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FROM THE DIRECTOR OPINION

Late last year Prof Gail Whiteford, Campus Director at Albury, asked me to prepare a proposal that would fund a professorial chair in ILWS. Gail had been contacted by a legal firm acting for the executors of an estate. We have been advised that our proposal was accepted. Of course, there are some details to be worked through. This is an exciting development and highlights the potential of a substantial integrated group to provide third parties with sufficient confidence to invest in research at CSU.

Many of you attended Prof Paul Burnett's Research Quality Framework (RQF) presentations and will be aware of the effort that will be required to prepare the CSU submission to the Australian Government in April 2008. ILWS planning for RQF is underway. Dr Ian Lunt will lead the ILWS preparations, supported by Roni McDowell (Business Manager) and a committee from the Management Team. We anticipate that 5/6 RQF groups (of the 20/25 at CSU) will be identified within ILWS. Each of these groups will then be supported as they prepare an RQF evidence portfolio.

Getting the best possible ILWS RQF submission is critical for future funding for research at CSU. We are also aware of the potential for the process to be resource hungry and divisive. Getting the balance right will require skill and goodwill. Research quality funding to CSU Centres in 2007 will be according to the outcomes of the 2007 RQF trial that will wrap up around September 2007.

The Management Team has established the principle that in 2007 RQF income will be shared equally across all Discipline Groups, regardless of the outcomes from individual RQF submissions. Additionally, each RQF group will receive funding to support preparation of their evidence portfolio. You can expect Ian and Roni to be in touch with more details of the ILWS RQF process.

-Prof Allan Curtis

By Professor Kevin Parton, Head of Orange Campus.

NEW RESOURCES MARKETS NECESSARY, BUT NOT SUFFICIENT

When the price of water to irrigators is \$60/megalitre and households can pay up to \$1400/megalitre, something seems to be out of line. To economists, establishing a system of getting the right prices of environmental resources is crucial. Two big issues that have pricing problems right now are water and greenhouse gas emissions. In the first instance it is the price of the "good", water, which is relatively under-priced in various (perhaps most) locations; in the second case it is the "bad", emission of greenhouse gases, that is allowed to occur at too low a price. Consequently, we have a shortage of the first, and an oversupply of the second. In both cases trading schemes have been proposed to get the prices right.

While such schemes will offer participants in the various markets incentives to produce and consume more sustainable levels of such environmental outputs, many economists would argue that the creation of water and emissions trading schemes alone will be insufficient to move us in the right direction in a reasonable time. In technical terms, we need to get the other "institutions" right as well. Included here would be compensation to current holders of property rights, subsidies and taxes. For example, the government may need to buy back some of the water rights that farmers currently hold. Subsidies may need to be offered so that users (including domestic users) invest in efficient water storage facilities.

In the case of carbon emissions, incentives may initially need to be offered for developing carbon capture and storage, less carbon intensive electricity generation (eg wind, solar, nuclear), clean-coal technology, better thermal insulation of buildings, etc.

(cont. page 2)



FEATURE ARTICLE: PROFESSOR JOHN BLACKWELL

"The management of natural resources is still a huge challenge in our unique climate and continent. Even with the best understanding management tools will have to be created and many of these tools will be physical engineering embodiments of ideas to overcome the results of natural and man-made problems." Story page 4

OPINION (CONT.)

While politically unpopular, emissions taxes may actually offer overall benefits when viewed from a societal perspective. It is clearly the case that greenhouse gas emissions represent the largest external cost imposed on us, and the usual approach in economics to correct such market failure is to internalise the cost by appropriately taxing those who generate the externality. Such a tax would undoubtedly increase the price of power to consumers, but it could be phased-in over a number of years, so that the effect would not be so noticeable. Moreover, the proceeds of the tax could be targeted at developing cleaner technology. Finally, it needs to continually be emphasised that estimates of the cost of stabilising these situations will be much smaller the earlier we start the correction process.

IN THE NEWS

RENEWABLE ENERGY

Dr Rod Duncan discussed renewable technology energy on:

- on radio ABC Riverina's Morning show with Anne Delaney on Nov 24, 2006
- on 2BS Bathurst's Morning Wireless show with Janeen Hosemans on Nov 28, 2006.

This was followed by an interview with Prime TV Bathurst on renewable technology and policy-making on Nov 29, 2006.

GLOBAL WARMING AND CLIMATE CHANGE

Assoc Prof Mark Morrison was interviewed by radio ABC Orange in relation to global warming on Nov 28, 2006.

PhD student William Adlong's address to the Country Women's Association was featured in the *Daily Advertiser* on Dec 7.

Prof Kevin Parton was featured re. this issue in the *Central Western Daily* on Feb 1.

Assoc Prof David Watson spoke about the effects of climate change on the snow fields on Prime TV News on Feb 7.

FUTURE FRAMEWORKS FOR REGIONAL RAIL

Media coverage for this symposium, organised by ILWS (A/Prof Ian Gray) and Engineers Australia's Railway Technical Society of Australasia, included:

- ABC Radio 'Morning Show' on Dec 22 and Jan 30
- ABC Radio National 'Bush Telegraph'; Prime TV News and WIN TV News on Feb 1
- Daily Advertiser and ABC Radio 'Country Hour' on Feb 2
- Border Mail on Jan 27
- Star FM, Wagga on Jan 31
- Local Govt and Shires Assoc 'Local Agenda' on Feb 28

CONSTRAINTS OF ETHICS PROTOCOLS

Dr Jennifer Sappey (ERD) and Professor Greg Bamber from the Griffith Business School raised issues in the Higher Education Supplement regarding the constraints on social science research imposed by the current ethics protocols of the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research in *The Australian* on Feb 21.

WOLLEMI PINE

Dr Geoff Burrows' research on the fascinating Wollemi pine was picked up by *Cosmos*, on-line Feb 2 and the Herald Sun on Feb 6.

MULTICULTURAL DIVERSITY

Branka Krivokapic-Skoko talked about her research into the ways ethnic groups have influenced the built environments of rural Australia. The interview was published in 'Migrant Research Focus', *Great Southern Herald* (Katanning WA), Nov 29.

BUSHFIRE COMMENTS

Institute researchers were in demand by media for comments related to the Victorian bushfires in December.

- Dr Rik Thwaites spoke on the effects of tourism on ABC Central West, Star FM, Prime News on Dec 7; and on Dec 21 to ABC Riverina
- Assoc Prof Dirk Spennemann spoke on bushfires and cultural management on the ABC Local Sunday Show on Dec 10; on ABC Tamworth on Dec 14; and on ABC Riverina on Dec 20
- Dr Geoff Burrows spoke on the effects on native vegetation on 2WG on Dec 8; on ABC Orange on Dec 11; on ABC Tamworth on Dec 12; and on ABC Riverina on Dec 14
- Dr Ben Wilson spoke on the effects on water quality and our rivers on Prime TV on Dec 12
- Prof Allan Curtis spoke on ABC Riverina on land management on Dec 19

MURRAY COACHLINES

Assoc Prof Dirk Spennemann's book on the Murray coachlines was featured on ABC Goulburn Murray on Dec 7, in the *Border Mail* on Dec 6 & 9 and also on ABC Goulburn Murray (Shep)

DROUGHT

- Tom Murphy spoke on the effects of the drought on ABC Bush Telegraph on Dec 15.
- Prof Marg Alston spoke on the social consequences of drought on Prime News on Feb 1; and on radio ABC Central West on Feb 2

WATER ISSUES

With water a very topical issue, our researchers' opinions and views are constantly sought by the media.

- Prof Shahbaz Kahn speaking on planning water supplies for South East Australia was on ABC National Rural News; ABC Online, ABC Rural Online on Jan 23; and responding to the PMs Water Initiative, on the Australian Science Media Centre on Jan 27
- Prof David Mitchell spoke on water issues on WIN TV and Prime TV on Jan 23; on ABC National Radio News on Jan 25; in response to the Queensland premier's proposal on effluent treatment systems on Win TV on Jan 29; and on recycling water on radio ABC Goulburn Murray on Feb 8
- Prof Allan Curtis spoke in response to the PMs water plan on radio ABC Riverina on Feb 2; to WIN TV (statewide) on Feb 6; and his views on water going to waste were reported in an article in *The Australian* on "Water Wars" on Feb 9
- Dr Paul Humphries spoke to ABC Riverina on Feb 2 on wetlands, rivers, drought and the nature of resilience of our aquatic fauna.

SOCIAL WORKERS & WELFARE

Prof Marg Alston spoke on the need for more social workers in rural communities on ABC Rural News on Feb 2; and again on the ABC Riverina morning show on Feb 14.

AGRIBUSINESS INDEX

Tom Murphy and the first Westpac/CSU Agribusiness Index report got plenty of coverage with stories and interviews on the ABC Country Hour, ABC Rural National, ABC South Australia, 2BS and on *The Age*, *The Australian*, and *The West Australian* on Feb 16; and on ABC Goulburn Murray Rural on Feb 19.

EUCALYPTS

Kylie Kent spoke on Prime TV on why our eucalypts are dying (or appear to be) on Jan 30.

PROPERTY TURNOVER

Prof Allan Curtis and his research on property turnover featured in the Country Mail section of the *Border Mail* on Jan 27.

(compiled with assistance from CSU Media www.csu.edu.au/news)

DISCIPLINE GROUPS

HUMAN DIMENSIONS OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

We welcome **Kerry Whittenbury** (post doctoral fellow), **John Rafferty** (Lecturer, School of Education) and **Di Boxall** (Lecturer, School of Humanities and Social Sciences) to the group. At our first meeting for 2007, we reflected on 2006 and the gains we had made from being in a research discipline group. Key benefits have been peer support for grant writing, writing papers and giving presentations. The writing retreat in September allowed members time out to write papers and get to know each other. The group has worked together on establishing goals and collaborative research in areas such as the role of feedback in energy consumption, environmental education, role of trust in wildfire management, and capacity building for agriculture and forestry in developing countries. Plans for 2007 include 2 writing retreats (April and September), an afternoon of 6 presentations in late May by staff and students attending the Society and Resource Management conference in Utah in June

(more details later) and possible seminars on Climate Change and Land Use Change.



Dr Kerri Whittenbury (left) who has taken on a joint ILWS-CRC Irrigation Futures post-doctoral position. Kerri, a social scientist, will be working with Prof Allan Curtis and Dr Penny Davidson and with the multidisciplinary team from the CRC Irrigation Fu-

tures "Tools for Profitability and Longevity project". Her project aim is to understand the factors influencing farmers' irrigation decisions, the processes they may use, and how and why they make take up irrigation technologies.

ECONOMICS & REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

THE ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT OF DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGE IN CENTRAL WEST NEW SOUTH WALES

The pilot project is now underway. Jennifer Sappey, Zelma Bone and Rod Duncan from the ERD Group are mapping the way in which public and private agencies are responding, through a range of policy and program initiatives, to provide age-friendly infrastructure and services for older citizens in the area. The outcomes of the pilot will include: a written report for community stakeholders which is intended to be a practical resource for informing the future efforts of government, private agencies and community groups in the sustainable development of the aged care industry in the Bathurst region; a community workshop to promulgate the research findings and discuss future directions for research; and in collaboration with community partners, an ARC grant application for future projects. The group recently held a meeting with Bathurst Council about the pilot project, and meetings are planned shortly with Blayney Council and the Department of Aged Services.

Steven Gibbs has started a PhD on professionals in rural areas through the Centre for Research Into Professional Practice, Learning and Education (RIPPLE). This project will involve a spatial science approach to addressing the problem and will include a component on the representational or 'truth' claims regarding Geographic Information Systems.

John Mullen is currently conducting research on 'Productivity growth and the returns from public investment in R&D in Australian broadacre agriculture'. This research has been partly funded by a consultancy with the Australian Farm Institute. A report from this project will be launched at a dinner meeting of the Chairs of the

Research and Development Corporations prior to Outlook 2007 on March 5.

OVERSEAS TRIPS

DROUGHT RESEARCH

Assessing drought and farm aid programs in the US and Canada formed part of Prof Margaret Alston's SSP leave in semester two last year. Margaret visited five universities to work with leading researchers in rural gender studies. "The trip was significant in allowing me to develop strong international linkages with researchers working in my field," said Margaret.

Margaret visited Penn State University and Lincoln University Nebraska in the US, the University of Regina and Saskatoon University in Canada and Queen's University in Belfast. She gave guest lectures and completed a series of papers on drought research undertaken in 2005. She also presented conference papers, gave guest lectures and attended farm fairs, a farm crisis centre, Canadian and US farms and worked with postgraduate students.

Another aim of the trip was to link a group of rural gender researchers into a cohesive research entity. "We prepared and submitted an ARC International Linkage to link Penn State, Regina, Queen's and CSU," Margaret said. "The grant proposal calls for funding for the group to be formalised at the European Rural Sociology Conference in the Netherlands in August 2007."

The contacts formed overseas have resulted in a return visit by Professor Carolyn Sachs (Penn State) to CSU in April. "During the visit we will work on research addressing gender and climate change in conjunction with the Gender Division of the UN's Food and Agriculture arm," Margaret said.

TROPICAL RESEARCH

David Watson returned from sabbatical in January, after spending four months on Barro Colorado Island, Panama and a month on the west coast of the United States. As a visiting research fellow at the Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute, Dave was based on the 1,500 ha island in the middle of the Panama Canal. In addition to finishing up several manuscripts and completing an ARC Discovery grant proposal, Dave conducted two field-based research projects, evaluating the efficacy of the Standardized Search for surveying diverse tropical bird communities, and determining which bird species depended on mistletoe. A side trip to Mexico for the North American Ornithological Congress enabled Dave to present the research findings emanating from his large scale RIFLE project, with Matt Herring also presenting a summary of the influence of sample completeness on ecological inference. A full report of this trip, including photographs of the rarely seen Ocelot will be included in the next issue.

INSTITUTE NEWS

TEACHING BUYOUT

A number of Institute members have benefited from CSUs investment in the teaching buyout program. Recipients for 2007 include: Penny Davidson, Ian Lunt, Rachel O'Brien, David Roshier, Peter Spooner, Iain Taylor, Rik Thwaites, Robyn Watts, Dimitria Giorgas, Elizabeth Moore, Manohar Pawar, Angela Ragusa, PK Basu, Branka Krivakopic, Mark Morrison, Jenny Sappey, Yapa Bandara and Kath Bowmer.

As Dr Lunt says: "The teaching buyout program is a fantastic initiative. It'll enable me to focus on writing grants for new projects, getting the best out of my existing projects, and writing up our unpublished, completed work. I'm very grateful for receiving these funds, and am really looking forward to focussing on research this semester."

PROFILE

PROFESSOR JOHN BLACKWELL



Challenge Prof John Blackwell with a problem and he'll immediately start thinking of ways to solve it. John or, more commonly, "Blackie" is very much the practical scientist evidenced by the number of inventions he has come up with over the years. An agricultural engineer, he says his forte is coming up with an agricultural engineering approach which may partially or completely solve a problem.

"I tend to do my science back to front," says John who recently joined CSU and the Institute as a Professor of Innovative Agricultural Water Technologies after a 39 year career with CSIRO. "If you are a pure scientist you approach a problem with a hypothesis, test the hypothesis, and then work how to put the result into effect. The way I work is give me a problem. I don't think to research the problem to fully understand it but rather how to solve it with a piece of equipment. So I build that piece of equipment, which is, in a way, my hypothesis. I put it to work and see if it performs as I envisaged."

Based at the International Centre of Water for Food Security at Wagga and a member of the Institute's Water Systems discipline group, John sees his main role as enhancing the research output of the group by working with its members to publish, raising funds for research, and doing research. Born in England, John was raised in Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) and Kenya before he returned to England to study agriculture and agricultural engineering at what is now Essex University. He then travelled around the world for two years and was in Sydney where an ad in the Sydney Morning Herald for an environmental control technician with CSIRO at Griffith in NSW caught his eye. That led to an extensive career with CSIRO which culminated in a position as Officer in Charge and Principal Research Scientist, at the Griffith Laboratory of CSIRO Land and Water.

John has been involved in the development of a number of new agriculture technologies. Together with Dr Keith Garzoli (now at ANU) he developed the first plastic green-house in Australia; was in the vanguard of drip irrigation research in the late 60s and early 70s; and introduced a lateral move irrigator in an attempt to improve the irrigation efficiency of broad-acre agriculture. This led to the development of innovative Soil Slotting Technology, with colleague Dr Nihal Jayawardane to transform infertile sodic and acidic subsoils. "Slotting is still a very good idea but it is an idea ahead of its time," says John who built six models of the 'Slotters', the last one being 474hp. His next work with inventor Jayawardane, was a Land Based Sewage Treatment system called 'FILTER' (Filtration, Irrigated cropping, Land Treatment and Effluent Reuse). He then developed the system further as a means of managing salt in the landscape (Sequential Biological Concentration). "We've tested FILTER and SBC on a pilot-scale at Griffith in conjunction with the City Council and many other people and Institutions are interested in both techniques," says John. "We are trialling one in Pakistan; we've trialled FILTER in two locations in China and I think it is just a question of time."

Another project John is working on is the development of a direct drilling machine for sowing seed into rice stubble. "Engineers have been trying to find a means of doing this for 40 years but haven't

been able to overcome the problem of rice straw," says John. "It's usually a massive stubble yield and the straw is tough, stringy and difficult to cut." Consequently burning is used to remove rice straw in preparation for the next season's planting. "In the Punjab in India and Pakistan that means 2 million hectares are burnt each year with huge health hazards, loss of nutrients and atmospheric pollution as a result," says John whose first prototype trailed in India 'worked perfectly.' That prototype has now been developed through five or six generations and is now available commercially in India and Pakistan. John admits "the machines do have some problems in Australia because of our huge yielding rice crops with up to 14 tonnes of straw. Anything over 8 tonnes of straw and we get into difficulty. We can overcome this but have to have wider spaced tyres, a configuration we will test in Colleambally in a continuing ACIAR funded endeavour".

At 62 years of age John feels he still has "plenty of energy left" and is still "productive and producing." While he has a small vineyard at Yenda and produces wine, he is keen to continue scientific research. Currently he is working on a number of ACIAR projects including further development of the Happy Seeder (the direct drill for rice stubble); and the Sequential Biological Concentration program in Pakistan.

As John chats he discusses other ideas that for water savings including a design to better manage environmental watering. "It is not a waste of water if you could take the little bit of water you want for the billabongs, but if you have to piggyback on a flood then it can be a waste of water," says John whose idea is a floating amphibious barrage that creates a temporary weir pool, generates its own electricity and lifts water into the higher wetland.

In conclusion John says the understanding and management of natural resources "is still a huge challenge in our unique climate and continent. Even with the best understanding management tools will have to be created and many of these tools will be physical engineering embodiments of ideas to overcome the results of natural and man-made problems."

CONFERENCES, SEMINARS & WORKSHOPS

BIANNUAL NON-MARKET VALUATION WORKSHOP

Assoc Prof Mark Morrison was invited to attend the Biannual non-market valuation workshop. This workshop, held at ANU on Dec 7 & 8, involved 11 participants from five countries.

YOU ARE WHAT YOU EAT

PhD student Barbara Parker attended the Agri-food Network's Annual conference and General Meeting held in Dunedin, New Zealand from Nov 27-Dec 1, 2006 where she presented a paper titled: You are what you eat! Regional Women share knowledge & experiences negotiating 'healthy' and 'risky' food.

PRESERVING RURAL LANDSCAPES

As part of the Institute's Demographic Change Integration Program a workshop to explore ideas and strategies for preserving rural landscapes within the Indigo Shire was held at the CSU Thurgoona campus on Jan 16. Organised by ILWS researchers (Dr Joanne Millar, Professor Allan Curtis, Dr Digby Race) and board member (Ms Cathy McGowan), Indigo Shire planners and councillors attended. The Indigo Planning Scheme is currently being reviewed and rural planning issues, such as the preservation of rural landscapes, have been identified as key land use planning issues. The workshop presented a range of schemes and approaches from the UK and USA. Options are being explored to fund a pilot scheme in the shire. For more information contact Dr Joanne Millar, ph 60519859 or jmillar@csu.edu.au

STATISTICS

Mark Frost attended the ACSPRI Statistics Workshop on Time Series Modeling at ANU from Jan 22-26.

RISK MANAGEMENT

Dr Rod Duncan presented a talk titled 'Risk management in climate change' for the 'Managing landscapes for climate change' conference at CSU Bathurst on Jan 30.

FUTURE FRAMEWORKS FOR REGIONAL RAIL

The future of our regional railway system was discussed at a symposium, initiated by A/Prof Ian Gray and Engineers Australia RTSA, with much assistance from the Institute's conference/seminar organizer Kate Roberts, was held at Charles Sturt University in Wagga Wagga on February 1. In many parts of Australia the regional, or branch lines are deteriorating and may fall into disuse leaving roads as the only means of land transport. This will inevitably increase the cost burden on local government unless a solution is found. The 130 delegates at the symposium heard from eight speakers in all, including Paul Neville, Chairman of the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Transport and Regional Services. Speakers outlined what is happening to regional rail across several states of Australia and discussed the need for genuine regionalization of the system. A plenary session heard from representatives of primary industry, local and federal government and the rail industry.



The symposium's keynote speaker brought some fresh approaches to the problem from Canada. Ed Zsombor, who manages Saskatchewan's rail system for the provincial government, described a locally-operated system which has developed over the last ten years.

The organising committee for the Rail Symposium including A/Prof Ian Gray (second from right)

ALTERNATIVE ENERGY

Dr Rod Duncan presented 'Can subsidizing alternative energy technology development lead to faster global warming?' at the 51st Annual Conference for the Australian Agricultural and Resource Economics Society at Queenstown, New Zealand on Feb 14-16.

PRODUCTIVITY GROWTH

Dr John Mullen gave an address as President at the 51st Conference of the *Australian Agricultural and Resource Economics Society* in Queenstown New Zealand on Feb 14. The title of his address was 'Productivity growth and the returns from public investment in R&D in Australian broad-acre agriculture'.

PEOPLE AND BIODIVERSITY

Dr Gary Luck, who is on sabbatical at the University of British Columbia gave a lecture on 'A Review of the Relationships Between Human Population Density and Biodiversity' on Feb 20 as part of the University's Institute for Resources, Environment and Sustainability Distinguished Lecture Series. <http://www.ires.ubc.ca/about/news.html>

WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

Three ILWS members Dr Angela Ragusa, Dr Wendy Bowles and Margrit Beemster are taking part in the CSU Leadership Development for Women Program 2007. "I have been asked, 'why would you need/want to do this?', " says Angela. "To encourage women to participate in the future, I would like to share my response.

First, it is illustrative to notice when social structures need changing, which becomes quite visible you read the program material articles documenting top-quality gender research. To read exam-

ples, such as the workplace conditions identified by the *Harvard Business Review* (2000) noting women's representation as "less than 3% of top corporate earners" and how "as women approach the top of the corporate ladder, many jump off, frustrated or disillusioned" is sobering and mandatory education for any woman working in a complex organization.

Second, few opportunities exist for women to meet, discuss and plan their career aspirations in light of the experiences and wisdom of 28 other university women represented across CSU's many campuses along with internal (HR, two vice chancellors and past participants) and external advisors/experts (program leaders).

Finally, removed from one's day-to-day work tasks, a unique synergy emerges and new ways of thinking tend to evolve regarding old problems. Networks expand. Plans develop. Paths unfold. In short, this program enables and encourages the development of clarity of purpose, tangible skills and support mechanisms to make individual leadership goals possible. So, why should any woman do this? Although it may be possible to hike the Himalayas unaided, if one offered you a quality map, guide, fine companionship and shelter when you needed it, why would you travel otherwise?"

COMING UP

INNOVATIONS FOR RURAL & REGIONAL PARAMEDICS

This is an ILWS sponsored workshop to encourage rural ambulance paramedics to engage with the rural health movement. A/Prof Peter O'Meara from the School of Public Health says he hopes participants will share new ideas about the design and implementation of rural ambulance models of service delivery. To be held on March 7 in Albury, prior to the National Rural Health Conference, the workshop will deliver results from a nation wide research project conducted on the Rural and Regional Ambulance Paramedic in Australia.

5TH AUSTRALIAN STREAM MANAGEMENT CONFERENCE

ILWS is hosting the 5th Australian Stream Management Conference in Albury from 21 - 25 May. Around 350 people from government, industry, community and academic organisations are expected to attend. Over 100 speakers will present papers across 5 themes under the conference banner of *Australian rivers: making a difference*. Conference co-convenor A/Prof Robyn Watts said, "The conference is an important event for people involved in river research and management. Not only is it invaluable to hear the latest information and research, but also to reflect on the lessons learned in other projects." Field trips are a feature of the conference with sites including the Murray, Mitta Mitta and Ovens Rivers and the Wonga Wetlands.

Prof Peter Cullen, a member of the Wentworth Group of Scientists and Commissioner with National Water Commission, will present the closing address. Dr Brenda Dyack a Senior Economist at ABARE who recently worked in the Dept of Prime Minister and Cabinet will speak on how economists assess whether we have made a difference with restoration investments. Dr Michael Douglas from Charles Darwin University will speak about the outcomes of recent investment in northern Australia. Register online registration now at the conference website <http://www.csu.edu.au/research/ilws/news/conference.html>. Early bird registration closes on 19 March.

3RD AUSTRALIAN FOREST GROWERS CONFERENCE

ILWS will sponsor the 3rd Australian Forest Growers Conference in Albury-Wodonga, a biennial conference for people interested in farm and plantation forestry. Digby Race is the Conference Convenor and the date is set for 19 - 22 October 2008. ILWS will work with a committee made up of local stakeholders and Australian Forest Growers, the national association representing private forestry and commercial tree-growing interests in Australia.

AWARDS & APPOINTMENTS

NEW BUSINESS MANAGER

The Institute's new business manager **Roni McDowell** sees her new position "as a fabulous opportunity" to bring all the experience she has had in the tertiary sector to an area which is her first love, the environment and ecology.



"I have had a lot of experience in administration in the tertiary sector and I feel I can really contribute to and support the work that is being done by the Institute," says Roni who took up her appointment on February 12. For the past 20 years Roni has worked for RMIT, most recently as head of its Statistics and Reporting Unit within its Planning Group. In that position the most important work was for the university's profile which included forward planning; modelling student

progression; working with senior staff and senior academics to set targets; and then helping to achieve those targets.

"Over my time with RMIT, the business of the university, as would be the case with Charles Sturt, has become much more complex," says Roni. An added complexity was that RMIT is a dual sector university with State funding for the TAFE, and Federal funding for the university. Roni was also involved in budget distribution with modelling and managing operating grants; assisting in the management of the Research Training Scheme; statistical analysis within the university including demographic analysis, progression and performance indicators; and for reporting to the Government. Roni sees one of her strengths as "being able to synthesise information, particularly numerical information, into real decision making."

Other skills include computing; data base theory; modelling and experience in inaugurating and managing a complex web site. Prior to RMIT, Roni worked for the Commonwealth Government in Canberra in what was then the Commonwealth Tertiary Education Commission. However Roni, who began her working life as a teacher at the University of Sydney in its School of Botany, didn't plan to have a career in administration.

In 1977 she obtained her Bachelor of Science (Hons) from the University of New South Wales and then went on to do her Masters in Marine Ecology. Both her Honours and Masters degrees were related to the effect of pollution on marine plant communities. Her Honours degree was related to oil pollution in Botany Bay and her Masters was about the effect of thermal effluent from coastal power stations on the coastal lakes north of Sydney.

Roni and her partner are keen cross-country skiers (Roni came second in her age class in the Birkebeiner Ski Race at Falls Creek last August and have owned property at Tawonga South for the past 10 years. "Soon after we came to Victoria, we decided that, in the long-term we wanted to live in the North-East," says Roni. "My husband is a Himalayan mountaineer and he particularly wanted to live somewhere where you could see the snow." The pair, who are also keen gardeners and enjoy growing their own fruit and vegetables, have now moved permanently to the North-East. "It's a beautiful place to live," says Roni.

WELCOME

Therese Formosa has been appointed as the new part-time research officer for the ERD Group. Therese has recently completed her Honours in Finance in which she investigated the relationship between size and performance of Australian superannuation funds. Therese will be based on the Bathurst Campus where she will assist on research projects conducted by the ERD group.

Dr Angela Ragusa has been appointed acting leader of the ILWS Demographic Change Integration Program while Dr Gary Luck is on SSP leave for the first half of this year.

Lisa Smallbone (an Honours student last year) has been appointed a research officer on Dr Gary Luck's new project on maximising biodiversity conservation in urban centres.

Congratulations to **Rod Duncan** who has been appointed Honours Coordinator for the School of Marketing and Management, and **Yapa Bandara** who has recently been appointed Honours Coordinator of the School of Commerce.

Our new PhD students this year include **Emily Sharp** (an Honours student last year) who will be looking at the dynamics of trust in individuals' perceptions of wildfire management and prescribed burning in communities undergoing graphic change (in-migration) with supervisors Dr Rik Thwaites, Dr Joanne Millar and Professor Allan Curtis.

Alison Matthews, who has completed her two-year secondment (from the Department of Environment and Conservation) lecturing in protected area management, has now taken up an Australian Postgraduate Award to commence a PhD in the School of Environmental Sciences. Her research topic will examine climate change influences on the distribution and resource use of grazing mammals in the Australian Alps. Supervisors are Prof Nick Klomp and Dr Peter Spooner, and Dr Dan Lunney and Dr Ken Green from the Department of Environment and Conservation.

In addition to an international student scholarship from CSU, **Karolina Petrovic** was awarded an Endeavour Europe Award, one of only 50 awards given annually to an outstanding candidate commencing their PhD work at an Australian university. "This is a first for both ILWS and CSU generally," says her principal supervisor A/Prof David Watson. Karolina's project is looking at the basis of edge effects in remnant eucalypt woodlands, using both birds and arboreal marsupials in fragments with and without mistletoe.

VISITORS

The ERD Group hosted Assoc **Prof Greg Poe** from Cornell University on Nov 20 to 21. While here Assoc Prof Poe presented his work on asymmetric dominance and public choice.

Assoc Prof Brian Arbogast from California's Humboldt State University presented a fascinating talk on North America's flying squirrels to Institute members at a lunch-time seminar at Thurgoona on Feb 19. Brian, who is the curator of his university's Vertebrate Museum, is an ecologist who studies the evolution, biogeography and conservation genetics of vertebrates, especially mammals and birds. He was in Australia for a preliminary study our gliding marsupials, in particular the Greater Glider. Brian, who visited Far North Queensland, the Atherton Tableland, the Blue Mountains, Tasmania, and museums in Canberra and Sydney, is a colleague of the Institute's Assoc Prof David Watson and was scoping future research collaborations, in particular with Dr Andrea Taylor from Monash University, and Dr Ken Aplin from CSIRO's Australian National Wildlife Collection. "I'm hoping to get back to Australia to do some more work, looking at genetic differences and population distributions which will help



with the conservation of these species," said Brian who is also interested in setting up a student exchange program between CSU and Humboldt University.

Dr David Watson and Assoc Prof Brian Arbogast

PUBLICATIONS

PEER-REVIEWED PAPERS

Allan, C., Curtis, A., & Mazur, N. (2006). Understanding the social impacts of floods, in *Floods in an Arid Continent*, A Poiani, Advances in Ecological Research 39, Elsevier.

Basu, P. K. (2006) Corruption: A Theoretical Perspective and Relevance for Economic Growth, *International Review of Business Research Papers*, Vol. 2, No. 2

Gupta, Rakesh and **Basu, P. K.** (2007) Have we learnt anything from the Asian Crisis? *Delhi Business Review*, Vol. 8, No. 1, January-June, pp. 21-30

Burrows, G., Meagher, P.F., Heady, R.D. (2007) An Anatomical Assessment of Branch Abscission and Branch-base Hydraulic Architecture in the Endangered *Wollemia nobilis* *Annals of Botany*; doi: 10.1093/aob/mcm003

Kidane, H. (2006) Identification of export market opportunities and challenging issues for Australian cotton industry. *The Journal of Academy of Business and Economics*. 6(2), 115-128.

Kidane, H. (2006) Export impediments and opportunities for Australian processed food industry. *Journal of Asia – Pacific Business*. 7(3), 23-43.

Luck, G.W. (2007). The relationships between net primary productivity, human population density and species conservation. *Journal of Biogeography*.

Morrison, M. & Bergland, O. (2006) Prospects for the use of choice modelling for the benefit transfer. *Ecological Economics*. 60(2), 420-428.

Race, D. (2007) Lessons from forestry partnerships in Australia and Indonesia. *The Australian Forest Grower*, 29 (4): 34-35.

Athukorala, P. & **Sharma, K.** (2006) 'Foreign Investment in a Least Developed Country: The Nepalese Experience', *Transnational Corporations*, Vol. 15 (2), pp. 125-146.

Sharma, K. (2006) 'The Political Economy of Civil War in Nepal', *World Development*, Vol. 34(7).

Sharma, K. (2006) 'Development Policy, Inequality and Civil War in Nepal', *Journal of International Development*, Vol. 18, pp. 553-569.

CONFERENCE PAPERS/PROCEEDINGS

Allan, C., Khan, S. & Davidson, B. (2006) Assessing the social acceptability of irrigation options *CRC Irrigation Futures Annual Research Forum*, Narrabri, December 2006, CRC Irrigation Futures.

Bowmer, K.H., Sainy G. R., Sonneman J. and Price, Anna (2006) Plant biomass management in the Ord Irrigation Area: science underpinning operations in irrigation supply flow management. Australian National Committee on Irrigation and Drainage Conference, Darwin 13-15 October 2006

Gardner, A. and **Bowmer, K. H.** (2006) Environmental water allocations and their governance. In *Delivering the National Water Initiative: Understanding the Social and Industry Dimension*, National Water Commission, Land and Water Australia and Academy of Social Sciences Parliament House Canberra 4-5 December 2006. Invited paper

Bowmer, K. H. (2007) Conflict resolution in regional water sharing; opportunities for social learning. In *Land and Water Australia Regional Water Planning: in Theory and in Practice*. ABARE Conference, 6-7 March 2007, Canberra. Invited paper.

Fullagar, I., Allan, C., and Khan, S. (2006) Managing across groundwater and surface water: an Australian 'Conjunctive licence' illustration of allocation and planning issues, Wichelns D and Anderson S S (2006) *Ground Water and Surface Water Under Stress: Competition, Interaction, Solutions*. Pp 353-364 in A USCID Water Management Conference. Boise, Idaho, October 25-28 2006. US Committee on Irrigation and Drainage, Denver, Colorado.

Jordan, K., **Krivokapic-Skoko, B.** (2006) Ethnic Minorities and the Built Environment in Rural and Regional Australia: Sites of Segregation or Inter-Cultural Exchange? Paper presented at Transformations Conference 2006, ANU, November 27-29.

Race, D., Farquharson, B., Birkhead, J., Vernon, D. and Bathgate, A. (2007) Understanding rural life – assessing the social dimensions when encouraging land-use changes in rural areas. Paper presented at the 51st Annual Conference of the Australian Agricultural and Resource Economics Society, Queenstown, New Zealand, 13 – 16 February 2007.

NON-REFEREED PAPERS

Prober, S., Lunt, I. and Thiele, K. (2006). Keeping your options open – optimal fire frequencies in *Themeda-Poa* ecosystems. *Australasian Plant Conservation* 15(3), 9-11.

COMMISSIONED REVIEWS

Bowmer, K. H., Malcolm, D., Fenemor, F., & Green, D.H. (2006) Third year Review of performance and progress, Report of the independent panel to the Board CRC for Irrigation Futures, 2 November 2006; 20 December; with response to Board 20 December 2006, 44pp.

BOOKS

Sappey, R., Burgess, J., Lyons, and Bultjens, J. (2006) *Industrial Relations in Australia: Work and Workplaces*, Pearson Education, Sydney.

Sharma, K. (2006) *Trade, Growth and Inequality in Developing countries*, London, Routledge. (Edited book with O. Morrissey)

BOOK CHAPTERS

Luck, G.W. (2007). Edges: The place where landscape elements meet. In *Managing and designing landscapes for conservation: moving from perspectives to principles*. D. Lindenmayer and R. Hobbs (eds). Blackwell Publishing.

Luck, G.W. and McCallum, F. 2006. Species turnover along gradients of net primary productivity. In *Focus on Biodiversity Research*. J. Schwartz (ed). Nova Science Publishers.

Sharma, K. (2006) 'Trade, Growth and Inequality in the Era of Globalization' in *Trade, Growth and Inequality in the Era of Globalisation*, K. Sharma and O. Morrissey (eds.), Routledge.

Sharma, K. (2006) 'Growth and Poverty in Tajikistan' in *Trade, Growth and Inequality in the Era of Globalisation*, K. Sharma and O. Morrissey (eds.), Routledge.

Sharma, K. (2006) 'Growth, Poverty and Inequality and Kyrgyzstan', in *Trade, Growth and Inequality in the Era of Globalisation*, K. Sharma and O. Morrissey (eds.), Routledge.

PROJECTS AND GRANTS

RESEARCH GRANTS

The Role of HRM and High Performance Systems in the Utilisation and Retention of Skills in Organisations. National Centre for Vocational Education Research (\$76 500) Prof Andy Smith, Prof Eddie Oczkowski, and Christopher Selby-Smith (2006-7)

Analysing Employer Training. National Centre for Vocational Education Research (\$17 600) Prof Andy Smith and Prof Eddie Oczkowski. (2007)

Documenting long-term changes in woody cover in reserved woodlands using remote sensing - Parks Victoria Research Partners Scheme, operating funds for new honours project by Lisa Seberry (\$4,000) .Lunt, I., Dehaan, R. & Morgan, J

Assessment of fish habitat and fish populations in the Old Man Creek/Beavers Creek anabranch of the Murrumbidgee River. Funded by Water for Rivers (\$140,000) . Assoc. Prof Robyn Watts. This project will fund a PhD stipend and operating costs for Stacey Kopf, who has previously studied habitat use and distribution of native and endangered fish in the Midwest USA as part of her Masters research. The aim of this research is to examine the fish community and in-stream habitat in the Beavers Creek/ Old Man Creek anabranch of the Murrumbidgee River. These data will be used to model the available habitat quality and quantity for adult and larval fish under different flows and inundation levels. This information will be used to predict how updating or replacing the Beavers Creek weir may affect fish habitat and fish populations in this anabranch system. (2007-2010)

INTERNAL GRANTS

Rural women's experience of intimate partner domestic violence, the healing process and the role of social support delivery in NSW, Australia. CSUs Faculty of Arts (\$10 000) Ms. Elizabeth Moore & Dr. Angela T. Ragusa.

Field campervan and off-road trailer for remote field work by staff and students of the ILWS Ecology & Biodiversity Group. Lunt, I., Luck, G. & Watts, R. (2006). CSU Research Infrastructure Block Grants, c. \$34,000.

APPLICATIONS

Many of the Institute's researchers have been busy writing applications for ARC Discovery grants. Applications include:

Woody plant encroachment in fragmented temperate woodlands: identifying drivers, dynamics and consequences for biodiversity. Lunt, I.D., Morgan, J.W. & Dehaan, R.L. ARC Discovery (2008-2011), \$516,254.

Ensuring sustainable natural resource use with adaptive management Dr Catherine Allan and Prof. Allan Curtis (2007-8) \$158,000.

Addressing Mental Health Issues and Enhancing Resilience in farmers impacted by drought Margaret Alston (2007) \$250,000.

Mental ill health and the promotion of resilience amongst adolescents in rural and urban regions of Australia Margaret Alston (CSU) and Professor Barbara Fawcett (2007) \$480,000.

Addressing health outcomes for rural Australians: recruitment and retention of allied health professionals and new models of service delivery Lindy McAllister, Patrick Ball, Wendy Bowles and Margaret Alston (2007) \$834,000.

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