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MESSAGE FROM THE VICE-CHANCELLOR

One advantage of being Vice-Chancellor of a genuinely international institution is that, no matter where you travel, alumni and associates are never far away.

This was crystal clear during a recent 12-day visit to China and Hong Kong, where the priorities were to expand and reinforce relations with alumni, research collaborators and industry allies.

In Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou and Hong Kong, about 15 colleagues and I caught up with hundreds of alumni who collectively represented UQ students from the 1960s to the 21st Century. We met research and academic partners, and organisations that buy products and services arising from UQ research. We were honoured by discussions with senior personnel such as the Executive Vice-President of the Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS), Professor Bai Chunli, and Executive Vice-President of the Chinese Academy of Engineering.

In Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou and Hong Kong, we met research and academic partners, and organisations — and leaders from other institutions and companies. Our interactions were based on mutual respect and strong relationships, and were enhanced by the presence of up to four fluent Chinese speakers on the Australia team. Our conversations with senior personnel such as the Executive Vice-President of the Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS), Professor Bai Chunli, and leaders from other institutions and companies. Leaders from other institutions and companies.

Leadership is a key to success in international relations, and UQ’s global profile and infrastructure have benefited immensely from the stewardship of Professor Trevor Grigg, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (International and Development). I pay tribute to him now because he will soon take leave before finalising his term as Deputy Vice-Chancellor. Make no mistake: retirement is not on Trevor’s horizon.

Rarely (if ever) described as retiring is our Secretary and Registrar, Mr Douglas Porter. Nonetheless, Douglas is preparing to shut down his UQ computer for the last time, after 22 years at the centre of the University’s administration, finances and good governance. I thank Douglas for his immeasurable contributions, which have influenced success in areas including business, research commercialisation, information technology and residential colleges.

I also thank colleagues who will soon step aside or retire from senior posts: Academic Board President, Professor Mark Gould; Faculty of Business, Economics and Law Executive Dean, Professor Ian Zimmer; and Property and Facilities Director, Mr Alasdair McClintock.

Professor Paul Greenfield AO


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COVER: An image from Saving Sight, Saving a Nation by UQ journalism lecturer Heather Stewart
PHOTO: HEATHER STEWART

Alumni celebrate in Asia
Volunteer readers honoured
Keeping koala populations in check
Paradise pair up in the ocean
Heron Island rebuild complete

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SHORTCUTS

They’re creepy, crawly, and often downright scary. But beetles, bugs and all insects in between fascinate UQ entomology lecturer Dr David Merritt, who has helped create a website to better inform the public about the creatures.

Launched in October, www.entomology.edu.au is a key part of the National Curriculum in Entomology Project, which is funded by the Australian Teaching and Learning Council and aims to boost student interest in the discipline.

The website includes guides on how to identify different species, insect-related news and resources for primary students, in addition to listing entomology courses available around the country.

“Most people don’t realise that insects have an enormous impact on the environment, human health and world economies,” Dr Merritt said.

“Insects are of direct importance to humans as pests, carriers of disease, pollinators, nutrient cyclers, sources of new bioactive compounds, and indicators of environmental change.”

The project was made possible by a partnership between The University of Queensland, the University of Adelaide, the University of Western Australia and Charles Sturt University.

INFO ➔ www.entomology.edu.au

A BLOOMING GOOD IDEA

A new generation of drought-hardy Australian native plants created at UQ will launch into the American market next year.

Aussie Colours has received a $465,000 boost from local investor group Brisbane Angels and the Queensland Government-owned teQstart, a company established to invest in early stage, knowledge-intensive local companies.

Since beginning operation in June 2007, Aussie Colours has sold more than 60,000 plants, with the Outback Princess® range proving particularly popular with Australian nurseries.

The Brisbane Angels / teQstart investment follows a series of milestone achievements for the company, which include a COMET grant of $64,000, trials in the USA and the commercial release of two new native varieties, including the world’s first yellow rice flower – “Gold Dust”.

Aussie Colours CEO Brian Ruddle said the plants had been embraced domestically and had sparked wide international interest.

“Australian nurseries have been selling out of the plants and we’re negotiating with overseas companies for distribution rights in North America and Europe,” Mr Ruddle said.

“This investment means we can confidently pursue those contracts and meet the demand for our products in both the domestic and global markets.”

Australian gardening enthusiasts can purchase their stocks of Outback Princess® from major retail and hardware stores, nursery groups and garden centres.

WEIGHTY ISSUES

Health professionals from across Australia recently met in Brisbane for a University of Queensland conference focused on prevention and treatment of childhood obesity and eating disorders.

The two-day conference, “Perspectives on Childhood Obesity and Eating Disorders: from Prevention to Treatment”, was hosted by UQ’s Children’s Nutrition Research Centre. It explored core issues surrounding Australia’s growing need for weight management solutions for children, including recent research that has uncovered new and effective methods of treatment.

Centre Director Associate Professor Peter Davies said the conference had attracted an impressive line-up of Queensland-based and national speakers to present on the future direction of childhood obesity and eating disorders.

Dr Davies said it was crucial to explore the clinical, psychological and social challenges of obesity, and to tackle the societal pressures that influence eating behaviour.

INFO ➔ www.entomology.edu.au

ALIEN LIFE EXPLORED

First-year students from UQ’s Advanced Study Program in Science have organised a national symposium to explore the origins of the Universe and the possible nature of life on other planets.

Held at St Lucia on October 22, the event featured eminent speakers including Dr Charles Lineweaver, Dr Brendan Burns, Dr Ragbir Bhathal and UQ’s Dr Kevin Pimbblet.

Participating student Alexander Metcalf said the symposium provided a unique opportunity to organise and experience a scientific conference.

“Not only were we given access to national and international field leaders, but we also received first-hand insight into the running of such an event,” Mr Metcalf said.

Dr Charles Lineweaver from the Australian National University discussed topics such as the origin of the Universe and how widespread life is likely to be.

Dr Brendan Burns from the University of New South Wales focused on the methods by which extraterrestrial life might be found, while Dr Ragbir Bhathal from the University of Western Sydney and Search for Extra-Terrestrial Intelligence (SETI) presented his views on the probability of communicating with alien life.

The flagship Advanced Study Program is an initiative of UQ Science and offers enhanced learning opportunities to high-achieving students.

Program features include interaction with leading scientists, early incorporation into research labs, and specialised field trips to encourage the pursuit of a career in scientific research.
A PORKY PROBLEM

New facilities located at UQ’s Gatton campus will help researchers determine why some foods are better for us than others.

Professor Mike Gidley, Director of UQ’s Centre for Nutrition and Food Sciences, and Professor Wayne Bryden, from the School of Animal Studies, are conducting nutritional studies at the Centre for Advanced Animal Science (CAAS).

“We are starting to use the CAAS facilities to run trials of human food components in pigs in order to increase our understanding of why certain foods have health-promoting properties,” Professor Gidley said.

“Over the next few months we will be carrying out studies aimed at understanding why whole cereal grains have certain health-promoting properties.

FISHY BUSINESS

A neuroscientist at UQ’s Queensland Brain Institute (QBI) has found a way to combat a debilitating illness that affects an estimated 50,000 people a year in tropical regions.

Ciguatera poisoning – which often results in acute nausea, vomiting and painful gastrointestinal symptoms – is caused by eating fish that have fed on a toxic micro algae that are often associated with large algal blooms known as red tides.

Cases of ciguatera poisoning have been documented for more than 200 years – and were recorded and described by Captain Cook on his second voyage to the Pacific in 1774.

Recently, scientists have discovered that the patented compound brevenal could be used to make an effective treatment for neurotoxic shellfish poisoning (NSP), a condition related to ciguatera poisoning.

Acting on a hunch, QBI neuroscientist Associate Professor Fred Meunier hypothesised that brevenal could be adapted to combat ciguatera poisoning.

“If successful, we plan to use the same approach to improve our understanding of why fruits and vegetables are an important part of a healthy diet.”

Professor Gidley said the findings would be applicable to humans.

“The digestive tract of pigs is quite similar to that of humans in several respects, and this makes them a good model for human digestive processes,” he said.

CAAS, a joint initiative between UQ and the Queensland Government, was officially opened by the Minister for Primary Industries and Fisheries, Tim Mulherin, on September 2.

“The state-of-the-art rooms being used allow environmental control of light and temperature and the monitoring of individual food intake by each pig, which is very important in nutritional studies,” Professor Bryden said.

SPEED OF LIGHT

Local schools are gearing up for high-speed internet connections as the new UQSchoolsNet service goes full throttle, enhancing the teaching and learning of students Australia-wide.

UQSchoolsNet was officially launched on October 28 at Ipswich Girls’ Grammar School (IGGS), allowing an online community of schools to connect to the internet at a speed of one gigabit a second, 500 times faster than many schools’ current network speed.

IGGS piloted the new network and now has the fastest internet connection of any school in the southern hemisphere.

UQ Information Technology Services director Nick Tate said the University had one of the best internet connections in Australia and was happy to extend the capability of the network to the school community.

“The demand that some resources and services require from a network connection are significant, therefore UQSchoolsNet opens up new avenues for teaching and learning including videoconferencing and access to higher education research,” he said.

ATOMIC STORM

Researchers from UQ’s School of Physical Sciences have simulated a strange phenomenon known as spontaneous quantum vortices.

Dr Matthew Davis and Dr Ashton Bradley have successfully conducted experiments on the formation of BECs created in the lab of Associate Professor Brian Anderson and co-workers at the University of Arizona.

A BEC forms when a gas of identical particles is cooled to a few billionths of a degree above absolute zero. At this temperature they lose their identity and start to behave as a single entity.

A quantum vortex is another manifestation of superfluidity where the entire BEC begins to spin, creating a mini-tornado of atoms with no particles in the eye of the storm.

The experimental and computational results have been published in the prestigious journal Nature.
Students and researchers from around the world will once again have unparalleled access to the Great Barrier Reef following the opening of new accommodation at UQ’s Heron Island Research Station (HIRS).

Boasting a capacity of 80 beds plus adjoining tutor dormitories, the student accommodation forms part of a $9 million reconstruction of the station’s research and teaching facilities following a fire in March 2007.

The new student accommodation, along with the rebuilt teaching and research facilities, will be officially opened early next year.

Bookings are now being accepted for large research groups, conferences, workshops and university and high school field courses.

UQ Centre for Marine Studies infrastructure manager David Harris said seven research labs, three teaching labs, two instrument rooms, and extensive aquaria infrastructure, seminar and computer rooms were among the new facilities’ highlights.

“The new buildings are similar in basic layout to the original, but we have made improvements in design and orientation wherever possible,” Mr Harris said.

This semester, US and Australian educational groups – totalling more than 480 students – will experience the crystal clear waters and pristine conditions situated right on the station’s doorstep.

UQ Centre for Marine Studies senior lecturer Dr Sophie Dove, who accompanied the first student group to the refurbished site in June, said she was impressed by the new accommodation.

“The new facilities are outstanding,” Dr Dove said.

“I look forward with great anticipation to making use of new teaching and research facilities.

“One of the best features of HIRS is its proximity to the reef and now the new infrastructure just makes the whole experience that much better.”

The HIRS official opening, planned for February, is set to attract about 100 dignitaries, including UQ Vice-Chancellor Professor Paul Greenfield and representatives from the State and Federal governments.

Station and island tours are expected to make up part of the opening celebrations.

Heron Island Research Station is located at the leeward end of a coral cay on a large 10km long, 5km wide platform reef, 80 km east of Gladstone and 600 km north of Brisbane.

Its location permits easy access to 290 species of coral, 900 species of fish and the cay’s rich terrestrial flora and fauna. These attractions draw students and researchers from universities world-wide.
UQ has celebrated the achievements of a women’s rights champion, a peace activist and a disability services advocate in its annual Alumnus of the Year awards.

Australia’s first female Governor-General, Quentin Bryce, has been named Alumnus of the Year, Cambodian aid worker Path Heang International Alumnus of the Year and music therapist Alissa Phillips Young Alumnus of the Year.

Mr Heang and Ms Phillips received their awards at the 2008 Courting the Greats luncheon, hosted by UQ’s Chancellor Sir Llew Edwards, Vice-Chancellor Professor Paul Greenfield and Vice-President of the Alumni Friends of The University of Queensland Inc. Dalma Jacobs on September 25.

Dr Bryce, who was unable to attend the event, will be presented with her award at a special ceremony next year.

Professor Greenfield said UQ was honoured to have such extraordinary alumni.

“Dr Bryce, Mr Heang and Ms Phillips have used the knowledge and experience they gained at UQ to remarkable effect, and their work will have lasting positive impacts on the lives of individuals, communities and even nations,” he said.

The International Alumnus of the Year Award was introduced in 2002 to recognise the outstanding personal and professional achievements of UQ’s international alumni.

Mr Heang was taken from his parents at age six and forced into a Khmer Rouge labour camp in the 1970s.

He graduated from UQ in 2004 with a Master of International Studies (Peace and Conflict Resolution).

As a young boy, Mr Heang endured severe hardships during internal conflicts in Cambodia.

He taught himself English by reading the labels on food commodities sent by UNICEF when the Khmer Rouge was overthrown.

From these beginnings, he triumphed over adversity to win a Rotary World Peace Fellowship to fund his study at UQ.

He worked with the Cambodian Institute for Cooperation and Peace, was program officer for the World Bank’s Justice for the Poor program and is currently working for the United Nations Development Programme in its Access to Justice project.

Nominees for UQ’s Young Alumnus of the Year must be under the age of 35 and are judged on their career achievements and how they have benefited the community.

Ms Phillips graduated with her Masters in Music Therapy in 2006 and last year won the Lord Mayor’s Young Citizen of the Year award.

As a registered music therapist, she has created a centre where young people with disabilities and their families can access allied health professionals such as physiotherapists and speech therapists.

The Specialised Programs and Community Endeavours, or SPACE, is also where young people with speech and language impairments, autism, acquired brain injuries and other disabilities can socialise.

Ms Phillips has already developed a music therapy program called BEAT (Be Enriched and Together with Music), aimed at teaching social skills to young people with intellectual impairments and autism.

She works with residents and clients of YoungCare, which provides relevant and dignified lifestyles for young Australians who need high levels of care. She also works as a music therapist at the Glenleighden School for children with speech language impairments.

The following alumni, nominated for the 2008 International Alumnus of the Year awards, were highly commended by the Vice-Chancellor.

Dr Ali Al-lasa, PhD, Educ 2002
Assistant Professor of English Language Teaching and the Assistant Dean for Postgraduate and Research at the College of Law – Sultan Qaboos University.

Acknowledgement for achievements in education in the Sultanate of Oman.

Dr Ali was the first Omani to be awarded a PhD by an Australian university.

Kumaran Phillai, BInfTech 1997
Acknowledgement for service to the finance sector in Asia.

Dr Bin Tean Teh, MD (Medicine) 1992
Director, VARI International, Van Andel Research Institute, Grand Rapids, Michigan.

Acknowledgement for outstanding services to research and innovation in cancer genomics.

Above: Mr Heang and Ms Phillips with their awards

Far left: Mr Heang teaching conflict resolution to communities in Cambodia

Left: Ms Phillips with Christopher Seizovic, who participates in her music therapy sessions

– SHIRLEY GLAISTER
University of Queensland research has confirmed teamwork is key to any good relationship, even those between parasite-eating fish.

Dr Lexa Grutter, from UQ’s School of Integrative Biology, along with colleagues from Stockholm University and the University of Neuchatel, Switzerland, found cleaner fish worked more effectively in pairs, provided they didn’t take advantage of the other party.

“By being in a pair, and cooperating as a pair, you end up providing a better service to your client,” Dr Grutter (pictured) said.

“It’s not just because there are two of you – the cumulative benefits are higher than if they provided the service separately.”

A cleaner fish’s main role is to remove the parasites from its client fishes, a mutually beneficial behaviour.

“By being in a pair, and cooperating as a pair, you end up providing a better service to your client”

This system works well when cleaner fish cooperate, but they prefer to cheat by eating the client’s mucus, causing it to quickly swim away.

All cleaners can choose to work individually, but only the largest female in the harem has the option of teaming up with the male to inspect larger clients.

“There’s a conflict between the client and the cleaner, but there’s also the conflict between the two cleaner fish when they work in pairs, because if one cheats that means the other doesn’t get any food,” Dr Grutter said.

“We had previously found that clients chose stations with pairs of cleaner fish, so we wanted to find out why.”

Lab work conducted at Lizard Island on the Great Barrier Reef involved replacing mucus with prawn and parasites with fish flakes.

When either fish ate the prawn, the plate of food was quickly removed, simulating the client fish swimming off.

“We’ve done a lot of experiments using this sort of approach – the cleaner fish love prawn but they don’t like fish flakes,” Dr Grutter said.

“The plate would be removed when someone cheated, and the male would then chase the female, and chasing is a form of punishment because it’s a costly behaviour.

“Males were more likely to chase females in trials in which the female had eaten the prawn item.

“So we can say that females were more likely to cooperate, possibly to avoid punishment.

“When working individually, however, the males and females provided a similar cleaning service.”

The research was published in the November 16 issue of Nature.

BRAINY BEES

Research led by the head of visual neuroscience at UQ’s Queensland Brain Institute (QBI) has demonstrated honey bees are capable of routinely counting up to four.

Professor Mandyam Srinivasan and a colleague from Sweden discovered a new insight into honey bee cognition after developing a series of experiments based on sugar-water incentives.

“We began by asking whether bees can learn to ‘count’ the number of landmarks that they encounter on the way to a food source,” Professor Srinivasan said.

“Individually marked bees were trained to receive a reward of sugar solution after they had flown past a specific number of regularly spaced yellow stripes during their flight through a narrow tunnel.

Depending upon the experiment, this number was one, two, three or four.

“After training, the bees were individually tested by removing the food reward, and observing their searching behaviour in the tunnel to determine which landmark they had associated most strongly with the reward during the training.”

When the research team introduced random objects that were outside the bees’ range of experience, the bees’ ability to count to four did not appear to be hampered.

“Bees trained in this way are able to count novel objects which they have never previously encountered,” Professor Srinivasan said.

“In all probability, this counting is performed sequentially, and required the ability to maintain a running tally of the number of events, incrementing the tally by one each time an event occurs.”

Professor Srinivasan’s research paper “Evidence for Counting Bees” appears in the journal Animal Cognition.
With the help of mobile phone technology, UQ researchers are set to decipher the distinctive grunting noises made by male koalas during the spring mating season.

Dr Bill Ellis, from UQ’s School of Integrative Biology, and Dr Sean Fitzgibbon, from the Centre for Mined Land Rehabilitation, along with Professor Paul Roe and Richard Mason from QUT’s information technology department, will combine their skills to eavesdrop on the koalas of St Bees Island, located off the coast of Mackay.

“We are studying whether males are talking to other males, or to females, and how vocalisations might stimulate breeding behaviour in female koalas,” Dr Ellis said.

“This collaboration has opened this area of research up for us and we are extremely excited about the data we have been collecting.”

Dr Ellis and Dr Fitzgibbon have tagged koalas on St Bees with Global Positioning System (GPS) collars that record their location every two hours, and solar-powered remote sound sensors have been placed around the island.

Koala bellows are transmitted using Telstra’s Next G network to the QUT site, where the research team monitors the duration and frequency of koala calls.

“For the first time, we are able to monitor the spatial response of all females (and other males) to the vocalisations generated by koalas at our site,” Dr Ellis said.

“Remote sensors and GPS loggers mean we don’t disturb the koalas while collecting high quality data, and the real-time nature of the data makes it all the more exciting.”

Funded by the Centre for Conservation and Research for Endangered Species at San Diego Zoo, Microsoft, Telstra and UQ, the research has the potential to uncover a great deal about the breeding habits of koalas.

“Our preliminary data from GPS collars indicate that at the time approximately corresponding to when we think a female conceives, she shows exaggerated movement,” Dr Ellis said.

“This might indicate females go looking for males.

“Since the young females stay closer to their mum’s home range, this makes sense – the females go to find an unrelated male.

“The question is, ‘what has bellowing got to do with this?’; which is where the new monitoring technology should be able to help.”
Deep sea pipelines to green gas production

UQ researchers are working to tap into a wealth of natural gas resources located in distant, deep-ocean fields off the coast of Western Australia.

Civil engineers Dr Faris Albermani and Dr Tom Baldock are working as part of the CSIRO Wealth from Oceans Flagship’s Subsea Pipeline Collaboration Cluster to safely and economically design and operate subsea pipelines in Australia’s deepwater frontiers.

Stretching hundreds of kilometres and positioned in waters of almost a kilometre deep, the pipelines will carry oil and gas from the remote reserves directly to the shore.

Dr Albermani said the subsea pipes would tap into previously unattainable natural gas resources off Australia’s continental shelf.

“Australia has recently expanded its area of offshore exploration and geologists believe there are lots of gas and oil resources in deep-sea fields to sustain the country for a long time,” Dr Albermani said.

“The new pipelines will transport oil and gas directly from subsea wells to the shore without the need for production platforms.”

The major challenge of their work is designing stable pipelines which will withstand decades of strong currents, a shifting seabed and steep seabed slopes.

Dr Albermani’s research will be vital in ensuring the structural reliability of the pipeline in the deep-water environment.

“Our research will investigate the effects of buckling on these ultra-long pipes and ways in which we can stop it from spreading through and damaging the pipeline,” he said.

The researchers will also be looking at the safe routing of the pipeline as it travels up from very deep water through submarine canyons and soft soil and onto the continental shelf.

“We need to know what protection the pipes require from hazards such as tsunamis which may trigger submarine landslides and seabed erosion,” Dr Albermani said.

UQ is one of six universities taking part in the Subsea Pipeline Collaboration Cluster through CSIRO’s Wealth from Oceans Flagship.

The group also includes the University of Western Australia, Monash University, the University of Sydney, Curtin University of Technology and Flinders University.

The University has recruited a world expert in imaging to establish a centre that will use the latest scanning technology to work on cures for some of the most debilitating human diseases.

Professor David Reutens, who started at UQ in September, will establish the Centre for Advanced Imaging (CAI) to progress treatments for diseases such as stroke, dementia, heart disease and cancer.

Professor Reutens said the centre would advance UQ’s already strong reputation in imaging research and its national leadership role in the area.

The centre will build on significant investments by the University and the State and Federal governments in imaging technology, investments that would see the first combined magnetic resonance imaging-petron emission tomography (MRI-PET) scanner to be installed in Australia.

Last month, UQ announced the opening of the headquarters of the multi-state National Imaging Facility (NIF), which specialises in animal imaging.

Professor Reutens leads a consortium of Australian researchers now using these imaging instruments, some of the most powerful in the world, to map the brain, providing information crucial to researchers globally.

New facilities at the centre, such as the PET scanner, will also allow researchers to study some of the basic molecular building blocks of the human body.

“The centre will draw together UQ’s expertise in fields as diverse as engineering, chemistry, physics, computer science, biology and medicine,” Professor Reutens said.

“CAI is an important step in creating an integrated progression of research and imaging from the laboratory bench, through animal models and finally into a clinical setting.

“This is unprecedented in Australia and really should reap dividends in discovering new approaches to curing major diseases and in fast-tracking the discovery of new drugs.”

Professor Reutens said the University’s strong links with leading international research institutes would be boosted by a new high speed digital data network and “visualisation wall.”

The visualisation wall is a bank of LCD screens combined with a high-speed optical fibre link that allows researchers around the world to share large volumes of imaging data in real time, linking Australia with discoveries being made globally.

Professor Reutens previously headed the neurology department at Monash University, and has also held faculty positions at the University of Melbourne and Canada’s McGill University.

He said he was attracted to Queensland by the potential to bring together multiple disciplines in a new collaborative model, and was encouraged by UQ’s and the Queensland Government’s pro-active approach to supporting cutting-edge research.

The Centre for Advanced Imaging is planned to open later this year and will build on the recently opened NIF.

The UQ node will be based at the Centre for Magnetic Resonance and house a $4.5 million combined (MRI-PET) scanning system.
UQ RESEARCHERS WILL BE PUSHING THE BOUNDARIES OF SCIENCE EVEN FURTHER, THANKS TO MORE THAN $43 MILLION IN FEDERAL FUNDING.

The University has topped the state in Australian Research Council (ARC) funding for new products to fight disease and pests, better understand how our economy functions, improve the understanding of how babies develop social skills and assist the development of talking robots.

UQ researchers will share in almost $36 million in funding for 93 projects funded through the ARC’s Discovery Projects scheme, a Federal Government initiative.

A further $7 million will come from the Linkage Projects scheme, together with almost $13 million in partner funding, aimed at encouraging collaborative research between universities, industry and other organisations.

UQ’s largest Discovery grant went to Professor David Craik from the Institute for Molecular Bioscience, who received $1.28 million in partner funding, aimed at developing robots, talking to industry and other organisations.

UQ’s largest Discovery grant went to Professor David Craik from the Institute for Molecular Bioscience, who received $1.28 million in funding for 93 projects funded through the ARC’s Discovery Projects scheme, a Federal Government initiative.

UQ’s Linkage Project recipients include:
- Professor Rob Capon from the Institute for Molecular Bioscience, who together with ParaCo, is looking at developing new portable sensors capable of detecting trace amounts of explosives
- Dr Derek Arnold, from UQ’s School of Psychology, who is to investigate how we perceive time with implications for disorders such as autism, dyslexia and schizophrenia.

UQ’s other Discovery Project recipients include:
- Dr Bo Feng, from the School of Engineering, who is developing robots that can more effectively speak and comprehend language
- Associate Professor Joanne Meers, from the School of Veterinary Science, who will work on a project with Australia Zoo and Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service looking at the spread of a retrovirus linked to cancer in koalas.
- Associate Professor Virginia Slaughter, from the School of Psychology, who will examine how babies develop social skills through imitation
- Dr Gordon Wyeth, from the School of Information Technology and Electrical Engineering, who is developing robots that can more effectively speak and comprehend language
- Professor Bernie Degnan, from the School of Integrative Biology, who is seeking to find the evolutionary foundation for how our bodies recognise foreign cells and reject them, as can occur following organ transplants
- Professor Paul Burn, from the School of Molecular and Microbial Sciences, who is looking at developing new portable sensors capable of detecting trace amounts of explosives
- Dr Derek Arnold, from UQ’s School of Psychology, who is to investigate how we perceive time with implications for disorders such as autism, dyslexia and schizophrenia.

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- Dr Derek Arnold, from UQ’s School of Psychology, who is to investigate how we perceive time with implications for disorders such as autism, dyslexia and schizophrenia.
- Associate Professor Joanne Meers, from the School of Veterinary Science, who will work on a project with Australia Zoo and Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service looking at the spread of a retrovirus linked to cancer in koalas.

PM’S SCIENCE PRIZE FOR Frazer

UQ’s cervical cancer vaccine co-creator Professor Ian Frazer has won the 2008 Prime Minister’s Prize for Science.

Professor Frazer, Director of UQ’s Diamantina Institute for Cancer, Immunology and Metabolic Medicine, was presented with his prize by Prime Minister Kevin Rudd at Parliament House, Canberra, on November 16.

The Prime Minister’s Prize for Science is the nation’s pre-eminent award for excellence in science and acknowledges the contributions of Australian scientists to economic and social wellbeing in Australia and the world.

Awarded for an outstanding specific achievement in any area of science advancing human welfare or benefiting society, it can encompass physical, chemical, biological and technological sciences, mathematics and engineering.

The Prime Minister’s Prize for Science comprises a grant of $300,000. The winner also serves on the Prime Minister’s Science, Engineering and Innovation Council for a year.

Professor Frazer said he would donate his prize money to UQ for a research program to develop further vaccines.

Last month, Professor Frazer, 2006 Australian of the Year and inaugural winner of the Queensland Smart State Premier’s Fellowship in 2006, was announced as the winner of the Balzan Prize for International Medicine.
UQ journalism lecturer Heather Stewart jumped at the chance to follow an Australian volunteer eye clinic team to East Timor earlier this year, and has recently published her first book about the experience. *Saving Sight, Saving a Nation* captures the blindness epidemic in East Timor via a series of stunning photographs, and was launched by East Timor Eye Program (ETEP) founder Dr Nitin Verma on October 18.

Dr Verma and a team of volunteers are working hard to eradicate preventable blindness in the fledgling nation by 2020. Taking photographic equipment, in addition to an audio and camera crew, Ms Stewart independently travelled to Dili and joined the eye clinic team at the ramshackle hospital in the city to record their work.

“It was a shock by any standards to see how Dili was still struggling despite having independence,” Ms Stewart said. “I was determined to come back to Australia and tell the story about how desperate blind people are in East Timor and give credit to the volunteers who are trying so hard to help.”

On her return, Ms Stewart generated content for ABC News and *Lateline* about the state of camps in the major regions housing more than 100,000 displaced East Timorese. Her feature about the ETEP also appeared on the Channel Nine Sunday program.

“I was expecting Timor to be further advanced and I really felt for the displaced people and was grateful they gave me a chance to tell their story,” Ms Stewart said.

The ETEP consists of volunteer groups from the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons, International Centre for Eyecare Education and the ProVision Optometry Team, who provide services to help and prevent curable blindness in the East Timorese population.

Dr Verma, an ophthalmologist based in Hobart, said the group had seen more than 30,000 patients and carried out more than 3000 operations. Each procedure is made possible by a donation of just $100.

“I can tell you that the joy that you get when the bandage is removed and the patient has seen...
and the smile that you get is all that you want, and it hasn’t faded,” Dr Verma said.

Ms Stewart followed the eye clinic team for a week in Dili and also visited Prime Minister Xanana Gusmao’s home to interview him and his wife, Australian-born first lady Kirsty Sword Gusmao.

Not long after Ms Stewart returned home, there were assassination attempts on both he and President Jose Ramos Horta, highlighting the political instability in East Timor and the plight of the Timorese.

“It made me realise even more how important it was to come home and tell the story that something good was happening in East Timor,” Ms Stewart said.

Saving Sight, Saving a Nation is available in eye surgeries across Australia and East Timor, with all proceeds donated to the East Timor Eye Program. It can also be ordered online.

INFO → www.etep.org.au

“I was determined to come back to Australia and tell the story about how desperate blind people are in East Timor”
HEALTH OUTREACH
UQ’s Bachelor of Health Sciences recently celebrated the completion of its first industry placement program at UQ Ipswich.

All third-year Bachelor of Health Science students undertook a placement within the local community, with projects including the Fit and Fuelled Kids for the Ipswich Council, writing a discussion paper on the Northside Health Service Strategic Plan, and a range of health promotion activities for the Ipswich Hospital Foundation.

The program was designed to ensure students are job ready and to provide an informed insight into future careers.

VIETNAMESE CLIMATE HELP
Representatives from the Vietnamese government recently visited UQ to assist with the planning and management of their biosphere reserves.

Supported by AusAID, the collaboration is an initiative of the School of Natural and Rural Systems Management (NRSM), and aims to assist Vietnam deal with complex environmental issues such as climate change and sustainability.

Topics covered included gender issues in natural resource management, communication and information flows and strategies for change.

In 2007, through the work of NRSM and Hai Phong City, the Cat Ba Island Biosphere Reserve was established as the world’s first “Learning Laboratory” for sustainable development.

YOUTH WATER FORUM
The UQ chapter of the global youth organisation AIESEC recently reached out to young people on the issue of water sustainability with the help of the International WaterCentre.

Entitled the “The Emerging Importance of Water in the 21st Century”, the seminar was presented by the IWC’s Dr Peter Oliver and attended by students from a wide range of disciplines at UQ’s St Lucia campus.

The seminar forms part of AIESEC UQ’s Project Overflow, which aims to help address water sustainability issues in Brisbane through seminars and workshops.

INFO ➔ 0406 421 613 or aiesec.uq@gmail.com

RECLAIMED WATER TECHNOLOGY WINS ENTERPRISE 2008
The team behind an innovative and cost-effective wastewater treatment technology has won $100,000 in UQ Business School’s Enterprise competition.

With the technology already in operation at the Fosters Yatala Brewery, the Bilexys team is confident their concept – which three years ago was a 50ml laboratory experiment – can be scaled up successfully.

The technology is a new version of a bio-electrochemical system, which uses bacteria as catalysts to remove dissolved organics from wastewater.

Team member Dr Paul Barrett said the Fosters pilot plant had been in operation for more than a year.

“The technology can also be applied to other industries including biodiesel, organic chemicals, petrochemicals, brewing, distilling, sugar, and pulp and paper industries,” Dr Barrett said.

The technology had been in development at UQ’s Advanced Wastewater Management Centre for three years and has grown into a 1000 litre fully functioning pilot plant.

“Bilexys is able to treat the wastewater as fuel and captures the energy from this fuel to

BAMBOO A HAVEN IN NATURAL DISASTERS
A group of UQ students have won an international award for the intuitive design of an emergency bamboo shelter, which could be your saving grace when a natural disaster strikes.

The UQ team’s sustainable structure recently won third place in the student contest organised by the International Association for Shells and Spatial Structures (IASS), in the Light Weight Structure with a Sustainable Approach category.

The group of fourth-year architecture and civil engineering students used a patented bamboo joint system to create the shelter for a variety of terrains.

The shelter stands about five metres high by 12 metres wide (model version pictured) and is engineered to withstand high winds, incorporates rainwater collection and storage systems and is easy and fast to construct, with only five different bamboo lengths required.

Civil engineering student and team coordinator Ryan Cantrill said bamboo was chosen because it was efficient in carrying loads, light weight, used less energy than steel, concrete or timber and had excellent strength and stiffness properties.

Other participants included architecture students Nicholas Flutter and Marie Penny and civil engineering students Vincent Chan, Elizabeth Knauth and Xavier Khoo.

The students’ design will be published in a forthcoming edition of the IASS journal.
Congratulating graduates and strengthening relationships with industry were Vice-Chancellor Professor Paul Greenfield’s top priorities during a recent trip to China and Hong Kong.

Between October 11 and 19, Professor Greenfield attended functions in Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou and Hong Kong. Accompanying Professor Greenfield in China was Professor Max Lu, the recently appointed Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research Linkages).

Originally from Shandong Province, Professor Lu has strengthened UQ’s research alliances with industry, governments and academic institutions. In 2006, Phoenix magazine ranked Professor Lu among the world’s 50 most inspiring Chinese people. He is the Honourary President of the Federation of Chinese Scholars in Australia and an Adjunct Professor at several Chinese universities.

“Professor Lu is a champion of collaboration in science and technology between Australia and China,” Professor Greenfield said.

“He was also instrumental in setting up an appeal that has now raised enough money to rebuild a school in Sichuan, and will help child casualties of the 2008 earthquake to continue their education.”

Beijing
Professor Greenfield arrived in Beijing on October 11 and attended a UQ dinner and an alumni reception.

Chinese students comprise 20 percent of UQ’s international student body, with most studying business and commerce.

“In Beijing I signed two new agreements: one between the China Coal Research Institute and a centre within our Sustainable Minerals Institute, and the other between the Chinese Academy of Sciences and UQ’s School of Information Technology and Electrical Engineering,” Professor Greenfield said.

Shanghai
The two-day trip to Shanghai allowed the Vice-Chancellor to update partners on research collaborations between UQ and Chinese institutions.

“In Shanghai, I have had discussions about E-Water research with Shanghai Jiao Tong University,” Professor Greenfield said.

Guangzhou
Professor Greenfield arrived in the capital of Guangdong Province in the southern part of the People’s Republic of China on October 16.

Among his activities were visiting Sun Yat San University to sign an agreement between Lingnan College and UQ’s Faculty of Business, Economics and Law (BEL).

“This collaboration will include a double degree articulation program, scholarships offered to Lingnan students, research cooperation and academic exchanges.

Hong Kong
The Vice-Chancellor was able to congratulate recent Hong Kong graduates in person during a graduation celebration on October 18, where more than 250 guests witnessed the graduation of 42 recent graduates, including three PhDs.

Also in Hong Kong, Professor Greenfield announced developments at the School of Veterinary Science. In 2010, the school will relocate from St Lucia to Gatton, where the $33 million Centre for Advanced Animal Science was recently opened.

An employment seminar hosted by the BEL Faculty allowed Professor Greenfield to inform alumni and friends of UQ’s upcoming centenary.

“We plan to bring some of the 2010 celebrations to Hong Kong, but we also hope alumni will come back to the University,” he said.
The University continues its success in being recognised for having Australia’s best teachers, adding two more national awards to its portfolio.

UQ won two Australian Learning and Teaching Council (ALTC) Awards for Teaching Excellence, announced in October by Professor Richard Johnstone, Executive Director of the Australian Learning and Teaching Council.

The result brings the University’s national teaching awards and citations to 53, and cements UQ’s record of winning more national awards for teaching than any other Australian university since the national awards system began in 1997.

UQ Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and Learning) Professor Deborah Terry congratulated the winners, and said their accolades illustrated the high standard of teaching excellence at UQ.

“This result is testament to UQ’s award-winning teaching and learning staff whose tireless work continues to top the nation,” Professor Terry said.

The University of Queensland prides itself on its ongoing academic success, with its state-of-the-art teaching programs and innovative learning techniques constantly being revised to meet the changing workforce.

The 2008 winners were both recipients of a 2007 UQ-wide teaching excellence award.

The ALTC prizes are worth $25,000 each. The 2008 UQ winners are:

- **Awards for Teaching Excellence**
  - Dr Marie-Louise Dick (Priority Area 2008 — Work Integrated Learning)
  - Dr Lisa Nissen (Early Career)

Dr Nissen is the 2008 Pharmacist of the Year, and has a flair for explaining complex information in simple terms.

“The University is entering a new era of enhancing the experience of students.”
UQ TEACHERS grab the limelight

THE UNIVERSITY OF QUEENSLAND’S INCREASING FOCUS ON QUALITY TEACHING WAS HIGHLIGHTED AT ITS 20TH ANNUAL TEACHING AWARDS ON OCTOBER 27.

The 2008 Excellence in Teaching and Learning Awards were held at Customs House in Brisbane and saw five individual teachers and three groups of educators honoured for their innovative approaches and commitment to enhancing the student learning experience at UQ.

Professor Deborah Terry, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and Learning), said the awards provided well-deserved recognition for UQ’s teachers, who were an integral part of the University’s push to be a world leader in both research and teaching.

“The University is entering a new era of enhancing the experience of students,” Professor Terry said.

“Recent developments include major infrastructure projects, new degree programs, academic scholarships, industry internships and increasing opportunities for students to study overseas.

“On top of this, we are recruiting new teachers to supplement the existing community of highly qualified educators to further enhance UQ’s reputation as one of Australia’s leading centres of higher education.”

Professor Terry said the awards were designed to recognise, encourage and reward sustained excellence in teaching, as well as excellence in the learning environment and provision of student services.

“I congratulate all of the winners in this year’s UQ Awards for Excellence in Teaching and Awards for the Enhancement of Student Learning,” she said.

The UQ awards come within weeks of two UQ teachers, Dr Marie-Louise Dick and Dr Lisa Nissen, receiving Australian Learning and Teaching Council Awards for Teaching Excellence, continuing UQ’s record of winning more national awards for teaching than any other Australian university in the awards’ history.

Dr Mary Taylor Huber, a Senior Scholar from The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching in California, was the guest speaker for the evening.

Dr Huber also presented the Teaching and Learning Week keynote address on October 28 on the topic “What Travels? The Social Life of Classroom Inquiry and Innovation”, which discussed what teachers can do to expand and enrich their own teaching and learning by engaging in community-wide discussions, collaborations and debates on ideas and practice.

The 2008 winners are:

- Awards for Excellence in Teaching ($10,000 each)
  - Associate Professor David Carrington, from the School of Information Technology and Electrical Engineering
  - Dr Joseph Grotowski, from the School of Physical Sciences
  - Dr Lydia Kavanagh, from the School of Engineering
  - Dr Louise McCuaig, from the School of Human Movement Studies

- Awards for the Enhancement of Student Learning ($10,000 each)
  - Transformation of skill acquisition through a comprehensive program of competency assessment: innovation driven by large student cohorts (School of Medicine)
  - Module-based Teaching at the CMM (Centre for Microscopy and Microanalysis) Project Leader: Dr Bronwen Cribb
  - School of Political Science and International Studies Internship Program
  - Dr Andrew Hindmoor, Professor Stephen Bell, Dr Richard Devetak, Dr Marianne Harrison, Ms Cara Herington, Ms Claire Pomeroy, Professor Emeritus Roger Scott and Dr Rae Wear
  - Commendations for Excellence in Teaching
    - Dr Andrew Fairbairn, from the School of Social Science.
    - Dr Katie Makar, from the School of Education.
    - Dr Greg Marston, from the School of Social Work and Human Services.
    - Dr Margaret Wegener, from the School of Physical Sciences.

INFO To find out more about Teaching and Learning Week visit www.uq.edu.au/teaching-learning

Three UQ teaching teams received further accolades for their work, each claiming $220,000 under the Priority Project program of the ALTC grants scheme.

Dr Craig Engstrom, from the School of Human Movement Studies, will collaboratively lead research into eCAPS, an integrated system for the online clinical assessment of practical skills.

eCAPS will be implemented into the University’s existing online postgraduate sports medicine program for general practitioners.

Fellow ALTC grant recipients Associate Professor Nancy Pachana, Dr Kate Sofronoff and Dr Mia O’Brien will undertake research to help improve and strengthen Australia’s clinical psychology profession.

The project will reevaluate postgraduate training needs to help meet the profession’s growing client load and include collaborations with several Australian universities.

The Final ALTC UQ grant winner is Associate Professor Julie Duck, Associate Dean (Teaching and Learning), who with her team of Professor Susan Hamilton, Professor Sarah Derrington, Professor Merrilyn Goos, Associate Professor Peter Sutton, Dr Glen Coleman, Ms Maureen Bowen and Mr Keith Webster, will use the funding to look at university assessment policies.

“Arguably, UQ has been ahead of other universities in implementing policy change in assessment but we need to close the loop in policy review,” Dr Duck said.

The investigation will be used to develop guidelines and a step-by-step process for Australian universities to review their assessment policies.
DONATIONS STACK UP FOR INDONESIAN LIBRARY

Indonesian students from The University of Queensland are embarking on an ambitious plan to collect 1.5 tonnes of books to help disadvantaged kids back home.

The English Books for Indonesian Children initiative is organised by the UQ Indonesian Student Association (UQISA), and involves book hunting at various venues culminating in an annual group donation to disadvantaged Indonesian schools and libraries.

“UQISA members regularly visit book fêtes, markets, garage sales, school fetes and warehouses to buy second-hand books at a lower cost,” association coordinator Mika Halpin Hasanah said.

“In 2007 we collected books throughout the year and shipped them in early December to the many communities who applied for book donations.”

But the program didn’t stop when the books were handed over, as the students monitored the fate of each book, including where and how they were used, who managed them and general usage progress.

“We have identified potential partners in Indonesia, including the UQ alumni and education networks of UQ Indonesian students, to distribute and facilitate the use of the books at schools in Indonesia,” Ms Hasanah said.

“One recipient school in the East Kalimantan province reported that the books were useful not only for students but also for teachers to learn and teach English.”

The event was nationalised in 2008, after Indonesian student associations from Adelaide, Perth, Melbourne, Canberra and Sydney joined the effort.

“During 2007, over 4800 books weighing no less than 830kgs were sent to at least 15 disadvantaged schools and libraries spread across the Indonesian provinces,” Ms Hasanah said.

To help trump the 2007 yield, people can donate English books for beginners or secondary school or university students, to distribute and facilitate the use of the books at schools in Indonesia.”

The programs aim to produce graduates with efficient leadership skills to influence policies and decision-making processes that are more sustainable and environmentally sound.

As part of the course, Ms Masud arranged a field visit to a remote area in Sindh, one of the four provinces of Pakistan.

“This was my first time to visit such an area and to see the one classroom building as the only foundation to an education opportunity for such an impoverished community, which was a real eye-opener,” she said.

“This incident brought in a new spirit that made me decide that I would eventually want to work with and for the communities and that meant that I needed to learn more about the processes and methodologies involved.”

Postgraduate student Phuong Lien Tran, from Vietnam, said all of the students enrolled in the course came from different backgrounds, yet had one thing in common: an appreciation of the importance of water.

“Working in an interdisciplinary team is a very important skill for my future career,” Ms Lien Tran said.

The Master of Integrated Water Management is offered over three semesters and can be completed in 12 or 18 months.

A GLOBAL CONNECTION

Ecuadorian-born UQ postgraduate student Maria Belen Andrade has seen first hand the implications of a poor water supply.

Now she has turned to academic study to help improve her homeland’s access to the precious resource.

Ms Belen Andrade joins a small cohort of students from across the globe enrolled in the Master of Integrated Water Management.

The course is run by the International WaterCentre, a joint venture between UQ, Monash University, the University of Western Australia and Griffith University.

Ms Belen Andrade realised her calling while completing an internship in South America.

“In the summer of 2002 I went to work in a dairy farm and it did not rain at all during the four months I was there. There was not even water for the people who were working there,” she said.

“They had to walk four kilometres to fetch water for drinking purposes and take all their clothes there to do the washing.”

Upon finishing her undergraduate studies, Ms Belen Andrade worked as a volunteer in Servicio Iganciano de Volunteriado where she built houses in poor slums in Guayaquil, Ecuador.

“The people who lived there did not have access to water or sanitation,” she said.

“We were living in the school of that slum and we also had to buy water from the water tank as all the people from that village did.

“It really struck me how people survived with so little water.”

Fellow postgraduate student Shafaq Masud, from Pakistan, also had a life-changing experience that led her to the Master of Integrated Water Management.

While working for an NGO in Pakistan, Ms Masud undertook work experience where she helped develop capacity building training programs.

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To help trump the 2007 yield, people can donate English books for beginners or secondary school or university level textbooks for all subjects, including biology, natural sciences and maths.

The UQISA also accepts donations of any kind, from financial and volunteer contributions, to stationery for packaging and shipping purposes.

“The success of the book drive depends on our volunteers’ commitment and passion, and we highly appreciate any help provided, be it your time, money or expertise,” Ms Hasanah said.

INFO ➔ To find out more contact Mika on 0404 609 008, Asti on 0401 798 843 or visit http://bukuuntukanakbangsa.blogspot.com

“The people who lived there did not have access to water or sanitation... it really struck me how people survived with so little water”

Master of Integrated Water Management students Phuong Lien Tran, Shafaq Masud and Maria Belen Andrade
Silver bullet triggers musical debut

Ancient Greek and alternative pop music might seem an odd match, but they've proved a perfect pairing for UQ graduate and staff member John Meyer, who released his debut album this month.

Mr Meyer works at the University as a research administration officer, and moved to Brisbane in 1993 to complete a Bachelor of Arts with Honours in Ancient Greek.

“Most people stare blankly when I tell them that,” he said.

“I find my studies really help with song writing; quite often little historical or literary references will pop up in a song, and I think that my studies gave me a real love of words that hopefully comes through in the songs.”

The debut EP – Silver Bullets Don’t Work on Vampires – was completed while working part-time at UQ, and with the assistance of Bryce Moorhead from Zero Interference Studios.

“Working with Bryce Moorhead was a fantastic experience. I learnt so much from him and will definitely be collaborating with him again soon,” Mr Meyer said.

“I feel quite lucky that I was able to go part-time at work and my boss is very understanding, which I really appreciate.”

Mr Meyer said the Brisbane music scene had a real “DIY” attitude and that being an independent musician wasn’t always easy.

“It’s pretty hard being an independent musician, you have to do everything yourself and you don’t have a record label guiding you in the right direction. Of course you also don’t have a record label trying to rip you off!” he said.

“Brisbane’s a pretty good place to be a musician but it could be much better. It’s well recognised that to foster a great live scene and allow new bands to come through and become great, you need lots of smallish venues.

“You also need the support of the general public, and I don’t think there are enough places for them to be exposed to the wealth of talent in Brisbane. I hope that changes soon.”

Happy to showcase other UQ talent via his music, Mr Meyer has used colleague Jill McFarlane’s art piece Valencia and the Floating Theatre as the album cover of the EP.

“I fell in love with Jill’s work the first moment I saw it; she’s such a talented artist,” he said.

Mr Meyer launched his EP with a free, all ages show at the Brisbane Powerhouse on November 9, and is currently undertaking an extensive East Coast tour which ends on December 12.

Silver Bullets Don’t Work on Vampires is available now.

INFO ➔ www.myspace.com/johnmeyermusic

– KATHERINE HILL

ENVIRONMENTAL EYE

UQ graduate Alana Heydon was recently presented with a special award by the Federal Minister for the Environment, Peter Garrett.

The prize is awarded annually by the Environment Institute of Australia and New Zealand, and is named after Professor Tor Hundloe, who has dedicated his life to environmental education and is an Emeritus Professor at UQ.

Ms Heydon works for the Environmental Protection Agency as part of the Queensland Wetlands Programme.

COUNTING THE COSTS

Rising rates of consumer bankruptcy will come under the spotlight in a new University of Queensland study.

Dr David Morrison, from UQ’s TC Beirne School of Law, has secured an Australian Research Council Grant for his project: “A Consumer Bankruptcy Project — an interdisciplinary empiric inquiry into determinants and impacts of bankruptcy upon Australian debtors”.

Dr Morrison is the only law academic in Australia to be awarded a 2009 ARC Linkage International Fellowship.

STEP IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION

Indigenous high school students from Ipswich and the Lockyer Valley have received direction on their future careers at “Knowing Where You’re Going”, a camp hosted at UQ Gatton in October.

The camp, aimed at year 10 and 11 students, ran from October 20-21 and was funded by the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations.

Camp facilitator Judy Dale said the program was designed to help students pursue a career in line with their interests and skills.
It was the book Virginia Lloyd never wanted to have to write.

At just 33 years old, she was widowed, having lost her husband to cancer. She turned her grief into *The Young Widow’s Book of Home Improvement*, a memoir, published by University of Queensland Press, of how she healed following her husband’s death.

The book tells three true stories: the love story between Ms Lloyd and her husband John, the renovation of their house and Ms Lloyd’s journey as a young widow, finding her place in the world again without her husband beside her.

Ms Lloyd (pictured) said the book drew a parallel between renovating her home – riddled with rising damp – and her grieving.

“About six months after my husband John died, I realised that the process of renovation – fixing the rising damp, rendering the newly plastered walls and painting the smooth surfaces – echoed the sorts of movement between internal and external surfaces, structural and cosmetic changes, that I experienced in that first year or so of moving through the world without John,” she said.

Ms Lloyd said the process of writing the book was cathartic and she hoped the finished product would comfort and enlighten readers.

“I decided to write about some of my experiences as a young widow, simply because I had never read about those first days after a loved one dies, I had never read an account by anyone my age enduring these experiences, and I had never read of anyone having the sorts of irreverent thoughts that I regularly had,” she said.

“I hope that readers find in my story something that moves them, that resonates with an experience of love or profound loss that they have had, or that illuminates an aspect of human experience to which they have not previously been exposed.”

**HISTORIC HIGHLIGHTS**

The contraceptive pill, the opening of the Australian Institute of Sport and the global effects of 9/11 are events featured in UQ historian Dr Martin Crotty’s new book, *Turning Points in Australian History*.

Following on from his *Great Mistakes in Australian History*, Dr Crotty, in collaboration with Dr David Andrew Roberts from the University of New England, has edited an insightful series of papers by leading authors, including two UQ historians.

Dr Crotty said the aim of the book was to stimulate discussion about Australian history and provide more than just a list of important historical events.

“We got on board some of Australia’s best historians and asked them to write about these particular moments in our history – not just in terms of describing what happened, but to tease out the way in which those moments constituted turning points in Australian history,” he said.

The book focusses on the effects of the turning points, which range from the separation of Tasmania from the mainland 16,000 years ago to women’s liberation and the current War on Terror.

In contrast, Dr Crotty said some of the events covered in the book were not greeted with much fanfare at the time, but in hindsight had revealed their influence.

“The pill, for example, did not arrive in the 1960s in a great blaze of publicity, but it is hard to imagine our society now without access to easy and reliable contraception,” he said.
LIFE WRITING

UQ English Literature graduate and 2008 Emerging Queensland Author winner Amy Vought-Barker knows all too well how it feels to be stereotyped by a postcode, and has used her childhood experiences to pen her first novel Omega Park.

Ms Barker received the honour at this year’s Queensland Premier’s Literary Awards, which were held at The State Library.

The $20,000 prize includes a publishing contract with The University of Queensland Press for the novel, which will be launched at the 2009 award’s short-list announcement.

"There’s not really words to describe it, I was speechless, I felt like I was dreaming," Ms Barker said.

"The hardest thing as an emerging writer is rejection. I think any writer will go through a lot of rejections before they get published…it just takes that one person to ‘get it’.

The novel is set in a fictional public housing estate on the Gold Coast and follows the lives of two young men as they struggle to overcome personal and societal obstacles including rioting, discrimination and isolation.

Ms Barker can identify with the novel’s characters, having once lived in public housing herself.

“I felt compelled to write it, drawing on experiences from my own past and also weighing in on the controversies surrounding the riots in suburbs like Macquarie Fields around the time I was writing,” she said.

While growing up in the estate, Ms Barker said she felt removed from society and part of an underclass, even though she excelled at school.

“You’re in this place and it feels that there is no way out. There is definitely a stigma associated with coming from the area,” she said.

“I remember I only went back there once to visit as an adult and I had this overwhelming feeling to tell the children I saw that you can get out. That they can do anything they want.”

Ms Barker originally enrolled in a Bachelor of Arts/Laws degree at UQ, quickly realising her passion wasn’t law mooting but words.

She was awarded the prestigious TJ Ryan Scholarship and was a member of the UQ-Link program, which assists school-leavers from disadvantaged backgrounds with financial and academic support.

As part of the UQ-Link program, Ms Barker was given a 12-month stay at one of UQ’s residential colleges.

“At the time, it was one of the happiest years of my life,” she said.

Ms Barker is already working on her next novel – inspired by a recent arts residency in Ireland – and is also the project manager of Remix My Lit, which sees writers “cut and paste” their words with the work of others.

VOLUNTEERS SET THEIR SIGHTS ON OVERCOMING BLINDNESS

Thanks to the tireless efforts of many dedicated volunteer readers, UQ has been able to support the academic needs of students with a vision impairment for more than 20 years.

UQ graduate Elizabeth Richmond spent countless hours recording reading materials onto cassette tapes between 1985 and 2007, and is one of the Alternative Print Service’s longest-serving volunteers.

Long-serving volunteer reader Elizabeth Richmond

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The $20,000 prize includes a publishing contract with The University of Queensland Press for the novel, which will be launched at the 2009 award’s short-list announcement.

“There’s not really words to describe it, I was speechless, I felt like I was dreaming,” Ms Richmond said.

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The Alternative Print Service was informally established in the early 1980s when library staff members volunteered to read texts to audio tape for a blind student.

The University’s first Disability Adviser, Rhonda Watson managed the service from 1987 to 1992, when Colleen Murdoch became coordinator.

Student Services’ Yvonne Watts, who now oversees the program, said while advances in technology have eliminated the need for tape reading services, the committed contribution by volunteer readers in supporting students will always be remembered and appreciated.

For Mrs Richmond, being a volunteer reader was never a chore, rather an experience which provided her with many fond memories.

“It was such a nice environment and I was having such a good time,” she said.

Now that Mrs Richmond’s reading skills are no longer required, she said she had more time to indulge in other interests including Probus, French classes, reading and film.
UQ dominated at the 2008 Australian University Games in Melbourne last month, winning the athletics crown for the 10th successive year.

With more than 6500 participants descending on Melbourne for the flagship university sporting event of the year, the small UQ contingent racked up 18 medals alone in the athletics competition to cap off another successful year for UQ.

UQ SPORT scholarship holder Josh Robinson spearheaded the athletics squad, winning gold in the javelin ahead of fellow UQ student Thomas Hall, who claimed silver.

This year’s Bridge to Brisbane 5km race winner, Jayden Russ, continued his fine form to take out gold in the 3000m steeplechase and bronze in the 1500m, while Fraser Coss maintained UQ’s domination of the track to win bronze in the 400m and finish fourth in the 800m.

The women picked up from where the men left off at Olympic Park, with Tamara Canovotto burning up the track to win gold and set an Australian University Games record in the 10,000m (35:33:53), as well as earning silver in the 5000m.

Winning her first Open Australian Championship title this year, UQ SPORT / Clem Jones scholarship holder Catherine Drummond was just pipped by rival Ellen Pettitt in the high jump to claim silver, and the talented athlete also finished fourth in the long jump.

Tracey Barnett and Mark Lawrence increased the medal haul, both hop, skip and jumping into first position in triple jump, while Ms Barnett (pictured) also backed up to take out silver in long jump.

In other sports, the UQ women’s water polo team once again excelled to claim gold in division two with a 12-6 victory over University of New South Wales, while the men’s team won bronze in division one following a 6-3 win against Melbourne.

The talented rugby union sevens team, bolstered by several University club players, looked on track to claim a gold medal but, following a loss against a strong University of New England outfit, they bounced back to defeat QUT and win bronze.

The UQ mixed touch football team was also victorious, with a second UQ team finishing in sixth.

Program Officer of College Sport and University Games, Kate Bell, said the team performed admirably.

“It was a big effort to make it overall athletics champions for the 10th year running and a fabulous result so they (the athletes) were obviously extremely happy with it,” Ms Bell said.

“A lot of praise goes to (athletics coach) Pat Clohessy who put in a lot of hours and a lot of work to get that team up and running as strongly as it is.”

Businesses back scholars

More than 250 guests donned their finest race wear to help raise money for UQ’s high performance athletes at the UQ John Barnes & Co Locksmith Race Day on October 25.

Some of Brisbane’s highest profile companies descended on Doomben race course to enjoy live racing, music and fine food from the luxury of the UQ SPORT marquee, injecting more than $40,000 into the scholarship program.

In the wake of the University’s successful Olympics campaign, with more than 20 UQ students, graduates and staff members representing Australia in Beijing, guests were entertained throughout the afternoon by some of UQ’s leading Olympic cohort.

Swimming sensation Melanie Schlanger, who brought home gold and bronze medals from her first ever Olympics, was in attendance, while triathlon bronze medalist Emma Moffatt, diver Robert Newbery and rowing coach Tim Conrad were among others who also mingled with patrons.

In the highlight event of the day, the $1000 UQ SPORT Quality handicap (1200m), Ghetto Blaster, surprised even UQ SPORT’s own tipster to overcome a strong field and finish first.

Heled for the fourth time this year, the event is the only major opportunity to raise funds for UQ’s high-performance athletes.

“To raise $40,000 was far more than we had envisaged and considering every cent goes directly to our scholarship athletes it was fabulous to see so many businesses getting behind Australia’s future sporting stars,” UQ SPORT Executive Director Kim Guerin said.

“A lot of businesses maintained their strong support for UQ athletes.”

In another huge boost for elite student-athletes, Vice-Chancellor Professor Paul Greenfield recently announced the University would double its contribution to sporting scholarships in 2009, increasing the number of scholarship holders from 12 to 24 and raising the funding per scholarship from $1500 to $6000.

INFO ➔ www.uqsport.uq.edu.au
RAISING THE BAR

Juggling several part-time jobs, university study and elite athletics is no easy task, but Catherine Drummond is not your ordinary scholar.

The Bachelor of Arts/Bachelor of Laws student (pictured) not only studies full-time and works four jobs, she also has her sights set on becoming Australia’s best ever high jumper.

“I’m working a retail job, I work in a law firm, I have two athletics coaching jobs and I’m doing a double degree so life’s busy,” Ms Drummond said.

It has been a stellar season for the 20-year-old, who has raised her personal best to 1.90m, won first Open Australian Championship title and also claimed her sixth Australian Championship age title along the way.

The promising athlete already has her sights set on bigger goals, and is closing in on the Australian record which would be a World Uni Games qualifier, a World Champs A qualifier, and get that it would be a World Uni Games Open Australian Championship title along the way.

And Ms Drummond has every reason to be confident of eclipsing the record – the Clem Jones scholarship holder has just been selected in the Target 2012 Squad, an elite group of 23 athletes deemed by Athletics Australia to have the drive, talent and passion to be World Champs A qualifiers, a World Champs A qualifier, and the Australian record which would be unbelievable,” she said.

The Australian Academy of Science will hold a public forum at UQ to celebrate the recent election of five Queensland scientists to the academy (5pm, Queensland Brain Institute, St Lucia). Information: (07) 3346 6402 or m.palva@uq.edu.au

• November 28 – February 1

The UQ Art Museum will showcase NEW – a special exhibition bringing together recent acquisitions. Artists involved include Shaun Gladwell, Tracey Moffatt, Samantha Hobson, Rosella Namok and Michael Zavros. The exhibition is open daily from 10am-4pm, with parking free on weekends. Information: www.artmuseum.uq.edu.au

• Wednesday, December 17

Three Score Club Christmas function: “Science & Religion: The God Delusion”. Guest Speaker Dr Yuri Koszarycz (11am-1pm, Emmanuel College). $35 members / $38 non-members, includes Christmas buffet. Information: (07) 3365 1561 or lorris@uq.edu.au.

GENERAL CLASSIFIEDS

• HOUSE SITTER: Prof. couple seek house sit or granny flat to rent Dec-Feb (flexible dates) in Brisbane area. Current UQ employee, trustworthy, clean, organised, loves animals. References available. Contact: 1.gibson@uq.edu.au

• HOUSE SITTER: UQ staff member available to house sit from early December. Previous sitting referees available. (Cannot care for pets Dec 27-Jan 1 or April 9-13). Contact: Greg 07 3346 4390 g.george@library.uq.edu.au

• ACCOMMODATION REQUIRED: Couple with 12-year-old daughter, mid-Jan to end-July 2009. Will consider house-sit, rental apartment/house or house swap (New Mexico). All areas considered. Contact: rosalind@googlemail.com, nick.martin@qimr.edu.au or coral.pink@qimr.edu.au

• FOR RENT: Spacious 2-bedrm, 2-bathroom apartment West End, Dec 08-June 09. Close to river, park, CityCat, bus and shops. Large veranda, secure complex. Rent $360/wk reg. Contact: Larry Duffy, l Duffy@uq.edu.au

• HOUSE SITTER WANTED: Jan-Feb 2009. House near Dutton Park Station, walking distance to Schonell Bridge. Contact: 07 3392 1246 or christien@hug.com.au

• CIVIL CELEBRANT: UQ alumna celebrant available for wedding and naming of children ceremonies. Contact: Lynda Flower 0488 101 266 or visit www.flower.ceremonies.com.au

CORRECTION: The main image of the Rural Clinical School on page 7 of UQ News 577 was incorrectly attributed to Jeremy Patten. The photograph was taken by Scott Burrows of Aperture Architectural Photography – www.aperture.com.au

For Summer Semester intercampus bus timetable: www.pf.uq.edu.au/buses.html

Library hours are available at www.library.uq.edu.au

SCHOLARSHIPS

• ES Cornwall Scholarship

To support work experience, typically consisting of employment with an overseas electricity supply authority, manufacturing company or research organisation, or studying for a higher degree with an international institution. Open to engineering graduates from Queensland universities with three to five years’ industry experience. Based on technical ability, initiative and leadership ability. Worth: $2700 per month for 18 months. Closing: January 29, 2009. Contact: ugscholarships@uq.edu.au or 07 3365 1984.

• Queensland Freemasons’ Scholarships

Three scholarships are available to full-time students enrolled in the fourth or subsequent year of their current undergraduate program, with preference given to fourth-year applicants. Awarded on basis of highest cumulative GPA in the current program. Preference given to Freemasons, and sons and daughters of Freemasons of at least five years’ good standing of the United Grand Lodge of Qld. Previous recipients may apply again. Worth: $1000. Closing: March 4, 2009. Contact: ugscholarships@uq.edu.au or 07 3365 1984.

• Alfred and Olvea Wynne Memorial Scholarships

To assist Maryborough and district students, who can demonstrate financial need in the following categories and order of preference: full-time undergraduate students; part-time internal undergraduate students; postgraduate internal students. Both new and continuing students may apply. Academic merit also considered. Closing: March 13, 2009. Contact: ugscholarships@uq.edu.au or 07 3365 1984.

• George Essex Evans Scholarship

Open to students undertaking an honours program in English. Preference given to applicants who have shown outstanding ability in the field of Australian literature and culture and who intend to continue in that field. Based on financial need in addition to academic merit. Worth: Approx $1500. Closing: March 13, 2009. Contact: ugscholarships@uq.edu.au or 07 3365 1984.

• Constantine Aspromourgos Memorial Scholarship for Greek Studies

Open to persons who are, a bachelor’s or masters graduates of this University of not more than five years standing; undertaking a postgraduate program involving studies which pertain to at least one area of Greek studies (ancient, Byzantine or modern) in language, culture, literature, history, archaeology, society, religion, economy, politics or geography; or undertaking the program as a student of another university acceptable to the committee, provided that some part of the program involves studies at another university. Awarded on the basis of academic merit and suitability of the program. Worth: approx $3950. Closing: March 27, 2009. Contact: ugscholarships@uq.edu.au or 07 3365 1984.

UQNEWS DEADLINES 09

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