Aboriginal food plants provide a lesson in survival

For Burke and Wills, a little knowledge was a dangerous thing.

The two starved to death eating the Aboriginal plant food, Nardoos, which they believed was nutritionally adequate.

"Nardoos was actually a food of last choice for the Aborigines," says Dr Beth Gott, of Botany.

"They ate it along with other more important foods like fish and witchetty grubs. Burke and Wills knew nardoos was edible but they didn't know its limitations."

Nardoos (a little water-fenn with leaves like a four-leaf clover) is one of more than 100 specimens gathered so far for the Botany department's unique collection of plants traditionally used by Victorian Aborigines.

Most are growing in the Aboriginal Plants garden, a special section in front of the south-west corner of the Botany building. Others are in the System Garden at the back and in isolated plants around the campus. They can be recognised by their distinctive yellow or white labels.

Firesticks

The collection attracts the interest of Aboriginal community groups who ask Dr Gott for guided tours and for cuttings, seeds or roots of plants they have not been able to otherwise obtain.

It is also used in ethno-botany courses which are now part of the curriculum for second and third year students.

"We are looking at how the Aborigines managed their vegetation all around Australia," says Dr Gott.

"But in the practical classes we concentrate on the plants which were important to Victorian Aborigines."

"We've made fire in the laboratory, using a couple of sticks from the grass-tree."

"The aim is to broaden botanical education, and the work is also useful from the viewpoint of such disciplines as anthropology, archaeology and palynology (the study of pollen)."

A small guide booklet prepared by Dr Gott and available from a box inside the foyer of the Botany building describes the collection in detail.

"Victorian Aborigines were more settled than those who lived in the low-rainfall areas of the continent," she says.

Storehouse

"They used plants for all the daily necessities of life — for food, medicine, fibre, canoes, houses and for all sorts of implements.

"Their most important foods were roots of many sorts; these had the advantage of being available all year round as the earth is a natural storage cupboard."

Among the collection are: Bunya Pine, a Queensland tree with prickly leaves and very large cones, the nuts of which provided great feast; Bulrushes, which were cooked, chewed, or beaten to obtain edible starch and fibre for string; Blackwood, a wattle whose bark was used to make coarse string and as a medicine for rheumatism, while the wood became spear-throwers and shields; Coast Banksia, whose nectar-rich cones were soaked in water to make a sweet drink; Flax-lily, the leaves of which were split and rolled together to make a strong tie; Milkmaids, a common lily with starchy swollen roots which were eaten; Native Flax, with only edible seeds similar to those of the European Linseed, and stems suitable for making string; Oyster Bay Pine, whose resin was used to cement stone axes, and Pig-face, whose red fruit and leaves were eaten.

The Aboriginal Plants section adjoins the Banksia Garden to the north, and further on is the revitalised Grampians Garden. For the past few years, all three have been tended by Dr Gott and two other members of the Botany department's staff, Rob McClure and Ian Rossiter.

More than 100 of the 800 known species of seed plants from the Grampians are established in the garden, where even the rocks have been imported (courtesy of the State Forests Commission).

Women set new course

Monash is set to become one of Australia's premier universities for research into issues which have affected women since antiquity.

Dr Jan van Bommel, the co-ordinator of the new Centre for Women's Studies, which will be officially opened in October, said Monash was strong in the area of the antiquities. "It's an expanding employment field they believed was nutritionally adequate."

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Host Scheme needs a helping hand

University can be an unfamiliar, even intimidating environment for new students — both young ones coming straight from HSC and "mature-age" students returning to education.

No doubt, many of you will remember your enrolment into first-year courses when you were shunted from building to building amongst thousands of unknown faces and piles of confusing paper work, or your first day of university when you walked into an immunology lecture hoping to hear about Shakespeare.

The Host Scheme was started in the mid-seventies to help make these first experiences at Monash a little more bearable.

This scheme brings together small groups of first years and gives them the opportunity to make their first friends at University.

The success of the scheme relies on later year students to act as hosts to these groups.

Hosts are required to contact their group of first year students and organise a social gathering such as a video night, pool party, barbecue or pub night.

They will also be required to meet their group on Host Scheme Day (as part of O-Week) and take them on a tour of the campus before enjoying the free bands and light entertainment provided.

The benefits of Host Scheme are for the hosts as well as the first years. Hosts will be given a chance to meet each other and develop new friends during the holidays when social activities will be organised for them.

They also have a chance to make new friends amongst the first years and have the satisfaction of knowing that they have helped make the transition from high school to university that little bit easier.

To become a host, just fill in a form available from a table in the Union foyer every lunchtime, or from the Contact Office.

Hosts are needed from all faculties whether part-time, full-time or mature-age.

Please join in and help make 1988 Host Scheme a great success.

Maree O'Toole
Host Scheme Co-Ordinators

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Lawyers, media fail to present issues

The media and the legal profession in Australia are helping to create a racist society, says Professor Brad Morse, a Professor of Law at Ottawa University.

He said that by ignoring Koorie (Aboriginal) issues, lawyers and the media had not fulfilled their obligation to educate the public.

Professor Morse was speaking last month at Monash about land rights to educate the public.

"I have not detected that Australians believe that Aboriginal issues are 'real' issues," he said.

"It's very hard to quantify racism, but it appears that Australians are less tolerant of cultural diversity than Canadians, " he said.

"Another example, which sickens me, is the distinction Canadian law makes between citizens and non-citizens. "

"They give up this right if they marry a person without status, for example. "

"I find it hard to accept that some government can say 'Sorry, but you're not a native'.

"It's a sad state of affairs when colonial powers the world over can tell you're not a native'.

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"It's a sad slate of affairs when colonial powers the world over can tell you're not a native'.

Professor Morse believed Australians' lack of interest in Koorie issues stemmed partly from the fact that they had never been challenged by a non-Aboriginal rival.

"On the other hand, Canada has always been divided into English and French sections, and no one group regards Canada as theirs and theirs only," he said.

One way to promote Koorie issues said Professor Morse, is to educate the rights, policing and legal rights, while educating the community, would be to train Koories as lawyers and journalists.

Mr Gary Martin, a Koorie law student who recently attended the Indigenous People's World Conference in Canada, said the education system in Australia did not cater for the needs of Koories.

"The system fails us and we can't operate because our needs are different from the broader community," he said.

The conference, attended by more than 1500 indigenous people from many countries, discussed the impact of systems designed to educate indigenous groups.

Mr Martin, the only Koorie law student to attend, believes there will be no attempts made in Australia to alter the system.

"I have accused the Australian government of preventing Koories from gaining the knowledge essential for economic strength."

This was one way colonial powers could divide and control indigenous populations.

"Another example, which sickens me, is the distinction Canadian law makes between status and non-status Indians.

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Carrie day for women

Making It, A Careers Day for Women, will be held on Wednesday 9 September as part of the university's affirmative action programme, 1987.

The program, organised by Monash Association of Graduate Students, 1987, at the Union Crafts Centre, and will emphasise issues affecting women aiming for an academic career.

It is designed to especially cater for honors students, postgraduates, tutors and research assistants, although all women are invited to attend.

Talks will be given from 9.30am to noon and topics include: the changing workforce; planning a career; scholarships — applying and winning; speaking up; attitudinal barriers and combining a career and a family.

A panel discussion and workshops on work application skills, sexual harassment and careers in medical research will be held in the afternoon from 2.15 to 4pm.

Further information is available from the MAGS office, Union Building, Patra Antonis on ext. 3196 or Marg Sloan on ext. 3198.

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VC launches OHS branch

The Vice-Chancellor, Professor Logan, has announced the official formation of the university's Occupational Health and Safety Branch.

The manager of the branch is Dr Cheryl Dunin, and the other branch members are Mr Tung Tan, Radiation Protection Officer; Mr Alan Wilson, Safety Officer; and Sister Kathy Hill, Occupational Health Nurse.

A consultant Occupational Health physician, Dr David Barton (replacing Dr Tony Ryan) who has resigned, will be in attendance for two sessions a week.

Among its duties the Occupational Health Branch will arrange training in health and safety matters, liaise with government departments, draft university policies, raise health and safety awareness of staff and students and co-ordinate or assist in the rehabilitation of staff with occupational injuries or disease.

Further details can be obtained from Dr Dunin, Room G09, University Office, ext. 4136 or Dr Barton can be arranged by contacting Sister Hill on ext. 4048.

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Library consortium to host Australia 'first'...
Conference highlights Monash strengths

Dental fillings, high temperature superconductors, gold extraction, ancient pottery and welding fumes have at least one thing in common — they have been investigated using Mossbauer spectroscopy.

Molecules absorb gamma rays only at certain frequencies, which are determined, among other things, by the types of atoms and how they are bonded. So, by measuring the precise frequencies of gamma rays which are absorbed, information about bonding in molecules can be built up.

In China, for instance, Mossbauer spectroscopy has been used to determine how hot the fires were that baked the famous Terracotta warriors. And at Monash, the technique has been used to investigate the way dental amalgams set into fillings.

One of the more interesting and lively sessions at the conference was on the molecular structure of the new high temperature superconductors. It was chaired by Professor Fred Smith of Physics.

"Although it cast very little light on the problem of how these superconductors work, it did highlight the fact that iron can substitute for copper in these (ceramic) structures." And both the iron and the copper appear to carry a higher positive charge than one might expect, which means an electron is being swept off somewhere.

Professor Smith, whose area of expertise has little to do with Mossbauer spectroscopy, said that, as an outsider, he was impressed by the coherence of the conference.

"They were a close-knit multidisciplinary group of scientists united by the technique. This is very unusual, and led to very good cross-pollination of ideas, both scientifically and culturally."

Associate Professor Cashion said that one way this showed itself was in a special session on assistance to developing countries, jointly chaired by a Chinese and an Egyptian scientist.

And a world centre for such research is Monash University, which recently hosted the first International Conference on the Applications of the Mossbauer Effect to be held in the Southern Hemisphere.

The conference was attended by about 165 physicists, geologists, biologists, metallurgists, engineers and inorganic chemists from 29 countries, including Hungary, China, Poland, Japan, West Germany, India, Egypt, Canada and the US. In fact, 90 per cent of those taking part were from overseas.

The organiser, Associate Professor John Cashion of Physics said many of the participants had been very impressed by the facilities available at Monash for holding such an international scientific meeting.

The Mossbauer technique provides information about the types of atoms and bonding patterns in molecules. It makes use of the well-known Doppler shift, that effect which explains the lowering in pitch of the siren as an ambulance rushes past.

As the ambulance moves towards you, the sound waves emitted are pushed together by the movement of the vehicle and reach the ear at higher frequency, hence a higher pitch. As the ambulance recedes into the distance, the opposite happens.

The same thing happens with the gamma rays emitted in Mossbauer spectroscopy if the source is vibrated back and forth, and, depending on the frequency of vibration, a whole range of gamma rays with slightly varying frequencies or energies can be produced.

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The AIDS tally

Cumulative analysis of AIDS cases in Australia as at July 30 1987

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Transmission category

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<th>Wood transfusion recipient</th>
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---National Health and Medical Research Council

It seems that yesterday (10 August) all condom vending machines were removed from the Halls of Residence.

There was no warning, but only last week it was claimed that they were not making any money.

It is curious that this event should coincide with a Catholic convention to be held at Halls. These conventions are a major source of income for the Halls of Residence.

Damien Ridge (Med III)

Roberts Hall

As you are aware, the Halls recently had condom vending machines installed in the male and female toilets located in the foyers of each of the five Halls.

Owing to insufficient usage to justify the costs involved with leaving the machines on site, all machines have been removed by the supplier from the Halls of Residence.

Vladimir Proch, Manager, Halls of Residence.

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* Professor Roger Short believes that the threat of AIDS overruns many social sensibilities. He also believes it is essential that the medical profession be quickly de-sensitised so its members can get on with the business of advising and helping patients at risk. As part of his campaign, Professor Short last month introduced a group of third year medical students to the public discussion of condoms with a 'blowing-up' competition to find out which ones — Thai, Chinese or Australian — would withstand the greatest pressure.

Photo — Tony Miller.

MONASH REPORTER Page 3 SEPTEMBER 1987
Cooking up some real Aussie grub

Brave souls at last month's Botany cooking afternoon will tell you that while a shrimp thrown on the barbie might be all very well, it does not rate with the genuine Australian tucker — the witchetty grub.

More than 30 students, staff and friends were treated to a taste of the grub before the afternoon's organiser, Dr Neil Hallam, discovered them on his Flinders property.

"We cooked them on a hot plate and the more adventurous ate them. "If we can get some next year we will probably have them again, but it's a matter of supply and demand," Dr Hallam said.

The Herbs and Spices cooking afternoons have been held annually for the past 12 years to show third-year students how plants are used as flavorings.

Did dust cloud do in dinosaurs?

The volcanic explosion which leveled Krakatoa in 1883 threw 18 cubic kilometres of dust into the atmosphere, causing a drop in the global temperature and brilliant sunsets for months, said Ms Helen Pongracic, a PhD student in extinction theory which suggested that dinosaurs died out after an asteroid crashed to earth and created a dust cloud, blocking the sunlight.

Ms Pongracic will speak on Asteroid Impacts: The Causes of Dinosaur Extinction, at the next meeting of the Space Association of Australia, Inc, on 3 September.

The association is a non-profit group which holds meetings monthly on Thursdays in R3 (Rotunda) starting at 7.30pm. They are free and open to the public.

Maths competition favors the boys

Boys' greater success in advanced problem-solving mathematics partially stems from their competitive nature, says Professor Elizabeth Fennema from the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

"Girls achieve more in a co-operative environment. "The gender-related differences exist because girls, much more than boys, don't learn to become autonomous thinkers," she said last month as a seminar in the Faculty of Education.

Professor Fennema emphasised the need to concentrate on gender differences in performance at higher level mathematics.

"There is very little difference in performance at the lower levels where success in mathematics largely depends on rote learning," she said.

Room for more women at the top

Monash's workforce includes a higher percentage of women than the workforce as a whole, said Dr Margaret James, the university's Equal Opportunities Co-ordinator, in a paper introducing the new Equal Opportunity Policy Statement.

But women still hold less than 20 per cent of full-time academic posts. "Those women who do hold academic positions are clustered at the bottom of the hierarchy, while a very high proportion of the female general staff hold secretarial positions, she said.

Under the Equal Opportunity Policy Statement adopted by the university council in June, Monash is committed to eliminating discrimination in education and employment.

Dr James stressed in the paper that students had as much to gain as employees from the policy's introduction.

She said discrimination against students by universities was unlawful, especially in the areas of admission and exclusion or access to benefits and also where it involved activities which could be detrimental to a student.

Dr James said if a student's access to library, laboratory, tuition or counselling services was hampered on the ground of sex, race or disability, for example, the student could claim he or she had been discriminated against.

"In New South Wales, it was held that a Ph.D student who was isolated by a racially hostile environment and whose work suffered as a consequence, was unlawfully discriminated against." Another example would be where a lecturer who believed women should not study engineering created a hostile environment which resulted in a female student gaining lower marks.

Dr James said setting age limits for prizes or awards was one of the most common forms of indirect discrimination in education.

"Setting an age limit of, say, 35 for a prize for the best thesis ignores the fact that women frequently undertake graduate work much later in life than men."

Reading of Quixotian’ work

The mysterious Arnhem Land writer, B. Wongar, who has just completed a term as Writer-in-Residence at the Aboriginal Research Centre, will present a reading from his latest book, Gabo Djaro, at the University Club on Thursday, 10 September.

This work is the final volume of Wongar's nuclear trilogy. It was recently released in the United States and Europe, and acclaimed by critics as a work of "Quixotian quality."

The Literary Soiree has been organised by the Aboriginal Research Centre. It will begin with refreshments at 5.30pm, followed by the reading at 6.30pm. Anyone wishing to attend should notify Crystal Chatterton on ext 3247 by Wednesday 9 September.

Page 4
Moral thinking must operate at higher level

Oxford philosopher, Richard M. Hare, is visiting the Monash Centre for Human Bioethics until the end of October. Professor Hare is working with a number of people in the centre on the ethical problems of the new reproduction technologies, in particular the ethics of organ transplantation. He is Graduate Research Professor at the University of Florida. He has written many books and among the hundred or so papers he has produced are a number of interesting, popular articles. In this interview, Professor Hare demonstrates the value of philosophy in everyday life.

I really do think philosophers might help in the education of our children.

The study of moral philosophers is the best way of thinking rationally about moral questions, and on the higher moral questions is about moral education — how should I bring up my children?

So if philosophy were more widely studied then I think parents would be better able to make these decisions in a rational way. The alternative is for them just to carry on with the ideas they were brought up in, but that might not work very well.

Look at the generation gaps we have when children don’t accept the moral ideas their parents pass on for granted. The children stop listening to the parents.

If the parents and the children were better acquainted with the philosophical moves I think they might be more in common, each of them would be better and decide between them what are the best principles.

What counts as a virtue, what counts as a good person? All these things are moral questions and they all use words like good and right and wrong. They are all part of moral language.

You can’t live peacefully together without moral language, and if you abolish it you end up re-inventing it. It’s such a useful thing. One reason it’s so useful is as education.

Intuitive

If you’re going to bring up people to behave as they would best behave, and we all try and do this to our children, then you’ve got, in the course of that, to teach them to think.

That means thinking morally. That’s to say, thinking what they ought to do and having the right ideas about what they ought to do, and if you don’t have a moral system you can’t express these ideas then how do you do it?

My work has been in ethical theory and in the study of the logic of moral language, that which, of course, conditions the logic of moral reasoning.

And much to my surprise, because I didn’t start off by being a utilitarian, I discovered that the logic really compels one to be a utilitarian and that no other ethical theory would stand up against it.

So, I am utilitarian, but of a rather good philosophers. There are a 101 of intuitive philosophers and my one is that the logic really compels one to have.

Think the public is capable of doing as I wish they would. And it’s not going to happen, that a philosopher is anybody who is prepared to learn the arguments that people attach great importance to.

You can’t take for granted what somebody is deeply convinced of being right. It’s obvious that this isn’t so. People have deep convictions and you can fight with each other, but when you’ve got to find some way of sorting it out.

My answer is that you look and see the convictions they ought to have, and the ones they ought to have are the ones which would be best for them to have.

Best for society, best for them, best for everybody, treating everybody as one.

Roughly that’s the scheme and I think it works extremely well. It enables you to bring up people which people attach great importance to.

You can’t take for granted that something is deeply convincing of being right. It’s obvious that this isn’t so. People have deep convictions and you can fight with each other, but when you’ve got to find some way of sorting it out.

My answer is that you look and see the convictions they ought to have, and the ones they ought to have are the ones which would be best for them to have.

Best for society, best for them, best for everybody, treating everybody as one.

The trouble is there aren’t enough good philosophers. There are a lot of bad ones, probably 90 per cent of them aren’t any good, and the bad ones just throw dust in our eyes.

America is full of philosophers going around throwing dust in our eyes, and others too, beside the philosophers. So that’s actually in great contrast to people’s moral thinking is really awfully muddled. I’m much happier about America.

The only trouble about Australia is that it’s frightfully polarised. You get the two opposite principles, we learned in our moral education and stick to them, feel bad if we break them, and don’t question them. At that level we act just as good utilitarians say we ought to.

And the trouble is that it would be a mistake, which is committed by the utilitarianists, to think that that’s the only level that we can ever have. These are rather general and simple, and therefore, the world being rather complex, they come into conflict in particular situations and we need to sort it out.

We can’t do without the higher level of moral thinking which calls the critical level which sorts out conflicts between these intuitive principles, and, for instance, think theological attitudes in Australia particularly are very, very rigid and I think perhaps some people on the other side are very rigid, too.

I sat on goodness knows how many committees of the Church in England and I’m more eye to eye about this. He is another, besides the philosophers. So I’m more concerned with theoretical. I people’s moral thinking is really awfully much because things are very polarised here.

Talking sense

Still, you’ve got a lot of very intelligent people here and I’m happier about Australia than I am about America. There you have such a vast country and so many people going around spreading confusion — it’s going to take an awful long time for the dust to settle.

I explain that a philosopher is anybody who is prepared to learn the arguments that people attach great importance to.

I’ve no respect at all for people who use the name philosopher or philosophy and do something which is just an egotistical venting of wind really, and unfortunately it happens.

I would wish, and it’s not going to happen, that the word philosophy should be as strictly used as the word physics or the word economics to define a discipline which has its standards; there are good and bad ways of doing it and you can tell one from the other.

But I think perhaps it’s rather easier to tell when a philosopher is talking sense than it is with an economist. If you find some philosopher and read a few pages of his writings you ask yourself, is he trying to make clear what he is saying, just exactly what he is saying, so I can ask myself is it right or not, and prove it?

Well, if he is I go on reading. But if he’s not trying to make himself clear — he’s trying to excite his readers, he’s trying to cut a figure — if he’s that sort of philosopher then I stop reading and I think the public is capable of doing as I do.

If he is not addressing himself to the practical issues and trying to sort them out so you can be clear about them, then to hell with him.

I am actually a Christian of a sort. Not an expert theologian, but I do have some views you could call theological. But on the whole I think that theology doesn’t help very much with these questions because whatever findings we make through our ordinary investigations about education, for example, can always be put in theological terms, but I don’t know what the theological terms help us to make the discoveries.

I think it’s really a matter of ordinary empirical investigation to see what it has done. After you’ve done that you can put it in a theological way, no doubt — the workings of grace and all that. But I don’t know whether approaching it from the theological end would help you very much in the investigation.

Perhaps if the theologians would pay more attention to the commands to love our neighbour and to do to others as we wish them to do to us, they would end up as utilitarians like me; and then they really would help.

Embryo tests’ ethical

Embryo experimentation does not catch the theologians of ethical theory, says Professor Hare.

"I don’t agree with the conclusions of the Tate committee to ban experimentation from fertilisation onwards."

"They say the important thing is the potentiality of an embryo for inheriting from a human being, and that the embryo is deserving of moral respect just like a child from the moment of fertilisation."

"I believe the contrary; while potentiality is very important, what deserves respect is not the embryo itself but the moral integrity that the embryo would turn into if it developed."

"If the legislators were to ban experimentation altogether, the effect would be that there wouldn’t be those embryos because nobody’s going to produce embryos except for implantation if they are going to be taken to court if the embryos perish."

"It’s not the case that there would be those human beings, then there would be nothing to be objects of respect."
Three consecutive generations have appeared since the second world war. The first wave began its career immediately after the war and reached its zenith in the early fifties. The second was launched by the events of the mid-sixties and reached its peak in 1968, but its momentum continued to expand in the late seventies. The third movement arose in the eighties and has not yet reached its zenith. The second and third movements grew out of the first, and the third from the second, both in the sense of continuation but also in the sense of reversing the signs of the previous movement.

The existentialist generation was the first and the movement, the rapidity with which Sartre's message, though not necessarily his philosophy, caught the minds of the young in Western Europe, and to some extent in Central and Southern Europe, was in itself not unprecedented.

The Romantic movement had spread just as swiftly, over a century ago. What was unprecedented, however, was the character of the movement, namely the circumstance, realized only in retrospect, that the existentialist movement was the first in a series of the most striking phenomena of Western history in the second half of our century.

Freedom

What mattered now was doing things in one's own way, practicing the rejection of our culture as a whole, being absorbed by our culture as a whole, so that the meaning of life. Freedom remained the main value, however, and unlike (he present situation in which concrete cultural phenomena of Western history in the second half of our century.

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What follows is an edited extract from a lecture entitled "Existentialism, alienation, postmodernism: Cultural movements as vehicles of change in the patterns of everyday life."

History meets public demand

The history business is booming in Australia and not just because of the Bicentenary. Aboriginal land claims, museums, building conservation and tourism are all demanding a new type of historian who can do more than pore over old diaries in libraries. There is work for practical historians — and the beginnings of an entirely new sub-discipline known as public history.

Last year the War Memorial introduced an innovative course for undergraduate honors students called History in the Field, which demonstrated the uses of history in the community and taught some research techniques. This course has been such a success that the university next year will introduce Australia's first MA in Public History.

This will focus on the problems of 'applied' history, and include a series of workshops in such techniques as site analysis, archival research techniques, report-writing, professional ethics and financial issues.

Central to the program will be an 'internship' with a public or private employer which will be written up as a research project," says History lecturer Dr Chris McConville.

"Historians are already working in a range of situations outside universities and colleges.

"At the same time, many professionals without historical training are having to deal with historical issues.

"The course is designed both for historians interested in the public history area, and for other graduates whose work involves historical analysis.

"Conservation architects, local history librarians, history teachers, museum curators and other professionals would be welcomed," says Dr McConville.

"Graduates from areas other than history may need to do some preliminary subjects, but credits may be granted for professional experience.

As a social theory, postmodernism has been developing since the 1960s. It had its origin in a transformation of the idea of modernity, which it replaced. Postmodernism was the creation of the alienation generation disillusioned with a false perception of a world.

As a cultural movement (not as an ideology, theory or program) has a simple enough message: anything goes.

It is neither conservative nor revolutionary nor progressive. It is neither a wave of rising hope nor a tide of deep despair. It is a cultural movement which makes distinctions of this kind irrelevant. Post-modernism is a wave within which all kinds of movements, artistic, political and cultural, are possible.

We have already had several brand new movements. There have been movements with a focus on health, anti-smoking, body building, alternative medicine, marathon-running and jogging. A movement of sexual counter-revolution has been developing. We have had and still have peace or anti-nuclear movements. Ecological movements are in full bloom. We witness the expansion of feminist movements, the movement for educational reform and much else.

We no longer have 'good taste' or 'bad taste'. (Of course, one still might refer to having taste not in the sense of distinguishing between the better and the worse within the same genre.)

If postmodernism, then, is going to be absorbed by our culture as a whole, we will finally reach the end of the transformation which began with the existentialist generation after the second world war. This is not a prophecy about the end of movements, rather the opposite. What this statement does forecast is a situation in which concrete cultural transformations will take place in so far as they affect one or another generation. However, the movements themselves will not occur in the form of new cultural waves. They will not, finally, will not be the 'movements of the young'; they will not only be cross-cultural but also cross-generational movements.

What the three waves of cultural movements have achieved thus far and what can be expected to happen in the near future, will be discussed in the same breath. The transformation is uneven, in the present of one country is the future of another. Yet even where the transformations are most spectacular, they are far from being close to comple...
Language skills would boost world trade

Australia will lose out on overseas markets unless our linguistic competence is improved, Mr Joe Lo Bianco of the Commonwealth Schools Commission told a seminar group at Monash during National Languages Week (9-16 August).

"Typical institutions could put a persuasive case to the government for the establishment of a range of key centres of teaching and research in language," he said.

"We need to follow the example of countries like Sweden who were pursuing "niche marketing".

"The best way to understand that is to look at the way Volvo is marketed overseas," he said.

"They may tolerate an elasticity in the price of Volvos, which are relatively expensive cars, because they are able to target and niche the economies of their markets and build up the Volvo's reputation as a well-engineered and very safe car.

"Australia's economic prosperity over the next decade and a half depends on that process of sophisticated understanding of the market - but for that you need trained people who are linguistically competent.

"Sweden has recently reduced the amount of teaching that it does in English and increased substantially the amount of teaching it does in Spanish.

"What they are effectively trying to do is carve out initials in Spanish-speaking countries - Spanish being by far the fastest growing language in the world - for their products which they know they do well enough with in English-speaking countries.

"The United States recently used the evidence of their major, most important business people to advocate precisely the same thing.

"If English is not enough for the United States and the United Kingdom, which is moving the same way, it ought not to be enough for Australia." he said.

"Only one-third of Australian government representatives overseas who occupied "language-essential" positions were linguistically proficient, Mr Lo Bianco said.

"This means two-thirds of our trade officials and public servants cannot meet one of the most essential requirements of their job." he said.

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Courses for all

Overcome stress through effective management planning, reinforce the notion with a relaxing massage, and then make doubly sure - talk to your plants.

The Arts and Crafts Centre is the place to go for such Creative Leisure Courses as stress management, massage courses, and couples massage.

There are more than 40 courses for all tastes, including leadlighting for the nostalgic, French polishing for the practical, and harmonica playing for the Blues enthusiast, life drawing for the game and chocolate-making for the sweet tooth.

Brochures for the spring program are available from the centre, ext. 3180.

WHAT'S ON

Lunch music

The Religious Centre's lunchtime recital series will continue this term with the following program:

COACH NEEDED

The Monash University Cricket Club wishes to appoint a practice captain to assist the coach at training sessions.

Ideally this person would be a retired cricketer from within the university community, although we would like to hear from any interested persons, male or female. A remuneration is negotiable for the successful applicant.

Last season the club showed itself to be the most successful turf club in the Eastern Suburbs Cricket Association with three sides out of six playing in finals matches.

Details regarding the practice captain may be obtained from either John Hill, 342 7703 (B), 870 4138 (H) or Adrian Jackson 606 6976 (H), 898 6276 (H).

John Hill

Honorary Secretary

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IMPORTANT DATES

The Registrar advises the following important dates for students in September:

- 3 Sept - Monash University Orchestra, directed by Gerald Gentry.
- 10 Sept - Paul Thom "Premiere Orde" (complete) for Harpsichord (François Couperin).

All recitals will take place between 1.30pm and 2pm on Thursdays in the Religious Centre. They are free and open to the public. Inquiries should be directed to the Chaplains' Office, ext. 3160.

Job ethics

Chemistry, animal experimentation, psychology and politics will be examined this month in a second series of seminars on Current ethical issues in the professions and occupations.

The series, organised jointly by the Careers and Appointments Service and the Chaplains' Office, is held at 1.10pm on Tuesdays in R3 (Rotunda).

Inquiries should be directed to Ms Jenny Baldwin, ext. 3150, or Reverend Philip Huggins, ext. 3162.

Light classical

Enjoy a light-hearted look at the Classics tomorrow night (Thursday 2 September) in Tea and Fun with CLIO, to be presented at 6pm in the Guy Monson Rooms, ground floor, Menzies Building.

The CLIO club is part of Classical Studies, and inquiries can be directed to the department's office on ext. 3263. (Clio is the muse of history.)

Paddy's market

A second-hand book, a plant, a cake, a piece of sewing - all these and more make up the annual Paddy's Market which will be held on Thursday 17 September in the Union Building between 9am and 2pm.

The organisers are the 'Friends of Monash University Incorporated.'

"We are the updated Monash Parents' Group with a new name, a new constitution and a new mandate which goes beyond parents and includes all friends, well-wishers, and supporters of the university.

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Bargains galore

Monash's first "garage sale" was such a tremendous success that the equipment officer, Mr Earl Headland, would like to see another organized "while the public is still in the buying mood," Mr Headland said.

More than $34,800 passed through the cash registers over the two days of the sale last month, and only 80 of the nearly 1000 items were left unsold. "We've already received dozens of inquiries about when the next sale will be," Mr Headland said.

Alex sets new record

The Alexander Theatre's audience increased by an estimated 10,000 last year, mainly due to the growth in popularity of children's theatre.

Mr Phil A'Vard, theatre manager, said the attendances for the Saturday Club, a series of productions designed specifically for children, had risen dramatically. "We had such a remarkably good run that we had to put on additional programs," Mr A'Vard said children's productions had a spin that made parents aware of the theatre's existence. Plays and stage productions attracted more than 114,000 people, while an estimated 5500 attended conferences and seminars. The total audience in 1985 was 108,500.

The increase was despite a regular hirer's nagging use of the theatre and the late cancellation of a large booking by combined student groups. Mr A'Vard said this year had seen an even greater increase in children's theatre, although he predicted adult theatre, although he predicted adult theatre.

Monash Reporter

The next issue will be published in the first week of October, 1987. Copy deadline is Friday, September 23, and early copy is much appreciated. Contributions (letters, articles, photos) and suggestions should be addressed to the editor, Lisa Kelly, Information Office, University Offices, or ring ext. 2085.

SEPTEMBER DIARY

The events listed below are open to the public.

ALEXANDER THEATRE
23: SCHOOL HOLIDAY ATTRACTION — "Tales of Christopher Robin". Children's Ballet pres. by Young Dancers' Theatre at 10am, 2pm daily. Adults $11.90, child $5.90.


ROBERT BLACKWOOD HALL
12: EVENING CONCERT — "Perspective Concernt No. 5". Symph. Orchestra cond. by Gerard Schwarz. Holberg Suite (Grieg), Horn Concerto Nos. 1 (Mozart), The Firebird: Ballet (Stravinsky). 8pm. Tickets available from RASS outlets or 10 Queen Street.


LECTURES, SEMINARS, EXHIBITIONS


ABORIGINAL STUDIES LECTURE — "Koorie Languages", by Ms Eve Fesl. 1.10pm. R6. Admission free. Inquiries ext. 3244.

ETHICAL ISSUES IN THE PROFESSIONS — Ethics by Dr W. P. Anderson. 1.10pm. R3. Admission free. Inquiries ext. 3150, 3162.


17: RELIGIOUS CENTRE RECITAL SERIES — "Anthropology and Archaeologists", by Dr G. R. Sibley. 1pm R6. Admission free. Inquiries ext. 3244.


MONASH UNIVERSITY GALLERY