

# Alchemy

Alumni Magazine Issue 07 Summer 2004

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Formulation  
Science  
graduates  
at work



The Victorian College of Pharmacy began life in 1881 as the School of the Pharmaceutical Society of Victoria. In 1992, it became a faculty of Monash University.

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*Alchemy*, the alumni magazine of the Victorian College of Pharmacy, is published twice a year. The next issue is due for publication in May 2005.

The magazine is published for the Victorian College of Pharmacy community, which includes alumni (both pre and post the Monash amalgamation), current and former staff, students, friends and colleagues of the College.

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**Front cover photo:** 2003 Bachelor of Formulation Science graduate Anthony Agnew in the lab at Applied Australia where he works as a Development Chemist.

## From the Dean

This issue of *Alchemy* carries stories about the Victorian College of Pharmacy's research eminence in the pharmaceutical sciences and in pharmacy practice.

The College's past and current strength in drug design and development is something of which

we can all be proud. For example, the first ever commercially successful drug developed in Australia, Relenza®, was developed at the College in 1989 and subsequently released on the international market by GlaxoSmithKline.

Recently, researchers at the College's Centre for Drug Candidate Optimisation, working with an international team, made a major breakthrough in malaria treatment. This research is of worldwide importance in fighting a disease that kills between one and two million people annually.

This year research at the College has again attracted a high level of funding from the Australian Research Council and from other sources in Australia and

overseas, and there is currently a record number of talented research students at PhD, Masters and Honours levels – 73 in total.

We can look forward with confidence to the College continuing to undertake world-class research, most of which will directly contribute to improving the health and wellbeing of our communities.



Professor Colin Chapman (1970)  
Dean



## Breakthrough in treatment for malaria

What has been described as the biggest breakthrough in malaria treatment of our generation has been developed by an international team that includes College researchers.

**Professor Bill Charman  
and Associate Professor  
Susan Charman.**

The new synthetic drug, set to become a major weapon in the fight against multi-drug resistant malaria, could be available to patients within three years.

Professor Bill Charman, Professor of Pharmaceutics and co-director of the Centre for Drug Candidate Optimisation at the College with Associate Professor Susan Charman, said the drug (OZ277/RBx11160) is highly effective against the most lethal forms of malaria, inexpensive to prepare and manufacture, and has the potential to save millions of lives. A major goal of the research team was to ensure that the compound would be affordable for even the poorest nations.

Professor Charman cited estimates stating that malaria kills between one and two million people every year. In sub-Saharan Africa, one child dies every 30 seconds from the mosquito-borne disease.

"We are thrilled with the progress and speed with which this drug has been developed. It is now entering human trials in Europe," he said. "Assuming all goes well with future clinical trials, we anticipate that it will be available to patients within the next three years."

Professor Charman noted that the ability of OZ277/RBx 11160 to treat drug resistant malaria is the key to its success, as other malaria medicines developed over the years have been less effective.

Development of the drug has been an international effort, with researchers from Monash University, the University of Nebraska Medical Center, the Swiss Tropical Institute and Hoffmann-La Roche of Switzerland working on the project since the late 1990s.

The results of the work were recently published in the highly regarded international scientific journal *Nature*, leading to significant coverage in print and electronic media worldwide.

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# Looking back at a fighting spirit: Sir Eric Scott OBE

The buildings on the Parkville campus are named in honour of three great leaders who left their mark on the College and the profession – Scott, Sissons and Manning. In issue six of *Alchemy* we profiled A.T.S. Sissons, Dean from 1920–1962. Here we look at the life and career of Sir Eric Scott, one of the founders and a long time president of the Pharmacy Guild of Australia, and a president of the Pharmaceutical Society of Victoria.



Eric Scott OBE, after the investiture by Sir Dallas Brooks, His Excellency the Governor of Victoria, on September 23, 1958. Sir Eric is standing on the lawn of Government House following the ceremony with his son Barry.

Sir Eric was a former amateur heavyweight boxing champion of Victoria and a league footballer. As well as having a reputation for not backing away from confrontation, his early working life was full of adventure and variety. He was at one time a jackeroo, pearl diver, cane cutter and a successful businessman, apart from his extensive work in pharmacy.

His interest in pharmacy dated from his first marriage, to a pharmacist's daughter. He was apprenticed to R.J. Poulton of Bourke Street but did not sit for his exams after serving his apprenticeship. Instead he travelled, bought a hotel and took on other jobs. He did not resume professional studies until 1925, passing his final examination in September 1927 and becoming registered the following year. He grasped the essentials of pharmacy with astonishing speed and also showed an aptitude for politics.

On 1 May 1928 he took part in the founding of the Pharmacy Guild in Melbourne, which occurred at a mass meeting of pharmacists at the College (then situated in Swanston Street). This meeting was organised by Alexander McGibbony, who became the first Victorian Guild and National Guild president. After McGibbony retired in 1930, Sir Eric was elected Victorian Guild president, and later National Guild president, a position he held from 1947–1971. In 1948 Sir Eric led the Guild's successful negotiations with the Chifley Government, which recognised the Guild as the sole negotiator for pharmacy under the new national health scheme.

Sir Eric also held the post of president of the Pharmaceutical Society of Victoria from 1955–1960. The College was founded and conducted by the Society until it was administered by a number of higher education organisations in Victoria, culminating in the Monash amalgamation in 1992.

Many important milestones were reached during Sir Eric's tenure as president. In 1958 the War Memorial Building Appeal was launched to build the new College in Parkville, which opened in 1960. He was personally responsible for obtaining a large financial loan from the Victorian Government for building the new College – the first time it had ever supported the College in such a substantial way. This loan was the basis on which the whole building project was able to go ahead. He commissioned the Sissons mural and ensured that the College was the most modern and best equipped school of pharmacy in Australia at the time.

Many accolades were published in Australia and overseas on Sir Eric's retirement in 1971, congratulating him on his significant contribution to the advancement of pharmacy education and pharmaceutical research through his work at the College. A dynamic leader and elder statesman, Sir Eric displayed a spirited and tenacious ability to negotiate through difficult circumstances. His tireless work for the Guild (both in Victoria and nationally) and for the Pharmaceutical Society of Victoria distinguished him as an outstanding leader of pharmacy in Australia.

## A.T.S. Sissons

In issue six of *Alchemy* we profiled A.T.S. Sissons, who was Dean from 1920–1962. The article referred to him as A.T. Sissons, leaving out his initial 'S', which stood for Stanley. We are told that this is the name his wife called him – although he was known affectionately at the College as 'Sisso' or simply 'A.T.S.'.



## Celebrating a successful Graduation Dinner 2004

Graduates, their parents, partners, family and friends came together for the inaugural Graduation Dinner for the Bachelor of Pharmacy and the Bachelor of Formulation Science 2004. Held at Hilton on the Park following the graduation ceremony at Monash's Clayton campus, the dinner was celebrated by over 150 guests and staff.

Alistair Lloyd (1956), Chair of the Victorian College of Pharmacy Foundation, formally farewelled the graduates as students and welcomed them as professional colleagues. Professor Colin Chapman spoke highly of the group's achievements, especially gold medal winners Yee Voon Yap and Frances Peach, as well as Monash Abroad students who had travelled far and wide on international placements.

Course directors Associate Professor Louis Roller and Dr Barrie Finnin also addressed the graduates. Both spoke of how proud they were of the graduates' accomplishments, urging them to stay in touch and to use the College as a resource as they advanced through their careers.

The highlight of the evening was guest speaker Lauren Burns OAM, taekwondo gold medallist at the 2000 Olympic Games, who spoke with passion about overcoming obstacles and maintaining goals. With a video display featuring her gold medal winning match and demonstrations of her taekwondo ability, Lauren spoke of her journey towards excellence that included overcoming several serious injuries.

Her demonstration involved a willing audience participant and taekwondo



Lauren Burns OAM in action.

novice who, under Lauren's tutelage, smashed a pine board with one impassioned blow. Lauren impressed everyone with her challenge to make the mind strong and the outcomes positive, staying afterwards to have photos taken and to meet with some of the graduating students.

The evening was a great success and all who attended were keen to see the Graduation Dinner become a College tradition.

## Success of the Foundation's first Annual Appeal



Alistair Lloyd AO (1956) with students at the College.

The Victorian College of Pharmacy Foundation's first Annual Appeal, launched in May, has already received gifts totalling more than \$30,000.

Alistair Lloyd AO (1956), Chair of the Foundation's Board, is very pleased with the result so far.

"I am delighted at this excellent start towards creating a significant endowment fund for the College and wish to thank all who have generously supported the Appeal," said Alistair.

Money raised from the Appeal will go toward a number of key projects which could not otherwise be teaching and research revenue. These include funding more postgraduate scholarships to further expand the College's research strengths and undergraduate scholarships to

ensure equity of access to all courses, especially for rural students.

In just a short time, the Foundation has achieved a great deal. It has funded the appointment of the first Professor of Pharmacy Practice, supported the development of the Pharmacy MBA program (the first of its kind in Australia) and established a new postgraduate scholarship in Medicinal Chemistry.

Other plans to assist the College to achieve overall excellence include supporting the appointment of a Professor of Clinical Pharmacy in association with a major teaching hospital, and the development of the Monash University Centre for Pharmacy Management, the Centre of Medication Safety and the Institute of Pharmaceutical Sciences. The Foundation will also support the development of state-of-the-art teaching, laboratory and research facilities in the planned new building.

"Over the coming years, we will continue to ask all Victorian pharmacists and graduates for their support, to give the College the financial flexibility and independence needed to achieve all-round excellence at world standard," said Alistair.

Gifts to the Foundation are tax deductible in Australia and all donors will be acknowledged in an appropriate way. There is a range of naming opportunities available and the Foundation can assist those who would prefer to defer their support by making a bequest of money, property or shares to the Foundation as a lasting legacy.

One of the first donors, Kilmore pharmacy owner Simon Yu (1972), quoted a Chinese proverb – 'when you drink water, think about the source' – when explaining why he supports the Foundation.

"The profession has been good to me," said Simon. "In making this donation I am giving back to the source of my good fortune and, like my predecessors, am supporting future generations of pharmacists."

## Vale: Shirley Dorothy Dixon

It was with great sadness that the College community learned of the passing, in June, of long time staff member Shirley Dixon, so soon after her retirement.

Shirley joined the staff initially as a tutor in Microbiology in 1994, a position she held until 1999. Following the retirement of Ian Griffith she became coordinator of Microbiology and was subsequently promoted to the position of lecturer. She expertly managed the teaching of Pharmaceutical Microbiology in the Bachelor of Pharmacy and Bachelor of Formulation Science programs between 2000 and her retirement at the end of 2002.

She was a very accomplished microbiologist, being a Fellow of the Australian Society for Microbiology and a Fellow of the Royal College of Pathologists in London. Prior to joining Monash, she worked at the University of Melbourne, St Vincent's Hospital and the Royal Free Hospital in London.

Keri Jones, an assistant lecturer in the Department of Pharmaceutics, speaks about Shirley's professional and personal life.

"She was a private lady, ageless and with boundless energy. Cultured and learned with a sense of fun and an adventurous spirit, she was my mentor in my early days at Parkville and my very dear friend. Shirley enjoyed our Friday night glass of red wine in the Pharmaceutics meeting room and religiously supplied the cheese and biscuits. Although she enjoyed fine dining, she ate like a sparrow, much to the despair of our then canteen lady, Pat. Very happy and productive times were spent with Shirley and Karen Finnin in our little corner of the third floor when I first came to Parkville five years ago.

Shirley's family has described her as 'inspirational, adventurous, thoughtful, unique ... and funky!' She was also a very private person and used words sparingly. As a microbiologist she would have appreciated this quote from Louis Pasteur, 'the microbe will have the last word'. Shirley was very special – one of a kind."



## Welcome to Marian Costelloe

Marian Costelloe joined the College on 31 May as the new faculty manager. Marion previously spent over 17 years at the University of Melbourne in various roles, most recently as General Manager in the Faculty of Architecture.

A Monash graduate, Marian first enrolled in welfare studies at the Gippsland campus. She went on to complete an Arts degree followed by a Graduate Diploma in Education and a masters degree in History at the University of Melbourne.

Marian has a firm wish to work as part of a dynamic team and to consolidate the work achieved by her predecessor, Janet White.

Welcome to Marian and best wishes for the future to Janet, who is now working at the Monash Faculty of Law.



## The 2004 Pharmacy Careers Expo



The inaugural Pharmacy Careers Expo was held on 28 May at Cossar Hall. It provided an opportunity for Pharmacy students to explore career options and for pharmacy owners from across Victoria to meet face to face with the next generation of pharmacists.

Exhibitors at the Expo included: Association of Professional Engineers Scientists and Managers Australia (APESMA), Defence Force Recruiting, GlaxoSmithKline (GSK), Healthwise, Mayne, My Chemist, National Pharmacies, Pharmore, Raven's Pharmacy Services, Slade Pharmacy, Terry White, the Pharmacy Guild of Australia (Victorian Branch), the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (Victorian Branch), the Society of Hospital Pharmacists (Victorian Branch) and Victorian Friendly Societies.

**For further information about exhibiting at the 2005 Pharmacy Careers Expo contact Louise Merkesteyn, tel: 613 9903 9504 or email [louise.merkesteyn@vcp.monash.edu.au](mailto:louise.merkesteyn@vcp.monash.edu.au)**

# Master of Clinical Pharmacy: first graduates

The Master of Clinical Pharmacy is designed to establish skills in evidence based practice, quality use of medicine, practice based research and provision of clinical pharmacy services at a high level.

The first group of students in the new Master of Clinical Pharmacy program will complete their studies at the end of 2004.

The Master of Clinical Pharmacy was introduced in 2003 to replace the former Postgraduate Diploma in Clinical Pharmacy. Modules in the course include biostatistics and epidemiology, evidence based practice, clinical pharmacology (including pharmacokinetics, pharmacogenomics and biotechnology), interpretation of clinical data, pharmacotherapy, a research project, journal club and specialty clinical placement.

The course is conducted on a part time basis over two academic years, with one full day of contact per week. In addition, each student is required to complete a four-week specialty clinical rotation with an experienced clinical preceptor. The timing of this placement is flexible and dependent on the university, the preceptor and the student. Students are also required to carry out a small practice based research project.

Coordinator of the course, senior lecturer Kirstie Galbraith, says that the new qualification has been a great success.

"Our graduates possess excellent clinical pharmacy knowledge and skills as well as the ability to promote and carry out research projects in their workplaces," she said. "They will become valued mentors to younger pharmacists who are developing their clinical expertise."

**For further information about the Master of Clinical Pharmacy visit [www.vcp.monash.edu/mclinpharm/](http://www.vcp.monash.edu/mclinpharm/)**



## Master of Clinical Pharmacy student profile: Josephine McGuinness

Josephine McGuinness is a clinical pharmacist working in the Specialist Medicine team at the Alfred Hospital and specialising in Infectious Diseases. She was the recipient of a 2004 Junior Researcher Support award from the Australian Society for HIV Medicine, allowing her to attend their conference and to present her masters project.

Josephine's primary area of research interest is the integration of acute and community service providers for HIV-positive patients, to improve follow up and continuity of care within this patient population. She is currently conducting a research project based at the Alfred Hospital called the Patient Information Exchange study, which forms the basis of her masters project.

This project aims to improve and formalise the process of information exchange between all the health care providers involved in the care of an HIV-positive patient and to evaluate the benefits of implementing a new service utilising a case management model of pharmaceutical care.

The study measures the impact of assigning patients a 'primary' pharmacist (one dedicated to an individual patient's care), allowing the provision of individualised care and improving follow up of patients by acting as the key contact regarding all medication-related issues.

"After working for three years across a variety of clinical disciplines in hospitals in the UK and Australia, I had identified the key benefits of postgraduate study. I had specialised in Infectious Diseases, but still wanted to be able to adapt my clinical skills to all areas with an equally high level of expertise and be equipped to approach unfamiliar clinical scenarios confidently, efficiently and comprehensively.

The strong emphasis on evidence based practice, discussion forums and mentoring, coupled with the sustained form of study coursework offers, particularly attracted me to this course. I thoroughly enjoy the clinical work I encounter at the Alfred and to have the opportunity to combine this with complementary academic study is a real benefit.

This course has given me the opportunity to experience clinical research first hand and to present my findings at a national conference. I have been able to explore the possibilities of diversifying the role of clinical pharmacists and this has allowed me to appreciate the importance of good quality research and critical evaluation. During the two years, I have developed key skills in both of these areas and in presentation. This is allowing me to achieve a higher level of job satisfaction and in turn, I hope, enabling my career to move forward in the right direction."



# Bachelor of Formulation Science: graduate snapshots

The Bachelor of Formulation Science program is the first of its type in Australia. It produces graduates with a solid science education and vocational skills in product development. Here we look at what our graduates are achieving in a diverse range of product development careers.

Cathy Smith



**Formulation Chemist**  
Cardinal Health Australia

"My employer, Cardinal Health Australia, is a contact manufacturing company that makes health and nutritional as well as over the counter tablets and capsules for other companies. I'm involved in troubleshooting problem products, evaluating new raw materials, formulating new products and supervising pilot batches within the manufacturing plant.

I enjoy innovative projects the most. As a formulator, they allow me to think outside the square and create something that has never been created before. When I walk into a pharmacy and see products I've worked on, it gives me a real buzz to know I played a part in getting that product onto the shelf!

I chose to do this course because I was interested in science and chemistry but I didn't just want to do testing or work on a lab bench all day. The course provided me with the opportunity to work in any industry imaginable – every industry needs new products and development. I would definitely recommend it to people like me who want to stay in the scientific/development side of things but also want diversity in their jobs. My work is never the same from week to week and I am constantly jumping from project to project, which keeps the work interesting.

In the future I hope to be in a managerial role where I can oversee all the different departments that are involved in the success of a product – from marketing and sales to formulating, business planning and much more."

Sophie Batty



**Research & Development Scientist**  
Preclinical Formulation Optimisation (PFO)  
Formulation & Finished Product Development  
CSL Limited

"I'm currently working as a scientist in research and development at CSL Limited in Parkville. My current project involves the formulation of a malaria vaccine using a variety of adjuvants and optimising conditions that will promote a stable formulation.

This is my first job and I'm enjoying it – it gives me great satisfaction to know that my work has the potential to help millions of people! It's a lot of hard work but very rewarding. I've always wanted to become a scientist, so being in this position is a dream come true.

I chose the Bachelor of Formulation Science because, unlike every other science degree, it focuses on the skills and knowledge that industry needs. It is also a very broad course in that it does not limit graduates to a particular industry – we can look for work in the pharmaceutical, food or cosmetic sectors. I would highly recommend the course because it can lead to so many different job opportunities."

Anthony Agnew



**Development Chemist**  
Applied Australia

"My role involves communicating with sales representatives, market and technical managers, and consulting with customers to create new product formulations. Working to a specified budget and timeline, I research, formulate and test many sample formulations so customers can choose the sample most suited to their requirements.

I'm involved in the reformulation of existing products to improve their performance, reduce costs or to comply with the requirements of new customers. There is also a service role to ensure the quality of the batches we produce.

What I like best is the variety of formulations I get to work with, such as exterior aircraft cleaners, touch-free automotive wash, coal dust suppressants in mining, carpet sanitisers and spot-stain removers, and waterless hand cleansers. There are always new formulations to work with, new ideas to explore and the chance to apply what I have learnt from the course and from my previous work experiences.

I enrolled in the Bachelor of Formulation Science because I've always found the idea of creating products out of chemicals to be fascinating. Now, in addition to creating formulations, I can control and manipulate these formulations by altering their chemical compositions. The career prospects at the end of this degree are immense because it covers the required theory and gives practical hands-on experience in many chemical and science based industries.

There is still much to learn, but in the future I'd like to work up to the role of a project manager, leading a team of experts on the development of unique and innovative products from an idea on the whiteboard through to a fully commercialised consumer product."



“When I walk into a pharmacy and see products I’ve worked on, it gives me a real buzz to know I played a part in getting that product onto the shelf!”

Rachma Saputra



**Graduate Chemist**  
Decorative Development Group, Research  
and Development Department  
Dulux Orica Australia

“My position is mainly involved with formulating new and improving existing products in the market. Some testing of raw materials is also part of my daily routine.

I started with this company while I was a third year student for my four-week placement. Then I found short term employment for the summer last year, working both in the decorative and protective coating areas.

I chose to do the course because I believed that I would gain a lot of knowledge about how to develop a product from scratch, and how to improve a product’s quality to maintain its existence in the market.

I will never regret my four-year course and I would recommend it to anyone. I learnt so much. In addition, there are many opportunities to gain experience working in different companies throughout the course. By the time I graduated, I had a very good picture of what work in this field was like.

In the future I would love to see myself excel by improving my knowledge and experience in this career. Maybe, if I’m lucky, I will be able to establish my own commercial business.”

Brunda Nijagal



**PhD student**  
Victorian College of Pharmacy  
Supervisors: Dr Barrie Finnin, Professor  
Jonathan Hadgraft of the University of London  
and Dr Andrew Humberstone of Acrux Limited

“My PhD project, which I started in August, involves looking at the regional variation in transdermal drug delivery.

In June, I completed a six-month contract with the Murdoch Children’s Research Institute at the Royal Children’s Hospital. I was employed as a Research Assistant in the Dermal Therapeutics Research group. It was a great opportunity to broaden my knowledge in transdermal research.

I’m really excited about starting my PhD candidature in a challenging and educational environment under the guidance of academics with vast knowledge and expertise. I’m looking forward to working independently, learning continuously, coming up with novel results and contributing to the knowledge that already exists on transdermal drug delivery.

I’ve always had an interest in research. I found that the Bachelor of Formulation Science offered scope for employment in various research fields including product development, biological research or chemical analysis.

I would recommend the course because the knowledge and skills obtained in it makes graduates highly employable. The strong emphasis on experience, through organised industrial placements in second and third year, were invaluable and provided us with an opportunity to experience a professional work atmosphere and to demonstrate our abilities.

In the immediate future I’m dedicating the next three years to my PhD candidature.”

Thao Dang

**Development & Technical Service Chemist –**  
Care Chemicals  
Cognis Australia Pty Ltd

“Cognis Australia supplies raw materials for coatings (paint), agrosolutions, personal care, food and mining products. I’m in charge of the personal care division and my role is to provide technical support for customers. I deal with problems that customers may encounter with our raw materials and do project work that will assist with product promotions. The best thing about my job is that it’s spontaneous – I learn something new each day, and every day is a whole new challenge.

Originally, I chose Formulation Science because I wanted to transfer into Pharmacy. But after studying and having this job, I realise I’ve got many more opportunities ahead of me. From this job I hope to travel, do product promotions and expand my knowledge. Maybe the experience will lead me to a managing role or starting my own business with newly developed products!

This course leads to so many opportunities. Graduates are not restricted to just one particular area, and there’s always room to make changes.”

# Centre for Drug Candidate Optimisation: update

The Centre for Drug Candidate Optimisation (CDCO) was officially opened at the College on 16 December 2003 by the Victorian Minister for Innovation, the Hon. John Brumby. The CDCO is a unique venture that was established with a \$4 million grant from the State Government's 2002 Science, Technology and Innovation Infrastructure Grants program.



The CDCO works collaboratively with commercial and not-for-profit research organisations by providing ready access to state-of-the-art instrumentation and highly qualified and experienced drug development scientists to fill the crucial gap between drug discovery and drug development. The co-directors of the CDCO are Professor Bill Charman and Associate Professor Susan Charman.

## Progress and activities

Over the past 18 months, the CDCO has secured research and related funding in excess of \$2.7 million against an original business plan target of \$1.8 million.

The CDCO utilises project revenue to pay staff salaries, consumable costs and equipment maintenance contracts, and to purchase new items of capital equipment. For example, late last year it purchased a Culex® automated blood sampling system to support pharmacokinetic and metabolism studies and recently purchased a further tandem quadrupole LC-MS/MS instrument to enhance bioanalytical capabilities.

Another important milestone is the number of collaborative projects undertaken by the CDCO. The business plan called for a total of 29 projects over the initial three-year period of operation – currently, 28 projects have been undertaken and/or initiated.

Professor Charman paid tribute to the 25 scientists who work within the CDCO.

"The contributions of our scientists are key to this success," he said. "Their commitment, dedication and hard work is very much appreciated by both the CDCO and our research partners."

## A valuable resource

The CDCO plays a key role in contributing to the broader infrastructure and research programs of the College. Recently, the CDCO spent approximately \$300,000 on equipment in conjunction with the Department of Pharmaceutical Biology and Pharmacology to undertake new biological studies in support of lead optimisation. The CDCO also supports a PhD scholarship and funds student placement positions and undergraduate faculty prizes.

## Recent initiatives

As projects at the CDCO are commercial-in-confidence, progress reports are unavailable. However, some results from the publicly-funded Medicines for Malaria Venture (MMV, Geneva) research program can be described. As part of this program, the CDCO recently attracted funding for a second drug discovery project to follow the initial program in which the designed drug candidate recently entered first-time-in-man Phase 1 studies. Results of the research were recently reported in the premier international journal *Nature*, with the publication of the results and description of the new drug receiving extensive international print, radio and television coverage. (See page 3 for more details about this development in the fight against malaria.)

The CDCO is currently involved with a range of new initiatives for funding and collaborative research. For example, a recently announced joint high throughput screening program with the Walter and Eliza Hall Institute, funded by the World Health Organization, will identify new drug leads in malaria and African sleeping sickness.

## For further information about the CDCO, its activities and programs contact

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# ARC Linkage Grants success



Dr Martin Scanlon



Dr John Haynes



Professor Bill Charman



Professor Colin Pouton



Dr David Chalmers

**Congratulations to Dr Martin Scanlon, Professor Bill Charman, Dr John Haynes, Professor Colin Pouton and Dr David Chalmers on their success.**

College researchers recently received more than \$570,000 in ARC Linkage Grants. These prestigious grants are awarded by the Australian Research Council (ARC) to foster excellence, partnerships and the highest ethical standards in research and research training in all fields of science, social sciences and the humanities. They are designed to build links between research centres in Australia and overseas by funding collaborations.

Dr John Haynes, a senior lecturer in the Department of Pharmaceutical Biology and Pharmacology and Professor Colin Pouton, Head of the Department, with Dr R.J. Lang (Department of Physiology, Monash's Faculty of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences) and Dr M.J. Munsie from Stem Cell Sciences Pty Ltd., will receive funding totalling \$398,734 over three years to investigate neurons isolated from embryonic stem cells as functional models for drug discovery. Stem Cell Sciences will contribute a further \$109,598 in cash to the project.

The study will highlight the functional effects of gene selection procedures on stem cell-derived neurons, and will investigate the responses of these neurons to neurotransmitters and neuropharmaceuticals. The project aims to obtain dopaminergic neurons typical of the mid-brain from embryonic stem cells. These cells degenerate in Parkinson's disease, leading to the well-known symptoms characterised by paucity of movement, difficulty initiating movement and resting tremor. Parkinson's disease affects about 1% of all people over 50 years old.

Dr Martin Scanlon, a senior lecturer in the Department of Medicinal Chemistry and Professor Bill Charman, Professor of Pharmaceutics and co-director of the Centre for Drug Candidate Optimisation (CDCO), with Dr H. Sakellaris and Dr L.B. Farrell from GBS Ventures, will receive \$103,906 over two years. Their project is titled 'DsbA: A target for the design of drug candidates as selective inhibitors of oxidative protein folding in Gram negative bacteria'.

This study focuses on the clear need for development of novel antibiotics that are capable of treating the increasingly prevalent strains of pathogenic bacteria that are resistant to currently available drugs.

Dr David Chalmers, a lecturer in the Department of Medicinal Chemistry and manager of the Computational Chemistry Facility, and Dr Martin Scanlon will receive \$70,668 over four years in partnership with Starpharma. Their project is titled 'Understanding dendrimer pharmaceuticals: The application of parallel computing to the investigation of dendrimer structure and activity'.

This project aims to use computer-aided molecular modelling and spectroscopic methods to investigate the three dimensional structure and dynamic behaviour of dendrimers or starburst polymers, an important new class of synthetic material with physical and chemical properties that lie between those of small organic molecules and traditional linear polymers. This will assist in the design of new compounds to target diseases such as secondary cancers, asthma and viral respiratory diseases.

Professor Colin Pouton is also an investigator on the University of New South Wales project 'Drug Delivery Devices: Hydrogels manufactured utilising Dense Gas Technologies', which was awarded \$257,804 in ARC funding.



Jean Baptiste van Helmont, (1577-1644), was an alchemist famous for a cure for injuries caused by knives and swords. The unique feature of his ointment was that it was not applied to the wound but to the weapon which caused the wound.

## Support for prostate cancer research



Congratulations to Dr Philip Thompson, a lecturer in the Department of Medicinal Chemistry, who received \$15,000 from the Sir Edward Dunlop Medical Research Foundation.

Dr Thompson, in partnership with Dr Stephen McPherson from the Monash Institute for Reproduction and Development, will be studying the potential of type II phosphodiesterase inhibitors as inhibitors of prostate cancer cell proliferation.

It has been suggested that phosphodiesterase enzyme PDE2 plays an important role in the proliferation of prostate cancer cells. However, understanding the true clinical potential of inhibiting this enzyme has been prevented by the lack of potent, selective PDE2 inhibitors.

"In this project we aim to develop such inhibitors to assess the role of PDE2 in cell proliferation, apoptosis and cell cycle progression of prostate cancer cell lines," said Dr Thompson.

The Sir Edward Dunlop Medical Research Foundation promotes medical research and awards grants to projects that benefit war veterans and their dependents, in particular

those relating to cardiovascular disease, prostate cancer and diabetes-related illnesses.

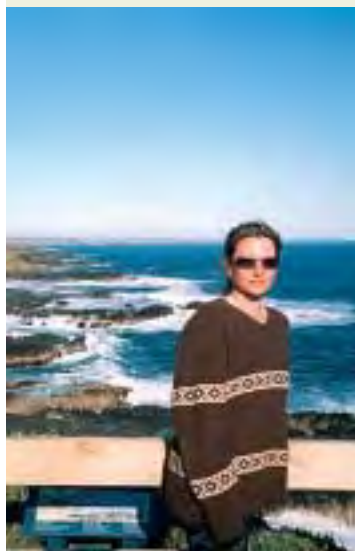
'Weary' Dunlop is a major figure in Australian history and a College graduate (1927). After graduating top of his class and receiving the gold medal and the first H.T. Tompsett Scholarship at the College, he went on to study medicine at the University of Melbourne. As a surgeon in the Australian Army during World War II, he became a national hero for his dedication to the men under his command while a prisoner of war. He went on to become a pioneering cancer surgeon and was Australian of the Year in 1976.

**For further information about the Sir Edward Dunlop Medical Research Foundation visit**  
[www.siredwarddunlop.com.au/](http://www.siredwarddunlop.com.au/)

**For further information about Dr Thompson's research email**  
[philip.thompson@vcp.monash.edu.au](mailto:philip.thompson@vcp.monash.edu.au)

**Dr Philip Thompson.**

## International scholarship brings new researcher to the College



The College attracts and supports researchers in all departments through a variety of internal faculty and Monash scholarships, as well as outside scholarships supported by the Commonwealth Government and industry.

The Monash International Postgraduate Research Scholarship (MIPRS) tuition scholarships are designed to bring the brightest and best young researchers from overseas to the university. In 2004, the College attracted Daniela Roth from Brazil under this scheme.

"I started my research career a few years ago back in Brazil, when

I began to work in a cytogenetics laboratory during my Pharmacy degree. I gained some experience in research, especially in the field of genotoxicity and cytogenetic analyses. After my Pharmacy degree, I studied for one more year to obtain a postgraduate diploma in Biochemistry. This enabled me to work in a laboratory of pathology, where I spent two years working with microbiology and haematology analysis.

At this point in my professional life I realised how much I appreciated working in the research field, and I decided to do a masters degree. During my masters I had the opportunity to acquire very good experience in molecular biology and immunology.

Since arriving in Australia, I have had the opportunity to work with Professor Colin Pouton, Head of the Department of Pharmaceutical Biology and Pharmacology at the College, to gain some experience and to improve my English before I started my PhD. Fortunately, last month I was awarded a Monash Graduate Scholarship and MIPRS Scholarship and I could start

my PhD studies. My PhD project involves collaboration between Professor Pouton and Dr Megan Waldhuber of the College, and Professor David Jans from the Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology at the Faculty of Medicine at Monash.

The major goal of my project is to understand how some nuclear and viral proteins get into the nucleus, in particular the intracellular trafficking of proteins along microtubules. This strategy may help to enhance DNA delivery into the nucleus, making possible treatment of cancer or infectious diseases by non-viral gene therapy. DNA vaccines are currently inefficient because few DNA molecules can reach the nucleus of target cells."

**Daniela Roth.**

## First rural pharmacy workshop ... and more to come

A workshop recently held in Wangaratta brought local pharmacists and College staff together to discuss the issues faced by rural pharmacists and to assess the College's rural focus.

The workshop, preceded by a light meal and refreshments, was hosted by Professor Roger Nation, Head of the Department of Pharmacy Practice and Katrina Fitzsimon, who administers the student placement program in the Bachelor of Pharmacy program.

At the workshop, local pharmacists heard an update from Professor Nation on the College's Rural Entry Scheme, which encourages students from rural areas to enter the Bachelor of Pharmacy degree course. He also advised the gathering about the new Bachelor of Pharmacy Rural Scholarship, which assists and encourages applicants from rural areas into the Pharmacy course.

The workshop participants were involved in a round-table discussion about the many issues they face as rural pharmacists, including the shortage of pharmacists (both in hospital and community rural practice)

and the difficulty of attracting new graduates to work in rural areas. Participants also related their positive experiences of hosting third and fourth year Pharmacy students on compulsory rural placements. They especially noted the favourable effect that placements had on city students who were previously unaware of the career options available to pharmacists in a rural area.

"It was very beneficial to have the opportunity to discuss with rural pharmacists the range of issues confronting rural pharmacy practitioners," said Professor Nation. "From the workshop, Katrina and I have several suggestions for ways in which the College can further promote rural pharmacy and assist rural pharmacists."

College staff plan to visit further regional centres to hold workshops and meet face to face with more rural pharmacists. Rural pharmacists are also encouraged to alert College staff to opportunities for promoting pharmacy careers through local secondary school career nights. Representatives will then be sent to these events with brochures and first-hand information.



For further information about the Rural Entry Scheme and Bachelor of Pharmacy Rural Scholarship visit [www.vcp.monash.edu/rural/](http://www.vcp.monash.edu/rural/)

Fourth year pharmacy student Tony Ung on his rural placement with pharmacist Chris Robb (1971) in Symons Amcal Pharmacy, Wangaratta.

For information about becoming a preceptor and hosting third and fourth year students in your pharmacy contact Katrina Fitzsimon, tel: 613 9903 9043.

## First Pharmacy Rural Scholarship recipient

Sarah Lum is a first year Pharmacy student and recipient of the inaugural Pharmacy Rural Scholarship, which was established to encourage regional students to study Pharmacy.

"I grew up in a small rural town – Holbrook in New South Wales – which has a population of 1400. I am the youngest of seven, with my twin sister and elder brother both studying Pharmacy in Wagga.

My parents, Marjory and Desmond, were a great support during high school, often driving myself and my twin sister into Albury seven days a week for musical, sporting and other extra-curricula commitments.

Much of my motivation to study Pharmacy came from my father, who has been the pharmacist at Holbrook

for 24 years and has contributed enormously to the town's vibrant community. Pharmacy is a highly respected profession, and I admire the trusting relationship between pharmacist and client.

During my year 12 studies, I did much research on where I could study Pharmacy. I found that the College would not only give me the opportunity to study and live in the city, but it places an excellent focus on rural pharmacy, which is how I came across the university's Rural Entry Scheme and Rural Scholarship. Monash recognises and addresses the acute shortage of pharmacists in rural areas, and provides rural students like myself with a great deal of support and encouragement.



Choosing to study here was one of the best decisions I have made in regards to my future. Upon the completion of my degree in Pharmacy, I plan to return to the country and help to alleviate health issues surrounding rural populations."

First year pharmacy student Sarah Lum.



Credit for the first microscope is usually given to Zacharias Janssen from Holland, around the year 1595. The first compound microscopes he produced were simply tubes with lenses at each end whose magnification ranged from 3X to 9X.

## Pharmacy students and Sigma get down to business



Five Pharmacy students were part of an award winning team in the 2003 Young Achievement Australia (YAA) Tertiary Business Skills program. This year, a new group of Pharmacy students has joined with students from Commerce, Arts, IT and Law at Monash to compete in this national competition.

Established in 1977, YAA is an independent non-government, not-for-profit organisation that runs programs linking education with business to provide young people with skills and knowledge to better equip them for their future working lives.

Sigma Company Ltd has again been a major supporter of the Pharmacy team, who have formed a company called Idiyada. The 18 students who make up Idiyada believe the program will enable them to experience the triumphs, disappointments and hardships of running a small business, as they endeavour to develop their business management skills. They are also aiming to give something back to the community by

volunteering to assist the Starlight Children's Foundation.

The company has developed a delightful series of products called Kooshi Creatures, convertible pillow-blankets (pillows that unzip into blankets) that are individually packaged with their own tags and ID cards. Kooshi-Oink, Kooshi-Moo and Kooshi-Quack have two layers of anti-pill fleece and the blanket, when folded out, is cot-sized. The product retails for \$25.

Idiyada, with the support of the Pharmacy Guild of Australia, recently launched the Kooshi Creatures to the profession at the inaugural Community Pharmacy Southern Convention and Exhibition. Demand was so high that the students sold out of Kooshi-Moo.

**For further information about Kooshi Creatures contact Jeffrey Lim, tel: 0431 524 373, email [generalenquiries@idiyada.com](mailto:generalenquiries@idiyada.com) or visit [www.idiyada.com](http://www.idiyada.com)**

**Idiyada team members at their booth at the Community Pharmacy Southern Convention and Exhibition.**

## Reality bites: Remedy's Real World Dinner 2004



Remedy is a group of students from the College who aim to improve the standard of pharmacy in developing countries.

On 3 September the group held a dinner to raise funds for a pharmacy school in southern India, and to give diners a taste (literally!) of the inequalities between developed nations and the Third World. The dinner was held in Cossar Hall, where 150 students, staff and friends were treated to finger food and beverages before being seated to enjoy an Indian dinner.

All present knew that there was a twist to the proceedings to reflect what happens in the 'real world', emphasizing the fact that for those less privileged, reality does 'bite'. Some were treated to a feast at elaborate settings, some dined on a moderate meal, while others had to make do with plain fried rice seated on the floor.

The event raised funds to help develop a Drug Information Centre for the Pharmacy Department of Annamalai University in Tamil Nadu, India, which was the subject of an informative slide show. Future events and fundraising activities will support other areas of need in Third World health settings, which the group is currently identifying.

Later in the evening, fourth-year pharmacy student Michael Frank spoke about his recent participation in a Northern Territory schools health careers workshop. First-year student Jaya also performed a traditional Indian dance. Two guest speakers then shared their experiences of volunteering as pharmacists on overseas aid programs – Bev Snell (1957) and Michelle Sweidan, a Public Health Fellow at the Department of Human Services.

Jana Dostal and Dhineli Perera, third-year pharmacy students, were two of the organisers of this successful event, which raised over \$4000.

"It was thanks to a great team that we were able to hold a night that proved to be so successful," said Jana. "We would like to see it repeated annually in the years to come so that we can provide ongoing support where it is needed, to achieve long term solutions."

"The night exceeded our expectations in every way possible," said Dhineli. "Not only did we raise funds for a worthy cause, but people learnt something and had fun at the same time."

**For further information about Remedy, email [vcp\\_remedy@hotmail.com](mailto:vcp_remedy@hotmail.com)**



## International Pharmaceutical Students Federation Congress

A report by Verna Wan, second year student, Bachelor of Pharmacy

"The International Pharmaceutical Students Federation (IPSF) is a federation of pharmacy student associations, representing approximately 350,000 students studying Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Science from over 90 countries. IPSF has close links with the International Pharmaceutical Federation (FIP). The main objectives of IPSF are to study and promote the interests of Pharmacy students and to encourage international cooperation among them on public health campaigns.

This July, IPSF celebrated its 50th Annual Congress over 10 days in Halifax, Canada. Over 300 Pharmacy students from all corners of the globe met in Halifax for educational symposia, workshops, presentations, IPSF general assemblies and various social and cultural events.

Australia was represented by 15 delegates from four of the nine

pharmacy schools. I was one of six students from third year who represented the College at the Congress, made possible by winning a poster competition open to Bachelor of Pharmacy students. My prize included a return airfare to Halifax and registration for the Congress.

The Congress has broadened my awareness of what pharmacy, as a profession, can achieve. I was pleased to discover the extent to which Pharmacy students can have a role in contributing to and promoting changes to public health on an international level, such as involvement in World AIDS Day and World No Tobacco Day.

All Pharmacy students in Australia are automatically members of IPSF through our national student body, the National Australian Pharmacy Students' Association (NAPSA). In turn, NAPSA is made up of the constituent student organisations at

each pharmacy school in Australia, such as the Victorian Pharmacy Student Association, which represents Monash Pharmacy students.

As part of the Halifax Congress, NAPSA ran a successful bid to hold the 2006 Annual IPSF Congress in Cairns, which will be the first held in Australia. It will be exciting to bring some of the IPSF spirit downunder, enabling all Australian Pharmacy students to be involved in something on an international scale, and to show the world what the pharmacy profession in Australia has to offer."

For further information visit [www.napsa.org.au](http://www.napsa.org.au)



The Australian student contingent at the 2004 IPSF Congress.



## Pharmacy Abroad 2005

Monash University prides itself on being internationally focused, with campuses and centres in Europe, Africa and Asia.

The Monash Abroad Program gives Bachelor of Pharmacy students at the College the opportunity to have an international pharmacy experience at partnering universities each year. In 2005, 11 students will take up overseas placements through this program.

In issue 8 of *Alchemy*, we will report back on how the students fared and what they learned from visiting these very different locations to observe how pharmacy is taught and practised in other countries.

Nottingham UK	Mary Etty-Leal Jane Booth
Kansas USA	Julie Varghese Esther Koh
Drake Iowa USA	John Chau Andrew O'Brien
London University	Vivian Chua Joanne Gross
Singapore	Dhineli Perera Winnie Tan Nathan Lum

## Mathew Peck Travelling Scholarship: update

The profits have been tallied for the Mathew Peck Travelling Scholarship fundraiser held in May – and the event raised \$7200!

This is a wonderful outcome for the second annual 'Drink II a Dream' organised by Susie Rudd and her band of helpers. The money raised will go to support Cancer Council Victoria and to the Travelling Scholarship that honours Mathew's life.

The family and friends of Mathew who organised the event wish to thank everyone who helped make the second fundraiser a wonderful night and a financial success.

To ensure that the scholarship is ongoing, the College has extended its initial commitment of \$2000 for five years, making a total contribution of \$10,000. In addition, all profits from the Monash shop located at the College reception desk will go towards the scholarship.

For further information about the Mathew Peck Travelling Scholarship visit [www.vcp.monash.edu.au/students/mppekscholar/](http://www.vcp.monash.edu.au/students/mppekscholar/)

To make a donation contact the Foundation Office, tel: 613 9903 9507.

## The Parkville Multicultural Society Annual Soccer Championship

The championship is on again in 2005, with a twist. As in 2004, when the championship began, teams of staff, undergraduate and postgraduate students play each other for the prized trophy. This year, the winner will play a team of graduate pharmacists organised by Angelo Pricolo (1987). We will report on the outcome of the championship and how the graduate team fared in the next issue of *Alchemy*.

# Alumni in profile: Rex Goble



A career in pharmacy was the foundation from which Rex Goble explored a range of business and personal interests.



"I left school in 1932, and because I enjoyed messing around with chemicals at home, my dad took me around all the local pharmacies to find me an apprenticeship. I became an apprentice at Nobbs Pharmacy in Footscray, working for John Nobbs.

The apprenticeship lasted for four years. The first year involved studying two nights a week at the Pharmacy College in Swanston Street, then working at the shop every day it was open – even weekends. Second year was college every morning and work every afternoon, then for third and fourth year, study dropped back to a couple of mornings or afternoons a week.

My job at the pharmacy was to sweep floors, polish windows and eventually to make mixtures and ointments under supervision. In those days the pharmacy was at the front of the shop and the rear of the shop was divided into the dispensary and a hairdressing salon run by Mrs Nobbs. This was a fairly common arrangement at the time.

I qualified as a pharmacist in 1938 and the shop came up for sale, for £900 – which was a lot of money in those days. My mother organised a loan for £700 from Felton Grimwade Duerdin, a wholesaler that helped to finance pharmacies at the time, and I borrowed the rest from an uncle. So at the age of 22, I was the proud owner of a pharmacy – with no clue on how to run a business.

The first thing I did was delegate someone to sweep the floor, so I never had to do that again! I relied heavily on the girls in the shop to

advise me on purchasing stock, because I had never done that, and I also ran the hairdressing salon. That closed in the 1970s because of security requirements in the pharmacy section.

Quite a few factory workers came into the pharmacy for treatment for minor accidents. There was no formal training. I learnt on the job by watching Mr Nobbs. When I took over the business, I treated these people too. For example, if someone had a piece of steel in his eye, I'd treat it with a cocaine solution and remove the steel.

We used to sell a lot of photographic papers and chemicals because people did their own developing. I didn't have a clue about that side of the business. So I enrolled in a three-year part time photography course at Melbourne Institute (now RMIT) and it became a lifelong hobby. I built up the stock of photographic supplies and

# Congratulations to Wilfred Amarant OAM

equipment, to the extent where I formed a group with six other photographic dealers to bulk buy. That group today is Camera House, which still operates Australia-wide. I was the first Chairman and was active in the group for my whole career.

We used to put a big screen at the back of the shop on Friday nights, and 15 or 20 people would gather to watch movies through the shop windows. Often they would come in to talk about photography and from this group we formed the Footscray Photographic Society. I was its first President.

The war years affected our supplies as a lot were imported, like 4711 cologne, which was very popular. I began manufacturing my own products to make up for the shortages. My shaving cream sold well. One buyer used to purchase four-gallon drums of the product and pack it himself for sale in New South Wales. I'd buy bulk opaque nail polish from cosmetics suppliers, add dyes and sell it to the girls from the munitions factory. I also made my own lotions.

In the early 1940s I took a chiropodist into the salon. She had trained students in the UK, so we began taking in chiropody students. This led to a partnership with a former lecturer at the Australian Chiropody School. Together we established the National School of Chiropody and the National Society of Chiropodists, which later joined with other chiropody groups around the country. Over a 25-year period more than 900 students graduated from our courses. Things were busy. I was still running the pharmacy, which by then was

50% involved in photographic supplies, and administering the school at night. I was also married with three sons. We closed the college in the 1970s when the government took over training for the profession.

Throughout those years I also played sport – cricket in summer and tennis in winter. I played cricket with the Footscray Cricket Club and was captain of the club eleven until I turned 43. My major achievement was taking six wickets in one over, in the days when we had eight-ball overs.

Pharmacy today is quite different. I don't think I would have the same opportunities to diversify as I had in my day. But we didn't learn things like anatomy and physiology, which are so important in diagnosing aches and pains. Computers, too, are a great help in assessing the compatibility and interaction of different medicines.

I was in my 70s when I sold the shop and retired, but I still did some locum work around Melbourne. And every year we still hold a barbeque at home for all the people who worked for us in the shop.

Pharmacy has been a great career for me and it gave me a lot of opportunities. I've never regretted that choice."



**Wilfred Amarant was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) in the Queen's Birthday Honours List 2004 for service to the community and to local government in Koroit.**

Wilfred graduated from the College in 1952, when it was located in Swanston Street. He speaks here about his career as a pharmacist and his life in Koroit.

"After graduation, I continued for four years with the pharmacist I was apprenticed to – E.A.L. Byrnes in Bridge Road, Richmond. I was there until 1957. On 1 April 1957 I bought the pharmacy in Koroit from the estate of the late R.S. Corson. I was there for 42 years, until 21 June 1999 when the pharmacy was acquired by Deidre Baker. The town was very stable during that time. Koroit is a small service town adjacent to Warrnambool – actually, 12 miles from the Warrnambool CBD.

I was a Guild member, of course, but being 175 miles from Melbourne with a young family, I chose to be involved in my local community. I also conducted another pharmacy in Warrnambool for 10 years. I bought it in November 1977, from the late John Wiggins. I sold that to Maree Luxford in March 1987.

My community work involved the management of Koroit District Memorial Hospital, which became the Koroit Nursing Home in the early 1990s. I was a board member for 36 years, seven of those as president and four as treasurer. One year I was both treasurer and president. I was president of the Koroit cricket and football clubs. My involvement with the football club was for 20 years in major country football.

I spent 21 years as a municipal councillor. That included 12 years as a councillor for the Borough of Koroit, two of those as mayor, and nine years with the Shire of Warrnambool, finishing as shire president for a couple of months prior to the amalgamation that led to the demise of Warrnambool Shire. I was with Koroit Borough for 12 years before it was amalgamated with the Shire of Warrnambool. I was also a recipient of a Centenary Medal, which was awarded for service to Australian society. I have been an Honorary Justice of the Peace for more than 25 years and continue to act in that capacity.

Looking back on this time, I realise that I was never home! For that reason I often say other people should be mentioned in acknowledging what I did. My wife's contribution was immense.

My greatest achievements are my four children. You live for your children – and hopefully, as a result, you will live on through your children. I am in the process of enjoying that now."



## 1954 reunion a real hit

On 27 June, more than 80 guests attended a luncheon at the Brighton International for a reunion of the 1954 graduating year.

Months were spent tracking down colleagues and seeking out past students from all over Australia and the world. Graduates Beverley Gorr and Bryan Casey (both 1954) did some tremendous detective work collating new addresses and spreading the word among friends and pharmacy colleagues.

"It was a great day," said Bryan. "I met many friends who I hadn't seen in 50 years – some who had moved interstate travelled great distances to be present for our very special day."

Professor Colin Chapman welcomed the guests and spoke of the many changes at the College and the importance of acknowledging the achievements of the reunion guests. Michael Gandolfo (1954), a prominent pharmacist, spoke with great enthusiasm about the work of the Foundation and encouraged others to get involved.

"It was wonderful that the Dean, Colin Chapman, gave up his valuable time to be with us and tell us all about the latest trends in pharmacy," added Bryan.

All the attending graduates were asked to bring along some reminiscence of their lives since graduation and some of their fond memories from their student days.

The recent passing of Bob Constable, a friend to many and a memorable pharmacist, was noted with sadness.

"We had such a good group of people who studied with us and formed lasting friendships," noted Beverley.

A surprise guest speaker, Libbi Gorr (best known as Elle McFeast from television and radio) arrived to entertain the gathering with her upfront and sharp observations. Libbi is the daughter of Beverley Gorr, one of the reunion organisers, and her take on being the daughter of a pharmacist kept the guests in stitches.

"We try to maintain contact every five years or so ... and that has always been a success. Although time and distance have separated us, we always come back to reminisce and enjoy each other's company and the latest gossip. I loved the day and I hope everyone else did too," said Beverley.

Dennis Farrington, a well-known musician who provided the music for Pharmacy Balls during the 1950s and 1960s, provided further entertainment. His three-piece band played all the old favourites and rounded off a terrific day.

"The camaraderie and friendship was evident. Almost without exception, guests were saying that they wished they had more time to say hello to everyone. I would especially like to thank Sarah Vincent and Liz Welch, the Foundation staff, for their contributions in making the day happen," added Bryan.

Fifty years ago a bright young group of graduates embarked on a professional life, some continuing with pharmacy and others branching into a range of other careers. Many thanks to Pharmaceutical Defence Limited (PDL) for sponsoring and producing the '50 years on' commemorative booklet.



Reunion organisers Beverley Gorr and Bryan Casey.

## Further College reunions

2004 seems to be the year for getting together at the College. Three graduating years are celebrating very special milestones this year, with the 1994 graduates celebrating their 10 year anniversary, the 1979 year marching up to their 25 year anniversary, and the 1954 graduating year marking a significant 50 years since graduation.

The 1979 reunion organisers Diana Nowak and Ingrid Norton joined with fellow graduates to raise

the roof of Cossar Hall on 9 October, celebrating the past 25 years, swapping stories and reconnecting with fellow graduates.

The 1994 reunion is particularly special, as it commemorates the first year graduating under the Monash banner. Suzanne Caliph, Dan Malone (both now teaching at the College) and Daniela Peers form the committee who organised the 1994 reunion, which took place on 2 October.

See the next issue of *Alchemy* for photos and news of these reunions.

Reunions are a lot of work but very rewarding for the committees of organisers who come together to track down and reignite past friendships, and to celebrate the achievements of their fellow graduates.

If you are interested in hosting a reunion in 2005 contact the Alumni Office, tel: 613 9903 9507 or email [alumni@vcp.monash.edu.au](mailto:alumni@vcp.monash.edu.au)

Due to the *Privacy Act*, the Alumni Office cannot hand out contact addresses of graduates to reunion committees, which is why the Office offers to do all the mail-outs for the reunions (one less thing for the organisers to do!).

## College staff publish new book

Congratulations to Dr Jenny Gowan and Associate Professor Louis Roller (1963) who have co-authored *Practical Disease State Management for Pharmacists*, a recently published text for Pharmacy students and pharmacists.

It contains articles designed to assist Pharmacy students, pre-registrants and practising pharmacists to deal with everyday situations in community and hospital pharmacies, residential aged care facilities and in the individual patient's home.

Each article is set around a major disease, giving adequate background to that particular disease and including case studies. The patient may be suffering from a number of medical conditions, which generally involve multiple medications and disease states. The basis of the case studies lies in the utilisation of rational drug therapy with an aim to achieve quality use of medicines.

It is hoped that schools of pharmacy in Australia and New Zealand will adopt the book, which is published by Australian Pharmaceutical Publishing Company Ltd (APPCo).



## Major award for Michael Dooley

Congratulations to Michael Dooley (1987), Director of Pharmacy at Peter MacCallum Cancer Institute, who has been awarded the Society of Hospital Pharmacists of Australia 2004 Clinical Pharmacy Award.

This is an annual award by the profession to an individual pharmacist for 'outstanding contribution to the field of clinical pharmacy practice and contribution to knowledge of therapeutics through research and clinical teaching'.

The award will be conferred at the national clinical conference in October in Sydney, where Michael will deliver an oration. This is wonderful recognition of Michael's outstanding contribution to clinical pharmacy in Australia.



## \$70,000 Cyril Tonkin Fellowship 2005

The Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (Victorian Branch) is calling for applications for the \$70,000 Cyril Tonkin Fellowship, which is awarded every three years.

The Fellowship will help to support a pharmacist undertaking a major project intended to make a significant contribution to the practice of pharmacy or pharmaceutical science in Victoria.

This new Fellowship has been developed by the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (Victorian Branch) as trustee for the scholarship fund, in consultation with Alistair Lloyd and Professor Colin Chapman.

Applicants are invited to choose their own subject for investigation. Preference will be given to projects that include at least some time spent on a study mission overseas and on projects that contribute to the development of the profession and science of pharmacy in Victoria.

The Cyril Tonkin Fellowship is available to Pharmacy graduates of the College, and other pharmacists resident and practising in Victoria.



**Applications close on 30 November 2004 and application forms are available from [www.psa.org.au/victoria](http://www.psa.org.au/victoria)**

**For further information contact John Illott, CEO of the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia (Victorian Branch), tel: 613 9389 4002.**

## The Pharmacists' Interstate Cricket Challenge

In 2005, the Cricket Challenge returns to Victoria on the weekend of the 29–30 January. Both the dinner and match are being held at Wesley College. For further information about playing in the team or attending the dinner contact Divesh Sanghvi on 0405 182 184.



## Let us know your news!

Please help to keep us – and your fellow alumni – up to date with your latest news. Fill in the update form, tear it off and send it to:

*Alchemy*

Victorian College of Pharmacy  
Monash University (Parkville campus)  
381 Royal Parade  
Parkville Vic 3052 Australia  
Or fax to: 613 9903 9058  
(confidential fax).

Name

Home address

Postcode

Country

Business address

Postcode

Country

Telephone (H/B)

Email (H/B)

Fax (H/B)

Graduation year

News about yourself  
(Please send separate sheet if required)

Have you received any postgraduate or additional professional qualifications since graduating?

Would you like further information on ...

- ☐ organising a reunion for your year?
- ☐ going on a tour of the College?
- ☐ postgraduate study at the College?



# Acrux Limited: A great success story for the College



Dr Barrie Finnin demonstrating Acrux's Metered Dose Transdermal Spray.

Shares in speciality pharmaceutical company Acrux Limited were listed on the Australian Stock Exchange at 11am (AEST) on 29 September, under the code ACR.

Acrux Limited was established in 1998, after researchers at the College invented a method for delivering drugs through the skin.

Acrux's underwritten offer of 30 million new shares at \$1.00 per share closed oversubscribed. The level of applications under Acrux's offer meant that, in addition to the \$30 million in new capital raised, over-allotment shares made available by existing shareholders were used to satisfy oversubscriptions. Based on the offer price of \$1.00 per share, Acrux now has a market capitalisation of \$130.9 million.

The \$30 million raised from the sale of new shares will be used by Acrux to continue the development and commercialisation of its patient-preferred healthcare products, each of which uses Acrux's innovative transdermal drug delivery technology. These products are as easy as taking a tablet or capsule, with all the safety advantages of transdermal delivery. They include hormone therapies for women and men, a female contraceptive and treatments for severe pain and for diseases of the central nervous system.

Acrux has already completed 13 human clinical trials with six different drugs and tested more than 20 drug candidates. Two Acrux products are about to enter the last stage of development (Phase 3) for the United States market.

"This is another initiative that will help the College to be accepted as one of the leading schools of pharmacy in the world," said Professor Colin Chapman.

"I congratulate the inventors of the technology – Professor Barry Reed (1963), Dr Barrie Finnin (1967) and Dr Tim Morgan (1992).

"Acrux is a great example of the potential of College research to make improvements in healthcare as well as to attract international partnerships and gain commercial success in global markets."

For further information, visit [www.acrux.com.au](http://www.acrux.com.au)