Two Monash groups which extend the university’s work into the community have been given $30,000 grants by the Federal Government.

Under the Higher Education Equity Program, the Careers and Appointments Service and MOSA (Monash Orientation Scheme for Aborigines) have received the awards for their outreach programs.

The Careers and Appointments grant will be used to extend the Schools Link project, in which students from selected schools are encouraged to enter tertiary study.

The co-ordinator, Bryan Barwood, says up to 18 schools will be included in the program this year. They have been selected on the basis of their low retention rates in Years 10-12 and their low tertiary participation rates.

“The program has three major components: to promote the advantages of tertiary education to students and their families; to provide access under special admission arrangements and to provide support systems for the students in their first year at Monash,” he says.

Government and private schools in the city and country take part in the program. They include Hadam, Cranbourne and Alexandra high schools and Christian Community College, Maryborough.

“We are also working with schools which have recently established Year 12, and with those which have a high migrant enrolment,” Mr Barwood said.

While about 20 students have entered Monash through special admissions since the scheme began two years ago, many more from the selected schools have been encouraged to apply, and have qualified, for places through standard entry.

MOSA, which offers access to higher education for unqualified Aboriginal students, will use the money to support its move into laboratory-based courses.

Director, Mr Isaac Brown, says the scheme, which has been operating for five years in the faculties of Law, Arts, and ECOPS, has now been extended into Engineering, Medicine and Science.

Laboratory space has been made available in the Science faculty, but MOSA must provide its students with specialised equipment including an oven, cathode ray oscilloscope, analytical balance, conductivity meter and ripple tank.

The scheme was praised last year following an independent review by Dr Deirdre Jordan, who strongly supported its extension into the laboratory-based faculties with a two-year bridging course. (The bridging course is for one year in the other faculties.)

Dr Jordan described MOSA as “a program of national significance which may be used as a model for other programs which provide access to university education not only for Aboriginal people but for the disadvantaged in general.”

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**New centre will be crucial test**

The new Institute of Contemporary Asian Studies will be “an absolutely crucial test for Monash”, says the Dean of Arts, Professor John Hay.

It has the capacity to foster collaboration within faculties.

“The institute will signal to the public how conspicuously strong is the field of Asian studies.”

And with a bit of luck it will signal to Monash how essential it is to get our ways of representing ourselves in better shape,” he says.

“Much of what we’re doing has, in a sense, been fragmented. It’s part of a Monash ‘keeping to my own patch’ syndrome, which means that you’re not working collaboratively as you might with people elsewhere.”

Professor Hay was speaking after he had announced the establishment of the institute to a recent meeting of Friends of Monash University.

He said in its attempt to combat the old insularity of faculties, the new institute would focus attention on one of the university’s major strengths: its Asian studies programs.

“More students participate in Asian courses at Monash than at any other Australian tertiary institution.

“More staff, proportionately, participate in Asian courses of one kind or another. And a greater percentage of the Monash budget is devoted to teaching and research in Asian studies than in any other field.”

Recent figures show that the total number of enrolments at Monash in courses with significant Asia-related content have increased from 1680 in 1984, to 2338 in 1988.

In tertiary institutions throughout Australia, over 97 per cent of students complete their courses without having studied a single Asian unit. At Monash, this year, 28 per cent of students in Arts and Economics and Politics are enrolled in Asian subjects.

The institute was established after it became clear that the public was not aware of the breadth and depth of Asian studies at Monash, said Professor Hay.

“It would be nice if the wider community could recognise what there is at Monash and Monash itself could take advantage of what there is here. That is to say, a very large pool of consultancy and teaching expertise which covers language and society in Asian countries.

“Without any tertiary institution in Australia can make those claims.”

The prominence of Asian studies at Monash would be maintained in the face of any cuts in funding, said Professor Hay. It is a priority area in the Faculty of Arts and this is reflected in the aims of the new institute.

The first aim is to co-ordinate and advise, so it will...and the second aim is to actively involve people from the wider community — from ‘downtown’ — in this planning and advisory exercise.”

In addition to representatives from the faculties of Arts, Economics and Politics, Law and Education, the institute will have members of the public sitting on its advisory board.

“We’re looking to approach people outside the university who want to encourage Asian studies at Monash, People with expertise in business and international relations, such as diplomats and the like.”

Although the institute will be organising occasional seminars and working parties, its primary purpose is disseminating, planning and integrating — in Professor Hay’s terms, a “hat-trick”.

And we see ourselves as an intellectual resource, as an absolutely, fundamentally important community resource, not to be as consultants in the field go.

“I don’t simply mean that we’ll be doing consultancy for money, although that will come into it. But it is also a resource to which people can turn for advice.”

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**Masters course in bioethics**

The Centre for Human Bioethics is establishing a Master of Bioethics course, the first of its kind in Australia.

From the beginning of 1989, up to 40 students a year — health care professionals, educators and qualified interested laypeople — may enrol part-time for a Master of Bioethics degree by thesis alone, or by coursework and minor thesis.

The course represents an important move into teaching for the centre which, since its establishment in 1981, has rapidly become one of the most influential research institutes in the world.

The coursework units will consist of two compulsory subjects — Ethics and Legal Issues in Bioethics — and two elective subjects from a group which will include Ethical Issues in Life and Death, Issues in Reproductive Technology, Health Economics and the Allocation of Medical Resources and History and Philosophy of the Health Care System.

Many of the elective units will be taught by guest lecturers from departments such as philosophy, law, economics and community medicine.
 Blues ain’t blues at ol’ Castrol U

Robert Frost was an OK poet in his way, I ’pose. Maybe dialectical themes went down real easy in them days.

But, yes, for a hard-headed Yankee his act gets a bit untight; I mean, asking a dumb question like, “Why make so much of fragmentary blue?”

If he had ever stuck his Cape Cod nose over the Catskills he would have learnt a thing or two about Castrol U — blues ain’t blues, Robert.

Let’s face it, Monash turquoise was a great idea in the Seventies era. (Did you ever notice that it’s just the shade of a Uni Club dinner.) Get it? Y’know ... labour, labor: coloured wool. No, she says it’s got nothing to do with all them weird books she’s run on (no, dumbum, the other one) - rats’ll get yer if yer doesn’t move faster.

But she has passed on (no, dumbum, the other one) sneezing yer hairpiece off in the dust of our, Color. Yeah, that’s right.) Heraldic Blue is a NOW colour.

OK, say Fraser does a comeback; section of confection, man; yer goes for Prussian blue. Joh for Canberra? Easy, cornflower. Radical feminists? Dummo, really ... don’t think powder blue’d do much for ‘em ... ’pose yer could try Beryl. What’s that, Harvie? Oxford, yet says OK, then. Yer thinking about them ethersnicks? No probs; or them old Copenhagen blue, Bile, Bengal light, Persy, or if yer doesn’t wanna get real specific, ultramarine. If yer really feels that cookey about the socialists, try cyanin but if yer wants to survive, Brunswick might do.

Yeah, I knows what yer means. Interfacing with the external community in any sense, let alone the widest, can be a real bastard if IVF’s being run by fourth-year med students. I know they’ll be cheaper than Carl and his mob, but ... y’know ... OK, if you say so.

Hey, man! I had this dumb Arts student ask me ... yeah, aren’t they, but. And this one was mature. In age, anyway. But how do I expain that her Ph.D. is going to be just as good supervised once every six months by a sessional tutor?

No, seems she’s into it just because she gets a rash hand-spinning natural coloured wool. No, she says it’s got nothing to do with all them weird books her kids is reading for HSC. I dunno, really, something isn’t upgradeing her qualifications now that she’s running personnel at SEC. No, it’s the other one what’s queen bee in the unions. Yeah, man, that true, this way won’t be getting no more of these know-alls full of bloody achievment and experience and all that crap.

Like I told yous, mate, Harve’s got it taped. Alice Blue.

George Silberbauer, Anthropology & Sociology

Bending to the corporate effort

Our corporate efforts were then bent towards speculating upon what might be “a well designed, coherent prescription for all manner of advertising and public awareness activities”, and what those activities might be. I have to report that, as far as we managed to get, we found it unsatisfying and, taken in conjunction with various other such phrases in the message, even perhaps a trifle embarrassing.

Left to myself, I was glad to learn that, at last, Monash is to have the heraldic colour which was designed for it, instead of the turquoise which has contributed so much to making our graduation ceremonies painful. This would be welcome at any time. In the present circumstances, I believe that the Vice-Chancellor and the advertising agency which he has consulted deserve our heartfelt congratulations.

Bruce Knox

School is handy

As president of the Council of Monash High School, I would like to draw the attention of university staff and students to the presence of the school as a convenient location for their children.

The school is vertically structured from Years 7 - 11 enabling students in general to progress at their own rates. A wide range of VCE options is available and excellent results have been achieved.

The school takes special pride in its diverse extra-curricular program: in an extensive instrumental musical program (all students in Year 7 to learn to play an instrument); and in a unique and innovative special interest program (all students are consulted about the various extra-curricular program areas to which they want to be referred to the functions of the connections parts on the rear of my computer, our combined lack of worldly wisdom led us to conclude that it was meaningless.

Loose ends

I refer to the Vice-Chancellor’s signed message in SOUND of 22 June 1988. I cannot accept the assertions regarding the style of letterhead will convey to the community the achievements of Monash University.

What will convey these to the community is the message carried underneath.

Such clauses as “I expect the loose ends of the design phase will be completed very soon” (my emphasis) can only denigrate our image. SOUND is a public document.

Gordon Tramp, Physics.

Feather age

In talking to a friend from the Chemistry department the conversation came round to the quairain by P.A.M. Dirac, the late Nobel Laureate in Physics, about physicists’ fear of “old age” — that is, an age over 30.

He did not know the quairain and said that it was not true of chemists, quoting good examples. Others may not know Dirac’s quairain:

Age is of course a fever chill
That every physicist must fear;
He’s better dead than being still
When once he’s past his thirthy year.

It seems to call for successors:

But chemists with amazement bleen
To hear young physicists have flopped;
Chimists stand still by their bench
When all the rest have stopped.

Can this be so, a lettered colleague jeers,
That scientists find age to give release?
Why, I’ve been working these many years
On my posthumous masterpiece.

You find the Calendar brings you
distance
And thirty gives you warmth?

He’s better dead than being still
When once he’s past his thirthy year.

dirac
Prestigious award for a dedicated teacher

Associate Professor Tony Lee of the department of Zoology was awarded the Australian Mammal Society's prestigious Ellis Troughton Medal at the society's centenary meeting in Sydney in May.

The award was presented to Dr Lee in recognition of his contribution to research into Australian mammalogy. It is only the third time it has been given. The medal was struck 10 years ago in honor of Ellis Troughton, former curator of mammals at the Australian Museum and Australia's foremost mammalogist in the years between the World Wars.

"... koalas are not threatened by the disease... the animals are still able to maintain a birthrate that allows populations to increase..." Since Dr Lee started work at Monash 24 years ago (“I feel almost cemented here”), he has assisted in the supervision of 18 Ph.D. students and many Masters students.

One of his noted charges was Dr Andrew Cockburn, who has been described as Australia's best zoologist. In 1983, Dr Lee and Dr Cockburn won the Whitely award for the best text in biological sciences with their book, "Evolutionary Ecology in Marsupials.

Dr Lee said: "I see myself as a facilitator and authority of clever young minds. I feel my own contribution has been through my ability to attract many good students." In the past four years, Dr Lee and yellow Monash zoologists, Dr Kath Handsayde and Roger Martin, have been studying the effects of the reproductive tract disease, chlamydiosis, on Victoria’s koala population. Their work has demonstrated that, contrary to popular opinion, koalas are not threatened by the disease. Although it does impair reproduction, the animals are still able to maintain a birthrate that allows most populations to increase.

If the Monash team's findings are certain to upset sections of the Australian media, "If something's not dying out, it ceases to become attractive," said Dr Lee.

The department of Zoology received another honor at the Australian Mammal Society meeting when Ph.D. candidate, Clare McArthur, won the Bolliger Award for the most outstanding student paper. Ms McArthur is studying the effects of tannins found in gumleaves on the digestive tract of ring-tailed possums.

The effects of tannins on the digestive system of animals is quite complex. However, it is known that they can cause a depletion of proteins which may lead to a lowering of health. When an animal consumes plant food containing tannins, the tannin binds with the available protein and causes proteins to precipitate. Once in solution, the proteins become harder to digest.

Ms McArthur has discovered that the digestive system of the ring-tailed possum has been able to adapt to the quantities of tannin found in its diet of gumleaves.

After completing her Ph.D at Monash, Ms McArthur hopes to continue her research in the United States where techniques are being developed that examine how a range of animals can be affected by tannins.

Giving cheese a taste of culture

We may not be able to build a better mousetrap but, through the newly-established Microbial Biotechnology and Diagnostic Unit, Monash has gone into the business of making a better cheese.

With more than 20 experts in the biotechnology field, the unit, under the tradename Micromon, is tackling such industry problems as the development of new vaccines and the search for better cheese culture.

In opening the unit, the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Logan, emphasised the importance of such an enterprise in helping to improve relationships between the university and industry.

The unit has all kinds of implications for those industries making use of microbial activity — including the wool industry and it is already involved in routine consultancies such as sterilising contaminated materials for commercial laboratories.

It also has a contract to check cooling systems for microbial contamination.
Counselling: Help when it’s needed

In the recently-published 1987 annual report of the University Counselling Service, the director, Graham Briscoe, has expressed concern about increasing levels of stress among staff members. In accepting the report, the University Counselling Committee recommended that the issue be raised with the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Logan. The following is an edited version of Mr Briscoe’s comments.

The past year has been a very busy one for the service. With the advent of the new Vice-Chancellor, Professor Mal Logan, it was agreed that the university should be more inward and outward looking — inward, at its quality of people and outward, at its relationships with both the Government and the private sector.

It was made abundantly clear that the path ahead for tertiary institutions was not rosy — financial cutbacks were imminent both in terms of recurrent expenditure and in terms of research. Institutions would have to generate more of their own funding, the status of tertiary institutions would be called in question in terms of their research functions, greater access to the disadvantaged had to be attained and the possibility of the re-introduction of fees for many students was raised.

The university immediately embarked upon defining a mission statement and a strategic plan. The Vice-Chancellor has endeavored to keep the lines of communication open with all staff to keep them informed of the direction in which the university is moving and to allay the fears that staff may have concerning proposed governmental and institutional changes.

It became apparent, as the year wore on, however, that signs of stress began to appear within various staff groups. Initially there were signs of excitement at the prospect of constructive changes which were aimed at redressing old grievances — overdue maintenance to run-down facilities, review of general staff salaries, increased funding for research initiatives, greater emphasis on public relations and contact with the community outside.

However, signs of stress began to emerge, especially when staff began to ask, "How will all these changes affect me?" "Why is this initiative being funded and not mine?" "Why has my budget been cut back for 1988?" "Why haven’t I got my budget yet?" "Why can’t I replace this staff member?"

Staff reactions in times of stress tend to follow a pattern of firstly, disbelief (tinged with anger) and then are followed by annoyance, frustration, anger, fear, and if we are not careful, cannibalism and dysfunction.

Concerns expressed by the University Counselling Service were echoed in moves by the two staff associations late last month:

**MUGSA (Monash University General Staff Association)**

In a call for general staff members to join MUGSA because "your future may depend on it", the association’s president, Doug Rash, said tertiary education in Australia was in a state of uncertainty as a result of changed attitudes from within and without.

The impact of the Dawkins initiatives on finances, the Cullen report on constitutional amalgamations and the new corporate image at Monash are yet to be properly felt.

Some of the changes that have been made, however, which have occurred raise serious concerns for representative bodies such as the General Staff Association.

For many years, this association and its academic counterpart, SAMU, have sought cooperation in a separate and timely consultation and to have some input in the decision-making process. This has not always been achieved and in recent times it seems to have been almost ignored.

Major issues of current concern for general staff include: institutional amalgamations; the salary classification review; the corporate image and its consequences; the operation of management and the work-force is critical to the development of more efficient enterprise and industries in Australia.

Recognising that we are a vulnerable group (not many votes in universities!) industry, current management approaches to our future and practices; contracts of employment; apparent increases in the use of external consultants; labor market attitudes to the 4 per cent second tier negotiations; Council and the committee system; additional workloads; staff turnover; and a yet-to-be-quantified high level of stress.

Bearing in mind that changes in the way things are done, and by whom, will inevitably arise from reviews of the activities mentioned above and more, it is of crucial importance that the new university management adopt a cooperative approach to achieving these changes.

The Confederation of Australian Industry (CAI) and the Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU) recently published a booklet outlining their shared conviction "that the cooperation of management and the work-force is critical to the development of more efficient enterprise and industries in Australia".

In major issues of current concern for general staff include: institutional amalgamations; the salary classification review; the corporate image and its consequences; consultation and to have some input in the decision-making process. This has not always been achieved and in recent times it seems to have been almost ignored.

SAMU (Staff Association of Monash University)

At a special meeting called to discuss the possible amalgamation of Monash with Chisholm Institute and its implications for academic staff, SAMU agreed to the following:

- that it undertake a plebiscite of all members on the amalgamation question, and make the results available to the Vice-Chancellor as soon as possible;
- that the association give its approval only to amalgamations which had clear advantages for Monash and no disadvantage for any department or faculty;
- that the Vice-Chancellor be asked to halt discussions on amalgamations, and withdraw authorisation for other offices which were in progress until he had advised faculties and departments of the educational advantages to Monash.

SAMU members also called for more information about the consequences of mergers — what they could expect and what the likely effects would be.

They were concerned that they would have no protection against increasing workloads, and that a possible "cabinet of curiosities" could develop in which one institution dominated another.

It was claimed that communications about the merger were better at Chisholm than at Monash, and that a staff forum should be held on the issue.

The meeting also expressed concern that "most action at Monash was going on at the top", "there are wild stories about changes to system and job classifications", and "people are uncomfortable".

Enrolments in Japanese at Monash are far outstripping those in other language departments, says Professor Juri Neustupny, the chairman of the department of Japanese Studies.

Professor Neustupny was speaking at a meeting at the Monash city office, where expressions of interest were sought to form a UMA Japanese Studies alumni association.

This year represented the department’s “coming of age”, he said. In its first year of operation, the department numbered 30 students and three academic staff, including Professor Neustupny.

In 1988, 21 years later, 240 students began studying Japanese under 12 teaching staff in the largest language department in the Faculty of Arts.

Professor Neustupny told the meeting of 50 graduates that many of the department’s former students were now teaching in Japan, the United States and Southeast Asia. Several were professors at Cambridge and Harvard, and at universities in Japan.

The department has Australia’s best-developed postgraduate courses in the Japanese language, he said. This year it introduced postgraduate courses in Applied Japanese Linguistics and Japanese Business Communications.

Following Professor Neustupny’s address, Ms Robyn Spence-Brown, a lecturer in Japanese, called for volunteer help to form the alumni association.

Japanese comes of age

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In a situation in which staff feel that they have no autonomy, then we must ensure that there continues to be good communication — communication which is two way — and, especially in a tertiary institution, we must never lose sight of the fact that “education and learning” are our raison d’être.

In times of stress the functions of staff development and staff support services must be maintained. The Student Health Service and University Counselling Service have vital roles to play in assisting staff members adjust to the changes they face. Such services are essential to maintaining the health and well-being of the university community.

Our Counselling Service values greatly the responsibility placed on us in times of change, and is determined to ensure that it carries out its responsibility in a highly professional manner.
New lions from a well-versed poet

Tasmanian poet, Gwen Harwood, who is the English department's first Writer-in-Residence for 1988, has kindly given Monash Reporter permission to print this recent, and unpublished, sonnet. The Lion's Bride may be read in its original sonnet form (and before deconstruction) in Gwen Harwood's Selected Poems.

The Lion's Bride
Deconstructed

I loved her softness, her warm human smell,
Her dark mane flowing loose. Sometimes stirred by
rank longing laid my muzzle on her thigh.
Her father, faithful keeper, fed me well,
but she came daily with our special bowl
barefoot into my cage, and set it down,
our love feast. We became the talk of town,
brute king and tender woman, soul to soul.

Until today: an icy spectre sheathed
in silk minced to my side on pointed feet.
I ripped the scented veil from its unreal
head and engorged the painted lips that breathed
our secret names.

A ghost has bones, and meat!
Come soon, my love, my bride, and share this meal.

I bring from old Vienna
a story from the zoo
about what happened when a
beast met a girl he knew.
She liked, the keeper's scion,
to visit with the lion,
and on her wedding day
went to his cage to say
"This is goodbye, dear Leo."
He didn't like Arpege
but now it feels fine.

I told her I loved her
with leonine pride.
Some rival has shoved her
away from my side.
I won't let him have her.
My heart took a
beating,
He didn't like Arpege
but now it feels fine.

I talk to his cage to say
"Bite! Bite! What a thrill.
My darling come back!
There are bones here to crack.

I ripped the scented veil from its unreal
head and engorged the painted lips that breathed
our secret names.

Pyrotechnic
Chemfest
at Alex

The Alexander Theatre was filled with
pyrotechnics and sound effects last month
when a top-hatted Dr Ian Dickson (right) of
Victoria State College's Ruseden Campus in-
troduced Year 11 and 12 students to
Chemistry in the Theatre. Dr Dickson's
unusual demonstrations were part of
Chemfest 88, a three-day lecture series run
by the Royal Australian Chemical Institute
in conjunction with Monash and Ruseden.
Other lectures were presented by Associate
Professor Ian Rase of the department of
Chemistry and Dr Robert Jones of the
University of Technology, Sydney.
Winds of change should be welcome: Webb

As an economist, let me be quick to join the humanists to insist that:

• a university is not just a knowledge factory;
• its staff are not just labor inputs into a production function;
• its buildings, laboratories and equipment are not just the capital inputs into the same production function;
• its students are not merely raw material being transformed into products with a higher value added;
• the whole university is certainly greater than the sum of its parts.

But Mr Dawkins and his Green Paper writers are not naive. They know that higher education generates public benefits (that is, it is a public good in the economist's sense) as well as private benefits.

And I don't think they are so Philistine as some believe them to be. They see themselves as embarked on an attempt to redress what they see as an overemphasis in higher education on government funding and government regulation, associated with an overemphasis on the public-good aspect of higher education. Essentially this is because they perceive an underemphasis on the private benefits, to graduates and their employers, of higher education.

Looking at the matter from a broader perspective, we are seeing the application to higher education of the decision by Flow Webb, Vice-Chancellor of Griffith University. But the 'winds of change' should be welcomed because, even in an open, more competitive higher education market, the future of the humanities is secure.

The Green Paper, the beginnings of a private sector in higher education, the Wran Committee's proposals for partial user-pays in higher education through student fees — these are just parts of the indicators of the extension of the deregulationist mood to higher education.

Provided that the promised reduction of regulation is actually delivered — and this is rather a big proviso at this stage — we should, I think, on the whole welcome these winds of change. The dangers have been stressed by others, so I forgive me if I concentrate on some of the advantages.

Directions

For too long, the directions of higher education have been determined mainly by participants in, and regulators of, the system. These directions have not had to survive direct market tests, or indeed direct tests of any kind, of appropriateness or relevance to community needs.

Employers and other 'consumers' of university services have of course been able to influence the content of courses to a limited extent by offering advice, serving on faculty boards, by writing to the newspapers, and so on.

But they have not had a great deal of power to influence curricula, especially in the arts, science, social science and commerce areas, that is the so-called non-professional areas.

The content of these, and perhaps other courses, has been driven mainly by the evolving interests and enthusiasms of academic staff and their research and postgraduate student communities.

Some would say this is right and proper. Some would say, mistakenly I think, that it is of the essence of academic freedom.

But it needs to be borne in mind that this form of academic planning and development has been operating essentially as a protected industry.

The community, speaking through elected governments, the business councils and the trade unions, now wants a more accountable and a more responsive system.

Such a system has been evolving for some years, but the pace of change has been greatly accelerated by the Green Paper.

Where are the humanists going? What is their prospect in a more open, more competitive, more market-tested scene?

Future

First, the future of the humanities is secure. They will remain at the core of any institution recognised as a university. Essentially this is because of concern with the quality of communication between the past and the present, between cultures and nations of different languages, is increasingly at a premium in a world where electronic technology has broken down many quantitative barriers to communication.

But the quality of communication technology expanded to keep pace with the quantity and this will take time to witness the lag between the discovery of television and the development of media technologies able to take full advantage of that medium.

Secondly, it is more important than ever to break down the wall between the scientific and the humanist areas of education. Sadly, we are making very little progress with this, especially at the school level. Indeed, competition for entry into a limited number of professional courses in higher education has produced an even deeper gulf in our schools between the mathematics and science stream and the arts stream, than existed 20 or 30 years ago.

The humanists should themselves move to bridge this gap. In particular, it is important that the information technology revolution be thoroughly embraced by the humanists.

There is more for humanists in the information technology revolution than word processing! Logic, linguistics and artificial intelligence, and expert systems belong as much to the humanists as to the sciences — and indeed in this context the two-culture concept loses any coherence it might otherwise have.

Thirdly, and while I am mentioning technology, let me be so bold as to say that the technology of humanities teaching and research might need some attention. Humanists are not alone, of course, in their commitment to the technology of chalk and talk.

I made a firm resolve when I went to Griffith that I would resist the construction of large-scale theatres (the word is well-chosen) where one lecturer/performer holds sway over 400 or 500 students for a statutory 50 minutes.

But the technology is remarkably persistent, and Griffith will have its first 400-seat theatre within two years. There must be a better way! Humanists as humanitarians should help to find it.

Another persistent piece of technology in the humanities, to a greater extent than in the social and natural sciences, is the 'lone-scholar' mode of research. This technology is still regarded as best-practice by many humanists, who look askance at the development of team-based research in other disciplines, and who condemn the ASTEC Report on research in higher education and the Green Paper for their tendency to favor research funding of projects involving teams of researchers.

I think this concern is exaggerated. History can be written by teams, and, as with laboratory-based research by groups of researchers, resulting work may well be richer, and more rapidly completed, as a result. I do not suggest that humanists should fall down and worship at the altar of conformist grantmanship. But some adjustment is both possible and desirable.

Fourthly, the humanities in Australia must continue to shed their Eurocentricity if they are to contribute fully to Australia's future. The shift of the world's centre of economic gravity from the Atlantic Basin to the Pacific Basin is a key theme of most contemporary futurology.

This is not intended to suggest that study of the rich heritage of European history, arts, language and culture should suddenly be abandoned. Fortun­ately, there is no real danger of that. It needs, however, to be placed in a different context, to be seen as less dominant in our future than it has been in our past.

First, there was the Great Spaghetti Bridge Competition.

The following year (1986), the Primitive Primordial Pristyn Cupreous Bridge appeared at Monash. Last month, the Ghastly Genialite Gaudy Balloon Out Of Gelenium made its world debut.

The competitions, for first-year Civil Engineering students, are devised by Professor Noel Murray.

The community, speaking through our elected governments, the business councils and the trade unions, now wants a more accountable and a more responsive system. Such a system has been evolving for some years, but the pace of change has been greatly accelerated by the Green Paper.

Where are the humanists going? What is their prospect in a more open, more competitive, more market-tested scene?
B doubles are a growing breed

Every driver has experienced that exquisite moment when the rear-vision mirror rapidly fills with the grim outline of a semi-trailer.

It is an unnerving sight that can make even the most devout motorist long for the days of horse-drawn transport. However, some transportation experts in Australia are currently urging state governments to reconsider the widespread use of an even larger breed of semi-trailer, the B-double combination.

Fitting a B-double to the prime mover, and you have the B-double — one of several medium combinations which the experts argue will revolutionise the Australian transport industry.

At a recent three-day symposium at Monash organised by the department of Civil Engineering and the Centre for Continuing Education, 180 delegates learned that all states except Tasmania have B-doubles or other medium combination vehicles operating under permit.

About 60 B-double combinations are already plying Australia’s highways with a 40 to 50 per cent increased freight capacity over that of ordinary semi-trailers.

The cost-efficiency of the larger trucks is beyond question, consideration of issues such as safety and environmental effects, road and traffic management, and effects on other modes of transport have delayed their wider introduction.

But according to symposium organiser, Assoc. Prof. Ken Ogden of the department of Civil Engineering, studies carried out in this country suggest it is only a matter of time before these 23-metre trucks become a common sight on our roads.

“People overseas are telling us...

"Look, you’ve done enough work. You can be confident about introducing medium combinations vehicles without any significant adverse consequences," said Dr Ogden.

The rules governing the B-doubles would ensure that the new vehicles are integrated smoothly into the existing transport system. The trucks would operate only on prescribed routes and to a speed limit, and could only travel at a specific time of day under a maximum loading.

The experience with B-double combinations in New Zealand, the United States and Canada has been very favorable, said delegate John Eicher, director of the Office of Motor Carriers in the Federal Highway Administration, United States Department of Transportation.

B-doubles had been used throughout the entire US highway system for the past five and a half years without any significant detrimental effect, he stated.

“They track better than semis, offer a terrific productivity boost to industry and have had no real effect on the rail industry."

Although five B-doubles can do the work of eight semi-trailers, the TNT Limited delegate to the symposium, Harry Close, believes that the introduction of the larger vehicles will not cause an upheaval in the trucking and rail industries. He said a shortage of good truck drivers existed already.

Rail unions have no argument with the B-doubles reducing the number of semi-trailers on the nation’s highways.

But according to delegate Glen Moorehead, a former national secretary of the Victorian Locomotive Engineers, there is a fear that the B-doubles may take over the role of some smaller country branch lines.

“We are concerned at the winding down in the number of members already underway. In some cases, we can see the B-doubles hastening that,” said Mr Moorehead.

Schools, on the issue of safety, one delegate adopted a later-day thinker’s viewpoint.

"With fewer trucks on the road, there’s a lot less road safety for the drunk to run into,” he said.
Children's author Jill Morris describes The Ark of Oz, the musical she co-wrote with Mary Lancaster, as "probably the largest, most spectacular musical for children ever put on in Australia''.

Currently playing at the Alexander Theatre, The Ark of Oz boasts seven actors, three puppeteers, three musicians, some 2.5m puppets, a raked stage and a six-metre gumtree, not to mention a big production crew.

"I decided at the time that the kids should have a Cazu too," said Ms Morris of the play which she hopes will become a standard production in Australian schools.

"We wanted to create something accessible to kids. While they won't have the Alex's fly tower and things like that at school, eventually they'll be able to do versions of The Ark of Oz.''

The play revolves around the adventures of a group of Australian animals in the outback. "It's a wonderful, vital breeding-ground for high-quality children's theatre, and I thought it was most appropriate that the play should be staged on the Alex as either musical director or composer.

"The Alex itself first came to Ms Morris's attention while she was reviewing children's theatre for The Age.

"It's a wonderful, vital breeding-ground for high-quality children's theatre, and I thought it was most appropriate that the play should be staged there," she said.

She described the theatre's workshop in a big floating nest with other people who have different attitudes, different needs and different backgrounds."

Instead of drawing comparisons, children will enjoy the antics of such characters as Granny Brolga (a puppet resembling a light plane and operated by three people), Lizzie the frill-necked lizard, and Bilby the rabbit-eared bandicoot.

Ms Morris believes the accompanying music confirms the status of composer, Faye Bendrups, as Australia's female equivalent of Andrew Lloyd Webber. The Ark of Oz is the 18th production on which Ms Bendrups has worked at the Alex as either musical director or composer.

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规则：回收

A university publication promoting rubbish recycling was launched by the Municipal Association of Victoria last month. Based on the report Domestic Waste Recycling: Municipal, Community and School Involvement published last year by the Graduate School of Environmental Science, Domestic Waste Recycling: Your Manual For Action describes how local councils can establish their own recycling programs.

The editor, Ian Thomas, of the Graduate School of Environmental Science, said at the launch: "We have some successful recycling operations and the technical know-how to recycle a lot more material.

"Our problem is to get people to participate by separating their domestic wastes. Most councils have to put more effort into showing they are serious about recycling and to give their schemes continuing publicity."

Councils can opt for one of five suggested recycling programs, from large municipal operations to those performed by small community groups. All Victorian councils have been sent a copy of the manual.

"You want to get people recycling without even thinking about it. Schools help develop this recycling habit when it is part of classroom work, and when in-house recycling is practised," said Mr Thomas.

"Schools can also act as drop-off centres for materials that can be sold to boost their funds."