Making art
Alumni are front and centre in the bold new Buxton Contemporary museum

USING NANOPARTICLES TO BEAT SUPERBUGS
Melbourne Arts Precinct, which is home to one of the highest 66 per cent increase in student numbers since 2010, by providing – for theatre, dance, music theatre and music performances. Built in 1912, the former Victoria Police Mounted Branch stables have been transformed into teaching and learning facilities, including a new visual arts wing – the Martyn Myer Arena – for visual arts and performance space in Melbourne’s Southbank. The $18 million refurbishment was made possible through the significant support of the University of Melbourne and generous philanthropists including The Ian Potter Foundation, The Myer Foundation, and Martyn and Louise Myer. The University’s Faculty of Fine Arts and Music has celebrated the launch of The Stables, a new world-class visual arts and performance space in Melbourne’s Southbank. LANDMARK GIFT UNDERWRITES STUDENT ENDEAVOUR Hundreds of talented Australian students will have the opportunity to realise their potential through an extraordinary $30 million gift to the University of Melbourne from the Hansens. A unique philanthropic partnership with the University, the gift from Jane Hansens and Paul Little AO (pictured below) will allow for the construction of Little Hall, a landmark student residence on Swanston Street, Carlton, and the establishment of the University’s flagship Hansen Scholarship Program. The annual program, which will run for an initial 40 years, will commence in 2020 with an inaugural intake of 20 students, to be known as Hansen Scholars. They will receive free accommodation at Little Hall, assistance with general living expenses for the duration of their Bachelor’s degree, and development and career support throughout their time at university.

“Little Hall was an exciting addition to Melbourne, a unique and outstanding architectural statement that establishes a new benchmark for student living in a distinctive academic and intellectually rich environment,” said Mr Little. More information: go.unimelb.edu.au/cnv6

PODCASTS
Tune in, don’t drop out

3010 is now more than a magazine - it’s a podcast too. The 3010 podcast will take you into the lives of some of our amazing alumni, revealing the fantastic - and, occasionally, surprising - places their Melbourne degree has taken them.

The first three episodes are now available, with more on the way!

1. Comedian Simon Taylor (BA 2009), who has written for TV comedians Jay Leno and Shaun Micallef and who plays to sell-out crowds around the world, tells how his psychology degree helps him deal with hecklers.
2. Veteran Harry Adriaanse (DVM 2014) takes listeners on a tour of her very special workplace. Melbourne Zoo, and explains how you anaesthetise a fish.
3. And Dr Fiona Price (PhD 2001, International House), the woman charged with one of the toughest jobs at graduation - reading out the names of graduands - reveals the secret to getting the pronunciation right every time.

Listen and subscribe at unimelb.edu.au/3010 or find us on iTunes.

Here are five more University of Melbourne podcasts to look out for:
1. Eavesdrop on Experts - insights and inspiration from our experts, researchers and visiting academics
2. Starting Somewhere - advice for young people on getting their career off the ground
3. The Little Red Podcast - celebrating China beyond the Beijing beltway
4. Talking Indonesia - a focus on Indonesian politics, foreign policy, culture, language and more
5. The Policy Shop - Vice-Chancellor Glyn Davis and guests explore thinking about public policy.

REVIEWED

Revamped Stables extend University’s artistic reach

The University’s Faculty of Fine Arts and Music has celebrated the launch of The Stables, a new world-class visual arts and performance space in Melbourne’s Southbank.

“Little Hall was an exciting addition to Melbourne, a unique and outstanding architectural statement that establishes a new benchmark for student living in a distinctive academic and intellectually rich environment,” said Mr Little. More information: go.unimelb.edu.au/cnv6

INTERNATIONAL
Partnering Saudi Arabia on schools curriculum

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has chosen the Melbourne Graduate School of Education (MGSE) to lead a large-scale transformation of its schools’ curriculum beginning this year.

The Ministry of Education will collaborate with University of Melbourne researchers to deliver a competency-based learning program to help strengthen the Kingdom’s capability as it assesses the economic challenges of the 21st century.

The project was initiated by Emeritus Professor Patrick Griffin (BSc 1968, MEA 1976). It will be conducted by the Assessment Research Centre, directed by Associate Professor Sandra Milligan.

MGSE Dean Dr Jim Watterston said the collaboration was a wonderful opportunity for MGSE to partner with Saudi Arabia to deliver evidence-based research methods into classrooms.

“We look forward to working with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to support a competency-based education program that aligns with its goals to provide a stimulating learning environment to promote knowledge and enhance the skills of students and teachers,” Dr Watterston said.

Fishermans Bend turbo-charging innovation

This University will build a new, seven-hectare campus at Fishermans Bend, Melbourne, as part of its almost $1 billion commitment to create a world-class engineering campus for the 21st century.

The new campus – just five kilometres from the city and within the old General Motors Holden site – is set to open in the early 2020s, and will be the centrepiece of Australia’s leading precinct for advanced manufacturing, design, engineering and technology excellence. Initially, 1000 engineering and IT students and academics will be based at the campus, where they will collaborate with companies across industrial sectors as diverse as transport, energy, food, mining, infrastructure and water.
INTELLIGENCE
INTELLIGENCE

Katherine ‘Kat’ Clarke (b. 1988) Gukwondooi (Wotjobaluk) or Old Man’s Weed (Centipeda cunninghamii), 2018 acrylic and pencil on canvas 2.4 x 1.47 cm MMH2018.22, Medical History Museum © Katherine Clarke.

Katherine ‘Kat’ Clarke

Autonomous vehicle transforming transport

As technology moves towards a driverless future, the University of Melbourne is helping to improve integrated transport solutions and make our transport safer with the launch of its own autonomous minibus shuttle.

The autonomous vehicle is designed for low-speed urban environments and is part of a three-year partnership with French company EasyMile, specialists in autonomous vehicle technology.

Unique to this collaboration is the inclusion of open platform technology, which will allow the vehicle to be regularly updated by researchers and improved as autonomous software advances.

University of Melbourne Vice-Chancellor Glyn Davis said the vehicle will provide researchers unprecedented access to autonomous technology, putting students at the forefront of research and development.

“The world is on the edge of a transport revolution,” Professor Davis said. “Technology is transforming the transport industry, impacting not only the way we travel, but also the way we live.”

Welcome the new Vice-Chancellor

Duncan Maskell, who will become the University of Melbourne’s 20th Vice-Chancellor in October, was the first in his family to attend university. He was accepted to study Natural Sciences at Cambridge in 1979 and, speaking at an alumni reception in London earlier this year, he described how his relatively humble circumstances were to go to one of the world’s top universities had been something of a culture shock.

But it wasn’t long before that shock subsided and he started to build an impressive career, much of it spent on his alma mater before accepting the challenge of guiding Australia’s number one university.

Professor Maskell’s arrival will mark the end of Professor Glyn Davis’s hugely successful 14-year term as Vice-Chancellor, during which he helped guide Melbourne into the top echelon of research universities around the world. He also introduced the Melbourne Model, a degree structure more in keeping with international standard, in which students start with a generalist three-year bachelor’s degree followed by a specialised master’s qualification.

Professor Maskell said he had been approached by a number of times in recent years to shift jobs, but “I have done an amazing job, getting it to where it is, and I think that there is plenty of potential to build on his strong foundation to knock on and improve even further. Add to that the fact that Melbourne is a really great city and it all adds up to a very exciting opportunity for me.”

After spells at Welcome Biotech, the Institute of Molecular Medicine at the University of Oxford, and Imperial College of Science, Technology and Medicine, London, Professor Maskell returned to Cambridge in 1996 as the first Marks & Spencer Professor of Farm Animal Health, Food Science and Food Safety.

He became Head of the Department of Veterinary Medicine at Cambridge in 2004 and Head of the School of the Biological Sciences in 2013. Since 2015, he has been the university’s Senior Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Planning and Resource) with overall responsibility for an annual turnover of approximately £800m and the University’s major building program.

He has published more than 250 research papers, leading to his election as a Fellow of the Academy of Medical Sciences.

In addition, Professor Maskell has been co-founder of four biotech companies, a member of the Cambridge Enterprise Seed Fund investment committee, and a board member of FTS250 company Genus plc and Cambridge Innovation Capital.

He gave some insight into his life outside of work when he noted: “I like art. I like reading. I play clarinet and saxophone, though no longer to any decent standard. I also love sport, particularly rugby union, football and cricket, and I always enjoyed watching Aussie Rules on TV. I now watch it on Saturday morning on cable TV. I can’t wait to attend my first footy match in Australia and the Stroke Foundation.

Tenecteplase was life-changing in treatment of ischemic stroke.

“We studied showed that the use of Tenecteplase restored blood flow to the brain before clot retrieval surgery in double the number of patients compared to Alteplase (22 per cent compared with 10 per cent of patients),” Associate Professor Campbell said.

“For one in five patients treated with Tenecteplase, clot retrieval surgery was not required and the earlier restoration of blood flow was associated with improved functional recovery in Tendecplase-treated patients.”

“Tenecteplase can be given over 10 seconds compared to the one-hour infusion of Alteplase, which has practical advantages when transferring patients between hospitals for clot retrieval surgery and is also less expensive.”

EXTEND-IA TNK involved 202 participants across 13 hospitals in Australia and New Zealand, who either received Tenecteplase or Alteplase.

The study was supported by grants from the National Health and Medical Research Council of Australia, the Australian College of Physicians, the Royal Melbourne Hospital Foundation, the National Heart Foundation of Australia and the Stroke Foundation of Australia. Trial infrastructure was supported by an unrestricted grant from Medtronic who had no role in study design, conduct or analysis.

CLOT BUSTER

Stroke research breakthrough

A breakthrough in stroke medical research found a drug, traditionally used for heart attacks, dissolves blood clots in the brain faster and more effectively than standard stroke drugs.

The EXTEND-IA TNK randomised clinical trial, led by the Royal Melbourne Hospital (RMH) and the University of Melbourne, compared the effectiveness of two drugs, Tenecteplase and Alteplase, in dissolving stroke-causing blood clots in the brain, before patients went on to have clot retrieval surgery.

RMH neurologist, Head of Stroke and study co-principal investigator Bruce Campbell (BMEdSc 1999, MB BS(hons) 2002, PhD 2002) said the study, published in the New England Journal of Medicine, found the drug Tenecteplase was life-changing in treatment of ischemic stroke.

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Buxton Contemporary

A collector’s multi-million dollar vision and treasure trove of art adds a new dimension to Southbank

When the new Buxton Contemporary museum opened in March, it marked the fruition of a project that Michael Buxton had mulled through decades of being an avid gallery-goer. Since the early 1990s, his goal had been to establish a suitable home for his art collection, quietly accumulated with the help of expert curators and his own ‘inbuilt radar’.

Mr Buxton, the property developer who co-founded the MAB Corporation with his brother Andrew in the mid-1990s, has devoted much of his spare time to visiting galleries and artists’ studios. In those places, his ‘radar’ activates: he sees art, he responds to it, and he generally knows when he’s looking at something with depth and quality. More than that, he can see the sort of work that will endure beyond fashion – an attribute evident in the museum’s inaugural exhibition The shape of things to come.

BY ANDREW STEPHENS
(BFineArts 1994, PGDipArts
(ArtHist&CinSt) 2001)

Inaugural director Ryan Johnston in the new museum, with Patricia Piccinini’s Game Boys Advanced (2002). Silicon, acrylic human hair and mixed media.
PICS EAMON GALLAGHER

CONTINUED PAGE 10
Mr Buxton’s ambition for a new museum has been co-chaired by VCA Professor in Art Su Baker and per cent representatives of the Buxton family. It is University of Melbourne representatives and 40 per cent of his collection to the University, along with a 20-year endowment and $8 million for the $12 million

Standing in the new museum, Mr Johnston is impressed with the way the design comfortably allows for an array of two-dimensional work, installations and sculpture. “The first time you come here, it is surprising because from the outside you can’t read the relationship between interior and exterior,” he says.

The space downstairs is vast and overwhelming – and then it is mirrored upstairs as well. And when the work is in it, you realise how cleverly it has been designed in terms of the scale. It was not entirely sure how some of these smaller works by Pat Brassington, designed in terms of the scale. I was not entirely sure if we see the museum as a place where we can educate. “This is an amazing opportunity to look at objects,” he says with a satisfied tone.

A curatorial or art historical perspective on things – whereas, at a university, you have people from across the entire range of academic disciplines, and you can marshal that as a really rich cultural experience.”

Mr Johnston, formerly Head of Art at Canberra’s Australian War Memorial (2012-2018), admires the Buxton approach to acquiring art. He describes Mr Buxton’s collecting as a unique and genuine passion, “well beyond a collector’s usual aspirations”.

Art lover Michael Buxton: “It is a 25-year dream finally come to fruition.”

PICTURE: JAMES GEER
for example, were going to fit in the space – but it is almost perfect.”

Mr Johnston is aiming for an annual curatorial program of three shows, which will vary in how they use the Buxton collection: solo shows, thematic exhibitions, or particular pieces that might be springboards for broader displays.

“Certainly, the aim is to showcase the collection and make it a part of life at the VCA and University of Melbourne – it is a strong enough collection to warrant that – but, also, to use the collection as a platform or an inspiration. The trick is for it to find its niche and what is unique about it and its ethos.”

While the education program is still to be forged through consultation with key University figures drawn from multiple faculties, Mr Johnston says the potential is amazing. But the uniqueness of this museum means there is no institutional tradition to which he must strictly adhere, which is liberating. “It is an unusual position to have in this 2020 and 2007.”

Likewise, Mr Buxton is no usual person. Part of his journey with the collection has been his generosity to the artists themselves, supporting them by acquiring the work over the long term (as opposed to collecting one-off trophies), giving them residencies and other aid, and, crucially, taking the time to get to know them. That rapport is clear when talking to the artists most of whom mention how Mr Buxton’s visits to their studios and exhibitions formed the beginning of a friendship. “He always backs what he says with action,” one observer.

### MEET OUR FINE ARTISTS

#### James Morrison

(DPFineArt 1983, PGDPfineArt 1996)

Beginning work with papier mache some decades ago, James Morrison would use newspapers and cheap glue. He was astonished to find the sculpted newspaper disintegrate within a year. “It would turn to dust,” he recalls.

Consulting a paper conservator, he began to use a new formula of materials, but when Michael Buxton visited his studio he happened to admire work that had been done using the old newspaper method - so the artist issued a warning about its likely limited life span.

Later, using the more enduring techniques, Morrison’s work was acquired for the Buxton Collection. Among those on display at Buxton Contemporary’s inaugural exhibition The shape of things to come is a paper mache work depicting a hand meddling perilously with a scorpion. Sculpted with 500 year paper (as it is known in the industry) mixed with pure starch, it passes all the archival tests – and is an extraordinary detailed work, its surface drawn upon with pen and ink by the artist.

Morrison, born in 1959, completed a Diploma of Fine Art and a Postgraduate Diploma (1990) at the VCA. He is committed to detail in his work, which includes the five-panel Freeman Dyson (2008), which tells a loose story of an astronaut finding himself on an Earth-like planet. “Michael appreciated getting into the narrative behind the work.”

#### Rob McHaffie


Rob McHaffie recalls Michael Buxton making visits to look at his work when he had a studio at the Abbotsford Convent in 2010. He knew about the Buxton Collection because the work of some of his former colleagues at the Victorian College of the Arts, such as Nick Mangan and Ricky Swallow, had been acquired for it.

McHaffie knows the University well, having studied science and then engineering at Parkville before transferring to the VCA to do a Bachelor of Fine Arts (Drawing), graduating in 1999, and a Graduate Diploma in Teaching (Visual Art), completed in 2004. When Mr Buxton visited, McHaffie presented his drawings and an extensive chat ensued.

“He chose things with such confidence,” McHaffie recalls. “I had never experienced that with a studio visitor before. He really backs his own choices, and that was positive feedback for me.”

Mr Buxton has continued his acquisitions while also giving McHaffie a residency at his Portsea house:

“Is he someone who is true to his word. Collectors (often) say they will follow your work, but often drop off. Michael keeps the relationship with the artist.”

During his career, showing his works through Darren Knight Gallery, McHaffie has often reflected on the great foundations he had in the drawing department, where tutors from various disciplines encouraged wider experiences, stretching beyond drawing to painting and installation work.

#### Benjamin Armstrong

(BFineArt 1996)

Visitors to Buxton Contemporary are intrigued when they see other patrons peering into Benjamin Armstrong’s enormous occlusal-like sculpture Into the Underworld (2007).

Unable to resist, they scoop across and peer into the opening of the round glass vessel with its waxy surface, and through the sides of which only a few blurred shapes can be seen. Inside are orbs that might be eyeballs or breasts, surrounded by what look like rotting apples. His work, often made in glass and wax, is said to move between the homely and the uncanny: it succeeds.

Armstrong (born 1975) holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts (painting) from the Victorian College of the Arts (1996) and says Into the Underworld was first shown in 2008 as part of a larger body of work. This piece was partly born out of his responses to reading The Road by Cormac McCarthy, while the linocut prints called The Shape of Things to Come II (2006-2007), also in the Buxton Collection, functioned “almost like an instruction manual” for some of his sculptures at the time.

On a round of studio visits, Michael Buxton was also intrigued by the works, eventually acquiring them. “It has been an ongoing connection and friendship,” Armstrong says.

#### Patricia Piccinini

(BFineArt 1991, DVPA 2016)

Patricia Piccinini is one of Australia’s most celebrated contemporary artists, known here and internationally for her hyper-realistic sculptural and digital photographic work that explores concepts of what is ‘natural’ in our techno-centric age.

For all the squeamishness her incredibly detailed works might evoke in viewers, they retain a deeply personal edge that somehow deepens our connection with the often grotesque creatures she creates – entities with distinct human DNA as her forte. Piccinini, who is having an extensive retrospective at Brisbane’s Gallery of Modern Art this year, is represented in all of Australia’s most significant collections. She holds a Bachelor of Arts in Economic History, Australian National University (1988); Bachelor of Arts in Painting from the Victorian College of the Arts (1991) and a Doctorate in Visual and Performing Arts from the University of Melbourne (2016), where she has also taught. Her exhibition history is extensive, and Michael Buxton has carefully followed her work for many years, buying several works between 2002 and 2007.

Piccinini has been described as being interested in the way the human form can be enhanced and manipulated through bio-tech intervention, from “mapping of the human genome to the growth of human tissue and organs from stem cells”, all of it raising serious questions about ethics, scientific progress and the delineations between what is human - and what is not.
in the evolution of the University, notes Gini Lee (MLArch 1987), Professor of Landscape Architecture. “The Union is, and was, has transitioned into another form and another way of being,” she says.

“Moving the Union into the student-centred Precinct that is about events and action will mirror those changes.” While past students will have fond memories of Union House, current students can look forward to a whole new experience in the New Student Precinct, which will incorporate a series of spaces that will include a diversity of social areas, mixed-use retail, food and beverage outlets, and increased contemporary study zones for the entire campus community. A vibrant Arts and Cultural Centre will also be a significant feature of the Precinct. The highly-valued arts facilities currently enjoyed by students in Union House will not only be replaced but further enhanced with flexible theatres and rehearsal spaces.

Meanwhile, architect Carey Lyon (BArch(Hons) 1982) has taken the helm of a consortium of firms – all featuring former alumni – appointed to design the Precinct. Encompassing nine buildings, the Precinct will for the first time bring together the University’s students, academic services and the Institute for Indigenous Development, Murrup Barak. It will be located in what used to be the Melbourne Teachers’ College cluster of buildings nestled in the south-east corner of the original Parkville campus, bounded by Monash Road (to the north), Swanston Street (east), Grattan Street (south), and the School of Engineering to the west.

“Many of the buildings were developed in the 1960s through to the 1980s and were defensive to the University,” explains Mr Lyon, a director of Lyons Architecture, based in Melbourne. “A key part of the project is to make the Precinct feel integrated and connected to the rest of the University. We plan to do that through landscape.”

The team of architects and landscape designers that have been assembled to create the vision for the Precinct includes Jefa Greenaway (BPD(Arch) 1997, BArch(Hons) 1999), an Indigenous Australian and award-winning director of Greenaway Architects. It also includes Julie Eizenberg (BArch 1977, DAch 1969, University College) and Hank Koning (BArch 1977) of LA-based firm Koning Eizenberg. More information: go.unimelb.edu.au/abd5

UNION HOUSE

THE STUDENT UNION THROUGH THE YEARS

1884 The first Melbourne University Union is formed, for staff, students and graduates. The president is John Ekington, Melbourne-educated professor of history and political economy, and bon vivant. Membership was voluntary. The Union gains rooms in the western wing of the Quadrangle.

1884-1885 The Princess Ida Club, for women staff, students and graduates, is granted rooms on the eastern wing, and becomes a new fixture of the 19th-century associations.

1901 The Union establishes rooms on the corner of Little Collins and Swanston Streets.

1906 Recreational Grounds Committee is formed to manage a compulsorily acquired basement which would become the Union House library.

1911 A new Melbourne University Union is formed to take possession of the former natural history museum constructed in 1862, which had housed the Conservatorium of Music over the previous decade. With a small grant, it is renovated and becomes the Club House, with a staff of caterers and stewards.

1936 William Bryden, from the University of Edinburgh, is appointed as the new Union House’s Warden.

1938 After a 10-year fundraising campaign, the Club House is rebuilt establishing Union House. The modern architecture of the new building is an extension of the old museum, which is retained in order to save costs. The new building includes a theatre, a gallery of pictures and a non-academic library.

1954 Robert Hatch is elected, the first student chairman of the Union. All previous chairs were members of staff. Staff establish a separate club, University House (1952), and the Graduate Association establish rooms in Leicester Street.

1968 The Melbourne Theatre Company is formed out of the Union Theatre Repertory Company, which had been established as a new building in 1952. The Repertory Company became renowned for its first productions of Australian plays.

1969 Union House is again renovated and extended. Almost all of the museum building is dismantled in order to create a large basement, the building is given a new unabored elevation, and a central tower is erected.

1975 The George Paton Gallery is established.

1989 The Melbourne University Union is reconstituted as the Melbourne Student Union, an independent association managed by students, combining the Union and the SRC.

1990 A report is recommended for the creation of a New Student Precinct, that will incorporate the Student Union.

2004 A new report is commissioned for the creation of a New Student Precinct that will incorporate the Student Union.

2018 The University announces plans for the creation of a New Student Precinct, that will incorporate the Student Union.
prosecutions service, which works on behalf of the silk. Now, she herself is the first woman to become (who would ultimately become a High Court Justice), Susan Crennan (BA 1965, PGDipArts(Hist) 2002) QCs. Later that same year she was inspired to watch and keep striving. “It’s just disappointing that people aren’t opportunities so that those who have the skills to encouraged to reach their full potential – and that’s what I’ve been talking about with women at the Bar – and, in 2016, became a Senior Crown Prosecutor. In March, she was appointed Victoria’s Director of Public Prosecutions, one of the most senior, demanding and responsible roles in the state’s legal system.

So, the teacher’s pessimistic assessment no longer rankles: “I think her reasoning was that I came from a rankles: “I think her reasoning was that I came from a demanding and responsible roles in the state’s legal career, working in criminal and civil matters, and appearing in Victoria, New South Wales and the Northern Territory in the County and Supreme Courts, as well as in Royal Commissions and appeals before the High Court. She took silk in 2007 – the Northern Territory in the County and Supreme Courts, as well as in Royal Commissions and appeals before the High Court. She took silk in 2007 – becoming a Senior Counsel, now Queen’s Counsel – and, in 2016, became a Senior Crown Prosecutor. In March, she was appointed Victoria’s Director of Public Prosecutions, one of the most senior, demanding and responsible roles in the state’s legal system.

Since then, she has had a varied and exemplary legal career, working in criminal and civil matters, and appearing in Victoria, New South Wales and the Northern Territory in the County and Supreme Courts, as well as in Royal Commissions and appeals before the High Court. She took silk in 2007 – becoming a Senior Counsel, now Queen’s Counsel – and, in 2016, became a Senior Crown Prosecutor. In March, she was appointed Victoria’s Director of Public Prosecutions, one of the most senior, demanding and responsible roles in the state’s legal system.

But I never even contemplated taking her advice anyway. I did go home and discuss it with my parents, who have always been very encouraging and supportive, and they said, ‘If it’s what you really want to do, don’t let anyone tell you not to.’”

Judd says she doesn’t feel vindicated. “It’s just disappointing that people aren’t encouraged to reach their full potential – and that’s what I’ve been talking about with women at the Bar and women more generally … you want to create opportunities so that those who have the skills to succeed will take up opportunities and keep pushing and keep striving.”

When Ms Judd became a judge’s associate in 1989, there were no female Supreme Court judges or QCs. Later that same year she was inspired to watch Susan Crennan (BA 1965, PGDipArts(Hist) 2002) (who ultimately became a High Court Justice), and Ada Moshinsky (LBB 1964, LLM 1976) take silk. Now, herself is the first woman to become Victoria’s Director of Public Prosecutions.

As DPP, she is the head of Victoria’s public prosecutions service, which works on behalf of the Crown in serious criminal matters. An independent statutory appointee, the DPP makes decisions on investigating, preparing and conducting prosecutions in matters including murder, major sex offences, drug trafficking, commercial crime and fraud, serious assaults, culpable driving, corruption, and serious occupational health and safety matters.

“I am responsible for prosecuting indictable crime, so all serious crimes,” explains Judd. “I make the decisions, ultimately, about what prosecutions should proceed or should not proceed. I make decisions about whether a sentence is appropriate or if it should be appealed, and there is a policy aspect to my role.”

As for being the first female in the role, Judd says: “I would love to think that we’re getting to a point in time where appointing a woman to something of this magnitude is not seen as an unusual thing. Those are very important positions, but it does mean that the number of senior women left at the Bar is reduced. So, it’s important to keep the numbers coming (through).”

In fact, Judd never intended becoming a barrister. She admits that, having arrived at law school, she hadn’t really thought it through. “I don’t think I thought about being a lawyer, it was more about learning about the law and the policy behind the law, those types of things.”

She envisioned a future as a solicitor, but as an articled clerk came to resent what she saw as a focus on billing. “So, very early on, I wondered if I’d made the right decision,” she says.

Judd has appeared in trials and appeals involving some of Victoria’s most horrific and moving crimes, including the Akon Guode case, in which a mother killed three of her children by driving them into a lake, and the abduction, rape and murder of Bega school girls Lauren Barry and Nichole Collins.

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She took a three-year “time-out” as associate to Supreme Court Justices Ian Gray and William Crockett (LLB 1945, LLM 1948, LLD 1995), which gave her the opportunity to watch barristers in court. As well, she says, her judges – like most at the time, former barristers – dealt with her, without ever really asking, on the assumption that her path would naturally lead to the Bar. Pretty quickly, she realised they were right.

“And I’ve loved every moment of it,” she says. “I enjoy the advocacy, I enjoy the variety of clients and the variety of work I’ve had over the years.

Sometimes they can’t be avoided. The Bega case still haunts her. Preparing for the appeal of one of the murderers, she read his graphic account of the lead up to the murder, the details of the killing and the girls’ last words.

“I remember having this recurring nightmare, where I would see two girls in school uniforms,” she says. “I don’t know where I got this image from, it wasn’t one of the trial exhibits, but I would wake up in a sweat. “Car adverts, say of a vehicle winding through a forest – meant to evoke pleasant escapism – still give her a chill.”

But, Judd adds, the rewards far outweigh the costs. She has pioneered electronic trials, which involve showing evidence previously presented on paper on screens and on jurors’ tablets, making them more manageable and efficient. One of her goals in her new job is incorporating such innovation more widely. She would also like to see respect for victims.

“The time has come when we must do more for victims,” she says. “It is important we advocate for them, both as individuals and as a group.”

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DONALD  

My parents were working class Scottish migrants to Melbourne. I was born in 1926 with undiagnosed dyslexia which caused me misery and stress. By the age of 13, I could no longer bear the humiliation and left school, taking a series of menial jobs. I was aware there was no future for me in any of them, but I had a stroke of luck. A friend told me of a position available as a laboratory assistant at Melbourne University’s zoology department. The war was on and the technicians had gone off to fight. I was interviewed by Professor Agar who, despite my lack of any qualifications and being uneducated, decided to give me a trial. So began one of the happiest periods of my life. I worked hard and loved every aspect of my job, particularly collecting specimens for microscopy from the Botanic Gardens’ ponds.

After 18 months, Professor Agar called me and asked where I saw my future. I said I’d like to be a doctor, as I was working alongside medical students and loving what they were doing. So I went to a college in the city and said I wanted to do physics, chemistry, biology, botany, English and German to intermediate standard in one year at night school. I developed a means whereby I could penetrate my dyslexia and at the end of the year, to everyone’s surprise, I passed.

Professor Agar called me and said, “Laddie, we believe you have shown you have the intelligence and the determination to become a doctor. We’ll do everything we can at the University to help.”

After six years of study, I had all the qualifications. I started doing autopsies for the coroner on people who had been killed in road accidents, and wrote articles on what was causing these deaths. At the same time, the College of Surgeons started the Road Trauma Committee to work out the causes of deaths on the road and how to prevent them. When my first article was published, they came to see me and asked if I would join them.

I think my contribution was significant, because other people had the idea but I had the figures to convince the government to bring in the legislation. There were 1000 people killed on the roads annually, but since my article was published, it has dropped by about 700.

I talk to everybody, all my children, about the significance of the University of Melbourne to me. I used to take Rebecca as a little girl for walks around the campus, before she herself studied there.

Rebecca was a very clever young girl and very determined. I think that my career, whether she’s aware of it or not, influenced her, because she developed a work ethic of great determination and strength and persistence.

Since I was young I have loved the National Gallery in Melbourne, and I used to take Rebecca there. She was exposed to the great collection at a very early age and she responded to it. She had a great eye and she understood it intuitively. I think it’s a great shame that she lives so far away, though I think what she’s accomplished is marvellous.

Driving  

Donald Hossack OBE PSM (MB BS 1954, BA 1975, MD 2006, Trinity College) overcame dyslexia to become a world-renowned surgeon who helped bring about landmark road safety legislation mandating the wearing of seat belts and alcohol breath-testing.

His daughter, Rebecca Hossack (LLB 1978), owns three galleries in New York and London, where she now lives, and is a long-time supporter of Aboriginal art.

They spoke to Erin Munro (BA 2006).

REBECCA  

We all knew about our father’s difficult start, but the University was always like his sacred site. Every week he used to take me there and we would go swimming in the Beaurepaire Pool. He would tell me about his different experiences and we’d go past the laboratory where he’d worked.

There was no option in my mind that I could go anywhere else, and Melbourne University was a sort of El Dorado to which we all aspired. My plan was to be an actress and I only did law because my parents said it’s better to get a professional qualification under your belt. And when I went to university, dad decided to do a BA, so often we would be sitting next to each other in the same class.

And then I went to London to study for the bar to be a barrister, but my secret plan was to go and look at all the paintings in the National Gallery. Because if you study art history in Australia, you look at everything on slide and you don’t actually see the real size of the pictures.

One day, I was riding my bicycle down the street in central London, and it was a beautiful sunny day – very unusual for London. And I saw an empty shop and it said ‘Lease for sale, no premium’, because in those days you had to pay a lot of money just to get the option to pay a lease. There was a man outside the shop hosing down the pavement, and I asked, “Do you know anything about this?” He said it was his, and I said, “Oh, great! I want to start an art gallery!”

If it had been a rainy day, I wouldn’t have done that because he wouldn’t have been out there. Suddenly, I’d signed a lease for 20 years. I didn’t know anybody and I didn’t really know anything, but I knew I loved art, and I was particularly in love with Aboriginal art.

In 1998, I opened my gallery in Charlotte Street, Fitzrovia. Then, 10 years ago, I opened the big, three-storey gallery on Fitzroy Square in Central London, and eight years ago I opened the New York gallery in SoHo. The British Museum has bought a lot of art from us, and I also lecture for the Fine Art Society of Britain. My subject is Aboriginal art, and it’s been a wonderful journey educating the British people on the topic.

Over the past 30 years, I’ve been privileged to have had pretty much all the major Aboriginal artists come and visit us. Clifford Possum Tjapaltjarri used to come and I got him to meet the Queen.

I’m going back to Australia for the Garma Festival with Melbourne University – with the medical faculty and Professor Marcia Langton – this August. We’re working on some projects on how to enhance the dialogue around Aboriginal art.

I think that’s something my father’s always instilled in me: a love of paintings and beauty, and nature, too. Every Saturday he used to take me to the Melbourne Botanic Gardens and we’d get some pond water and then we’d go home and look at all the animal life through a microscope. Still, when I go back and see him, the first thing we’ll do is he’ll take me out to his garden.
A program pairing local alumni with international students is making for rewarding cultural exchanges.

By Kate Stanton (M.journ 2016)

When University neuroscientist Dr Nupur Nag (BSc(Hons) 1997, PhD 2004) hosted a dinner party for her new friends, three students from Indonesia and Pakistan, one brought her favourite dessert – durian.

The others tasted this pungent but controversial delicacy, which is popular in Indonesia, eating small mouthfuls and agreeing it was lovely. That was, until politeness gave way to laughter, as three admitted they couldn’t finish it.

Thus began the friends’ “food challenge”, where a new food was trialled at each meet-up. Together, they have tasted Vegemite on toast, garlic crackers, salted egg yolk and fish skin, bonding over each other’s likes and dislikes. It’s now a group tradition, along with regular walks and dinners and coffee catch-ups.

Nag met all three women as a volunteer for the Welcome to Melbourne program, which pairs local alumni with international graduate students who have received the prestigious Australia Awards Scholarship.

Now celebrating its 10-year anniversary, the program aims to make participating students feel more comfortable in Melbourne by introducing them to a local resident.

Nag, who lived previously in the US and Singapore, says her experience living abroad as an expat was her motivation for joining the program.

“It can be difficult settling in to a new country due to differences in culture and social values, and also not having your family or friends for support,” she says.

“Knowing someone local is invaluable as they can provide insight on a diversity of topics – from where to find the best local café is located to how the government provide insight on a diversity of topics – from where to find the best local café is located to how the government.”

Nag introduced all three women to each other during a dinner party, and now all four meet regularly for walks, dinner, cultural events, coffee and conversation. Nag and Atika even met and travelled in Indonesia together.

“We all share a very good bond and understanding,” says Sheerazi. “Whenever we are together we just talk and laugh a lot.

Since 2009, more than 1500 students and 770 hosts have participated in the Welcome to Melbourne program. Students have come from 18 Asian and African countries, including Ghana, Sri Lanka and Mongolia.

“It’s not so much an academic exchange, as it is a social and cultural one, says Catherine Navon (GDipArts 2003, MMgt(Mktg) 2012), the University’s Australia Awards co-ordinator.

“The point is for them to have an opportunity to meet a local that’s not in the context of their academic obligations,” she says.

The pair are only required to attend an initial launch event and one activity together. There is no obligation to continue the friendship.

“The beauty is the simplicity,” Navon says. “Meet up twice. Have a cup of tea. Have a chat. Now you know someone else who is a potential friend.

“It may or may not blossom further. Either way, that’s great.”

Students involved in the Welcome to Melbourne program come from developing countries eligible for the Australia Awards Scholarship, which is awarded by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. It’s a big deal, and recipients are expected to use their Australian education to drive change back home.

The exchange goes both ways. Navon says it is also in Australia’s interest to develop positive relationships with people who are going to be in positions of influence in their home countries.

“They’re highly accomplished and ambitious,” says Navon. “These are people who are quite visionary. That’s why they get the scholarship in the first place.”

That doesn’t mean they don’t get homesick. Many are used to being surrounded by extended family.

Navon says some participants come from big cities, such as Jakarta, but some also come from smaller cities or towns. “For them, Melbourne is the big smoke,” she says. “That can be really lonely.”

The alumni relations team tries to match volunteers and students based on shared interests and hobbies.

Nupur Nag (second from right) meets up with her Welcome to Melbourne friends (from left) Jinia Sheerazi, Saqiba Sheerazi and Nur Atika.

Putting out the welcome mat

770 hosts have connected with 1574 students since 2009

Students from 70 countries have participated

30% of students from Indonesia

Other countries most represented

Vietnam, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Cambodia

Biggest participation was in Semester 1, 2014: 346 alumni and students

In 2016, when Luong Tran moved from her village in Gia Lai, in the central highlands of Vietnam, to study epidemiology and biostatistics in Melbourne, she was overwhelmed. Even the University campus seemed too big.

“I had no smartphone on my first day and had to ask so many people around my house how to get to Melbourne Uni,” she says. “And then, when I got there, I needed to ask more people how to get around Melbourne Uni.”

Tran was paired with Sue Lees (BA 1978), a retired teacher and counsellor, and her husband, Andrew (MB BS 1979), a retired GP. They invited her first to an Australian dinner – roast lamb and veggies – at their home, and now meet occasionally for coffee.

“We all share a very good bond and understanding,” says Sheerazi. “Whenever we are together we just talk and laugh a lot.

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An Australian company recreates a New York icon on Broadway.

BY ANDERS FURZE
(MJourn 2016)

It is one of the most iconic images in movie history: King Kong, standing astride the Empire State Building, clinging to Ann Darrow as aeroplanes circle overhead. Oddly, for a story that’s so strongly identified with New York City, King Kong has consistently attracted creative attention from the other side of the world.

New Zealand director Peter Jackson remade the 1935 Hollywood classic in 2005, and now the Australian live entertainment company Global Creatures is bringing its stage musical version to Broadway.

“For any Australian company to have a show on Broadway is a huge moment,” says Carmen Pavlovic (BA 1994, MBA 1998), the company’s founding chief executive. “It’s hard to think of anything more exciting than adapting a movie you loved when you were young.”

Debuting in Melbourne in 2013, the show attracted acclaim for the technical wizardry involved in its standout feature: a giant, stylised puppet of King Kong, operated by a team of 18 puppeteers at any one time.

The logistics involved are remarkable: 14 people stage the clip marionette strings on and off his limbs to move him around, while a team at the back of the theatre controls his facial expressions, with someone else creating voice live in performance.

But Pavlovic felt that during its Melbourne run, the rest of the show didn’t quite gel with its central achievement. “I had this nagging sense that this incredible puppet, with all of its physicality, was being dropped in the middle of someone else’s musical.”

The critics agreed, and the light bulb moment for the creative team came when they realised that although King Kong was nominally the lead character of their musical, he didn’t sing, dance or speak. “So we asked ourselves: what is the essential element that makes King work?”

The answer? His sheer physicality. “We thought: ‘What if we told the story in a very physical way? What if the puppeteers moved the set? And the storytelling became very visual?’”

The result will finally debut in November at the Broadway Theatre, which is actually on Broadway, in Manhattan, after five years of retooling. Does she feel any pressure about how the global epicentre of musical theatre will respond to the show?

“There’s a fair amount of pressure,” Pavlovic concedes, “both economically – the show is very big – and also creatively. It’s an iconic title. I was very keen that the show would have something new to say.”

It might seem like a long road from an Australian company to the heady world of musical theatre, but Pavlovic is quick to point out that the entertainment business is far from the anarchic free-for-all some might think.

“The business is a business like any other. We wrestle with cash flow, we have to raise money, we think through marketing and how our audiences are and how to reach them. It’s very much a regular business. And, then, there’s the part of it that’s not. That part – the creative process – makes for a job that blends the best of both worlds.”

“I like the structure and order of the business side of it, but I find the creative process completely thrilling, and I feel very privileged to be part of that. I certainly pinch myself regularly that I get to contribute to this conversation.”

The conversations span anything and everything. “At one end of the day I’m discussing international taxation, marketing and copyright law; then, at the other end of the day, I could be discussing the role of a female protagonist in 2018.”

About that female protagonist – King Kong’s Ann Darrow often has been criticised as being the prototypical Damsel in Distress. Pavlovic says that she was keen to change that for Broadway.

King Kong’s writer, Jack Thorne, who recently worked with J K Rowling to adapt Harry Potter for the stage with

Carmen Pavlovic, right, looks forward to the Broadway debut of her ‘incredible puppet’.
SPEAKING OF WHICH ...

BY GAY ALCORN

Scott Ryan met Tony Smith in 1991 on his first day at the University of Melbourne. It was near the end of Smith’s time at the Uni.

“I think we met at the orientation week barbecue,” says Smith (BA(Hons) 1990, BCom 1992). “Could have been, I thought it was the AGM,” says Ryan, (BA(Hons) 1997).

Whichever it was, it was a function organised by the University’s Liberal Club, which both men would head, Smith in 1988 and Ryan in 1994.

More than a quarter of a century later, the two are close friends and agree to meet in their Melbourne office at Treasury Place. Smith, 51, often described as perennially obsessive about his vocation, according to one analysis, is the President of the Senate, the equivalent position in the Upper House.

Each is responsible for upholding parliamentary rules and maintaining order and fairness at a time of deep mistrust of politicians and even of democratic institutions. Together, they oversee the workings of Parliament House, managing a $300 million budget and more than 1200 staff.

It is unusual enough that the two presiding officers in Australia’s national parliament attended the same university, where they both studied Arts. Ryan had many of the same lecturers as Smith in subjects such as history and politics.

Their shared interest in the distinction is the way I describe it. It’s a very important recognition of the plummeting integrity of political life in Australia and the need to find people who would settle things down and show fairness and consistency rather than partisanship.

Both men are aware of the plummeting respect for the workings of the parliament, despite a more polarised debate prompted by a revolution in the way people receive communications – it’s all very instant. Arguably, it’s had a behavioural effect.

“Televising parliament has changed things and modern communications – it’s all very instant. Arguably, it’s had a behavioural effect. We’re both students of history and you can look at some of those Hansard debates, going right back, contentious issues like the conscription referendum, and they were pretty warring.”

Ryan says it would take a doctoral thesis to fully explore what has changed in politics in the past 15 years or so, but a crucial shift is that the way people consume information has been upended. That has led to “fragmentation, reinforcement of existing world views and prejudice, but it has also meant that to get attention you sensationalise or escalate your rhetoric.”

So that has led to, in my view, an incentive and a reward for saying extreme things.”

The idea of qualification, or compromise, is being lost and what has replaced it is arguing about someone’s motive rather than the worth of a proposal. “People can say, ‘Scott, you opposed the mining tax because you’re in the pay of big coal,’ or ‘You opposed the CPRS [the carbon pollution reduction scheme] because you get money from big carbon-polluting companies.’

“It’s that introduction of the word ‘because’ which has meant that we don’t debate whether a mining tax or a CPRS should be implemented, or have objective measures on what it should be measured by.”

Ryan wonders whether, these days, people would insist that then Prime Minister John Howard and Treasurer Peter Costello should have refused to compromise when they introduced the GST in 1999. They negotiated with the now-defunct Democrats to get it passed.

“That issue of something is better than nothing, that compromise may not be perfect but can be an improvement . . . the point I made about inflated rhetoric has made that harder.”

When they are not working, Smith and Ryan are reading, particularly history and politics. Their shared interest in the former is particularly apt; to be a successful President of the Senate or Speaker of the House requires knowledge and respect for parliamentary history, traditions and norms. To adapt to a changing world without throwing out what matters. To be respected as fair by all sides of politics. So far, Smith and Ryan seem to have that in common, too.

“The Senate President’s role is subtly different through having that vote [on every bill] and they are very different cultural places because of this lack of a government majority and the fact that you rule by consent in the Senate,” Ryan says. Malcolm Turnbull’s government does not have a majority in the 76-seat Upper House, relying on negotiations with 11 cross-benchers to pass legislation.

“I can’t even throw someone out in the Senate without there being a formal naming process,” adds Ryan. “Tony can. In the Senate, you rule by consent rather than by authority is the way I describe it. It’s a very important distinction.”

“Some people don’t wish to call it a Senate President, at a time when all sides of politics were looking for outstanding public leadership.”

Both men have deep knowledge and respect for the workings of the parliament, despite a more polarised debate prompted by a revolution in the way people receive information.

Smith likes to remind people that there was never a golden age of civilised debate – he recalls that, back in 1965, then-Labor leader Gough Whitlam threw a glass of water in the face of External Affairs Minister Paul Hasluck in parliament.

“A lot of people say to me, Gee, you couldn’t do that in a classroom or a church. And I say, Well, it’s not a classroom or a church.”

It’s not. People these days see so much more and they think, therefore, this hasn’t happened before.

“Televising parliament has changed things and modern communications – it’s all very instant. Arguably, it’s had a behavioural effect.

“We’re both students of history and you can look at some of those Hansard debates, going right back, contentious issues like...
Millions of people are being forced to flee the places they call home. Lives in limbo

Although some can be refugees, in most cases stateless people have not left their country and are not seeking protection elsewhere. The remedy they would be seeking is recognition in that country as nationals."

The Rohingya people are a contentious but obvious example. Despite their existence in Myanmar dating back generations, they were denationalised in 1982. It’s not a new phenomenon. Up to 2 million Russians were denationalised after the Russian Revolution, the Nazis used it as a form of persecution against the Jews. An estimated 250,000 people are stateless in Latvia because they are determined to be of Russian, rather than Latvian, ethnicity. Ethnic Vietnamese in Cambodia are recognised only as “non-immigrant foreigners” despite living in the country for generations. Australian government data suggest there are 56 stateless people living in our community, although the number in detention is unknown. Ahmed al-Kateb, born in Kuwait to Palestinian refugees from Gaza, was deemed stateless when he was rescued from a fishing boat washed up on Ashmore Reef off the northern coast of Western Australia. He endured seven hellish years before the government finally agreed to allow him to settle here. According to Professor Foster, there are also 27 countries, including Nepal, whose nationality laws discriminate against women. “They won’t allow women to pass on their nationality to their children. If the father is unknown, the child becomes stateless.”

Having served for 26 years with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Erika Feller (BL, LLB(Hons)) explains Professor Michelle Foster, Head of the new Centre.

They came from different worlds, one privileged and the other poor, but comic genius Spike Milligan and Ahmed al-Kateb, a volunteer council worker, shared a surprising bond. Both experienced statelessness, albeit fleetingly in the case of the comedian.

In 1960, Milligan was declared “stateless” under British immigration laws after he refused to take the oath of allegiance to the Crown. He resolved the issue by adopting his father’s Irish nationality. Al-Kateb’s path from statelessness to Australian citizenship was more torturous and much more indicative of the difficulties faced by the world’s estimated 10 million people who have nowhere to call home.

Their plight is unimaginable, unable to do the sorts of everyday things most of us so happily take for granted – opening a bank account, owning land or property, accessing healthcare, getting a driver’s licence, attending school. Their lives are in limbo. "It’s at the sharp end of injustice and inhumanity," he says. He’s enthusiastic about the Centre’s commitment to the development of practical initiatives to address challenges such as a legal framework to provide protection for stateless people. "We know the consequences of not doing so results in many people being left in limbo," he argues. "Many are consigned to prolonged and indefinite detention. It’s a tragedy."

The Centre, which is being supported by a generous gift from Peter McMullin (BCom, LLB 1974) and his wife Ruth, will focus on teaching, research and engagement projects. "Statelessness grabbed my attention largely because of my past history as a Member of the Refugee Review Tribunal [1993-1996], where Australia was a leader in the field of refugee law," McMullin says.

Ms Feller says a number of universities have already expressed interest in a curriculum for teaching and engagement projects. "Statelessness grabbed my attention largely because of my past history as a Member of the Refugee Review Tribunal [1993-1996], where Australia was a leader in the field of refugee law," McMullin says.

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Taking on the SUPERBUGS

FIVE QUESTIONS FOR ANDREA O’CONNOR CHEMICAL ENGINEER

Antibiotic resistance is fast emerging as one of the world’s most pressing medical challenges, with drug-resistant infections threatening to hinder simpler procedures we currently take for granted – basic surgeries, medical device implants or intensive care. Associate Professor Andrea O’Connor (BE(Hons) 1990, PhD 1995) is at the forefront of the battle to beat the ‘superbugs’, pioneering the use of nanoparticles to fight infections at their source.

Dr Andrea O’Connor is Deputy Head of the School of Chemical and Biomedical Engineering. Her expertise is in the field of biomaterials, implants and tissue engineering (the practice of merging scaffolds – tiny, porous devices that act as a template to regenerate tissue and organs – with human cells to repair wounds and damaged tissues).

1 What exactly is the problem you are trying to solve?

Conventionally, bacterial infections have been treated with antibiotics, but we are seeing lots of reports about bacteria developing resistance. So, we’re interested in finding alternatives to antibiotics, particularly in the areas where we are doing research, which are medical devices – hip implants, valves for hearts, plates and screws… things mostly made of metals and plastics, sometimes from ceramics – and in the field of tissue engineering. With the latter, we try to make materials, sometimes like a sponge, that you might put into the body to repair tissue, or replace tissue that is missing, after people have maybe had a car accident or major trauma, surgery due to cancer, something like that.

Bacteria are very good at evading the immune system, and when they sit on the surface of something like an implant they can grow a biofilm, which is like a gooey layer, that protects them and makes it tough for the antibiotics to get in to treat the bacteria. The bacteria become what we call quiescent; they sort of slow down, and just become quiescent; they sort of slow down, and just

2 What’s so good about nanoparticles?

Nanoparticles are very small particles – typically, below 100 nanometres in size, and a nanometre is one-billionth of a metre. But nanoparticles are attractive for a few reasons; interestingly, they have a lot of surface area relative to the total amount of material. Because they’re microscopic, a lot of the actual particle is surface as opposed to the bulk (or internal) material, and that displays different chemical activity compared to a large block of the same material. That means there is a lot of surface area for things to interact with, and one of the things that that changes is how the particles might interact with cells and bacteria, and how quickly they might dissolve or undergo chemical reactions, because a lot of those things happen at the surface of the particle, not inside the particle.

It has been shown that nanoparticles of some materials, like silver, are quite good at killing bacteria, and so silver has been used for decades for that purpose, and it’s now incorporated in some wound dressings, band aids, even some clothing. But silver is also toxic, so it’s not ideal, and for that reason we’ve looked at other materials.

3 Selenium, the silver bullet?

A post-doctoral researcher in my lab, Dr Phong Tran, who’s now at Queensland University of Technology, had some experience in working with selenium as a material that had antimicrobial properties. So we started investigating that, and that has led to collaboration with Professor Neil O’Brien-Simpson’s (PhD 1998) team in the Melbourne Dental School and some exciting results that look really promising.

Selenium looks to be somewhat in the sweet spot in that it is quite effective against bacteria, but it’s much less toxic to human cells. So, it’s much safer. It means you can use more of it, and it’s very effective against a class of bacteria we call Gram-positive bacteria, a common example of which is Staph aureus – Staphylococcus aureus, or Golden Staph – which has drug-resistant variants that are in the Australian community and hospitals and cause significant problems. We’ve been able to control the properties of the selenium nanoparticles, by synthesising them carefully, so that we can attack those drug-resistant forms of bacteria.

And then we made another step in the synthesis that we’re aiming to take out a patent on, where we can actually produce selenium-based nanoparticles that will also attack Gram-negative bacteria, which are typically more difficult to attack. That’s things like E. Coli, which is also quite prevalent and causes a lot of illness.

One of the things that bacteria need to stay functioning is their cell membrane. If it starts to get holes in it or starts to leak, then the bacteria don’t function well and if it gets bad enough then they will die. One of the ways that these nanoparticles can attack bacteria is by disrupting that membrane so they make the bacteria leaky, and then things can pass in and out of the bacteria in a way they normally wouldn’t.

In tests, we’ve incorporated the nanoparticles as a coating on the surface of a medical implant, or as part of a tissue-engineering scaffold. The antimicrobial components are then gradually released into their surrounding environment, and prevent infections forming.

Our research focus has been on medical devices, so that could be implants, it could also be things like catheters, where biofilm infections can be a problem.

Another major problem is wounds, chronic wounds, and particularly for patients who are elderly and who may have diabetes; they are very prone to ulcers and chronic wounds that don’t heal well, and those can often suffer from superbug-type infections.

So we’re producing wound dressings and wound regeneration scaffolds that might incorporate these antimicrobial components. They would ideally help to heal the wound, while also preventing infection.

4 Where next for this exploration?

We are working to better optimise and understand the performance of the nanoparticles that we’ve produced. One of the key things about nanoparticles, is that we expect the bacteria won’t develop resistance to them as easily as they do to a lot of drugs, because the nanoparticles have multiple ways that they attack the bacteria.

So this is something that we’re really trying to understand – what aspect of a material means that bacteria can, or cannot, develop resistance readily? To understand that would really be a very big step forward. Ultimately, the most exciting thing would be if we could have this technology adopted in medical devices, so that it actually impacts peoples lives and makes a difference.

I think we need lots of strategies to do that given the rise of superbugs. No one strategy is going to be the solution to everything, but this could be a part of it, which is very exciting.

5 How many superbugs have been identified?

There’s a set that have been identified called the ESKAPE pathogens, which are a handful of pathogens that are known to be prone to drug resistance. But there are many different strains.

The other thing that I’ve been really struck by as we work with human and mammalian cells, is that when we switch to growing bacteria and testing them, they grow so fast, and they replicate and they change so fast. It’s quite shocking when you’re used to dealing with mammalian cells that chug along and double once a day, sort of thing. These bacteria have been through several generations in that time, so the challenge that superbugs present is striking.

An extended version of this interview can be found at unimelb.edu.au/3010
“When I came to Australia I said, ‘This is heaven for me; I need to make use of the opportunities here’.”

Gemeh Kromah

Kromah describes the camp where he spent most of this time, and which housed 2000 refugees, as “no different to a prison”. “It was terrible; life was inconclusive,” he says. Kromah was finally offered refuge in Australia in 2005, arriving in Melbourne with some of his non-biological family. “When I came to Australia I said, ‘This is heaven for me; I need to make use of the opportunities here’.” He embarked on a Bachelor of Counselling at the Australian College of Applied Psychology, before completing a Bachelor of Social Work at Monash University. While working as a social worker, Kromah noticed a lot of the women he was dealing with were from non-English-speaking backgrounds and unable to find work. They were also staying at home to look after children.

He set up a unique business where mothers with limited financial growth. “On completing the Masters, we went ‘boom!’” But his entrepreneurial drive had been ignited: “Before the course, my business was at a grass-roots level; we were stuck in terms of financial growth.”

Hhairiah Talha left Melbourne University in 1980 with a degree in town and regional planning, her future husband, and what she considered a radical concept – “taught me how to think and express my opinions,” she says. “At that time in Malaysia, subordinates were supposed to do what they were told. Women, in particular, were supposed to do what they were told.” Talha and her husband, fellow Malaysian scholarship student Mohd Othman (BEng 1977, International House, University College), started their careers as government employees in Terengganu, then Penang.

Talha was young and outspoken. Although she wore traditional Malay Muslim dress, she was comfortable with Western ideas. Malaysia did not particularly welcome such people in leadership positions at the time and the fact that she prevailed, and paved the way for other women leaders in Malaysia, is one of her lasting achievements.

“My career in government was cut short because I expressed my opinion too much.”

KWA Planners has won major awards for its work in areas ranging from urban redevelopment to strategic and integrated master plans for rainforest preservation and eco-adventure tourism. The company also designed precinct 11, a residential area in Putrajaya, the new administrative capital of Malaysia created to reduce congestion in Kuala Lumpur. Talha’s largest project for 2018 has been preparing a strategic plan for Subang Jaya, a town between Kuala Lumpur and Petaling Jaya, part of the Klang Valley Corridor. As the first female president of the Malaysian Institute of Planners (1999 to 2003), Talha established a council of advisers and devised a code of professional conduct. She was Secretary General of the Eastern Regional Organization for Planning and Human Settlements from 2002 to 2010, forging close links between professionals across the region, including Australia.

“I surprised a lot of people, being a Muslim woman – opinionated, upfront, employing Western consultants and in my private practice,” she says. “There are people who build bridges. There are people who build walls. I prefer bridges.”

Increasingly, Ms Talha sees her role as mentor, helping encourage new generations of town planners. She cites as one of the main challenges in planning the need to gain political support for implementing policy. “It should be the role of town planners to make politicians see the benefits of good planning in the longer term,” she says, “not just for winning the next election.”

“Some people think that town planning is about construction of streets, roads and parks,” she says. “It is a lot more than that. It is preparing to manage existing and new developments to cater for the needs of different communities at different times, in a cycle of change and renewal… For cities to thrive, they have to be planned in consultation with the people who live in them.”

KWA Planners’ current projects include major renewal programs for government buildings in Kuala Lumpur, as well as the Klang Valley corridor, the administrative capital of Malaysia created to reduce congestion in Kuala Lumpur. Talha’s largest project for 2018 has been preparing a strategic plan for Subang Jaya, a town between Kuala Lumpur and Petaling Jaya, part of the Klang Valley Corridor. As the first female president of the Malaysian Institute of Planners (1999 to 2003), Talha established a council of advisers and devised a code of professional conduct. She was Secretary General of the Eastern Regional Organization for Planning and Human Settlements from 2002 to 2010, forging close links between professionals across the region, including Australia.

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Sarah Lynn Rees wants Australian buildings to better reflect the country’s Indigenous peoples – the Traditional Owners of the land. “We’re projecting who we think we are in our buildings,” she says. “But when I look around Melbourne, I don’t really see an Indigenous presence. And that’s a shame. “But it’s also an opportunity”

Rees, a Plangermaireener woman from Hobart, Tasmania, is in a position to help create that change. After graduating from the University’s architecture program in 2012, she was awarded the prestigious Charlie Perkins Scholarship, which gives Indigenous Australians the opportunity to undertake postgraduate study at exclusive universities in the US or UK.

Rees completed a Masters of Philosophy in Architecture and Urban Design at Cambridge, where she studied Indigenous housing in remote communities. Once registered, she will be one of a handful of Indigenous Australian architects working to integrate Indigenous design into the built environment. It’s exciting, she says. “I think we’re past the point of hanging an Indigenous dot painting on the wall and that being enough. It’s about actually embodying these buildings with Indigenous ways of being, knowing and thinking — with the complexities and the knowledge of Indigenous cultures.”

Growing up, Rees says her father, a builder, got her thinking about architecture as a career. “I was quite interested in problem-solving so architecture seemed like a good fit,” she says.

As part of her studies at Cambridge, Rees spent six months living in Yuendumu, a remote Indigenous community nearly 300 kilometres northwest of Alice Springs, where she looked critically at the way government programs delivered remote housing to Indigenous people.

She found that governments rarely designed housing based on an understanding of the way Indigenous people in those communities operate: “Now back in Melbourne, Rees works as a graduate architect at Jackson Clements Burrows Architects and as a consultant with Greenshoot Consulting on various projects, including working to support the Faculty of Architecture, Building and Planning to create Indigenous Cultural Design Competency modules (ICDC).

She’s also co-organising an Indigenous architecture symposium with award-winning architect Jala Greenaway (BArch(Hons) 1999, BPD(ARCH) 1997), to be held at the University this July, bringing together Indigenous architects from all over the world. She is also a director of Indigenous Architecture and Design Victoria. It’s already a lot of work for someone still at the beginning of her architecture career. “I submit the notion that we’re all going to have five careers in our lifetimes,” she says. “However, I’m trying to have them all at once because they all feed into each other.”

“I was quite interested in problem-solving so architecture seemed like a good fit.”

BY KATE STANTON

Matt Tinney, hopping into a plane with an 80-year-old aerobatics pilot in the cockpit is just another day at the office. “Fortunately, I didn’t vomit, but I did feel a bit queasy afterwards,” he says of the flight, filmed for the Seven Network’s breakfast show Sunrise, where he serves as Perth correspondent. “That’s the great thing about this job — you meet a lot of different people. Sometimes they’re celebrities, but often they’re average people who do extraordinary things.”

Growing up in Essendon with dreams of becoming a pilot himself, Tinney decided to pursue a journalism career after just missing out on a job in the air force. “I had either journalist or politician in the back of my mind,” and he asked an old primary school teacher what to do. Her advice was simple. “She said, ‘Do you consider yourself to be honest, Matt?’ I said, ‘Oh, you know me, of course I do.’ And she said ‘Do yourself a favour, and don’t become a politician. It’ll get you into trouble.’”

At University, Tinney majored in Politics and Italian, which taught him how to research and analyse material, “both key skills for a journalist.” He also got as much professional experience as he could, volunteering for community radio and TV. Two weeks after graduating, he landed a job at WIN News in Wollongong. Upending his life to kick-start his burgeoning career,

“It’s not until afterwards that you reflect on what you’ve done, and the emotion does hit you.”

BY ANDERS FURZE

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BY ANDERS FURZE
LYNN BURMEISTER
(MB BS 1989)

Every Christmas, a grandfather in Melbourne raises a glass to Lynn Burmeister, and thanks her for helping create his eighth grandchildren. His daughters became pregnant under the care of Burmeister, recognised as one of the country’s leading IVF and fertility specialists.

“It’s a sweet story,” she says. And it’s not an uncommon one; Burmeister helps thousands of patients have babies every year.

She has just set up her own egg freezing and fertility clinic after a long relationship with Monash IVF came to an end, opening her new rooms in Collins Street, Melbourne.

The elegant furnishings and inspirational quotes adorning its walls give it an air of a day spa, but this is serious business for Burmeister and those who rely upon her.

“I’m not a miracle worker and I tell all the patients that, but I do like the complexity of a fertility patient because there are so many aspects that you have to get right,” she says. “I tell my patients we don’t have Botox for eggs. The older patient will always struggle to have a baby.”

She tries to solve any issues that hinder conception before IVF is needed, whether it’s fixing uterine abnormalities or removing ovarian cysts. She makes patients aware of their responsibilities, too, often telling them to lose weight or improve their diet or lifestyle before she’ll treat them.

Burmeister initially planned to become a surgeon, but while she was training her potential was spotted by IVF pioneer Professor Carl Wood. She hasn’t looked back since.

Since 2017, she’s been offering IVF in Geelong to comply with a temporary non-compete order with Monash IVF.

“With IVF, every little step along the way – the health of the eggs, the health of the sperm, how the embryo is made in the laboratory, how the embryo is put back into the patient – if it’s not right, could mean that that patient might not be able to have a baby.”

Burmeister says many women delaying starting a family until they have established a career, fertility is a growing concern. Burmeister says the technology is improving all the time, but science has not yet discovered how to reverse the ageing process.

“I tell my patients we don’t have Botox for eggs,” she says. “The older patient will always struggle to have a baby.”

While she can legally treat patients up to age 52, she urges women to try to complete their families by 35. Increasingly, women for whom that is not an option are choosing to freeze their eggs.

Despite her best efforts, there are some people Burmeister still cannot help. “I give them other options – there’s egg donor therapy, sperm donor therapy, embryo donor therapy.”

And when it does work – by whatever method – Burmeister shares the patients’ joy. “It’s so rewarding,” she says. “I love creating life.”

BY VAL MCFARLANE

LEONIE VALENTINE
(BSc 1990)

There’s egg donor therapy, sperm donor therapy, embryo donor therapy.

Until, that is, Valentine graduated at the height of the recession in 1990, when geology jobs were scarce, so she took a job in marketing at BP.

“I didn’t even know what marketing was,” she says with a laugh. “But I was lucky that they would hire generalists and train them.”

She focused on general business marketing and advertising until 1999, when she joined friends who had started a small internet venture. That opportunity led to 12 years in digital strategy and customer experience for Telstra.

Valentine eventually accepted a job with the company in Hong Kong, where she now lives with her husband and children. Then Google came calling. Valentine joined as managing director in 2014, and was promoted to managing director in 2016.

Valentine says she’s passionate about working on ways to integrate technology into the Hong Kong community, such as working with local schools to include coding in the curriculum and raising the profile of women in the tech and business industries.

“I’m always grateful for doing the science degree first,” she says. “I learned how to approach something from a scientific point of view - how to use data and facts and experiment - landing a job as a marketing trainee allowed me to develop my communication skills and a human point of view. Those two things have applied really well at Google.”

BY KATE STANTON

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“I look at what they did and where they’d been in the world and I saw that as my escape route,” she says. But Valentine had other influences, too. Her mother, in particular, had been a Hong Kong bank secretary and one of the city’s first-ever computer operators. “That was back when they were retraining smart secretaries to do punch cards that were used to operate computers,” Valentine says.

It’s fitting, then, that she would return to her mother’s city as a tech industry leader. Valentine is now the managing director of sales and operations at Google Hong Kong.

“I love the city,” she says. “And the opportunity to be Google’s managing director means I can actually make a bit of a difference when it comes to promoting digitisation here.”

She is responsible for driving Google’s strategy in the city and contributing to the company’s role as a major digital presence in the Asia-Pacific. It’s a big job, but Valentine says she didn’t set out to work in the tech industry.

“I went off to Melbourne University fully intending to become a geologist, join an oil company and then go and see the world,” she says.

Valentine gradually accepted a job with the company in Hong Kong, where she now lives with her husband and children. Then Google came calling. Valentine joined as managing director in 2014, and was promoted to managing director in 2016.

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BY KATE STANTON
Events 2018

For more information and details of many more alumni events worldwide, visit
go.unimelb.edu.au/exx6

Join your fellow alumni at events worldwide, including:

- Beijing, Shanghai, Shenzhen and Hong Kong: Business and Economics Dean’s Events
- Sydney – The Australian Boat Race
- FRIDAY 23 AND SATURDAY 24 NOVEMBER
- MDHS Alumni Reunion Weekend
- WEDNESDAY 24 – MONDAY 29 OCTOBER
- Hong Kong Alumni Reception
- Perth Alumni Reception
- FRIDAY 28 SEPTEMBER
- SUNDAY 14 OCTOBER
- TUESDAY 21 AUGUST
- THURSDAY 19 JULY
- FRIDAY 20 JULY

Picture: Prudence Upton

AWARDS, HONOURS & ACHIEVEMENTS

Two alumnae have been honoured by Women and Leadership Australia, an initiative that supports the presence of women in business and community leadership roles. Professor Gillian Triggs (LLB 1967, PhD 1983, St Hilda’s College, Janet Clarke Hall, International House), the former President of the Australian Human Rights Commission, won the New South Wales Award for Excellence in Women’s Leadership, while Marita Cheng (BE, BCS 2014) won the Tasmanian Award for her work as an advocate for women in technology and tech entrepreneurship.

Emeritus Professor Alan Robson AO (BScArts 1966) has been inducted into the Royal Agricultural Society of Western Australia Hall of Fame. Professor Robson, a former Vice Chancellor of the University of Western Australia, is recognised internationally for his work on nutrition in plants and soil fertility.

Chasing Digital is the new book by alumni Anthony Stevens (BA) and Louis Strauss, published by Wiley & Sons Book Publishers. It focuses on digital transformation and is targeted to business leaders. Mr Stevens (MCommLaw 2005, BCom 1999, BIS 2000) is the ex-Chief Digital Officer of KPMG and now Managing Director of Digital Asset Ventures, while Mr Strauss (BIE 2014, MIS 2016) is a digital consultant at Digital Asset Ventures.

Professor Emeritus Norm Williamson (BVSc 1966, MVSc 1974) has been awarded the American Association of Veterinary College’s Billy E. Hooper Award for Distinguished Service. This award is presented by the AAVMC to an individual whose leadership and vision has made a significant contribution to academic veterinary medicine and the veterinary profession.

Awards, Honours & Achievements

- Professor Marcia Devlin (PhD 2007) has been appointed Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Senior Vice-President of Victoria University. She served as Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Learning and Quality) at Federation University from 2014 to 2017 and has also held senior positions at RMIT University, the University of Melbourne, Deakin University and Open Universities Australia.
- Sally Capp (BCom, LLBHon) 1991) has been elected Lord Mayor of Melbourne, the first woman to hold the post in almost 30 years. She took leave without pay from her position as Victorian executive director of the Property Council of Australia to campaign.
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- Interval (IJOP) is the second volume of poetry from award-winning Australian poet and author Judith Bishop (BAHon) 1993, PhD 2003, Frму Colloge). It follows the success of her 2007 volume, Event. Ms Bishop’s poems have won numerous awards, including the Peter Porter Poetry Prize (2006, 2011), an American Academy of Poets University Prize (2004), and the Martin Bequest Travelling Scholarship (2002-2004). Event (Satl), was shortlisted for three major awards and won the Anne Elder award (2008).
- Dr Roy Ponea (MAE 2001, DEd 2016) was presented with the Excellence in Innovation Award at the 2017 Australian Excellence Alumni Awards, held in the Philippines. Dr Ponea founded an after-school care program in the Philippines aimed at increasing literacy and numeracy experiences for children in underprivileged communities, which has since grown into a number of children-focused activities with a 2017 currently Vice President of Research and Extension at the Davao Oriental State College of Science and Technology.

Two Melbourne alumni took home medals in the 2018 Gold Coast Commonwealth Games. Elena Gabobashvili (BComp 2012, DCom 2014) won silver in the Women’s 25m Pistol and bronze in the Women’s 10m Air Pistol at the University of Melbourne. Professor Warren Bebbington (PhD 1978, Trinity College) is the new chair of the board of design college LCI Melbourne. The college was created 20 years ago as the Australian Academy of Design and is now part of a global 21-campus chain, founded in Canada. Professor Bebbington has held several senior positions in universities, including Vice-Chancellor of the University of Adelaide and Pro Vice-Chancellor (Global Relations) at the University of Melbourne.

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The logophile
(with a passion for puzzles)

BY IAN THOMPSON
(BVSc(Hons) 1980, BSc(Hons) 1994, PhD 1999, Queen’s College)

My mother was into cryptic crosswords. She was self-taught, and she’d do the Sydney Morning Herald one on the train into university. When I started having a go, Mum was very much a beginner, too, so we were at the bottom end, trying to nut out clues – we didn’t always manage to solve them, but we had our successes. I loved doing them.

Then, when I was studying for my Bachelor of Veterinary Science, way back, the Veterinary Students Society magazine asked if I could produce one because they knew I liked crosswords. It was my first real attempt at creating one. I’ve actually still got it and when I look back I think, gee, I was pretty good then.

The first thing I do is create a grid and then I fill the grid with the answers. You can work out a clue with an answer and slot that in first but, generally, I just go from scratch and randomly pick a word out of my head and worry about how to make a clue for it later, in the belief that every word will be ‘clueable’, however difficult.

Sometimes, it feels like crosswords are becoming a bit old fashioned because young people don’t seem to do them much. I’m a tutor in first year Biology at the University and I occasionally give my students crosswords to learn biological terms. I also tried to get them to work out some anagrams once. I think they think I’m a bit mad.

Having filled all or much of the grid, the answers to the three ‘wordsearch’ clues should emerge (ignore the bars when searching).

ACROSS
1. Regarding a light-sensitive tissue in the eye (7)
2. Fallow (3)
7. Display exaggerated feelings (5)
9. Greek philosopher (5)
10. A windblown loamy deposit (5)
12. Death notice (abbr.) (4)
13. Singers with the lowest female voice (5)
14. Injury linked to repetitive actions (abbr.) (3)
16. Chocolate substitute (derived from the pods of Ceratonia siliqua) (5)
17. Angry tirades (5)
19. A garden avenue (from French) (5)
21. Wind instruments (5)
23. A key (abbr.) (3)
25. Prize (5)
28. Prejudice (4)
30. Heart chambers (5)
31. Carry out (5)
32. Force out moisture by twisting (5)
33. A small hard seed (5)
34. Actor Richard who starred in An Officer and a Gentleman (4)

DOWN
1. Object of historic interest (5)
2. Digit (3)
3. A place for brooding (4)
4. A law degree (abbr.) (3)
5. Den (4)
6. Males who practise a system of Hindu philosophy (5)
8. Spirit (6)
9. Neatly (4)
11. Fruit of the blackthorn (4)
15. Intervene (4,2)
18. Be next to (4)
19. Farewell (5)
20. Compass point (4)
22. Put on (5)
24. One prone to telling stories (4)
26. On which tennis may be played (4)
27. One of the Great Lakes (4)
29. TV program on the Nine Network (abbr.) (3)

Having filled all or much of the grid, the answers to the three ‘wordsearch’ clues should emerge (ignore the bars when searching).

WORDSEARCH
A Model institution? (9,10)
B A way through the answer to A (3, 5)
C Museum at A (5)

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WITH VAL MCFARLANE

Ian Thompson, who goes by the pen name Flowerman, has constructed a quick crossword especially for 3010 readers.

PICTURE: STEVE MCKENZIE

SOLUTION ON PAGE 4
Sometimes all it takes is a simple conversation

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