

SOUND

THE OFFICIAL BROADSHEET OF MONASH UNIVERSITY

THE FIRST ELEVEN YEARS – A GOOD START

Number 74

20.4.72.

The Vice-Chancellor, Dr. Matheson, delivered the address at the annual commemoration ceremony to the late Sir John Monash in St. Kilda Road on Sunday, April 16, and commented on the development of the university named after him over its first 11 years.

Dr. Matheson told his audience that the name Monash had first been suggested by Professor J. M. Swan, now Pro-Vice-Chancellor, and had set a precedent: all universities established since had similarly been named after famous men – La Trobe, Macquarie, James Cook and so on.

“When Sir John Monash’s name was proposed its appropriateness was manifest,” Dr. Matheson said.

“Those who have given this address in previous years have paid tribute to his many talents and qualities which enabled him to achieve success in many spheres: as a schoolboy, as a graduate in three disciplines, as a military leader, as an engineer and as an administrator who made striking and lasting contributions to this state and to Australia as a whole . . .

“There were times in Monash’s lifetime, especially in the early years of the State Electricity Commission, when he came under intense public criticism; but he survived, his Commission survived and now, when men speak about him, all that is forgotten and what is remembered are the splendid qualities that made his name the first choice for the new university.”

Dr. Matheson said that naming a university after a man assured him of immortality, a state which was once most fervently desired.

“But what sort of immortality has Monash University so far conferred on Sir John? Does the reputation and standing of the university enhance the honour attached to the name? or does achievement fall short of the promise which the name conveyed?”

Dr. Matheson pointed out that universities everywhere, indeed whole educational systems, were today passing through a period of great turbulence, and that after only eleven years of teaching it was far too soon to attempt a proper assessment of Monash University’s achievement.

“In as large and complex an organisation as Monash University has now become, achievement is far from uniform. At any moment some things are going well, sources of pride and joy to all concerned; others – most things, I suppose – are proceeding normally; while inevitably there are always some matters that give rise to acute concern. These may be student activism one day, some financial crisis the next, or an employment problem, or a difficult building contract to handle, or a contentious matter to steer through Professorial Board or Council.

“On such days, that is to say nearly every day, I wish that I had Sir John’s intellectual powers, his apparent imperturbability, his determination and his political acumen. And yet when I make my way home across the campus – at this time of year just as the light is fading and the stars are beginning to show through the marvellous, blue twilight sky – I often wonder what Sir John would think of it all: the elegant buildings; the beautiful gardens; the vigorous and often turbulent student life; the distinguished intellectual activity of the place.

“And I conclude, usually, that he would say as he probably did to the S.E.C. in its early days, when press and public were hounding him, that we should be patient; we had made a good start. If we kept at it the recognition and reputation would follow in due time.”

UNION PHARMACY MEMBERSHIP CARDS

Staff members are advised that new pink membership cards will be issued from Union Reception Desk from Wednesday, April 26.

The blue membership cards will not be valid after May 1. Members are requested to collect new cards from the desk.

NEW APPOINTMENTS IN LAW, ENGINEERING

Council has approved the appointment of a new reader in law and two associate professors in the faculty of engineering.

Dr. I.C.F. Spry, a senior lecturer in law at Monash since 1969, has been appointed reader. A barrister and solicitor of the Supreme Court of Victoria, Dr. Spry was associate to the Chief Justice of the High Court, Sir Owen Dixon, in 1963-64 and spent two periods as a tutor in law at the University of Melbourne before joining Monash as a lecturer in 1967.

Dr. B. W. Cherry is the new associate professor in the department of materials engineering. A graduate of Cambridge University, he has been a senior lecturer in materials science at Monash since 1968. His principal interest has been research in the field of rubbers and plastics, with particular reference to the relationship of properties to structure.

Mr. C. T. Carson, senior lecturer in electrical engineering, has been appointed associate professor in that department. A graduate of Queen's University, Belfast, and the University of Pennsylvania, he spent some 10 years with the Weapons Research Establishment, first as senior research scientist, then from 1969 to 1971 — as principal research scientist — before coming to Monash.

ENGINEER'S SUCCESS — IN THE THEATRE

Monash's first graduate in mechanical engineering, 30-year-old David Williamson, is making headlines — as a playwright.

This week he learned he had won the George Devine Award from writing for his play "The Removalists". The award is made annually in England to one or more promising or improved directors, designers or playwrights. The winners are chosen by leading members of the theatrical profession, who this year included Sir Laurence Olivier and Harold Pinter.

Mr. Williamson graduated from Monash in 1964 and is now a lecturer in thermodynamics at Swinburne Institute of Technology.

He writes part-time (his most successful enterprise so far has been "Stork", still showing as a feature film — it is due to be shown at Monash in the next couple of months) and would like to make it a full-time occupation, but can't afford to.

"The Removalists" has been performed by the Carlton La Mama group and the Nimrod Theatre, Sydney. Harry M. Miller is now negotiating for the rights.

CHOIR IN BLACKWOOD HALL

The Monash Choral Society will hold a concert in Robert Blackwood Hall on Thursday, April 27, at 8.15 p.m. Admission prices are: Adults, \$1.50; students, 80 cents. Tickets are available from a table in the Union foyer.

The program will include works by Purcell, Tomkins, Morley, Buxtehude and Bruhns. The conductor will be Douglas Lawrence and the soloists Barbara Sambell, Geraldine Rose, Barry Skelton and David Goodrich.

MYRA ROPER ON OPERA

Well-known traveller-lecturer, Myra Roper, will give two illustrated lectures on Chinese Opera in the department of music on Monday, April 24.

Miss Roper has made several visits to China and has published widely on many aspects of life there.

Each lecture will last one hour and will be given in Room 1103, Menzies Building, at 12 noon and 3.15 p.m.

POTTERY ON DISPLAY

Pottery by H. R. Hughan is this month's exhibit in the Union fine arts display case.

Mr. Hughan, whose work has been acclaimed for more than 20 years, is perhaps Australia's most distinguished potter. He is regarded as the pioneer in stoneware in Australia, and the works on display are examples of the simple and elegant stoneware for which he is famous.

For those not familiar with the display case, it is located on the first floor of the Union building, near the head of the main central stairway.

EDINBURGH CONFERENCE — MONASH TO SEND FOUR

Monash hopes to send a delegation of four to the Eleventh Commonwealth Universities Congress to be held at the University of Edinburgh from August 11 — 18, 1973.

Council last week agreed that the Vice-Chancellor, Dr. Matheson, should lead the Monash delegation. Others invited include a member of Council and members of the academic staff. Council felt that these, preferably, should be chosen from members of the University who were likely to be in the United Kingdom at the time of the Congress (which coincides with the Edinburgh Festival).

The Congress will be followed by a meeting of Executive Heads, to be held at the University of Exeter from August 23 — 28, 1973.