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2006 SNAPSHOT VC'S PEAK

This year has been one of rapid change for the Division of Research & Region. A significant number of notable events and achievements have occurred during this time. Of particular note are:

- Establishment of four Priority Research & Innovation Projects (PRIPs);
- Establishment of Office for Industry and Community Engagement;
- Individual researcher rankings under the Research Quality Framework (RQF);
- Adoption of the Research Activity Index (RAI);
- Embedding the Associate Deans (Research & Research Training) into the research management structure;
- Involvement in the AUQA exercise;
- Discussion around the accreditation of research areas for supervision;
- Planning for the professional development activities of researchers;
- Research Matters: monthly bulletin launched;
- Researcher Development Scheme development and initiation.

The Division would like to particularly thank the Associate Deans for their commitment, invaluable assistance, lively discussions and enthusiasm. They have been a delight to work with.

There has been a real buzz about research at VU across 2006 as researchers step up to the mark concerning their personal, and team, research output and performance. Thankyou to our VU colleagues for your research contributions and we look forward to working with you all in the new year.

VC'S PEAK AWARDS FOR EXCELLENCE IN RESEARCH & RESEARCH TRAINING 2006

RESEARCH SUPERVISION CATEGORY AWARDED TO ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR HELEN BORLAND

Associate Professor Helen Borland has made an outstanding contribution to the development of postgraduate research students at VU. She has successfully supervised more than 10 postgraduate students. Helen has supervised students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and has fostered a collaborative and supportive student research culture.



Associate Professor Helen Borland and Professor Elizabeth Harman.

RESEARCH DEGREE GRADUATE CATEGORY AWARDED TO DR EWA SZTENDUR

Ewa Sztendur's PhD research has made an important contribution to the theory and practice of Response Surface Methodology. Ewa has published a number of papers in influential international research journals, with more papers expected. Her thesis examiners collectively agreed that her research has made a significant contribution to the field.



Professor Elizabeth Harman and Dr Ewa Sztendur.

THE VICE-CHANCELLOR AWARDED CITATIONS FOR EXCELLENCE IN RESEARCH TO THE FOLLOWING RESEARCHERS:

STAFF RESEARCHER CATEGORY:

Associate Professor Theo Papadopoulos, Faculty of Business & Law.

RESEARCH DEGREE GRADUATE CATEGORY:

Dr Charles Mphande, Faculty of Arts, Education & Human Development.

Dr Ewa Sztendur, Faculty of Health, Engineering & Science.

RESEARCH SUPERVISION CATEGORY:

Associate Professor Helen Borland, Faculty of Arts, Education & Human Development.

PASCOE PRAISES REMARKABLE CATHOLIC EDUCATOR

A new book dedicated to the life of a great Australian, John F. Kelly - Catholic priest, learned scholar and teacher, and written by **Professor Robert Pascoe**, Dean Laureate at Victoria University - will be launched on Tuesday November 28, 2006 at Victoria University's Flinders St Campus. The book is entitled "The Feasts & Seasons of John F. Kelly".

The biography of Monsignor John F Kelly (1910-1992) is the story of a remarkable man whose story has not been told till until now. He was one of Australia's great Catholic scholars but his story is also a chronicle of the history of the Irish in Victoria; the development of Australian Catholicism; and the virulent Catholic versus Protestant sectarianism that existed in his lifetime.

The story also reveals what it was like growing up Catholic in twentieth century Melbourne and experiencing the Catholic education system. It is a personal story but it is also about social and political struggle. At the beginning of John F.'s life being a Catholic meant being underprivileged in Australian society and during his life came the rise of BA Santamaria and the Democratic Labour Party.

Professor Robert Pascoe has used a variety of sources to recreate John F.'s life, including very personal excerpts from his Diary which he kept from 1934 till his death in 1992 1993. He made an entry in this Diary almost every day, and continued to do so until the year he died, six decades later. It is a rare resource, and, carefully read, yields marvellous insights into this remarkable person.

Professor Robert Pascoe says "One of Kelly's closest friends later in life was Victoria University's very own Ann Woodruff, who established the nursing program at Footscray Park in the mid-1980's. Kelly lived in Footscray for a quarter century - his descriptions of the suburb are quite revealing."

"Kelly was one of the brightest priests of his generation. He was more scholarly than political, so part of my intention with this book was to give him a voice, to use his diaries in particular to tell the story of how the Catholics came to assume the dominant role in our culture that they do today."

"People often judge the Church by its right-wing minority, but really the Catholic Church in Australia comprises many people who, like Kelly, are progressive in their politics, in their attitude to the role of the laity, and in their appreciation of women's capacity. Kelly would be quietly pleased by my biography, because it says things that he as a diocesan priest felt constrained not to say out loud."

Professor Robert Pascoe is an historian and is the author of 19 books and monographs about social history and Australian education.

SUCCESSFUL VICTORIA UNIVERSITY RESEARCHER DEVELOPMENT GRANTS SCHEME PROJECTS FOR 2006

- **M Carolan**, Nursing & Midwifery, Anxious waiting: Soft markers and high risk pregnancy, funded \$21,386.
- **C Stathis**, Biomedical Sciences, Does short-term exercise training decrease the sensitivity of muscle amp-activated protein kinase to amp during exercise in humans?, funded \$18,240.
- **M Elchalakani**, Architectural Civil and Mechanical Engineering, Strengthening and retrofitting of aging steel structures, funded \$20,000.
- **I Miliszewska**, Computer Science and Mathematics, Refinement of a multidimensional model for transnational computing education programs, funded \$14,445.
- **K Moinuddin**, CESARE, Measurement of the flow velocity field at the opening of fire enclosure, funded \$15,000.
- **K O'Brien**, Health Sciences, Pilot investigation of the efficacy of Japanese acupuncture in the modification of vascular compliance and endothelial function, funded \$15,000.
- **H Shee**, Management, Organisational capabilities, leadership and competitiveness: A comparative study of enterprises in Australia, US, India and Fiji, funded \$25,000.
- **L Lockstone**, Hospitality, Tourism & Marketing, An investigation of volunteering flexibility in the tourism sector, funded \$15,000.
- **C MacMahon**, Human Movement, Recreation and Performance, When are sport decisions biased by the hot-hand belief, the gambler's fallacy, or selective knowledge accessibility?, funded \$23,965.
- **A Pearce**, CARES, Neurophysiological changes associated with muscle fatigue and delayed muscles soreness, funded \$8,000.
- **C Goodman**, CARES, Understanding the mechanism of taurine improving skeletal muscle force and fatigue resistance, and in protecting against muscle damage, funded \$21,488.

2007 NEAR MISS GRANT

Associate Professor Fu-Chun Zheng from Electrical Engineering has been successful in obtaining funding of \$19,500 for a Near Miss grant titled: Space-time block coding over time selective fading channels.

FIFTEEN APA SCHOLARSHIPS FOR 2007!

VU recently received the exciting news that we have been allocated 15 Australian Postgraduate Awards for 2007. This is the highest number of APA's VU has ever been allocated, which is not only good news in its own right, but also highlights a return on our ongoing investment in research students.

Australian Postgraduate Awards are allocated based on the same funding formula that is used for RTS funding. This formula gives a 50% weighting for HDR completions, 40% for research income and 10% for research publications, each taken over the two most recent years for which data are available.

From the Office for Postgraduate Research's perspective, the University is starting to see the rewards from the increasing numbers of HDR students completing their degrees in recent years. We would like to take this opportunity to thank all the students, supervisors and staff who have worked so hard to make this possible. We look forward to ongoing successes in 2007 and beyond.

RESEARCH STUDENTS

The final week in November was a special week for at least three Victoria University research students.

Flossie Peitsch saw the submission of her exegesis and the opening of the accompanying exhibition at SPAN Galleries. In addition the book 'Flossie Peitsch: Art and Soul', published by MacMillan, was launched. This is a magnificent coffee table book that will aptly bring Flossie's art which focuses on family and spirituality into households this Christmas.

Euan Mitchel, a former research student, now lecturer at VU, also launched his recently published novel at the end of November. The novel was part of Euan's creative research thesis that examined a controversial philosophy called neo-pragmatism. The novel 'Making Noises' explores a story set within the Melbourne popular music scene and a one level the novel is a narrative that follows characters that are caught up in this philosophy. The launch was enlivened with music from contemporary Melbourne musicians.

Whilst Euan Mitchel launched his latest novel at Readings, at one end of Lygon Street, at the other end. **David Webb**, a recent doctoral graduate shared the stage at Trades Hall with the ABC's Julie McCrossen and Dr Ruth Vine, Director of the Victorian Government's Mental Health branch. The event was the 20th birthday party of Victoria's Mental Health Legal Centre. David Webb graduated earlier in November and his thesis is the first doctoral thesis on suicide by someone who has attempted suicide.

David sits on the board of the Mental Health legal centre and is also Australia's representative on the World Network of Users and Survivors of Psychiatry.

VOLUNTEERING IN THE CULTURAL ATTRACTION SECTOR: INSIGHTS FROM RESEARCH AND PRACTICE

**HELD ON 7TH DECEMBER 2006 AT THE
MELBOURNE MUSEUM**

Speakers from the Centre for Hospitality and Tourism Research (CHTR) and Museum Victoria presented insights on volunteering in the cultural attraction sector at a recent seminar co-hosted by the School of Hospitality, Tourism and Marketing, CHTR and Museum Victoria.

CHTR Director, **Associate Professor Barry O'Mahony** welcomed guests to the seminar (one of a series planned for the tourism industry).

CLOS



Associate Professor Barry O'Mahony

Associate Professor Margaret Deery began the evening by speaking about the changing face of museums and volunteers and the implications for the management of cultural volunteers as both museum staff and visitors.

20,443 volunteers worked in Australian museums in June 2004, contributing 343,139 hours in both front-of-house and behind-the-scenes roles (ASB 2005). The positioning of museums as cultural tourism resources and the move of role from education to entertainment, or edutainment, has been driven by reduced government funding, greater pushes to generate revenue, and a desire to enhance community access and build visitor audiences. Global and national trends in volunteering include concerns over time pressures on individuals, demographic changes, a recognition of the social and community role of volunteering, and the impact of information technology (Merrill 2006). Consequently there is a

need for more flexible volunteering opportunities, including volunteering that is short-term, episodic, once off, or virtual (Volunteering Australia 2006b).

Associate Professor Deery emphasized that in the cultural sector, volunteers can play an important connecting role between staff and visitors. Volunteers can be managed like paid staff using a formalized workplace model, and concentrating on the work aspects of volunteering (such as providing high-quality service). Conversely, volunteers can be managed as part of the museum's audience or visitors, concentrating on the leisure aspect of volunteering (such as providing opportunities for social interaction). Ideally, museums need to balance these two aspects in their approach to volunteer management.

Visiting Research Fellow at CHTR, **Dr Karen Smith** from Victoria University of Wellington (New Zealand) then presented **perspectives on museum volunteering from the UK**. Volunteers make an important contribution to UK museums, and have been the focus of recent research. Dr Smith focused on two themes: the volunteer manager, and social inclusion and access for all.

Having a person dedicated to managing or coordinating volunteers has shown to be a crucial component of a successful volunteer program. It demonstrates the importance and recognition of volunteers in the museum and gives paid staff a central contact point (IVR 2005). Funding for this role is key to ensuring a volunteer program's stability (Howlett, Machin & Malmersjo 2005). Volunteer managers have to balance multiple roles and are a key relationship which contributes to the volunteering experience (Smith 2002). Volunteers want 'a choice blend' from their managers, combining choice, control, flexibility and organisation (Gaskin 2003).

In the UK, government policy has focused attention on audience development and encouraging a wider range of visitors to museums. Volunteering also has a role for museums addressing public policy areas such as combating social exclusion, encouraging lifelong learning, and promoting active communities and citizenship. The Imperial War Museum North and their 'Learning through Volunteering' program is an example of best practice. Embracing social inclusion and access for all aims, this program has brought diverse groups of people into the museum as volunteers, offering an innovative and tailored training course and support. It demonstrates what can be achieved, but also illustrates the effort, funding and support that is required.

Continuing to highlight good practice in the sector, **Dr Leonie Lockstone** presented the results of research at the Melbourne Museum on flexible strategies to manage volunteer workforces.

Flexibility has been identified as a key volunteering trend, but what does it mean? Dr Lockstone linked flexible work practices back to research on paid workers and suggested how these strategies can be applied to volunteer workforces.

Research undertaken at the Melbourne Museum and the National Museum of Australia measured the attitudes of paid staff and volunteers to different types of flexibility and their levels of job satisfaction, commitment and intention to leave. Overall, volunteers were found to be more committed and satisfied with their jobs than paid staff. Paid workers rated the availability of job enlargement and job enrichment, both forms of functional flexibility, more highly than volunteers. Volunteers rated the availability of voluntary reduced hours, and the value of voluntary reduced hours and zero hours contracts, all forms of temporal flexibility, more highly than paid staff.

The findings demonstrate that organisations can benefit from considering volunteers and paid workers flexibility needs. For both volunteers and paid staff, work practices that promote skill development/ multi-skilling and the freedom to pursue domestic or other activities, are associated with higher rates of: job satisfaction, organisational commitment, and lower rates of turnover. This can result in happier volunteers and paid staff, improved retention rates, potential reductions in recruitment and training costs, positive word-of-mouth, and greater diversity amongst volunteer and paid workforces.

Jane Humphrys, Manager Volunteers at Museum Victoria, complemented this discussion by providing practical insights from **Volunteering at the Melbourne Museum**.

The Museum Victoria Volunteer Program is long established and covers all three venues, Melbourne Museum, Scienceworks and The Immigration Museum, as well as the museum storage facility at Moreland. The Volunteer Program sits within the Public Programs Department, itself within the Operations Division, and at any one time there are around 450 volunteers actively involved.

Drawing on her experiences in the museum, she emphasised that cultural volunteering covers a wide set of experiences, and discussed the importance of

maintaining relationships and communication, and the balancing of motivations, expectations, and rewards and recognition. Importantly, when managing volunteers there is a need to avoid assumptions. For example, that retired people have plenty of time and mothers have no time. Neither is true. Concluding, the importance of research for providing an understanding of volunteers and informing planning for the future was emphasised.

Concluding the evening, **Associate Professor Barry O'Mahony** highlighted the key themes of the seminar:

- Volunteers can be viewed as and managed from staff and visitor perspectives.
- Museum volunteering has a role in cultural development and community engagement.
- Flexibility is a key trend in volunteering and museums need to offer flexible strategies to recruit and retain a diverse volunteer workforce.

ARC DISCOVERY PROJECTS

The ARC is now calling for applications under its ARC Discovery-Project scheme for funding commencing in January 2008.

Application Process

1. On-line form which must be completed using the ARC's web-based Grant Application Management System (GAMS); and
2. Additional text which must be submitted as part of the paper version - please refer to Instructions to Applicants.

Applicants will require a GAMS User Id and password in order to access the system and create an application form. Note, the form will be available on GAMS shortly. If an applicant has been allocated previously access to GAMS, his/her User ID and password should still be current. If you require or have forgotten your GAMS ID and password, please contact palmina.fichera@vu.edu.au

GAMS ID for Partner Investigators

Please note that any investigator listed on the application will require a GAMS User ID and password. Please e-mail palmina.fichera@vu.edu.au for assistance.

Assistance with GAMS

If you are a first time GAMS user and need some assistance getting started, please do not hesitate to contact **Palmina Fichera** on ext 4707.

Number of Copies Required

Applicants are required to submit one copy of their completed applications by 9 February 2007. This copy will be used by the Office for Research for compliance checking and to provide feedback. Once

an application has been checked, applicants will be expected to submit an original plus three copies (four in total).

Certification Page

All signatures must be obtained prior to the submission of the final application to the Office for Research. In addition to the certification required by ARC, the University Research Committee meeting of March 26, 2002 recommended that *Directors of Institutes/Centres and Heads of School are required to certify that the proposal has undergone a critical peer review process*. For this round of proposals the name of the individual(s) who have undertaken the review are to be included. The Certification Page can be downloaded from the Office for Research website: http://research.vu.edu.au/arc_linkage.php

DVC (Research & Region) signature

Certification by DVC (Research & Region) will be organised by the Office for Research.

Planning to lodge an application?

Please tell us by sending an e-mail to palmina.fichera@vu.edu.au, prior to Christmas listing the investigators and a proposed project title. Please also advise your Assoc Dean (Research)/Director of Centre or Institute. If you are a named investigator on application submitted via another institution, please tell us also.

Important Key Dates

Eligibility Rulings - Internal Closing Date – 12/1/2007

Eligibility Rulings - External Closing Date – 19/1/07

Request of non-use of a potential assessor – 9/2/07

Request of non-use of a potential assessor – 2/3/07

Complete Application - Internal Closing Date – 9/2/07

Complete Application - External Closing Date – 2/3/07

Documentation for Discovery Projects for 2008 is available on the ARC Web Site at http://www.arc.gov.au/apply_grants/discovery_projects.htm

NHMRC FUNDING SCHEMES & CLOSING DATES FOR 2007

- Programs – 9/2/07
- Fellowships – 9/2/07
- Projects – 16/3/07
- Development Grants – 9/2/07

For further information please visit:

<http://research.vu.edu.au/calendar.php>

THANK YOU: To all who contributed to the content of the fifth Research Matters bulletin.