ANTARCTICA: 100 years since Mawson

(Special feature celebrating UTAS’ enduring endeavour, pages 2–9)
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Alumni News is the regular magazine for graduates and friends of the University of Tasmania. UTAS alumni include graduates and diplomats of UTAS, TCAE/TSIT and AMC. Alumni News is prepared by the Communications and Media Office for the Development and Alumni Office.

Edited by Janette Brennan

Contributors
Peter Cochrane, Cherie Cooper, Nicki Fletcher, Emma Kellaway, Sarah Nicol, Melanie Roome, Luke Scott and Sharon Webb

Design
Clemenger Tasmania

Advertising enquiries
Melanie Roome
Alumni and Development Manager
Phone +61 3 6324 3472

Let us know your story at
Alumni.Office@utas.edu.au
Phone +61 3 6324 3052
Fax +61 3 6324 3402

UTAS Development and Alumni Office
Locked Bag 1350
Larnceton Tasmania 7250

Cover: Boiling water vaporises and freezes (almost instantaneously) when thrown into the sub-zero temperatures of the Antarctic air. This breathtaking image is courtesy of Dave Buller (page 6), who has managed Casey Station over the past 12 months.
Championing excellence, 100 years since Mawson

ON 2 DECEMBER 1911 AN Australian geologist, Douglas Mawson, sailed from Hobart to establish a base on the Antarctic continent. This expedition marked the beginning of Australia’s endeavour in Antarctica – a field of science and discovery that UTAS, a century later, continues to champion. UTAS has a long-standing tradition of excellence in Antarctic sciences. One of the most exciting recent developments in Antarctic research and teaching has been the establishment of the Institute for Marine and Antarctic Studies from 1 January last year and the commencement of construction of the $45 million building for IMAS on Hobart’s waterfront.

This stunning facility will be a fitting home for the scientists of IMAS and their temperate marine, Southern Ocean and Antarctic research. It will bring together many of Tasmania’s considerable strengths in marine and Antarctic studies in one precinct, encouraging interaction and offering opportunities for collaborative research of state, national and international significance. The University, through IMAS, has close collaboration with the CSIRO Marine and Atmospheric Research Centre and the Australian Antarctic Division and is a core partner in the Antarctic Climate and Ecosystems Cooperative Research Centre (ACE CRC) and the Integrated Marine Observing System – all leading organisations in this space. It is fair to say that there is already a global buzz around IMAS and what it has the potential to do for Tasmania and Australia as a leading world institute. Several of the stories in Alumni News this issue speak to that excitement of being at the centre of Antarctic and marine excellence.

Another great strength at UTAS, which is profiled in the pages of Alumni News, is our special relationship with the wider Tasmanian community. The development of our next Strategic Plan, Open to Talent, has allowed us the opportunity to speak to the community about the University and its role for Tasmania. Our best opportunities, in an increasingly globalised world, will come from alignment of our local strengths with national and international trends. This requires that we determine how it is that we are distinctive, what opportunities we have that set us apart and what we have to offer students, researchers and the broader community that will bring the world to us and us to the world. The stories of passion and excellence following here illustrate the firm base on which we are building.

Warm regards,
Professor Peter Rathjen
Vice-Chancellor, University of Tasmania

Lasting friendships are worth the effort

IF YOU’RE LIKE ME, THEN YOU probably look back on your Uni days with considerable pride and affection. The gaining of specialised knowledge and training has allowed many of us the opportunity to pursue challenging, worthwhile and interesting careers. I also fondly remember the great friends I made and fantastic times shared with them.

We all know this, but it’s still so easy to lose touch with our alma mater. Indeed as time goes by, life can get very busy with family, career commitments and opportunities. So what are the simple things we can do to make sure we stay in touch? Here are a few ideas:

• Firstly, make sure you’re registered on the alumni database so that you receive regular electronic updates about Alumni and University events and activities. It’s as easy as emailing the Alumni Office at Alumni.Office@utas.edu.au or by mail – Development & Alumni Office, UTAS, Locked Bag 1350, Launceston, Tasmania 7250. Return the fly sheet that came with this magazine.

• Secondly, if you’re already registered, make sure you open your news updates ... but don’t just open them – read them!

• Thirdly, and most importantly, may I encourage you to attend Alumni or University events in a location near to you. In 2011 Alumni events were held in Tasmania (Hobart, Launceston and Burnie), interstate (Melbourne and Canberra), and overseas (Singapore, China, Hong Kong and the UK).

Through the activities of the Alumni, your university tries hard (and at considerable cost) to keep in touch with you. Like any good friendship, people need to keep in touch to stay connected. Please do so.

I look forward to meeting you at an Alumni function in 2012.

Wishing you the very best,
Dr Ashley Townsend
Chair, University of Tasmania Alumni

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Hearing the call of silence

Professor Pat Quilty (PhD 1969) retired in 1999 from his position as Chief Scientist with the Australian Antarctic Division. During his career he made 15 working trips to the Antarctic and left his mark with five species, a mountain range (the Quilty Nunataks) and a bay (Quilty Bay, in the Larsemann Hills) named in his honour. He has received the US Antarctic Services Medal, the Royal Society of Tasmania Medal, and was awarded Membership of the Order of Australia (AM). Best of all, he’s one of ours! In 1997 Pat received the Distinguished Alumni Award from the University of Tasmania. Alumni News is delighted and honoured that Pat agreed to introduce us to his passion, the Antarctic, and the story of the 100 years since Mawson.

By Professor Pat Quilty*

A few days into my first trip to Antarctica was when I encountered the silence. Popping out of my tent in the early hours of the morning (because nature had called) I noticed that the sun was low on the horizon and the sky had turned from blue to apricot in colour. And as I stood there, alone for several minutes, I heard the silence—a dead silence like I’d never experienced before. Mawson too had written of this stillness. It’s a deeply spiritual feeling that says you’re on your own amid the vast expanse.

My Antarctic journey had begun when I was about 13 years old. I was given a book as a school prize, *The Eagle Book of Modern Adventurers*, and it featured the story of Robert Falcon Scott, among others. Somehow that book put the dream of Antarctica in my head. It got stuck in there. So it was a boyhood ‘dream come true’ when, about a decade later, an unexpected voice on the phone from the US (University of Wisconsin) said I was the sort of character they’d like working for them in Antarctica. I was lecturing in Geology at UTAS at the time, so it wasn’t difficult to drop everything for the trip—although things were a little chilly at home because it meant I had to put off my wedding for a couple of months. But Antarctica was the world’s biggest wilderness, and I use that word in its old sense. It was a place where people didn’t traditionally go and those who did were involved in inspirational activities. Everything within me was excited.

That first trip that I made to Antarctica was 54 years after Douglas Mawson had sailed from Hobart as leader of the Australasian Antarctic Expedition. Earlier this month we celebrated the centenary of Mawson’s expedition, which was the start of Australia’s serious involvement in Antarctic science and exploration. Mawson had actually been invited by Robert Falcon Scott to join his ill-fated expedition to the South Pole, but Mawson declined. His focus was science, particularly its diversity and excellence. He also pushed hard to get us the Australian Antarctic Territory—yes, he often raised the flag, read a proclamation and claimed a region for the British Crown (land which was later ceded to Australia).

Mawson died the year I started university, which was a great pity. I would have loved to meet him. But I’ve befriended his legacy. A century later, we’ve come to the realisation that Antarctica isn’t just that frozen, isolated expanse at the southern end of the world. It’s much more influential than that. It controls the world’s sea levels and the composition of our oceans, as well as our weather (indeed in Tasmania, we all know the origins of our cold fronts). But perhaps one of the most defining lessons from the Antarctic came in the ‘80s when the depletion of stratospheric ozone was observed. Investigation soon proved that the cause of that problem was chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) from the Northern Hemisphere.

We learnt that you can’t do something on one part of the Earth without it having an effect somewhere else. In the Antarctic we discovered a global sense of how interconnected we are on this little blue planet.

Over the years I’ve made 15 working trips to the Antarctic, and dozens more these days with tourist over-flights and cruises. A highlight of my ‘working’ career came on the morning of 1 February 1985 when I discovered dolphins and whale fossils at Marine Plain. These are the only known vertebrate fossils from the Antarctic from the last 40 million years. They lived before the North and South Poles were covered with ice, and their discovery has challenged the previously accepted view that Antarctica has been much the same as it is now for the last 15 million years. It’s given rise to spirited and heated debate which, I’m glad to say, is ongoing.

Today, Tasmania boasts the Australian Antarctic Division, the Institute for Marine and Antarctic Studies (IMAS), the Antarctic Climate and Ecosystems Cooperative Research Centre (ACE CRC), and the interrelated sciences at UTAS and the CSIRO. A hundred years since Mawson, we’re at the forefront of Antarctic research—but best of all, we’ve barely scratched the surface.*

*As told to Janette Brennan.
A frozen time capsule dating back 80,000 years

By Janette Brennan

SNOW THAT FELL ON THE EARTH 80,000 years ago is helping Tasmanian scientists to understand long-term climate change.

Dr Tas van Ommen (BSc Hons 1984, Dip Teach 1986, PhD 1993), a glaciologist with the Antarctic Climate and Ecosystems Cooperative Research Centre (ACE CRC), is a member of a team studying an ice core drilled through Law Dome, which is near Casey Station in Antarctica. Law Dome is a mountain of ice that’s about the same height as Hobart’s Mount Wellington, but is also around 200 km wide (like a fat pancake).

“Our group drilled all the way through the 1,200m of ice and got an ice core record that goes back 80,000 years,” Tas said.

“When you look at the ice deep below the surface, you see lots of bubbles in it. These are pores of air that have been trapped and preserved between snowflakes that fell hundreds or thousands of years ago.

“Cracking open the bubbles in this ice is like opening a time capsule of past atmospheres. The mix of gases in this trapped air shows us what the atmosphere was like tens of thousands of years ago.”

The story being told by these ice cores is one of climate and change: details of recent and past temperatures, wind extremes, and levels of greenhouse gases. And while 80,000 years might seem like a lot of climate history, the deepest ice cores (from further inland in Antarctica) go back around 800,000 years.

Plans are developing to take this even further back in time.

“The international community wants to drill the oldest ice core that you can possibly find.” Tas said, “but not just because we think bigger is better.

“Evidence from other sources shows that before around a million years ago the climate system was doing some pretty different things to what it has in the past 800,000. The ice cores show a fairly regular cycle of ice ages and warm periods that pulsed with a period around 100,000 years, but before a million years ago, this ice age cycle was shorter, at around 41,000 years. We want to understand what was involved with this change.

“And if we get an ice core that goes back more than a million years – and it’s possible we could do that – then we could really nail down what caused the shift in ice age pacing.”

Ice cores from the frozen continent must seem worlds away (literally) from NASA, where Tas started his career as a radio astronomer. Originally from north-western Tasmania, he studied maths and science as an undergraduate with the view to becoming a science teacher. But after a year in front of the classroom, Tas was still thirsting for further study. He returned to UTAS to complete a PhD in radio astronomy.

“That led to a couple of years with NASA in California,” he said. “But then I got that bug that Tasmanians often get in that I wanted to come back home to live, and that wasn’t going to be easy in the astronomy field. Career wise, I just had to make some hard decisions.

“It was about that time, in the mid ’90s, that the Australian Antarctic Division’s glaciology section was moved from Melbourne to Hobart, which opened up a job for a physicist. I haven’t looked back since.

“Working in astronomy, and now in the field of Antarctic research, is similar in that it’s all applied physics. Working in astronomy and with NASA was an exciting time, but I personally enjoy the immediate nature of the problems we are tackling in earth and climate science.”

Tasmania is today a world leader in Antarctic research, boasting the University’s Institute for Marine and Antarctic Studies (IMAS), the Australian Antarctic Division, the CSIRO and the ACE CRC, as well as the inter-related sciences at UTAS.
But Tas said that even scientists acknowledge that the frozen continent holds more than simply research possibilities.

“Most of us who go down there are really awe-inspired by the vastness of Antarctica – and the isolation,” he said.

“It is a remarkable feeling being out in the deep field, maybe 200 km from the nearest station, with only five or six of us in camp in tents. You get up in the morning after sleeping under a twilight sky that doesn’t darken and the sun is glinting on all the ice crystals. You look out and you know that for hundreds of kilometres, there’s just you and your small team.

“It’s an extreme environment and it’s beautiful and it’s stark. That sense of the infinite is wonderful.”

The ACE CRC’s core partners are the Australian Antarctic Division, CSIRO, UTAS, the Department of Climate Change and Energy Efficiency, the Alfred Wegener Institute for Polar and Marine Research (Germany) and the National Institute of Water and Atmospheric Research (New Zealand).

Flying high at the bottom of the world

F
ORMER NASA ASTRONOMER DR TAS van Ommen hasn’t clipped his wings completely since turning his focus towards Antarctic research 17 years ago. This last summer Tas has moonlighted from his usual job (of ice core analysis) on a joint ACE CRC and US project that involves flying over Antarctica in a World War II vintage DC3 aircraft (fitted with radars under the wings).

“The purpose of these flights is to measure the thickness of the ice,” Tas said. “If you don’t know the thickness of the ice sheet, you can’t predict what it’s going to do.

“But I have to admit that it’s also pretty nifty to be flying over Antarctica.”

The Antarctic continent is a slab of ice sitting on top of hills and valleys. The team, which has flown over an area of ice that’s equivalent in size to New South Wales, discovered that large sections of ice rest on land which is actually below sea level.

In fact they found that an area the size of Tasmania was more than a kilometre below sea level.

“There is concern because ice that is grounded below sea level can be more vulnerable to warming ocean waters,” Tas said. “It is possible that melting where ice meets ocean leads to retreat of the ice followed by further intrusion of ocean.

“What this does is to increase ice flow from the continent. You get an enhanced contribution to sea level over what we might have expected before we knew this.”

Antarctica contains around 70% of the world’s fresh water. If all of Antarctica were to melt (which, by the way, no-one is actually predicting) it would cause a sea-level rise of approximately 60 metres.
By Sarah Nicol

**MC POSTGRADUATE ALUMNUS**

Dave Buller (GradCertBus 2001) is currently wrapping up his “once in a lifetime” experience managing Casey station in Antarctica.

The Australian Antarctic Division seconded Dave from the Army for one year as the Station Leader. It’s the first time such an arrangement has been made. His job is to ensure the smooth day-to-day running of the station and to make sure that the needs of both science and non-scientific projects are managed appropriately.

Summer is a particularly busy time with 130 long-term visitors and various scientific projects conducted. There are also upgrades and repairs to be made to the station and infrastructure to last the perilous winter. As few as 16 staff remain at Casey over winter to keep the station running and ready to go in November.

“I have to ensure the safety of all personnel on station, taking into consideration the extreme and unforgiving working environment that is ‘Antarctica,’” he said.

Dave found the biggest challenge was the isolation over winter and spending so much time away from his wife Tarni, nine-year-old son Kyl and four-year-old daughter Taylor-K.

“For anyone with family, this is a very big sacrifice – particularly if young kids are involved,” he said.

There is no way of getting back to Australia during winter if a problem occurs at home, which is a difficult challenge. Dave not only deals with these problems himself but also, as Station Leader, has to assist others who may be experiencing these types of issues.

But the benefits do outweigh the negatives. Dave said the ever-present wildlife in the summer months made for fantastic photo opportunities.

“There are penguins galore and they are inquisitive and will come right up to you,” he said. “I had one ‘peck’ me on the hand as it came to check me out.”

Experiencing the change from summer to winter as the continent froze in (and doubled in size) was another highlight. Also the sunsets, sunrises and Southern Lights made for amazing viewing.

“It’s definitely one of those ‘once in a lifetime’ experiences when you see a really bright and active aurora dancing across the sky,” he said.

Experiencing life in Antarctica, on station and in the field, was an adventure on its own.

“We have no choice but to look after each other on station,” he said. “Station life is a big contributing factor to the Antarctic experience. We have some fantastic people from all walks of life to share experiences with and to learn from.”

Dave is looking forward to reuniting with his wife and children. He’s excited also about seeing trees again – and feeling grass between his toes.

Dave graduated from Duntroon in 1989 and spent the next 10 years working in the field of amphibious operations. This experience, which was mostly to do with water transport and terminal operations, included a two-year posting on the HMAS Tobruk. He completed a Graduate Certificate in Business (Port and Terminal Management) at the AMC while working at the Army’s Maritime School at Chowder Bay Sydney in the mid-1990s.

Dave has served on operations in East Timor, Bougainville, the Solomon Islands and Afghanistan and has just returned from a three-year posting in Canada, which prepared him for the cold of Antarctica.

“Canada probably taught me how to dress warmly, to clear unwanted snow and to drive in white-out conditions,” he said.

“I think that every life experience better prepares you for the future. My military career in general has given me valuable operational, personnel management and...
leadership skills that have been readily transferable on station.

“Having said that, the Antarctic experience is quite surreal, often unpredictable and unforgiving – so having a ‘fly by the seat of your pants’ mentality is always handy.”

Dave will return to the Army in 2012 as a full-time serving officer in Canberra. He said he would consider a similar placement again, but not until his children were older. “It is a fantastic opportunity and one that will always be treasured, but it comes at a great cost when you’re not around to see your children growing up so fast,” he said.

For more in Dave’s year ‘on ice’, go to http://frostyferris.tumblr.com

Forestry expert:

Dr Mark Hunt (BAppSc Hons 1994, PhD 1999) won’t be seeing any trees for the next year. He’s taking on the role of Casey Station Leader in Antarctica, replacing fellow UTAS alumnus Dave Buller.

“People keep telling me there aren’t any trees in Antarctica,” Mark said. “This is very different. It’s a big change.”

Mark, who manages forestry within the Queensland Government, spent the three months leading up to his 3 December departure in Hobart working with his team in training exercises and debriefs.

Before leaving, he said he was expecting the isolation, the large workload and the distance from his wife and adult children to be major challenges. But the benefits would make it worthwhile.

“It’s difficult to imagine a year in Antarctica won’t significantly change me,” he said.

Mark was planning to take his e-book reader to keep himself occupied. He’s also hoping to take many photographs and to learn to cross-country ski. He said the station was well-equipped with a library, theatrette, gym and sports equipment.

“They try to provide really well for recreation because it’s not only a place of work, but also people’s home for a year,” he said.
**The art of the ocean**

By Cherie Cooper

Ocean art: Contemporary jeweller and marine biologist Dr Karin Beaumont displays some of her pieces, which are inspired by microscopic forms.

**Scott of the Antarctic spotted in Claremont**

By Janette Brennan

Antarctic Explorer Robert Falcon Scott never set foot in Tasmania, except for the afternoon he spent on Macquarie Island on 22 November 1901. So it seems strange that a three-panel stained glass window – commemorating the arrival of Scott and his companions at the South Pole and their death on the return trip – was commissioned for St Alban’s Anglican Church in Claremont only months after the world learnt of the death of the explorer’s 1912 death (and remembering there were as few as 41 householders in the rural parish at the time).

The story behind this monument (which was moved to Edge Anglican Church in the 1980s, when St Alban’s was deconsecrated) has been researched by Professor Pat RN … He endured unto the end and was faithful unto death.

Pat and Gillian discovered that the window was the gift of Mrs Edith Knight, who had attended the 1913 laying ceremony of the church’s foundation stone. This event was also attended by Lady Ellison-Macartney, who was not only the wife of the then Governor of Tasmania but also Scott’s sister. In fact Scott’s mother, Hannah, along with another of his sisters, Rose Campbell, had accompanied the Governor’s family to Hobart. It’s likely that this was the occasion when Edith Knight offered to have made, and installed, a stained glass window as a memorial to Scott.

The window, which was designed and made by Auguste Fisher, consists of three tall panels with a dedication: Captain R.F. Scott RN … He endured unto the end and was faithful unto death.

**Oceanides: Art of the Ocean**

By Karin Beaumont (Grad Dip Antarctic and Southern Ocean Studies Hons 1996, PhD 2003) is beautiful, intricate and very wearable.

It’s also curiously recognisable. The forms she represents in her pieces are somehow familiar, but you can’t quite put your finger on how you know them.

Karin said people sometimes examine a piece and say it reminds them of something – the pattern on a starfish, or maybe the scales of a fish.

Her jewellery range, Oceanides: Art of the Ocean, is inspired by nature, but a side of nature a lot of us don’t see very often – the microscopic side. Karin’s designs are inspired by the tiny forms of the creatures that appear at the end of her microscope: a scientist’s view.

After she completed a Bachelor of Applied Science in Natural Resources Management at the University of Adelaide, Karin moved to Hobart, to be closer to her desired place of employment – Antarctica.

She completed an honours degree in Antarctic studies, followed by her PhD in zoology at UTAS in 2003, researching microscopic plankton in Antarctic waters and their role in climate change.

Inspired by the intricate, tiny organisms she studied, Karin created her first piece of metal sculpture in the diesel mechanics workshop at Davis Station, Antarctica.

Her twin passions of jewellery making and marine biology are a pairing which works surprisingly well.

“I love being able to have the creative side – not that science isn’t creative, but it’s a more tangible form of creativity in that you can have an object at the end of the process,” Karin said.

“I also love the act of making. The best thing is when you have an idea in your head and the idea transforms straight from your hands into the piece.

“In high school I really enjoyed metalwork and I was much more drawn to metal as a material above wood and plastic – but I didn’t think I was going to do anything with that. Now later in life it’s come full circle and I create lots of metal pieces.”

Karin’s work has been exhibited in the Waterhouse Natural History Art Prize, Conrad Jupiter’s Art Prize and the Macquarie University World Year of Physics Art Prize. Her work is stocked at The Art of Silver co-operative gallery, Salamanca Arts Centre, where she works every Friday fortnight.

Karin also creates exhibition pieces, sculptures and special one-off commissions.

“The alum cuffs are worn by people from the age of 18 to 80,” she said. “It’s really rewarding to have a design that spans that age spectrum and that reaches all different types of people.”

To see Karin’s work, visit www.oceanides.com.au/gallery.htm or www.bluecaravan.net/oceanides
Living for Months in an Aircraft Packing Case

packing case redesigned as a hut, on a windswept subantarctic island, was how marine zoologist Mary-Anne Lea (PhD 2002) spent years of her early 20s. To shower, Mary-Anne and her colleague would say goodbye to the penguins that they were studying and make the weekly two-hour walk to the nearest base.

Mary-Anne loved it. She’s been hooked ever since.

“People come alive when they go to the Antarctic,” said Mary-Anne, who today is a senior research fellow/lecturer at the Institute for Marine and Antarctic Studies (IMAS).

“It’s a beautiful place and it assaults all of your senses – the sounds, the smells, the sights. I’ve yet to meet a person who isn’t profoundly affected by going there.”

Mary-Anne has devoted most of her professional life to studying the behavioural ecology and climate interactions of marine predators, particularly fur seals. Her CV lists six summers in the subantarctic assessing the behaviour of penguins, elephant and fur seals, followed by three Arctic winters in Alaska studying the migratory patterns of northern fur seals and sea lions. An additional and unexpected highlight was being part of a team to discover a new emperor penguin colony in Antarctica in 2005.

But the added bonus of this research lies in its sense of adventure. For Mary-Anne’s PhD, which focused on the foraging activity and oceanographic interactions of Antarctic fur seals, she was one of only three women (among more than 100 men) working on the French-speaking, subantarctic Iles Kerguelen. Several years later her postdoctoral life in Alaska was played out on an old fishing boat, where the scientists lived while tracking sea lions through the eternally dark winter days and nights.

Isolation, marine predators ... and discovery

By Janette Brennan

Teeming with wildlife: Mary-Anne (left), pictured with colleague Margie Morrice, said that living in an old aircraft engine packing case is not quite so tough when you have king penguins and elephant seal pups for neighbours!

For the past five years Mary-Anne has been part of a circumpolar study of Antarctic fur seals, working with scientists from the US, South Africa, the UK and now France. Tracking the winter migration of three main populations of Antarctic fur seals, the scientists discovered that females in one part of the Antarctic spend the winter visiting the harsh and stormy environment at the edge of the ice and the open ocean. Meanwhile fur seals on the opposite side of the Antarctic migrate up to the east and west coasts of South America to bathe in warmer waters.

The finding that one species would behave so differently was unexpected, and exciting in that it raised even more questions. It seems that years after Mary-Anne’s first taste of life on a subantarctic island, the region continues to surprise.

“In the past I’ve worked occasionally as a lecturer on small polar cruise boats,” Mary-Anne said. “The main challenge is trying to convince people not to rush to take it all in, but just to sit still and to soak it up – take the time to experience it. If you sit on a beach, you’ll be surrounded by penguins within seconds.

“The weather and scale of the Antarctic can make people feel small and vulnerable. But just to know it’s there has a calming influence. I think that’s why there’s such a strong global push to preserve it. It’s important not just because of the science and for its crucial role in the regulation of global temperature, but because of the emotion of its beauty, and the feelings the place and animals evoke when you’re there.”

Hitching a ride: A fork-tailed storm petrel joined Mary-Anne and her colleagues when they were tracking steller sea lions through the dark winter days.

“I was enthralled by the combination of isolation and discovery,” Mary-Anne said. “as well as the chance to be in a place teeming with wildlife. It’s heaven for a zoologist to be surrounded all day, every day, by animals that aren’t scared of you – animals that actually seek interactions with you.

“But for a scientist, you always come back to discovery. And one of the biggest discoveries for me has been learning that there’s an enormous variability in the behaviour of individual members of a species, just like there is with human behaviour.”
The winds of destiny
By Janette Brennan

IT ALL STARTED ON A DAM IN A paddock in Margate, southern Tasmania. Fred Barrett (BEngNavalArch 1994) would race radio-controlled boats against his mates and dream he was sailing in the Admiral’s Cup.

“There were two years in particular, when I was a teenager, when I busily worked throughout the winter on designs of boats for my friends,” said Fred, who today owns and operates Fred Barrett Yacht Design and Naval Architecture.

“Then, in the summer, we’d compete with eight or nine boats on the local dam. We threw cow patties into the water for markers.

“It was very basic stuff, but it’s from there that I found my love for design and building and giving to people.”

From these early days Fred began offshore racing at 16 and started competing in Sydney to Hobart yacht races at 17. Following high school, he enrolled in a maritime engineering degree at the Australian Maritime College (AMC).

At that time (the late ’80s) AMC was in its infancy and the courses focused on building offshore structures. But Fred and several other students spoke to the lecturers about their interest in boat building, so the degree was adjusted to accommodate their interests.

The scope of courses at AMC today is, of course, much wider – so much so that Fred now conducts a unit on yacht and small craft design.

After graduating, Fred worked at the Tasmanian passenger/car ferry producer Incat. If you’re into the construction of boats, he explained, it’s good to head to a shipyard for your first job. It shows you how boats work.

“In the four years that I was there quite a lot of boats rolled out,” he said, “so it was an exciting time. But still the dream was always to go yachting.

“So I applied for lots of positions around the world, just to see what was going on out there. Then, at 3 one morning, I got a fax from Sparkman and Stephens in New York – they’re quite a famous design firm for racing and motor yachts.

“They flew me over to Manhattan, which was my first time outside Australia, and I started designing and sailing professionally for them in Long Island Sound. It was quite a culture shock. I left the space and quiet of Margate to live in a Manhattan sub-let, which was across the road from (former US Secretary of State) Henry Kissinger and up the street from the United Nations.”

Returning to Hobart in 2000 for family reasons, Fred got his first taste of running a small business: he’d do okay, then struggle a bit, then do okay again. A turning point came when he was headhunted by McConaghy Boats to project-manage the build of Morning Glory, which was the first canting keel supermaxi in the world (the keel could be swung in different directions to balance the yacht).

This project led to an invitation to join the Spanish Movistar Sailing Team, which was competing in the Volvo Ocean Race (formerly the Whitbread Round the World Race). Fred joined as Technical Manager for the build, and stayed on to become Shore Manager for the 2005/06 event.

These days, back in Hobart, Fred Barrett Yacht Design and Naval Architecture takes on commercial work (such as vessels for fish farms and catamarans for commercial fishing), as well as high-performance yacht design. Recently, one of his yacht designs was selected from among 18 of the world’s best to be included in the World Match Racing Tour.

“I’m a jack of all trades, which you have to be in Tasmania,” he said. “The coalface of this industry is in Europe, but Tassie is quite an iconic place for a yacht designer to come from. It’s the end of the Sydney to Hobart, and a lot of very famous yachtmen come from here – although not too many yacht designers.

“Hopefully, that’s something I can change.”
ANZ board boosted by UTAS alumni

IN AN AIRPORT INTERVIEW JUST before she leaves Australia for Germany, flights are in disarray and baggage handlers striking – but Alison Watkins (BCom 1985) is noticeably cool and collected.

Dividing her time between her job as CEO of Graincorp, her position on the board of the ANZ Bank and her family in Melbourne is all part of a regular week for her.

Currently the only woman on the board, she has had a non-executive role since 2008 and is a member of the board’s audit and governance committees.

“It’s very much a part-time role,” Alison said. “We meet most months for a day or two, so it’s very compatible with my Graincorp role.

“My contribution very much draws on my business experience in food and agriculture – and I know what it’s like to be a corporate customer of a bank.”

Alison’s work history has given her significant experience in retailing and small business and she has a strong background in finance and accounting.

She was the CEO of Berri Ltd and investment company Bennelong Group and is a former director of Woolworths Ltd. Most useful to her in her board role are the several years she spent as group general manager of strategy with ANZ.

Alison anticipates she will not be the only female ANZ board member for long.

“You need to have someone who understands that from a business and technology point of view.

“Technology is extremely important to banks because 30 per cent of their costs are in technology and information systems,” he said. “It pays to have someone who understands that from a business and technology point of view.

“And of course the ANZ is the only Australian bank to have a technology board committee – I think that’s really paid off for them. Ian Young, who was CEO of Singapore Telecom, is also on that committee.”

Greg is one of three Clark brothers who grew up in Launceston and graduated from UTAS, with Greg Clark and Alison Watkins on its board and Warwick Smith (LLB 1979) and Ivan Colhoun (BSc Hons 1986) in the executive ranks.

UTAS graduates play a significant role in the upper echelons of the ANZ Bank, with Greg Clark and Alison Watkins bringing to the board her business knowledge in food and agriculture – and she knows what it’s like to be a corporate customer of a bank.

Relationships and technology

TO ANZ BANK BOARD DIRECTOR Dr Greg Clark (BSc Hons 1966) banking is about two things: relationships and technology. The longest-serving member of the board, Greg’s expertise is in broad technology – telecommunication and IT. After completing first class honours in science at UTAS he did a PhD in physics at the Australian National University, moving eventually into running businesses in media technology.

He has been principal of Clark Capital Partners, a US-based firm that has advised internationally on technology and the technology of the marketplace, and has held senior executive positions in IBM, News Corporation and Loral Space and Communications.

These days he splits his time equally between Sydney and the US, a director of KaComm Communications and advising ICE Energy, a Colorado-based company dealing in off-peak energy.

“It’s the green energy storage concept; they’re a good outfit,” Greg said.

“Until recently I was also working with another Australian to bring high-speed satellite broadband to outback Australia, Antarctica and other islands but that’s now been taken on by the NBN.

“That’s life – except our company does have space assets over Australia.”

A non-executive ANZ board director since 2004, Greg believes he brings a deep technology base and a related business capability to the position.

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Greg is one of three Clark brothers who grew up in Launceston and graduated from UTAS.

All have been extremely successful in their chosen fields: Allan (BSc Hons 1968), who is a professor at the University of Geneva, works on the Hadron Collider in Cern and recently was awarded an honorary Doctor of Science at UTAS; Ian (BSc Hons 1968), a banker who took a DPhil at Oxford University and is now retired in the UK but invests in green energy; and Greg, who also has a green energy focus but maintains his Australian roots with his position on the board of the ANZ Bank.
The very decorated life of a housewife superstar

By Janette Brennan

Renaissance woman: Marjorie Bligh, pictured on her wedding day, is the author of a library of advice books.

SHE IS A CELEBRATED TASMANIAN author, a respected career woman – and mostly, an eccentric domestic goddess. No, we’re not talking about author Dr Danielle Wood (BA Hons 1994), who indeed is a former Vogel-winning writer* and a gorgeous young mum (and who is now also well-versed in the methods for treating constipated goldfish with Epsom salts). But Danielle’s latest book, Housewife Superstar: The Very Best of Marjorie Bligh, introduces us to the life story and selected highlights of Marjorie Bligh – a true original Australian domestic goddess and an inspiration for comedian Barry Humphries’ adored alter ego, Dame Edna Everage.

“I first met Marjorie when I was a journalist at the Mercury newspaper,” Danielle said. “I went to her house in Devonport and had a tour of the garden and of the private museum where she keeps her handcrafts. “But it wasn’t until quite a few years later, when I was given a copy of one of her books as a semi-ironic wedding shower gift, that I became seriously interested in her life story.”

Marjorie Bligh, now 94 years old, is the author of a library of advice books and the go-to girl for all manner of problem-solving. She knows what to do when you run out of rouge (cut a beetroot in half and slap it on your cheek) and how to stop coughing at night (roast an onion before an open fire, skin on, then top with butter and serve).

Famous for never wasting a thing, Marjorie constructed a museum within her own home to show off the various items she’s knitted and crocheted (using unlikely materials such as plastic shopping bags and used pantyhose). Her abundant garden is staked out with old-fashioned corset brassieres that function as plant protectors.

“Marjorie fascinates me because of the way she’s approached housewifery as a career,” Danielle said. “For her, housewifery is not so much about the domestic as the public sphere. In an agricultural show, she was near unbeatable on just about every count – cakes, scones, jam, pickles, flowers, vegetables, knitting, crochet, embroidery – she was quite the Renaissance woman.”

The release last month of Housewife Superstar was complemented by an exhibition of Marjorie’s life – featuring books, diaries, scrapbooks and handicrafts – within the Morris Miller Library. A highlight of the exhibition was a selection of Marjorie’s hand-made gowns, including two of her three wedding dresses. In fact on that point, the thrice-married Marjorie is described by comedian Barry Humphries as “no slouch in the matrimonial department”. How did Barry Humphries become such a colossal fan?

“I kept hearing the rumour that Marjorie had inspired Dame Edna, and I wanted to know if it was actually true,” she said. “And so I did quite a bit of research and tracked down Barry Humphries, and I can now confirm that there is indeed a story to tell.”

Housewife Superstar: The Very Best of Marjorie Bligh is an illuminating look at an Australian treasure. It will change forever the way you look at household management – along with plastic shopping bags.

*Dr Danielle Wood’s first novel, The Alphabet of Light and Dark, won the 2002 Australian/Vogel Literary Award and was shortlisted for the 2004 Commonwealth Writers’ Prize in the Best First Book category.

“I don’t think Edna has ever admired anyone as much as she admires Marjorie Bligh.” Barry Humphries
Eighteen months ago, Rohan Wilson (BA Hons 1998) was starting to feel a bit down about life. The company he worked for in Japan had just collapsed, and he was stranded far from home.

After getting back to Tasmania with his wife and child, Rohan decided to focus on an idea he’d been working on casually for more than five years—a novel about Tasmanian explorer and entrepreneur John Batman. It was a gamble.

Last April, that gamble paid off. Rohan won the 30th annual Vogel Literary Award—a $30,000 prize given exclusively to young, unpublished Australian authors.

Rohan beat competitors from around Australia with his novel The Roving Party. Overnight, he went from a self-described “guy who lives in his bedroom” to a national media darling.

“It felt a bit like how I imagine it would be to step out of the Big Brother house and onto the main stage,” Rohan laughed. “I’d just been sitting in my bedroom for nine months, editing and writing. Then one day I was in Sydney at the Vogel party. It was crazy.”

The Roving Party traces Tasmania’s brutal past, especially the misdeeds of John Batman and the band of convicts and trackers he led in 1829. It’s considered fiction because Rohan has filled in the gaps in historical accounts of Batman’s activities as a bounty hunter.

But despite this book taking out one of Australia’s most prestigious literary prizes (and selling, to date, more than 6,000 copies), Rohan has remained grounded. “I was lucky,” he insisted several times throughout the course of our interview. “Before the Vogel, not only was I unpublished, I also had not really written anything.”

He paused, and quickly added: “But I’m not going to give it back.”

A twist of fate here or a quirk of circumstance there, and Rohan believes his book might never have seen daylight. Even while he was writing it, he wondered if the story was too dark or violent for popular interest.

And for a while it seemed publishers felt that way too. After nearly seven years’ work, Rohan was facing the very real possibility that his manuscript wouldn’t sell. As the rejection letters trickled in, his determination and confidence were shaken.

“It was starting to become a real burden,” he said. “I’d done all this work. I had brought my family over from Japan and if I couldn’t make it work, I had dug a big hole for myself that I didn’t know how to get out of.”

Just when Rohan was at his lowest point, his fortune changed. He received a phone call telling him he had won the $30,000 Vogel prize.

“It felt like this weight lifted off me,” he said. “That’s why the Vogel is such an important literary institution in Australia—it’s because the people who decide it are not publishers. They are writers, critics, journalists. They come to your book with no financial agenda, and no thought to the bottom line. They read it as a piece of art. Books that might be a little dangerous, like my book, have more chance of seeing daylight thanks to the Vogel.”

In the six months since Rohan won the prize, his life has not changed (much). He still keeps office hours in front of his computer at his Launceston home, working on the follow-up to The Roving Party. He has, however, spoken at the Melbourne Writers Festival and the Australian History Association conference. The Roving Party was also shortlisted in the Victorian Premier’s Literary Award.

“The publishing world is a little bit stratified,” he said. “There’s the published and the unpublished.”

“The unpublished are this pretty vast, enormous crowd of people. The published are this little clique of elite, ivory tower writers.”

“I’d hate to feel like I’d ever be part of that tiny elite, because I guess everyone is sitting on a knife edge and you don’t know which side you might fall.”
His best work, you’ll never notice
By Peter Cochrane

COBUS VAN BREDA (BFA 1990) works in a profession where one’s best work usually goes unnoticed – as it should be. He is a paper conservator, one of three professional conservators currently employed by the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery (TMAG). Cobus is based at the Rosny storage facility, which is home to the vast majority of the institution’s more than one million objects.

Only a small percentage of TMAG’s collection is on display at any given time. Many objects can be displayed permanently, but works on paper, being light-sensitive, are frequently rotated and that helps keep him busy.

While the public’s attention is sometimes grabbed by major restoration efforts – such as that of the Sistine Chapel frescoes between 1980 and 1994 – Cobus explains that the preference today is for conservation over restoration.

“The emphasis these days is on minimal intervention. What we’re trying to do is not deceive people but to minimise distraction from the intent of the creator.

“Everything we do should be, as much as possible, reversible.”

So the less you see of his handiwork in the artworks hanging on the TMAG walls, the happier he is.

One of the biggest challenges facing conservators, he explains, is having to treat low-quality paper – such as that made from poorly processed, ground wood pulp – “in other words, it’s close to newsprint”.

“No matter what you do it will break down – which is unfortunate because a lot of artists, particularly young struggling artists, do some of their best work on cheap paper.”

Then there’s damage caused by works being dropped, torn or creased. Staining caused by the use of inappropriate adhesives or tapes is also a frequently encountered problem.

The use of poor quality acidic mountboard can also cause staining. Most of all, prolonged exposure to light causes colours to fade and paper to discolour and weaken.

The last-mentioned could see a 19th-century watercolour of a summer scene, complete with indigo-blue skies, turn over time into an autumnal scene, with grey skies.

Conservation/restoration has a long history, though the profession is relatively new to Australia. In an article penned for the Friends of TMAG newsletter, Cobus notes that the Sistine Chapel ceiling frescoes were first ‘restored’ 53 years after Michelangelo completed them, using linseed or walnut oil (subsequent restoration methods included cleaning the frescoes with linen cloths and bread, and with sponges dipped in Greek wine).

Here in Australia public galleries and museums were forced to recruit conservators and restorers trained overseas until 1978, when the University of Canberra introduced the first applied science course to train conservators.

That was about the time Cobus enrolled at the Australian Maritime College in Launceston, and after completing a diploma of nautical science, he sailed with the Australian National Line as a third mate. He spent five years at sea before deciding that his true vocation lay on land, and in the arts.

“It was a major career move,” he concurs.

“But it made sense. I realised that I didn’t want to be an artist, because I didn’t have the fire in the belly, but I liked science and I liked the combination of art and science, and in particular, I liked printmaking.”
After completing a Bachelor of Fine Art at the University of Tasmania, he completed a Bachelor of Applied Science in Canberra in 1993, majoring in paper conservation, followed by a postgraduate diploma in photographic conservation in 2004.

In 1993 he was offered an internship at the National Gallery of Victoria, working on its significant collection of prints and drawings – which include works by Rembrandt, Goya, Matisse and Picasso – and he subsequently became responsible for its European portrait miniature collection. He joined TMAG in 2000.

Among the highlights of his seven years at the NGV were an exhibition in 1994 of the work of 16th century German painter and printmaker Albrecht Dürer and the 1997 blockbuster Rembrandt: A Genius and His Impact.

For the Dürer exhibition he was required to assemble a monumental woodcut called The Triumphal Arch, commissioned by the Holy Roman Emperor Maximilian I. The work is a composite of 49 sheets, and in its assembled form measures nearly 3 metres wide by 3.5 metres high. It had not been previously exhibited at the NGV because of its size.

Sometimes an artwork has been subject to more than one restoration attempt over the centuries and those interventions have not stood the test of time. A painting conservator, for example, might have to strip away layers of varnish applied by his or her counterparts in the 18th or 19th centuries. “You should document everything you do and discuss with the curator or curators what should stay and what should go,” Cobus said.

Increasingly, conservation is being linked to connoisseurship. “That involves working with curators to learn as much as possible about the materials and techniques used.”

The Rembrandt exhibition gave him the opportunity to study the Japanese papers that the Dutch master sometimes used in printmaking. The papers – considered exotic at the time – were brought to Europe from Japan via the trading post established in 1634 on an artificial island in Nagasaki harbour (the setting for David Mitchell’s latest novel, The Thousand Autumns of Jacob de Zoet). No less unusual for its time is the collection that Cobus is currently preparing for exhibition at TMAG when the refurbished Henry Hunter galleries reopen in 2013 following the completion of stage one of TMAG’s redevelopment. It consists of 51 warts ‘n’ all watercolour portraits of the urban poor in regional areas of England in the 1820s.

Keeping Cobus company for months to come will be an idiosyncratic cast of characters, including the lunatic Little John of Colchester; the soldier ‘Whistling Billy’ of York, with his broken and bandaged sabre; Tommy Raeburn, the Ayrshire Hermit, and Samuel Hevens, the Jewish old clothes merchant of Greenwich – not to mention the Muffin Man, the Bun Man and the Sand Man.

* Further information on conservation in Australia and Australian conservators can be found on the website of the Australian Institute for the Conservation of Cultural Material: www.aiccm.org.au

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**YOUR WAY FORWARD.**

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A funny thing happened...

By Janette Brennan

MAGICIAN, VENTRILOQUIST, comedian and playwright Daryl Peebles (BEd 1983, MEd Studies 1988) has devoted his life to funny business, although his latest production may not be what you expect. Daryl is doing a part-time PhD within the UTAS School of Management on the value of humour within the workplace and its potential correlation with increased productivity.

“The key is to take your job seriously and yourself lightly,” Daryl said.

For many years Daryl’s day job was in human resources at the ABC and in the Tasmanian State Public Service, but the inspiration for his thesis came from much closer to home.

“In 1990 I went through a rough patch that knocked the stuffing out of me,” he said. “My whole life was in turmoil. I was 40 and feeling depressed and inadequate. Everything changed for me within the space of one year – my marital status, my job, my home. In fact the only constants for me at the time were my kids and my cat.

“But at some point you have to look at your choices and decide whether you want to wallow in misery, or if you’d rather drag yourself up by your bootlaces. I’ve always had a parallel career in theatre and comedy, and during this difficult period the comedy really helped me cope.”

Also around this time Daryl began to notice that for people to be truly productive at work, they need to experience some state of happiness. He decided to read up on the topic, never dreaming it might lead to a PhD. But the more Daryl spoke to friends...
and colleagues about the physiological and psychological benefits of laughter, the more people started telling him there was a book in it – even a PhD.

And while there’s a general acceptance that ‘a good laugh’ does us all the world of good, it’s more challenging to prove it in an empirical way. A breakthrough came when Daryl came across Canadian research which determined there are four types of humour: two of which are positive and affirming (such as fancy-dress days within the office), while the other two are negative and derogatory (such as sexist jokes and put-downs). Daryl also read US research which developed the concept of psychological capital, exploring the belief that individuals who are high in qualities such as hope, confidence, resilience and optimism are the ones who succeed in the workplace.

“This research also observed that there are other human characteristics linked to psychological capital, such as spirituality, wisdom and humour,” Daryl said, “and when I read that this work mentioned humour, I knew there was an opening for psychological capital, exploring the belief that individuals who are high in the positive humour style and these elements of productivity.”

Daryl was first bitten by the performance bug as a child in Penguin. His neighbour, who belonged to a local band, introduced Daryl to amateur theatre, as well as touring shows by magicians and hypnotists. Looking back, Daryl admits the shows were probably amateurish – but at the time, they felt like Hollywood.

Daryl bought his first magic book when he was eight (despite protests from his Methodist mum, who believed it was the work of the devil). In a way she was right! Daryl has been possessed by humour ever since. He’s since written three plays, 14 one-act plays and a musical. For 30 years he toured with Glenn Brown as musical comedy duo Novak ‘n’ Good.

Will the real Daryl R. Peebles please stand up?

Around seven years ago a minister of religion in the United States was told of an internet story that praised his work with homeless teens. Hoping to track down the report, the minister googled his name – Daryl R. Peebles. But instead of finding a story on his outreach work, the minister was surprised with a list of stories about a Tasmanian entertainer who sang rude songs in pubs.

“Daryl R. Peebles is an unusual name,” said our Daryl. “But here were these two men, on either sides of the world, who had exactly the same name and were the same age. In fact when we started to correspond, we discovered we had a lot more in common than just our name.”

It turns out that Daryl and Daryl share more than 30 similar or identical characteristics. The odds of this level of coincidence, calculated one professor of mathematics, are around 750 (followed by 32 zeros) to one!

Daryl met Daryl in person during a recent trip to the US. “The local media got hold of the story,” said our Daryl, “and then the national media started running it. We ended up doing 35 international radio and television interviews within 24 hours.”

The two Daryl R. Peebles have since been interviewed by people of the calibre of Jay Leno (The Tonight Show).

Seeing double: Daryl R. Peebles (right) with Daryl R. Peebles.
Where politics and pop culture collide

By Cherie Cooper

May 1, 2011, 11.59pm: Who Made the Bed? (2011), by Jamin (After Lichtenstein). This painting was created in the week following Osama’s assassination and the text borrows from Donald Rumsfeld’s quote of 2002, in which he attempts to explain the lack of evidence of any weapons of mass destruction in Iraq after the US invasion.

The studio used by Benjamin Kluss (BFA Hons 2005, MFA 2008) is an explosion of colour and clutter. A giant half-pipe takes up the rear wall and there are brightly painted riot shields leaning in formation nearby. Meanwhile stacks of paint cans and equipment assemble amid an array of large stencils – they feature images of Osama bin Laden, George Bush, and other world leaders.

This is where pop culture collides with politics ... and becomes art.

This year Ben was awarded the four-month UTAS/Arts Tasmania Rosamond McCulloch Studio residency scholarship. The studio is located in the Cité International des Arts studio complex in the heart of Paris. Here he is continuing to pursue a form of art which combines popular, iconic images with an unsettling commentary on politics and the media. He uses stencils and spray paint to create large, vibrant, colourful artworks.

Like most street artists, Ben exhibits under a pseudonym: Jamin.

During a break from his undergraduate degree at the School of Art, Ben travelled around Australia for three years.

“When I came back it was post 9/11 and it was interesting to see that there was more protest culture,” he said.

“I became hyper-aware of the media façade of political issues, and the figures involved. My work shifted to become more about the media itself and the way it represents both those figures and those issues, and the way images and information degrade through media processes.

“Part of the rationale is that these massive events – like the assassination of Osama, or Abu Ghraib – become big pop culture moments where, despite the horror and tragedy involved, their portrayal becomes ubiquitous. In turn, those images are used in different contexts for different agendas and different reasons.”

Ben said the image gets used so many times, for so many causes, that we’re no longer attached to a specific meaning – that the meaning has become ambiguous.

“Stencil art has a way of reducing and simplifying forms to easily understood motifs,” he said. “In that sense it is a useful, populist way to talk about politics.

“Sometimes it’s nice to have ways of opening up that dialogue without getting too bogged down in art-speak or political jargon.”

Having not travelled outside Australia before, Ben said that the experience of being in Paris is a whole new world – particularly since so much of his work is about global issues.

His latest research project will look at the historical aspect of street and stencil art, and protest culture.

“French street artist Blek Le Rat is regarded as the grandfather of stencilling, and then British street artist Banksy took up the flag...
of stencilling in the ‘90s,” he said. “Blek was doing it 10 years earlier.

“People often think of Banksy as being the pioneer. In many ways the rats he was doing are a homage to Blek Le Rat.”

From a young age Ben could produce “half-decent” art but he didn’t see it as his career trajectory. After school he completed a trade in graphic pre-press, working in the print industry for five years. He quit the trade to go and do painting at art school, creating abstract oil paintings.

After the sudden and tragic death of his father, Ben took a break from his undergraduate degree, returning several years later with the aforementioned new interest in street art and media politics.

“It was only at that point I realised those previous skills from the trade came through and I found it quite natural to work with computers and mechanical processes,” he said.

“Stencilling is similar to sign writing. There are a lot of unexpected crossovers which have worked out well.

“The most interesting thing for me about pop art is the cultural references it makes, but also creating fine art through industrial processes. I use materials like steel, aluminium, perspex and rubber car trimmings – plus the paint itself comes in a pre-packaged can. You can mix the colours, but you’re not mixing them the same way you’d mix oils.

“It’s like using the machine to critique the machine in a way, and I find that fascinating.”

Ben said political art could be touchy but was worth pursuing.

“A lot of art can be political without being overtly political so it doesn’t trigger those responses in people,” he said. “But what I do is more overt in its use of recognisable figures.

“It can stir people up and get them passionate about issues. It’s a point to identify with.”

Critiquing the machine: Ben Kluss, aka Jamin, uses stencil art to open up a dialogue about politics and the media.

Team America (2007), by Jamin: Part of a series called ‘First We Take Paris, Then We Take The World’.


Wolves in Sheep’s Clothing (2010), by Jamin: This painting was completed the day Julia Gillard became Australian Prime Minister.
MELBOURNE-BASED FASHION designer Alexi Freeman (BFA 2004) is making a name for himself as a successful creator of beautiful high-end clothing. His designs are a beguiling mix of beauty, modernity and wearability. The woman who wears his label Alexi Freeman is “a woman who knows what she wants”, according to the designer.

Alexi’s creativity has always been evident. He completed a degree in fine arts at the University’s Tasmanian School of Art, majoring in printmaking.

“Prior to launching the Alexi Freeman label, I felt my artistic ideas were like storyboards for yet to be realised fashion collections, so I decided to take the plunge and launch the fashion label in 2006,” he said.

“My time studying and practising fine art definitely informs the work I’m doing now. Designing prints is still one of my favourite parts of the job.”

Alexi’s creative process is as unique as his clothes. He cites as his inspiration “the clouds, the stars, the shapes that I see when I close my eyes ... pretty much everything except fashion itself”.

“First of all, I create a range plan of pieces that I consider to be the most relevant for that season,” he said.

“Once I’ve established what I believe those pieces are, I create the individual pieces/looks through a fairly intuitive process that involves sketching and experimentation, before I decide upon the final garments and accessories that I offer in my collections.

“It’s a constant process of designing, editing and refining my ideas, so it’s my hope that each collection is in some way a progression of the last ... That said, there is generally a theme specific to each collection, which I’ll investigate for that season only.”

Alexi said his career highlights so far included having his Neo Lace Gown accepted as a finalist in the Powerhouse Museum International Lace Award.

To see Alexi’s designs, visit: http://alexifreeman.com/

Clothes maketh the man

By Cherie Cooper

High-end designer: Alexi Freeman cites as his inspiration “the clouds, the stars ... pretty much everything except fashion itself”. Photo by Nadia Sliwka.

Breaking down legal barriers

By Sarah Nicol

DALE REARDON (LLB HONS 1992) isn’t the sort of guy to let disability get in his way. He was Tasmania’s first blind lawyer, he ran a bed and breakfast business, worked for the Tax Office and is now about to begin a PhD.

After graduating with first class honours in law, Dale struggled to find work in Hobart. But instead of giving up, he looked elsewhere and found work in Launceston at Zeeman, Cable and Page.

Dale was Tasmania’s first blind lawyer and did not see his disability as a barrier in practising. After about two years in Launceston, he moved back to Hobart and worked for his own firm with Ian Rutherford – Rutherford Barristers and Solicitors. However, the partnership closed after four years due to health reasons. Facing constant rejection from Hobart firms, Dale moved into tourism, operating three bed and breakfast businesses in Hobart. He later worked with the Australian Taxation Office in Melbourne, where he met his wife Jo (also a UTAS graduate).

But now, after more than three years doing legal and administration work, he is starting the next phase of his life. Dale has enrolled in a PhD at the UTAS School of Law.

“The timing seemed right to move back to Tassie and be with family,” he said. “I’m a little bit nervous; it’s something I haven’t done in a while.”

Dale has been granted a Tasmanian Research Scholarship and will use conversion software to translate written text into spoken language. He hasn’t yet made plans for his post-PhD life.
EIGHTY-FIVE-YEAR-OLD JOAN WEBB (GradCertEd 2010, MEd 2011) graduated from UTAS with a Master of Education last August, but she has no plans to slow down. Indeed the next chapter in Mrs Webb’s career – which has spanned teaching, local politics, environmental activism, tourism and writing – is likely to be a PhD on poetry and the role it plays as the conscience of society.

“UTAS has been an amazing experience for me,” said Joan, who earlier this year was placed on the Tasmanian Honour Roll of Women. “Studying at this age makes me positive about life and excited about the future.”

Joan began a two-year Graduate Certificate in Education in 2009, which she then broadened into the masters degree. It suited her to do the majority of her study online with regular support from her supervisors, particularly her coordinator Associate Professor Rosemary Callingham.

So what prompted Joan to head back to Uni in her 80s?

“Yo see I’ve always enjoyed acquiring knowledge, but life can make it difficult to study,” she said.

“I did my original teaching qualification in 1963, when I was in my late 30s, and at that time I had three young children. But what I find at my age is that at last I’ve got the time to do whatever I choose to do and can usually organise my day without too many interruptions.”

Mrs Webb was born in London in 1926 and moved to Tasmania in 1963. She wanted to be closer to her daughter, who’d married a local boy. In the following years she taught at the Mount Arthur Family School, and devised literacy programs for intellectually challenged adults and the long-term unemployed.

Soon after she started the West Tamar Action Group (which succeeded in turning the Exeter tip into a recycling facility); was elected to the West Tamar Council; instigated the Save the Supply Mill Ruins movement (which preserved the historic site as a community park); and created the Exhibition of Excellence (now the Beaconsfield Gold Festival). She then opened Tasmania’s first wine centre/restaurant, produced the first tourist map of the West Tamar, ran a B&B/conference centre on 30 ha of bush at Deviot, and published a novel, *The Controlling Factor* (2006), and two books of poetry, *A Twist in the Tale* (2006) and *Hanging By My Toe* (2008).

But Joan laughs at the suggestion that her life – or her ‘big adventure’, as she calls it – has been remarkable.

“There have been many times in my life when I’ve been unable to get attention for this issue or that,” she said. “Now I realise that all I had to do was to keep breathing in and out and, eventually, I’d be told I’m amazing.”

Remarkable: Joan Webb said that acquiring knowledge makes her excited about the future.

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We number amongst our ranks many alumni of the University of Tasmania. We support higher education through the provision of scholarships tenable at the University of Tasmania and research at UTAS through the Masonic Centenary Medical Research Foundation.

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**Unveiling the mystery of the Tarkine**

By Nicki Fletcher

THE MYSTERY OF THE TARKINE wilderness has been unveiled in an exhibition at the Cradle Coast campus by north-west photographers Jen Archer and Jen Evans (BArch 1999).

The exhibition captures the artists’ unique encounters with the Tarkine landscape and its ecosystems and follows the release in November 2010 of a self-published photographic book *Tarkine Tasmania – Wild, Unique, Diverse.*

“One of their most memorable experiences in the Tarkine was finding an Aboriginal quarry on the coast. Over time, sand had moved to uncover thousands of artefacts showing thousands of years of occupation.

“The energy and beauty of this place is amazing and we hope our images capture a small element of its intensity,” Jen Archer said.

The Tarkine rainforest remains a favourite place for Jen and Jen to visit and photograph. They love the challenge it poses; the contrast of light and dark, the rich colours, the deep creeks and ravines and the towering myrtle trees.

One of their most memorable experiences in the Tarkine was finding an Aboriginal quarry on the coast. Over time, sand had moved to uncover thousands of artefacts showing thousands of years of occupation.

“The energy and beauty of this place is amazing and we hope our images capture a small element of its intensity,” Jen Archer said.

The exhibition in the Atrium Gallery at the campus will be open until early January 2012.

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**Applications for Semester 1, 2012 are now open and can be made online at [www.utas.edu.au/apply](http://www.utas.edu.au/apply). For further details about these programs, visit [www.utas.edu.au/government/onlinegradcert](http://www.utas.edu.au/government/onlinegradcert) or contact: Dr Matt Killingsworth (International Politics) Matt.Killingsworth@utas.edu.au or Dr Hannah Murphy (Policy & Administration) Hannah.Murphy@utas.edu.au**
The study showed that 84 per cent of the 10- to 12-year-old Tasmanian children surveyed had mobile phones, and nearly all of those regularly sent text messages. When asked how many they sent and received a day, the children’s estimates ranged from fewer than one to 315. These findings, published in the US Journal of Computer Assisted Learning and in the Australian Journal of Educational and Developmental Psychology, support recent British research that has identified a strong link between primary school children’s use of text abbreviations and improved literacy.

“This supports the idea that the same skill set underlies the ability to manipulate the sounds and features of spoken, written and texted language,” Nenagh said.

“The ability to create or decipher phonetic abbreviations requires an awareness of the multiple sound-letter correspondences in English. Further, increased experience with reading and writing textese might lead to increased confidence and flexibility with manipulating language sounds, a key skill for developing reading prowess.”

Nenagh believes the popularity of texting shows that language is fluid and flourishing – particularly when children play creatively with words rather than stick to standard usage.

Eureka! Devils team claims top research prize

By Peter Cochrane

A TEAM OF RESEARCHERS BASED AT the University of Tasmania has won one of Australia’s top science prizes for its work in trying to save the Tasmanian devil from extinction.

Last September the team, co-led by Dr Menna Jones of the School of Zoology and Associate Professor Greg Woods from Menzies Research Institute Tasmania, was awarded the $10,000 Sherman Eureka Prize for Environmental Research.

“This is a classic example of how the University of Tasmania leads the world in critical conservation research,” the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research), Professor Paddy Nixon, said after the award was presented in Sydney.

The annual Eureka Prizes, presented by the Australian Museum, honour Australia’s brightest minds in science research and innovation, journalism and communications, and leadership. The devils research team was one of three University of Tasmania finalists this year. Associate Professor Michael Breadmore (Outstanding Young Researcher category) and Professor Paul Haddad (Outstanding Mentor) were also shortlisted.

“Winning a Eureka Prize will help highlight the plight of the Tasmanian devil,” Menna Jones said.

Menna has devoted herself to the fight against the devil facial tumour disease (DFTD) since its emergence in the north-east of Tasmania in the mid-1990s. It is both a rare and unusual disease.

“This is the second only known case in nature of a contagious cancer, so almost everything we do in research, immunology, immunogenetics, conservation management, in understanding the epidemiology of this infectious disease, is brand new,” she added.

“The really critical thing is that we try to bring devils back into the Tasmanian ecosystem to fulfil their ecological role as a top predator in suppressing cats, foxes and over-abundant macropod prey. This really should drive our management strategies.”

The other members of the devils research team are Professor Hamish McCallum (Griffith University), Associate Professor Kathy Belov from the University of Sydney, and Mrs Anne Maree Pearse of the Save the Tasmanian Devil Program.
Honorary degrees cap off graduations
By Cherie Cooper

MALAYSIAN SENATOR TUNKU Abdul Aziz (BA 1965) has been awarded an honorary degree by the University of Tasmania.

Tunku Aziz was honoured with the Doctor of Laws honoris causa by the Chancellor of the University, Mr Damian Bugg AM QC. Tunku Aziz has campaigned relentlessly for good governance and ethical conduct in his fight against corruption. It is testament to Tunku Aziz’s high international stature that he was appointed in February 2006 by the then United Nations Secretary-General, Kofi Annan, as a Special Advisor to provide advice on the set-up of the United Nations Ethics Office, and its operating procedures.

"Tunku Aziz came to the University of Tasmania as a private student in 1962," Mr Bugg said. "He joined many other young people from Australia’s South-East Asian neighbours undertaking study in Australia at that time with the intent of later assuming leadership roles in their home countries. "Tunku Aziz not only reached, but exceeded, that expectation.”

Meanwhile world-renowned Chinese scholar Professor Jao Tsung-i was awarded an honorary Doctor of Letters at a special conferral in Hong Kong in May. Prof Jao is known as one of China’s most outstanding scholars and is expert in many fields in the arts. He has helped established China’s cultural place in the world, by bringing international attention to the richness of Chinese literature, history and art.

Also honoured at the mid-year graduations was Dr Peter Smith (BSc Hons 1957), who was awarded an honorary Doctor of Science.

Dr Smith introduced the teaching of modern inorganic chemistry into the University’s Department of Chemistry and, in conjunction with two other colleagues, set up the Central Science Laboratory. He sought to engage with the wider chemical community and convinced many Tasmanian industries to employ graduates, seeking scholarships from business in the process. Most importantly, he cared for and took a strong personal interest in the welfare and wellbeing of countless students. As an alumnus of the University, he was an inaugural member of the Alumni Committee, and a long-time supporter and Governor of the University Foundation.

Order of Australia awards

Our graduates boast a wealth of talent, and we would love to see more Tasmanian alumni deservedly receiving Order of Australia awards. Do you know an alumnus who should be nominated for achievement or service? Please visit the It’s an Honour (www.itsanhonour.gov.au) website to find out how, then nominate an alumnus. Nominations may be made by individuals or organisations.

Author’s bequest supports UTAS women

By Cherie Cooper

THE LEGACY OF A GREAT WOMAN IS living on through a generous bequest left to UTAS from the estate of the late Tasmanian educator and author Dr Joan Merle Woodberry, AM.

The $450,000 from the Joan Woodberry estate to the University will be allocated to the Joan Woodberry Fellowship Trust, managed by the University Foundation to support the Joan Woodberry Postgraduate Fellowship for Women.

Several female students have already benefited from her generosity, using the fellowship to pursue their postgraduate studies in engineering or bioscience.

Dr Woodberry had a major influence on the lives of young Australians through her writing, teaching and education of teachers.

Her lawyer and one of her estate executors, Jim Walker, said Dr Woodberry was always interested in history, women’s issues and education.

“Shes enjoyed helping women who found themselves in trouble, calling them her ‘damsels in distress’,” he said.

“Joan was an interesting person and a great conversationalist, discussing everything and everyone; she had an opinion on everything.”

UTAS Vice-Chancellor Professor Peter Rathjen said the University was honoured to accept the bequest.

“Dr Woodberry’s legacy will continue by helping to nurture and support the best and brightest women reach their academic goals.”

A generous bequest: Author and UTAS alumna Dr Joan Woodberry has left $450,000 to support the Joan Woodberry Postgraduate Fellowship for Women.
IN 2010, UTAS OPENED A NEW $58 million world-class medical research and clinical facility for the University’s Menzies Research Institute Tasmania and the Faculty of Health Science, known as Stage I. After four years of planning, development and fundraising, Stage II is now under way.

Costing an estimated $90 million, the Stage II facility will enable Menzies to further expand its highly innovative research program, make more discoveries, and intensify the pace of turning discoveries into better treatments and health practices for the community.

$70 million funding is already in place, with $45 million from the Commonwealth Government through the Health and Hospitals Fund, $15 million from UTAS and $10 million from the Tasmanian State Government.

Atlantic Philanthropies has pledged a $10 million Challenge Grant that is contingent on Menzies raising an additional $5 million in philanthropic gifts from the Australian community. Once Menzies reaches its target, the State Government has agreed to match the funds raised by Menzies with an additional $5 million, thereby completing the $90 million capital campaign.

The Challenge Grant is part of a new initiative to help increase philanthropy throughout Australia. Through this collaborative initiative, known as Giving While Living Networks, the Founding Chairman of Atlantic, Chuck Feeney, along with Atlantic staff, are assisting grantees with fundraising by reaching out to philanthropically-inclined individuals and families.

Proving to be an effective initiative, businessman and philanthropist Graeme Wood has donated $2 million to the appeal. As a result, there is significant progress towards the $5 million target.

Mark Bennett, CEO of the UTAS Foundation, said Tasmania is very lucky to have been selected. “We are very fortunate that Atlantic has chosen Tasmania as the first state in Australia to invest its Giving While Living Networks initiative,” Mark said. “There is the opportunity for all individuals to be a part of building one of the Southern Hemisphere’s top medical research centres.”

Once Stage II is completed in early 2013, there will be $150 million in new buildings to ensure that Menzies continues to directly contribute to better health outcomes for not only Tasmanians, but communities around the world.

To support the appeal or more information visit www.utas.edu.au/foundation or contact the CEO of the Foundation on (03) 6226 1938 or Mark.Bennett@utas.edu.au
Alumni events around the world

**Hobart**
- John Hunter and Beverley Richardson.
- Bronilyn Smith and Lynne Andrews.
- Larry and Lorraine Polglase.

**London**
- Colin Watson and Chanaka Wirasinha.
- Chancellor Damian Bugg, Frank and Jonna Hytten, Elizabeth Britton.
- Diana Sargent and Keith Bradshaw.
- Duika Burges Watson and Simon Mills.

**Melbourne**
- Elizabeth and Meredith Jones.
- Lizzie and Caryl McQuestin.
- Wayne Worlandge.
- Justinian Habner, Tom Nowell, Joseph Trifus and George Britovsek.
A Tasmanian AFL team – Are We Ready?: Spirited but good-humoured debate at a recent Melbourne Alumni event included Edward Kemp, Ben Groom, Development and Alumni director Mark Bennett, Saul Eslake, Mike Sheahan and Tim Lane.

SOME OF THE FERVOUR YOU MIGHT expect to see at Aurora Stadium during a Hawthorn game was evident at a recent UTAS Alumni event on the ‘north island’, as it was frequently called on the night. A near-capacity turnout in Melbourne witnessed a spirited but good-humoured debate on the topic: A Tasmanian AFL team – Are We Ready?

The panel featured alumnus Saul Eslake, one of Australia’s leading economic commentators; The Age journalist and Network Ten commentator Tim Lane; the Herald Sun’s chief football writer, Mike Sheahan; and Edward Kemp (BA 1996), a business of sport commentator with the Melbourne sports radio station SEN.

Gamely taking on the role of anchor was a third alumnus, Ben Groom, general manager of strategy at Melbourne Football Club.

The audience included Peter Hudson, one of the game’s greatest full-forwards, who declared: “I do absolutely support a Tasmanian team, but it must be sustainable.”

Ben Groom, in his introductory remarks, painted a sobering picture of the financial commitment needed to maintain a competitive modern AFL team. After sketching Tasmania’s proud football history, he stressed “there is more to it than just pedigree … the AFL is now a $3.9 billion industry and in 2009 AFL clubs averaged $36 million in revenue, 37,000 members and 36,000 attendees per home game.

“AFL clubs these days tend to have between 20 and 60 individual corporate sponsors … and the wealthier clubs now spend more than $20 million per annum on their football clubs alone.”

The panellists themselves were united by their support for Tasmanian football but divided over the perceived sustainability. Mike Sheahan said at the outset that he was an ‘agnostic’: “The issue for me is romance versus reality … how is Tassie going to generate $35 million to $40 million annually to support an AFL team?”

Saul Eslake, who helped to prepare the State Government’s business case for a local AFL team, was in no doubt over the reasons why we did not already have our own team, and who we should blame.

The AFL executive was interested only in establishing second teams in NSW and Queensland – to wit, Greater Western Sydney and the Gold Coast Suns. The annual draft was skewed to that end, on top of huge cash injections.

“We should start proceedings in the Federal Court of Australia for reparations,” Tim Lane suggested, tongue in cheek. “We could settle for $250 million, and that would provide a base for running an AFL team.”
Emma Bugg (BFA 2002) works as a jewellery designer from her studio in Bank Arcade, Hobart. In 2009, Emma undertook a two-year silversmithing course at the polytechnic and honed her jewellery-making skills. Emma's pieces containing concrete have gained a lot of attention. “I love using this robust material on a scale that subverts common perception,” she said. “I am inspired by architectural design and the urban landscape.” Pieces will often contain ground-down parts of buildings from demolition sites as a way to conserve the memory of a place that once existed.

Emma works part-time at MONA, the Museum of Old and New Art, and also incorporates the 250-million-year-old Triassic age MONA sandstone in her concrete jewellery. “I think of my work as sculptures on an intimate scale that can adorn the body.” Emma has also created special memorial pieces, with cremated human ashes being set in concrete as a way to immortalise the memory of a loved one. Emma’s work is stocked at the Handmark Gallery and the MONA bookshop. See more of Emma’s work at http://emmabugg.com/home.html.

2000s

Tennille Burdon (BA Hons 2001) has recently begun her appointment as a member of the Australian Classifications Board. The members of the 12-person board are chosen to be broadly representative of the Australian community and are appointed by the Governor-General, usually for a term of three years. All are based in Sydney.

Misha Merzliakov (BE NavArch 2008) was among the finalists for the 2011 Young Designer of the Year Award. Misha Merzliakov, who is currently working for Austal ships in Perth, was among the five finalists. His submission was a 52 m motor catamaran.

Lisa Watts (Grad Dip Lang 2003, BA-LLB 2005) departed for Papua New Guinea in July as part of the Australian Youth Ambassadors for Development (AYAD) program. She is based in Kavieng in the New Ireland Province, working with the government as a Juvenile Justice Advocacy Officer and introducing restorative justice practices. “I’ll be basically trying to build up rehabilitation programs,” she said. Lisa previously lived in Japan for two years and spent four months doing volunteer work with Peace Boat, which travels around the world doing educational and activist work. She then flew to India where she completed a cycle ride to raise money to end child labour.

1990s

Kate Tongs, formerly Greenhill (BSc-LLB 1993) worked in government policy before going back to complete a Bachelor of Teaching at UTAS in 2000. She worked for five years as a high school science teacher before returning to government policy and is now a part-time policy analyst for the Tasmanian Department of Health and Human Services. Kate married Jeff Tongs and they have a son, Felix.

Peter Battaglene (BFA Hons 1995) and Fiona Tabart (BFA 1988) are independent artists whose collaboration, Arbor Vitae, was selected as part of the Love Lace Exhibition, displayed at the Powerhouse Museum in Sydney this year. Arbor Vitae, which is Latin for ‘tree of life’, was created using sandblasted toughened glass. The Love Lace Exhibition featured 130 lace works from 134 artists from 20 countries.

Tony Flowers (Grad DipFA 1996, Master Visual Communication 2009), the creator of the intricate pop-up book Gaijin Holiday, has beaten more than 350 entries to win the Iguchi-Bunshu prize in Japan’s prestigious Oshima International Handmade Picture Book Contest. Tony’s book, which took more than five months to create, was based on a family holiday in Japan and is told through the eyes of his two children. The Iguchi-Bunshu prize was established in 1998 to honour one of the great picture-book authors in Japan.
1970s

Professor Nikolai Petrovsky (BMed Sci 1979, MBBS 1982), who founded the biotech company Vaxine, recently won the prestigious Vaccine Industry Excellence (VIE) Award for the Most Innovative Asian Biotech. Presented at the 2011 World Vaccine Congress Asia, which was held in Singapore, the awards celebrate the leaders, innovators and pioneers in the Asian vaccines industry.

1950s

Phillip K Cowie (BA 1958) has been living in Italy for more than 40 years and is recognised in Italian historical circles as an expert on Garibaldi’s Second Exile (1849–54). He has been published by the Istituto per la Storia del Risorgimento, the most important institute in the country for such studies. In 2003 he won the prestigious Monsignor Geno Baroni History Prize (Univ. Rhode Is., USA). “I have now finished a two-volume study of that Exile, the fruit of 30 years’ research,” he recently told Alumni News, “and also a short novel dealing with Garibaldi on Three Hummock Island in 1852; both are now seeking that elusive personage: a publisher!” (To contact Phillip, please use: phillipcowie@libero.it)

Christobel Mattingley nee Shepley (BA Hons 1951) has been named by the Australian Committee of the International Board on Books for Young People as its nomination for the 2012 Hans Christian Andersen Award for Writing, awarded biennially to a writer whose complete works have made a lasting contribution to children’s literature. The winner, from nominations from 33 countries, will be announced at the Bologna Book Fair, Italy, in March 2012. Christobel, who lives in Adelaide with husband David (also a graduate of 1951), is the author of 50 books.
AMC Dr Michael Vertigan has been appointed as the new Chair of the Australian Maritime College board. He replaces Dr David Sterrett, who is due to complete his maximum term of eight years as Chair this year. Dr Vertigan is currently chairman of MyState Limited and of the Australian Government Solar Flagship Council. He is an alumnus and former Chancellor of the University of Tasmania who holds a PhD from the University of California (Berkeley) and an Honorary Doctorate of Laws from UTAS.

ARTS UTAS Bachelor of Arts student Laura Sykes was invited to participate in the University Scholars Leadership Symposium 2011, held recently in Thailand. The symposium played host to 350 university students from 37 countries who are passionate about engaging in discussions around sustainable development and humanitarian aid. “The symposium gave me a greater understanding of global humanitarian issues, their complexities and the ongoing challenges facing those in the field of development,” Laura said.

BUSINESS Stephen Mayne, the founder of Crikey.com, drew a crowd of more than 300 people when he spoke about corporate governance in Australia at UTAS Open Days in Launceston and Hobart in August. Mr Mayne is Australia’s best-known shareholder activist, focused on driving greater accountability and transparency across corporate Australia through shareholder activism. In his lecture, titled ‘Naming and Shaming – making business accountable’, he discussed why transparency and good corporate governance are absolutely vital in today’s business world.

EDUCATION High school students across Australia are learning about the statistics of Australian venomous snakes and winners of the Melbourne Cup thanks to a new classroom resource produced by academics from the Faculty of Education. The book, Digging into Australian Data with Tinkerplots: Data analysis for middle school students, allows students to compare their class with random samples of other Australian students (such as on language spoken and travel time to school). Other data sets are related to Australian prime ministers, sports and the First Fleet.

HEALTH SCIENCE The Australian Medical College (AMC) has extended the accreditation of UTAS’s Bachelor of Medicine/Bachelor of Surgery (MBBS) program until December 2016. Faculty of Health Science Dean Professor Ray Playford said the AMC could choose to extend accreditation for any period up to five years, depending on the faith in the workings of a particular institution. For UTAS to receive five years’ accreditation was a sign of great trust. He added that the strength of the course was due to the strong relationships the School holds with the hospitals in all three regions as well as Menzies Research Institute.

IMAS Dr Graham Edgar and Dr Rick Stuart-Smith from the Institute for Marine and Antarctic Studies (IMAS) recently launched Reef Life Survey Foundation Incorporated – the not-for-profit home of the unique marine science and conservation program Reef Life Survey (RLS). This program links recreational divers, managers and scientists in activities that improve biodiversity conservation and sustainable use of marine resources. Dr Edgar said the marine environment is suffering from a variety of human impacts. “When trying to deal with these impacts, managers currently find it almost impossible knowing where their limited conservation dollars are best directed,” he said. “Our RLS network of highly trained scuba divers provides an effective set of eyes for managers and scientists to see under water.”

MENZIES Menzies Research Institute Tasmania’s Senior Research Fellow Dr Kristy Sanderson’s 2008–09 NHMRC Project Grant has been selected to appear in NHMRC’s Ten of the Best Research Projects 2011 book. Selection was by review of the final report. The project is titled Depression and anxiety in working adults: the costs and outcomes of working while ill.

SET Current and former members of the School of Chemistry recently gathered at the UTAS Sandy Bay campus to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the opening of the Chemistry building. To commemorate the milestone, an impressive model of the periodic table, which features samples of the 118 known chemical elements, was unveiled. 2011 also marks 10 years since the Australian Centre for Research on Separation Science was established. In that period the team has published 500 papers, received $24 million in funding, secured 12 ARC Fellowships and graduated 80 PhD students.
A Brilliant Touch: Adam Foster’s Wildflower Paintings
By Christobel Mattingley
(National Library of Australia, 2010)
Adam Foster (1848–1929) began life as Carl Ludwig August Wiarda in Germany, but changed his name when he migrated to Sydney in 1891. A skilled, self-taught botanical artist, he set himself the goal to paint 1,000 species of Australian wildflowers. The National Library of Australia has more than 900 of Foster’s superb watercolours, 90 of which are presented in A Brilliant Touch as full-colour plates. A portfolio of these paintings follows a short biography of Foster by award-winning author Christobel Mattingley (BA Hons 1951).

Beneath the Tamar: More than Silt
By David Maynard and Troy Gaston
(NRM North, 2010)
The Tamar supports a number of complex marine habitats and inhabitants. This beautiful book is designed to raise awareness of the diversity and beauty of those animals living in the Tamar estuary. A combination of photography, estuarine science and biology highlight a side of the Tamar that the majority of people never get to see. David Maynard (BA-AppSc Fisheries 1993) and Troy Gaston (Grad Cert, University Learning & Teaching 2007), both from the Australian Maritime College, originally presented this delightful work in the form of two highly-popular photographic exhibitions.

Dark Clouds on the Mountain
By John Tully
(Hybrid Publishers, 2010)
Set in wintry Tasmania in the early 1900s, with flashbacks to post-war Hobart and Europe during World War II, this story deals with dark secrets, crime and Nazi plots, interwoven with familiar domestic tensions of family life and marriage. John Tully (BA 1975, DipEd 1977) creates a fictional world strongly embedded in authentic details of real locations and well-conceived characters. In this richly-drawn web of intrigue the ground shifts, the past intrudes and time and place are vividly realised.

Lioness
By Katherine Scholes
(Penguin, 2011)
Lioness, the latest novel by the bestselling author of The Hunter’s Wife, introduces the reader to young Angel Kelly and her mother, who are struck by disaster when travelling by camel across northern Tanzania. Meanwhile Australian medical researcher Emma Lindberg arrives at a nearby field station, hoping to lay to rest a grief she’s carried since childhood. This novel by Katherine Scholes (BEd 1981) is a heart-warming story that asks what it really means to be a family – and what it takes to be a mother.

Old Head on Young Shoulders: How to Ensure Financial Security for Life
By Charles Badenach
Throughout our lives we are inundated with financial advice from friends, family, associates, professionals and the media. Some of this advice is good; some bad and some is simply misleading. This book explains in plain language what you need to know to build, grow and control your finances. Charles Badenach (BA-LLB 1994) has made a career out of devising financial planning strategies and is a regular speaker at professional and community-based forums.

Reading in Colonial Tasmania: The Early Years of the Evandale Subscription Library
By Dr Keith Adkins
(The Ancora Press, 2010)
When Reverend Robert Russell arrived in Evandale at the end of 1838, the settlement was little better than bush. Russell immediately set about building a church for his Presbyterian community, and then a library. The Evandale Subscription Library was established in July 1847. In researching the people who helped achieve this goal, Keith Adkins (BA Hons 1996, PhD 2004) has created an engaging study of colonial life in nineteenth-century Tasmania. This study shows how the history of reading can reveal much of the character of local communities.

The Devil’s Milk: A Social History of Rubber
By John Tully
The Devil’s Milk, by John Tully (BA 1975, DipEd 1977), is a fascinating social history of rubber, including its terrors (such as slavery) and its pleasures (condoms, among others). John tells the story of humanity’s long encounter with rubber in a kaleidoscopic narrative that regards little as outside its range. With the skill of a master historian and the elegance of a novelist, he presents what amounts to a history of the modern world told through the multiple lives of rubber.

The Pulp: The Rise and Fall of an Industry
By Allan Jamieson
(40° SOUTH, 2011)
For more than half a century The Pulp provided Burnie with security, a benevolent sustenance and an identity. Yet Allan Jamieson (GradDip Professional Management 1984) does not gild the lily – here is the robust, critical and forensically detailed history that the pulp and paper mill demands. Allan’s focus is on people, but he also sees the bigger picture. Indeed the story is much more than Burnie’s story – it links to tides and currents flowing through the entire country, and the whole world.

Village Nepal and the diaries of Gwen Coventry (1959–1979)
Jeanette E. Hyland
(Clain Hogarth Publishing, 2011)
Melbourne missionary nurse Gwen Coventry worked in Nepal for 20 years. When she walked the hills of western Nepal for days and weeks, taking health services to 200 villages, she was welcomed by people who had never before seen a Westerner. Gwen’s papers came into the hands of Jeanette Hyland (PhD 1994) in 2007 and she knew she must write her story. The resulting book is a thorough account of a life served with understanding and integrity.
Professor Charles Harcourt Miller

**Died 8 April 2011, aged 90 years.**

PROFESSOR CHARLES MILLER WAS educated at The Friends’ School in Hobart, matriculating with maximum grades in all eight subjects. At the University of Tasmania he graduated BE in electrical and mechanical engineering in 1943, receiving prizes in every year. He was Vice-President of the Student Representative Council and editor of the student magazine *Togatus*.

In January 1942 he joined the Australian Army as an Engineering Lieutenant in charge of radar and telecommunications sections in various field workshops.

Charles was awarded the Tasmanian Rhodes Scholarship in December 1945. He enrolled for a postgraduate research degree and his DPhil thesis was entitled “Measurements on Molecular Absorption Spectra”, later published as a Research Paper in the *Proceedings of the Royal Society of England*. He had been involved in developing automatic recording spectrometers and spectrometers with higher resolution.

In 1950 Charles began work as a Radio Engineer in the Research Laboratory of Amalgamated Wireless Australia (AWA). He went to England in 1953 to set up a small electronics laboratory for S E Opperman. Returning to Australia in 1956, he worked again for AWA, engaged in the design of television receivers, before moving in 1957 to the CSIRO National Standards Laboratory, where he was occupied with electrical measurements of the highest accuracy.

He married Margaret Poole in March 1956 and was devoted to her for their lifetime together.

His academic career began in 1961 at the University of NSW as Senior Lecturer and later Associate Professor, with a research interest in modulation of audio and radio frequencies.

He was appointed Professor of Electrical Engineering at the University of Tasmania in 1966, and later took on roles as Chairman of the Professorial board, Pro-Vice Chancellor, and Acting Vice-Chancellor.

...few individuals in 25 years of contact with engineers and physicists working in the field of electronics.”

At UTAS, Charles was not only Head of Department in his discipline but took on wider roles in University administration as Chairman of the Professorial board, Pro-Vice Chancellor for two years, Acting Vice-Chancellor and even Director of Environmental Studies for a short time. He retired in 1985.

Outside the University, Charles was an Associate Commissioner of the Hydro-Electric Commission (1984–92), an enthusiastic radio-ham operator transmitting in morse code, and Electorate Vice-President for Denison for the State Liberal Party (1979–83).

When Professor Lou Davies finally gave up the Association of Rhodes Scholars in Australia (ARSA) Secretariat in 1976, it moved to Tasmania. We looked for someone with secretarial assistance to take it on. When Charles volunteered, I asked him, as a busy professor, how much he was prepared to do. “Whatever is necessary,” he replied. He did the job for four years, his newsletters characteristically starting with a list of scholars who had died. As our most senior scholar for many years, he never failed to make a thoughtful after-dinner speech when farewelling each new Tasmanian scholar.

After his wife died in 2001 Charles continued to live in his Taroona home, ensuring it was well maintained and arranging several improvements. He enjoyed the high definition of plasma TV, a far cry from TV in 1956. Ever helpful, he dictated a brief resumé of his life a week before he died. He was then, at the age of 90, in the middle of building a holiday home.

Tribute written by Bruce Cole, the recently retired Honorary Secretary of ARSA.

Emeritus Professor David Caro, AO, OBE

**Died 15 August 2011, aged 89 years.**

PROFESSOR CARO WAS Vice-Chancellor at the University of Tasmania from 1978 to 1982. This was a period of great change with the merger between the University and the Tasmanian College of Advanced Education.

He was a physicist and among his accomplishments, he wrote a seminal physics textbook, and worked as Deputy Vice-Chancellor at the University of Melbourne.

Professor Caro was born in 1922 and educated at the Universities of Melbourne and Birmingham. Professor Caro was not only a leader in higher education but also a world-renowned physicist. With colleague John Rouse he created the world’s first high-speed, variable-energy nuclear accelerator.

Following his term at UTAS, Professor Caro became Vice-Chancellor at the University of Melbourne and then interim Vice-Chancellor at the Northern Territory University. He also served as Chancellor at the University of Ballarat.

Professor Caro remained a strong supporter of UTAS and will be remembered fondly by former colleagues here as well as in the national higher education sector for his excellent lifelong contribution. A gentle and unassuming man, he was deeply respected by all for his wisdom.

A leader in higher education: Emeritus Professor David Caro was Vice-Chancellor during a period of change at UTAS.
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