as the cooler dry season ushers in another influx: tourists from around the world.

So large are Roebuck Bay’s tides that they reach beyond the mudflats and red sandy pindan soils, through mangroves that lace the coastline. And it was when Lyngbya algae was observed draped on coastal mangroves after one such tidal surge that researchers became alarmed at the possible threat to this Ramsar site.

“As Roebuck Bay is one of the most important staging posts for migratory birds, we were concerned when we found a nutrient enrichment signal in the food web,” says Adjunct Associate Professor Andrew Storey from UWA’s School of Animal Biology, who has wide experience in water-related research and

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*Above: UWA researchers working on the mudflats at Roebuck Bay where they fear that toxic algae could endanger the wealth of marine life.*

*Next page: Male fiddler crab (Photos: Jan van de Kam)*

aquatic fauna in the State's north-west and Papua New Guinea.

"We studied the bay's algae and phytoplankton along with animals fed upon by the shorebirds. Finding an elevated nitrogen signature in algae in the bay reminded me of a similar problem in Queensland several years ago when blooms of toxic blue-green Lyngbya (caused by excess nutrients) were prolific in Moreton Bay.

"It's alarming because Lyngbya grows in profusion and literally smothers seagrass beds that are a nursery habitat for prawns and a feeding ground for dugongs and green turtles. At certain stages of its development the algae can be quite toxic to marine creatures and humans and when fishermen and beach goers were affected by rashes in Moreton Bay, the clean-up became a big economic cost for local councils.

"In Moreton Bay the nutrient enrichment that was helping drive the algal blooms was traced back to inefficient sewage treatment plants in the greater Brisbane area and we know that the Water Corporation has had problems with effluent disposal in Broome which is undergoing rapid population growth. Currently treated effluent is sprayed on parks and greens, and a recent PhD study has shown elevated nutrients in groundwater feeding into the bay.

"Dr Bob Prince from the Department of Environment and Conservation (DEC) first noticed Lyngbya in Roebuck Bay in 2005/6 and since then the infestations have become progressively worse, blooming most prolifically after the onset of wet season rains which are thought to flush nutrients into Roebuck Bay. Because we don't know enough about the hydrology of the bay or the source of the nutrients, we still don't have a clear picture of what is happening.

"While the Federal Government has recently listed Lyngbya as one of the threats to Roebuck Bay (along with off-road vehicles and people) and is offering funds to manage the issue, we haven't yet succeeded in getting funding for basic research into the mechanisms and processes at play.

"When some of Western Australia's wetlands were first listed as Ramsar sites in 1990 we had a reasonably good idea of their ecological values, but because there has been minimal monitoring, today we're not sure of the extent of changes. When a listed site undergoes adverse change, it should be reported to Ramsar under a voluntary reporting system known as the Montreux Record but Australia has opposed this reporting, even though the ecological values of many of the nation's Ramsar sites are under threat."

Dr Storey has joined a chorus of academics critical about the lack of monitoring and inadequate funding for Australia's Ramsar sites. "Australia's 65 Ramsar sites are the crown jewels of our wetlands, and if we can't look after these, what hope is there

for the many thousands of other wetlands across our continent," he asks.

The UWA researcher and his team (including Spanish postdoctoral fellow Dr Sora Estrella and Perth-based shorebird expert Grant Pearson) are currently working with scientists from The Royal Netherlands Institute for Sea Research and Groningen University. Generous support from the Port Authority and DEC in Broome is helping them gain a better understanding of the impacts of Lyngbya blooms on foodwebs and shorebirds.

"It's a big ask to manage problems like this if you don't know the processes that give rise to them. And to fully understand those processes you need adequate and ongoing funding that acknowledges the international importance of these wetlands," he says.



RAMSAR SITES ARE THE CROWN JEWELS. IF WE CAN'T LOOK AFTER THEM, WHAT HOPE IS THERE FOR THE MANY THOUSANDS OF OTHER WETLANDS

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# Turning around Toolibin

*Professor Neil Coles, Director of the Centre of Excellence for Ecohydrology, has been tracking the fate of the Toolibin Lake Ramsar Wetland for close to a decade, so he's well aware of the threats to the wetland east of Narrogin.*

The internationally significant wetland of the Toolibin Lake is blanketed with woodland and located in a valley seasonally replenished with surface runoff. When full, the wetland is a habitat for breeding waterbirds with some 50 species recorded, including ducks, cormorants, egrets, herons and spoonbills.

Perched above the water table, Toolibin is the only natural wetland in the bioregion that has not become saline. However, saline groundwater has risen within a metre of the lake bed and signs of degradation have brought a decline in water birds and other species.

Threats to the lake include overgrazing, invading weeds, clearing of vegetation, pollution, nutrient runoff, salinity, water logging and a drying climate.

At the request of the Department of Environment and Conservation (DEC), the Centre of Excellence for Ecohydrology established a network of high quality hydrologic data collection to investigate surface water flows in the catchment. The Centre, which opened last year, is a partnership involving the Department of Agriculture and Food (DAFWA), UWA and Edith Cowan University.

"Back in the '90s, I started working on the Toolibin recovery project initiated by DEC," explains Professor Neil Coles, who divides his time between UWA and DAFWA.

"The aim was to assess the hydrology of the valley floor, to put in place better management of surface water runoff from the catchment into the wetlands and direct more fresh water into the lake. It soon became clear the impacts of salinity were linked to both surface and groundwater water contributions

and that salt affected farm land to the north of the wetlands was a major contributor of salt loads into the lake.

"Work undertaken in the 90's involved managing the saline runoff by designing and building channels that collect water and channel it through the reserve and around the lake. In the last three years additional waterways have been constructed above Dulbinning reserve to reduce the level of inundation and waterlogging that has degraded the wetland ecosystem. In this way we ensure that more fresh water gets into the lake and we can manage how long the wetlands stay wet. This appears to be helping but it's still too early to say whether we'll succeed."

Professor Coles says local farmers are adopting better management practices such as alley farming and improved drainage structures, while DEC has purchased and revegetated nearby land to manage both the quantity and quality of runoff.

"We are seeing signs of recovery on the lake bed and in the number of birds and plant species," he says.

"Recovery will be slow because we've not been great custodians of the landscape. There's been more than a century of decline – that's how long we've been clearing agricultural land – followed by 20 years of trying to repair the damage in collaboration

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*Above: Additional waterways have been constructed above Dulbinning reserve (pictured) to reduce the level of inundation and waterlogging in the Toolibin wetland ecosystem  
Next page: Nik Callow and Ben Cohen installing piezometers that measure the fluctuation in groundwater levels*



with farmers, government departments, land holders, the local council and the Department of Main Roads.

“I think communities are more aware of their obligations and of the value of wetlands. However, we’ll only make progress if we continue to track the causes of decline rather than just treating symptoms. It’s important the good environmental monitoring continues because it was poorly done in the past. We don’t have long-term records and we don’t even have ready and secure funding to continue the monitoring into the future. Good long-term datasets of more than 20-30 years are important, particularly if you are trying to determine the impacts of landuse change, land management practices and climate variability.

“Federal and State governments tend to tackle problems like this with short-term initiatives. First there was Landcare and now Caring for Country. You need a 20-year approach to turn things around, not a burst of funding – and a hope that the problem will go away.

“In the case of wetlands like Toolibin, we’ve finally got to the point where we have developed a robust monitoring network and strong management. This has largely been due to the long-term planning approach adopted by CALM (now DEC) and implemented in the early 1990s. Now changes are being implemented but it will be another 10 to 15 years before we know whether we’ve been successful.”

As the work progresses, students are gaining valuable insights into the way wetlands work: using isotopes to evaluate surface and ground water interaction and salinity encroachment; doing on-site monitoring; exploring the use of alley farming as part of landuse change in the catchment and studying the history of land clearing and its impact on wetland performance.

Students in other disciplines are also adding to knowledge in this area. Recently final year student Samuel Cleary in the School of Environmental Systems Engineering won the AWA National Undergraduate of the Year Award for his research into strategic planting scenarios aimed at reducing stream salinity in the Warren River Catchment. It’s the second year running that a UWA student has won the award with Ali Barrett-Lennard winning the award for her work on salinity development in the Dulbinning Reserve.

Professor Coles says that it is quality research and data collection that will finally untangle the mesh of causes contributing to wetland degradation.

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# Putting people and culture into the environmental equation

**Anthropologist Sandy Toussaint says water research has traditionally been dominated by the physical, engineering and natural sciences, but that input from the humanities and social sciences is vital.**

UWA anthropologist and graduate Sandy Toussaint has been observing human interactions with water and land for several decades. She's fascinated by water sources, be they remote outback water holes, wetlands or the rivers of the State's tropical north.

"When you see a wild, unregulated river like the Fitzroy, it's just iconic and so culturally important for Indigenous communities," says the Adjunct Professor in Social and Environmental Inquiry. "Many cultural sites are tied to the river, local communities fish the river and it provides a place of enduring social significance. Indigenous people are careful to protect it. They're the custodians of Australia's waterways."

Professor Toussaint, who is jointly anchored in the School of Social and Cultural Studies and the Centre of Excellence in Natural Resource Management, says that water-based evidence in Native Title claims has proved as crucial as that inspired by the land. "It is plain that the culture of water sources, land formations and human activity regularly interact in ways not always understood by outsiders.

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*Above: Sandy Toussaint and Amy Ngunda Nuggett, a Juwaliny-Walmajarri woman, working together on a TRaCK project at the Kimberley's Fitzroy River (Photo: Tina Nyapaljarri Rogers)  
Next page: Pirnini, a painting about a wet season lake in the southern Kimberley, by Amy Ngunda Nuggett (Photo: Sandy Toussaint)*

Each situation also emphasises the primacy and connectivity of past, present and continuing human and environmental relationships.”

The UWA academic says attitudes and practices are changing and, as in Queensland’s wild river debate, some people want rivers left in their pristine state while others want to see them developed in ecologically sound ways.

“My concern is how to build people and cultural beliefs and practices into the environmental equation, so we make sure researchers and planners take into account the interdependence of the human-environment relationship,” she says. “I often work with natural scientists and ecologists who acknowledge that their work would benefit from the added human dimension – but of course that dimension makes decision-making complex. Humans vary, as do environments and water sources. While researchers and others like the idea of bringing people and the environment together, it’s not as straight forward as seeing things from one disciplinary perspective!”

The UWA graduate specialises in ethnographic work relating to human-environment interactions. She explores the socio-cultural, aesthetic, material and emotional perspectives of people’s relationship with waters and lands, observing that the topic poses challenges for both environmental and cultural research.

“While research findings from the physical and natural sciences are crucial, especially in relation to Australia’s current water crises, how people differentiated by gender, class, race, ethnicity, age, language and religion relate to and use water, is equally crucial,” she says. “If environmental and social sustainability and evidence of resilience are to be successful for future generations, knowledge sharing that involves the humanities seems to provide the best of all integrated disciplinary worlds.”

A large Australian Research Council Discovery Project grant has funded A/Professor Toussaint’s four-year study into four water catchment areas across urban and remote Australia. She worked with environmental anthropologist Professor Veronica Strang of the University of Auckland and they built a postgraduate award into the project.

“Our ARC grant was among the first to recognise the value of ensuring people and culture were included in research about environmental issues that related, in this case, to water,” she says.

The UWA researcher says she has observed a big change in community attitudes over the last decade particularly in relation to rivers like the Swan, including a resurgence of interest in volunteering to improve the health of the river.

“As a member of the Swan River Trust’s Technical Advisory Panel, I’m aware of the tremendous amount of community involvement in initiatives like River Guardians which spans all age groups and fosters a real sense of being responsible for rivers and of using this finite resource wisely,” she explains.

A/Professor Toussaint has undertaken research for the Tropical Rivers and Coastal Knowledge (TRaCK) Project through UWA’s Centre of Excellence in Natural Resource Management. The latter project is being co-ordinated through UWA, Griffith and Charles Darwin Universities over a five year period. National and local organisations such as CSIRO and the Kimberley Land Council are involved too.



She also serves on a Social and Cultural Working Advisory Group for the Federal Government’s Department of Water, Heritage and the Arts that is exploring how best to use the water resources of Northern Australia, how to increase Indigenous and non-Indigenous involvement in planning processes and how to bridge the gap between the wealth of environmental work on water and the dearth of socio-cultural and economic research on people-water interactions.

Professor Toussaint has published widely about water, people and culture and is currently collaborating with a Kimberley Juwaliny-Walmajarri family with whom she has worked for almost three decades on stories about desert-to-river migration.

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# Working against wetland loss

**Greens Senator (and UWA graduate) Rachel Siewert laments that in the International Year of Biodiversity, we are still battling to save wetlands that are habitats for unique plants and animals.**



Photo: WWF-WA

Wetlands once interlaced the entire serpentine sweep of the Swan River but today many have disappeared entirely.

The WA Branch of the Worldwide Fund for Nature (WWF) has called for the designation of new Ramsar sites in Western Australia, in the hope that listing may give them a better chance of being maintained. This call for greater protection is echoed by UWA graduate Rachel Siewert.

“I became involved in wetland conservation as soon as I joined the Conservation Council and learned about the incredible loss of WA wetlands in the south of the State,” says the graduate.

**WHEN YOU GET LISTING, YOU THEN START BATTLING FOR RESOURCES TO MANAGE THEM AND FOR THE POLITICAL WILL TO HALT MAJOR THREATS**

The WA Greens Senator spent 16 years with the Conservation Council of WA. In 2004 she won a Senate seat, helping to double the party’s representation in the house of review and becoming the fourth in a long line of ‘strong Green women Senators from the West’. (Former Senators Christobel Chamarette and Dee Margetts are also UWA graduates.)

Senator Siewert says that while there is wide community support for saving wetlands, the battle is a daunting one, with a significant challenge being posed by nutrient run-off from agriculture.

“People love wetlands,” says Ms Siewert, “and many hours of community volunteering is invested in protecting them.”

Senator Siewert believes the Commonwealth has shrugged off responsibility for wetland maintenance to the States.

“My feeling is that as the nation signed up to Ramsar, the Federal Government has the moral and ethical responsibility to ensure they’re maintained,” she says. “When I was Co-ordinator of the Conservation Council we worked with the Wetlands Conservation Society and other conservation groups on a campaign to get some of our WA wetlands listed on the Ramsar Convention and now I am pushing for wetland conservation at a national level.”

The Greens Senator has had the satisfaction of seeing 12 additional wetlands listed in recent years, but that’s the beginning of another struggle.

“When you get listing, you then start battling for resources to manage them and for the political will to halt major threats: encroachment of urban development, clearing native vegetation for housing developments, salinity and eutrophication caused by nutrient run-off.

“Certainly we manage wetlands better today than in the past, because at least some are now part of national or regional parks. However, there are different layers of protection and significant problems remain.

“It often strikes me as amazing that, with all we know about their value, in 2010 – the International Year of Biodiversity – we are still fighting to protect our remaining wetlands.”

# Disappearing – two football fields a day

*Guest Columnist and UWA graduate Paul Gamblin cut his teeth as an environmental campaigner with the community campaign to save Leighton Beach. “I’d just returned from the US and the plan to sprawl housing across the foreshore looked all too much like mistakes I’d seen there. Simultaneously, I was being seduced by Ningaloo Reef...” Whereas the battle for Leighton delivered only a measure of success, the Ningaloo campaign that attracted high profile supporters proved more satisfying. Earlier this year the reef was nominated for World Heritage Listing. Paul Gamblin is Director WA for WWF-Australia.*

A whistling kite hovers high above the Swan Coastal Plain after a late winter shower has drifted across the landscape. It’s a time before suburbs began their incessant sprawl and the kite scans for prey across a mosaic of glinting wetlands spread out as far as the Plain itself.

Now we’ve cleared, filled and built over the vast majority of the Plain’s wetlands. What are we doing with the last 20 per cent?

The answer lies in the government’s response to its own State of the Environment Report. The last one in 2007 delivered a pithy measure of harm: “Wetland vegetation on the Swan Coastal Plain is being lost or degraded at the rate of about two football fields per day.”

Two football fields a day of lost or degraded habitat that filters and cleans the dirty runoff from our civilisation; that feeds and incubates frogs, reptiles, waterbirds and fish; that nourishes countless migratory birds needing these restorative places for their vast journeys; that sustains the whistling kite and other dependent birds of prey proudly sitting atop the Coastal Plain’s food chain.

Wetlands have had great cultural significance for millennia. They are oases that give untold pleasure and respite to urban and rural dwellers. Kids watch native ducks and discover tadpoles by the water’s edge and some will go on to become scientists, while others might grow up to till the earth as



WETLAND VEGETATION ON THE SWAN COASTAL PLAIN IS BEING LOST OR DEGRADED AT THE RATE OF ABOUT TWO FOOTBALL FIELDS PER DAY

farmers who might decide that a fence to stop their stock grazing too close to these fragile places is the least they can do.

Many of the last precious wetlands are now in private hands. The landholders who protect them are the unsung environmental heroes, and might be embarrassed to be known as such, but they stand between the sprawl and the last dwindling 20 per cent. WWF has worked with many people who, when they realise just how special that swamp down the end of their property is, want to know how to protect it.

Some landholders will even apply legal instruments, like nature conservation covenants, which protect the wetland areas in perpetuity if they ever decide to sell their property, because little

*continued on page 26*

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Above: UWA graduate Paul Gamblin with author Tim Winton during the campaign to save Ningaloo Reef (Photo: The West Australian)

# The Clough Circle celebrates

**Distinguished graduate Harold Clough says that initiating the Clough Engineering Scholarships in partnership with UWA was one of the best things he had done when managing Clough Limited. The scholarships supported many graduates who were recently reunited at a celebratory dinner.**

It is always stirring to witness the flowering of a single act of philanthropy – and the possibilities of further benefaction it can propagate.

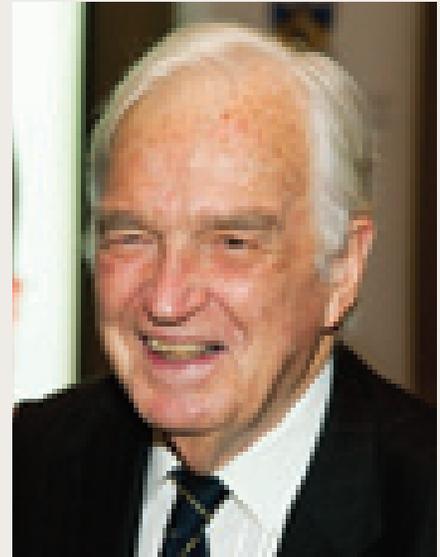
Recently UWA welcomed back to campus many of the 140 recipients of Clough Engineering Scholarships that ran for 35 years. Some travelled half way across the world to pay tribute to Dr Harold Clough, whose generosity had spurred their successful careers and who was guest of honour at the Clough celebration dinner at the University Club.

UWA has flourished for close to a century through the generosity of forward-thinking leaders who recognise the importance of excellence in education.

Vice-Chancellor Professor Alan Robson hailed Dr Harold Clough as a graduate who went on to help UWA realise the visions of its founders, while advancing the engineering profession that has contributed so much to the dynamic development of Western Australia.

Three generations of the Clough family have studied at this University since Harold Clough completed his Bachelor of Science Engineering in 1947. There are currently five grandchildren studying at UWA.

“Our University has enjoyed a long and mutually beneficial relationship with Clough Limited over more than 40 years,” said Professor Robson. “This has involved industry membership of the UWA Futures



Foundation for Oil and Gas Education, funding for scholarships, vacation employment, student prizes, research collaborations and the Clough First Year Engineering Centre.”

Harold Clough (himself a scholarship recipient – a Fulbright took him to the University of California, Berkley) joined his father’s construction company in 1954. Within three years, he was heading one of our capital city’s biggest engineering projects, the building of the Narrows Bridge, a joint venture with a Danish company. It was the State’s first significant civil engineering project awarded to a private contractor.

Over the next 45 years the UWA graduate guided Clough Limited through numerous major construction projects in Australia and overseas, while also creating one of the first successful university-industry partnerships, the Clough Engineering Scholarship program.

Dr Clough told the audience that one of the best things he did when managing Clough Limited was to initiate the scholarships with the University that had provided him with his first degree and “the best four years of my life”.

“What you understand clearly over time is the importance, for a company or a country, of the intellectual horsepower of its people,” observed the distinguished graduate.

“To run a company you need money and assets – land, buildings, plant and equipment – but what outweighs all these is the need for smart people. Give me a team of smart, entrepreneurial people and I will forego all the other requirements. Smart executives manage these things. The strength and success of Clough during its growth came from the



Left: Dr Angeline Kings-Lynne (Technical Project Manager, Transmin), Andrew Caetano (Structural Engineer, Woodside Energy) and Tri Suseno (Director, Akamai Management Group)

quality of its people. With a strong team we knew we could do anything.

"When excluded from large projects for lack of experience or financial capacity we formed joint ventures with the biggest and best of our international competitors. Working alongside their peers from the world's leading companies gave our people great confidence to know they were as good or better.

"To win a Clough scholarship you needed to be the cream of the cream and I believe the credit for success and growth of our company goes in no small part to the contribution of our scholarship winners."

Dr Clough urged local companies to consider launching or expanding scholarship programs and forging a close mutually beneficial partnership with a university.

"In business it's important we continually improve and universities play a vital role in fundamental research which is often the basis for improvement," he said.

While some 50 per cent of scholarship recipients joined Clough, there was no obligation to do so, unlike government cadetships that required recipients to work with government for three years.

## TO WIN A CLOUGH SCHOLARSHIP YOU NEEDED TO BE THE CREAM OF THE CREAM AND I BELIEVE THE CREDIT FOR SUCCESS AND GROWTH OF OUR COMPANY GOES IN NO SMALL PART TO THE CONTRIBUTION OF OUR SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS

Professor Robson said that the success of the pioneering scholarship program laid the foundations for many ongoing UWA-industry partnerships with companies such as Chevron, BHP Billiton, Monadelphous, Apache Energy, AMEC Minproc, Western Power and others. It also provided a new generation of engineering talent with exposure to large-scale oil and gas projects.

The Clough Circle dinner was clearly a success and there was talk that it could become an annual event. As recipients were reunited with fellow graduates, academic staff and industry leaders, stories were shared of Dr Clough's interest in helping young engineers to further their international careers. Many graduates went on to successfully lead industry and



Above: (l - r) Lindsay Courtis (Proposals Director, Petrofac Engineering & Construction), Russell Waugh (CEO Offshore Oil and Gas, Leighton International India) and Dr Jim Limerick (Project Director, UWA Centre for Energy and Minerals Policy), who was MC for the evening

government organisations, others established their own businesses and some followed Dr Clough's lead by giving back to the profession and investing in the future through local and international universities.

If you would like to know more about supporting engineering students at UWA, contact Quang Ly. *The Engineering Essential* insert (for engineering graduates) has more information on the celebratory dinner.



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# In the eye of the storm

When driving winds, rain and sustained volleys of the largest hail stones recorded in Perth smashed Winthrop Hall's classic stained glass windows, whitened lawns, flooded offices, crushed glasshouses full of research plants, collapsed ceilings, encased priceless books in mud and shredded an estimated 80 per cent of foliage from trees – the University knew it had been in the eye of the devastating March storm that abruptly ended our capital city's long hot summer.

The damage caused within a couple of action-packed hours was costly in both human and financial terms. But it also proved that the University is more than capable of a swift response to major critical incidents such as this.

As soon as the severity of the storm became apparent, a Critical Incident Management Team came together comprising staff from across campus: building services and grounds, human resources, IT services, security and parking, student services, public affairs, health and safety, risk management and insurance.

Says Human Resources Director Bob Farrelly, who headed the team: "We knew of the damage to Winthrop Hall and to cars, but were surprised by the extent of the damage to other areas of campus. Initially it was a bit chaotic due to the large number of reports coming in through Security and Facilities Management but by 9pm we had a reasonable idea of the main damage sustained.

"What I found most impressive was the commitment to the University from all involved. Staff put in long hours to ensure the recovery would be as fast as possible. Some, whose houses were damaged, were here at the University.

"By the evening orders were already being placed for equipment and materials for the clean up. The priority was safety and starting the clean up in an ordered fashion.

"The efficiency and speed with which operations were resumed was remarkable and credit must go to staff and contractors involved. The extent of the damage will take some time to fully quantify but is expected to be in the order of \$15m to \$20m."

With the campus under siege from the volatile storm, some 200 students were evacuated from

residential halls, library staff attempted to save priceless volumes from a metre of engulfing mud; cockatoos and ducks were rescued and senior managers offered to drive stranded students home.

As soon as it was safe to venture out into an eerily spectacular sunset, outdoor staff began clearing the mounds of branches and debris off approaches to lecture theatres. When students and staff viewed their shattered windscreens, at least one group of students immediately pooled cash to fund a new windscreen for an uninsured colleague.

Vice-Chancellor Professor Alan Robson later observed: "If ever there was a need for further evidence that adversity brings out the best in people, the fierce storm provided just that."

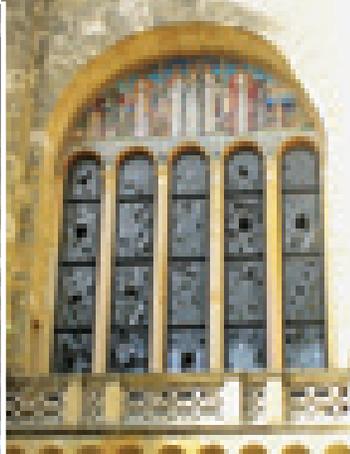
The Vice-Chancellor and staff were overwhelmed by messages of support from alumni, friends, local businesses and other universities. Having declared the storm a natural disaster, Premier Colin Barnett (a UWA graduate) took time out to view the damage to Winthrop Hall where leadlight windows on the northern side took the brunt of the storm.

While the Somerville was badly hit and several nights of Perth Festival films were cancelled, the flooded Octagon and Dolphin were quickly cleared and no performances were cancelled. However, some teaching venues, including QEII's FJ Clark lecture theatre, will be out of commission until second semester.

At the Education, Fine Arts and Architecture Library, known for its impressive collection of classic volumes, the scene was daunting.

"Entering the library after the storm was one of the most heart-breaking experiences of my life," recalls UWA librarian Kael Driscoll. "It was dark and dank, almost pitch black in some areas. We surveyed the damage using torches and I think it was the first time I fully understood the meaning of 'disaster'. To see a place usually so full of light and life reduced to a chaotic swamp was, I have to admit, almost more than I could handle.

"All the bottom shelves were under water so we didn't even attempt to move them. Some shelves were buried in sand. It was awful seeing those beautiful books in such a condition, knowing there was



nothing that could save them. Many were wonderful irreplaceable art books I had shelved and looked at myself while working there.”

Books on the shelves above hadn't been as badly affect and these were rescued and moved to the Reid Library where a team assessed them and started the drying/recovery process.

Meanwhile at QEII Medical Centre campus, staff in the Faculty of Medicine, Dentistry and Health Sciences were coping with ceilings collapsing under a deluge of water and ice.

“Light fittings, air conditioning vents and sodden suspended ceiling panels rained down forcing a complete evacuation of the building,” recalls the faculty Dean, Professor Ian Puddey. “A torrent of water and debris turned the staircase into a waterfall. It became quite an obstacle course but all staff managed to get out safely.

“What was waiting outside was another icy deluge that swamped the FJ Clarke and Mary Lockett Lecture Theatre complex and student computer laboratories. They were under six inches of water.”

The destruction of windows in Winthrop Hall saw several graduation ceremonies relocated at short notice in the Recreation Centre gymnasium. However, as Professor Puddey observed, “There was no diminution in the atmosphere of joy, celebration, relief and high expectations for the future that typify all our graduation ceremonies.”

For the School of Plant Biology, the storm damage was particularly severe. School Manager Alan Luks noted that some international research students had lost 12 months work and were devastated.

“Some of these students are of course many miles from home and family support networks, so we all did our very best to support them,” he said.

Temporary fixes were made to restore some of the plant growth facilities, more than half of which were lost in the storm. Mr Luks paid tribute to staff who had worked non-stop to minimise the impact on staff and students: “We have lost some significant work that, in some instances has taken two years to assemble, but without the effort of Chief Technician Rob Creasy and teaching and research staff, it would have been a lot worse.”

Five days after the storm, much of the shattered coloured glass in Winthrop Hall had been removed, the remaining panes were sandwiched between perspex sheets, replacement glass had been ordered from the United States and guests gathered in the historic hall for the popular annual Parents Welcome.

A record number – some 1,000 – attended this year and the drama that launched the working week was quickly eclipsed as staff and student volunteers joined forces to showcase UWA's impressive facilities.

“It was just what I needed to help myself and my daughter through the transition,” wrote an impressed parent who had travelled from Kalgoorlie for the event. Another enthused: “My wife and I greatly appreciated and thoroughly enjoyed all aspects of the afternoon. Thank you for going to the effort and expense of such an event. You are definitely onto a winner – we, our kids and you are all working towards the same end. Well done and grateful thanks!”

Clearly, it was business as usual at the State's flagship university. Having welcomed the State's 'best and brightest' – and their parents – for close on a century, it would take more than turbulent weather to disrupt the University's calendar for 2010.

If you would like to donate to the storm recovery fund, visit: [www.development.uwa.edu.au/donate/storm-recovery](http://www.development.uwa.edu.au/donate/storm-recovery)



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**UWA EXTENSION**  
CONNECTING WITH COMMUNITIES

## Guest Column

### Disappearing – two football fields a day continued from page 21

could be more disheartening than lovingly protecting a wetland, just to have the next owner bowl it over.

Working directly with these people makes complete sense but the scale of the work now is almost immeasurably small when set against the sheer numbers of potential wetland protectors who would welcome a knock at the door.

Government can also do much more for the wetlands not yet cleared. It needs to increase the proportion of wetlands in the conservation estate. It must also protect a much greater proportion of high conservation value wetlands in private hands where the owners do not want to protect them. This will also mean regulation and can be a delicate business but failing to act now will just make for much harder political calls in future as each remaining wetland becomes even more important, and the pressure really mounts.

Having a high conservation value wetland on one's property is not a right to bulldoze it, as some still believe, just as having a Carnaby's cockatoo nest in a tree in your backyard does not give you the right to destroy it.

Of course, some property owners see wetlands as a liability that reduce the value of their property, particularly for creating suburban lots and new highways as the city expands, or even to run cattle freely. But these are not reasons for governments to tip-toe. After years of policy stasis, governments must resolve this matter. They must also avoid any cynical temptation to toy with how wetlands are classified in order that more of the rarest can legally be destroyed.

The powerful WA Planning Commission controls land use zoning and can set aside wetlands rather than allow them to be bought and fall into the 'property rights' quagmire.

As Perth begins what might be a multi-decadal growth spurt, we may soon wish it was two football fields a day. It may already be more than that. Development can and must be directed to avoid targeting the remaining 20 per cent of our functional wetlands and the other last stands of precious nature that exist for now between the ever-growing tentacles of urban expansion.

Two football fields a day, every day that nothing is done.

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<sup>1</sup> International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC)  
World Health Organisation, 2002



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Helping Drive a Healthy WA





# The challenge of global peacekeeping

When the UWA Business School set up The Ambassadorial Council (see *In Focus*), Joel Cohen was one of several high-achieving graduates based in the United States who became members of the North American chapter.

When welcoming new students at the start of the University year, Vice-Chancellor, Professor Alan Robson, emphasises the hope that UWA will equip them with far more than a degree.

Study at UWA, he says, is all about engaging with the wider community of Western Australians through community service; it's about getting to know students from more than 80 countries with culturally diverse backgrounds; and learning from academics whose expertise is widely acknowledged, and who contribute internationally in a range of vital areas.

"We aim to produce 'citizens of the world' well-equipped to contribute as culturally-aware players on an international stage," says Professor Robson.

It's a message that UWA graduate Joel Cohen clearly absorbed, along with some lofty ambitions already well embedded through growing up in a household where issues were keenly debated, where supporting worthy causes was a way of life and where a constant stream of visitors brought a world of ideas to his doorstep.

Today, Joel certainly fits the description of being 'a player on the international stage' – you can't get more 'global' than working at the United Nation's headquarters in New York.

Recently the UWA graduate returned to campus to address a UWA Business School audience on the well-chosen subject of *An International Career: Developing a Global Perspective*. He caught up with family and friends, spoke to *Uniview* about his work, relished several swims in the Indian Ocean, then packed his bags and flew back to his job as Executive Officer for the United Nations'

Departments of Peacekeeping Operations and Field Operations.

It's a job that has seen him based in locations as disparate as Bosnia and Herzegovina, Timor-Leste and The Hague where he worked with the UN's International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia. His department's field operations encompass some of the world's most troubled conflicts from Sudan to the Democratic Republic of Congo.

**TODAY WE MANAGE 16 PEACE OPERATIONS GLOBALLY THAT COST US\$9 BILLION ANNUALLY AND INVOLVE SOME 100,000 PERSONNEL**

Clearly, it's the sort of job where you need to keep a focus on achievements – and there have been many. United Nations peacekeeping was born in the late 1940s when Cold War rivalries frequently paralysed the Security Council. Its primary goal was to maintain ceasefires and stabilise situations to allow conflicts to be resolved. Today peacekeepers undertake a more complex range of tasks as Kofi Annan outlined during his term as Secretary General.

"UN peacekeeping operations are now increasingly complex and multi-dimensional, going

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*Top right: UWA graduate Joel Cohen. Other photos © United Nations Multimedia, [www.unmultimedia.org](http://www.unmultimedia.org)*

beyond monitoring a ceasefire to actually bringing failed States back to life, often after decades of conflict,” he said. “The blue helmets and their civilian colleagues work together to organize elections, enact police and judicial reform, promote and protect human rights, conduct mine-clearance, advance gender equality, achieve the voluntary disarmament of former combatants and support the return of refugees and displaced people to their homes.”

Increasingly the UN works in peacekeeping partnerships with organisations such as the African and European Unions. While its uniformed personnel come largely from third world countries such as Pakistan, Bangladesh, India and Africa, the biggest contributors to the peacekeeping budget are the United States, Japan and Germany.

“UN peacekeeping began in the Middle East in 1948,” says Mr Cohen. “Today we manage 16 peace operations globally that cost US \$9 billion annually and involve 100,000 personnel. One of our current major challenges is the Sudan where we face challenges on two fronts – to support the comprehensive peace agreement between the North and the South and working with the African Union

and other international partners to help bring an end to the conflict in Darfur.”

The UWA graduate recalls taking up his job at the New York headquarters 17 years ago with a head full of “altruistic notions of the work I would be doing”. These aspirations were shaped by growing up in a household in which worthy causes were embraced.

“My father, Dr Harry Cohen (also a UWA graduate), was politically and socially active for many different campaigns and causes related to the environment, population and nuclear disarmament. Because of that, I had very broad exposure to what were essentially international issues. Lots of visitors came through our front door and their interests became my interests,” he recalls.

When he enrolled at UWA he considered several career options including Law but ended up completing a Bachelor of Economics.

“It was a good first line degree to get me launched into areas that interested me. I’ve always been interested in foreign relations and international affairs and at UWA I realised I wanted a career that brought together these elements.

“When I graduated, the United Nations was recruiting young professionals from different countries as part of its normal intake, so it was a case of ‘being in the right place at the right time’. I applied and was fortunate to be selected. I ended up being assigned to UN Headquarters in New York and that’s where the journey began.

“Your training with the UN really starts as you come through the door, because a lot of the work involves on-the-job learning – about process, about how programs are executed and how mandates are established.

“When you join, it’s assumed that you’ll be good at analysing situations and able to draft papers and proposals. Looking back, I appreciate that when I joined, they dropped you into the deep end to see if you could swim. Today the training is a lot more structured.

“I was fortunate in that I had the opportunity to do a lot of different and interesting things, with the benefit of good mentors and managers. I went from New York to the Netherlands where I was involved in the establishment of the United Nations International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia located in The Hague.

“This was ground-breaking work because it was the first international war crimes tribunal since the post-World War II Nuremberg trials, and the court would be trying individuals indicted for crimes committed in the former Yugoslavia, and later Rwanda.

“The United Nations, like any organisation, is not beyond criticism and not long after I had joined I would appreciate that because, over the period of 12-months, the organisation learnt some very painful lessons in Rwanda and Srebrenica.”



In Rwanda in 1994, the United Nations failed to prevent the genocide that took place in that troubled African nation. One year later, UN peacekeepers in the Balkans set up a UN 'safe haven' for vulnerable Muslim civilians but were unable to save thousands being massacred by Serbs at Srebrenica. "One of the lessons learned from these tragic events is that while UN peacekeeping is a critically important part of dealing with conflicts, it is not a panacea in all circumstances. UN peacekeepers can't be expected to keep a 'peace' where there is no peace to keep," says the graduate.

"Peacekeepers are not an occupation force; they don't go in unless they are invited. Having said that, we do continue to face difficult situations where the government of a country in which we are deployed makes it difficult for us to execute the UN mandate. The big difference is that today, as an organisation, we are much better at knowing our strengths and our limitations."

Mr Cohen recently returned to New York after 18 months in Dili, where he served as the Chief of Administrative Services in the UN Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste.

"The appeal of my job with the United Nations is that, along with my colleagues, I'm making a contribution to improve the lives of others. It may sound trite but for many that is what motivates us.



Sure, there are lots of challenges because you are dealing with complex operations, but this makes it interesting and personally rewarding, because we're doing something positive that, if we succeed, will improve the lives of a great number of people.

"A truly rewarding aspect of my work is that the UN employs amazing people around the world. So you're working with dynamic and motivated people in different countries with different cultural backgrounds who are all working for the common good.

"New York? Yes, it's a great city, an exciting place to live, but, you know what, Perth is still home. Look, I've just come back from the beach and, I have to say, there's no place in the world quite like this."



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**THE UNIVERSITY OF  
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# Those were the days

UWA Publishing's *An Everyday Transience*, takes readers back to the heady days of Western Australia's gold rush when the promise of a fortune lured prospectors from across the globe. This elegant book conjures the atmosphere of the Goldfields through the memorable images of John Joseph Dwyer, the son of a Tipperary miner who came to Australia during one of Victoria's gold rushes.

With his waxed moustache, panama or pith helmet, his starched high collar and waistcoat – plus the accessories of cigar and cane – Dwyer cut a distinctive figure in the brash, mushrooming town of Kalgoorlie.

In his spacious Hannan Street studio, ladies of fashion, men of consequence, local beauties attired in fancy dress and small boys no doubt sweltering in Scottish kilts were captured by the curious eye of his camera.

Out on the streets, Dwyer captured grand Victorian edifices, groups of naked, unabashed male bathers at the Kalgoorlie Baths, wood-panelled club rooms, a racecourse grandstand packed with punters, along with the poppet heads and tunnels that were dramatically reshaping the landscapes.

As UWA's Professor of Architecture Geoffrey London notes in one of several absorbing essays that accompany the photographs, Kalgoorlie boasted a range of amenities from "five newspapers to a skating



rink, to opera companies, to a racetrack, a swimming pool and a library" – all in the middle of a remote and testing landscape.

Dwyer's stunning images (selected from WA Museum and Battye Library collections of the photographer's work) are accompanied by texts by Professor Clarissa Ball and Professor William Taylor of the Faculty of Architecture, Landscape and Visual Arts at UWA; lecturer Philip Goldswain; author Joan London; photographic archivist Dr Joanna Sassoon and film maker Barry Strickland.

*An Everyday Transience: The Urban Imaginary of Goldfields Photographer John Joseph Dwyer* is available from the Co-op Bookshop and all good book stores.

Another offering from UWA Publishing catapults readers from the sepia images of the 19th century to the challenges of the 21st. *Screw Light Bulbs, smarter ways to save Australians time and money* by Donna Green and Liz Minchin has won high praise from the ABC's Robyn Williams who described it as a guide to our carbon future that is clear, sensible, authoritative, interesting and fun.

And there's much more from the University's publishing house. Consult the UWAP website for a full list of new titles: [www.uwap.uwa.edu.au](http://www.uwap.uwa.edu.au)



Above: The cover image of photographer John Dwyer.  
Left: Miss Joy Rolls in fancy dress (1909); Group portrait of hunters (1907); Portrait of Mr and Mrs Robinson (1907)

# Convocation supports the rhythm of the game

**A Convocation Sports Bursary funded by donations and presented annually is helping Sports Science student Janine Murray to compete for a place in the 2010 Commonwealth Games. Alasdair Dempsey, a Research Associate (Biomechanics) in UWA's School of Sport Science, Exercise and Health, talks to the gymnast.**

Rhythmic Gymnastics is not a sport that is at the forefront of the Australian sporting psyche, but one athlete who is trying to change this is the 2010 Convocation Sports Bursary winner Janine Murray.

Janine is currently balancing her UWA Sports Science studies with training and competing for a place on the Australian Rhythmic Gymnastics team for the 2010 Commonwealth Games and World Championships. This involves up to four interstate trips for competition as well as a one-week training camp in Bulgaria.

"It's a challenging balance," says Janine, "but one of the most important aspects of the scholarship is access to the Elite Athlete-Friendly program." This program recognises the demands placed on elite athletes and helps to manage University assessment around competition.

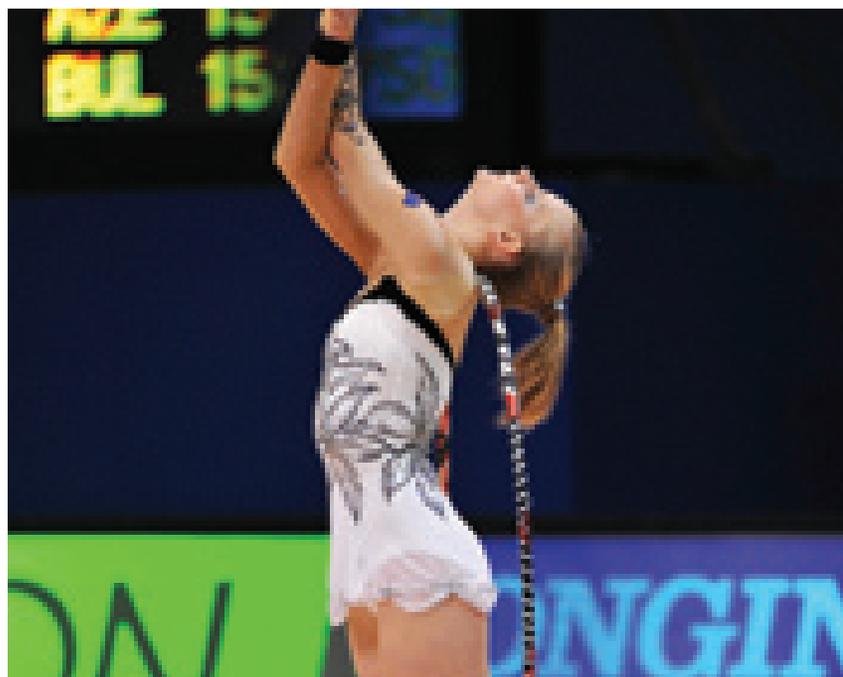
"It's great not having to worry about assignments and exams when you are away competing but it can be a bit of a challenge completing them all once you're back in Perth," she says.

As Rhythmic Gymnastics is a minor sport, Janine has to find the funds to undertake much of the travel involved in her quest for a place on the team. "It's hard to get scholarships, so any support I can get is much appreciated," she says.

While she is lucky to have supportive parents who help out with the costs, winning the Convocation Sports Bursary will go a long way to easing the financial burden imposed by competing at a high level. Rhythmic Gymnastics also has high training costs, including gym, weights and ballet sessions. However more than that, the recognition of her sport at a university level means a lot for Janine.

The National Championship, which doubles as the selection trials for the Commonwealth Games and World Championships will be held at the Loftus Recreation Centre from the 5–11th July.

Despite an injury interrupted season in 2009, Janine is currently the second ranked athlete overall in the five apparatus of ball, ribbon, clubs, hoop and rope and she has a strong chance to be selected for the Australian team. With Australia not being one of



the highly-ranked countries in Rhythmic Gymnastics we are only allocated one place at the Olympics. Selection in the Commonwealth Games and World Championships teams this year will give Janine the experience to challenge the top athlete who was Australia's representative at the last Olympic Games in Beijing.

Janine recently returned from the Pacific Rim Gymnastics Championships in Melbourne, an event that brought together some of the world's best-performing teams from Russia, China, Korea, Malaysia, Canada and New Zealand. The Australian Rhythmic Team was placed third (Russia was first and Canada second), the best result the team has achieved at this event. Janine achieved a personal best score.

UWA continues to support our 2010 UWA Convocation Scholarship recipient as she strives to make selection for the Commonwealth Games team.

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*Above: Janine performing at the 2009 Rhythmic Gymnastics World Championships*

## From the Warden



Several new Councillors were elected at the 2010 First Ordinary Meeting and I welcome Lesley Cala, Patricia Hatch, Warren Kerr, Paul McCann, Raoul Oehmen, Fran Pesich, Chris Richards and Taiwo Sanusi. All Council positions were filled and I believe we will have an active and effective Council.

Early discussions indicate a proactive and enthusiastic approach and I am sure many new activities will be explored. One will undoubtedly be how best to communicate with graduates. Building awareness of Convocation will enable us to get feedback from graduates on local and national issues. Older graduates realise they were privileged to have studied at a truly free university and find it easier to reconnect at a later stage in their life. More recent graduates often demonstrate their appreciation of their UWA experience by remaining connected in ways other than joining Convocation directly: through their faculty graduate group; playing sport with a University club or taking part in activities on campus. Council's role is to find ways of making that connection with the University as easy as possible and in a way that enables graduates' pride and satisfaction with UWA to lead to more active engagement.

The overall financial position of Convocation is sound, with support for activities being provided by the University. Significant funds secured through the efforts of past Councils also support a number of prizes and awards from accrued interest. This interest remains a key source of income but expansion of awards is not possible at this stage. Indeed, because of general cost increases, Council needs to secure additional funds as we respond to changing circumstances and priorities within the campus.

The University's Centenary will be celebrated with several events leading up to major celebrations to mark the arrival of the first students in 1913. Convocation is still determining the form of its contribution and is close to short-listing options. It will be hard to match the contribution made towards the 75th Celebration when Convocation funded the relocation of the Irwin Street building on campus. This building contains the original Senate meeting room (now used for Council meetings) and is a beautiful reminder of the University's early years. However, several suggestions are being considered and we are confident our contribution will be significant and memorable.

At the First Ordinary Meeting of Convocation, the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Alan Robson, discussed a number of issues including the need to provide additional student accommodation through a partnership with an experienced developer of student housing; and an update on the changes to the course structure of UWA from 2012 (see: <http://www.newcourses2012.uwa.edu.au>).

At the meeting there was also an explanation, by Professor Robyn Owens, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research), of the index and criteria by which UWA is measured against all other universities throughout the world. This presentation provided valuable information about the challenges and opportunities for UWA in its quest to become one of the top 50 universities in the world by 2050.

Convocation is exploring ways of canvassing graduate views on matters of importance to UWA and developments on tertiary education in general.

Convocation is seen by some as a custodian of their university experience and this is valid. But Convocation is also required to explain the need for UWA to meet the challenges of the tertiary education sector in the 21st century. We all want UWA to continue to be the very best it can be and graduates all benefit from its continuing success.

I look forward to a dynamic year for Council. I have also been elected by graduates to the UWA Senate and expect that my dual roles of Warden and member of Senate will enable an even greater contribution by graduates to the ambitions of the University as a whole.

**Simon Dawkins**  
Warden

### Council of Convocation, the UWA Graduates Association

#### Members ex officio

Warden of Convocation: Simon Dawkins  
Deputy Warden of Convocation: David Hodgkinson (and Convenor of Statutes Committee)  
Immediate Past Warden: Suzanne Baker

#### Other members

Paul Appleton, Duncan Barton, Lesley Cala, Colin Campbell-Fraser, Alasdair Dempsey, Ashok Desai, Richard Harper (Convenor of Awards Committee), Patricia Hatch, Mahesh Hettiaratchi, Warren Kerr, Geoffrey Leach, Graeme Martin, Paul McCann, Raoul Oehmen, Giacinta Parish, Ian Passmore OAM (Chair of Centenary Planning Working Group), Lance Perry, Fran Pesich, Christopher Richards, Taiwo (John) Sanusi, Pauline Tremlett (Convenor of Graduate Outreach Committee)

#### Convocation-elected members of Senate

Bill Biggs, Roderick Cooper, Simon Dawkins and Hilary Silbert  
Convocation Officer: Juanita Perez

## Recent Convocation Elections

by David Hodgkinson, Deputy Warden

Elections were held recently for Convocation members of the UWA Senate and for the positions of Warden and Deputy Warden of Convocation.

Following the 9 March, 2010 deadline for receipt of voting papers, ballots were conducted by the Convocation Officer, assisted by scrutineers, pursuant to University Statute No 9. Over 1100 votes were counted for eight Senate candidates. The successful candidates were John William (Bill) Biggs, Simon Lee Dawkins and Hilary Ann Silbert.

Bill, Simon and Hilary will each serve a term of four years from 15 March 2010 to 14 March 2014.

Again, following the 9 March deadline for receipt of voting papers, a ballot was conducted by the Convocation Officer, assisted by scrutineers. There were two candidates for each position. Simon Dawkins was re-elected as Warden. I was re-elected as Deputy Warden.

### Election issues

It has been some time since contested elections were held for Convocation-elected Senate members and for the Warden and Deputy Warden positions. The elections were conducted, and votes were counted, in accordance with the provisions of the relevant University statutes (statutes 9 and 12) and, of course, subject to scrutiny.

As a result of the elections, however, it has become clear that a review of those statutes is needed – particularly in the case of multiple elections with multiple candidates for a number of positions – provisions are streamlined, inconsistencies are removed, obligations on voters are made less complicated, and other matters are addressed.

A review by the Statutes Committee of the Council of Convocation of all University statutes is underway this year. The first statutes to be reviewed, and the first statutes for which amendments will be suggested, are statutes 9 and 12, the latter in particular. Members of Convocation and certainly all candidates in the recent elections will be invited to make suggestions – submissions – as part of that review, and to comment on proposed amendments, revisions, and processes to be put in place. I've already received a number of helpful comments from candidates and others and they, of course, will be considered as part of the review.

### Council of Convocation

The Council of Convocation welcomes a number of new members and re-elected members. The new members are Lesley Cala, Patricia Hatch, Warren Kerr, Paul McCann, Raoul Oehmen, Fran Pesich, Christopher Richards and Taiwo Sanusi. Re-elected members are Ashok Desai, Graeme Martin and Ian Passmore. Council warmly welcomes our new and returning Councillors.

Three long-serving members – Cathy Tang (a former Convenor of the Graduate Outreach Committee and member of Senate), Rita Clarke (a member of the Graduate Outreach Committee and a contributor to the Grad News articles in *Uniview*) and James Fogarty, a former Deputy Warden of Council and treasurer – are leaving the Council. On behalf of all members of Convocation I'd like to thank Cathy, Rita and James for their invaluable contribution over a considerable period of time.

## 50th Reunion Luncheon 2010

**Coming soon – Convocation's famous annual 50th Reunion Luncheon of the 'Graduates of 1960 and Earlier' to be held this year on Sunday 31st October in Winthrop Hall.**

Graduates who have already celebrated their 50th Anniversary with us (or who could not attend earlier functions) are welcome. A formal invitation will be sent to all. Any volunteers who would like to help organise the event are invited to join a small sub-committee. Your assistance will be much appreciated.

We have lost contact with a few 1960 graduates and list those below. If you have an idea of their whereabouts could you please let us know.

John E Alderson, Veronica J Balchin, William W Barker, Clive M Beck, Isfriede M Bekker, Peter J Bentley, Colin G Blake, Robert W Blythe, Diana F Cardell Oliver, Geoffrey G Carter, Robert P Chambers, James H Chute, Eric A Creighton, Frederick T Elliott, William O Ewing, Kevin E Forward, Geoffrey R Gatti, Bruce J Graham, Rhys I Gray, Hugh D Hamersley, Leslie Hart, Robert B Hughes, Richard Jeffreys, Mara Jindra (*nee Ulmanis*), Siebe Jorna, Lance L Joseph, Brian A Kent, Peter Lawrence, Chin G Lim, Clement D Ling, Fay P Lorimer (*nee Jordan*), Peter H Lucich, Alastair J MacMillan, Stewart R Marks, Philip R Martin, Jennifer A Medcalf, John A Merritt, Kathleen Moriarty, Austin W Mumme, Pamela F Nielson (*nee Leuba*), Frederik Olgers, Alice A O'Loughlin, Merle J Peacock, Frank Percival, Ian J Purdie, Peter D Rappolt, Anthony W Richardson, James N Rolfe, Robert J Scott, Francis P Sharples, Brian Smith, Neville J Smyth, Kathleen G Snook, Bernard P Sutherland, Dominic C Tay, Patricia H Turner (*nee Ferrell*), Joseph E Walsh, Margaret W Watt (*nee Thomas*), Russell G Wilkinson, Trevor H Williams, John J Williamson, Hendrik Wolzak, Hong Y Wong and Meng-San Wong.

Please contact Juanita Perez, Convocation Officer (+61 8 6488 1336 or [juanita.perez@uwa.edu.au](mailto:juanita.perez@uwa.edu.au)) if you have any information or would like to help organise this year's event.



# Reconnect with alumniConnect

Reconnecting with former classmates and staying in contact with the University community has never been easier thanks to a web-based networking tool that will revolutionise communication with and between UWA graduates.

Launched in May *alumniConnect* is a professional and social networking website exclusively for UWA graduates. As with many educational institutions around the world, UWA has taken advantage of the very latest web technology to accommodate the growing need of graduates to reconnect in *real-time* with their alma mater, no matter where they are located.

The University has always had a commitment to providing opportunities for graduates to network with each other. And with over 60,000 graduates who live and work all over the globe, that is a huge network to tap in to.

Alumni Relations Manager, Ms Pippa Worthington anticipates the communication potential of *alumniConnect* and hopes that “it will assist our graduates to be able to stay connected with each other, by enabling both professional and personal networking in a secure online environment.”

“In Alumni Relations we get many requests from alumni who are trying to track down someone they knew while studying here. This is difficult for us to handle while protecting an individual’s privacy. The directory in *alumniConnect* will help these alumni to reconnect with people with whom they have lost contact,” she said. “From the University’s perspective *alumniConnect* has the ability to support alumni engagement initiatives and will provide very targeted electronic communications with graduates.”

The official launch of *alumniConnect* follows a pilot programme involving local, national and international graduates who were invited to register and explore the community, engage with each other and provide feedback on its functionality. The pilot participation was vital for the implementation of the project as it helped us to understand how this networking tool was being used, which aspects needed further development, what worked well for users and what didn’t, and which aspects graduates considered missing from the community.

To get the most varied feedback from the program, three graduate groups with anticipated differing needs of an online community were chosen for the trial. The groups involved were graduates of Health Sciences; graduates located in



## alumniConnect →

Victoria; and graduates living in the UK and Europe. With early access to the community, they were encouraged to explore various opportunities within *alumniConnect*, with particular emphasis placed on the communication possibilities within the Groups and Networks module.

All the pilot participants were surveyed at the end of the trial with feedback sought in the areas of general appearance of the site, ease of navigation, relevance and clarity of information, as well as the level of alumni engagement and the likelihood of graduates using *alumniConnect* as their main communication hub with fellow graduates and UWA.

Most feedback gathered by the survey indicated a strong affiliation amongst graduates towards staying connected to their University with participants agreeing that the online community provides a meaningful and useful way to achieve that. Feedback from the pilot graduates has proven invaluable in the final development of *alumniConnect*.

Fiona Marshall, a graduate from the UK and Europe group thinks that the site is a great idea. “I would use the site for networking mainly, and to keep up to date with UWA news,” she said. “I think it’s very good to have the recruiting/resume section.”

Not surprisingly, keeping up-to-date with UWA news and events as well as the ability to interact in forums were the prevailing reasons for opting for *alumniConnect*, with the majority of graduates indicating that they would use it in the future and recommend it to their alumni friends.

As registered members of *alumniConnect*, it is expected that many graduates will embrace the community by building connections through career and social networking, mentoring and specific job features, including searching job postings.

*alumniConnect* features an online directory with improved search functions, a place to post photos and add profile content, ability to get e-news and events in a tailored format for alumni on the go.

The ability of alumni to form groups and networks is also one of the cornerstones of this kind of online community offering a range of interactive services for alumni to self-manage and extend their University connections.

While the online community is very much centred on the professional networking possibilities, graduates savvy in using social media for their daily communication can bump up their online presence with the use of members-only media tools and customise their online experience by sharing photos, blogs, videos and by joining discussions in chat rooms and forums.

This technology signals a new mode of communication between the graduate body and the University, and offers a fantastic opportunity for enriching and broadening the graduate experience. For the University, this means a progressive step towards embracing social networking relationships with and between its alumni.

## How graduates can get connected to the community

Login details have already been provided to all UWA graduates for whom we have valid email addresses. The Office of Development and Alumni Relations is keen to hear from graduates who have not received the email but would like to register and explore *alumniConnect*.

### To register for

**alumniConnect** ➔

Email your full name, your UWA degree details (including your last year of study) to **alumniconnect@uwa.edu.au**

When we email your login details back you can go to **www.ac.uwa.edu.au**

Once in the community, select the 'First-time login' button on the top right hand side of the *alumniConnect* homepage

If you have any questions on *alumniConnect* and its possibilities email the *alumniConnect* Team at **alumniconnect@uwa.edu.au**



Keith Cook BEd, MSc, Registered Migration Agent  
Number 0108109 of A & M Australian Migration,  
is offering this special service.

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## Keep in touch!

“Grad Briefs – they’re the first thing I read,” writes one graduate. “They often remind me of former classmates and colleagues and have enabled me to repair and resume long-lost friendships,” emails poet, author and graduate William Grono. And that’s what Grad Brief networking is all about. So let us know where you are, what you’re doing and put us in the picture: hard copy (which we’ll return on request), digital image (tif or jpeg file at 300 dpi). Email to [terry.larder@uwa.edu.au](mailto:terry.larder@uwa.edu.au) or post to Terry Larder, The University of Western Australia, M427, 35 Stirling Highway, Crawley, WA 6009. We’d love to hear from you.

### 1950s

**Neville Byrne** (BA 1954; DipEd 1955; MA 1960) writes that he is now semi-retired after working at an inner-city church in Sydney. He has moved to Cowra and helps out in parishes in western NSW, which he enjoys.

**Helen Rubinstein** (née Silberman) (BSc 1951) writes that her main interest was Clinical Biochemistry research and that she has had papers published in *The Lancet*, *Nature* and other journals. Further studies in London were followed by research at Royal Perth Hospital and work as a demonstrator in Clinical Biochemistry at Melbourne University. She lectured in Clinical Biochemistry at UWA in 1960. She married Dr Phillip Rubinstein in 1959 and they have two sons and a daughter. Now in retirement, she continues to enjoy travel, music, reading and her grandchildren.

### 1960s

**Jacqueline Foyel** (née Heitman) (BSc(Agric) 1960) previously worked as a researcher on Bougainville Island and then took up the position of Land Use Planning Manager for Primary Industries in South Australia. Now retired Jacqui still continues to do consulting work and is an accredited organic inspector. Former classmates can contact Jacqui at [matfoyel@senet.com.au](mailto:matfoyel@senet.com.au)

**Wayne Bradshaw** (MB BS 1965) writes that he enjoys teaching medical students in his Mandurah medical practice on a one to one basis. He keeps fit and has no plans to retire as he truly enjoys helping his patients.

### 1970s

**Melvyn Wall** (MB BS 1973) had previously practised at Kelmscott as a consultant physician specialising in neurodevelopmental disorders in children and adolescents. He writes that following a dog attack whilst visiting a patient’s home in 1997, he unfortunately developed a chronic pain disorder in his injured leg and has been unable to practice since that time. He is now retired. Melvyn is a Fellow of the Royal Australian College of Physicians.

**Michael Allenby** (BSc 1975) has completed the AICD’s Corporate Directors Course, sponsored by the WA Department of Sport & Recreation. He writes that his Chairmanship of the WA Sports Federation and board membership of

Healthways will be enhanced by the course. He has a passion for corporate governance improvement and looks forward to implementing his learning at his not-for-profit boards as well as the water treatment board and management positions in Australia and Malaysia.

### 1980s

**Jimmy Kho** (BCom 1982; DipEd 2009) writes that he has been lecturing at Kingston International College teaching high school students from overseas. Former classmates can contact him at [khojimmy@hotmail.com](mailto:khojimmy@hotmail.com)

**Roma Wiseman** (née Sayers) (BA 1983) enjoys attending classes at the University of the Third Age. She writes that she is retired and lives two hours from Melbourne. Roma also enjoys attending ballet, theatre and exhibitions. Former classmates can contact her at [wisemanroma@yahoo.com.au](mailto:wisemanroma@yahoo.com.au)



**Sean Burke** (BA(Hons) 1989; LLB 1993) worked as a lawyer and then as a teacher. He began teaching in the Steiner Waldorf method and now works as a State secondary ESL teacher. Sean has published his thoughts on language teaching in his recent book *Lighting the Literacy Fire*. Former classmates can contact him at [seanburke@westnet.com.au](mailto:seanburke@westnet.com.au)

### 1990s

**Jacqueline Stanley** (BA 1993) completed her Masters degree in English at St Thomas University, Houston, Texas. She writes that after teaching Middle School, she has had two children’s books published about wolf-eels and sea dragons. Jacqueline now works for Young Audiences, a national group that uses arts to aid learning. She visits schools and conducts workshops. Her passion is diving and underwater photography and presently she holds the Education seat on the Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council. Former classmates can contact Jacqui at [wolfeellady@earthlink.net](mailto:wolfeellady@earthlink.net)



**Iain McIntyre** (BA 1992) has had a new book published by Breakdown Press entitled *How to Make Trouble and Influence People: Pranks, Hoaxes, Graffiti and Political Mischief Making From Across Australia*, which covers over 220 years of Australian ‘radical history’. He is currently completing a Masters thesis at Melbourne University covering the history of the 1991 AIDEX anti-arms fair protests. He lives in Melbourne with his partner and child and works as an ESL teacher.



**Benson Akinshipe** (PhD 1993) retired as Head of Pathology Laboratory services at the Federal Medical Centre, Nigeria, after serving for 25 years at the Federal Ministry of Health. He is currently engaged as a senior lecturer/hospital lab consultant in Clinical Immunology at the School of Clinical Medicine at the Igbinedion Teaching Hospital in Okada, Nigeria. He writes that he is very grateful for the advice and knowledge given to him by his PhD supervisors, Professor Peter Hollingsworth and Professor Roger Dawkins during his Commonwealth Scholarship and Fellowship training at UWA. Benson also manages an oil palm plantation with his wife, children and farm workers.

**Karalee Tilvern** (BA 1994; DipEd 1995) has returned to Perth with her husband and two children. She previously worked for 10 years interstate as a radio and newsreader for Channel 7 Melbourne and a senior reporter for SBS World News as well as appearances on the Sky News current affairs show, Melbourne Lunch.

**Kim Cronin** (BA 1995; DipEd 1996) writes that she spent many years teaching ESL overseas and was married in Japan. Kim now

teaches at Perth’s Polytechnic West as an ESL lecturer. Former classmates can contact her at [kim.m.cronin@gmail.com](mailto:kim.m.cronin@gmail.com)

### 2000s



**Kok Chiang Ng** (BCom 2005; BE(Hons) 2005) has completed a PhD in Chemical Engineering at the University of Nottingham. His doctorate focussed on nanocomposites of carbon nanotubes and super capacitors. In his research, he characterised nanomaterials in terms of their physical and electrochemical properties for their application in power storage technologies. He lives in Selangor, Malaysia and fellow classmates can contact him at [KokC.Ng@gmail.com](mailto:KokC.Ng@gmail.com)

**Annette Seeman** (MFA 2006) writes that she is using the knowledge and skills developed through creative critique and analysis to restructure and redesign new courses in art and design for Honours and Postgraduate coursework programs at Curtin University.

**Brooke Anderton** (BSc(Hons) 2008) is studying full-time for her Graduate Diploma in Education degree in secondary teaching.



**Kate Charlesworth** (MB BS(Hons) 2004) and **Manny Petros** (LLB 2002; BCom(Hons) 2003) celebrated their wedding last December at the Wise Winery in Margaret River. Kate works at the National Health Services Sustainable Development Unit based in Cambridge, UK, and Manny works for the Macquarie Group, in London. This happy wedding photo also features other UWA graduates (l-r) **Jonathan Van Hazel** (BE(Hons); BCom 2002) **Libby Charlesworth** (LLB(Hons); BA(Hons) 2007) **Manny Petros**, **Kate Charlesworth**, **Rachel Harris** (MB BS 2009) **Aaron Hood** (BE(Hons); BCom 2003) **Mel Shaw** and **Bryn Hardcastle** (BA; LLB 2002).

**Anthony Arkell** (BCom 2008) works for RSM Bird Cameron Chartered Accountants, in Moora, after completing his first year of work in Perth and accepting a transfer to the country. Former classmates can contact him at antarkell@hotmail.com

**Rhiannon Halse** (BSc(Hons) 2009) writes that she has commenced her PhD studies at UWA's School of Sports Science, Exercise & Health. She is working with Dr Kym Guelfi and Dr Karen Wallman.

**Luke Nuske** (BSc(Hons) 2009) is a geologist working for Barrick Gold on an underground gold mine called Wallaby, located 20km south of Laverton, WA.

## Graduate's book will help others

When **Suzie Edward May** was diagnosed with rheumatoid arthritis – a chronic, inflammatory disease – she was determined it would not stop her from putting her UWA Law degree to good use, nor prevent her from having a family.

However, largely dependent on medication to help her live a functional life, she knew she would have to cease medication to safely conceive. At the time she was desperate to find other women who had been through the physical and psychological pain she knew she faced.

"I wanted desperately to speak to others who had been through this and had succeeded. I wanted inspiration to stop me from giving up when things felt too hard. But I found nothing," she recalls.

When well enough "to think beyond myself" Suzie determined to create a resource that would answer the questions she knew could only be answered by those who had been on the same journey. The result is her book *Arthritis, pregnancy and the path to parenthood*, launched in March. It shares not only Suzie's story but the experiences of women and men from around the world who have fulfilled their goal of having a family despite arthritis.

Clearly it is a much-needed book not only for those living with arthritis but for the families, friends and colleagues who support them.

Now a mother of two – she's photographed with Oscar and Olive – Suzie is currently taking time out from her legal career to be a mother and to promote this important book. It is available for purchase through [www.suzieedwardmay.com](http://www.suzieedwardmay.com) and from the Arthritis Western Australia bookshop at 17 Lemnos Street, Shenton Park.



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## Tropical sojourn leads to tale of isolation

UWA graduate **Deb Fitzpatrick** spent several years living in a tiny rural village in the cloud forest of Costa Rica getting used to isolation and loss of identity, the shock of no telephone or Internet, tropical downpours and vegetation teeming with scorpions and monkeys.

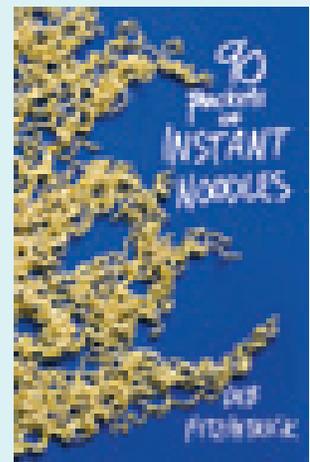
Being an author (her manuscript *Starfish* was shortlisted for the 2007 TAG Hungerford Award) the graduate used this experience as a basis for a manuscript for young adults *Ninety packets of instant noodles* recently published by Fremantle Press.

"Born in Melbourne, raised in the sand dunes of Perth, I'm now a mother of two, live in Fremantle and have reliable running water and electricity, but I don't have coyotes coming into my garden at night to howl..." she muses.

Deb's book centres on two mates who get into scrapes together and face the consequences together. However, when one turns violent and is sent to juvenile detention, his mate Joel's father intervenes, making a deal with the police and Joel spends 90 days fending for himself in a remote bush shack.

*Ninety packets of instant noodles* is Joel's story.

Deb is a freelance editor and writer who completed a Masters in Creative Writing at UWA.



## Flying solo to the UK

UWA graduate **Barry Markham** has always been fascinated by accounts of epic flights by famous aviators. After flying modern aircraft such as Cessnas, he decided to learn to fly a Tiger Moth – and embarked on his own epic journey. "I was in for a shock. Just taxiing was an art form ..." he recalls in his book *Solo to England*, published by Melrose Books.

Barry's interest in the Tiger Moths began with tales of his father's wartime experiences and having mastered the biplane developed by the de Havilland Aircraft Company, he found it a thrill to fly. After buying a Tiger Moth built in Australia during World War II, he flew it from New South Wales to Perth: an experience that prompted him to start planning a much longer flight from Perth to the United Kingdom.

Preparing and fitting out the Tiger for its long journey was a major task but by April 1998 it was ready for the 60 day flight to Cambridge.

With a foreword by the Duchess of Bedford, President of the de Havilland Moth Club, *Solo to England* is an informative and inspiring account.



## Graduate comes full circle



Kevin Kenneally who won the *Pride of Australia Medal (for the environment)* last year. (Photo: The Sunday Times/ Theo Fakos)

for instance, they did bird counts, netted and banded migrant shorebirds and measured and tagged green turtles.

"Given that eco-tourism is growing and we were fully booked, the loss of these expeditions when funding was cut just didn't make sense," he observes.

However, as an Honorary Research Associate with DEC, Kevin Kenneally's Kimberley research continues. He is also an Adjunct Professor in UWA's School of Earth and Geographic Sciences, and is delighted to renew his association with the University.

"I owe much of my scientific career to staff at UWA," he recalls. "In June 1963, aged 17, I was appointed a lab assistant in the Microbiology Department. Professor Neville Stanley and his staff were very encouraging and helpful. A year later, I joined the Botany Department under Professor Brian Grieve who encouraged his technical staff to study part-time. He was helpful in so many ways and his letters of introduction allowed me to visit interstate botanical institutions and study their plant collections," recalls A/Professor Kenneally.

Graduating in 1973, he joined the WA Herbarium as a research botanist, but he didn't forget his UWA mentors. Along with other Botany graduates, he maintained close contact with Professor Grieve until his death.

"Without the support and encouragement of these people, many of us would never have had the opportunity to attend university and graduate. It has now come full circle with my appointment an Adjunct Professor in 2008. I am so pleased to have an opportunity to give something back to the University that nurtured my science career."

And with his wealth of experience, UWA is delighted to have him back on campus.

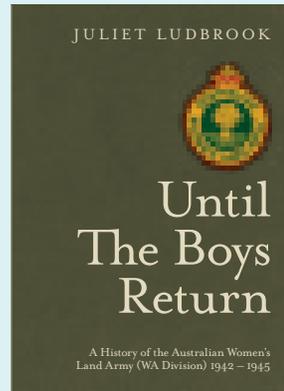
UWA graduate **Kevin Kenneally** has had a long association with the Kimberley and with Ramsar wetlands like Roebuck Bay. In 1994 he was awarded the CSIRO External Medal for research achievement for the book *Broome and Beyond – Plants and People of the Dampier Peninsula* and in 2005 was appointed a Member of the Order of Australia for his contribution to science and the community.

Until last year he was Scientific Coordinator of LANDSCOPE expeditions, organised by the Department of Environment and Conservation (DEC) and UWA. These popular expeditions to diverse WA landscapes enabled enthusiastic amateurs to conduct important research alongside professionals. On Roebuck Bay,

## Looking good in the Land Army

UWA graduate **Juliet Ludbrook** has just written a book that celebrates the role of the women who, during World War II, contributed to the war effort by joining the Women's Land Army. *Until the Boys Return* was recently launched.

When the Japanese attacked Port Hedland, it became clear to Australians that the conflict – once on the other side of the world – had come to their doorstep. By 1940 hundreds of volunteer auxiliary and paramilitary organisations were established and women were volunteering for training as signallers, nursing aides and drivers. The Women's Land Army helped fill the gap of farmers who had left for the front and its volunteers played an important part in feeding the population and the troops (Australian and American) based in the State.



As Major General Michael Jeffery points out in his foreword, the war changed Australian society forever. "With decreasing numbers of men to work the essential farms and factories...women were needed to meet the shortfall, a challenge they quickly and willingly accepted." In doing so they forever altered cultural attitudes, particularly in the workforce.

Women who joined the Land Army (sometimes leaving family homes for the first time)

were soon doing everything from harvesting crops and driving tractors to classing wool and helping to sink wells. Sometimes they had brushes with danger (like the lass "tossed by a Guernsey bull") and they frequently suffered the discomfort of inadequate accommodation. However, their wartime memories make fascinating reading, and are invariably positive.

When the volunteers got the uniforms (and recognition) they deserved, they were delighted. UWA graduate Joan Pope, one of those quoted in the book, was a school girl at the time and she admired the 'land girls' and their uniforms.

"I thought it was rather glamorous; they assumed a Bette Davis kind of look, and I think they played that up," she recalls. "They did the chaff-cutting and the hay-stooking and haystack building; they drove the old T-model Ford truck, chopped the wood, did the milking, scalded the cream; and they could make meringues in the cooling oven at night. Morning teas were terrific! They could catch and kill and pluck a chook, and were not scared of the huge boar in the pen next to the pigs."

*Until The Boys Return, A History of the Australian Women's Land Army (WA Division) 1942 - 1945* is published by The Ex AWLA Association of WA. It is available by phoning Trish on +61 8 9337 6129.

## Designing Indigenous courts

Architect **Phil Kirke** graduated in 1988 – "possibly the last year to complete studies in the 50-year-old weatherboard 'temporary' buildings on the north-west corner of the campus, since demolished. The standing joke was that the architects had the oldest and worst buildings of the entire University, but we loved them!"

He spent almost a decade working for the Commonwealth Department of Works before joining GHD and, in 2004, the local practice Hassell which, he points out, is currently rated in the top 25 architectural practices in the world. He is now a Senior Associate.

The UWA graduate's work for Commonwealth clients brought him into contact with traditional and remote Aboriginal communities. "From 1996 with the Martu of the Western Desert and eventually with the Spinifex People of the Great Victoria Sandy Desert Reserve, the Kimberley mobs, the Nyoongar of the Swan Coastal Plain and Wheatbelt and, more recently, the Wongatha of the central Goldfields. This work continues," he says.

"My focus as a writer is always that of a practising design architect with a particular interest in social, psychological and cultural factors and how these may assume a key role in design."

In 2007 he presented a paper on the design of Indigenous courts at a conference of the Australasian Institute of Judicial Administration and last year travelled to Washington at the invitation of the World Bank.

"My work as a design architect in both community and justice facilities was recognised as an approach which engages with and incorporates Indigenous cultural principles, and I presented a tutorial to senior World Bank staff drawing on my experience," he says.

Phil Kirke's many publications include *The Shelter of Law: Designing with Communities for a Culture of Natural Justice* (2009) and *Culture-Based Justice Architecture: Building Community Wellbeing through Deeper Cultural Engagement* to be published this year by the World Bank, Washington.

His books are available at Boffins Bookshop in Hay Street Perth and at Architext Bookshops in Melbourne and Sydney.





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## Foundation welcomes new patrons

The Hackett Foundation was established in 1998 and has received wide support from business and community leaders, most of whom are graduates of UWA. In April, the University welcomed new Patrons of the UWA Hackett Foundation that, to date, has received donations and sponsorship totalling more than \$82 million.

"Our University's achievements over almost a century would not have been possible, nor dreams for the future realised, without the unqualified loyalty and tangible support of our alumni, students, staff, friends, corporate partners and donors," says Vice-Chancellor Professor Alan Robson.

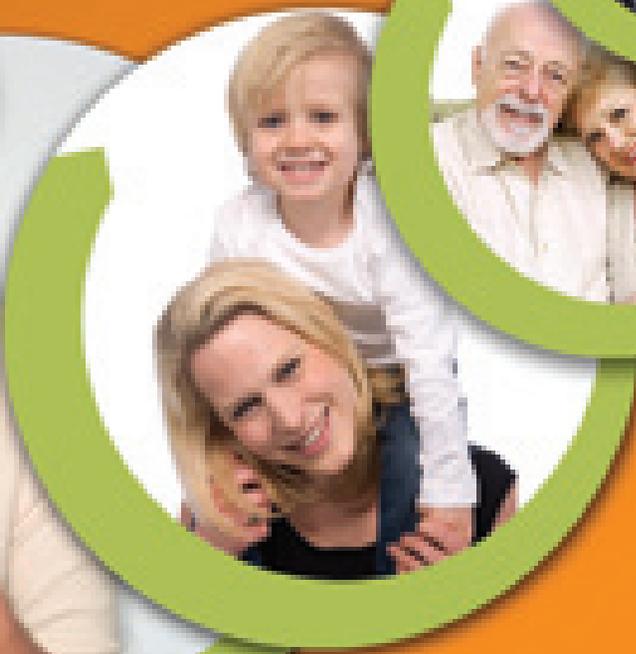
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