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## FROM THE DIRECTOR

Since July 1 I have been Acting Director of ILWS and will continue in this role until Max Finlayson takes up the positions of Strategic Professor in Ecology and Director of ILWS in early December. Prof Allan Curtis has done a wonderful job in his three years as director and will be a very hard act to follow.

My main goal over the next 5 months is to work with the leaders of the discipline groups and integration programs, and staff of ILWS to maintain the momentum of research activity in the Institute. I will attend meetings of all of the discipline groups so I can get to know more members and extend my knowledge of the diversity of research undertaken in the Institute. Recently I attended meetings of the Human Dimensions group and the emerging Communications, Arts and Education group. At both meetings I was impressed by members' enthusiasm and the range of research projects in progress and under development.

Over the next few months I will review the 2007 teaching buyout program and work with the Institute's Business Manager (Roni McDowell) and Management Team to plan the teacher buyout program and ILWS budget for 2008. Next month is also an important time for the development of RQF portfolios. The outcome of the CSU RQF trial (due 3rd September) and the RQF submission to DEST (due April 2008) are critical for the future funding of ILWS. I urge all members to work with your RQF Research Group Coordinator to put together portfolios that reflect the high quality and high impact research we have undertaken over the past six years. Developing RQF portfolios is very much a retrospective activity and I encourage all members to take the time to develop a personal research plan that outlines what you would like to achieve over the next six years.

Allan and I recently met with several members of the ILWS Advisory Board. They are following the progress of ILWS keenly and are particularly interested in the development of the integration programs. They reiterated they were fully supportive of what the Institute is trying to achieve and were available to contribute to its future.

This newsletter highlights some of the recent developments, publications and activities of our members. I would like to extend a welcome to our new adjunct research fellow Barney Foran who was previously employed as a Futures Analyst with CSIRO. His expertise in examining environmental issues from an economic and social perspective will complement the diversity of expertise among existing ILWS members.

-Assoc Prof Robyn Watts

## OPINION

*By Dr Gary Luck, leader of the ILWS Integration program 'Demographic Change in Rural Landscapes'*

I'm lucky enough to be involved in a European Union 6<sup>th</sup> Framework project called 'Rationalising Biodiversity Conservation in Dynamics Ecosystems' (RUBICODE). The project focuses mostly on understanding how ecosystem change impacts on the provision of ecosystem services (and consequently human wellbeing), methods for measuring this change efficiently and effectively, developing tools for land managers, and communicating results to the broader community.

It is designated as a 'coordination action', which means its primary aims are to synthesise current information, engage in proof of concept and involve stakeholders in project development. We hope this preliminary work will lead to a successful grant application for a more comprehensive EU project in the near future. RUBICODE involves 23 partner institutions mostly from the European Union and is funded at approximately € 2.5 M (which primarily covers the cost of meetings). The project runs for 2.5 years (and is about 12 months old). Aside from the research we are involved in, I have taken a keen interest in the strategies employed to successfully manage such a large project. Some of these strategies may be relevant to the management of current and future ILWS programs. RUBICODE has a coordinator who is responsible for overseeing the entire project, facilitating correspondence among members and with the EU, and for planning the full project meetings.

(cont page 2)



FEATURE ARTICLES-  
Barney Foran..... Story page 8 & 9

Elaine Dietsch..... Story page 8



## OPINION (cont)

The project is split into 7 work packages, each of which has its own leader and members (approximately 4-8 people). These work packages cover components of the overall topic – including ecosystem services, traits, indicators, valuation, drivers of ecosystem change and stakeholder engagement. Each has specific tasks they must complete (e.g. stakeholder meetings, review papers, EU reports). While work packages are mostly independent they must eventually come together to develop an integrated framework for rationalising biodiversity conservation in dynamics ecosystems. Hence, a representative member from each work package attends full project meetings where strategies and progress are discussed with the entire group and methods for integration are developed. I have attended 2 full project meetings and have been impressed by the positive interaction among members and the drive to reach designated goals. I believe that the desire to make progress is related to the fact that Framework projects are coupled with fairly detailed contracts that establish specific and binding milestones that must be met to ensure continued funding and options for future funding. Hence, rewards/penalties exist dependent on the success of meeting objectives. This seems to be a strong motivational force!

The other aspect of RUBICODE that impresses me is the formal requirement to engage stakeholders through the entire project. This is achieved through inviting key stakeholders to meetings where we present research/management ideas and garner feedback on how to make these ideas more relevant and useful to managers. This feedback is documented, synthesised and then incorporated into future project development. Other aspects that seem to contribute to RUBICODE's success include establishing a web site ([www.rubicode.net](http://www.rubicode.net)) to outline project objectives and information and disseminating information via a newsletter. Project meetings are held in different locations each time, allowing different partners to take responsibility for organisation (in Europe this usually means travelling to a different country for each meeting, which may act as a motivator for attendance (e.g. to see somewhere new), although it's bad news for carbon emissions). The tyranny of distance is also overcome by regular email communication, the use of forums, electronic databases and member-only areas of the web site.

I have no doubt that a combination of the above strategies are key to RUBICODE's success, and offer important insights into the successful management of large research projects in Australia. These lessons are particularly valuable as our research agenda moves inevitably towards greater emphasis on large, multi-disciplinary projects designed to tackle broad-scale issues.

## IN THE NEWS

### **SEEDS OF CHANGE**

US visitor Prof Carolyn Sachs, who gave a free Institute hosted public seminar in Albury on May 3, was featured in a *Border Mail* story on May 12.

### **5ASM MEDIA COVERAGE**

The 5th Australian Stream Management Conference received extensive coverage in national and regional media. Prof Allan Curtis promoted the conference on ABC Goulburn Murray news on May 8, Win TV on May 11 and on 2AY on May 17. Prof Kath Bowmer promoted the conference in:

- 'Experts to Pick Over Water Plan' in *The Border Mail*, May 11
- *The Daily Advertiser* on May 12
- The ABC Radio Country Hour on May 17
- And talked about water issues in the Murray Darling Basin on Prime News Wagga and on ABC Riverina on May 17

During the conference there were at least 33 media "hits" with stories in *The Border Mail*, regional TV and radio almost, if not every, day. The conference and interviews with various presenters also made national radio programs including:

- Prof Allan Curtis and Prof Bryson Bates (CSIRO climate change expert) on ABC Radio's 'PM' on May 22
- Prof Ian Rutherford (Melbourne University) on ABC State-wide Drive program on May 24
- Prof Peter Cullen on ABC Radio 's 'World Today' on May 25
- Prof Peter Cullen, Prof Allan Curtis & others on ABC Country Hour on May 25
- Ray Evans and Prof Peter Cullen on H2O Radio on May 27 <http://www.h2otoday.com.au>
- Prof Allan Curtis gave a wrap up of the conference on 105.7 The River breakfast show on May 28

### **PNG ECONOMY**

Rod Duncan, in PNG, to deliver a paper on the country's agricultural economy and electoral cycle was featured on *The National* (PNG) on May 24; and again on May 30 re the lack of progress on microeconomic and institutional reform under the Somare Government.

### **FROG RESEARCH**

Skye Wassens was interviewed on ABC Riverina re. her lecture on 'The Search for the Smoking Gun: Unravelling the Myths and Misconceptions of Global Amphibian Decline' on May 25.

### **WORK LIFE BALANCE**

Dr Dianne Boxall talked about work-life balance on ABC Central West mornings on May 30, and on 2BS on June 12.

### **NEW CENTRE**

Prof Shahbaz Khan spoke on the newly established International Centre of Water for Food Security on ABC Riverina on May 29.

### **RURAL POLITICS**

Dr Troy Whitford, who has a regular spot on 2AY Albury discussing rural politics and affairs, has also been on air on:

- ABC Regional Radio (Orange) talking on the politics of local government on May 22
- ABC Regional Radio (Orange) talking on industrial relations comparing Liberal and Labor policy on June 1
- ABC Radio National's "Australia Talks" discussing political start recruits on June 6
- On ABC Regional Radio (Orange) talking on the up-coming Federal election on July 5

### **LEADERS CHALLENGE**

Prof Kevin Parton's article 'Leaders Challenge' appeared in the *Brisbane Courier Mail* on June 1.

### **EUCALYPT REGENERATION**

PhD student Alison Skinner's research on the effect of annual pasture competition on eucalypt seedling growth and survival featured in the *Border Mail* on June 9.

### **REMOTE ISLAND RESEARCH**

Assoc Prof Dirk Spennemann's visit to the remote Kiska Island, part of the Aleutian Islands in Alaska, to document and do an inventory on guns left behind by the Japanese during World War 2, was featured on Prime TV and Win TV Albury on July 18, and on ABC Goulburn Murray on July 23. A story on his planned venture was in *The Border Mail* on June 21.

### **PHILOSOPHY OF DROUGHT**

Prof David Mitchell featured in Grafton's *The Daily Examiner* in an article 'The philosophy of drought' based on his address given as part of the International Philosophy, Science and Theology Festival on June 21.

### **IMPACT OF BROADBAND TECHNOLOGY**

Dr John Atkinson was interviewed on ABC Radio National regarding the impact of broadband technology on health and education on June 25. It also made the ABC Victorian Country Hour news.

He also spoke on ABC Riverina on June 25 re a CSU trial on whether speech pathology consultations can be made over the internet.

## HEALTH SERVICES

Dr Julaine Allan's work comparing health services in Canowindra and Molong was featured on Prime TV Orange on June 25 and in the Centralian Western Daily on June 29.

## WATER FOR OUR CITIES

Institute adjunct Daryl McGregor was interviewed on June 26 by Steve Block from Radio 2AY on the "Water for Our Cities Report", talking about what we need to do to survive droughts.

## NEXT STOLEN GENERATION

Prof Margaret Alston's opinion piece on the next stolen generation was in the Herald Sun on June 28. She was also on the radio on ABC Riverina and 2BS on June 28 speaking about the same issue.

## FOXES ON THE RUN

A story on PhD student Andrew Carter's research which involves tracking the movement of foxes so that fox baiting programs become more efficient appeared in the *Red Gum Courier*, Nathalia's local paper on July 6.

## RESEARCH DROUGHT

Prof Sam Lake, in Albury for an Institute organised seminar, featured in a *Border Mail* article on July 7 calling for more research into droughts.

## HANDING OVER THE REINS

Prof Allan Curtis' resignation as Institute director and Assoc Prof Robyn Watts' appointment as acting director was reported in the *Border Mail* on July 7.

## TREE CHANGERS

Prof Allan Curtis' research, predicting that 40 to 50% of rural properties across Victoria will change hands over the next 10 years, was the focus of a story in the Winter issue of *Victorian Landcare & Catchment Magazine*.

## RIVER TENDER

Jonathon Howard's evaluation of the River Tender program was featured in the Winter issue of the *Victorian Landcare & Catchment Magazine*.

## SCIENCEALERT

Check out the new ScienceAlert website on [www.sciencealert.com.au](http://www.sciencealert.com.au) which has reports from all the main scientific R & D institutions, listings of science jobs, opinions and a science conference calendar.

*Compiled with the assistance of CSU media*

## POSTGRADUATES



The recipient of the Institute's first scholarship on offer for its integration programs is Sylvia Zukowski (left)

"Through my integrated PhD scholarship I will combine ecology and sociology to examine developing better decision making processes for sustainable

fishery management. Currently very few scholarships tackle these two disciplines together in a PhD project and I believe it is vital to integrate them in order to produce a combined knowledge which is

very necessary for future Natural Resource Management", says Sylvia, 29, who started her PhD under supervisors Prof Allan Curtis and Assoc Prof Robyn Watts in May. Sylvia's PhD comes under the Institute's 'Sustainable Management of Environmental Assets' integration program which is led by Assoc Prof Robyn Watts.

Sylvia, whose research project will focus on the ecological and social implications in decision making and the management of threatened freshwater icon species such as crayfish, catfish and cod, did her undergraduate studies, a Bachelor of Science, at Flinders University in Adelaide. After completing her Honours at the University of Adelaide looking at the ecology of gastropods species (snails) and river regulation in the Murray system, she worked for a year as a wetlands officer with Wetland Care Australia at Renmark, SA. She then worked for six years at the Murray Darling Freshwater Research Centre in Mildura as an aquatic ecologist/community scientist before moving to the MDFRC in Wodonga with her partner Nick Whiterod who had taken up a PhD with CSU under Dr Paul Humphries and Assoc Prof Robyn Watts looking at the energetics of Murray Cod. Sylvia says her work with community groups and natural resource managers, as well as in freshwater ecology, has given her a excellent experience which will be highly beneficial in her PhD.

Other new ILWS PhD students in the mid-year intake include:

**Eloise Seymour**, with principal supervisor Prof Allan Curtis and co-supervisors Dr Catherine Allan, Prof David Pannell, UWA and Dr Anna Ridley, Department of Primary Industries Victoria, Rutherglen. Eloise's topic, at this stage, is about 'Asset-based approaches for regional NRM investment: the role for scientific and community-based valuation.'

**Wendy Minato**, with principal supervisor Prof Allan Curtis, and co-supervisors Prof Tony Jakeman, ANU, and Dr Catherine Allan. Wendy's research project is funded by Landcape Logic, a collaborative project that aims to improve the way decisions are made in relation to land use and natural resource management. She will be looking for knowledge gaps from an environmental sociology perspective with a focus on landholder behaviour and improving native vegetation condition (in Victoria).

**Penny Cooke** has obtained a full-time PhD scholarship under the supervision of Prof Stephen Kemmis (School of Education, Wagga campus). It is a study to discover new ways to promote learning in environmental sustainability in rural regions and communities - within the groups who are developing changes in community practice. This work will contribute to Prof Stephen Kemmis's ARC program "Sustaining Practice" with particular focus on 'non school' settings to understand interactions between educators and the social and environmental spheres. In particular, the study will explore how communities of practice are created among participants in Education for Sustainability initiatives (like landusers, NRM professionals and formal and informal educators) to pursue sustainability objectives. The study will explore how communities of practice exist as dynamic cultural, social and material-economic networks, as well as in relation to natural-ecological systems.

Penny has been working as a social science researcher for ILWS since mid-2004. Recent large projects have included the 2006 Corangamite CMA social benchmarking survey in which 1,000 landholders were surveyed (based on Prof Allan Curtis's research methodology that has now been adopted by the Australian government department DAFF). The Corangamite project was carried out to establish benchmarks of social and economic variables, to predict landholder responses to policy options and predict trends in social and farming structures in the region by means of a mail survey and subsequent analysis and discussion. The nationally-significant Water for Rivers project assessment of irrigators' responses to channel automation (TCC) trials was also completed in 2006 under the direction of Dr Digby Race. The Victorian Landcare survey report 2004 (Prof Allan Curtis) contributed to the Australian Government's National Landcare Program, Monitoring and Evaluation Project. It is part of the only state-wide longitudinal study of its kind and involved a survey of all community-based NRM groups in Victoria.

# CONFERENCES, SEMINARS & WORKSHOPS

## MARKET BASED INSTRUMENTS

Assoc Prof Mark Morrison presented "Impediments to the Adoption of Market Based Instruments and Incentives" at the Land and Water Australia workshop, Canberra, May 15.

## RURAL HEALTH

Patrick Ball presented two papers co-written with Julaine Allan, Judith Crockett, Kerri Whittenbury, and Margaret Alston at the Tamworth Rural Health Colloquium, Tamworth NSW May 14-16. They were on 'Roles, responsibilities and networks: the views of rural pharmacists and social workers with implications for professional role expansion' and 'How to avoid building a palace on a sea of shifting sand: community development processes in health research'.

## 5ASM CONFERENCE

ILWS hosted its first major conference, the 5th Australian Stream Management Conference, May 21 to 25 in Albury with 275 delegates attending over 4 days. The overall theme of the conference "Australian Rivers: making a difference" challenged participants to consider how their research and practices have made an impact on river management. Keynote speakers and speakers in concurrent sessions presented a diversity of papers in the following five areas:

- What is the science underpinning restoration practises?
- Is new policy 'evidence based' and are new policy initiatives working?
- What have been the outcomes of restoration investments?
- Are we really doing adaptive management?
- How effectively are we building capacity and investment to enable action?

Field trips to the Wonga Wetlands, Dights Creek, Banyandah Wetland, and the Mitta Mitta and Ovens Rivers provided an opportunity for delegates to observe and discuss restoration projects. Social activities provided opportunities for networking and delegates particularly enjoyed the conference banquet at All Saints Winery and a taste of the region dinner at the Albury Convention Centre. Prof Peter Cullen closed the conference with his views on the future of river management in light of the current water availability. By all accounts the conference was an outstanding success and thanks to the tireless work of the organising committee. The next Australian Stream Management conference, hosted by Charles Darwin University, will be in Darwin, 2009. The peer reviewed conference proceedings is available on the ILWS website at <http://www.csu.edu.au/research/ilws/publications/5asm%20proceedings.html>



*L to R - Michael Douglas, Wayne Tennant and Brenda Dyack keynote speakers in the "outcomes of restoration investments" keynote session.*

*The fieldtrip to Dights Creek, an anabranch of the Murray River near Albury, to view works being undertaken.*



## PNG ECONOMICS

Rod Duncan has presented a

- paper "Papua New Guinea economic survey: Fiscal discipline needed" at public workshops held in Port Moresby, Kokopo and Alotau in Papua New Guinea on April 11, 13 & 17, and in Canberra and Sydney on May 29 and 30
- paper on "Agricultural productivity and the electoral cycle in Papua New Guinea" at the Economics Research Workshop on Pacific Agriculture at Lae, Papua New Guinea, July 16-17
- talk on "Development, sustainability and resource use in the Pacific" for the LAFIA Pacific 2007 Workshop, Australian Public Service Commission, July 27

## BIODIVERSITY ACROSS THE BORDERS

On June 15, four PhD students attended the Biodiversity across the Borders conference at the University of Ballarat. The subtitle of the conference was 'Maintaining biodiversity in modified landscapes'. Elisa Tack and Anna Burns presented a summary of their research to the mostly agency-based conference delegates, on conservation of bush-stone curlews and the diversity of insects and spiders of box mistletoe, respectively. It was a good opportunity to hear about some of the latest research from Victorian universities (La Trobe, Deakin, VUT & Ballarat) and meet with natural resource managers and environmental officers. ILWS, and the other universities involved, contributed financially to running the conference of which Dr Ian Lunt was one of the organisers.

## ANNUAL ERD WORKSHOP

The Annual Economic and Regional Development Workshop was held in Bathurst on June 18 & 19. The workshop was attended by 20 people including visiting Professor Jock Collins. It was a great opportunity for members of the ERD group and other interested individuals to meet to receive feedback on current projects, discuss future research opportunities and listen to presentations.

## MARKETING SCIENCE

Assoc Prof Mark Morrison presented a paper at the Marketing Science Conference in Singapore, titled "Modelling consumer decision states and their effects on consumer preferences, information search and choice behaviour for a new high technology product", June 28 to 30.

## EMOTIONAL LANDSCAPE

PhD student Patty Please gave a presentation "Exploring the Emotional Landscape of an Australian Environmental Problem" at the Emotions, Moods and Motivations Symposium convened by Prof Kay Milton (Social Anthropology), Queen's University, Belfast at the University Club, UWA, on June 28-29.

## SOCIETY AND RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

The Institute's Human Dimensions Group was well represented at the 13<sup>th</sup> International Symposium on Society & Resource Management Park City, Utah USA June 17-21 which was attended by over 650 delegates, mostly from North America but also Europe, China, Australia and New Zealand. Papers presented by Institute members to a mixed discipline audience were:

- Allan Curtis, Providing the missing link: integrating spatially referenced social and economic data for watershed management;
- Gill Earl, Duty of care and stewardship in biodiversity conservation: towards a shared understanding;
- Emily Mendham, Taking over the reins: trends, challenges and opportunities of changing property ownership for NRM
- Michael Mitchell, Triple bottom line reporting in irrigation: evaluating its outcomes;
- Rosy Black, Interpreting significant vegetation communities in a regional context: a case study of the Victorian Box- Ironbark forests, Australia; and
- Penny Davidson, The influence and role of sense of place in natural resource management agencies

## ILWS EXPERTISE ENHANCES THE COMMUNITY BENEFITS OF R&D IN THE ASIA-PACIFIC

The social science and community development expertise of researchers in the ILWS is having widespread influence in the Asia-Pacific region. Over the last 20 months, Dr Digby Race, Dr Joanne Millar, Ass/Prof Neil Lipscombe and Dr Tony McDonald have conducted six training workshops on the 'Social and Community Dimensions' (SCD) of agriculture, forestry and fisheries projects. Participants at the workshops represented more than \$10 million of investment by the Australian government (ACIAR), Australian partners, and in-country government, university and private sector partners. Over 100 project leaders, policy makers and researchers attended the workshops in Indonesia, Laos and Papua New Guinea. The 5-day training workshops provide a structured approach for understanding and analysing the social and community dimensions of farming, fishing and forestry, and in particular how research and development (R&D) can generate benefits for rural communities. The workshops provided the first opportunity for many participants to explore how their R&D projects can be designed and managed for social benefits.

Dr Race says: "The link between technical research and the benefits for communities is often complex. Assuming everyone in a rural community will experience benefits from R&D can be naïve at best, and sometimes can lead to further inequity and poverty. As researchers, we need to take responsibility for the technical and social impacts of what we do." Participants have now applied the concepts and analytical tools to their work following the workshops, and are requesting an 'advanced' training workshop to learn more about social science methods. Senior managers in ACIAR are already

seeing evidence of R&D projects being designed and implemented with greater awareness of how R&D can enhance the livelihoods of rural communities. "Recently Dr Tony McDonald and Dr Digby Race conducted a 3-day Advanced SCD training workshop with 18 researchers in Indonesia. Another advanced workshop will be held in PNG later this year.



*Dr Digby Race (left) at the workshop in Lombok*

## LEARNING CONFERENCE

Zelma Bone was a virtual participant in a Learning Conference held in Johannesburg, South Africa, June 26 to 29, where she presented a paper (co-written with Dr Geoff Watson) on "Realising on the educational potential of tours."

## DROUGHT: THE CREEPING MARAUDER



*Prof Sam Lake (left) with the Institute's acting director Assoc Professor Robyn Watts*

Prof Sam Lake's talk in Albury at the Nowik Theatre on Tuesday evening, July 3 attracted a good audience of 55 including people from catchment management authorities, the Murray-Darling Freshwater Research Centre and La Trobe University.

Prof Lake, a leading figure in Australian and international freshwater ecology, gave an interesting talk describing our perceptions and the types of drought; how it has shaped human history; its impact on aquatic ecosystems; and predictions of what we can expect as a result of climate change. "We are very poorly set up to deal with drought," said Prof Lake from Monash University's School of Bio-

logical Sciences. He said Australia's policy makers and natural resource managers tend to be reactive when it comes to droughts instead of being pro-active. Changes he advocated included implementing new and on-going restoration programs for degraded systems; identifying and protecting those systems with biota which need to be conserved; removing and/or circumventing unnecessary barriers in waterways; investing in solar desalination; allowing the flood plains to be flooded; and altering farming practices to suit our variable climate.

## AUSTRALIAN GEOGRAPHERS

Jonathon Howard presented a paper "Amenity values challenge our ability to create environmental flows for the Murray River"; Emily Mendham "Taking over the reins: trends, challenges and opportunities of changing property ownership for NRM"; and Assoc Prof Ian Gray "Trams versus Buses: imagery and conflict over urban transportation equipment and the spatiality of environment and administration" at the Institute of Australian Geographers Conference at the University of Melbourne, July 1-5.

## RURAL FUTURES

Assoc Prof Ian Gray presented on "What future for regional railways?" at the Australian Local Government Association annual Local Roads & Transport Congress at City Hall in Newcastle from July 8-10 July.

He also spoke on "Has Australia's administrative heritage maintained a culture of agrarian dependency?" at Rural Futures in Developed Countries - Australia, America, Europe Anthropology Department, at ANU July 21 to 22, and the same again at a seminar at the ANU Research School of Social Sciences on 23 July.

## ECOLOGICAL PROCESSES

Dr Ian Lunt gave a presentation on 'Ecological processes: a key element in strategies for conserving biodiversity' at the Biodiversity Extinction Crisis Conference - A Pacific Response, Inaugural Meeting of the Society for Conservation Biology Australasia Section, at the University of NSW, Sydney, July 10 to 12.

## COMING UP

### CROSS BOUNDARIES

'Cross-boundary farming - is it an opportunity to sustain Australia's farming activities?' is the theme of a seminar in Wagga on Sept 7. Guest speaker David Brunckhorst of the University of New England will present his research from the Tilbuster Commons project. Other farming groups and speakers will discuss the implications and possibilities for agriculture. This free seminar will be held at the National Wine and Grape Industry Centre at CSU Wagga. Please register with Kate Roberts on [kroberts@csu.edu.au](mailto:kroberts@csu.edu.au).

### BETTER BUSH ON FARMS

A Better Bush On Farms Conference will be held on Wed., Sept 19 from 9.30 to 4.30am at the CD Blake Theatre, Thurgoona. Hosted by ILWS, the Nature Conservation Trust and the Better Bush project, the aims of this conference are to release the latest research findings of ILWS members and natural resource management agencies in southern NSW and Victoria, and to discuss issues relating to the implementation of on-ground incentive programs to protect native vegetation on farms. Presenters include Andrew Bennett, Sue McIntyre, Josh Dorrough, Phil Gibbons, Andrew Young, Ian Lunt, Alison Skinner and Peter Spooner.

The conference will be particularly relevant to catchment planners and implementation staff, public land managers, vegetation practitioners, and researchers. There is no cost for this event but please RSVP by Sept 14 to Kate Roberts on [kroberts@csu.edu.au](mailto:kroberts@csu.edu.au) or phone 1800 671 260. For more information about the program contact Paul Ryan, CSIRO, on 02 6242 1602 or [paul.ryan@csiro.au](mailto:paul.ryan@csiro.au), or Peter Spooner on 02 6051 9620 or [pspooner@csu.edu.au](mailto:pspooner@csu.edu.au).

# PUBLICATIONS

## PEER-REVIEWED PAPERS

**Allan, J, Crockett, J, Ball, P, Alston, M., Whittenbury, K.** (2007). 'It's all part of the package' in rural allied health work: A pilot study of rewards and barriers in rural pharmacy and social work. *Internet Journal of Allied Health Sciences and Practice*. vol. 5 no.3, <http://ijahsp.nova.edu>

**Laidlaw, P., Spenneman, D.H. & Allan, C.** (2007), No time to de (con)struct: The Accessibility of Bush Fire Risk Management Plans in New South Wales, Australia, *The Australian Journal of Emergency Management*, vol. 22, no. 1. pp.5-17.

**Boylan, C.** and Mulcahy, D. (2007). *Discovering the advantages of multi-age education*. *Free to Learn*. 3(1).

**Alston, M., & Dietsch, E.** (2007) Collaborative Healthcare practice within the rural context, in *Healthcare Practice and Policy in Australia*, S. Taylor, M. Foster & J. Fleming (eds), Oxford University Press, Sydney

**Dietsch, E., & Davies, C.** (2007) The Nocebo effect for women in waiting, *Collegian*, vol. 14, no, 3, pp. 9 – 14.

**Lunt, I.D., Eldridge, D.J., Morgan, J.W. & Witt, G.B.** (2007). Turner Review No. 13. A framework to predict the effects of livestock grazing and grazing exclusion on conservation values in natural ecosystems in Australia. *Australian Journal of Botany* 55(4), 401-415

Jordan, K., **Krivokapic-Skoko, B.**, Collins, J. (2007) Ethnic Monitories and the built Environment in Rural and Regional Australia: Sites of Segregation or Inter-Cultural Exchange, *International Journal of Diversity in Organisations, Communities & Nations*, 6 (6) : 167-177

**Whitford, T.A.,** Boadle, D. (2007) Formulating War Service Land Settlement Policy: The Returned Soldiers and Airmen's Imperial League of Australia and Rural Reconstruction Commission. *War and Society*, vol 26, No 1, May

**Valentine, B.** (2007) Licensing, accreditation and quality improvement. *Australian Journal of Public Administration*, 66(2), pp 238-247

## BOOKS

**Sharma, K.** (2007) *Trade and Development in Transition: Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan*, New York, NOVA Science.

**Sharma, K. & Herath, G.** eds. (2007) *Trade, Growth and Child Labour Deployment in South Asia*, London, Ashgate.

## BOOK CHAPTERS

**Allan, C., Davidson, P. & Curtis, A.** (2007) 'Giving Voice to the Researched: Exploring Evolving Relationships in Participatory Action Research', in *Being Critical and Creative in Qualitative Research*, eds Higgs, J., Titchen, A., Armstrong, H., & Horsfall, D. Hampden Press, Sydney. pp. 208-218

**Bamberry, G.** (2007). Cumulative causation as explanation and policy base for child labour. In Herath, G. and Sharma, K. (eds) *Child labour in South Asia*, Aldershot: Ashgate

**Alston, M. & Dietsch, E.** (2007), 'Collaborative Healthcare practice within the rural context', in *Healthcare Practice and Policy in Australia*, S. Taylor, M. Foster & J. Fleming (eds), Oxford University Press, Sydney

**Ragusa, A. T.** (2007). The impact of socio-cultural factors in multi-cultural virtual communication environments. In St-Amant, K. (Ed.) *Linguistic and Cultural Online Communication Issues in the Global Age*, Idea Group Inc.

**Sharma, K.** (2007) 'WTO and Child Labour Rules in South Asia', in *Trade, Growth and Child Labour in South Asia*, G. Herath and K. Sharma (eds.), Ashgate

**Sharma, K. & Herath, G.** (2007) 'Trade, Growth and Child Labour: An Issue', in *Trade, Growth and Child Labour in South Asia*, G. Herath and K. Sharma (eds.), Ashgate.

## CONFERENCE PAPERS

There were a number of Institute members' papers published in Wilson, A..L., Deehan, R.L., Watts, R.J., Page, K.J., Bowmer, K.H. & Curtis, A. Proceedings for the 5<sup>th</sup> Australian Stream Mangement conference. *Australian rivers: making a difference*, 21-25 May, Institute for Land, Water and Society, Charles Sturt University, Albury, Australia. (Proceedings are available on line at <http://www.csu.edu.au/research/ilws/publications/5asm%20proceedings.html> )

They were:

- **Allan, C.** (2007), 'Adaptive Management of natural resources',
- **Bowmer, K.** (2007) 'Water and conflict resolution: from smoke filled rooms to public participation'
- **Bowmer, K., Eberhach, P., Murphy, T., & Harris, E.** "Science to support water sharing planning in New South Wales'
- **Herr, A., & Kuhnert, P.,** 'Uncertainty in diffuse source pollution assessment and mitigation options-who knows?'
- **Howard, J.** 'Do stakeholder committees produce fair policy outcomes?'
- **Mitchell, M., Curtis, A., & Davidson, P.** 'Can the 'triple bottom line' concept help organisations respond to sustainability issues?'
- **Page, K., Frazier, P., Pietsch., & Dehaan, R.** 'Optical dating of post-European settlement channel change: Gilmore Creek, southeastern Australia.'
- **Watts, R.** 'Challenges for improving the science underpinning river restoration practices.'
- **Wilson, A., Watts, R., Page, K. & Dehaan, R.** 'Monitoring of remediation works to arrest stream degradation in an agriculture-dominant catchment.'

**Allan, C., Curtis, A., Howard, J. & Robertson, S.** (2007). 'Informing future practice through evaluation', *Veg Futures 06: the conference in the field, Sharing information for regions to manage native vegetation in productive landscapes*, eds D Carr & O Cox, Greening Australia, Published online at <http://www.greeningaustralia.org.au/veg-futures>.

Watson, G., & **Bone, Z.** (2007) Critical success factors underpinning industry visits in farm management education. Paper presented at the International Farm Management Association 16 Congress at Cork University, Ireland, July 15-20.

Jordan, K., Collins, J., **Krivokapic-Skoko, B.** (2007) The Landscapes of Multicultural Australia: Exploring the Impact of Migration on Griffith's Built Environment. Paper presented at the National Trust's Cultural Context conference, Sydney, June 15, 2000

**Krivokapic-Skoko, B.,** Jordan, K., Collins, J. (2007) Diversity beyond Metropolis: Heritage and Multiculturalism in Rural Australia, Diversity 2007 Conference, Amsterdam 3-6 July 2007

Collins, J., Jordan, K., and **Krivokapic-Skoko, B.** (2007) Ethnic Precincts as Built and Social Environments: Sydney's Chinatown and Perth's Northbridge, Diversity Conference 2007, Amsterdam, 3-6 July 2007

## TECHNICAL REPORTS

**Race, D., Curtis, A., Birkhead, J. & McDonald, S.** (2007) *Understanding the social context of land-use in the Boorowa catchment: Lessons for measuring and managing the social implications of changes in rural land-use.* DPI Report #3, NSW Department of Primary Industries: Orange, NSW. pp. 63, ISSN 1832-6676.

## RURAL SOCIETY

This first issue of 2007 marks a momentous occasion for the Centre for Rural Social Research, the editors, and the journal. After 17 years of self-publishing, we are delighted that *Rural Society* will now be published by e-Contentmanagement a niche commercial publisher with a special interest in regional journal production. This change provides the opportunity to offer subscribers both full electronic copies and/or print issues. It is planned that all back copies will be loaded onto the publisher's website over the course of 2007. Electronic copies will also be available for purchase per issue and per article. Wider exposure to more aggregator databases will also promote access to the journal. Members of ILWS are entitled to a discounted membership.

The broad discipline areas covered in the journal means that it is unusual to have two papers in the one issue that complement each other as well as those by Frank Vanclay, Tiini Silvasti & Peter Howden and that of Ian Coldwell. Both papers are in the broad area of farmers' perceptions of their own and other farmers' identity and roles. Ian Coldwell, in his paper *Young farmers, masculinities and the embodiment of farming practices in an Australian setting* examines how male farmers perceive their roles and that of their female counterparts within the context of changes that have occurred in gender and identity in farming.

Using van der Ploeg's styles of farming approach as a starting point, Vanclay, Howden and Silvasti establish two other frameworks in their paper *Styles, parables and scripts: Diversity and conformity in Australian and Finnish agriculture*, those of farmers' parables (in the Australian context) and cultural scripts (for the Finnish) to help explain why farmers chose to become farmers, and how farming styles and farmers' ways of life are socially reproduced.

In *Work-sport competition: The role of agricultural contests in New Zealand*, Rupert Tipples and Jude Wilson discuss the function of these contests from a range of theoretical perspectives, and outline their economic and social benefits.

A paper by Brian Dollery, Neil Marshall & Tony Sorensen called *Doing the right thing: An evaluation of new models of local government service provision in regional New South Wales* continues the theme of the special issue in 2006 on Governance. The authors examine a range of models used by local government councils that provide alternatives to mergers, and make best use of scarce human, infrastructure and financial resources for improved service delivery. Partnerships of a different form are the focus of Sue Johns, Sue Kilpatrick & Jessica Whelan's paper *Our health in our hands: Building effective community partnerships for rural health service provision.* The authors have developed a framework of effectiveness indicators for successful partnerships within the health sector, and another for the stages of partnership development.

*Land use and the Ridley Paddock 1897-2005* is Deirdre Slattery's unusual and engaging environmental history narrative that tells of the relationship to land of the author's family and other people in relation to changing times, and policy development and their impact

on the management of what the family have long known as the Back Ridley Paddock.

-*Marion Bannister & John Connors (Editors)*

## LEAF MORPHOLOGY TUTORIAL WEB SITE

Dr Geoff Burrows, Kylie Kent and Scott Black have been busy developing a new section on the CSU herbarium's web site, <http://www.csu.edu.au/herbarium/>, Leaves – a guide to leaf structure.

Geoff says the impetus for the project was that he had noticed many of his second year students were consistent in incorrectly keying out plants in our local Flora where the key requires an early choice between simple/compound and pinnate/bipinnate leaves. Subsequent direct testing on leaf morphology showed that students did not have a good understanding of leaf morphology.

"To give the full-time students and the large cohort of distance education students (and any other interested botanists) better resources to improve their leaf morphology recognition skills Kylie Kent (CSU Herbarium) and I designed a web-based tutorial," says Geoff. "We hoped that a logical arrangement of features, combined with a larger range of material than can be provided in a practical class, would allow students to better develop their skills in this area." The tutorial is based on scans of about 50 species, with two interactive tests (designed by Scott Black using ToolBook) using an additional 22 species. The species are a mix of Australian natives, and crop, weed and garden species that have been introduced to Australia.

Geoff says he would feedback on the tutorial and tests – from factual faults, layout improvements, the inability to run some or all of the tutorial or tests on some computers, etc. He can be contacted on [gburrows@csu.edu.au](mailto:gburrows@csu.edu.au)

## OVERSEAS TRIPS



### TRIP OF A LIFETIME

Assoc Prof Dirk Spennemann is off on an "excitement of a lifetime" trip to a rugged and remote Alaskan island to do an inventory of the guns left behind by the Japanese during World War 2.

Dirk has been contracted by the US Fish and Wildlife Service to inspect and document the guns on Kiska Island, one of the Aleutian Islands between Alaska and Russia in the Bering Strait, and assess their state of conservation. After the attack on Pearl Harbor during World War 2 the Japanese tried to restrict American operations in the Pacific by establishing bases at strategic locations. While their attack on Midway, an atoll north of Hawaii, failed, they were successful in their attacks on Attu and Kiska Islands. In 1942 established a military base on Kiska Island and stayed for just over 14 months.

"Kiska is very important to the American war history because it is one of only four true American territories occupied by the Japanese during the war," said Assoc Prof Spennemann. He left Australia on July 29 for the island, a two day boat trip from the island of Adak, to which he will fly from Anchorage. He is one of a party of five (the others are from the US Fish and Wildlife Service, and the US National Parks Service) who will spend five days on the island, a National Park that has been part of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge since 1913.

# PROFILE

## ELAINE DIETSCH

by Kate Roberts



Elaine (centre) learning with midwives in a village in the Congo

The differences between remote Australian communities and isolated villages in the Congo are great, but practicing midwife

and CSU lecturer Elaine Dietsch admires the resilience and courage that these women share in their experiences of child birth.

This insight comes from spending the last 3 years learning from traditional midwives. During the university's summer break, she travelled to experience first hand life in villages in the Democratic Republic of Congo and on the Kenyan/Ugandan border. "They are incredible women, they are absolutely inspirational, I don't go there to teach, I go there to learn, to walk alongside - and I learn so much," she says. Her admiration for the Congolese people in the face of extreme trauma - a war that is officially over, but where rape, torture and murder are still common place - is overwhelming. With boundless enthusiasm she recounts a story of sitting in on a midwives learning circle in a grass hut in a village which took two hours to reach by walking.

Elaine was asked by the Congolese midwives what she would do if a woman presented with a baby lying transverse, or sideways across the uterus, rather than the normal position of head down and feet up. Knowing that a caesarean would most likely be performed by an obstetrician, she listened to the women explain a complicated physiological procedure to the turn the baby. They then pointed out the very healthy six-month old boy to her. Elaine had never seen the procedure done in any Australian hospital. A couple of months later and back in Australia, she was doing an obstetrics skills course and read in a training manual virtually word for word the same procedure the traditional midwives had performed. "To my astonishment it was labelled the most complex and dangerous procedure in modern obstetrics," she says.

Trained as a nurse and midwife in Sydney, Elaine moved to Hay in the late 1970's where she worked primarily in women's and sexual health with the regional health service. Moving to Wagga in 2001 to chart a new course, Elaine began lecturing at CSU, and is now the Coordinator of the Postgraduate Diploma of Midwifery in the School of Nursing and Midwifery at the Wagga Campus. Elaine teaches students who are spread across NSW, Victoria and South Australia and studying by distance whilst practising midwifery at a local hospital. She is passionate about passing on the knowledge of midwifery and her belief in the importance of the continuity of care for women. "No matter where you are in the world the best outcomes for mothers and babies are with a known, skilled care giver through the pregnancy, the labour, the birth and the time immediately afterwards. Some evidence suggests traditional midwives are not a good idea but that has not been my experience, I have found them to be extremely skilled."

Like women in Africa, Elaine says women in remote Australia seem to accept the isolation of having to travel to give birth, and are resigned to it. "A generation ago women did give birth in these towns and had fantastic birthing experiences." She cites a combination of the medicalisation of birth and the government's economic rationalist viewpoint that has seen a succession of small, rural maternity units close, forcing pregnant women to drive for up to four hours –

some whilst in labour - to the closest maternity unit.

This spurred Elaine and a team of researchers to action and they are now investigating *Women's Experiences of Birthing Away from their Rural and Remote Communities*. The team (Carmel Davies, Pam Shackleton, Margaret McLeod, Sandra Forde and honorary midwife Margaret Alston) received a \$26,000 Research and Development Scholarship from the Nurses and Midwives Board of NSW, to complete the study. Now well into the data collection phase of the project and with three-quarters of the interviews completed, Elaine is grateful to the many women in the remotest parts of NSW who have shared their experiences. The team has asked the women how the geographic isolation has affected their experiences of pregnancy and labour. "The women fall into two camps – if they choose to go to town to sit out the labour then they must bear the financial cost, the isolation from family and friends and are more likely to be involved in a cascade of interventions during the birth," she says. "But if they stay at home and wait for labour they put themselves in danger by travelling on isolated roads whilst in labour or heavily pregnant, often at night and hitting kangaroos or getting a flat tyre are real possibilities."

"We've got to look at what it means to experience a healthy, normal pregnancy and see birth as a normal life experience," she says. "Evidence demonstrates that birthing in small, rural Australian maternity units is not associated with adverse outcomes for low risk women or their newborn babies." She says their research outcomes will be important for the future of midwifery care in rural and remote areas and an important aim of the study is to ensure the results are given to the decision makers in government. Elaine is also thrilled that the research team have been invited to participate in a comparative study with the University of British Columbia looking at the similarities between Canada and Australia. "We think we are remote! There are areas in Canada that are 6 hours flight from the nearest support unit," she says, "I am really excited because we could learn a great deal from Canadian models particularly in maternity services for remote aboriginal women."

Elaine makes a point of speaking to groups like Rotary and in the media at least once or twice a week to share the stories of the women and their plight in Congo. She also mentions the in-principle support of CSU in encouraging her travels, which are self-funded. "I must also thank my CSU colleagues for their support of the Congolese people through fund-raising," she says.

## BARNEY FORAN



New ILWS adjunct research fellow Barney Foran, 60, says he is at a period in his life of 'synthesis.'

"I'm trying to pull all the inter-connections together," says Barney who has recently retired from CSIRO in Canberra

where he was a futures analyst, to live with his wife, Ali, on an 11ha property at Beechworth in North-East Victoria. An example of this 'synthesis' is a project Barney is working on with World Wide Fund for Nature to come up with six laws of sustainability. "This is an attempt to try and come out with some things that nations, states and regional communities can all do," says Barney. "I'm moving very strongly towards trying to find very big picture solutions to the problems we face. The trouble is national policy still won't get us within a bull's roar of sustainability. And that's the unknown thing. Do we need a huge crisis to tip us over into real action as opposed to band-aiding that is typical of how we run national decisions these days? When you run the future numbers against our physical realities, then it's very challenging." Barney's propensity is being able to talk about environmental issues buffered by economic and social forces with a strong numeric/modelling base.

"Perhaps the biggest challenge for me is to find types of communication for these big ideas," says Barney. "While I have a lot of papers still to write, I'm thinking scholarly essays or literature as one way into the national mindset. In State of Origin terms, I'm looking for a line of attack that gets environment against across the advantage line."

Very much a rural man, Barney was brought up in Cunnamulla in Queensland's south-west near Charleville. After completing a basic degree in agriculture with Queensland University he moved to Alice Springs where he spent the next 23 years. Initially he worked for the Northern Territory Department of Agriculture before joining CSIRO Rangelands Research Unit studying ecology and pastoral management in Australia's semi-arid country which is 70% of Australia. During that time he spent three years in South Africa where he did his Ecology Masters on the management of high rainfall grasslands in Natal at the University of Natal in Pietermaritzburg. From 1990 to 1993 he was based in New Zealand's South Island and was involved in a big land-use change program (precursor to Landcare Research New Zealand). On his return to Australia and CSIRO Wildlife and Ecology, Barney took on a Canberra-based job looking at the long term environmental effects of human population growth in Australia. On the surface it seemed a major change for a plant ecologist, but for Barney it was a natural progression.

"My skill base up until then had been focusing on interconnections, which is rather an ecological thing to say, but everything is interconnected," explains Barney. "My work was taking me more and more, in a science sense, enumerating the connections between everything that moved." His new research involved modelling the physical transactions that underpin all of the activities in Australia.

"I started with running the numbers on agriculture, water... but then I had to do cars, people, buildings, industrial processes... basically what we call the physical economy which is everything that moves underneath the social and economic flows of Australia," he says. This research led him into a "difficult area of science where we started to come up with things that challenged the status quo of how Australia was being run. A lot of these issues are still being played out." The result was a study "Future Dilemmas" which examined everything that moved in Australia out to 2050. Barney says it was a difficult, politically, to get the results of the research out into the public arena, but with the help of a Four Corners program in 2002, was finally able to do so.

"The research attracted a lot of criticism at the time from the Government, economists and the Murdoch press but nonetheless, five years on the study is still relatively intact," says Barney. "All the things it highlighted are the gaping sores on the national metabolism that we are dealing with now, things like energy, green house, water, balance of payment issues....." At the same time while Barney was working on the 'Future Dilemmas' project he became "entranced with the area of energy in a fundamental and practical sense. In a fundamental sense the laws of thermo dynamics and how they affect how our economy runs, and in a practical sense how we are going to get the different sorts of energy we are going to need well into the future to sustain our lifestyles.

"With my rural background and knowledge of big landscape problems in southern and south-east Australia, I started to see that something like biomass energy from growing large areas of trees could be part of a renewable energy mix." The trees would, firstly, 'put the roughness and texture back on the landscape' from a biodiversity and water pumping point of view. "But more importantly, if done really big, it could give us a climate resilient 'other crop' that could produce wood alcohol," says Barney, who is still working on a Land & Water Australia funded contract to develop a strategy to revitalise rural Australia by making a transition to a biomass based economy.

In response to some of the criticisms levelled at the 'Futures Dilemma' study, Barney and a group of physicists at Sydney University, developed a study 'Balancing Act' where a triple bottom line analysis was done for each of the 135 sectors that make up the

Australian economy for a full-life cycle. The study, funded by what is now the Federal Department of Energy and Water, came out in 2005. The study has since been turned into an accounting tool where corporations, for example, can connect financial accounts with physical realities and come out with a broad-ranging environmental, social and economic account that takes into consideration all the effects right back through the production chain.

*\*Barney gave a well-attended seminar at Thurgoona on June 5.*

## ADJUNCT NEWS



He may well have retired from lecturing from CSU in 2003 but life for Dr Jim Birkhead as an ILWS adjunct and private consultant has never been busier.

*Jim Birkhead with members of the Palyku Indigenous group in WA*

A shortage of anthropologists in Australia has meant that Jim is in high demand for his skills in working with Indigenous people, often in very remote parts of Australia. There is a real sense of adventure in the work I am doing now," says Jim who has had a series of short-term contracts to investigate the impact of proposed mining ventures on Indigenous culture and heritage. "It's fantastic work and an incredible experience, and is putting a lot of the theory I've taught for years into practice."

Before Jim 'retired' he was actively involved in the Native Title Claim by the Githabul people from northern NSW. Over a six year period he worked on reports on their cultural and archaeological sites, and their genealogy, which was used in their submissions to the NSW and Queensland Governments. That claim is settled in NSW and is almost settled in Queensland. Projects he has undertaken for the Institute include two with an agricultural (rather than Indigenous) focus 'Integrating social and economic assessments of landuse change at the catchment scale in Boorowa, NSW.' and 'Assessing customer responses to channel automation in Central Goulburn Irrigation Areas 1-4' and one for which Jim has finished the field work.' For this latter project Jim was involved in focus group meetings with local Indigenous people at Camp Coorong, looking at Indigenous water values. "I think the whole Indigenous water issue is emerging as a really big issue," says Jim who has also done a preliminary assessment project for a Native Title Claim for the Taungurong people from the Goulburn Valley. This year he did an anthropological survey for the Department of Defence at the Cultana Expansion Area near Port Augusta in South Australia (Jim was assessing the impact on sacred sites from proposed military tests and was also the overseeing anthropologist for other anthropological surveys).

But what he has found very fascinating is his work for organisation representing Indigenous interests (i.e. the Pilbara Native Title Service in the west, and Aboriginal Legal Rights Movement in the south) assessing impacts from proposed mining claims from companies like Rio Tinto and Fortescue Metals Group. That work has taken him into the thick of Australia's current mining boom, as he assesses sites with local Indigenous elders. Jim has conducted 15 surveys since September last year. "I never imagined I would be doing this kind of work as it is so distant and remote from my farm at Chiltern," says Jim. "It is just something I kind of fell into. I thought I would be doing more Native Title Claims." Meanwhile Jim is still co-supervising PhD candidates, Yalmambirra, Harry Sakulkas, Julie Collins, who will receive her degree at the next graduation, and Neil Ward who has just been admitted as a Masters student.

# DISCIPLINE GROUP NEWS

## COMMUNICATIONS, ARTS & EDUCATION

An enthusiastic response at a meeting held on July 19 at Wagga has seen the Communications, Arts & Education group looking to the future with a number of potential projects identified. Members of the group (from the Schools of Visual and Performing Arts, and of Education) are keen to work together on projects that use the arts to convey environmental messages. John Rafferty is in the process of meeting with various Catchment Management Authorities. So far he has had discussions with Southern rivers, Central West and Lachlan. All three have expressed interest in working with the group in developing innovative ways of getting information out to the community and have projects that members are interested in exploring and being a part of. In particular the Lachlan CMA has a project running called the Boorowa Experience, which commits \$10,000 a year for three years to run a school camp that follows the river through the catchment area. Members were particularly interested in this project and saw a range of opportunities for the development of artistic responses to it as well as involvement in the project as well. The meeting resolved to allocate initial seed funding of \$1000 - \$1500 as a CAE group project to explore ways in which it could link with the Lachlan CMA and develop research projects with them. A working group has been established to develop a proposal for Lachlan CMA. The group has prepared its business plan for the ILWS Management Meeting in August. Most of its funding will be used for seeding potential collaborate research projects with some seeding funding for individual research projects. The group is also keen to develop links with other ILWS discipline groups.

## ECONOMICS & REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The ERD group has funded \$5000 for each of the following projects:

- The Affect of Work/Life Balance Employer Brands on Skilled Internal Migration: A dual-perspective analysis of skills shortages in regional Australia. Kerry Grigg & Debra da Silva
- Comparative Reliability of Choice and Rank Data. Mark Morrison, Peter Boxall & Kevin Boyle
- An investigation into the efficient use of factor inputs in cotton production. Hailu Kidane & Yapa Bandara
- What's in a name? A quantitative study of market stimuli in the beef cattle industry. Ian Coghlan

Funding has also been granted to David Dowell from the ERD group to hold a PhD Workshop on 'Elements of Trust in a Business-to-Business Relationship'.

## PROJECTS

### Yield Prophet: Evaluation of Users' Appreciation of Probability

Kevin Parton has spent the last couple of months working with CSIRO in Brisbane. In collaboration with Zvi Hochman (CSIRO, Brisbane) and James Hunt (CSIRO, Melbourne) he has been working towards an evaluation of Yield Prophet users' understanding of probability. Yield Prophet is an online crop production model designed to provide grain growers with real-time information about the crop during growth. To assist in management decisions, growers enter inputs at any time during the season to generate reports of projected yield outcomes showing the impact of crop type and variety, sowing time, nitrogen fertiliser and irrigation. Yield Prophet uses the computer simulation model APSIM together with paddock specific soil, crop and climate data to generate information about the likely outcomes of farming decisions. A questionnaire is currently being tested which attempts to test the knowledge of farmers and their advisors on issues ranging from soil moisture and risks of alternative sowing dates to seasonal forecasts based on the Southern Oscillation Index (SOI). For more information on this project contact Kevin Parton [kparton@csu.edu.au](mailto:kparton@csu.edu.au).

## VISITORS

The ERD group have:

- hosted visiting Professor Peter Boxall from the University of Alberta on June 10 to 13. While here Peter assisted with research projects and presented on "The Demand for Socially Responsible Consumer Products: Evidence from the Brewed Coffee Market".
- hosted a group of visiting regional geography students and staff from the University of New South Wales on June 16. Dr Richard Sappey and Dr Jennifer Sappey spoke on the ERD's ongoing research projects into the Regional Labour Market and Demographic Change and Ageing in Central West New South Wales.
- funded the visit of Associate Professor Jithendranathan from the University of St. Thomas, USA on July 17 & 18. Assoc Professor Jithendranathan is a renowned researcher in the area of applied finance. During his time in Bathurst he presented on past research he has conducted with Australian researchers, and suggested topics for future joint projects.

## HUMAN DIMENSIONS OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

Acting leader of the group (while Jo Millar is on SSP Leave in England) is Penny Davidson. The group has awarded travel grants, totalling \$5500, to Rosy Black, Penny Davidson, Catherine Allan and Jonathon Howard for attendance at conferences. It has two collaborative books currently underway: one will be the output of the Adaptive Management Conference held earlier this year; the other an output of the recent 5ASM conference.

## VISITORS



Dr Joanne Millar with University of Sydney researchers, Dr Marta Hernandez-Jover (right) and Nicole Schembri who visited the Thurgoona campus on Tuesday June 19

Dr Joanne Millar, leader of the ILWS Human Dimensions research group, has been assisting a group of veterinary researchers at the University of Sydney

to explore pig producer awareness and reporting of diseases. Dr Millar was invited to provide guidance in the development of a series of focus group workshops with pig producers from Forbes, Bendigo, Ballarat, Camden and Toowoomba. Disease awareness, information needs and risk assessment is largely unknown for this sector of the industry. The research will make recommendations for engaging and supporting producers in safeguarding their industry and reducing risk to animal and public health in Australia.

## RURAL SOCIAL RESEARCH PROJECTS

### Why health services are "inconsistent"

A project developing models of health care that work for specific needs of rural and remote communities is nearing completion. Dr Julaine Allan from Charles Sturt University's (CSU) School of Biomedical Sciences conducted research into why Molong and Canowindra have relatively good health services compared to other towns of a similar size. She says "confusion" over State and Federal government health services, and local communities being excluded from the decision-making process, can contribute to the inconsistency of health services from town to town. "Health services can also develop historically. A service tends to stay put. So, one town will have something that another town doesn't, just because it has always been there," said Dr Allan. "Next I want to look at small towns which are seeing increasing numbers of disadvantaged people moving in because of cheaper rental prices. They bring with them a greater need for health services. I want to work out what is the best use of limited resources in a large area."

## WATER SYSTEMS

The Water Systems group (recently accredited as the International Centre of WATER for Food Security) hosted a seminar by Prof Mike Bonell, Chief of Section, Hydrological Processes and Climate Division of Water Sciences, UNESCO, Paris France on June 27 at Wagga. Prof Bonell spoke on "Experiences in Tropical Forest Hydrology in North East Queensland, Australia from 1970-1994 noting Successes, Failures, Natural Hazards and Protests in the Australian Tropical Rain Forests".

## INTEGRATION PROGRAM

### ENVIRONMENTAL ASSETS

The Environmental Assets integration program recently met and discussed a range of concepts plus initiated some ideas for future integration projects. The meeting was attended by 17 members representing all five of the discipline groups in ILWS. In the first part of the meeting we furthered our common understanding of the focus of the integration program. We discussed what we mean by the terms 'environmental assets' and 'sustainable management' and it was useful to see how these terms are used by researchers from different disciplines. We also developed some principles of collaboration which will guide how we work together and in particular ensure we respect the opinions of researchers from different backgrounds.

The group identified a number of areas of existing research strength which include water management, regional decision making, market based instruments/incentives, fragmented areas, and habitat restoration and remediation. We split into three focus groups to discuss future activities of the integration program and there was considerable overlap between the three groups with a common theme being the linking of policy decisions and water and catchment management. Several ideas for integration projects were discussed including writing a review or commentary paper, an edited book, integration workshops with industry partners, and development of new research projects.

The next meeting of the Environmental Assets Integration Program will be a two day workshop on 30-31<sup>st</sup> August. The focus of the workshop will be to further develop some of the integration projects that were raised at the previous meeting. The workshop will also provide the opportunity for members to get to know each other in an informal social setting. There will be a group activity (possibly bushwalking or coffee shop or both) on Thursday afternoon and after dinner on Thursday evening several members will give short presentations on their current projects. One of the talks will be presented by PhD student Sylvia Zukowski, who is the recipient of the first integration PhD scholarship in ILWS. Any ILWS members would like to join the integration program or attend the workshop please contact Robyn Watts ([rwatts@csu.edu.au](mailto:rwatts@csu.edu.au)) or Roni McDowell ([vmcdowell@csu.edu.au](mailto:vmcdowell@csu.edu.au)). —Robyn Watts

## TEACHING BUYOUT

### ELIZABETH MOORE

Ms Elizabeth Moore and Dr Angela Ragusa have committed some of the time provided from the ILWS teaching buyout to build on a research partnership with Research and Education for Solutions to Violence and Abuse (RESOLVE), a tri-provincial Canadian research centre of the Prairie Provinces. This collaboration commenced in 2003 when Professor Jane Ursel, Director of RESOLVE at University of Manitoba, delivered a keynote entitled *Community-academic research partnerships* to the *Wellbeing of Women* (Moore 2003) conference held by the CSU Gender Women and Social Policy Community of Scholars. During a visit to RESOLVE in 2005, Elizabeth was invited to adapt aspects of a tri-provincial longitudinal study to the Australian context. Angela and Elizabeth joined forces in 2006 and are pursuing this work through three funded projects. For one of these they will contribute in an advisory capacity on the

potential for Australian collaboration on a Canadian project - Gill, C. (University of New Brunswick) *Canadian observatory on the justice system's response to intimate partner violence*. Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada – which has received over \$2million funding. (*Details of the other two projects are on Page 8*) During a return visit to Canada in April, Elizabeth was invited to meet with the Community Research Partners for the longitudinal study and to anticipate and resolve some of the problems that might arise in conducting research with community service providing agencies. "Our success with gaining the funding for these three projects is largely attributable to the time made available through the ILWS teaching buyout which enabled us to accelerate our progress and credibility in this international collaboration," says Elizabeth.

### ANGELA RAGUSA

Dr Angela Ragusa has just completed her Autumn 2007 ILWS Academic Buyout. This has afforded her the time to achieve many research productive tasks including two referred conference papers on demographic change and "tree change" exploring the socio-environmental impact on rural and urban landscapes as put forth in the media; four ethics applications for upcoming research projects (tree change interviews with Dr Dianne Boxall and Dr Kent Patrick; intimate partner violence research with Ms Elizabeth Moore; gender and the legal profession in NSW with honours student Mr Philip Groves; and innovative technologies in higher education with Mr Anthony Chan and Dr Andrea Crampton), two journal articles (one exploring Landcare with Mr Thomas Holden and the other analysing educational satisfaction of podcasting technology with Anthony and Andrea). In addition, she has entered the data collection phase of three collaborative research projects, one with Dr Andrew Crowther conducting focus groups of nurses; another working with Australian and Canadian counterparts in conjunction with Ms Elizabeth Moore and a third project with Anthony and Andrea exploring educational technologies. Finally, she is working to complete journal articles on tree change, and time use, and a paper on water risk.

### RIK THWAITES

As a result of the Research Fellowship over Autumn Rik Thwaites was able to submit for publication three journal papers, along with the development of a personal research plan.

## AWARDS & APPOINTMENTS

The inaugural director of ILWS **Prof Allan Curtis** has stepped down to return to his position as Strategic Chair of Integrated Environmental Management. Newly appointed Associate Director **Assoc Prof Robyn Watts** will be Acting Director from July 1 until the Institute's new director Max Finlayson takes up his appointment in December.

**Prof Allan Curtis** has been appointed to lead the social research in the \$4.5 million CERF (Commonwealth Environmental Research Facilities) program, Landscape Logic, by Prof Ted Lefroy from University of Tasmania. Landscape Logic aims to test the assumed links between current recommended practices and change in environmental condition. The social research component is valued at \$570K over three years. Already, the Institute has one PhD funded through this program (Wendy Minato).

Farewell to **Anne Kent**, administration officer based at Wagga Wagga with the Centre for Rural Social Research group, and welcome to **Jennie Meiklejohn**.

**Hazbo Skoko** has been selected to join a pool of experts in the ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND HUMAN SCIENCES (ECO-SOC) panel of the European Commission, DG Research, Brussels, for the Marie Curie Programme for the Initial Training Networks (ITNs) activity evaluation (part of the Framework 7).

**Dr Neil Lipscombe** has been appointed to the NSW NPWS Karst Advisory Council.

# GRANTS

## RESEARCH GRANTS

NSW Department of Environment & Conservation, \$96,115, to **Ian Lunt, Karen Ross, Janet Cohn** and external collaborators. Additional funding to supplement existing DECC-CSU Linkage Grant on '*Managing tree densities in western New South Wales: development of a process-based model to predict woodland dynamics*'. Funds will extend Karen Ross's post-doctoral fellowship by 12 months and provide additional operating funds for Janet Cohn's PhD project.

Willis, E. Pointon, T. Brightwell, R. Lord, W. Morris, M. O'Meara, P. Phillips, R. Service, M. Walker, T. Webb, H. & McCoy, A. Paramedic education: developing depth through networks and evidence-based research. Carrick Discipline-Based Initiatives Scheme. 2007-\$99,801.

**Facilitating energy saving behaviours among university student residents.** (2007-2008) Rosy Black and Penny Davidson have a \$72,000 grant from the NSW Energy Savings Fund, Department of Environment and Climate Change, for a joint project with CSU, Division of Facilities Management, Country Energy, Telstra and Ampy Meters. The project will compare the impact of two strategies: use of in-house energy consumption displays, and social marketing strategies on Wagga student residents' energy consumption.

## INTERNAL GRANTS

Using podcasting as an innovative technology in distance education. CSU project funding (\$1760) **Dr Angela Ragusa**

**Moore, E & Ragusa, A.** *Rural women's experience of intimate partner domestic violence, the healing process and the role of social support delivery in Wagga Wagga.* CSU Faculty of Arts Research Development Grant \$10,000. A pilot of the methodology of the Canadian longitudinal study that asks women what supports and services have helped them to gain safety and healing from family violence. At the local level this project involves collaboration with community service providing agencies.

## TRAVEL GRANTS

PhD student **Robyn Whipp** has been awarded a travel grant of \$2500 by the CRC for Plant-based Management of Dryland Salinity to attend the 2007 ESA/SER Joint meeting: Ecology-based restoration in a changing world in Sane Jose, California, USAA, from August 5 to 10.

**Moore, E.** and Ursel, J. (University of Manitoba) with collaborators **Ragusa, A. & Tutty, L.** (University of Calgary) *Navigating the interface of knowledge about individual and institutional responses to intimate partner violence in Canada and Australia.* International Council for Canadian Studies, International Research Linkages Travel Grant. \$11,197.

## WOMEN IN RESEARCH

Twelve members of Thurgoona campus' Women in Research met in mid-July to revive the group after a period of inactivity. Two members, Maggie Watson and Karolina Petrovic, gave short talks about their experiences as 'women in research'. These talks generated discussion about how group participation could enhance members' personal and professional development. Members suggested using meetings as a way to test research ideas, give practice runs of seminars and receive feedback about grant applications and papers in development. Convening regular and frequent meetings, establishing a culture of mentoring, and networking with other women's research groups also were discussed. The next meeting, at 12 pm on 30 August, will further develop these ideas to produce a document which will explain 'who we are and what we do'. The document will be used to assist in the process of gaining formal recognition of the group by the University. Contact person for the group is Emily Sharp on [esharp@csu.edu.au](mailto:esharp@csu.edu.au).

## EDITOR'S CONTACT DETAILS

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