IN THIS EDITION…

• Research Report - Maree Donna Simpson
• Northern Territory Trip 2008 - Patrick Ball
• Pharmacy Social Weekend
As the team leader for Pharmacy Practice within the School of Biomedical Sciences, I am delighted to report that practice research is flourishing at CSU. We have Honours students, doctoral students, research being undertaken by practice staff and my own research.

Two Honours students have just submitted their dissertations:

Loesje Schoen (featured in the first edition of Script for 2008), who investigated why students choose rural schools of pharmacy, rural placements and rural practice and why pharmacists in rural areas choose to practise there.

Anna Unger investigated a three item screening protocol, which she developed, for determining the difference between COPD and asthma in community pharmacies to enable appropriate management or referral.

Following Loesje and Anna, is Sarah Kissiwaa who will submit her dissertation early this year. Sarah is currently undertaking her literature review and development of the methodology for her project. She is looking at measures of nicotine dependence and the efficacy of various dose forms and therapies.

The doctoral candidates are similarly addressing a variety of areas, such as efficacy and adherence to weight management treatments (Tabitha Jones (nee Franks)), and understanding of microbiology and its implication for health (Jenny Cox). Emma McLean is returning to research following the birth of her first boy (after three girls).

I have taken over the supervision of Mari Lashbrook in mid-year due to a staff member’s departure. Mari’s research involves investigating professionals and professionalism in teaching.

Staff member Mary Madden is undertaking research that explores pharmacists’ decision-making processes with the aim of improving patient safety through the development of new habits and elimination of old ones by retraining.

As a principal investigator, I am involved in three projects, all collaborative with other universities. The longest running project is one for which I am the current chair of the Australian Consortium for the Education of Preceptors (ACEP). This consortium formed to secure Guild-Government funding to develop an online program for the training of pharmacy preceptors. The Consortium received the following funding: Rural and Remote Infrastructure Grants Program (Guild-Govt) 2002 and Rural and Remote Infrastructure Grants Program (Guild-Govt) 2005.

The Consortium expanded from the original members Jennifer Marriott (VCP-Monash); Rosalind Bull (UTas); Sue Taylor (USyd) and Maree Simpson (CSU) to include La Trobe University representatives, broadening the project to include all allied health clinical educators. This expanded consortium secured RHSET funding in 2006 for this project, which also generated a commercial product.

The second project is to develop an interactive virtual patient for training and assessment of students. This is entering active trial in 2009 with results being reported in Adelaide at an ALTC (Carrick) workshop and in a workshop at APSA in December 2009. A commercial product is also expected to result from this research.

The final project is with Lesley White and colleagues at the University of Sydney and is looking at increasing the uptake of HMRs by consumers.

I was recently awarded a teaching fellowship for first semester this year with the Education for Practice Institute, looking at preceptors and preceptor training.
Students from the CSU Pharmacy Program and three guests from the La Trobe University Pharmacy Program in Bendigo last year participated in the annual trip to the Northern Territory (NT) to study Rural, Remote and Indigenous Health. The tour was led by Professor of Rural and Remote Pharmacy, Patrick Ball, with new Lecturer Mary Madden, Adjunct Lecturer and local pharmacist Rollo Manning and Indigenous guides Daphne Banyawarra and Deleese Garrawarra completing the party.

Northern Territory Health Minister and pharmacist, Dr Chris Burns, took time out from his busy schedule to address the opening study day in Darwin. Dr Burns spoke to the group about some of the inequities in rural and remote health care and innovative actions that are being done in the NT to address them, including novel approaches to service delivery and the use of computerised health records accessible from anywhere in the territory. Other speakers included an inspirational address from a tribal elder from the Dhurrri Djammarrapingu tribe in NE Arnhem Land, Keith Djiniyini. Keith has kidney disease and is on dialysis but trying to lead his people to better health through partnership, co-operation and understanding between his tribe and the ‘whitefellas’.

The students were formed into groups during the tour and given one of the following health issues to look at: child health, substance abuse and mental health, or kidney disease.

While in Darwin, the group was hosted to a barbecue by the pharmacy students at Charles Darwin University. Head of the University’s program, Professor Roger Rumble, spoke about how their program attempts to address the special needs of the Territory.

The touring group visited health facilities in Darwin, looking at the upheaval involved for family and friends when people need to travel long distances to Darwin to be treated.
The group also visited Bathurst Island and the community of Nguiu where they were guests of the Wangatunga Strong Women’s Group, which recently sang and danced for the Pope and Prime Minister at World Youth Day in Sydney.

Next followed a trip through the Kakadu National Park where park rangers introduced the group to what they called the ‘meat and vegetables section of the world’s largest supermarket’, talking about bush tucker and bush medicines. Did you know that termite mounds make a great cure for diarrhoea? Most of the group tried eating green ants but seemed to prefer baked barramundi and roasted local goose at the bush tucker cook up.

The group enjoyed another study day down in Katherine and visits to remote communities and health facilities. Chief Executive of Sunrise Health Services in Katherine, Irene Fisher, is a member of the stolen generation and spoke about the practical impact of the Federal intervention on the ground, and how little the politicians in Canberra seemed to understand the real situation. Last year, Irene featured in a major ABC documentary.

On the last day of the tour, the students gave presentations at Knott’s Crossing Resort in Katherine on the particular health issues they studied while on tour.

The presentations were insightful and showed that the students had learned a great deal from the trip. Their learning was discussed further on the bus back to Darwin with the group taking it in turns on the microphone to talk about their experiences and what they had enjoyed while on tour.

The students also shared their learning with students and staff when they returned to university.
The Pharmacy social event of the year was a weekend enjoyed by more than 80 pharmacists and their guests.

Held in Orange last October, a game of golf on Friday morning heralded the commencement of the Pharmacy Social Weekend. Players enjoyed 18 holes on the picturesque but challenging Duntry League course. The overall winner of the day, the player with the longest drive and nearest to the pin all received prizes. Each hole was generously sponsored by supporters of the Pharmacy Foundation.

Drinks and canapés followed on the Friday evening at the Union Bank while Borrodell, on Mount Canobolas, provided the picturesque venue for the Pharmacy Foundation dinner on the Saturday evening. Prior to dinner, guests enjoyed the lush views overlooking the vineyards, high above the City of Orange.

The formalities commenced with Chair of the organising committee, Meagan Doyle, welcoming everyone. Chair of the Pharmacy Foundation Dick Marris then spoke of the new faces on the Foundation Committee and how they have brought with them different areas of expertise.

Mr Marris spoke also of the new strategic plan for 2008/09 and its three objectives: to heighten awareness of the Pharmacy Program and CSU; to provide opportunities for rural and metropolitan pharmacists to become supporters of the CSU Pharmacy Program and; to raise funds to support students and the program through the CSU Pharmacy Foundation.

“For these reasons we need and value your support. Resources are in place within the University and Foundation office to support our activities, and we are thankful we have a Chancellor and Vice-Chancellor who are totally committed to the growth of the Foundation.”

Mr Marris then introduced Charles Sturt University Chancellor Mr Lawrence Willett AO, who spoke of the importance of the pharmacy degree at Charles Sturt University and that the success of the course had provided CSU with the confidence to introduce further health related degrees such as veterinary science and dentistry. Mr Willett also spoke on other developments within the University.

Guests were treated to a three course meal featuring fresh local produce, and enjoyed wines produced by CSU and the owners of Borrodell, while guest speaker Marty Roebuck (former Australian rugby union player) entertained everyone with his accounts of his playing days (on and off the field).

The Pharmacy Cricket team were delighted to present a Scholarship to CSU Wagga Wagga student Kate Callaghan who gave a heart-felt speech on the difference it will make to her studies.

Guests were transported back to town by Professor Patrick Ball who also doubled as the bus driver.

Cricketers in the City versus Country match donned their whites on Sunday morning and took to the green oval of Kinross Wolaroi School. The result rested on the final over - you will have to read the Pharmacy Cricket report on the following pages to find out the final score!

The organising committee would particularly like to thank its major sponsors, API and Alphapharm, for making the Pharmacy Social Weekend a financial success.

Foundation Committee member, Tony Lawler, said the weekend was a great balance of education and socialising with fellow pharmacists and industry representatives.

“Everyone I spoke to said the weekend was incredibly worthwhile and that they would recommend attendance next year,” he said.

“Those not interested in golf, enjoyed the Friday afternoon shopping or wine tasting, so the weekend had something for everyone.”
Patti Payne and Chair of the organising committee for the Pharmacy Social Weekend, Meagan Doyle

Michael Flannery, Angela Flannery, Peter Madden and Mark Benton

Frank Payne, Peter Madden and Patti Payne

Chancellor Lawrence Willett AO and NSW President of the Pharmacy Guild Si Banks

NSW State Manager of API, Geoff Canning, and guest speaker (former Australian rugby union player) Marty Roebuck

Malcolm Rosborough, Tony Lawler and Sue Muller
Pharmacy Cricket  
- City v Country

In association with the Charles Sturt Pharmacy Foundation, the annual cricket match between City and Country was played in late October at the picturesque ground of Kinross Wolarloi School in Orange.

The match lived up to the expectations of previous games with the result hanging in the balance until the last two batsmen were at the crease. Batting first, Country lost wickets quickly but Mark White held the side together with a fine 42 before being bowled by Chris Georges. With the help of Mark’s brother, Dean, who achieved 18 not out, Country managed to score 143 runs in total. City’s bowling Honours were shared with Andy Dent taking 2 for 13 and Danny Huynh taking 2 for 23.

Twelve pharmacy students played as members of the two teams and it was delightful to see the first female student Diviya G-K playing for Country. Diviya opened the batting and played out some very determined and accurate bowling from Chris Georges and Brenton Hart. Andy Dent finally bowled Diviya after 14 overs.

City started in a disastrous manner and were 1 for 1 in the first over, then 2 for 8, 3 for 30 and so on until they were 5 for 53. Binh Luu remained at the crease, scoring 17 runs. Andrew Douglas helped with a well compiled 36 as did Andy Dent with 26. Then came the collapse, with City losing four wickets for 13 runs. Not to let the side down, Captain David Sidgreaves came in as last man, and joined the not out batsman Chris Georges with the City team requiring 11 runs to win. David watched as Chris scored the runs required, Chris’ final stroke being a four, taking City to victory. Country Captain Ben Brndusic had the best figures with 3 for 19 off his nine overs and was helped by opening bowler Glen Harper taking 2 for 24 off 10 overs.

The Sidgreaves Shield was presented by CSU Associate Professor Lyn Angel to City Captain David Sidgreaves, and Country’s Mark White was awarded Player of the Match.

On the Saturday evening prior to the match, the Foundation held an excellent dinner at the Borrodell Vineyard, Mount Canobolas. The first of the two Pharmacy Cricket Scholarships for 2009 was presented on the night to CSU’s Third year pharmacy student Kate Callaghan. Those at the dinner were very impressed with this fine young lady and many commented favorably about the way in which she intends to use the scholarship funds.

‘The match lived up to the expectations of previous games with the result hanging in the balance until the last two batsmen were at the crease.’
CSU Associate Professor Lyn Angel presents the Sidgreaves Shield to City Captain David Sidgreaves.

CSU's first female student to play for Country, Diviya G-K, leaves the pitch.

Kate Callaghan receives her Pharmacy Cricket Scholarship for 2009 from Pharmacy Cricket President Greg Hodgson.

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Pharmacist Profile - Michael Anderson

Home town
Warren, NSW

Pharmacy
on locum in
Dubbo, NSW

Full name
Michael Anderson

My grandfather, Frank Anderson, started the pharmacy in Warren, NSW in 1929, and my father Brian Anderson took over 30 years later and then, 30 years on, I took over.

On graduation in 1980, I spent a year in Cobar saving for the big one year overseas trip. On return a few friends and I started the first incorporated locum company in Australia looking after pharmacies mainly in Oxford Street and Kings Cross and the first few late opening pharmacies in Sydney at West Ryde and Hurlston Park. In those days we were one of the first trained on the new pharmacy computer at API. Our locum activities took us as far away as Broken Hill.

After various stints in Port Macquarie, it was back to Sydney to open the new pharmacy in the Queen Victoria Building, as I had previously worked on the station at Town Hall.

In 1993 my dad phoned needing help at home in his pharmacy so home I went and never left. It was fun in those early days as we started a social/buying group covering most of the remote pharmacies in western NSW. We would have a get together once a year and called ourselves the “Hot & Dry’s”.

I bought the pharmacy from my dad in 1999 and sold it to an Argentinean family in 2005, moving to Dubbo where I now locum for the Lawler group.

Working in the country is fantastic, as it’s affordable living, profitable and family friendly. I could never do all the things I do with my family now if I lived in the big smoke. If you are looking for lifestyle, there is no better way, especially if you are into sport.

Full name
Geeta Pradeep

School
Biomedical Sciences

Lecturing in Therapeutics

Geeta Pradeep completed her Bachelor degree in Pharmacy in 1997 and Master of Pharmacy specialising in Pharmacy Practice in 2000 from the Taminadu Dr. M.G.R. Medical University, Chennai, India. She also holds a Postgraduate Certificate in Rational Drug Management in International Health from the Swiss Tropical Institute (2002), University of Basel, Switzerland. She has completed the initial stage of a Certificate in Pharmaceutical Care Program from Peters Institute of Pharmaceutical Care, University of Minnesota (2006).

Geeta embarked on her teaching career as Lecturer in the newly established Department of Pharmacy Practice, Victoria Hospital, Al-Ameen College of Pharmacy, Bangalore in 2002 where she was responsible for imparting practice skills to postgraduate students in a clinical environment. Apart from her undergraduate and postgraduate teaching responsibilities, she also worked in the capacity of a clinical pharmacist at the Drug Information Centre, Victoria Hospital and coordinated the functioning of the Peripheral Pharmacovigilance Centre at the hospital.

Her research interests are in the area of Pharmaceutical Care, Patient Compliance and Pharmacoeconomics and the integration of these to provide optimum and ongoing Medication Therapy Management services to patients.

She has recently joined the CSU family on Orange Campus in the capacity of Lecturer in Therapeutics.

Geeta was born in Kuwait where she completed her schooling, and then moved to India to complete her higher degrees. She has an older sister who is a school teacher in Fujairah, UAE and a younger brother who is a computer engineer in Germany. Geeta and her husband, an HR professional, have two daughters aged eight and six years.
What was your previous career?
Prior to beginning the Bachelor of Pharmacy in 2006, I was a high school mathematics teacher in Sydney and then in Bathurst. Originally from Sydney, my husband Ian and I decided to move our family to Bathurst in 2001. We have three children - Daniel 15, Joshua 11 and Rebecca 9.

What attracted you to a career in pharmacy?
From school, I entered university as a medical student. Although I left this course after three years of study, I have always enjoyed all things medical and majored in pharmacology and physiology to complete a science degree prior to my teacher training. I liked teaching, but could not see myself teaching high school students for the rest of my working life. I picked up a UAC manual for inspiration in 2005 and was delighted to see that I could study pharmacy in ‘the country’. Immediately, the opportunities seemed endless - the ability to combine my love of medicine with my love of education as well as the possibility to choose from so many career paths - working full-time, part-time, owning a pharmacy, working as a locum, working in the hospital, research, lecturing at Uni, etc.

Why did you choose CSU?
My husband is a partner in one of Bathurst’s medical practices, which means that any options for study were limited to Bathurst or its surrounds. I felt so lucky that Charles Sturt University was offering courses to regional Australia that previously would have only been available to people living in large metropolitan areas. The drive from Bathurst to Orange and back took 50 minutes each way - but in reality this was less time than I used to spend driving to work in Sydney.

Why did you decide to complete your Honours?
When I discovered that I could either graduate with Honours or without Honours in exactly the same time frame (Honours projects are done consecutively within the 3rd and 4th years of the degree), I decided that I wanted to graduate with Honours. I have always enjoyed studying and learning, and my Honours project in Pharmacy Practice allowed me to begin to engage with my new profession as I spent hours and hours in a variety of pharmacies.

Are you involved with any projects at the moment?
My Honours dissertation is entitled “Promoting Enhanced Safety: Identification and analysis of dispensing errors associated with Community Pharmacy packing of sealed Dose Administration Aids”. During my PGTC year, I will also be enrolled in a postgraduate certificate at CSU that will enable me to publish the findings and expand on a number of areas of the research.

What has been a highlight in your course?
Although I started one year later than my peers, the credits for previous study I obtained allowed me to enter the first graduating class on the Orange Campus. I consider myself very lucky to be part of such an important milestone for the University. For me, the personal relationships that you can have with the lecturers at CSU (as compared with other bigger universities) has been a daily highlight.

As a student, what do you believe are the current issues being faced by rural pharmacy?
People living in the country do not have access to as many healthcare services as their urban counterparts. In this context, the support of a local pharmacist takes on increased importance for rural people. Relaxation of pharmacy ownership rules will impact the country far more than the city, and I worry about the impact this will have on rural communities should this ever become a reality. I also passionately feel that pharmacies in the country should be owned and managed by people committed to the community in which they exist, rather than what is beginning to be seen in the ‘one size fits all’ approach where regional managers (usually not pharmacists) are engaged to ensure profitability for interstate or absent owners.

What are your plans for when you complete your studies?
Subject to NSW Pharmacy Board approval, my PGTC year will be structured to have two concurrent supervised practice locations - three days in community pharmacy and two days doing further research through CSU.

Where do you see yourself in 10 years?
Because pharmacy has allowed me to enjoy so many options, I’m still working this one out! However, I could see myself working a couple of part-time jobs. It has been a long term plan for our family to move overseas for a year, so in 10 years time I hope to have experienced pharmacy in some different cultural context - perhaps doing further research if we end up in a developed nation, or providing essential medical services in a third world setting.

What do you do outside of pharmacy?
Far too much I think! We are a very busy family - everyone seems to be zipping back and forth constantly. I have three children in three different schools, and each of the children have a variety of interests including sport, dancing and music. Life is hectic but we also enjoy our time together. We have a big house in a peaceful setting (another bonus that comes from living in the country) which we use for hospitality whenever possible.