Monash University Medical Foundation launched

A new Medical Ethics Centre will be established under the auspices of the recently launched Monash University Medical Foundation.

Launched on 10 October by the Faculty of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences in the Grand Ballroom of the Rippon Lea Estate, the foundation will attract support from the medical, health care and scientific fraternities, the business and government sectors and the public.

Faculty dean Professor Nick Saunders told guests, including key members of industry and research groups, that the foundation would not be about "plugging holes" in funding but about adding value to the work already being carried out by the faculty, as well as moving forward with innovative teaching and research initiatives.

"While the faculty has about 800 of those are medical students. Therefore, the foundation will not just support medical research and teaching but work towards the life of the faculty in general," Professor Saunders said.

He said the foundation had been established to support the development of special activities, such as the new medical ethics centre, and teaching and learning, through the faculty's Centre for Medical and Health Sciences Education.

Also speaking at the launch, deputy dean of the Faculty of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences, Professor Nick Piterman said initiatives such as new teaching laboratories and the centre were central to the faculty breaking new ground in the medical field.

"The Centre for Medical Ethics will play a vital role in the university and the community at large engaging in that debate in a meaningful fashion," he said.

Foundation launch: From left, medical student Mr Nathan Grills, dean of the Faculty of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences Professor Nick Saunders, Monash alumnus Dr Margaret Howsam, foundation board member Mr David Buckingham, deputy dean of the Faculty Professor Leon Piterman and Monash vice-chancellor Professor Daniel O'Connor.

"But business is also looking at ways they can build alliances and at the same time serve a community purpose, and I am optimistic that the foundation will succeed," Mr Buckingham said.

Trips down memory lane ease dementia

BY ALLISON HARDING

Elderly Australians suffering dementia are reaping the benefits of an innovative drug-free treatment developed by Monash University researchers.

The Aged Mental Health Research Group, based at the Kingston Centre in Melbourne and headed by Professor Daniel O'Connor of the Faculty of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences, is using Simulated Presence Therapy to calm distressed and agitated sufferers of dementia and Alzheimer's disease.

The treatment involves a close relative of the patient recounting into an audiotape an event or memory from the patient's past which is likely to have a calming effect.

Topics have included a description of the patient's childhood home, friends and activities, a favourite nursery rhyme or poem, and how the patient met their spouse.

The tapes are then repeatedly played through headphones to the patient at times identified as likely agitated periods.

Simulated Presence Therapy is only suitable for patients diagnosed with dementia and with intact hearing, some verbal ability, and a regular propensity for certain behaviours such as yelling, disrobing and aggression.

Senior research fellow and psychologist Ms Edwina Beer, from the Department of Psychological Medicine, said the therapy was first used in a small study in the US in the early 1990s. However, no placebo group was used in this instance, whereas the Monash study is using a comparative study in which the patients listen to a stranger talking on tape.

"The therapy is based on the belief that the earliest memories of Alzheimer's sufferers are the last ones to fade," Ms Beer said. "So we need to activate those memories to have a calming effect.

"The relative speaks in a conversational tone, with pauses for the patient to respond if appropriate. The anecdotal results so far have been that the tapes appear to have an immediate calming effect on patients.

"And because of their short-term memory problems, the tape is a new event every time they hear it."

Ms Beer said the therapy assisted relatives as well as patients, as it was a positive way of helping their loved ones.

"Often relatives feel guilty that they cannot cope with the strange behaviour of a loved one and have had to place them in a nursing home," she said.

"This therapy empowers the family to be proactive. The responses from families so far have been phenomenal - we've had wives, siblings, grandchildren and various other relatives take part.

"It is an intensely personal project as well, because you hear very moving stories from these patients' lives."

Ms Beer said advantages of the therapy included the fact that it did not place further demands on nursing staff and that it was drug-free.

Continued on page 2

-listening to Professor Daniel O'Connor with a patient using a new therapy to help alleviate the distress caused by dementia and Alzheimer's disease. Picture: GREG FORD

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Monash 2001

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Opinion

Election issues

What history has to say about the 10 November election.
Trips down memory lane ease dementia

By Mary Visnovich

It is a little disconcerting to walk into a museum and find you are older than most of the pieces on show.

But the rapid change of technology which makes a computer obsolete today may be what will keep you sharp.

Launched by the School of Computing Science & Information Technology within the Faculty of Information Technology on 17 October at the university's Caulfield campus, the museum presents a chronology of computing from the early 1960s to the present.

One of the highlights of the display is the PDP-9, which featured in the Australian film The Dish as the central computer in the control room of the Parkes radio telescope, used by the Americans to help monitor the first moon landing.

Organisers of the exhibit and IT lecturer at Caulfield Ms Judy Shoard said most of the exhibits in the museum were donated by the likes of IBM, government departments, computing archives and staff. Many of these pieces were simply gathering dust in long-forgotten cupboards.

"If we don't make an effort to preserve what we have in terms of computing heritage, it will be lost," she said.

In this context and a visit to the university by Mr Max Burnett, honorary secretary of the Australian Computer Society, she is pleased that the exhibit sparked the idea for the museum.

Ms Shoard said Mr Burnett had become concerned that Monash's first computer, a 1961 Siemens Sirius, of which three were ever made, was lying under a set of stairs at the Clayton campus.

Undergraduate scholarships at Monash

Students wishing to submit a postal application for undergraduate scholarships at Monash must do so before 30 October. Applications submitted over the web have an extended closing date of 30 November. For further information, visit www.adm.monash.edu.au/ssd/sarb/scholars.

New research initiatives for Enterprise Information Research Group

By Mary Visnovich and Alex St Clare

Four major new initiatives in Monash's Faculty of Information Technology were launched at an event hosted by the Enterprise Information Research Group (EIRG).

Dean of the faculty Professor John Rosenquist welcomed about 100 guests, including Monash vice-chancellor Professor David Robinson, to the new Caulfield campus on 25 September.

The initiatives include a Centre for Community Networking Research, a joint project involving the state government's Multimedia Victoria, the Library Board of Victoria and Monash University.

In declaring the programs open for business, executive director of Multimedia Victoria Mr Randell Shaw said the four undertakings will explore the complex relationship and interplay between information and communications technology and human behaviour.

"Each draws upon the recognition that the health of a society's information system is dependent on how well it takes the human and organisational contexts into account," he said.

"These undertakings represent the outcomes of a fruitful collaboration with external partners, which is one of the hallmarks of the Enterprise Information Research Group.

Building upon Victoria's world reputation in community networking through YIKNET and other Victorian Government initiatives, the new centre will study and develop initiatives to ensure fair access to the benefits of information technology for all citizens.

The three other initiatives, solely funded by Monash, include the Information Systems Development Research Group, the Information Systems Management and ebusiness Research Group, and the SIMS Graduate Research Centre.

The Information Systems Development Research Group will focus on providing information systems development process across a wide range of platforms and industries, while the Information Systems Management and ebusiness Research Group will apply this perspective to guest companies and external partners.

A current interest of this group, shared with other EIRG colleagues, focuses on the potentialities of online banking for the Australian community.

The SIMS Graduate Research Centre, located at the Caulfield campus, will accommodate up to 25 research students from the School of Information Technology and Systems. The centre recognises the needs of students conducting research for the first time and aims to foster a Community of Researchers.

Monash receives equal opportunity accolade

By Alex St Clare

Monash University's family-friendly policies were applauded at an awards ceremony at which the university was named an employer of choice for women.

In recognition of initiatives that advance women in the workplace, Monash was a finalist at the national inaugural Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workplace Agency (EOWA) Business Achievement Awards in Sydney.

Monash was the only university nominated as an equal opportunity finalist, with vice-chancellor Professor David Robinson nominated in the category 'leading CEO of the advancement of women'.

"Monash has adopted staffing policies to provide a work environment where there is a commitment to equity and equal employment opportunity," Professor Robinson said.

The university has also developed and promoted a coordinated and strategic approach to family-friendly work practices.

The university was a top 10 finalist in the category 'leading organisation (more than 500 employees) for the advancement of women', and the acting manager of the Equity and Diversity Centre, Ms Ray Gardner, was one of 10 nominees in the category 'diversity leader for the advancement of women'.

Remember the Apple II?

By Mary Visnovich

The Age is proud supporters of Monash University.

For home delivery phone 13 72 82
Pharmacy research follows a natural course

By June Yu

Monash University researchers hope to develop natural alternatives to existing anti-inflammatory drugs that could aid arthritis sufferers.

Pharmacy researchers at the University's Victorian College of Pharmacy have isolated and successfully tested compounds with anti-inflammatory properties in a Thai plant called gynura.

Pharmaceutical evaluation supervisor Dr Ian Cooper and honours student Ms Cindy Song screened the compounds and found extracts that were more potent than existing anti-inflammatory drugs.

"There is still a need to develop better anti-inflammatory drugs, because all the existing ones have quite serious side effects and can only be used for short periods of time," he said.

For example, he explained, steroids and anti-inflammatory drugs could suppress the immune system, increasing risk of infections. They could also retard growth and needed to be used with caution in babies and children.

Dr Cooper said the first step in the research was to identify the chemical properties and the active ingredients of the gynura extract.

Ultimately, the goal was to develop natural or hybrid anti-inflammatory drugs to treat conditions such as arthritis, skin conditions and ulcerative colitis (inflammation of the colon).

Medical chemistry senior lecturer Dr Magdy Iskander said gynura, a shrub-like plant, had been used in Thai and Southeast Asian traditional medicine for centuries and was still used in the area today.

Dr Iskander, whose interest is in natural product-based drug discovery, plans to investigate the medicinal properties of all Aboriginal plants in Victoria.

His work aims to provide a scientific basis for natural medicines and herbal remedies.

"There are many natural products and extracts on the market at the moment, and we want to explore the active ingredients of these products to discover new drugs," he said.

"We aim to make Monash a centre of excellence in research on natural products and herbal medicines."

The results of the group's research will be published in Plant Foods for Human Nutrition early in 2002.

For more information, contact
Dr Magdy Iskander on telephone +61 3 9905 9545.

A natural alternative: Dr Magdy Iskander examining the crystal formation of one of the isolated compounds. Picture: PETER MCGILVERY 99039545.

Monash makes multimedia work for police

BY JUNE YU

Monash University's Faculty of Information Technology has taken a leading role in developing an interactive multimedia training program for police detectives.

The Future Vision CD-ROM program, developed by multimedia masters students Mr Ben Lippa and Mr Suteck Fu, was officially handed over last month to Victoria Police chief commissioner Ms Christine Nixon.

Ms Nixon said it was important for Victoria Police to incorporate the latest multimedia programs into the force's training to provide new skills and experience to its members.

"We are pleased to have the opportunity to benefit from the expertise of Monash University to help maintain and enhance the excellent reputation of Victoria Police and the service we provide to the community," she said.

Mr Lippa said the program tested detectives' knowledge and understanding of the procedures and processes of crime investigations through the provision of simulated real-life situations.

"It allows the detective in training to visit a virtual police world, including the police station, crime scene and interview room."

Responding to the instructions of the participant, it involves attending the crime scene, taking photographs, obtaining fingerprints, writing reports and interview-suspecting suspects.

"Mr Lippa said the program was developed in line with Victoria Police's assessment system. "The software tracks the user through the scenario and logs them onto a database, which allows the instructor to review and assess the trainee's performance and if they have completed the required tasks in the correct order," he said.

The program was developed by the School of Multimedia Systems Dr Raymond Li, who supervised the project, said the CD-ROM supplemented existing training systems by applying a realistic, cost-effective simulation that could be delivered when required.

"The program also provides a template from which the police can quickly and inexpensively build fresh or specialised scenarios directed to specific investigations," he said.

"As far as we know, this package is the first of its kind in Australia to apply this level of interactivity to police competency testing in crime investigation procedures."

For more information about the CD-ROM, contact Dr Raymond Li on telephone +61 3 9905 9545.

Record numbers at postgraduate expo

BY MARY VISCOVICH AND ALEX ST CLAIRE

Melbourne Town Hall came alive last month, with 977 Victorians inquiring about further study during the 2001 Monash Postgraduate Information Expo.

In the most successful Monash postgraduate expo to date, official figures placed the number of those seeking information on postgraduate programs at almost three times that of last year.

Staff attending the event represented seven faculties: Arts, Business and Economics, Education, Engineering, Information Technology, Law and Science.

Also attracting interest was the newly announced Postgraduate Education Loans Scheme (PELS), an interest-free loan facility for fee-paying students undertaking postgraduate coursework programs.

These students can now receive financial assistance similar to that which undergraduates currently receive under the Higher Education Contribution Scheme (HECS).

PELS allows students to obtain a loan from the Commonwealth Government to pay for part or all tuition fees incurred from 2002.

For information about PELS, visit www.hecs.gov.au/pe.htm or call 1800 020 108.

Fighting crime: From left, Dr Raymond Li, Sen Sgt Ged Griffin and Det-Sen Sgt Rod Lloyd of the Strategic Planning Unit and Mr Ben Lippa test the CD-ROM that will help detectives refine their skills. Picture: MAURICE DRAVEGRANT

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A BRIEFS

Murdock speaks out

Australia risks global irrelevance if it doesn't make a bigger investment in education, Monash University president Sir Robert Murdoch said today.

The head of News Corporation called on Australia to invest in education, and to be more internationally competitive.

Countries that lacked top-quality educational institutions were suffering a loss of human capital, he said.

"No country in the developed world needs educational improvements more urgently than Australia, and education is not enough of a core priority," Mr Murdoch said.

"While the Howard Government had allocated an encouraging $4.4 billion to support higher education, more needed to be done to develop Australia's universities at a time when there had been a "disturbing erosion" of postgraduates and a drop in the percentage of young people in both government schools and universities.

"Adding more places for students will enhance our universities. Adding great numbers of world-class teachers would revolutionise them."

Until that last point the Federal Government had spent more on peace-time defence measures than on education.

Packaging prizes

Monash visual communication and design students Ms Kristina Benjamin and Ms Jennifer Isaac won in this year's Southern Cross Packaging Awards, winning awards in each category. Gold prize winners were Mr Warain Benjapong for eau de toilette packaging, Ms Jennifer Paul for an adult money tin, Ms Lena Shifman for a barbecue sauce bottle, Mr Michael Owen for a mobile phone pack and Ms Jennie Issaca for a city lunch box.

Strategic success

The recent national championships of the BCG Business Strategy Competition have been won by a Monash undergraduate team from the Faculty of Business and Economics.

The students, who beat state finalists from around Australia and New Zealand, had already won a case study of the Australian supermarket industry, before going on to win their final competition - recommendations to a panel of adjudicators from the Boston Consulting Group.

The Monash team consisted of Ms Laura Brown, Mr David Vines, Mr Mark Wai Hoe, Ms Jodie Crawford and Mr Justin Quigg.

BRIEFS

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For more information about the CD-ROM, contact Dr Raymond Li on telephone +61 3 9905 9545.
Monash's 40th year has been an exciting one – from the opening of a campus in South Africa and a centre in Prato to deals with football clubs and groundbreaking research developments and industry links. ALLISON HARDING looks back at 2001.

New beginnings

Monash University extended its international activities further this year, with the opening of a campus in South Africa and a new centre in Prato, Italy.

As the first Australian university registered to operate as a private higher education institution in South Africa, Monash launched its new campus at Roodeport, near Johannesburg, with 50 new students in late February. Studies offered include arts, business and commerce, business systems, and computing and information technology, and further courses are currently being planned.

Pro vice-chancellor Professor John Anderson says the campus is part of the new South Africa's growing involvement with the global economy and will play a major role in educating the country's youth for the challenges ahead.

September saw the opening on the Monash Prato Centre in Italy. The centre is a gateway into Europe for Monash staff and students and is combining with the Monash Centre at King's College London to forge links between the academic and professional communities of Australia and Europe.

The flags are flying: The Monash Centre in Prato, Italy.

Synchrotrons and science centres

Three major projects announced during 2001 – the $4.2 million Monash Science Centre, the $300 million Monash STRIP (Science Technology Research and Innovation Precinct) and the $157 million synchrotron – reinforce the university's commitment to science.

The projects are indicative of how the university will look in 2020. The new science precinct at Clayton campus will provide a multidisciplinary environment in which the university, businesses and industry will work together to develop new products and industries from research with commercial potential.

And within the new precinct, science will be equally accessible to all students – from primary, secondary and tertiary students through to post-graduate students – working and learning in an industry-based environment.

Monash deputy vice-chancellor (Resources) Ms Alison Crook says businesses and industry will be drawn to the precinct because of the links it will provide to the overall university environment.

The Monash Science Centre, due to be completed in 2002, will provide the initial starting blocks to inspire children to learn about science. It will attract mainly primary school groups and families, who will come to appreciate science through a range of hands-on educational programs.

Stage one of the STRIP is also due for completion by the end of next year. In total, the planned cluster will comprise seven buildings and car parks progressively developed over five stages.

Work on the Victorian Government's $157 million synchrotron, the ideal complement to the STRIP, will begin mid-2002.

The synchrotron – an extraordinarily powerful microscope that will help local and international scientists make major breakthroughs – is regarded as the most significant scientific infrastructure investment in Australia for many years.

Taking off: Australia's first synchrotron will be built at Monash University – a powerful $157 million microscope that will revolutionise scientific research.

International pursuits

Monash International is moving from Caulfield to new premises at the university's Clayton campus early in 2002.

A four-storey $14 million complex will be the new hub for the university's international activities – from attracting students to working on worldwide aid projects.

Monash International, which is responsible for international marketing, recruitment and admissions, and the Office of International Affairs, will occupy the western wing of the building.

The eastern wing will accommodate student and administration facilities for Monash College and the Monash University English Language Centre.

The complex was a necessary response to the growing demand for Monash College courses, which offer local and international students guaranteed entry into selected Monash courses after one year's preparatory study.

Also announced this year was that the Hangzhou Green Tree YI Hua School has become the second provider of Monash College programs in China.

The Hangzhou School began teaching English language programs in October, with the Monash College Certificate program in business and information technology to begin in March 2002.

The announcement followed the success of the programs at the Guangzhou Huaemi International School, which began teaching English in July.

Malaysian graduates

History was made in September with the graduation of the first students from Monash University Malaysia.

While the university has held graduations in Malaysia since 1991, the September event was the first to include Monash students who completed their degrees in Malaysia.

The graduates were awarded degrees in business and commerce, biotechnology, environmental management, computer science and nursing.

Established in February 1998, Monash Malaysia now has a student population of 1300, 13 per cent of whom are international students.

First steps: New recruits at Monash South Africa.

PAGE 4 MONASH NEWS NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2001
Accident research

The Monash University Accident Research Centre has continued to make headlines during the year.

A new director, Dr Ian Johnston, formerly head of ARRB Transport Research and former road safety director at VicRoads, was appointed in July. When interviewed for Monash News in July, he nominated aviation and rail safety as fields where MUARC could make a significant new impact going on into air and rail safety.

Michael Regan said the new technology to monitor driver behaviour and deter dangerous practices.

MUARC project manager Dr Michael Regan said the new technology will attract significant interest at the course that attracted more than 150,000 skilled workers annually.

A new super research organisation, containing a measles vaccine in a new virtual time-machine that can visualise the earth, inside and out, has grown a genetically engineered plant containing a measles vaccine in a technique that could eventually lead to simpler and cheaper immunisation programs for a range of viral diseases, including HIV and malaria.

A new partnership between Monash University and Melbourne Cricket Club, the first of its kind between an AFL club and a university, was announced in June.

A landmark study by Monash University's School of Historical Studies for the State library of Victoria and the School of Historical Studies for the Monash University Centre for Population and Urban Research revealed that the natural hormone estradiol may be a potential treatment for schizophrenia.

The study showed significant improvements in female patients' psychotic symptoms when administered with estradiol by intradermal patches.

The results concluded that the researchers have now embarked on a three-year trial on male patients.

Monash scientists announced in March that they had successfully grown a genetically engineered plant containing a measles vaccine in a technique that could eventually lead to safer and cheaper immunisation programs for a range of viral diseases, including HIV and malaria.

A new project announced in May, new prototype SafeCars were fitted with a range of technologies that monitor driver behaviour and deter dangerous practices.

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A very perplexing poll

Can history be used to predict the winner of the 2001 federal election?

PROFESSOR BRIAN COSTAR from Monash's School of Social and Political Inquiry assesses the chances of the Coalition and the Labor Party.

Opinion

At the time of writing, the opinion polls have the Coalition in a close, yet murkier, battle the ALP camp is high following Kim Beazley's apparent win over the Prime Minister in their recent television debate.

What an extraordinary election campaign! Several weeks ago all the polls had Labor in front - some by a huge margin. Then we had the Tampa asylum seekers and the devastating terrorist assaults in the US, followed by anthrax threats (both real and imagined) and the delayed bombing of Afghanistan by the US.

Almost overnight the polls went into reverse - Labor's support plummeted and the Coalition's primary vote rose to an historically high 50 per cent.

The pundits claim that wars and international uncertainty always favour incumbents in Australian elections. Yet the evidence is not quite so clear cut.

We are in 2001, not 1966, when Prime Minister Harold Holt won a landslide victory against the backdrop of the Vietnam War. The difference lies in the fact that in 1966 the ALP led by Arthur Calwell, was actively opposed to Australian involvement, whereas now Kim Beazley fully supports the US war on terrorism.

The 1940 and 1943 elections are better analogies. In 1940, the incumbents in the ALP camp were prominent, they did not altogether crowd out debate over domestic issues. Unlike Britain, which postponed an election due in 1940 and formed a national government of all parties, Australia continued the competitive party contest at both federal and state levels, even in the darkest days of conflict.

What was interesting about the 1940 and 1943 polls was that while war concerns were prominent, they did not crowd out the electorate onto domestic matters such as health, education, the GST, and so on, it could still emerge victorious on 10 November.

The rapid improvement of the Coalition in the polls was the result of a quite understandable emotional reaction of voters to the events of 11 September in the US.

It is possible, then, that the Coalition's success is a 'soft component' that may dissipate in the weeks remaining in the campaign. As well, the Coalition must maintain a high profile vote to be assured of victory because most of the preferences of the minor parties strongly favour Labor.

Interestingly, while the major parties have dipped in the opinion polls since 11 September, the flow of preferences to the ALP has remained constant.

On the other hand, neither the government nor Labor has any central or real influence over future international events or the US reaction to them, yet Prime Minister Howard's decision to commit 1500 Australian troops to Afghanistan may have unexpected consequences.

Either party could win the election, but it is unlikely to be close - Australian federal elections rarely are.

Monash University's Politics department is one of the largest in Australia, offering courses to more than 2000 students. About 40 undergraduate units are offered along with a range of postgraduate courses. Politics at Monash has an active research tradition, and staff frequently participate in public debates and media discussions.

Vox Pops

Who will get your vote in the November election? Have recent events changed your decision? Monash News conducted its own mini poll of on-campus voters.

Briana George, 21
Heathmont
Arts/law student
I think I'll be voting for Kim Beazley. He's taking a very good stand on education and the image he puts across is better than Howard's. Unfortunately, I think the Liberals will win because John Howard has taken such a steadfast stance in relation to the asylum seekers, which I don't agree with.

Tanya Figiel, 21
Mount Waverley
Arts/science student
Most likely I'll be voting for either the Democrats or the Greens because I'm not a huge fan of the major parties. I'm really hoping that it won't be the Liberals. I think some of the things they've been doing recently are quite dodgy with John Howard being on the military bandwagon, especially with the Tampa boat crisis.

Allan Russell, 69
Doncaster
Stationary buyer
I haven't thought about who I'll vote for. I usually read up and see who is the most genuine. I think John Howard might just get by because he seems to have more strength. He's standing up to everybody now on issues such as the Tampa crisis and the war in Afghanistan whereas before he was a bit meek.

Karen Haroutunian, 28
Hawthorn
Hairdresser
I'm undecided at the moment. I would not want to vote for either of them. I used to vote Liberal but I probably would like to vote Democrat. I'm a bit disillusioned at the moment. I was so embarrassed when John Howard spoke in America last month. I think he's the worst public speaker known to man. I hope that Labor will win.

Ravi Ravirharan, 39
Wantirna South
Research fellow
I haven't quite made up my mind yet. I'm going to play the cards very close to my chest. I'll probably vote for the Liberal Party because I think they will win unless they screw up, for example if events escalate and things go really badly.
Cray matter works to enhance engineering research

By JUNYU

A $1 million world-class Cray supercomputer will boost the research capabilities of Monash University's Engineering faculty.

The recently donated Cray SV1, which will be one of Australia's fastest supercomputers, is designed to work on scientific and engineering problems requiring computational resources that cannot be done on a normal desktop computer.

Director of Electrical and Computer Systems Engineering head Professor Greg Egan said the machine would be a powerful tool for ongoing industry research related to telecommunications, telecommunications, defence and the automotive industry.

"Our work includes simulating very large systems, including the next generation mobile networks, in order to determine their performance and reliability, such as video-conferencing and video-on-demand," he said.

"We are also modelling solar storm activity over the Antarctic and its effect on telecommunications systems."

Professor Egan said the department, along with colleagues in mechanical and aerospace engineering, was interested in infrastructure management.

"In our case, this is best represented by our work with the electrical power industry. We are conducting simulations of the study of electrical power distribution networks to determine the most cost-effective lines to replace parts of the network," he said.

"It is very important to be able to predict their lifetimes so they can be replaced in a cost-effective manner." He said this could lead to significant cost-savings for power companies, which could be passed on to consumers.

He said the Cray was becoming a popular tool for "code breaking" work on the human genome project in gene sequencing and matching.

Department of Mechanical Engineering researcher Professor Rhys Jones said the Cray would help the department's work with the aeronautical industry and the Australian Defence Department.

"The Australian aeronautical industry has to ensure that its systems are safe and capable of meeting operational requirements," he said.

"It needs ways of assessing airworthiness and how to undertake structural modifications to ensure a particular operational lifetime. The Cray will be used to test small 60-module stress on F111 aircraft to aid in this work.

Professor Jones said the mining industry would also benefit from the Cray's computing power.

"It is essential to be able to model 1 per cent of the world's coal. We are looking at how more can be exported without increasing road loads on the rail," he said.

"The only way you can do that is to produce lighter ore carriers. The challenge is to make these models without compromising the safety of mine workers."

Other Monash faculties, including Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences, would also be able to use the Cray for their research.

Monash's engineering students will also have access to the Cray for studies related to computer architecture.

For more information about the Cray supercomputer, contact Professor Greg Egan on +61 3 9903 1090 or Professor Rhys Jones on +61 3 9903 3000.

Gippsland student wins art prize

The 2001 Campus Activities Victoria Tertiary Art Prize, which attracted entries from eight universities across the state, has been won by Monash visual art student Mr Adam Cochrane for his award-winning work 'Greater Than'.

The art prize, which aims to showcase the work of tertiary students from across Victoria, is an open competition, accepting works in any artform or craft, including photography, film and video.

Mr Cochrane, a second-year student, was chosen from Gippsland, who received the award for 'best overall work' at an exhibition opening held at the Switchback Gallery last month.

Visions of ecstasy

Ecstasy and the Pleasure of Collecting, on display in Switchback Gallery at Monash's Gippsland campus, will feature the Allan Aldous Asian art collection and recent acquisitions to the Latrobe Regional Gallery permanent collection.

The collection draws together historic Japanese coloured woodcuts, kimono, contemporary sculpture installation and Australian art.

The exhibition, which runs until 15 November, is a prelude to the display of the permanent collection, which will go on show when the gallery's redevelopment is completed.

Gippsland show

From 20 November, Switchback Gallery will feature an exhibition of works by final-year fine arts students, including paintings, photography and sculptures.

For more information, contact +61 3 5127 6261.

Cut and Paste

From 9 November to 15 February, the Faculty Gallery will present Work Out, Paste, Paste, Play, an exhibition which features a selection of student work from across the studios in the Faculty of Art and Design.

Contact the gallery for more information on +61 3 9905 2882.

ARTS SCENE

Made in China

Visiting Chinese artist Professor Liu Jun will display a selection of his work in the Faculty Gallery of Monash's Caulfield campus.

Professor Liu is dean of the School of Fine Arts at Sunhui University.

Contrasting black on the pure space of paper, his work abstracts flowers, birds, trees and the inspiration of nature.

The exhibition, titled Professor Liu Jun, will run until 8 November.

Novel

Wilson's Promontory, the southernmost tip of the Australian mainland, is the spectacular backdrop for romance, sex and murder in the latest novel by Monash University academic Associate Professor Peter Fitzpatrick.

Promontory is expected to do for the Proms what its AFI award-winning screenplay Hotel Sorrento did for the seaside Peninsula town.

Head of the Centre for Drama and Theatre Studies at Monash, Dr Fitzpatrick also co-wrote the successful football crime novel Death in the Back Pocket and the screenplay Brillant Lines.

In his new novel, a bush-walk in the Wilson's Promontory is expected to replace the sleuthing of mystery novels. With around 50 per cent of Australians being either the child or grandchild of an immigrant, it is easy to see the strong and lasting influence immigration has had on the nation. Victoria, in particular, is Australia's most multicultural state, and Melbourne is one of the world's great multicultural cities.

Building a New Community: Immigration and the Victorian Economy

Edited by Andrew Marius
Published by Allen and Unwin
RPP: $35

India, 1885-1947:

The Unmaking of an Empire

By Ian Copland
Published by Longman
RPP: $120

The period of British rule in India lasted from the early 1800s to 1947 and, for a majority of this time, it was considered the permanent jewel in the crown of the Empire. The British considered themselves excellent rulers, and Indians, for the most part, were resigned to the rule of the foreign Raj.

But in 1885, the Indian National Congress was established and, only 60 years later, India was given its freedom. In India, 1885-1947, author Ian Copland probes the reasons behind the sudden change.

The text begins with the establishment of the congress and concludes with the first vice-chancellor of Monash, the foundation of morality - a person is good.

To order your copies of India, 1885-1947, contact Professor Andrew Marius, deputy head of the School of Historical Studies; Dr Bob Birell, director of the Centre for Population and Urban Research; and Associate Professor Tony Dingle, head of the Department of Economics.
Child-friendly map makes the grade

BY ALEX ST CLARE

Starting high school can be a difficult time for many youngsters, so a group of education students from Monash University's Peninsula campus has created a child-friendly map of the Frankston area to help make the transition smoother.

The map, which folds to business-card size, contains information about a list of central activities in an easy-to-read style, including pay phones, bus stops, parks, and organisations that welcome young people are displayed by symbols on the map.

The Monash students, from the Faculty of Education, completed the project under the guidance of senior lecturer Dr Karen Malone.

The idea for the project originated with Dr Malone, who presented a report, titled "Growing up in Frankston," to the local council in 1999. She shared her ideas with third-year students, who interviewed young people from Frankston and surrounding areas to establish the level of awareness of their city's facilities.

"The initial research revealed that young people often found it difficult or scary going to Frankston," Dr Malone said. "They also said they needed information about where local public toilets were located and who to contact for bus and train schedules."

Map paid for the printing of the plastic version.

Mapped out: Students show their child-friendly map to young volunteers, with senior lecturer Dr Karen Malone (fourth from left). Picture: MAURICE DREW-GRANT

The feasibility study for the transition map, presented to the local council at the end of last year, received high commendation, and this semester the students completed the project.

"Monash University has generously supported this child-friendly initiative," the students said. "It shows a great commitment to the community, and we've been pleased to have been involved. It's been a great experience."

Sponsorship from child-friendly scheme.

"The students working on the map have been walking the beat, drumming up sponsorship and editing designers," Dr Malone said.

The maps will be presented to Year 6 students as part of their orientation package for secondary school. They have already received a great response from the children involved in the pilot scheme. "I think it's a cool idea," said one Year 6 student.

Child-friendly map makes the grade

"Frankston" is beginning to have a strong identity," said Dr Malone. "We've been pleased to have been able to have already received a great response from the children involved in the pilot scheme. "I think it's a cool idea," said one Year 6 student.

There's still time to change!

Monash Change of Preference Information Sessions

Now you have your VET results you may want to reconsider your course selection.

At the Monash Change of Preference information sessions you can speak to faculty representatives about the courses you have selected, and talk to faculty representatives about the Monash Change of Preference Information Sessions.

Monash Change of Preference Sessions are open to students who have already received a course offer, and who have not yet changed their course.

Metropolitan region: Wednesday, 15 December, 12 pm - 3 pm
South One Lecture Theatre, Building 64
Monash Peninsula, Dandenong campus
Pedestrian Road, Cranbourne

Graduate region: Tuesday, 15 December, 2 pm - 7 pm
The Broadview, Building 66
Monash Peninsula, Clayton campus
North-West Road, Clayton

For further information, contact the Monash Change of Preference office, or visit the Monash Change of Preference office on campus.

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Need further information?
Visit the Monash University Service Centre, Campus Centre, Clayton, Ext 54120.
www.edcredit.com.au
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*Interest rates on all loans are variable. Costs may be payable. Details, terms & conditions are available on request.