

CAMPUS NEWS

Professor Whelan's book on bushfires and ecology

Head of the Department of Biological Sciences, Professor Rob Whelan, has been researching the effects of bushfires on animals and plants since his PhD in Western Australia in 1978.

His interest in the impact of fires continued at Wollongong with research at the Barren Grounds Nature Reserve, the catchment areas managed by Sydney Water, and the Royal National Park.

In addition he has worked on fire in Florida and Southern California.

Professor Whelan's interest and experience in fire ecology led to the commissioning by Cambridge University Press, of a book titled *The Ecology of Fire* in the Cambridge Studies in Ecology series.

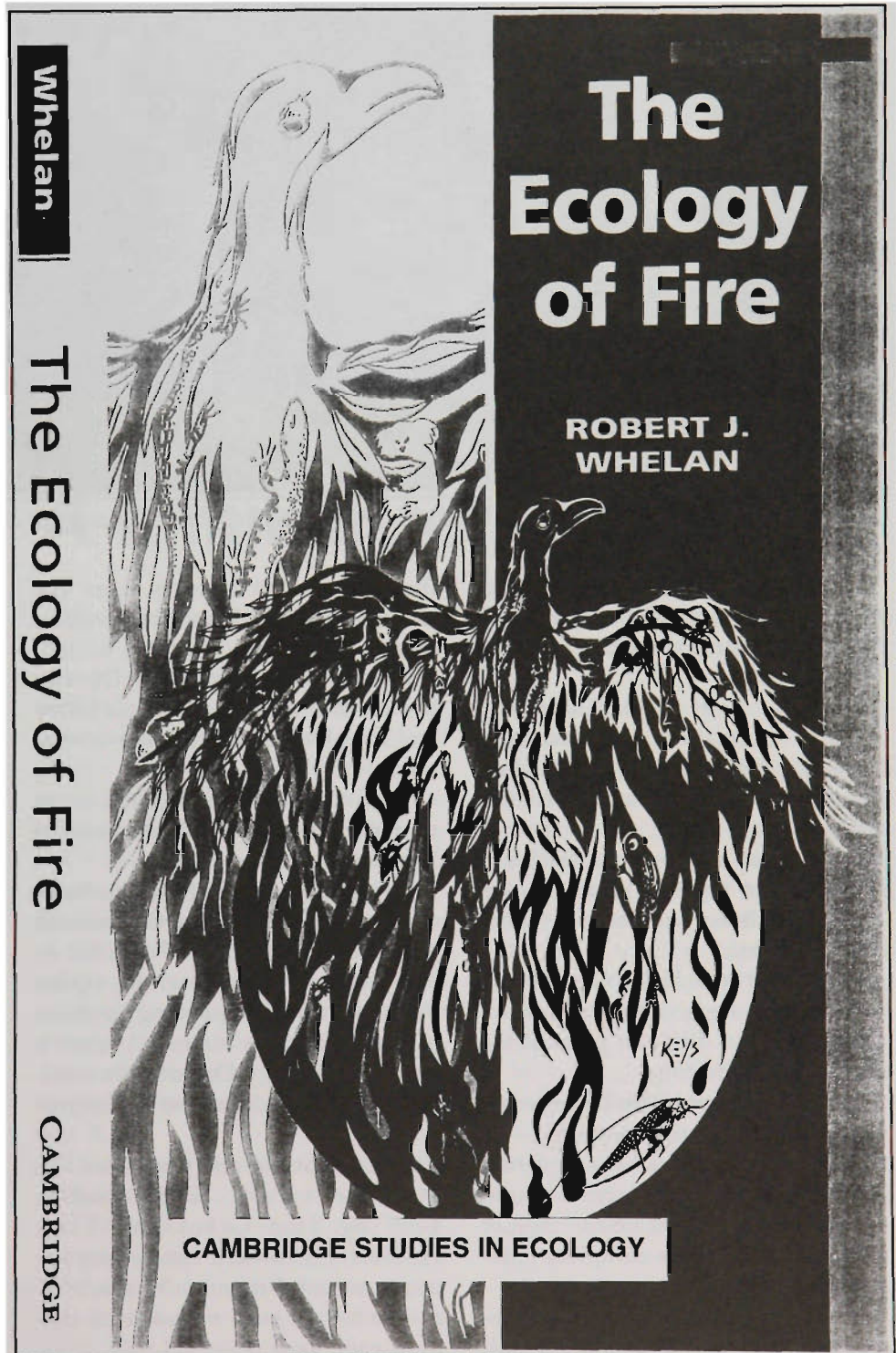
The book was published last year and is now available in Australia.

It was recently reviewed in the journal *Nature* (18 January 1996; Vol 379 p218).

Professor Whelan said: 'One aim of the book is to draw together information on ecological effects of fire-prone regions of the world to reveal some general principles.

'The book looks at the role of fire in moulding the evolution of plants and animals, and responses to fires by populations and communities of a great variety of organisms.

'Most importantly, since our recent wildfires of 1994, it relates current knowledge of the ecological effects of fires to the management of natural environments.'



The cover of Professor Whelan's book was designed by Wollongong graphic design artist Donald Keys. It depicts a phoenix rising from the flames. Hidden in the phoenix are many Australian plants and animals that are affected by fire.

Biology's 21st birthday party



Mat O'Mullane, Richard Scarborough, Phil Glass, Raellie Smith, Fiona Beynon, Carl Gosper and Jack Baker (seated) in a party mood

The Department of Biological Sciences recently celebrated 21 years as an official Department at the University of Wollongong.

With the help of the University Alumni Association, and hard work by Biological Sciences' general staff, the party on 17 February went off with a bang!

Many past and present staff and students got together in the Union Hall for a dinner and dance — and a few speeches.

Duncan Brown, Helen Garnett and Rob Whelan each recounted memorable events in different parts of the Department's history.

The development of the Department was likened — appropriately — to that of a marsupial: a long gestation period much of which is spent in rapid development but still tied to mother in the pouch, before complete independence.

Dr Jim Campbell effectively ran Biology at Wollongong, as the sole staff member — senior tutor, from the early 1960s.

Several people at the party recalled

the video-taped lectures from the University of NSW and the practical classes run by Jim.

The first appointments — Duncan Brown as Professor, and Ross Lilley and Tony Hulbert as lecturers — were made in 1974.

The first year of the Department as part of the independent University of Wollongong was in 1975.

Helen Garnett told of some features of the years of rapid growth while she was Professor from 1987 to 1992 — including a letter she received, via the Vice Chancellor, requesting payment of \$260 for 'costs incurred' when a stranded Biology Department vehicle held up a coal train on the escarpment!

All staff at the party recalled the Meat Pie Award. Established in 1980 by Tom Grant and Tony Hulbert, this award recognises the most outstanding mistake made by a member of staff or research student each year.

For many years, Professor Geoff Brinson (Metallurgy) was the official reader of nominations at the annual

Biology Christmas Party.

Rob Whelan identified several features of the Department which showed the development of tradition — a central part of 'coming of age'.

All past students and staff are invited to send in to the Department their recollections, and old photographs, to help record the history and illustrate the tradition.

Keeping track of past students is difficult in any Department.

All past students are invited to join the Alumni Association, and to keep the connections between the Department and its graduates.

Having a good party and interacting with people and units from all parts of campus were two traditions for which Biological Sciences is well known.

This 21st birthday party was no exception.

The evening was topped off by the debut performance of the Department's rock band 'Legless', who are now expected to be much in demand across campus.

Happy birthday, Biology!



Bill Harrison outside the Aboriginal Education Centre, Building 30

Bill Harrison has taken up his position as Head of the Aboriginal Education Centre.

Mr Harrison is no newcomer to the Wollongong campus.

He completed a Bachelor of Education (Secondary) English / History and a Master of Education (Education Planning) at this university and held the position of Deputy Head and Lecturer in Aboriginal Studies at the Aboriginal Education Centre from 1990-1993.

During his early career he served in the Royal Australian Navy.

He experienced war service and served as an aircraft technician and a technical instructor.

Before taking up his present position, Mr Harrison was the Executive Officer, Aboriginal Education Unit at the Department of Employment, Education and Training, where he managed the Wollongong, Nowra, Batemans Bay and Canberra Aboriginal Education Units.

The AEC is making a change in its direction towards improved student support activities.

Mr Harrison said that they hoped that faculties would again take advantage of the services offered by the

A familiar face returns

AEC with regard to provision of Aboriginal perspectives lectures in various subject areas in a bid to increase non-Aboriginal awareness of the uniqueness of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and also to provide cultural relevance to Aboriginal students in their subjects.

Dr Dianne Snow has also started work at the centre as an Aboriginal Studies lecturer and will be available to talk with other lecturers who may wish to utilise her skills and expertise.

Mr Harrison intends to re-open the very popular Aboriginal Studies Resource Section within the AEU once a suitable person can be employed to run it.

This should be before the end of the Autumn Semester.

'1996 looks like being a very exciting year in the Aboriginal Education Centre and we have an enthusiastic bunch of new students to boost us along,' Mr Harrison said.

'Continuing students are progressing well and all the staff in the centre have shown me that they are working

hard to provide the support the students require to complete their studies.

'We will all be working towards that end.

'I would like to thank those Centre staff and core of students who have worked so hard to give the Centre the momentum it now has to meet head on all the challenges of 1996 with determination and confidence.'

Mr Harrison also plans to pursue his research interest in international comparative indigenous education issues.

He is involved in the collaborative development of a research proposal to conduct a national study investigating the factors which contribute to retention and attrition rates for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander higher education students.

He also has an interest in contributing to the development of government policies that will result in socio-economic improvements for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

ITS award for outstanding Computer Applications student



Iris Maris was presented with a cheque and a medal by the Director, Information Technology Services, Mr Greg Naimo. Professor Graham Winley gave his congratulations.

Iris Maris is the 1995 recipient of the Information Technology Services Award for the best overall academic achievement in the Associate Diploma in Computer Applications.

Originally from South Africa where she received a medical technology diploma, Iris lives with her husband and two children in Balgownie, Wollongong.

She decided to further her education in an area where there were promising employment prospects and was attracted to the Associate Diploma in Computer Appli-

cations offered by the University's Department of Business Systems.

The lectures fitted in well with her children's school hours and there is a demand for graduates in this area.

As well, studying at a university appealed to her and it would give her the opportunity to go on to further study if she wanted.

Head of the Department, Professor Graham Winley, said that Iris had an overall academic performance that was 'remarkable achievement in a competitive environment'

and that she well deserved the award.

'This course attracts many excellent students who would not otherwise have thought of university studies,' he said.

'Several are high achievers and go on to further studies or interesting, well-paid positions.

'A recent University Medal winner's first qualification at this university was the Associate Diploma in Computer Applications.'

Information Technology Services provides this award annually as part of its program of providing some form of sponsorship for each of the faculties.

Nominations called for 1997 Japan Prize

The Science and Technology Foundation of Japan invites nominations for the 1997 Japan Prize.

Each year two areas of research are selected for this award. The selected categories for the 1997 Japan Prize are 'Systems Engineering for an Artifactual Environment' and 'Biotechnology in Medicine'.

This is an international award for scientists who have made original and outstanding achievements in science and technology.

The laureates are recognised for contributing not only to the progress of science and technology, but also to the peace and prosperity of mankind.

Nominations should be received by Tuesday 30 April.

Guidelines and a nomination form have been sent to the Deans of the Faculty of Engineering, Faculty of Informatics and the Faculty of Health and Behavioural Sciences.

Planning for Open Day '96 underway

The University will continue the tradition observed for several years now of holding Open Day on the last Sunday in August. This year the date is Sunday 25 August.

Dean of the Faculty of Education, John Patterson, will be the chairperson again this year.

Lee-Anne Owen has been appointed three days a week to be the coordinator of Open Day.

It was felt that Lee-Anne's location in Marketing would assist the smooth running of this project.

She can be contacted on ext 3027 Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday.

The theme 'Discover the Difference' worked well last year and will be used again this year with some variations.

A pro-forma will be forwarded to faculties, departments and units shortly so the program booklet can be produced as quickly as possible.

Ensure that you list clearly the names and addresses of contact people.

Professor Patterson is happy to meet

with relevant faculties and units in the next round of Faculty/Department meetings and will organise to visit the various faculty planning meetings.

Professor Patterson said that the Open Day committee is examining ways of bringing Postgraduate Open Day and the University's Open Day as close together as possible.

'Open Day is one of the University's most important events and we have to continue to do it well,' he said.

May Graduation schedule of ceremonies

Ceremony 1, 8 May, 9.45am: The following degrees from the Faculty of Commerce: Bachelor of Commerce (Surnames A-K only), Graduate Certificate in Management, Master of Business Administration, Associate Diploma in Computer Applications, Diploma in Computer Applications

Ceremony 2, 8 May, 2.30pm: The following degrees from the Faculty of Commerce: Bachelor of Commerce (Surnames L-Z only); Bachelor of Commerce (Honours) (all); Graduate Diploma in Commerce; Master of Commerce; Master of Commerce (Honours)

Ceremony 3, 9 May, 9.45am: The Faculty of Education with the exception of Master of Education graduands

Ceremony 4, 9 May, 2.30pm: All degrees from The Faculty of Arts and Master of Education graduands.

Honorary Award: Dr Winifred Ward, Fellow of the University

Medallist: Mr Julian Nash, BA(Hons), Department of Modern Languages

Ceremony 5, 10 May, 9.45am: All degrees from the Faculties of: Informatics and Creative Arts.

Emeritus Professor: Professor Hugh Bradlow

Honorary Degree: Ms Merrion Frances (Mem) Fox, Doctor of Letters (honoris causa)

Medallist (Shared): Mr Anthony Carolan, BMath(Hons),

Department of Applied Statistics;

Medallists (Shared): Mr Dean Noacco, BInfoTech (Hons),

Communication Technology.

Ceremony 6, 15 May, 9.45am: All degrees from the Faculties of: Science, Law and Graduate Certificate and Graduate Diploma graduands from the Faculty of Engineering.

Emeritus Professor: Professor Murray Wilson

Honorary Award: Dr Ron Broadfoot, Fellow of the University

Medallist: Ms Natalie Gray, LLB(Hons), Faculty of Law.

Ceremony 7, 15 May, 2.30pm: The Faculty of Engineering with the exception of Graduate Certificate and Graduate Diploma graduands.

Honorary Award: Mr Paul Jeans, Fellow of the University

Medallist: Ms Fiona Kaul, BE(Hons), Department of Material Engineering

Ceremony 8, 16 May, 9.45am: The Faculty of Health & Behavioural Sciences with the exception of Bachelor of Nursing, Bachelor of Science and Bachelor of Science (Honours) graduands

Ceremony 9, 16 May, 2.30pm: The Faculty of Health & Behavioural Sciences, Bachelor of Nursing, Bachelor of Science and Bachelor of Science (Honours) graduands only.



Simon Tognetti 'Ceramics'

Long Gallery from 21
March

Wollongong artist Simon Tognetti will be exhibiting mainly Chinese-inspired porcelain wares including domestic pieces and one-off vases and bowls which are either carved and incised with a celadon glaze or painted in blue cobalt and white glaze.

Also exhibiting in the Long Gallery from 21 March are Richard Hook, Lynn Brunet, Pam Johnston Dahl Helm

Are weeds better than nothing?

Areas of bushland dominated by weeds are often thought of as devoid of life.

There are often fewer native plants in the area as all the space is taken up by the introduced plant.

But what happens to native animals when bushland becomes overrun with weeds?

Dr Kris French of the Australian Flora and Fauna Research Centre at the University of Wollongong is undertaking a series of studies, to look at what animals are using weedy habitats, and to see if there are differences in the animals in weedy compared to those in more natural habitats.

The study began with an interest in how birds move the seeds of native plants. Birds love berries and other fruits and swallow them whole.

A short time later, the seeds pass out of the bird on to the ground.



Many of our rainforest plants have seeds spread this way, as do many introduced weeds in Australia.

Berry type fruits are found, for example, in bitou bush, lantana, privet and camphor laurel.

These plants were often introduced deliberately by humans, who planted them in an attempt to make Australia more like 'home'.

However the seeds are spread by birds and many of these introduced species are out of control.

Dr French and her students began looking at which birds consume the fruits of these weeds to see which might

be spreading the seeds of these plants.

Initially the study concentrated on bitou bush and lantana.

'We expanded the study when we realised that birds do not just consume fruit, but forage for insects, build their nests and gain shelter from the dense bushes,' she said.

'Some birds like Whipbirds and Fairy Wrens seem to live happily in these bushes.

'Silvereyes and many of the honeyeaters ate fruits readily.

'In fact, our initial studies suggested that the diversity of birds in weed infested habitats was not very different from native vegetation.

'This was a surprise. However, some seed-eating and nectar-feeding birds appear disadvantaged in bitou bush, and possibly lantana.'

Some studies on insects are also being completed too, to see if the pattern is similar for other organisms.

Flying insects and litter insects are important elements of many birds' diets and form a large component of Australia's biodiversity.

Understanding how weed infestations affect their abundance is likely to be extremely important.

'We need to know whether weed-infested habitat is as good bird habitat as the native vegetation that it replaced,' Dr French said.

'Studies comparing the sizes of territories for birds and their breeding success in different habitats are in the pipeline.

'Animals may only use weeds because other vegetation is not available, but would prefer native species.

'For now, the message is pretty clear. If you clear weed infested areas, you need to replace them with good quality native habitat.

'Otherwise you may damage the biodiversity in an area.

'Animals are using weeds for food and shelter and until we understand how important weeds are in maintaining their populations, we must be careful about how we replace these resources.

'Removing weeds is not the issue. The mechanism how we do it, might be.'

• This article is part of a series produced by students and staff in the Australian Flora and Fauna Research Centre in the Department of Biological Sciences.

The Time is not Yet Ripe

by Louis Esson

March 16 - 24
Hope Theatre
Bookings 29 6144

THEATRE SOUTH
& the University of Wollongong

'Magnificent Voyages' exhibition and book display in Library

As part of local Heritage Week celebrations – which, in 1996, will adopt a Maritime Heritage theme – the University Library is mounting an exhibition featuring two recent acquisitions to its Rare Books collection.

These are Charles Wilkes' Narrative of the United States Exploring Expedition 1838-42 (Philadelphia, 1845, five volumes and atlas) and Karl Scherzer's Narrative of the Circumnavigation of the Globe by the Austrian Frigate Novara 1857-59 (London, 1861-3, three volumes.)

In both instances, members of the associated scientific contingents visited Illawarra in search of material for later study and placement in European or American museum collections.

Geologists J. Dana and F. Hochstetter, plus various botanists and ethnographers, visited Illawarra during brief stopovers at Sydney, and the results of their research are recorded in numerous publications and

scientific papers.

The 'Magnificent Voyages' display will feature the above indicated volumes, plus associated books and artworks.

Most noteworthy of these are two large watercolours of the Illawarra escarpment by Novara artist Joseph Selleny.

These were done during November 1858, and are being loaned for the exhibition by Wollongong City Gallery.

Rare books, watercolours show Illawarra's history

The Wilkes Narrative is a rare work of immense historical significance, while the visit of the Austrians in 1858 is little known.

Both expeditions are the subject of on-campus research.

For several years Dr Brian Jones and Dr Paul Carr of the Department of Geology have been researching Dana's time in Australia, in collaboration with an American mineralogist, and a book on this topic will be published in the near future.

The exhibition will be opened at 10.30am in the Library foyer on Friday, 22 March by Commodore Sam Bateman of the University's Centre for Maritime Policy and will run for two weeks.

The Wilkes and Scherzer volumes will form part of the University Library's Rare Books collection.

This is a small, though varied collection, numbering some 800 items.

Individual volumes are housed in the Archives reading room on the ground floor, and listed on the Library catalogue.

Access to this material is restricted, dependent upon the condition and rarity of the material.

For further enquiries, contact the Archivist, Michael Organ, ext. 3545.

National workshop on working with the families of people with mental illness

The University of Wollongong and Deakin University have obtained a \$25,000 grant to conduct a national workshop on the use of multiple-family groups in the management of mental illnesses such as schizophrenia.

The grant comes from the Commonwealth Department of Human Services and Health, Mental Health Branch.

The workshop will be addressed by Professor William McFarlane of the Maine Medical Centre, Portland, Maine, USA and will be attended by senior mental health clinicians from all state and territory mental health services together with representatives of key consumer and carer groups from around Australia.

Professor McFarlane's work involves the implementation of multiple-family group treatment and single-family treatment at six public mental hospitals in New York State.

The outcome of the study is impressive at a two-year follow-up with multiple family groups yielding significantly lower relapse rates than did single family

interventions (16 per cent vs 27 per cent).

These relapse rates are a fraction of the expected relapse rates of clients receiving standard treatment (65 per cent to 80 per cent for two years).

The estimated cost of treatment found that for every dollar spent on multiple-family treatment, \$34 was saved by the health care system when compared with treatment costs for each client in the two years before treatment.

The study also found that multiple-family groups were most effective with patients at higher risk for relapse.

These impressive results have encouraged Ross Harris and his staff at the Department of Public Health and Nutrition, University of Wollongong to seek funding to further the work of Professor McFarlane in Australia in co-operation with Margaret Leggatt of Schizophrenia Australia and Deakin University, Melbourne.

As a first stage in this process Professor McFarlane will train clinicians from Illawarra, Western Sydney and Melbourne to implement a pilot program.

General

Meeting dates for the Human Research Ethics Committee and the Animal Ethics Committee for this year are: Human Research Ethics Committee: 19 March, 23 April, 21 May, 23 July, 20 August, 22 October, 19 November, 17 December. Animal Ethics Committee: 22 May, 21 August, 20 November. Agenda items are due two weeks before meetings. Enquiries Karen McRae, Office of Research, by email or on ext. 4457 on Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday.

19 March: Women's Issues Group meeting, the Function Centre, Union Building. Speakers: Robin Iredale (Centre for Multicultural Studies – 'The Processes and Outcomes of the Beijing Women's Conference') and Lenore Lyons-Lee (Department of Sociology – 'Media Coverages at the Beijing Women's Conferences – What really happened'). Cost: members \$2.50. Non-members: \$3.50. Enquiries: Moira, phone 843 741.

Creative Arts

Creative Arts productions '96

Each year students and staff in the Faculty of Creative Arts produce a diverse range of performances. They

What's On

are presented in numerous venues across the campus depending on the nature of the performance.

Following is the provisional timetable for this year. Watch *Campus News* for confirmation and more details.

'**Lion in Winter**' – 27-30 March, director Ian McGrath, Hope Theatre Apron.

'**Music-Theatre**, Lillian Helman's 'Children's Hour' – 15- 18 May, director Houston Dunleavy. Performance Space, north-western end of Campus.

'**Graduation Production**' – 11-14 September, Hope Theatre and 18-21 September, Newtown HSPA, director Jany's Hayes, producer Jeff Kevin and assistant producer Jacqui Clarke.

'**Stretching Exercise**' – 5-8 June, directed by Jany's Hayes and/or Jeff Kevin, Black Box Production, Hope Theatre.

'**Classic Production**' (Shakespeare, Marlowe, Jonson etc) – 23-26 October, directed by John Senczuk and Jeff Kevin, Performance Space, Black Box Production.

'**Australian One-Act Plays or excerpts**' – 4- 8 November, Kate Newey, Sharon Bell, Peter Shepherd possibly to direct. Performance Space.

Art of Lunch concerts every Thursday during session, from 12.35pm-1.25pm. Venues are the Hope Theatre, Union Hall Foyer and Faculty of Creative Arts Music Auditorium. Brochures and information are available from Marilyn Meier, ext. 3990, and Jenny Fullerton, ext. 3996.

Winners of IMB book vouchers

The Illawarra Mutual Building Society's University Branch held a competition in conjunction with the enrolment of students at the University.

The following students have won prizes:

Andrew Holland, Albion Park Rail, \$300 book voucher at the Union Bookshop;

Dale King Farmborough Heights, \$200 book voucher at the Union Bookshop;

Anthony Sim Figtree, \$100 book voucher at the Union Bookshop.

University of Wollongong Rugby Club

Rugby Scholarships for 1996

The University of Wollongong Rugby Club is offering a number of rugby scholarships for university and other tertiary students in 1996. These scholarships, ranging in value from \$400 to \$1500, will be used to meet educational expenses.

Applicants should include a copy of their Curriculum Vitae/Playing Record plus the contact details of two referees.

The closing date for applications is 31 March 1996.

Applications should be forwarded to:
Dr Paul Webb, President,
University of Wollongong Rugby Club,
c/- Faculty of Education,
University of Wollongong
Northfields Avenue
WOLLONGONG NSW 2522.

Further details can be obtained from either
Dr Paul Webb (042) 21 3887 or Canio Fierravanti (042) 268822.

Stop Press

Gain real experience and add to your degree. Come to the Young Achievement Australia Business Skills Orientation Session, Thursday 14 March, 12.30-1.30pm, Function Room 2, Union Building. All welcome.

Campus News is published weekly on Wednesdays. Send material, preferably by Microsoft Mail or on disk, to E-Mail account 'Campus News' by noon on Monday of the week before that of publication. For any other enquiries contact the Editor, Gillian Curtis (042) 21 3926. Campus News has a circulation of 3500. It is distributed on campus to staff and students. 1000 are mailed to the community and overseas including schools in Illawarra, southern Sydney and Canberra; local, Sydney and Canberra media; Friends of the University; business representatives; MPs and numerous individual requests.