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FROM THE DIRECTOR

As we enter the Christmas period I want to reflect on what we have achieved and identify some of the key activities for next year. The challenge is always going to be to add value to the existing research groups. Have we done that? It is early days, but I think we have taken some important first steps.

We have established sound governance arrangements, with a Management Team, internal Reference Group and an external Advisory Board. Recently, I've met with all Board members ahead of the first Board meeting in February next year. In my conversations Board members emphasised their strong commitment to CSU as a regional university and to the Institute's mission. The Reference group has met twice, once at Orange and then at Wagga. Apart from providing valuable advice and insight to the Management Team, the Reference group provides a fora for members to learn about research in ILWS, foster integration and build personal networks. The Reference group will meet three times next year. The Management Team of Marg Alston, Kath Bowmer, Ian Gray, Shahbaz Khan and Nick Klomp has met most months and I thank them for their hard work and wonderful support.

Integration is founded on strong discipline bases. Mark Morrison is leading our emerging Economics and Regional Development group which includes members from Wagga, Bathurst and Orange. One of this group's first activities will be a workshop in early 2006 to showcase the group's capacity and explore research opportunities with potential partners. Ray Goodlass is leading our efforts to develop a group around Arts/ Culture and Education. These groups will complement our existing Social Research groups at Wagga and Albury; the Ecologist group from Albury and Wagga; and the Hydrology group at Wagga.

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OPINION

By Prof. Marg Alston, Director of the Centre for Rural Social Research

Service delivery in inland rural Australia: Human Rights abuses in our backyard

Having spent several months during 2005 conducting research in small rural communities across three states, I am aware of the significant gaps in service delivery that have developed over recent years. I have no hesitation in classifying many of these as human rights violations because of the restrictions they place on freedom in rural areas. For example, of the seven communities visited, only one had facilities where women can give birth. In other communities women are expected to travel up to some hours in order to find a hospital prepared to take them. This has led to some serious, and life-threatening, experiences for women in these communities. It is only a matter of time before more serious consequences arise.

In all communities visited the lack of mental health facilities also is cause for concern at a time when community members are experiencing significant stressors including drought, lack of income, overwork, social isolation and stress. All service providers note the rise in mental health issues. The number of suicides in rural Australia is one indicator of the deficiencies in mental health services. The lack of accessible and available mental health services in rural Australia compromises health, safety and quality of life.

Covered under Article 26 of the Declaration of Human Rights is the right to education. Yet in every community visited there are young people unable to take up university education because of the financial pressures facing their drought - impacted families. Many delay going to university or pass up their offer entirely. Most note that this is based entirely on financial considerations. There is no doubt that the human rights of rural Australians are being violated. Who is taking up the fight?



FEATURE PROFILE:
Tourism and recreation lecturer Dr Penny Davidson talks about her career and research interests.

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FROM THE DIRECTOR

They will ensure we have the capacity to be a one-stop-shop for research examining rural and regional sustainability.

Integration across disciplines and in our case, Faculties and Campuses requires investment of time and resources. We have deliberately adopted a strategy of purposeful engagement based around projects, workshop and conferences. An ILWS Integration Team met several times, including with CSIRO Water for a Healthy Country Flagship staff. This group provided the base for a CSU bid to the Commonwealth and Environment Research Facilities Fund (CERF) in partnership with the EG Graham Centre and researchers at Orange Campus. If we are selected to proceed to a full bid, this group and our Advisory Board will be heavily involved. Substantial ILWS funds will be available in 2006 to support integrated research and members should discuss their ideas with me or others on the Management Team.

The appointments of Margrit Beemster and Kate Roberts to the positions of Communications Coordinator and Conference/Workshop Coordinator have enhanced our capacity to promote research, build effective partnerships and support integration. ILWS held a number of highly successful events this year, including the Catchment Communities Conference at Wagga in August and will hold the Australian Stream Management Conference in Albury, May 2007. We have begun planning for an international conference, probably in Canberra, in October 2007. Members are invited to submit proposals for ILWS supported workshops.

We have identified the appointment of senior research adjuncts as a way of quickly increasing our research capacity. Digby Race, Jim Birkhead, Tony Dunn, David Roshier, Caroline Ifka, Rod Griffith and Nicky Mazur are all highly experienced researchers who have taken up adjunct appointments this year and have brought additional research into ILWS.

I look forward to working with you all to further research at CSU.
Prof. Allan Curtis

IN THE NEWS

KYOTO PROTOCOL

Prof. Kevin Parton speaking on Kyoto Protocol was the Daily Columnist in the Central Western Daily on September 21. He was also quoted in the publicity leading up to the Asia Update 2005 Forum, which CSU hosted on Friday Sept. 23 in ABC News online, ABC Central West news, Win News Orange, Prime News Orange.

OVERSEAS COVERAGE

A/ Prof. Dirk Spennemann was in Micronesia in September and had plenty of media coverage including:

- Articles in the Saipan Tribune on the launch of an online version of "An Annotated Bibliography of German Language Sources," (Sept 11, 13, and 15); in the Marianas Variety (Sept.13) and re. the publication of the Micronesian Journal of the Humanities and Social Sciences for 2005 (Sept. 16)
- a one hour radio talk show on Radio KZMI (Saipan) on Sept. 12 about the German Period in Micronesia
- an interview by Marianas Cable Vision News on Sept 13. and an appearance on the John Gonzales Show Live on Sept. 14.

DAMS

Prof. David Mitchell featured in the Canberra Times on Sept. 14 in a story on the cost-effectiveness of dams as reservoirs noting the high evaporation rate from dams in our climate.

MAGPIES

Dr David Watson gave Prime TV news viewers on Sept. 23 some commonsense comments on the behaviour of magpies in spring.

YOUNG PEOPLE IN THE COUNTRY

Prof. Margaret Alston featured in a story in the Sydney Morning Herald on Oct. 1 for her studies of sustainability of inland rural towns and what happens to their young people; and, on Oct. 4, in the Canberra Times for her research on rural families being forced to split up with many women moving considerable distances to bigger regional towns to find work to pay school fees and purchase family goods.

TRAPPED PENGUINS

PhD student Amy Jorgensen featured in a story in the Sunday Telegraph on Oct 2. titled "Battle to save island wildlife".

PARTNERS IN GRAIN

The Stock Journal featured an article on Oct. 20 –"PinG harnesses options for SA grain workforce"- on the research work of PhD student Patricia Hamilton who is being supervised by Prof. Margaret Alston. PinG stands for Partners in Grain, a capacity building program to increase the decision-making skills of women and young people in the grains industry.

ENVIRONMENTAL ECONOMICS-EARLY CAREER WORKSHOP

The role of environmental economists featured on ABC Bush Telegraph on Oct. 31 with interviews with A/Prof. Mark Morrison and Prof. Kerry Smith from the USA who were contributing to the two day E-CReW workshop held at Bathurst, Oct. 27-28.

MENTAL ILLNESS

Dr Darryl Maybery's research on mental illness and who cares for the kids was covered by WIN TV, Nov. 3; ABC Central West Nov. 4; 2PK news and country magazine, 2BS Morning Show, Nov. 7; ABC News online and The Border Mail, Nov.5; Triple J, Nov.7; and a report in The Age, Nov 28.

BIRD FLU

An ILWS public information and panel discussion on 'Bird Flu- A Local Perspective' in Albury on Nov. 4 generated extensive local media coverage with ILWS members Dr David Roshier, Dr David Watson and Professor Nick Klomp all interviewed.

- The Border Mail ran a double-page feature article with a cover photograph on Oct. 29 and the day's editorial. This was followed up with other mentions on Nov. 4 & 5
- Prime TV did three separate reports which were also covered by Win TV
- ABC Goulburn Murray Radio interviewed panel members for its breakfast show on Oct. 31. Dr Roshier was also interviewed by Melanie Sim for the ABC Country Hour program, by ABC Riverina and Star FM 'Our Backyard' program, as was Dr David Watson.
- A news report on Edge FM/3NE
- Dr Roshier featured on ABC Online for Nov.4 with 'Bird flu fears prompt concerns for local ducks.'

HEALTHY SOILS

Dr Ben Wilson featured in Tasmanian Country newspaper re Healthy Soils for Sustainable Farms on Nov. 11.

ACADEMIC V FICTION

A/Prof Dirk Spennemann :

- ABC Goulburn Murray, Nov. 25, with Jonathon Wright speaking on academic vs fiction writing and the 101 word microstory breakfast.

PROPERTY OWNERSHIP FUTURE

Prof. Allan Curtis speaking about changes in property ownership and what that means for rural communities, resource management and industries, was on ABC Radio National Country Hour on Nov. 23.

SQUIRREL GLIDERS

Craig Grabham's study to determine Squirrel Glider movements and habitat use near CSU's Thurgoona campus was featured on ABC Goulburn Murray Radio, Nov. 30.

SEX IN THE COUNTRY

Dr Angela Ragusa was interviewed on her research on sex workers in the country (see feature in this issue page 7) on ABC Radio NSW Statewide Drive program and ABC Radio Canberra on Nov. 30; for ABC Radio Central West and by the Daily Advertiser newspaper in Wagga Wagga on Dec. 1; and for WIN News and ABC Riverina on Dec. 2.

PROFILE

DR PENNY DAVIDSON



Dr Penny Davidson started her academic career with a science degree in biochemistry and zoology from the University of NSW. That path is a far cry from her current position as a lecturer in tourism and recreation with the School of Environmental and Information Sciences at the Thurgoona campus.

"I was working in the science labs at the time and realised that I didn't want to work in science laboratories focusing on instruments and test tubes for the rest of my life," says Penny. Instead she applied for and got a two-year teaching position in Zimbabwe, Africa, teaching science to high school students. "That was quite a wake up call," reflects Penny, 22 years of age at the time, and as she says, quite ignorant of politics and the world. "Mugabe had not long got in and was committed to increasing the education opportunities for Zimbabweans. What horrified me the most over there was how much status I had just because I was a white person."

A year travelling and working around Europe (mostly in Portugal and England) followed before she returned to Australia to pursue an interest in the leisure/tourism field, at

the time a profession being developed in Australia. After completing her Associate Diploma in Leisure at Kuring-Gai College of Advanced Education, Penny worked as a recreation officer with the Royal Blind Society. In 1990 she joined the staff of CSU to teach in the Bachelor of Applied Science- Parks, Recreation and Heritage degree. In 1996 she completed her Masters looking at women's holidays, a topic she is still interested in and presented a paper on at The Australian Sociological Association 2005 Conference in Tasmania.

"I'm interested in the individualised nature of leisure ... the way that for women with home care duties especially leisure is an individual responsibility rather than a social right as it is presented for those in the paid work force," says Penny. "For women with young children the work they do at home is ongoing, not able to be postponed so they don't get the 'leisure breaks' as happens with people who are in paid employment. And our society is shifting to greater individualisation – so any shift to caring about people who have inequitable access to leisure is likely to struggle".

Penny says she found doing her Masters led her to another big "wow" moment in her life- the beginning of her interest in feminism and a broader understanding of how our society works in general. The interest in women's lives led on to research projects and consultancy work in the mid 90s looking at women in Landcare; women and adventure tourism; and women working in National Parks.

"That led to a curiosity about ourselves – as carers of place and managers of tourism – what is our experience of these activities, and how do we make sense of these activities in our Australian society – rather than looking at 'the visitor'. We can't leave ourselves out of the equation. This led on to other projects and underpinned the PhD I did," says Penny who spent three and a half years doing her PhD on "The Social Construction of the Jenolan Caves" with James Cook University in Townsville, Queensland.

Since her return to CSU in 2003, Penny has continued lecturing (in the subject areas of leisure sociology, facility management, recreation leadership and communications) in the Parks, Recreation and Heritage and Ecotourism degrees and is the course coordinator for the Post Graduate Karst Management courses. She and colleague Dr Rosy Black produced "Principles for Guided Cave Interpretation: Ideas from the Profession" which collated the ideas and experiences of cave tour guides regarding what they found worked in their tours. "We were trying to mix practice with theory," says Penny. "It was something that hadn't been done before in that particular industry. There is so much knowledge on the ground that doesn't get tapped into."

More recently Penny worked with Alexandra Knight on a case study in Mt Buffalo National Park looking at the development of "attachment to place" among Parks Victoria staff. Penny is also a co-supervisor with Prof. Allan Curtis of PhD student Michael Mitchell who is looking at the triple bottom line for a Sustainability Challenge Project with the CRC for Irrigation Futures.

Penny is involved in a number of professional organisations: Parks & Leisure Australia, of which she is on the Board of Directors, and Chair of the communication committee; the Australian Caves and Karst Management Association; the Australian and New Zealand Leisure Studies Association; and is a member of the University's Faculty of Science and Agriculture's Board.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

EMERGING GROUP-Economics & regional development



Associate Professor Mark Morrison is leading the emerging Economics and Regional Development group within ILWS. "We are at the planning stages," says Mark. "We have a strategic plan, have strong support within ILWS, and are now generating further support from within and outside the University."

At 35 years of age, Mark, who is based at Bathurst, is an interesting mix. He is one of the University's youngest A/Profs; an economist with a strong interest in non-market valuation which includes valuing environmental quality; a research fellow with CSIRO; and currently teaches marketing and economics with the Faculty of Commerce.

Mark did his undergraduate studies in economics (Honours) at Macquarie University before working as an economist with the NSW Environment Protection Authority. He did his PhD with the University of NSW's Australian Defence Force Academy in non-market valuation, which is about "valuing the environment," and helped develop a new evaluation technique, which is known as "Choice Modelling". Mark, who joined CSU in 1999, says a recent highlight was a year long term as an invited professor (2001 to 2002) with Georgia State University's environmental policy program in the USA.

One of the large projects Mark is working on is funded by the U.S. EPA and National Science Foundation involving experimental economics. "In non-market valuation research, typically we use surveys to get people to state hypothetically their willingness to pay for environmental improvements," explains Mark. "But you often find what people say hypothetically far exceeds what they do in practice. We are trying to figure out how to get people to say in a hypothetical situation what they would actually do in a situation involving actual payment."

A second project involves CSU students and is funded by the US Forestry Service. "It's also about how to get people to answer honestly when they are participating in these stated preference surveys," says Mark. "But for this one, we are not using choice modelling but a different technique called contingent valuation which is a simpler approach. Rather than evaluating multiple alternatives, respondents evaluate just a single alternative, a technique which is appropriate for single projects."

Recently completed projects with an environmental application involving collaboration with Prof. Jeff Bennett have explored how communities value riverine health across NSW; and in

South Australia with CSIRO biodiversity valuation.

Mark's second area of research is market-based instruments (MBI) that potentially create incentives for businesses and individuals to try and reduce environmental impacts at lower cost than regulation. One of these is the use of environmental offsets. "Basically if you create an environmental impact, you 'offset' that impact by paying for environmental improvements at a second site, and these environmental improvements can be larger than the impact you created such that your development leads to a net environmental gain," he explains. "It sounds good in theory and it's actually not a bad idea overall but there are some real risks with it. There are some tricky incentive and equity issues that I don't think have been well explored."

Mark's third area of interest is in technology adoption, particularly environmentally friendly technology. As part of this work he has an ARC Discovery Grant with researchers from UTS and Monash.



Professor Eddie Oczkowski from the School of Commerce at Wagga Wagga is playing a leading role in the development of the Economics and Regional Development group of ILWS and is looking forward to the opportunities that participation in ILWS will offer.

As the Faculty of Commerce's resident quantitative data analysis consultant, Eddie is available to higher degree students and staff who need assistance with analysis. "If other researchers in the Institute feel they need to have a quantitative focus with their research to answer questions, then I'd be happy to come onboard as a co-investigator or whatever," says Eddie who sees himself "refocussing his expertise" because of his alliance with the Institute. Eddie, one of the Institute's principal researchers, is an econometrician, working in a discipline that combines maths, statistics and economics.

"Essentially, it's trying to apply economic theory to realistic situations through the use of data and a bit of mathematics. Eddie's PhD (back in the late 80s) was on "Disequilibrium economics and econometrics" where he developed a whole series of techniques, using economic theory and econometric statistical techniques. He applied these to the Australian Tobacco Leaf Market which back then had quotas as well as minimum prices. "The traditional view of markets is that they operate perfectly, there are no imperfections... that demand equals supply, that they are very efficient, and that they are very useful ways of delivering scarce resources," says Eddie. "In contrast the disequilibrium approach recognises that, for whatever reasons, markets might fail, there might be some imperfections, and, as a consequence you need to analyse those markets differently. My focus, primarily, has been on estimating models which have got those characteristics, where you are talking about markets that are operating out of equilibrium."

Over the years he applied econometric techniques to a number of different contexts including raw wool trading, the coking coal trade between Australia and Japan, the Australian egg industry, and more recently looked at the wine grape industry. "The study was based on data from the Annual Wine Grape Crush Survey which goes out to all wineries and they announce what they pay to independent growers, and talk about whether they have got too many grapes, or too few etc." says Eddie. "I found there seemed to be an inconsistency between how prices are changing over time and what they suggest is in glut. There are standard predictions from economics that if there are too many grapes around prices will fall and vice versa." However, when Eddie did the "number-crunching" aligned with varieties and regions, he found that this wasn't necessarily so. "There's a mismatch there," he says. "The results aren't consistent with what you would expect from standard theory."

In the past Eddie's research focus has been on agricultural commodities and how markets operate within that context. However his skills as a quantitative analyst have been used for projects in education, marketing, and human resource management. He is now investigating the water trade market and looking at applying certain models to gain insight. "I think having an economists' group within the Institute is very important," he says.

CONFERENCES AND SEMINARS

RIVER SYMPOSIUM

Prof. Kath Bowmer attended the 8th International River Symposium 2005, Sept. 6-9, in Brisbane where she presented a paper: 'Achieving Environmental Benefits: A River Operator's Perspective.' Other Institute participants at the symposium included Prof. Shahbaz Kahn, Dr Ken Page and Dr Andrea Wilson.

Prof. Bowmer was also invited to present a paper at the National Europe Centre (ANU), International Symposium on Sustainable Water Management: Comparative Perspectives from Australia Europe and the United States from Sept.15 -16. Her paper was titled 'Water for the environment – compliance, trading and community obligation.'

RIPPLE CONFERENCE

Dr Catherine Allan and Dr Penny Davidson presented a paper on 'Who us? Do the research? Reflections on some current participatory action research projects' at the RIPPLE conference, 22-23 Sept. 2005, held at Albury CSU. Penny and Alex Knight presented a second paper at the conference on 'Sense of place in conservation agencies: exploring emotions that affect work practices.'

PhD student Kim Alexander presented a paper on 'Whispers, voices and challenges for people in the hills of Lao PDR' at the conference. Honours student Emily Mendham presented a paper 'Whose voice counts? Reflections on interpreting farmer identity and relationship with native vegetation management in the Murray irrigation areas of NSW.'

RAILWAYS

Prof. Ian Gray presented a paper on 'What Can Railway Organisations Learn from Railway Cultural Traditions?' at the National Railway Heritage Conference, Tamworth, 28-30 Sept.

BIOECON CONFERENCE

A/Prof. Mark Morrison presented a paper with co-author Dr Darla Hatton MacDonald (CSIRO) on 'Valuing Biodiversity in South Australia' at the Bioecon Conference at Cambridge and at the University of Wales at Aberystwyth.

RISK

'The Paradox of Risk' was the title of a paper (written with A/ Prof. Neil Lipscombe) that Dr Penny Davidson presented at the Parks and Leisure Australia Annual Conference, held on 10-12 October in Hobart.

AMBULANCE PROFESSIONALS

Dr Peter O'Meara with Veronica Madigan presented a paper on 'Graduate paramedic career choices: student intentions, influences and outcomes' at the National Conference of the Australian College of Ambulance Professionals, 11-15 Oct. in Canberra.

BIRD CONFERENCES

Over the last three months Dr David Watson presented papers at the Bird Australia Congress in Bendigo, Ecological Society of Australia meeting in Brisbane and the Australian Ornithological Congress in Blenheim, New Zealand.

INTERNATIONAL MARINE PROTECTED AREAS CONGRESS

A/Prof. Neil Lipscombe and Andrew Porter attended the inaugural International Marine Protected Areas Congress (IMPAC) in Geelong, Oct. 2005. Over 800 delegates from 80 countries attended the Congress co-hosted by the World Parks Congress, the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority and Parks Victoria. Of particular interest to Andrew's PhD was the theme on 'Shared Stewardship' and a cross-cutting issue of 'Indigenous & Local Communities'. Neil divided his time between the 'effective management' and 'shared stewardship' themes.

KEYNOTE ADDRESSES

Professor Margaret Alston has given a number of keynote addresses at various conferences over the last few months, including:

- a paper on social factors relevant to the future of livestock agriculture at the Horizons in Livestock conference on the Gold Coast, Oct.3
- a paper on Third Stream funding from the perspective of a researcher at the Academy of Science conference, Canberra, Oct.13
- the Country Women's Association's regional conference in June, Oct. 26
- the Australian Farm Institute seminar in Sydney, Nov. 22

Prof. Alston also recently hosted a meeting in Wagga Wagga between ILWS social researchers, the E.G. Graham Centre and the NSW Farmers Federation to explore potential research partnerships.

ENCHANTED RIVER

It's not often you get a group of scientists sitting down and sharing ideas and experiences with a group of artists but a 'The Artists Meet the Scientists Brekky' held at the Thurgoona campus on Friday, Nov. 18 provided just such an opportunity.

As part of the planning and development for next year's Enchanted River festival on the banks of the Murray in Albury on April 1, the two groups got together to share their knowledge of science through the arts.

The community artists included Enchanted River producer Annie Edney, artistic director Stef Robinson, assistant director Tim Monley, circus/physical theatre trainer Per Westman, stilt dancer Alana Harris, visual artist Libby Alexander and Susie Losch, Arts &Media Albury TAFE.

The scientists included Dr Paul Humphries, Dr Ben Wilson, Dr Jim Birkhead, Dr Joanne Millar, Alison Matthews, Natasha Schedvin, Geoff Edney and Dr Darren Baldwin from the Murray Darling Freshwater Research Centre.

CONFERENCES AND SEMINARS cont.

IN THE PHILIPPINES

Prof. Kevin Parton recently travelled to the Philippines (Oct.15-20) to attend the Philippine Atmospheric Geological and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA) Update Forum on "Philippine Climate". The trip was a component of the ACIAR research project concerned with "Seasonal Climate Forecasts for policy and farm decision-makers in the Philippines and Australia." Kevin spent the week working with researchers at the Philippine Institute of Development Studies (PIDS), PAGASA and the Leyte State University (LSU). From 14 – 23 Nov. the Philippine collaborators on the project were in Australia.

SUSTAINABILITY FROM A SOCIAL RESEARCH PERSPECTIVE

Prof. Allan Curtis gave a key note address to the National PUR\$L Workshop on October 21-23 at Wellington, NSW on "Regional NRM and salinity: a social research perspective". Discussions with the North Central Catchment Management Authority indicate that ILWS is the preferred provider for two research projects examining management of the Macquarie Marshes and providing social data to underpin catchment planning.

He also gave an Invited presentation to the University of Melbourne, School of Anthropology, Geography and Environmental Studies on Oct. 12 on 'Regional NRM from upside down: a social research perspective.'

ENVIRONMENTAL AND RESOURCE ECONOMICS EARLY-CAREER RESEARCHER WORKSHOP 2005

A workshop for early career researchers to get feedback on their research, interact with experienced researchers and meet with others at a similar stage in their careers was held in Bathurst Oct. 27-28. Organiser, A/Prof. Mark Morrison said there were about 60 participants and the workshop/mentoring sessions helped some people experiencing difficulties with their research. Prof. Mike Young's presentation on dealing with the media and policy makers was particularly useful. The workshop attracted three AusAid people from China, one attendee from New Zealand, and one from Germany.

"We plan to hold the workshop again in 2007," says Mark.

AQUATIC WEEDS

Prof. David Mitchell gave a keynote address to a seminar on Aquatic Weeds on November 3 at the Hawkesbury Campus of the University of Western Sydney.

BIRD FLU INFORMATION EVENING

ILWS hosted a public information and panel discussion on "Bird Flu-A Local Perspective" in Albury on November 3. The evening was a great opportunity for ILWS to engage the regional community, with close to 100 people attending. The evening was chaired by Professor Nick Klomp, with four speakers:

- ecologist Dr David Roshier, a Senior Research Fellow in ILWS - movement of birds within Australia and between south-east Asia and Australia
- district veterinary officer with the Department of Primary Industries, Dr Jeff Cave - avian influenza from an agricultural perspective
- Tony Kolbe, Director of Population Health Greater Southern Area - public health and planning
- Albury City Environmental Health Officer, Lauriston Muirhead – local response to a bird flu outbreak.

RURAL FUTURES 2020

Orange campus was the venue for the Rural Futures 2020

conference, aimed at exploring the visions and practicalities of sustaining agriculture, the land and regional communities in the Central West of NSW. On the day before (Nov. 21) the conference a roundtable discussion with many of the region's senior policy, planning and decision makers, explored the issue of sustainability. Prof. David Kemp chaired discussion. Prof. Peter Newman, the NSW Sustainability Commissioner, was one of the participants. Institute members at the conference included Prof. Dr David Goldney who spoke on 'Natural Sequence Farming- A new model for agriculture and landscape restoration?' and Institute Director, Prof. Allan Curtis speaking on 'Engaging rural landholders and communities-lessons for regional organisations.' The second day of the conference featured presentations by postgraduate research students.

MATERIALISM AND SOCIAL VALUES

Dr Angela Ragusa presented a paper on 'American materialism, consumerism and social values: A sociological analysis of social issues and value priorities' at the Women in Research 'Women Doing Research' 2005 Conference held at Gladstone in Queensland from Nov. 24 - 25.

GRANTS & PROJECTS

NEW

ILWS SUCCESS IN LATEST ARC ROUND

Dr Ian Lunt (ILWS) and Dr Ross Bradstock and Michael Bedward of the NSW Department of Environment and Conservation recently received an ARC Linkage grant to research, '**Managing tree densities in western New South Wales: development of a process-based model to predict woodland dynamics.**' The three year project was awarded \$439,000 including \$221,000 from the ARC, \$60,000 from DEC and an in-kind contribution of \$158,000 from DEC. These funds will be used to employ a post-doctoral fellow, PhD student and a casual technical assistant.

'Towards Sustainable Regional Institutions: The Nature, Role and Governance Implications of Contemporary Australian Regionalism', an ARC Discovery Grant with A/Prof. Ian Gray (ILWS), Dr AJ Brown of Griffith University, Prof. D Brunkhorst of University of New England and Prof. C Saunders of Melbourne University. (\$390 000 2006-2008)

Participation following traumatic brain injury in rural, regional and remote areas – ARC Linkage grant with the South West Brain Injury Program in Albury. Professor Marg Alston (ILWS) with researchers from Community Health in Albury, Lindy McAllister, Alison Winkworth, Michael Curtin and Bob Neumayer. (\$52,000 2006/2007)

NATIONALLY COMPETITIVE GRANTS

Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR): **Reinforcing the social and community dimensions of ACIAR projects to deliver livelihood impacts.** Dr Digby Race, Dr Joanne Millar and Prof. Allan Curtis . (2006/7). \$83,000. This project will provide training in social research to project managers in ACIARs agricultural, forestry and fisheries research programs in Laos, Indonesia and Australia.

EXTERNAL GRANTS

Corangamite Catchment Management Authority: **Social benchmarking for the Corangamite CMA.** Prof. Allan Curtis with Dr Digby Race, Penny Cooke and Simon McDonald. (2006). \$99,000.

Dr David Watson and PhD student Laurence Barea have received a Holsworth Wildlife Grant for \$4000 for their project on the **conservation ecology of Painted Honeyeaters.**

CURRENT PROJECTS

SEX IN THE COUNTRY



For the past 18 months sociologist Dr Angela Ragusa, who is based at Wagga Wagga, has been undertaking a research study looking at rural sex workers.

So far the research has involved in-depth interviews of 20 female and transgender sex workers, Sex Workers Outreach Project workers, brothel owners and managers in New South Wales and Queensland country towns. Angela has found that many sex workers enter the industry as a result of financial hardship, dissatisfaction with personal relationships and/or desire for intimacy without attachment. Some have also experienced domestic violence prior to entry into the industry.

“There is an erroneous stereotypical belief that most sex workers in the country are illicit drug users, when, in reality many are victims of physical and socioeconomic hardship who engage in this occupation to reclaim their sense of power in relationships,” says Angela. “Many of those interviewed were middle-aged women who have gone back to work. Often their clients are country men who are usually farmers, academics, administrators and other upstanding community members, who seek companionship.”

Angela is conducting the study with three collaborators from the University of New England. The project was initiated due to concerns about the lack of access to basic services for sex workers in the country compared to those working in the city. The research is a pilot study for an Australian Research Council grant application for a large quantitative and qualitative study.

PUBLICATIONS

PEER-REVIEWED PAPERS

Allan, C & Curtis, A 2005, Nipped in the Bud: why regional scale adaptive management is not blooming, *Environmental Management*, vol.36, no.3, 414-425.

Cole, I., Lunt, I.D. and Koen, T. (2005). Effects of sowing treatment and landscape position on establishment of the perennial tussock grass *Themeda triandra* (Poaceae) in degraded *Eucalyptus* woodlands in south-eastern Australia. *Restoration Ecology* 13(3), 552-561.

Cole, I. and Lunt, I.D. (2005). Restoring kangaroo grass (*Themeda triandra*) to grassland and woodland understoreys: a review of establishment requirements and restoration exercises in south-east Australia. *Ecological Management and Restoration* 6(1), 28-33.

Gray, I., Williams, R. and Phillips, E. (2005) Rural community and leadership in the management of natural resources: tensions between theory and policy, *Journal of Environmental Policy and Planning*, 7 (2): 125-139.

Lunt, I.D. and Spooner, P.G. (2005). Special Paper: Using historical ecology to understand patterns of biodiversity in

fragmented agricultural landscapes. *Journal of Biogeography* 32(11), 1859-1873.

Lunt, I.D. Coates, F. and Spooner, P. (2005). Grassland indicator species predict flowering of endangered Gaping Leek-orchid (*Prasophyllum correctum* D.L. Jones). *Ecological Management and Restoration* 6(1), 69-71.

O'Meara, P. 2005 A generic performance framework for ambulance services: an Australian health services perspective. *Journal of Emergency Primary Health Care* (JEPHC), Vol. 3, Issue 3, Article Number: 990132.

Bi, P., Parton, K.A. and Donald, K.(2005), Secular trends in mortality rates for diabetes in Australia, 1907-98, *Diabetes Research and Clinical Practice* 25, 270-277.

Stevens HC and Watson DM. (2005) Biparental care in the Grey Shrike-thrush, *Colluricincla harmonica*. *Emu*, 105, 223-231.

TECHNICAL REPORTS

G. FitzSimons, S. Mlcek, O. Hull & C.Wright . Learning numeracy on the job: A case study of chemical handling and spraying. *National Center Vocational Education Research (NCVER)* - <http://www.ncver.edu.au/publications/1609.html>

The first of the Institute reports are out.

Report No. 1 'Socio-economic profile of the Boorowa catchment, New South, Wales': D Race, J Birkhead, A Curtis & S McDonald. This is the first report to come out of a \$200,000 research project funded by the NSW Department of Primary Industries looking at the social implications of changes in land-use to arrest dryland salinity.

Report No.3 'Evaluation of the North East Catchment Management Authority Rural Land Stewardship project: promoting sustainable agriculture through landscape change and payments for environmental services.' G Earl, C Allan & A Curtis. This evaluation examined the implementation of a \$300,000 Rural Land Stewardship Program in North East Victoria.

A Multi-Disciplined Community of Scholars: A Johnstone Centre Bibliography. Dirk HR Spennemann. (Full report next issue)

AWARDS & APPOINTMENTS

As an acknowledgement of his water- savings works in China, The Chinese National Centre of Efficient Irrigation Engineering and Technology Research, Chinese Academy of Science, Beijing has appointed **Professor Shahbaz Khan** as their Adjunct Professor and Senior Principal Researcher.

Dr Digby Race has been awarded an Erskine Fellowship (valued at approximately Aus\$15,000) by the University of Canterbury, in Christchurch, New Zealand. Digby will be going to New Zealand for seven weeks next February-April to be the principal lecturer in the University's Community Forestry course, and to work with other researchers exploring the social dimension of commercial forestry in New Zealand.

Congratulations to **Dr Amy Jansen** who has moved to Tasmania to take up an appointment as a researcher working on a state government funded project, and to **Dr David Cornforth** who accepted an appointment as a senior lecturer in the School of Information Technology and Electrical Engineering at the University of NSW-Australian Defence Force Academy in Canberra.

POSTGRADUATES



A discussion with her professor at the University of Wageningen, The Netherlands, who was editing a book to which Prof. Allan Curtis had contributed a chapter, led to Masters student **Linda Scholten** doing four and half months research based at Thurgoona.

While here Linda worked on a research project looking at landcare groups and their relationships with Catchment Management Authorities. Much of Linda's research (qualitative) was out in the field interviewing landcare group representatives, CMA coordinators and senior CMA staff. The research is part of Linda's Masters in Environmental Science with the University of Wageningen's policy group.

RURAL SOCIETY

The idea for this latest edition emerged in the lead up to the 2004 International Social Work Conference held in Adelaide in October where several of these papers were initially presented. As they were gathered and refereed, others were commissioned to establish a solid focus on rural social work practice in the twenty-first century. Papers:

Domains of Rural Social Work Practice *by Brian Cheers, Ros Darracott & Bob Lonnie*

'Great Lifestyle, Pity about the Job Stress': Occupational Stress in Rural Human Service Practice *by Rosemary Green & Bob Lonnie*

Whispers on the Wind: The Small Quiet Voice of Rural Health and Welfare Practice *by Raeleene Gregory*

Forging a New Paradigm for Australian Rural Social Work Practice *by Margaret Alston*

A Satellite Model for Rural and Remote Social Work Field Education *by Wendy Bowles & Rohena Duncombe*

Paucity Management Addresses the Limit-situations of Human Services Delivery in Rural Australia *by Susan Mlcek*

Employment Officers' Views on the Operation of Job Network in a Non Metropolitan Area *by Manohar Pawar*

Defying the Odds: Enterprising Social Work Practice in a Rural Employment Project *by Penny Crofts & Phoebe Begg*

Beyond the Drought: Towards a Broader Understanding of Rural Disadvantage *by Greg Hall & Melinda Scheltens*

REGIONAL RESEARCH SOLUTIONS

Established by the Centre for Rural Social Research in 2003, Regional Research Solutions is the Institute's commercial market research unit. It provides a service for both internal and external clients (private business, government and other researchers) and while it conducts mail, email and web based market research, it specialises in Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI) surveys.

"We work with a client to work out the most appropriate method or methods of conducting market research," explains the unit's manager Karryn Murray who has been in the position since February this year. Recent clients include the Greater Southern Area Health Service and the University's School of Agriculture and Veterinary Science. Other telephone survey work has been undertaken for Albury City Council, and the North East Catchment Management Authority through referral by ILWS researchers.

CATI is described as a "fast, accurate, cost-effective and reliable method of data collection which can reach ten to thousand's of survey participants." The facility is equipped to script questionnaires, select appropriate samples, conduct telephone interviews and provide survey results as either raw data or analysed in report format. If required the unit will use the University's Spatial Data Analysing Network (SPAN) for more detailed reports. Regional Research Solutions also provides a random recruiting service for Focus Groups. If you are looking for a way of getting someone else to do a lot of the legwork associated with market research/surveys contact Karryn on 02 6933 2834.



Incorporating the Centre for Rural Social Research and the Johnstone Centre

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