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FROM THE DIRECTOR

The details of Centre performance for publications and research income in 2005 has recently been announced by the University. ILWS has increased its research income by almost 100% since 1994 to just over \$2 million and publications by about 30% to 67 DEST points.

The University has proposed annual targets of 20%-25% improvements on these performance indicators which, in my view, are realistic targets. I congratulate all members and associates (59 members, 91 associates and 59 PhDs) for their contributions to this outstanding achievement. The Institute's Annual Report has been submitted to the Centre for Research and Graduate Training and will be on the Institute's website once approved by CSU.

Reviewing information for the Annual Report I was impressed by our progress in establishing sound governance arrangements; engaging key stakeholders; and enhancing research capacity. ILWS research capacity will be further enhanced by recent CSU initiatives relating to the appointment of strategic professors (three approved for ILWS); allocation of funds for teaching buyout by research centres (details to be announced by Prof Ross Chambers); and the foreshadowed appointment of Business Managers for ILWS and the EH Graham Centre.

Amongst the highlights of recent weeks have been: Notification that the bid Prof Shahbaz Khan is leading for an International Centre of Water for Food Security under the auspices of UNESCO-IHP is proceeding; Dr David Roshier's return from Siberia; work by Dr Digby Race and a team of ILWS researchers examining irrigator responses to new channel technology in the Shepparton area; meetings of the Economics and Regional Development Group to develop research proposals; a public forum in Albury examining aspects of prescribed burning; and the launch of Prof Prof Margaret Alston's drought report.

-Prof Allan Curtis

OPINION

By Prof Kath Bowmer

Sage on the Stage or Guide on the Side?

For me, this little phrase nicely captures the dichotomy in possible approaches – expert or facilitator.

It's often applied to teaching. With the expansion of information students need to be equipped to research their disciplines, rather than be filled full of content to be regurgitated in examinations and then forgotten as quickly as possible, so teacher as *guide*, rather than *sage*, is the preferable *modus operandi*.

It seems to me that the facilitator / guide approach is relevant to researchers too, especially those of us engaged in supporting the deliberations of regional and community groups as they face the difficult challenges of priority-setting and decision-making in natural resource management. In principle I fully support the increased opportunities for local and regional involvement in NRM that have been provided by the Natural Heritage Trust and National Action Plan and, more recently, in water sharing through CoAG Water Reforms and the National Water Initiative. However, many regard this move to regional governance as a very risky experiment. Surveys also reveal a gulf between researchers and catchment managers that reflects a conflict in values, or even downright antagonism. A typical comment about the approach of expert researchers to a regional management process was *'Boy, have we got the solution for you!'*

I wish now that I had concentrated earlier on doing things a little differently:

- Thinking beyond problems to solutions and options
- Understanding more about policy and planning, priority-setting and decision-making frameworks

(cont page 2)



FEATURE STORY: DARYL MCGREGOR

The Institute's newest Research Fellow Daryl McGregor brings a lifetime of skills and knowledge gained from working in the water industry. His motto is "to make a difference in whatever I do." Story Page 4

OPINION

- Developing good networks;
- Listening more;
- Incorporating the different kinds of knowledge- expert, local and cultural into my work.

'*Guide on the side*' has the right overtones of humility and respect for relationships. It is a world apart from RQF and nationally competitive grants - more on that later, no doubt, because Universities seem to be consumed by it.

In my view ILWS provides a great opportunity for us to do things a little differently and thereby support our regions more effectively.

Further reading:

Campbell A (2006). The Australian Natural Resource Knowledge System, Land &Water Australia 45 pp
Chartres, C., Bowmer K. H. et al. (2004) Scientific Advice on Natural Resource Management to the Natural Resource Management Ministerial Council, 66 pp.
</www.nrm.gov.au/publications/sci-advice/pubs/sci-advice.pdf#search=%22NRMCC%20Chartres%20%22>

IN THE NEWS

HERITAGE FUTURES

Assoc Prof Dirk Spennemann's public seminar on Heritage Futures: Global and Local attracted media coverage with:

- a story in the *Border Mail* on June 3
- radio interviews on ABC Riverina, June 5, and ABC Goulburn Murray on June 6.

DIGITAL DIVIDE

Dr John Atkinson's research looking at the level of access to computers available to residents in Albury featured in:

- A story in the *Twin City Post* on June 15
- In an interview with Edwina Farley ABC Rural radio (Victoria) on June 8

BALANCING NEEDS

Prof Shahbaz Khan's research on ways to balance the needs of irrigators with those of the environment featured in a story "Scientists look for balance to stay afloat" in the *Border Mail* on July 15.

SUGAR AND WEEDS

Interest in Dr Ian Lunt and Dr Suzanne Prober's research into using sugar to control weeds continues with a story "Sugar packs punch in weed fight" appearing in *The Australian and New Zealand Grapegrower and Winemaker* journal in July.

NESTING BOXES

Honours student Rebecca Durant featured in the *Border Mail* on July 27 for her research into the use of nesting boxes in Baranduda.

CURTIS REPORT

Prof Allan Curtis' report on 20 years of Landcare in Victoria featured as the "Curtis Report" in a feature story in the winter edition of the *Victorian Landcare and Catchment Management* magazine with an accompanying editorial.

FARMER PLANS

Dr Digby Race and Dr Jim Birkhead's research in the Boorowa Catchment where they have been talking to farmers about future plans for their properties as part of a research project on the socio-economic profile of the catchment made the local newspaper, *The Boorowa News*, on July 13.

COUNTRY WOMEN

Prof Marg Alston's opinion was sought for a piece in the *Daily Telegraph* on July 22 relating to the lack of women in the country.
<http://www.news.com.au/dailytelegraph/opinion/story/0,22049,19863409-5001031,00.html>

WATER CONSERVATION

Prof Allan Curtis's response to Toowoomba's rejection of having treated sewage returned to their water supply which was on the CSU news site was picked up by:

- the *Border Mail* on Aug 1
- ABC Riverina on Aug 1
- 2BS Morning Wireless program and ABC Central West on Aug 2.

NUCLEAR ENERGY

Economist Dr Rod Duncan, who participated in a nuclear energy forum held at the Bathurst Uniting Church on July 1, was subsequently interviewed by ABC Goulburn Murray radio; and ABC Riverina.

PRESCRIBED BURNING

The public forum on prescribed burning organised by the Institute received excellent media coverage with:

- preliminary stories in the *Border Mail* on July 29 and *The Fireman* on Aug 16
- an interview with guest speaker Prof Bruce Shindler in the *Border Mail* on August 16 with an accompanying editorial
- radio interviews on ABC Rural with Prof Allan Curtis on August 12; on ABC Goulburn-Murray with Prof Shindler on Aug 14; on 2AY with Prof Curtis on Aug 15.

MICRONESIAN HISTORY

Assoc Prof Dirk Spennemann's association with Micronesia continues to make the Australian and international media with:

- His archaeological survey of a former Japanese agricultural research station in Pwunso featured in the *Kaselehlie Presas, Pohnpei*, on August 2, in the *Pacific Magazine*
<http://www.pacificislands.cc/pina/pinadefault2.php?urlpinaid=23799> on Aug 3, in the *Border Mail* and the *Marianas Variety* on August 8
- Reports on his lecture series on the history of Rota in the *Marianas Variety* on Aug 30 and the *Saipan Tribune* on Aug 31.

FORESTRY PARTNERSHIPS

Dr Digby Race, who is doing a 3-year ACIAR-funded research project "Community-company forestry partnerships in Australia and Indonesia" was interviewed for:

- ABC Southeast SA (Mt Gambier) radio on August 7
- Prime TV (Albury) on August 21.

REGIONAL GOVERNANCE

Assoc. Prof Ian Gray featured in a story by William Birnbauer in the *Sunday Age* on August 8 that questioned the need for state governments.

CLIMATE CHANGE

A CSU News Release – "Disease turns up heat on climate change" focussing on Prof Kevin Parton's comments on the effects of global warming was picked up by ABC Central West NSW on Aug 10.

WATER AND CONFLICT

Prof Shahbaz Khan made the front page of four newspapers in the Philippines where he made a presentation on "Water and Conflict; from global to local" during a UNESCO HELP forum in Mindanao on Aug 19.

RELATIONSHIPS

Dr Angela Ragusa was heard on ABC Riverina radio discussing the relationship between women's fertility rates, number of children and level of career progression and economic status in Australia and abroad on Aug 24.

DROUGHT REPORT

Interviews with Prof Marg Alston about her report on 'The impact of drought on secondary education access in Australia's rural and remote areas' which was launched by the Federal Education Minister Julie Bishop at Wagga on Aug 24 was heard on ABC Country radio and appeared in the *Herald Sun*.

DISCIPLINE GROUPS

ECOLOGY & BIODIVERSITY

Members of the Institute's ecology and biodiversity group had the opportunity to learn more about the world of publishing, be inspired by the research work of their peers, and enjoy an excellent Thai dinner as part of the group's ecology day on Thursday June 29 at the Thurgoona campus.

Camilla Myers, from CSIRO Publishing and editor of its *Wildlife Research* and *Emu* journals explained to the 35 members present what an editor was looking for in a paper.

"Authors should ask themselves a number of questions before they submit including: 'Why am I publishing?'," said Camilla. "Do I have something to say and know what my message is; does it add to the existing knowledge in the field; is what I am writing about of interest to others in the field; which journal has the most impact and what is the market for that journal; and have I got results that provide answers?" She also suggested it was a good idea to let someone from outside the author's field to read through the article before submitting.

Camilla was followed by Dr Denis Saunders, Chairperson of the Institute's Advisory Board and an ecologist who gave an interesting presentation on his studies on Carnaby's cockatoo in WA, originally considered as vermin in the mid 1960s but now considered a threatened species. Denis said that if he had his time over he would have tried to engage communities more in the work he did. "I think it makes a big difference to what happens on the ground," he said. He went on to say that ILWS provided an opportunity for researchers to have "an integrated approach which will make a wonderful difference."

Other presentation during the day were made by Dr Gary Luck on "Evidence in ecology: everything you know is wrong"; Skye Wassens on "The dangers of boat building: frogs, floods and arthropods"; Dr Geoff Burrows "Up in flames: the Myrtaceae and Falling branches: the Wollemi Pine"; Dr Andrea Wilson "Managing biodiversity in modified landscapes"; Dr Peter Spooner "Making inroads: native vegetation in rural landscapes"; Dr Ian Lunt "Woodland vegetation dynamics: impacts of management and disturbances on past, present and future vegetation states"; Dr Paul Humphries "Water under the bridge"; Dr Iain Taylor "Body size predicts the response of waterbirds to human disturbance"; Dr David Watson "The research program of David M Watson: an overview"; Dr Cilla Kinross "Wildlife and pest management in agricultural and forested landscapes: past, present and future"; and Dr Robyn Watts "Rivers, wetlands and riparian zones: overview of research outcomes and impacts on management practices."

ECONOMICS & REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The ERD Group held two workshops over the last few months.

The first one on June 16 at Bathurst was for members who are more interested in regional development and was attended by about 20 people from the University's four campuses. It provided an opportunity to hear about the work of fellow members; build relationships; and decide on three pilot research projects, which are:

- Ageing and the not-for-profit sector (which will look at the effect the ageing population and Government requirements is having on not-for-profit volunteer organizations such as the Red Cross)
- An analysis of the labor shortage in the regional nursing market in Australia
- Developing regional networks.

The second workshop, on August 8 & 9 at Wagga, was attended by 10 people and had more of an environmental economics focus and included ecologists, and members of the NSW Department of Primary Industries. The group discussed two potential research projects:

- Developing a method to value ecosystem services which combines biophysical and ecosystem models and non-market valuation to be able to predict the non-market value of land-use changes; and
- Irrigation efficiency.

The group was successful in receiving a CSU Visiting Research Professor grant and, as a result, Prof Jock Collins from the University of Technology, Sydney, will be working with members over the next few months. He and Prof Peter Boxall (University of Alberta) will be at the group's planned writing retreat on Nov 13 -15.

The group has also engaged Siti Amri, on a part-time basis, as a research officer. One of Siti's initial tasks will be to assist with the development of the group's promotional materials, including its website on the ILWS pages.

CENTRE FOR RURAL SOCIAL RESEARCH

The leader of the Institute's Centre for Rural Social Research group, Prof Margaret Alston, is on SSP leave. While she is away Dr Colin Boylan, a senior lecturer with the School of Education will be acting in that role. Colin has been with the University for 27 years. Colin's research covers staffing issues for rural and remote schools; professional development access for rural teachers; and technology based delivery systems for rural students.

Colin says he is looking forward to his acting role. "I think there is the potential to bring a social and welfare perspective into the environmental and sustainability issues being faced in the Murray-Darling Basin," he says. "The Institute provides fertile ground for collaborative research and information dissemination."

An information session in the School of Humanities and Social Sciences at the Wagga Wagga campus for CRSR members has been organised for Thursday, Sept 28 from 11.00 am to 12.30 pm. Colin says the session, with Prof Allan Curtis, provides an opportunity for members to learn more about the role of the Institute and opportunities for collaborative and cross-disciplinary activities.

HUMAN DIMENSIONS OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

Social researchers at Albury interested in environmental management meet every two months to share information. New initiatives include a writing retreat in late September to finish journal papers, regular short seminar sessions on the second Wednesday of each month and development of a webpage on the ILWS site.

ILWS INTEGRATION PROGRAM

The implications of social and demographic change for land management in rural Australia.

Most of the activity in developing this program has been around determining interest in the topic from members and potential external partners, coordinating meetings to discuss the integration process and setting short and long term goals and deciding on the mechanisms required to achieve these goals. Currently, 25 ILWS members have indicated their interest in the topic. Two potential external partners (Department of Primary Industries NSW and Nature Conservation Trust of NSW) have also indicated an interest. A small team at Albury and Wagga have been developing research ideas. A full-day meeting for all members will be held on Oct 20 at Wagga to discuss in detail the possibilities for integration across disciplines and partners, and to set short and long term goals including designating program outputs in the next 12-18 months.

PROFILE

DARYL MCGREGOR



The Institute's newest Research Fellow is Daryl McGregor. Daryl brings to the Institute a lifetime of skills and knowledge gained from working in the water industry.

Daryl, who up until July this year was the Manager of Albury Water, has retired from municipal life to set up his own business, DLM Environmental Consulting Pty Ltd and to pursue his interest in the Murray River and Murray catchment in terms of water quality and supply issues, salinity, land degradation, and the general management of the health of the catchment.

"There's obviously a need out there for expertise in water and waste water management," says Daryl. "There is a lot of interest in the urban sector in terms of conserving water, and harvesting and reusing water. "My association with CSU will give me the opportunity to interact with people like Allan Curtis and the other members of ILWS."

Daryl is a water engineer who graduated from Melbourne University in 1973. He then went on to do his Master of Engineering Science at the University of NSW; a Master of Business Administration, Deakin University; a Post Graduate Diploma in Business Management, Deakin University and a Graduate Diploma in Municipal Engineering, Warrnambool Institute of Advanced Education. Daryl has 33 years of experience as an engineer, the first 11 of which were working with engineering consultants. In 1984 he joined the Albury City Council in what was then the Water and Sewage Department and has held five or six senior management positions over the years with council.

He is also the immediate past chair of the NSW Water Directorate, a politically active organisation set up to provide technical expertise and support for water government authorities that represents 95 water authorities in NSW. Currently Daryl is a member of the National Water Commission's Urban Water Advisory Committee and a member of the Murray Catchment Management Authority's Board of Management. (Previously he was chair of the Murray Catchment Management Board before it became an Authority.)

Daryl was very instrumental in establishing Wonga Wetlands on the edge of Albury (which uses reclaimed water from the town's waste water treatment plant). He lists his areas of expertise as:

- Water and waste water management
- Natural resource management
- General engineering
- Project management

Daryl has worked with Prof David Mitchell over a number of years including on Albury's Wastewater Management Strategy and the Wetlands Treatment System at Thurgoona CSU. "There's a lot of things to be done under the Living Murray banner," says Daryl. "The Murray-Darling Basin Commission is looking for a lot of input and expert advice and there is an opportunity for the Institute to be a part of that process." At 56 years of age, Daryl says he still "has a fair bit to offer" and believes he can "have an influence in the way we develop our water resources for the future. We need to do things the community is comfortable with and can understand. I think I can bring a good knowledge and understanding of the processes in the Murray catchment to the Institute." As he says: "My motto is to make a difference in whatever I do, I like to have a crack at changing things."

CONFERENCES AND SEMINARS

SOCIOLOGICAL CONGRESS

Dr Ingrid Muenstermann was one of 3214 people from 104 countries who attended the XVI Sociological Congress in Durban, South Africa from July 23 to 29. Ingrid's presentation "Personal attitudes regarding prenatal diagnosis and abortion – A comparison of students in Germany, Japan and Australia" was based on research in three countries involving a researcher in Augsburg, Germany, Dr Kerstin Wuestner, and in Tokyo, Japan, Dr Ulrich Heinze.

CLIMATE PREDICTION

Prof Kevin Parton attended a workshop, "The Science of Seasonal Climate Prediction" in Canberra on August 2 & 3, held under the auspices of the National Committee for Earth System Science. Its objective was to assess the scientific basis for seasonal climate prediction and its application to practical problems.

WATER FOR IRRIGATED AGRICULTURE AND THE ENVIRONMENT

A one-day international conference held by the Academy of Technological Sciences and Engineering Crawford Fund on Aug 16 in Canberra was attended by several ILWS members (Dr Penny Davidson, Dr Joanne Millar, Mr Michael Mitchell, Ms Christine Piko and Ms Nicole McCasker). The conference explored the challenges of providing irrigation water for agriculture over the next 20 years.

CLIMATE INFORMATION

At the IAAE Conference (Conference of the International Association of Agricultural Economists 2006) on the Gold Coast On Aug 15 Prof Kevin Parton presented a summary of research designed to assist policy makers in the Philippines use seasonal climate information to predict regional rice yields

EDUCATION IN RURAL AUSTRALIA

Dr Colin Boylan, along with colleague Kate Haddow from the Katherine School of the Air, organised the 22nd National Society for the Provision of Education in Rural Australia Conference in Hobart, July 12 to 14. Sixty-five people attended including participants from Alaska, Newfoundland, Canada, New Zealand and all states of Australia. Colin presented three papers and edited the conference's proceedings.

AMERICAN WATER RESOURCES ASSOCIATION

Prof Allan Curtis and Dr Catherine Allan attended the American Water Resources Association Summer Specialty Conference, held in June in Missoula, Montana, USA. The theme of the conference was Adaptive Management of Water Resources. Allan and Catherine, with Dr George Stankey from Oregon, presented/ facilitated a panel session (attended by over 100 people) which focused on the social and institutional constraints to adaptive management.

WORKSHOPS

GRASSLANDS

Dr Ian Lunt participated in two grassland workshops in June talking on 'Major themes in ecology of grassy ecosystems' at the Parks Victoria Grassland Management Workshop, Melbourne, June 1, and on 'Conserving and managing native grasslands and woodlands' at the CSU Ecology & Biodiversity Group – Murray CMA workshop in Albury on June 13.

TRAINING WORKSHOPS IN INDONESIA AND LAOS

Dr Digby Race and Dr Joanne Millar conducted two training workshops on Social and Community Dimensions for ACIAR Project Leaders in Indonesia. The first workshop, held in Puncak, West Java, Indonesia, from May 29 to June 2, was attended by 22 people representing 18 research institutes, national agencies and universities.

A second workshop was held in Denpasar, Bali from June 19 to 23 with 22 participants.

Teaching staff from the Faculty of Agriculture of the National University of Laos participated in a one-day workshop on July 7 on understanding and evaluating extension, farmer adoption and learning. The workshop was run by Dr Joanne Millar who used examples from the CSU-ACIAR project she has led over the last three years in Laos.

COMING UP

Call for abstracts: 5th Australian Stream Management Conference

ILWS will host the 5th Australian Stream Management Conference (5ASM) in Albury on 22 - 25 May 2007. This conference has a loyal following amongst scientists, managers and landholders.

The central theme of 5ASM is **Australian rivers: making a difference** and the conference aims to encourage participants to reflect on how their research and practises have made a difference to river management.

Papers should address one or more of the following sub-themes:

- 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?

The conference's principal sponsors are Water for Rivers; Murray Darling Basin Commission; Earth Tech and Land and Water Australia. The partners (who are coordinating field trips) are NSW Dept of Natural Resources; North East CMA; Murray Wetlands Working Group; and Murray Darling Fresh Water Research Centre.

The abstract submission deadline is Friday 6 October. For information about speakers, field trips and to submit an abstract online visit the conference website:

<http://www.csu.edu.au/research/ilws/news/conference.html>

PROJECTS AND GRANTS

NATIONALLY COMPETITIVE GRANTS

New Immigrants in the Regional and Rural Australia: Attraction and Retention (2005) Rural Industry & Rural Development Corporation, DIMIA, DOTARS. \$224,000. Dr Branka Krivokapic-Skoko and Professor Jock Collins (UTS).

Economic and cultural value of water to Indigenous People in the River Murray Region. Water for a Healthy Country, Flagship Collaboration Research Fund, CSIRO (\$100,000). Dr Jim Birkhead, Wendy McIntyre (CSIRO), Romy Greiner (River Consulting), Steven Hemming (Flinders University) and Matt Rigney (Ngarrindjeri).

Understanding landholder constraints to the uptake of market-based instruments. Land & Water Australia, Department of Natural Resources Mines and Water (QLD), Northern Rivers CMA, Central West CMA. \$173,000. (2006/7) Assoc Prof Mark Morrison, Ray Baker (DNRMW), Dr Jeanette Stanley (DNRMW) and Dr John Ward (CSIRO Land & Water).

RESEARCH GRANTS

Kicking the Dirt (2006-2007) \$55,000. Murray Catchment Management Authority. This project led by Drs Ben Wilson and Catherine Allan will evaluate the Murray CMAs "Meeting in the Middle" soil health program which is bringing together soil scientists, agronomists and farmers to work out ways to achieve healthy soils through a collaborative approach.

Review of Portable Sawmills in the Pacific: Identifying the factors for success. ACIAR. (CSU component \$15,000) Dr Digby Race has joined colleagues from the Australian National University and the University of Melbourne to identify the socio-economic and environmental outcomes of the use of portable sawmills by remote rural communities in Australia (eg. communities in Cape York), Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands.

INTERNAL GRANTS

Exploring how socio-cultural environments impact adolescents' use of leisure time, well-being, level of materialism and the pursuit/value of consumer items". CSU publications grant (\$3000). Dr Angela Ragusa.

OVERSEAS TRIPS



Dr David Roshier (second from the right) with other members of the expedition and local Chuchi in a fishing camp. Photo by Augusto Faustino.

SIBERIAN EXPERIENCE

As Dr David Roshier talks about his recent 10 week field trip to the remote Chukotka region in the Russian Far East he uses phrases like "fantastic experience", "Aussie bones adjusting to the cold", "travelling at less than walking pace", "quickly changing seasons" and "the eerie silence of the tundra after the birds have left."

These phrases conjure up images of what it must have been like for this intrepid ILWS ecologist, one of a team of international scientists who joined counterparts from the Russian Academy of Science to study seabirds, waterfowl and shorebirds on the edge of the Arctic. "It's as far east as you can go in Russia, opposite Alaska," says David a member of a survey team which included two Danish, one Dutch and two Russian scientists looking for nesting sites of the Spoonbill Sandpiper, one of the world's rarest shorebirds with an estimated 400 breeding pairs left. "The birds breed along the coastal shores of the Bering Sea in Russia and then winter somewhere in South East Asia but we don't yet have a clear understanding of why their numbers are declining," says David.

The team, who spent a total of six weeks out in the field (200km to the north east and then south east of Anadyr) used aerial photographs of breeding sites identified in 2002 to search for the birds. They found eight breeding pairs, including one nest and one brood. "We spent a lot of time just getting from one place to another travelling in a caterpillar, at a average speed of 10km per hour, because there aren't any roads," says David. "It's very tough terrain and at first, in June, it was very cold with lots of ice and snow but by July, the temperature was in the mid teens to 20s and the ground was very boggy."

During the expedition the team also recorded every bird they saw including eiders, geese, ducks, swans, other sandpipers and various passerines; stage of incubation of eggs in nests they found; and collected down samples. "It was really natural history as much as anything," says David who observed European Pochard, a duck not recorded in that part of Russia before. The team also found shorebirds, including Great Knots and Red Knots, that had been flagged in Australia or New Zealand.

"It was exciting to explore their breeding grounds in the Arctic," says David, "and to observe birds in breeding plumage that I had only seen previously in their less spectacular winter plumage. "Another extraordinary sight was to see adult geese float their goslings down the rivers from their mountain nesting sites to where food was more abundant in the lowlands. I had read that they did this but to actually see them was amazing."

BUSY IN MICRONESIA

At the invitation of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) Council for the Humanities A/Prof Dirk HR Spennemann flew to Saipan to speak on the German colonial period of Micronesia. While there Dirk presented a training session at the 2006 Teachers Institute; gave two public lectures on recent research on the role of the island of Rota as a stronghold of local cultural traditions during the German times; presented talks at the Northern Marianas College and senior High Schools; and testified in front of the Judiciary and Operations Committee of the House of Representatives (Congress) of the CNMI. His testimony related to a proposed bill strengthening the CNMI historic preservation act.

INSTITUTE EVENTS

TAKING THE HEAT OUT OF PRESCRIBED BURNING



From left to right Peter Farrell, John Boal, Prof Bruce Shindler and Dr Ian Lunt

This public forum, held on Aug 15 at the Nowik Theatre in Albury at 6pm attracted more than 80 people with a good cross-section representative of rural landholders, NSW Rural Fire Brigade, Country Fire Authority, land management agencies, local and state government and the health sector.

The evening was chaired by Prof Allan Curtis. The keynote speaker was Prof Bruce Shindler, a social scientist from Oregon State University who provided an international perspective.

Prof Shindler told his audience that they should encourage others to get engaged in the planning processes for prescribed burning. "In the U.S. if you don't have a community fire plan you don't get fire money," he said. He also stressed the need to build "trust" between communities and agencies.

Other speakers were:

- Peter Farrell, Manager Fire North East (Department of Sustainability and the Environment) speaking on what is prescribed burning and when it is used and why
- John Boal, Manager Community Safety, North East area (Country Fire Authority) on future fire management for the CFA
- Dr Ian Lunt, a Principal Researcher in ILWS who spoke about the role of fire in forest ecology.

BIODIESEL FORUM

Institute Research Fellow and retired CSIRO researcher Dr Barney Foran will be the key speaker at a public forum about the "Regional development opportunities for bio-fuels" to be held in Wagga on **Wednesday, Nov 15**. Prof Jim Pratley will chair the event and three other speakers from agriculture and industry will add their views. More information from Kate Roberts at kroberts@csu.edu.au.

HERITAGE FUTURES

A public seminar presented by A/Prof Dirk Seminar at the Nowik Theatre in Albury on June 6 saw some 40 people enjoy Dirk's talk on Heritage Futures: Global and Local. Starting with a quote "My interest is in the future because I am going to spend the rest of my life there" from Charles Kettering, former head of General Motors, Dirk dispelled some of the myths about heritage, namely that something needs to be old, pretty, historical and that time needs to have elapsed to make it worth preserving.

Dirk provided examples of things he believes we need to look at now to assess their future heritage value. Most unusual was the concept of preserving Neil Armstrong's footprints on the moon. Dirk is concerned that as space tourism becomes a reality, a site that has world-wide heritage and cultural significance, could be destroyed by the unwitting tourist.

PHD STUDENTS

GILL EARL



DUTY OF CARE FOR BIODIVERSITY?

After more than fifteen years working in the field of biodiversity management with the Victorian Department of Sustainability & Environment, Gillian Earl was looking for a new challenge.

"I was keen to develop a policy tool that would help achieve the Government's long-term vision for biodiversity management," says Gill, a PhD student with ILWS. Gill's involvement in social research for a Landcare project in the NSW Murray Catchment stimulated her interest in the management of biodiversity in agricultural landscapes where the majority of assets occur on private property. "Effective biodiversity conservation in agricultural landscapes will only be achievable if landholders

accept some level of responsibility for biodiversity conservation," says Gill. "Landholders need to be willing to undertake positive and responsible management to protect and promote biodiversity on their properties. At the moment it isn't clear what a landholder's level of responsibility is and who should pay."

To help answer that question, Gill is doing a PhD with supervisors Prof Allan Curtis and Dr Catherine Allan, supported by a scholarship from the CRC for the Plant-Based Management of Dryland Salinity. "The issue of who pays [public/private] and what for is contentious," says Gill. "Many landholders feel they carry an unfair financial burden for the conservation of biodiversity on private land. We need an approach that complements existing programs and policies; promotes positive management for biodiversity on private land; and clarifies the responsibilities of landholders and the community."

Gill is investigating whether a duty of care for biodiversity, designed to operate at a catchment level, could provide a way of overcoming these difficulties. She is aiming to develop a framework that will assist staff in CMAs and other agencies to decide how to implement biodiversity management programs in ways that allocate responsibilities transparently and fairly, and make appropriate use of public funds. She has recently begun a series of interviews, seeking feedback from experts, agency staff, industry groups and landholders on the draft framework.

-Kate Roberts

WELCOME

To students who joined ILWS mid year.

Kelly Marsh: 'Indigenous values and historic preservation in Western Micronesia' with supervisors Assoc Prof Dirk Spennemann and A/Prof Anne Perez Hattori, University of Guam.

Hamza Farooq Gabriel: 'Scenario planner for closing the urban water loop under future climate change and development demands' with supervisors Prof Shahbaz Khan, Dr Matthew Collins and Dr Richard Culas.

Janet Cohn: 'Woodland tree dynamics' with supervisors Dr Ian Lunt, Dr Peter Spooner, Dr Ross Bradstock (University of Wollongong) and Michael Bedward (NSW DEC).

David Lohrey: 'Post-colonial studies with an emphasis on travel writings and first-contact narratives' with supervisor Dr Christine Ferrari.

Jianxin Mu, who will probably be working on the Utilization of FILTER system in Kunming City with supervisor Prof Shahbaz Khan.

They join fellow PhD students who started earlier in the year.

Emily Mendham: 'The rural rebound and changes in rural property ownership. Trends, challenges and opportunities for natural resource management' with supervisors Prof Allan Curtis, Dr Joanne Millar and Dr Rachel O'Brien.

Kylie Eklom: 'The influence of vegetation structure and food resources on habitat use by the Plains-wanderer in a grazed native grassland' with supervisors Dr Gary Luck and Dr Ian Lunt.

Chris Harrington: 'Interactive space and place: negotiating "communities" in biodiversity conservation' with supervisors Prof Allan Curtis and Dr Rosemary Black.

Janelle Levesque: 'Finding benefits in parental cancer: Psychological and behavioural outcomes' with supervisors Dr Daryl Mayberry and Dr Kent Patrick.

Tamara Jackson: 'Minimising the environmental impact of groundwater dominant irrigation systems through optimal energy and water use efficiency' with Prof Shahbaz Khan, Dr Moshin Hafeez and Matthew Collins

Nick Whiterod: 'Bioenergetics of Murray Cod.' Dr Paul Humphries, Dr Robyn Watts, Dr Shaun Meredith (MDFRC)

PUBLICATIONS

PEER-REVIEWED PAPERS

Oczkowski, E., (2006) Nash bargaining and co-operatives. *Australian Economic Papers*, 45(2), 89-98.

Wilson, A., Jansen, A., Curtis, A., & Robertson, A. (2006) Measuring riparian condition: a comparison of assessments by landholders and scientists. *Ecological Management & Restoration* 7(2): 123-129.

BOOKS/CHAPTERS

Allan, C., Davidson, P., and Curtis, A. (2006) Who us, do the research? Reflections on three participatory action research projects. in G. Whiteford (ed) *Voice, identity and reflexivity*. Pp. 208-218. Proceedings of the Second RIPPLE Qualitative Research as Interpretive Practice Conference, 2005. Charles Sturt University, Bathurst, Australia.

CONFERENCE PAPERS/PROCEEDINGS

Boylan, C., Munsch, T. (2006) Beyond the Line and Closer to the Edge, in **Boylan, C. (ed)** *Community, Diversity and Innovation in Rural and Remote Education*. Proceedings of the 22nd National SPERA Conference, July, Hobart, Australia.

Wallace, A., **Boylan, C.** (2006) Place, schools and communities: new beginnings in rural NSW, in **Boylan, C. (ed)** *Community, Diversity and Innovation in Rural and Remote Education*. Proceedings of the 22nd National SPERA Conference, July, Hobart, Australia.

Boylan, C., and Mulcahy, D. (2006) Creating multi-age classes: Exploring challenges, benefits and strategies, in **Boylan, C. (ed)** *Community, Diversity and Innovation in Rural and Remote Education*. Proceedings of the 22nd National SPERA Conference, July, Hobart, Australia.

Allan, C., Curtis, A., Stankey, G.H. and Shindler, B. (2006) Adaptive management and watersheds: A social science perspective, Panel session for the American Water Resources Association Speciality Summer Conference, Adaptive Management of Water Resources, June 26-28, Missoula, Montana.

TECHNICAL REPORTS

Taylor, I., Shultz, M., and Taylor, S. (2006) Management of wading birds and their habitats in the Murrumbidgee Irrigation Area: balancing the needs of conservation and irrigated agriculture. Report # 2.

Watts, R.J., Ryder D.S., Burns A., Wilson, A.L., Nye E.R., Zander A. & Dehaan, R. (2006). Responses of biofilms to cyclic releases during a low flow period in the Mitta Mitta River, Victoria, Australia. Report to the Murray Darling Basin Commission. Report # 24 Institute for Land, Water and Society, Albury, NSW.

AWARDS & APPOINTMENTS

Dr Joanne Millar has joined the editorial board of *International Journal of Agricultural Sustainability*; **Dr Colin Boylan** the editorial board of the *Journal of Research in Rural Education* (a US based journal); and **A/Prof Prof Mark Morrison** the editorial board of the British journal *Journal of Environmental Planning and Management*.

Prof Kath Bowmer is the Chair of the review panel for the CRC Irrigation Futures. Kath has also been appointed by the NSW Natural Resources Advisory Council to assist developing a critical issues strategy in water.

John Harper, Roger Mandel and **Dr Geoff Burrows** have won the Australian Society of Plant Scientists 2006 Teaching Award.

Ms Victoria Keighery has left her position of Chief Executive Officer with Regional Arts NSW to take up a new CEO position at Community Cultural Development NSW but will maintain her position on the ILWS Advisory Board.

Congratulations to **A/Prof Neil Lipscombe** who has retired from the School of Environmental and Information Sciences after 34 years.

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