A senior lecturer in Electrical Engineering at Monash has warned Australia against being spendthrift with revenue from Bass Strait oil.

Dr Kevin Forward said recently that the special levy imposed on Bass Strait oil to bring its price in line with world prices was netting the Government in excess of $100m a year. This was going into general revenue.

He said it would be senseless for a country like Australia to encourage home manufacturers to duplicate what was already on the market. In the two to three years it would take to set up a plant the overseas market leaders would be that much further advanced on the learning curve and would most probably have developed processes making the earlier ones obsolete.

Dr Forward said: "The computer industry is, however, one in which there are many discontinuities. The point is to identify and utilise one of these and find an advanced place along the learning curve to enter. It is a challenge for those with creative minds."

The first activity of Inmos has been to set up under the direction of one of Britain's top computer technologists who has, as an incentive, a financial stake in the company.

He said that the British Government had legislated for profits from the oil to go into a special fund which would provide for the establishment of export-based industries. Earnings from these industries would help pay for the energy Britain had to buy from Bass Strait.

He suggested that Australia might adopt a similar course by following the example of Britain in its deployment of revenue from North Sea oil.

He said that the British Government had legislated for profits from the oil to go into a special fund which would provide for the establishment of export-based industries. Earnings from these industries would help pay for the energy Britain had to buy from Bass Strait.

Dr Forward said that the first investment from the fund had been in an electronics firm.

This firm — Inmos — has been set up under the direction of one of Britain's top computer technologists who has, as an incentive, a financial stake in its success.

The first activity of Inmos has been to go to the home of the most advanced computer technology research, the US, to recruit some of the best talent and establish a plant.

Dr Forward said the plan was to develop a new process, provide for the industry something which was not already being provided, export the know how back to Britain and establish a plant there parallel with the one in the US.

He said it was believed that the researchers were working on a microprocessor designed to manipulate alphabetic rather than numeric characters.

Dr Forward emphasised that the key element in the firm's strategy was the bid to do something which was not already being done.

He said that this aim should be borne in mind by those who advocated that Australia should not be importing technology but making its own equipment.
Discovering what the Dickens he had to do with Australia

"'The' Australian cricket entrepreneur is negotiating to bring to this country perhaps the biggest household name in the English speaking world, other than a politician, for a series of performances."

Such news would not be meaningless on the front page of Melbourne newspapers today. It is not front pages of 1862 also.

The entrepreneur was Spiers and Pond who brought to Australia the first household name in the English speaking world, other than a politician, for a series of performances. The name was Charles Dickens.

The sum offered was 10,000 pounds for an eight month tour of a program, tentatively titled The Uncommercial Traveller Upside Down, in which Dickens would read his own works. (The author's contemporary and biographer John Forster reveals that Dickens, even the shrewd businessman, planned to include the offer and take a percentage cut instead, designed to net him at least 12,000 pounds.) The trip was never made.

It was just eight years before his death and, although only 50 years old, he was unwell through overwork on his writing, editing and rigorous reading tours of England. The entrepreneur, who accounts Australian audiences missed out on an exercise in electrifying theatre. One passage he insists on including in the performance was the Murder of Nancy from "Oliver Twist." It is reported that during the reading, such was the emotion he put into it, his pulse beat at an un-earthly rate and, when he left the stage, he was almost paralysed.

Although Dickens never made it to Australia he maintained an affinity with the country. That affinity is a subject of continuing interest to senior lecturer in English at Monash, Dr Adrian Dilnot.

Dr Dilnot suggests that Dickens's interest in Australia was greater than in any other country except Britain. The magazine he edited from 1850 to 1853, "Household Words", averaged four pages a year on Australia and the publication which followed, "All the Year Round", carried a similar high number.

Among the contributors from Australia were people who had known well in England, including Caroline Chisholm, Hone (about whom former Monash writer-in-residence Barry Oakley wrote last year), Whitehead and Howitt.

Dr Dilnot says that perhaps the most telling demonstration of Dickens's bond with Australia was his decision to send two of his sons here to "make their way in the world."

Alfred D'Oyrs Tennyson Dickens arrived in the colony in 1865. Edward Bulwer Lytton Dickens arrived in 1869, at age 16. Edward was Dickens's youngest son and, it has been said, his beloved.

Dr Dilnot says that Dickens's action in sending someone so young so far was not unusual.

He says: "Dickens was determined that none of his children should stand on his shoulders. Hence arriving this he was probably more severe than a less successful father would have been."

If Australian audiences didn't see the original they at least saw a close imitation. Alfred, who settled in the far west of NSW before moving to Hamilton in Victoria and then Melbourne, performed readings from his father's works throughout Australia. He died in the US on his way "home" from a visit to England. The Dickens name from Alfred a side branch - the ones that do exist were all female.

Edward became a station manager at Wilcannia in New South Wales and, among other achievements, represented the area in Parliament and was a leader of light in the Wilcannia cricket club. The name has survived with his descendants.

An account of the two sons in Australia is given in a book written by Mary Lazarus.

Dr Dilnot says that although Dickens was a prolific letter writer - he estimates the author wrote, on average, one and a third letters a day during his adult life - there are few of his letters in public institutions in Australia. The ones that do exist were written chiefly to people who had helped his sons. He says that it is possible that others exist in private hands and requests anyone with a Dickens memento to contact him. It would be particularly interesting, he says, to find correspondence with Spiers and Pond.

Dr Dilnot says that Australia rates a mention in most of Dickens's novels with several of his notable characters coming here. He traces a shift in attitude towards Australia in the novels, paralleling a shift in attitude of Britons generally.

In the earlier novels, like "Oliver Twist", Australia is regarded fairly much in jocular terms and as a dump-out place - a fitting place for a miscreant such as the Artful Dodger to end his days, for example.

By the 1850s however - and in novels such as "David Copperfield" - it had become the country to which many people might turn in order to become prosperous or a place to which a good hearted felon, like Abel Magwitch ("Great Expectations") might go to expiate his offence and return with wealth.

There is a hint that Dickens himself thought about migrating. Biographer Forster talks about the author's "old notion of having some slight idea of going to settle in Australia."

He certainly encouraged others to do so. Dickens was on the board of management of a London home for "fallen women." As part of the rehabilitation process the ex-prostitutes were encouraged to go to Australia to "make a fresh beginning." Hundreds took the advice.

Dickens had a soft spot for the colony then the feeling was mutual.

 Barely a year after Melbourne was founded a paper published by one of its "fathers", John Pascoe Fawkner, was running extracts from "Pickwick Papers." Other Australian papers, operating outside vaguely drawn copyright laws, were pirating extracts from his books too.

Later, the business man Dickens interceded. "Our Mutual Friend" appeared in The Australian with "by agreement with Mr Dickens.

Booksellers were doing a brisk trade whatsoevert Dickens novels. Within two years of Melbourne's foundation a Pickwick Cricket Club had been formed. A ship which plied the route between Melbourne and Launceston was named The Pickwick.

No hard times for local devotees

Melbourne devotees of Charles Dickens this year celebrate the 78th anniversary of their special interest body, the Dickens Fellowship.

Several members of the Monash English department belong to the Fellowship which is now one of the few groups devoted to the study of a single author's works still existing at Australian universities.

Dr Alan Dilnot has the task of writing a history of the Fellowship. It was established in 1904, only months after the London body had been set up. Others were set up around the same time throughout the English speaking world. Many have fallen by the wayside, making the Melbourne group one of the longest surviving outside England.

The Fellowship exists to promote the study of Dickens's works and, as Dr Dilnot puts it, "to lend support to causes which would have been dear to his heart."

Although what he may have thought about, say, land rights, "I'm not too sure," he adds.

The Fellowship meets monthly to listen to papers on Dickens's works and to discuss a book selected for special study. The author's birthday, February 7 - a special dinner is held.

Dr Dilnot says that the Fellowship has been a lively body throughout the years and has even come to the aid of the country's defence.

During World War II it published for sale a "Dickens In Our Commonwealth" booklet to raise money for the war effort and conducted fund-raising activities during World War II also.

Caring for second generation Monash

Not all members of the Monash community find contentment immersed in a learned journal or involved in work in the laboratory.

Some - and not only those who have come to a perverse conclusion on the worth of the pursuit of knowledge - find enjoyment in simpler activities, like finger painting, caring for pets and constructing castles with building blocks.

For the most part these uncomplicated pastimes take place in outside aides of the Monash community or in the corner of the campus - Nos. 2, 16 and 18 Beddie Avenue.

Children are cared for on an hourly basis. Permanent bookings are normally required during term although casual bookings are accepted if space is available. Casual bookings are taken during vacations.

The cost of the service varies for the three user groups - students, staff and general public. Students pay a means-tested scale anything from five cents to $1 an hour or $12 to $36 a week. Staff pay $1.10 an hour or $36 a week and the general public $1.50 an hour or $40 a week. For students and staff a second child is taken at half rate.

The Creche is a non-profit association and receives financial assistance from the University, the Union and the Department of Health.

For further information and bookings contact Mrs Hill on 544 4999.

MONASH REPORTER
Why Monash is not secular: honored churchman tells a divine story

Unlike Melbourne University, Monash is not, by constitution, a secular institution. Its status was changed after a deputation consisting of Sir Edmund Herring and Archbishop Woods, with the support of Archbishop Mannix, met with Premier Bolte the day before the Monash University Act was to go before the Victorian Parliament in 1958.

The deputation sought — and obtained — the removal of a clause from the Act which would have excluded Monash from examining in Divinity. Such a clause is in the University of Melbourne Act upon which the Monash Act was modelled.

(Now) the Most Reverend Sir Frank Woods revealed details of this little known aspect of Monash's history in an occasional address to a recent Arts graduation ceremony. Sir Frank received an honorary Doctor of Laws degree at the ceremony.

This is how Sir Frank documented the history:

“My interest and involvement with (Monash) started in 1958 with a telephone call from Sir Edmund Herring, at that time Chief Justice and Deputy Premier. “He rang to tell me that on the following Tuesday (it was then, if I remember rightly, a Friday) the Monash University Bill was to come before the Victorian Parliament and that he had seen the text of it, and — this was what had disturbed him — that the Bill as it stood contained a clause prohibiting the University from examining in Divinity.

“No other subject was excluded. “Sir Edmund thought — and I thoroughly agreed with him — that it would be a great pity if the Bill were passed with this exclusion in it and asked if I could do something about it. That something had to be done with speed.

“I immediately telephoned two people of influence in the community and in church circles, Dr McCaughhey (Master of Ormond) and Mr (later Sir) Frank Rolland, asking their support for a petition to the Premier, Sir Henry Bolte, to have the offending clause excised from the Bill.

“It was essential that the petitioners should be thoroughly representative and that we had the support of the redoubtable Archbishop Mannix. A personal visit, accompanied by Sir Edmund, secured that support and on the Monday Sir Edmund and I called on the Premier.

“I hope that my memory does not play me false that Sir Henry told us that the Bill had been based on the University of Melbourne Act and that the wording of which had mostly been followed including the clause permitting the University to examine in all subjects but expressly excluding Divinity, so assuring the secular status of the University.

“He assured me that there would be no difficulty in excising the said clause. He doubted if anyone had given the matter serious consideration.”

Sir Frank said the aim of seeking to change the University's status was not so that a Faculty of Divinity of the traditional kind — consisting of candidates for the church's ministry — could be set up.

He said: “What we wanted and hoped for was something wider. “A group was established to do some “thinking and planning”. It consisted of Dr McCaughhey, Mr Ronald Cowen, (then Vice-Professor) Frederick, Dr (now Sir) James Darling, Sir Francis Rolland and Archbishop Woods.

Sir Frank said: “We were determined that whatever was eventually to be set up should be fully representative not only of the Christian tradition but should be a place where study and research would be facilitated for members of any and all religious traditions.”

Professor calls for improved debate on economic policy

There was a pressing need to improve the standard of debate on economic policy in Australia, a Monash professor of econometrics, Professor David Giles, said recently.

Professor Giles was delivering the occasional address at an ECOPS graduation ceremony. He told the graduates that there was much they could offer in meeting the need for improved debate.

Professor Giles, aged 29, is Monash's youngest professor.

He started his address by expressing doubts about his qualifications for the job as occasional speaker.

“My lack of age seems to preclude a certain type of address often associated with such occasions, despite my having been described as a 'young fogey' by one member of our faculty,” he said.

Professor Giles said there were two ways in which graduates could make a contribution toward improved debate: by expressing views in a more timely and considered fashion and by promoting the use of analytical quantitative techniques in the use of this information.

He said: “There is no doubt in my mind that, despite considerable effort and expense on the part of successive governments the data set upon which so many important economic policy decisions are based is still quite inadequate. In many instances information is not available in the form needed to enable us to answer important questions.

“For example, an analysis of the policy implications of the observed shift in the saving ratio in this country is hindered by the fact that the published breakdown of private consumption expenditure is not compatible with the published breakdown of the Consumer Price Index.”

He continued: “From a policymaking point of view a recurring problem is the delay so often associated with the release of new data. This alone can lead to poorly timed policy decisions and, when all of the lags associated with policy changes are taken into account, it is not uncommon for an intended stabilisation measure to be procyclical rather than counter-cyclical in its effect.

“I believe that considerably more resources can be directed to improving the relevance and timeliness of our economic data before the marginal net cost equals the marginal net benefit of such an undertaking.”

Professor Giles urged the graduates never to abandon their "formal tool kit" of analytical quantitative techniques in favour of "ad hocery”.

He said: “If your training at this University has been successful then you should have acquired not only the merits of the tools that you have acquired but also their limitations.”

MONASH REPORTER

Space physicist to lecture at Monash

A space physicist whose special field of research is the interaction between Earth and the Sun will deliver a public lecture at Monash this month.

He is Professor K. D. Cole, chairman of the Physics department at La Trobe University and head of the Division of Theoretical and Space Physics there, who will talk on The Magnetosphere of the Earth on Thursday, June 14 at 1:15 p.m. in lecture theatre S3.

The Division Professor Cole heads has been investigating plasma and atomic physics in the upper atmosphere as well as studying radio communication using the ionosphere and theoretical work on transport properties and reliability.

He has concentrated on the interactions between Earth and the Sun, including weather and heating effects, as well as working on theories on Earth's ionosphere.

He is chairman of the local organizing committee for the International Magnetospheric Study symposium to be held in La Trobe University in late November.


He is a fellow of the Institute of Physics and the Australian Institute of Physics.
It is still within the power of people — through their government — to influence the nature of the technological changes that are taking place in society.

This was the message of hope that Professor Fred Jevons, Vice-Chancellor of Deakin University, had for a forum on "Employment in Universities and New Technology" held at Monash last month.

Professor Jevons was one of three principal speakers at the forum, sponsored jointly by the two Monash staff associations and two unions with members on campus.

The other speakers were Dr Russell Lansbury, senior lecturer in administration, and Mr Max Telechmann, senior in nuguy politics.

Professor Jevons said that most people seemed to take the view that "technological changes are coming — do what we may...

Like weather

"This view is one that seems to me to make it rather like the weather, in that we can make forecasts — short-term and rather unreliable forecasts — about what is likely to happen," he said. "And we can decide what to do in the light of those forecasts. Such as deciding whether to put on our winter woollies or our summer suits. But there's nothing we can do to change what is coming...

I do not believe that is true. I believe that we can, collectively, influence the nature of the technological changes that are going to take place in our society.

He went on:

"Until the 1960s it was widely assumed that technological change is, in itself, a 'good thing', and there was a great deal of talk about how we could promote technology, how we can stimulate innovation and so on.

"The assumption was that the changes would be good. But in and since the '60s people's attitudes have become more discriminating. They have taken more cognisance of the undesirable side effects that many technological changes have — in particular, such things as pollution.

Assessment

"And there sprang up a movement that has now come to be called the 'technology assessment movement' within universities and countries. The basic thrust of which has been 'Let us try harder to foresee what the real effects of technological changes are going to be — not only the immediate effects, but also the more remote, second and higher order effects'.

"That movement is now something like ten years old, and to the best of my knowledge, employment prospects have not yet figured largely in the technology assessment considerations.

Professor Jevons said it was time that the 'technology assessment movement' began to consider employment consequences as a major component in technology assessment.

"That is possible because technology creates jobs as well as displacing jobs.

"But there is a selective viability effect here: it is easier to see jobs being displaced than new jobs being created.

"If we had been sitting here in 1879, it would have been very difficult to predict how many new kinds of jobs it was going to come into being during the next 100 years. However, the selective version of the technology assessment, impression you get in public debate that technology has only one kind of effect on jobs and that is to destroy...

"Professor Jevons said it was possible, in a general sort of way, to distinguish between the kinds of technological change that would create jobs and those that would destroy them...

"It seems to me a reasonable proposition that the federal government, -- one look, then, to stimulate the job-creating kind without at the same time stimulating the job-displacing kind," he said.

"Such economists would maintain that it is efficiency in industry that counts — and that philosophy is enshrined in the Department of Productivity.

"But if maximum productivity were to be the only consideration, why do we have pollution controls? There's no doubt that if industry weren't lumbered with pollution controls, it could make goods more cheaply than it does now.

"But we have decided, as a society, that we are not prepared to accept unlimited pollution. We're prepared to insist on pollution controls at the expense of the creation of wealth.

"You can say that unemployment is related to the amount of social pollution and it is then reasonable to ask how much unemployment we're prepared to put up with...

"The government has at its disposal a whole armory of means of intervention in industry to bring about the kind of protection that's needed.

"I would mention two possible means: one is the system of research and development incentives, and the other is the concept of investment allowances, in the form of taxation allowances on investment in new machinery.

"The basis of my suggestion is extremely simple: all I am saying is that, in applying those two schemes, one might include employment consequences amongst the criteria.

"Why should the Commonwealth Government use our tax money to give incentives for the kinds of technology which are going to displace jobs at a time when many of us recognise unemployment as a major social problem. It just doesn't make sense."
Two recent art acquisitions

'A turning point' in collection

Professor McCaughey reviews Brack work

John Brack is one of the major figures in contemporary Australian painting.

Born in 1920, he was a participant in the famous Antipodean Exhibition in 1969, Head of the National Gallery of Victoria Art School during the 1960s and represented in all major public collections of art throughout Australia.

His style is elegant yet forceful, direct yet perceptive. While he has been content to work within the boundaries of portraiture, still-life, the nude and other figurative subjects, the originality and penetration of his vision have given these subjects a new thrust and relevance.

Thus the recent acquisition of his painting, Crossing, (1978) for the Monash Art Collection represents a turning point in the development of that collection.

It is not just "a good example" of John Brack but marks the climax of the series which he has worked on over the last few years. It might fairly be described as "the masterpiece" of this series in which the conventions of still-life painting are subverted to produce an eerie and irrational effect.

Still-life is almost exactly the wrong phrase for this painting as Brack brings inanimate objects to life, huddles the pencils and pens together or strings them out in precarious balance.

All this is accomplished with the greatest spareness and clarity. The more irrational the effect, the more lucid become Brack's forms. That combination of elegance and anarchy, of clarity and deception make for the irony of Brack's vision. For all its balanced austerity, there is a richness of content here, rarely found in contemporary painting.

This notable acquisition is currently on view in the Main Library.

Monash commissions Chancellor's portrait

Monash has commissioned a portrait of its Chancellor, Sir Richard Eggleston, by Melbourne artist, Bruce Fletcher.

Sir Richard has been Chancellor since late 1974. He is the University's third Chancellor, his predecessors being Sir Robert Blackwood and Sir Douglas Menzies.

Bruce Fletcher's work hangs in Buckingham Palace (one of his paintings was presented to Prince Charles in Melbourne in 1964), the Commonwealth Collection in Canberra, Melbourne University and in collections throughout the world.

A total of 35 of his paintings and 220 drawings hang in the Australian War Memorial: he was Australia's official war artist in Vietnam.

Fletcher has exhibited extensively throughout Victoria and has won prizes at Albury, Malvern, Dandenong, Camberwell, Doncaster and Waverley. In 1970 he won the Elisabeth T. Greenshield Fellowship in Montreal against international competition.

Among his portraits are those of Sir Henry Bolte, Major-General Sir Alan Ramsay, Sir James and Lady Darling, Theodore Fink, Sir Harry Chauvel and Sir Russell Grimwade.

Sir Richard and Lady Eggleston view the portrait of Sir Richard following a recent Monash graduation ceremony. The artist was Bruce Fletcher. The portrait will hang in Robert Blackwood Hall. Photo: Herve Alleaume.

Time may not be ripe for dissent

- From previous page

history of good industrial relations, but that history will become marred in the future — and in the very near future — history that will become marred in the future. And in the very near future — history that will become marred in the future.

These movements have come at a rather unfortunate time," he said.

"If the anti-pollution and environment protection movements are an analogy, it seems likely that they will lose support.

"It may be that society might not feel it can afford them. They might turn out to be luxuries accepted only in a period of high economic growth, and they might be the first kind of things to be shed — along with jobs.

"In other words, we're living in a situation where it's each man for himself, each employer for himself, and each economy for itself in a world of cost-cutting, competing economies."

Mr Teichmann said he was not happy about the "unseen hand" theory of new jobs being created as they were in the past.

"It has been said that 100 years ago, many of the jobs we have now didn't exist and that the last 100 years created them. Therefore we should look forward with reasonable confidence to the future resembling the past.

"I am not at all certain about this. I would like to see the argument unpacked a bit more than that.

"Because if we really believe that this is the case, why are we all, I think, agreed to unemployment and going to be a permanent fact of life?"

Mr Teichmann went on: "As far as Monash is concerned, you might say we have a unique situation to challenge us. We live in a country with a low rate of economic growth; we face increasing overseas competition not so much for the things that we sell as for the things that hitherto we have made and which have provided jobs.

"We face a situation where there's a great strain on public revenue. We are turning away from an increase in public spending particularly from an increase in educational budgets. At the microeconomic level, there's a considerable resistance not so much to increasing, but just maintaining university spending.

MONASH REPORTER

June, 1979
How valid is the proposition that computer technology is destroying jobs faster than it is creating them?

According to a lecturer in Computer Science, Dr Gopal Gupta, the weight of evidence bears out the computing community now agrees with the proposition. Dr Gupta is convenor of a special interest group of the Computer Society looking into the social implications of computers in Victoria. He led a discussion at a recent gathering of the new technology interest group at Monash instigated by the late Associate Professor Ian Turner.

Dr Gupta quoted from a paper by I. M. Barron, an adviser to the previous UK Government on computer technology.

In it, Barron said: "It is facile to expect that any computer system poses serious questions which each of us needs to face and to answer. "The first question is whether we can accept the human cost of this technology. The answer must be yes, because otherwise we must accept the even greater cost of not using the technology. Not only does it offer the prospect of reducing the burden of work on man, but it also, by improving the utilisation of resources, offers the prospect of reducing the burden of man on the environment. The consequences of such an answer are that we must positively plan and legislate for a job replacement change. It is no longer possible to allow the individual to suffer for the ultimate good of others."" The second question is, therefore, what should be done about unemployment. It is unrealistic to expect that employment can be maintained on a scale that can be shared equitably, given the varying impact of the technology on different jobs and on different sectors of the economy.

"What must be done is to make unemployment both socially and economically acceptable. This means a change to our social policies for unemployment, the provision of a living wage as a right and for more emphasis on retraining and reorientation."

Speaking after the discussion session, Dr Gupta said he agreed with contemporary analysis that the function of new computer technology had a shifting emphasis from a coping role to job replacement.

He said: "In the last 20 years, businesses have used computers to enable them to perform new functions — to help them do what they wanted to do but weren't able, things like getting accounts out on time."

He said the focus was now shifting from supplementing the abilities of humans to replacing them.

"The aim now is to automate whole systems — like ordering, despatch and assembly — so that businesses do exactly what they were doing before but with fewer bodies."

Dr Gupta said the deciding factor in the introduction of new technology, naturally enough, was cost effectiveness. And he pointed to some figures on the capability of computers in relation to cost which put them in the orbit of consideration of a growing number of businesses.

He said that the computing power available per dollar had gone up by a factor of about 10,000 in the last 20 years and would continue to rise by a factor of 10 every four to five years.

"That means that computer hardware which cost $10,000 in 1965 now costs $1; in four or so years it will cost 10c and by the late 1980s it, he said.

But, he added: "In addition to hardware, computer programs (software) are required to use the computer. The cost of these has been going down only slowly."

New group aims to improve science-media relations

A new group aimed at improving science-media relations through better understanding between science and technology and the media held its inaugural meeting in Melbourne last month.

Called the Science and Technology Media Group, it has its origins in ANZAAS Section 33 (communication) and seeks to foster greater personal contact between media people and workers in science and technology — from industry, government, universities and other educational and research institutions.

Among the founders of the group are Dr Gopal Gupta, president of ANZAAS Section 33 (communication) and Dr George Seddon, director of the Centre for Continuing Education, the seminar will be held on June 16 from 5 p.m. to 9.45 p.m. The fee is $20.

A seminar aimed at giving welfare workers a better understanding of the social security system will be held at Monash next month.

Organised by the Centre for Continuing Education, the seminar will look particularly at all aspects of entitlements and will attempt to deal with the problems encountered by welfare workers. It will be held on Monday, July 16 from 4 p.m. to 9.45 p.m. The fee is $20.

There will be two sessions. One will look at "the system" and cover such aspects as eligibility criteria, the mechanics of review and appeals, and the problems of administration with unemployment, sickness and benefits, work test guidelines and access to information.

The second session will look at some specific areas of concern including anomalies in benefits paid to single parents, special benefits on hardship grounds and resources for welfare workers. Among the speakers will be Mr Terry Carney, lecturer in Law at Monash, and representatives of the Department of Social Security, the Brotherhood of St Laurence, the Council for the Single Mother and Child, and the Action and Resource Centre for Low Income Families. For further information contact ext. 3718.
Eight Victorian schoolchildren spent part of their recent holidays glued happily to the screen — with the blessing of no less bodies than the Victorian Association for Gifted and Talented Children and Monash's Faculty of Engineering.

The screen did not belong to a television domesticus, but was part of the IICI'eOn — with electronics equipment the students encountered during a stimulating vacation project.

The students from public and state schools in Melbourne, and Stawell and Morwell high schools — spent three days in the Electrical Engineering department at Monash absorbing some electronics theory then tackling practical problems. The class was one of several sponsored by the Association for Gifted and Talented Children. Others included classes in creative writing and research at Melbourne Zoo.

When Reporter caught up with the students — one female and seven males ranging from second to fifth form — they were engaged in demonstrating the efficiency of loudspeaker crossover networks, under the supervision of Associate Professor E. M. Cherry and lecturer, Dr K. Dukhile.

They were paid an informal visit by the Dean of Engineering, Professor Lance Endersbe, who stressed the importance to Australia's future of its technological research.

Concentration on their work, and not shyness, prevented many of the students from engaging in lengthy dialogues. Most said they had been invited by their teachers to join the class; all expressed their enthusiasm for such a way to spend a holiday and particularly for the opportunity afforded to use equipment they couldn't hope to encounter in their schools.

**Voices sought for 'Pilgrim' opera first**

*Vaughan Williams*

Monash University Choral Society will present the first Melbourne performance of Ralph Vaughan William's opera, "The Pilgrim's Progress", in August.

The opera will be presented as a fully staged production at the Toorak State College Theatre on August 1, 3 and 5.

The society is looking for new voices for the opera, first performed in 1951, which is its second term project. "The Pilgrim's Progress" has been described as a "Morality" rather than a conventional opera.

**Book by Bunyan**

Based on the book by John Bunyan, it is an allegory about a Pilgrim's way to the Celestial City and the trials he encounters on his travels.

In Vaughan Williams's work, we follow Pilgrim from the start of his journey to his first major scene, the "House Beautiful", where he is clothed in a white robe and sent on his way.

After being armed, he sets out on the King's highway and travels to the Valley of Humiliation, where, with a crowd of Doleful Creatures (the living on and off anything but encouraging, he has a battle with Apollyon (complete with a rhapsodically synthesised voice) which Pilgrim wins.

**Meets Lecbery**

Following more adventures, he arrives at Vanity Fair, where "all that the world can provide is for sale." One of the residents, Lord Lecbery, delivers a long sales pitch, the general tone of which is to get what you can while you can.

"This is wasted on Pilgrim who tells them he "buys with truth".

He is duly condemned to death, but manages to escape, and, on the last leg of his journey, passes through the Delectable Mountains and reaches the Celestial City.

Most of the solo parts will be taken by members of the choir.

However, the work is full of choral singing, and a chorus of about 60 is required for the production.

The society rehearses every Tuesday night at 7 p.m. in the rehearsal room, Union basement. Lifts home after rehearsal can be arranged, and further enquiries may be directed to the secretary, Libby Nottle, on 24 4430.

**Flexi Time — an office worker's joy**

Now and then a show comes along which has appeal to a wider range of people than members of the narrow bunch who call themselves "theatre goers."

Such a show is Flexi Time, which at the Alexander Theatre is presenting in conjunction with the Victorian Arts Council between August 15 and September 8.

Flexi Time is a comedy about life in the public service and is of particular interest to anyone who has ever worked in an office.

The company will include Terry McDermott, well known from television series such as "Homicide" and "Bellbird" and live productions such as "Man of La Mancha" and "Olivier." Anne Flahue, currently appearing in "Gentlemen Only" at the Playbox and formerly in "Bellbird", and Sydney Leshepere of the Melbourne Theatre Company.

Flexi Time is being directed by Don Mackay who was responsible for such productions as "Puckoon" and "Under Milk Wood" while he was artistic director of the Alexander Theatre Company. He is now executive director of the Victorian Arts Council.

Advance notice of the production has been sent to government, professional associations and charities which may want to arrange "working days" for fund raising or a social occasion. Attractive concessions are being offered to such organisations.

Inquiries should be made to Mr Ian Prentice, assistant director of the Victorian Arts Council, telephone 529 4355.
A MUMCO invitation: come to the cabaret old chum

As second term begins, few members of the Monash community might share the sentiment that "Life is a cabaret, old chum!"

But members of the Monash University Musical Theatre Company are inviting everyone to come to the "Cabaret", a production of which they will be staging from June 7 to 10 and then June 13 to 16 in the Alexander Theatre.

Several leading Melbourne theatre identities have joined with MUMCO to present this musical which depicts the experiences of an American cabaret performer in Berlin in the 1930s. The book of the musical is based on a story by Christopher Isherwood.

Director and choreographer is Ron Challinor who has produced in such shows as "Grease", "Applause" and "Godspell" and, with Celette Mann, devised and appeared in "Hats" at the Playbox.

Susie Fowler, who appeared in "The Getting of Wisdom", plays the female lead of Sally Bowles. Derek Watkins plays the Master of Ceremonies. The musical director is Roger Hilmann.

Tickets cost $4 or $2.50 for students and can be obtained from the Alex. on 543 2828 or any BASS agency. On June 8 and 13 a wine and cheese supper will be served for an extra $2.

Dinner dance for Ex-Halls

A dinner dance for all Ex-Halls of Residence students will be held in Denks Hall at 7.30 p.m. on Saturday, July 25.

The dinner dance is being conducted by the Monash University Heat of Residents. Tickets, which cost $12, cover a four-course meal and music. They are available from: A. New, Nan, telephone 240 0598 (after hours).

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6: INTRODUCTORY COURSE in data process ing for non-scientists by Dr. M. A. Boer, Monash Computer Centre. Weekly from June 6 to August 4, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. in Computer Centre. Fee: $45. Inquiries: ext. 2264.

8: LECTURE — Mathematics of Winds and Climate" by Dr. F. C. F. Frawley. Of interest to year 11 & 12 students. Free, by Monash Department of Mathematics. 7 p.m. Lecture Theatre A3. Admission fee. Inquiries: ext. 3020.

9: SATURDAY CLUB (Blue Series) — "Twice Upon a Time", two mini-operas by the Victorian Opera Company. 2.30 p.m. Alexander Theatre. Admission: adults $1.75, children 80c.


11: LUNCHEON CONCERT — "Heir Music"— contemporary group directed by Keith Hume. 1.15 p.m. RBH. Admission free.

11: MIGRANT STUDIES SEMINAR — Changing Place of the Ethnic Group in the American City since 1900" by Prof. David Ward, University of Wisconsin, 7.30 p.m. Lecture Theatre E3. Admission fee. Inquiries: ext. 2209.

12: PUBLIC LECTURE — "The Magnetostratigraphy of the Earth" by Prof. K.D. Cole, Head, Earth and Space Physics Division, La Trobe University, Free. by Monash Astronomical Society. 1.15 p.m. Lecture Theatre 80. Admission free.

13: ORGAN RECITAL by John Mallord, organist, St. Patrick's Cathedral. 1.15 p.m. RBH. Admission free.

14-17: CONGRESS — "Ocean '79 Underwater Congress and Film Festival". RBH. Further information and tickets write to P.O. Box 800, Spencer Street, Melbourne 3000.


18: CONCERT — "Ear Music" presented by Melbourne University Music Society. 8 p.m. Lecture Theatre A3. Admission free. Inquiries ext. 3020.

23: CONCERT — "The Hunter Marries An Art Lover" presented by Monash Department of Music. A presentation through Gamelan music, puppetry and dance, of Aja Yud. A javanese folk story, 8 p.m. RBH. Admission: $3. Students and pensioners $1.50.

30: LUNCHEON CONCERT — piano recital by Ronald Barnes. Room 806, Monash University. 1.15 p.m. RBH. Admission free.

Newcomers take roles in 'Vanya'

"Visiting professor's young wife causes havoc!"

This would be one way of describing the invitation to Yelena, beautiful young wife of Fine Arts Professor Serebrjakov, into the peaceful household of Sonia and her uncle Johnny (or Vanya, as the Russians would say.)

The occasion is Chekhov's play, Uncle Vanya, which the Monash English department is presenting from June 19 to 22 in the Ground Floor Theatre, Humanities Building.

Three newcomers to the company are Marion Amies, who plays Yelena; Margaret Swan, who plays Sonia, and Malcolm Elliott, the guitarist playing Telyugin. The pompous professor is played by David McLean, and the imprecation and astrophilia of Mimi Colligan, Barbara Calton is the sympathetic nurse.

Davison is conserved

The major role of Vanya will be in the experienced hands of Richard Punnell, who has seen in many major parts in Shakespearean and other productions.

Dr Astrov, the spokesman for surprisingly modern ideas on contraception, is being played by Dennis Davison, who founded the company some 15 years ago and is (he declares) reasonably conserved himself, considering the scores of plays he has directed at Monash.

The Ground Floor Theatre now has raised platforms for seating and is heated.

The Vera Moore Foundation provided a grant to enable the production, tickets for which may be obtained from room 707, Humanities Building, at $2 (81 students). Enquiries on ext. 2140.

Vacancies still available for 1979 Saturday Club Series — a perfect introduction to live theatre for Red Series — 5-8 year-olds, Blue Series — 8-13 year-olds. Further information and tickets available from BASS agencies.

Davison, by Ronald Barnes. Tickets available from BASS agencies.

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Contributions (letters, articles, photographs, and suggestions should be addressed to the editor (ext. 2035) or the information office, ground floor, University Offices.