

# CAMPUS NEWS

## Vice-Chancellor announces Centre for Maritime Policy

At the international conference, 'Australia's Maritime Bridge into Asia' organised by the Royal Australian Navy and Computer Sciences of Australia last week, the Vice-Chancellor Professor Ken McKinnon announced the establishment at the University of Wollongong a Centre for Maritime Policy.

This centre will be a joint venture in association with the Illawarra Technology Corporation (ITC), the commercial and consultancy arm of the University.

It is anticipated that the centre will open in January.

The Centre for Maritime Policy will provide a focal point for multi-disciplinary, policy-oriented research, teaching and consultancy on maritime issues, with a particular emphasis on Australia, Asia and the Pacific.

This will include a postgraduate program of Maritime Policy Studies aimed at providing a comprehensive introduction to maritime policy issues and covering a range of accompanying disciplinary, geographic and thematic interests.

The centre will have as its focus four substantive areas:

- Maritime security, strategy, and issues in maritime law including aspects relating to defence, maritime boundaries, law-of-the-sea, maritime law enforcement, maritime surveillance, response to maritime emergencies and maritime history
- Maritime transport including commercial shipping, both in foreign and domestic trade; port development; logistics and intermodal transport systems; waterfront issues



Two of the key players in the Centre for Maritime Policy Commodore Sam Bateman and Dr Ross Robinson

including problems of efficiency and waterfront reform

- Maritime environment including problems of marine pollution, environmental monitoring, responsibilities, legislation, enforcement and control

- Maritime resources including problems that relate to offshore gas and oil extraction, seabed mining, aquaculture and fisheries.

The centre will be able to provide access to a wide range of expertise with a strong policy orientation and research in relation to maritime issues in and across traditional disciplines and in diverse parts of the world. It will have a unique ability to take an integrated approach towards issues of the greatest — and rapidly growing — importance to business and government in the Asia-Pacific region.

The key players will be:

- Dr Ross Robinson, Associate Professor and Director of the Centre for Transport Policy Analysis in the Illawarra Technology Corporation. Dr

Robinson, a former member of the UNCTAD team in Geneva and former Director of the Port Development Program in UN ESCAP, Bangkok, has had extensive experience in South-east Asia. Dr Robinson is regarded as Australia's leading expert in port development planning and policy. He will be the joint director of the Centre for Maritime Policy.

- Professor Edward Wolfers, Foundation Professor of Politics, Head of the Department of History and Politics, Co-ordinator of the Postgraduate Program in International Relations and joint director of the Centre for Maritime Policy. He has extensive experience in writing, teaching and consultancy on foreign and public policy in the South Pacific.

- Commodore Sam Bateman, a former officer in the Royal Australian Navy with extensive experience in strategic policy and force development policy. He has written extensively on defence and maritime matters and is the Manager of the Centre for Maritime Policy.

# Intelligent polymers: improving on the human system

The University of Wollongong will host the second Asia Pacific Workshop on Intelligent Materials from 6-8 December with international speakers and other invited scientists from Australia presenting their work.

The focus of this workshop will be to elucidate the role of polymers in Intelligent Material Systems.

Polymers, as they do in natural Intelligent Materials, play an important role in this science.

It is no accident that the most sophisticated intelligent material structure presently known to us, the human body, interfaces with the environment through a range of polymeric sensors

including: the skin, the nose, the eye and the eardrum.

It is even more thought-provoking to consider that the internal workings of this system are due to processes occurring at dynamic polymer membranes (i.e. the biological cell).

During the workshop, world renowned experts will discuss what we can learn from nature and how we can assemble, communicate with and control synthetic polymer systems to produce intelligent behaviour.

Findings in this area are contributing to the rapidly advancing field of molecular nanotechnology.

Application areas that are already

beginning to evolve from this important science such as the controlled drug delivery systems, artificial muscles and artificial skin will be discussed.

The development of Intelligent Material Systems cannot be ignored in Australia.

Our economic dependence on supplying the world with naturally occurring raw materials both from mineral processing and agriculture means that it is of particular relevance to us.

A Poster Session explaining the Role of Polymers in Intelligent Material Systems will be open to the public on Tuesday 7 December at the University of Wollongong.

## Secretariat restructuring

The Secretariat section of the Academic and Student Services Branch has been restructured after the departure of Trevor Cuthbertson.

The major changes are:

Trevor James has transferred upstairs to become the Course and Legislation Officer with responsibility for:

- the Undergraduate Studies Committee and the Postgraduate Committee of the Graduate Faculty. (As one of his major tasks, he is co-ordinating the processing of subject and course proposals);

- the oversight of legislative changes and the conduct of elections;

- the Investigation Committee and the Council Committee of Appeal (the Student Discipline area).

If you need to contact Trevor about any of the above matters (especially UGSC, course proposals and Student Discipline), ring ext. 4457.

Olena Cullen has taken on the role of Minute Secretary to the Academic Senate and its Standing Committee. Her extension is 4136.

Jenel Elrick is Secretary to the Computer Policy Committee and is assisting Lynn Woodley with the Council Secretariat. Jenel's extension is 3947.

## Award for paper on knee injuries

Julie Steele (pictured), Department of Biomedical Sciences, was awarded the 'Young Investigators Award — Basic Science' at the 1993 National Scientific Conference in Sports Medicine in Melbourne recently.

The conference is hosted by the Australian Sports Medicine Federation and the New Zealand Federation of Sports Medicine.

The award is worth \$2500 and includes cash and funding to cover costs to present the paper at the 41st annual meeting of the American College of Sports Medicine in Indianapolis next June.

The title of her paper was 'Reliability of the Dynamic Cruciate Tester'.

The Dynamic Cruciate Tester is the trade name for an instrumented system, known as an 'arthrometer', used by orthopaedic surgeons and physiotherapists to enable objective assessment of knee laxity after injury or surgery.

She also received a commendation for a second paper which she presented at the same conference. Both papers are related to work she has completed as part of her PhD.



# AUCTION



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# Concept of Islamic Banking introduced into Australia

The International Business Research Group in the Department of Economics held an international conference on Islamic Banking from 9-10 November at the University Centre in Sydney.

More than 50 delegates attended from Australia, Canada, India, Indonesia, Iran, Kuwait, Malaysia, Saudi Arabia and the United Kingdom.

Among those attending were representatives from Islamic banks and overseas banking research institutes as well as government ministerial staff and academics.

Several delegates praised the University, and particularly the coordinator of the conference, Associate Professor Mokhtar Metwally, for having the initiative to hold such a conference and urged the University to take this leadership further by introducing studies in Islamic banking and finance which, they felt, would make the University extremely attractive to many international students.

Media coverage on SBS, ABC Radio National, Radio Australia, ABC Melbourne, the Australian and the Financial Review generated considerable interest from the community.

The conference passed a resolution recommending that the existing Islamic banks consider the establishment of an 'Islamic Bank in Australia' and that further conferences and seminars be held for this purpose.

In his keynote address, Dr Metwally gave an overview of the principles of Islamic banking and the issues involved in establishing a bank in Australia based on Islamic law.

'The application of Islamic principles to economic affairs would most certainly change the current premises and the basic framework within which contemporary economic theories are derived and on which current economic relationships are based,' he said.

'Take Islam's stand on interest, which is the base of the subject matter of this conference.

'Islam prohibits the payment of interest on all types of loans whether these loans are made to friends, private or public companies, government or any other identity.

'Islam objects to interest consisting of a fixed charge which the borrower



Associate Professor Mokhtar Metwally

has to pay regardless of his circumstances since this does not allow for the risk he takes, but, instead makes him solely responsible for its adverse consequences.

'It is thought unfair that borrowers should have to pay the same amount irrespective of whether their financial position is favourable or adverse. This objection applies to both business and private borrowers.

'It is seen as one-sided that the borrower should take all the risks, while the lender gets a fixed reward without assuming any risk, apart from that of the borrower's default. 'Even then, the lender will be able to sell off any collateral the borrower has offered to redeem the financial position.

'Meanwhile, the borrower will be in extremely depressed circumstances, which may result in much suffering for both himself and his family.

'For this reason, according to Islam, business finance should be on a profit-sharing basis, where both the lender and the borrower share the risks, rewards and losses.

'This is viewed as much more equitable and in conformity with Islamic precept.'

The first Islamic bank (Dubai Islamic Bank) was established in the United Arab Emirates in 1973.

This was followed by the Islamic Development Bank in Jeddah (Saudi Arabia) in 1975.

There are more than 100 Islamic banks active in 45 different countries.

The Al Baraka group, which began at the start of the 1980s, is the fastest

growing Islamic banking group with interests in the Middle East, Africa and Europe.

It is the only Islamic financial Institution so far to be granted a licence as a licensed deposit taker by the Bank of England.

The Al Rahji group, which was developed by a group of Saudi money changers in 1978, is also expanding into the UK.

It, together with the Al Baraka group and the Kuwait Finance House, established the Islamic Banking System International which has founded a separate Islamic bank in Denmark (IBID)—the first such European-based bank—which is designed to encourage trade and development participation between Scandinavia and the Middle East.

The Bahamas, Switzerland and Luxemborg also have Islamic banks.

Dr Metwally said that very few businessmen approach the new Islamic banks, as they are regarded as a strange kind of institution that functions in unusual ways that few can understand, although this is now beginning to change as such institutions penetrate European financial services and set up branches there.

There may even be fears about default on payment, or that at least part of the payment may be withheld on the grounds of some obscure religious justification.

This may be intensified by the suspicion in which such Islamic institutions are held by the conventional banking sector, whether in the Muslim world or in the West.

According to Dr Metwally, such fears are groundless.

None of the Islamic banks has gone into liquidation, and all have been able to honour their commitments with respect to trade finance.

Their record has been considerably better than that of many of the other smaller commercial banks in the Islamic world, and, because of the ways in which they advance funds, the borrower can be less fearful of becoming insolvent.

Copies of the full text of Dr Metwally's address are available from Gillian Curtis (042) 213926.

# No increase in parking charges, reserved spots cheaper

The Vice-Principal (Administration) Ken Baumber has announced new parking arrangements for next year.

There will be no increase in the cost of 'red' and 'blue' parking permits which give holders the right to park on campus but do not guarantee a parking place.

These costs remain at \$130 and \$75 a year respectively with sessional rates available at exactly half those amounts.

Costs have remained unchanged for several years now.

Extra floors are being added to the multi-storey car park, increasing total parking spaces by 166.

Expected total number of spaces in 1994 will be 2423 — 1267 red and 1156 blue. The corresponding total figure for this year is 2257.

Two changes were made halfway through 1993 to address problems facing regular permit holders and caused by the large numbers of campus users purchasing daily permits.

The casual parking fee was increased from \$2 to \$3 and casual parkers were restricted to 'blue' areas until after 4.30pm.

The changes improved the parking situation for 'red' permit holders and will become a permanent part of the parking arrangements for 1994.

Reserved parking has been available to campus users — at a premium.

The cost to an individual is a minimum of \$600 per annum, which includes the price of the 'red' permit.

'Official' reserved spaces also cost each unit that amount (although users of the spaces still need appropriate permits).

From the beginning of 1994 the price of reserved parking to both individuals and units will be reduced significantly — to \$400 per annum.

This means that for the individual user the cost of a reserved spot in the multi-storey car park (over and above the cost of the permit) will be about \$1 per working day. Payroll deductions allow this to be spread over time.

Many staff members have indicated during year that if the cost of reserved parking was not so high they would avail themselves of it. You now have the opportunity.

Renewal notices will shortly be distributed to existing holders of reserved spaces.

All enquiries regarding the allocation of new reserved parking in the multi-storey carpark should be directed to Gavin Berry in Business Services, ext. 3219, or by E-Mail.

New reserved parking will only become available as construction work on the multi-storey allows.

Work is planned for completion before autumn session.

## What's On

### General

2 December: 6.30pm **Department of Management dinner** for graduating students and staff. Fraternity Club, Fairy Meadow \$18. Enquiries 21 3707 or 21 3749

3 December: **Applications for General Staff Development Leave** close. Enquiries Ann Kiceluk, Personnel Office, ext 4284

3 December: Department of Accountancy presents the **Annual Val- edictory Dinner** to be held at Portofino International, 26 Atchison Street Wollongong from 7.30pm. Cost: \$35 includes 3 course meal, beer, wine and soft drink. Dress formal. Limited tickets available from Anne Mitchell, Room 40. 333, phone 213609. Enquiries: Mary A Kaidonis, phone: 213681.

4 December: **Illawarra Committee for Overseas Students** final event for year, Australia's Wonderland. Tickets and details are available from ICOS office, 3rd Floor, Union Retail Centre on Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday from 9.30am to 2pm or phone 21 3158.

**Human Experimentation Ethics Committee** meeting dates with agenda deadlines in brackets are: 21 December (7 December).

### THREE SEMINARS ON C.A.L. AND OTHER TECHNOLOGIES IN HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE UK AND THEIR RELEVANCE TO AUSTRALIA

PRESENTER: Mr Philip Hobbs, Director, Centre for Computing in Economics, University of Bristol, UK. Mr Hobbs is responsible for the overall management of three CAL (Computer Assisted Learning) projects with a combined annual turnover of £500,000 per annum.

One of these projects is the nine-University Economics Consortium, for which Bristol is the lead site, and which is one of the 76 TLTP (Teaching and Learning Technology Projects) being funded by the UK Higher Education Funding Councils to the tune of £34m over a five-year period.

Each seminar will be informal and the opportunity provided to discuss the key issues raised and their relevance to Australian higher education.

#### SEMINAR 1

Developments in Higher Education in the UK  
2.30-4pm Wednesday December 1, Club Lounge, University Union

#### SEMINAR 2

CAL (Computer Assisted Learning) for Undergraduate Economics  
11am-12.30pm Thursday, December 2, Function Room 2, University Union

#### SEMINAR 3

Project Managing CAL Software  
2-3.30pm, Thursday, December 2, Function Room 2, University Union  
For further information, contact Ed Wilson (Department of Economics) ext. 3663, or Geoff Hamer (Information Technology Services) ext. 3113.  
Please advise Geoff Hamer if you are able to attend.

## Stop Press

### Last booksale

The last alumni booksale for 1993 is on this weekend (27 and 28 November) at our Fairy Meadow Bookshop and Gallery (opposite the Science Centre) from 1-5pm. A good range of study texts, fiction and non-fiction will be available

**Campus News is published weekly on Wednesdays. Send material, preferably by Microsoft Mail or on disk, to Gillian Curtis (042) 21 3110 by noon on Monday of the week before that of publication**