

MONASH NEWS

NEWS FROM THE CAMPUSES OF MONASH UNIVERSITY
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MONASH
UNIVERSITY

Future shock to be investigated

By JULIE RYAN

Monash University's Centre for Ambulance and Paramedic Studies (MUCAPS) has been awarded a \$130,000 grant to identify patients who are at risk of major trauma but who do not initially present with serious injuries at the accident scene.

The study is in conjunction with the Metropolitan Ambulance Service and Rural Ambulance Victoria, which are part of a multidisciplinary steering committee will guiding the project.

The centre's paramedic research fellow, Mr Mal Boyle, said current strategies for predicting major trauma after an accident when no initial indications are present have been developed from American models over the past 20 years.

"While most cases of major trauma attended by ambulance paramedics can be easily identified using the two main criteria of the pre-hospital major trauma criteria, there are situations where a third criteria is applied," he said.

Where there is no physiological or anatomical evidence of injury, ambulance

paramedics apply criteria known as 'mechanism of injury'.

The MUCAPS study, funded by the Victorian Trauma Foundation, an arm of the Transport Accident Commission, will investigate the value of this criteria in establishing risk of major trauma.

Criteria that are likely precursors to major trauma currently include vehicle rollover, motor bike or cyclist impact at greater than 30 km/h, high-speed car accident, same vehicle fatality, extended extraction time and fall from a height greater than five metres.

Mr Boyle said the key issue was how to best treat people in the 'mechanism of injury' category and whether the current American-derived criteria best suits the Australian trauma model.

"For instance, a car accident victim with low blood pressure and a broken upper leg would automatically be classified as a major trauma patient. The pattern of injury would also suggest that if the force had been strong enough to break an upper leg, there may also be internal injuries, even if these are not immediately apparent," Mr Boyle said.

"But what of patients who have been in a high-speed car accident (where the vehicle was travelling more than 60 km/h), have a normal blood pressure, no obvious injuries, are walking around and talking coherently?

"The current criteria would suggest that they are still a candidate for major trauma. Do you transport them to hospital even if they appear fine? In some instances, these accident victims refuse transportation to hospital."

Mr Boyle and his team will follow up patients who have been involved in traumatic incidents in Victoria, to see if major trauma developed later.

"For those who are initially taken to hospital, later major trauma is easy to follow up. However, we are asking hospitals to advise us of those patients who were not hospitalised initially but who later presented with injuries," Mr Boyle said.

"By establishing both the types of injuries sustained and the likelihood of major trauma from certain incidents, we will be able to refine the 'mechanism of injury' criteria to suit Australian conditions, and ultimately improve the current system."

This study has been based on the findings of the 'Review of Trauma and Emergency Services in Victoria - 1999' in which the questions about suddenly deteriorating patients remained unanswered. The study will add significant knowledge to trauma care both in Australia and overseas.

New health institute the way of the future

A new super research organisation will bring together more than 1000 health and medical researchers working in the Clayton precinct to create one of Australia's largest medical and biomedical science research complexes.

The Monash Institutes of Health (MIH), launched last month by Federal Health Minister Dr Michael Wooldridge, will consolidate expertise in the fields of DNA sequencing, biotechnology, embryonic stem cells, diabetes, drug discovery, cancer research, population health statistics and clinical practice.

The new body pools the research expertise of Monash University, Southern Health, Prince Henry's Institute of Medical Research and the International Diabetes Institute.

Researchers from these institutions will work collaboratively on joint research initiatives to share expensive infrastructure, develop bids for joint research funds, build links with commercial partners, and develop new research and training facilities.

Faculty of Medicine dean Professor Nick Saunders said the strength of the new institute lay in the combined expertise of the individual members.

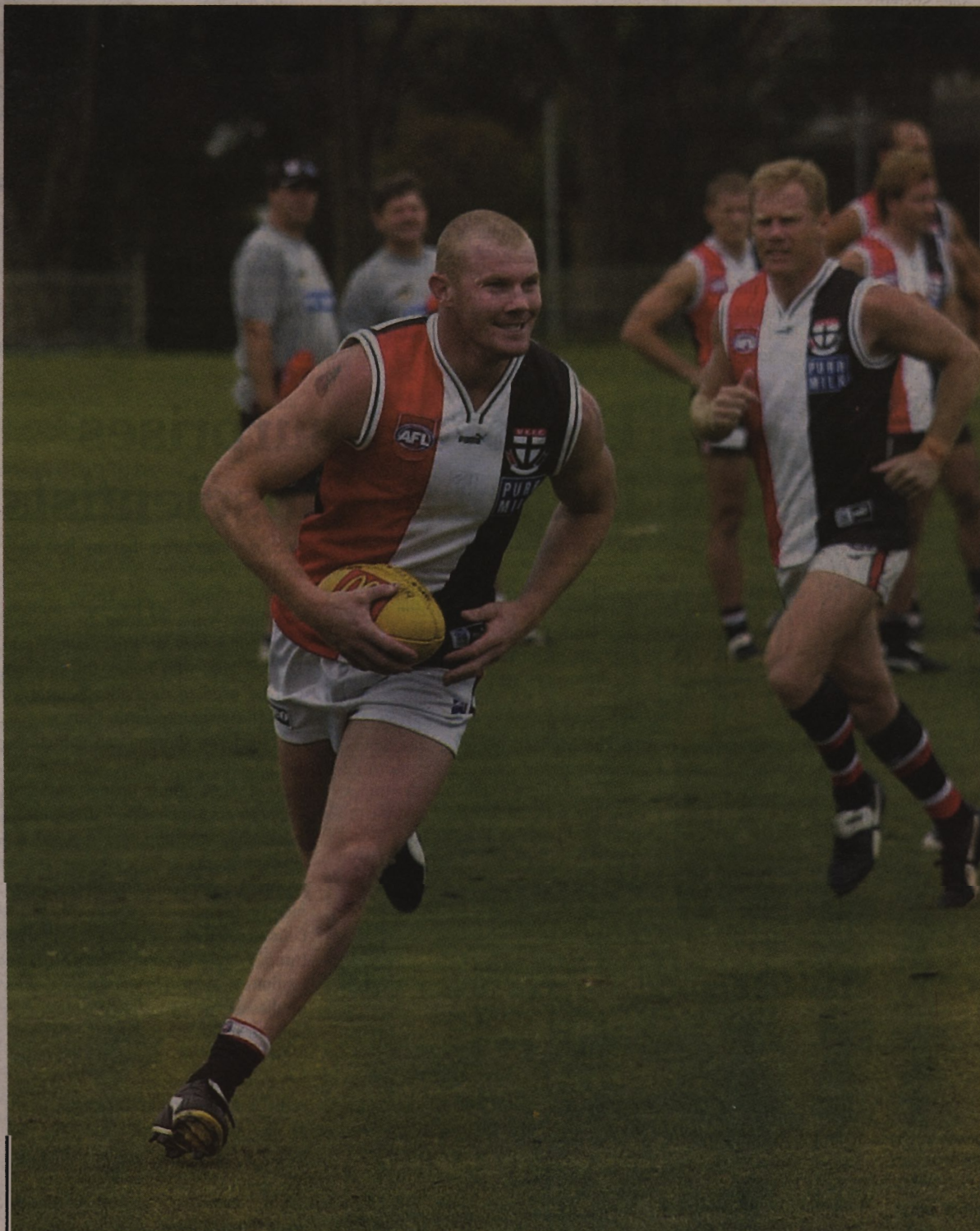
"This is the way forward for medical and health organisations that want to position themselves as global leaders in the rapidly expanding biotechnology industry," he said.

"MIH is a full-service facility, taking research from the molecule through to the clinical stage to ultimately be of major benefit to the broader community."

Dr Wooldridge said the MIH was a very important for Monash because biotechnology was becoming increasingly important for Melbourne.

"If we are really going to compete on an international stage, it is simply not possible in the future for us to have an enormous number of institutes. That is why we have been encouraging institutes to collaborate," he said.

"Monash is on the threshold of extending the biotechnology revolution that will define this century, and there is no better time to be working in biomedical research here in Melbourne."



Footy's back, and St Kilda players have been taking advantage of the sports facilities at Monash University's Clayton campus. Photographer GREG FORD captured coach Malcolm Blight putting players - including Barry Hall and Nathan Burke (above) - through tough training schedules, with fans watching from the sidelines. The Saints will continue training at Monash's gym, pool and ovals until later this month in preparation for their opening round match on Saturday 31 March. But what of the game's future? One researcher believes Australia's favourite sport is at risk. See page 3 for the full story.

Inside

Opinion

Nurses: the patient experts

Nurses should play a central role in decision making, says a Monash bioethicist.

News

Age is no barrier

An 80-year-old has become Monash's oldest female PhD.

Page 2

Page 3

Nurses: the patient experts

OPINION

Traditionally, nurses have accepted a subservient role to doctors. But bioethicist **ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR HELGA KUHSE** believes nurses should play a central role in decision making in the health care industry

AS TIME and economic pressures on health care systems continue to increase, nurses can be the saviours.

Of course, the roles of doctors and nurses should not be confused. Doctors diagnose illness and disease, perform surgery and prescribe medication – and, in a hospital setting, because of constraints, may hurriedly see patients for only short periods.

Nurses, on the other hand, spend whole shifts caring for a particular patient, and consequently often gain a better insight into and understanding of the patient's concerns and desires than doctors do.

As a result, it seems obvious that nurses should play a more prominent role in ethical decision-making than they have done in the past. They are aware if a patient is worried about a particular course of treatment or outcome and are in a position to inform the doctor, who should listen and take the views on board.

When modern nursing began, virtually all nurses were women and almost all doctors were men. Like women in the wider community, nurses were typically considered the helpmates of men – dependent functionaries who aided doctors in their work.

And despite the move of more men into nursing, it remains a fact that most



Nurses should play a more prominent role in ethical decision making. Picture: GREG FORD

nurses are women. It is not surprising, therefore, to find that nurses are struggling not only for improved status, wages and working conditions, but also, and more fundamentally, for recognition as a profession that has specific ethics.

Recent philosophical attempts to introduce a feminine 'ethics of care' into nursing – that is, the view that women are inherently more caring than men and have a natural desire to nurse the sick, raise children, be homemakers etc – are flawed. Why? Because while the various proponents of this strongly North American philosophy

tell nurses they ought to care, they do not define what 'caring' actually means.

So nurses are left wondering: what should they do when confronted by a moral dilemma? How should they 'care' appropriately? And how do they justify their actions to doctors who may not appreciate their moral judgement?

The problems arise, of course, because 'caring' can mean different things to different nurses. Faced with a severely disabled newborn infant, one nurse may feel the caring thing to do is everything possible to sustain life. Her colleague, however, may feel that the

appropriately caring path to take is to allow 'nature to take its course' and let the infant die.

Encouraging and promoting a caring attitude, then, is simply not enough. It's time the industry had deep discussion, reflection and agreement on the values on which moral decisions are to be based.

Too much emphasis on caring also creates another problem. Patients want professionalism from nurses. They want their physical needs attended to by a responsive and sympathetic nurse – they don't want to become best friends with the nurse.

There needs to be great discussion in the health care field about principles and values and the roles nurses can play. Otherwise, nurses are at risk of ending up in the same situation as past generations of nurses – condemned to silence.

■ *Helga Kuhse is an honorary senior research fellow at Monash University. Her current research focuses on ethical issues raised by new reproductive technologies, including cloning, and forms the basis of a paper for the World Health Organisation. She is also the author of the book Caring: Nurses, Women and Ethics.*



A 1907 postcard designed to entice holidaymakers to travel Australia, taken from the book.

Australia – a nation of holidaymakers

BY DEREK BROWN

From hunting on the Mornington Peninsula in the late 1800s to relaxing at island resorts in Northern Queensland, Australians have always loved holidaying in their own country.

Professor Peter Spearritt, from the National Centre for Australian Studies at Monash University, who is co-author of *Holiday Business: Tourism in Australia since 1870*, said the tourist industry, which today generates \$16.8 billion a year, had humble beginnings.

"In the late nineteenth century, Tasmania was probably the most important long-haul tourist destination. Melbourne in summer could be

unpleasant, and many middle-class Melburnians would travel to Tasmania to escape the heat," he said.

While camping was also very popular during this period, Professor Spearritt said tourism was more of an elite pursuit, with middle and upper class guests staying at guesthouses and hotels.

According to Professor Spearritt and his co-author, Associate Professor Jim Davidson from the Victorian University of Technology, the growth of most tourist destinations can be traced to a dramatic increase in car ownership during the late 1950s and early 1960s, allowing Australians to travel further afield.

"Air travel was still very expensive. Owning a car was much more affordable, and mass car ownership encouraged an exodus of people from Melbourne to Sydney and Queensland's beach resorts and a growth in the popularity of caravanning," he said.

Professor Spearritt said that when the price of airfares dropped in the 1970s and 1980s, domestic tourism – and tourist regions such as the Gold Coast and Cairns – boomed.

"Australia now attracts almost five million international visitors per annum. Basically, this is because of cheaper air travel, in particular the 707 and 747 aeroplanes," he said.

Discovery surprises international scientists

BY SANDRA BUCOVAZ

Scientists at Monash University's Institute of Reproduction and Development have surprised their international colleagues with an exciting discovery that could impact on the treatment of hepatitis, multiple sclerosis (MS) and certain types of cancer.

The Monash team has discovered the activities of a soluble receptor molecule that offers a clue to better understanding how interferon works in the body and possibly how it can be used for more effective therapy with fewer side-effects.

The discovery is perhaps one of the most significant since interferon therapy was introduced in the 1960s for the treatment of hepatitis, MS and some forms of cancer such as leukemia.

Reflecting the significance of the discovery, the research findings were published in a recent issue of the prestigious medical journal *Blood* and presented at two international conferences, where they have received a positive response from international scientists.

The discovery was made by Associate Professor Paul Hertzog, Dr Catherine Owczarek and postgraduate student Matthew Hardy at the institute's Centre for Functional Genomics and Human Disease.

Dr Hertzog described the findings as "very significant", particularly

because interferon therapy had been around for so long.

"We thought we knew all the variables – it's exciting to discover something new at this stage," said Dr Hertzog, who hopes the findings can be used to dramatically improve the efficacy of interferon therapy.

Interferon therapy can sometimes be hit-and-miss in that some people benefit while others do not, suffering side-effects including drowsiness, headache, vomiting and general flu-like symptoms.

Produced predominantly by white blood cells, interferons primarily make cells resistant to viruses, inhibit tumour growth and stimulate the immune system. They act at local sites of disease or can travel around the body to act on other 'target' cells.

Receptors are necessary for interferons to get their message into target cells, by helping the interferon 'bind' to the cell. Up until now, it was believed the receptors were embedded into the cell surface. However, the newly discovered soluble receptors occur in significant quantities floating around the target cells.

Dr Hertzog said the Monash discovery explained why interferons can have such different impacts on the body. He added, however, that much research still lay ahead.

So football is more than a game, research reveals

BY ALLISON HARDING

Australian Rules football might not survive unless greater efforts are made to keep strong links with fans, according to a Monash University researcher.

Dr David Nadel, from the School of Political and Social Inquiry, says the game may eventually become merely another television sport and lose out to world sports such as soccer and rugby union unless its "tribal" elements remain strong.

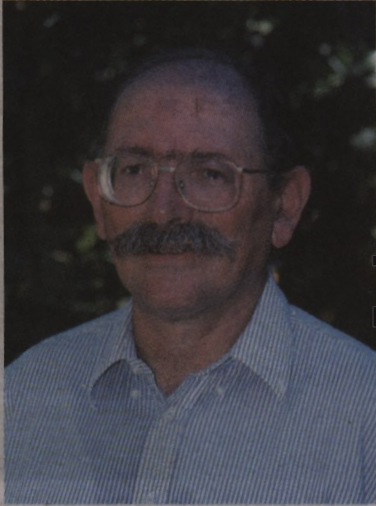
In his thesis, 'The commercialisation and professionalisation of Australian football, 1975-1996', Dr Nadel says the suburban relationship between football supporters and their clubs has been an essential component of the peculiar strength of the sport.

"Some of the strategies adopted in the march to corporate professionalisation place the future of Australian football at risk," he says.

Dr Nadel's thesis points to the introduction of the draft and the end of suburban zoning - where players were recruited from suburban or country clubs to a big league side - as one of the major contributors to the breakdown of the relationship between fans and clubs.

Moving teams from their suburban grounds, such as Footscray's Western Oval and Collingwood's Victoria Park, also have a negative impact, his research reveals.

"The further you move the clubs from where their supporters live, the



Dr David Nadel

more you break the link between fans and their clubs," he says.

He believes it would have been a better option for the AFL to spend money on redeveloping certain suburban grounds.

"The people who transformed the AFL were basically businessmen, and they've tended to adopt not only an American model, but also a business model," he says.

"In truly business terms that makes sense - we want the best-run clubs, we want to limit the costs and maximise profits, and we want to create a competition that everyone will want to watch.

"The problem with doing these things is that you don't look at the cultural aspects, and by not looking at the

culture involved, they've created an entertainment model that is threatened by the whole globalisation of world sports."

In the final analysis, Dr Nadel says, "the success of the game depends on the number of people who go through the gate or sit down to watch it on television".

"They won't do that unless they have teams they can identify with and a sense that football is important," he says. "If the right things are done, if some effort is made to keep a real link with the fans, then we might have a national game."

But there is also a risk that fans will drift off to international options and that soccer and rugby union could sound the death knell for Australian Rules, much as the AFL has for country and non-Victorian football leagues, such as Tasmania.

"There are really only three societies that have managed to keep their own code of football - Northern America, Ireland and Australia (grid iron, gaelic football and Australian Rules)," Dr Nadel says.

"There has to be a reason for minority regional codes to survive, and while America can afford to play a code that everybody else thinks is stupid, in the case of Australia and Ireland that's not the case.

"I would argue, to use the famous cliché that Channel Nine uses, that it has to be more than a game. It's the communalism and tribalism that make it survive."

Age no barrier to PhD success

BY JUNE YU

At age 80, Dr Gwendoline Carlos has become the oldest woman on record to graduate with a PhD from Monash University.

Dr Carlos took nine years to complete her PhD in Education, in which she examined the development of the education of deaf children in Victoria after 1945.

Prior to that, she spent three years writing a pre-1945 history of the Victorian Deaf and Dumb Institute in St Kilda Road (now the Victorian Services for Deaf Children) for her Master in Education.

Dr Carlos investigated influencing factors on the education of deaf children - such as the influx of new ideas from immigrants and the government taking responsibility for deaf education in the 1950s, which led to more schools, organisations and support for the deaf in Victoria.

She also outlined the 'deaf power movement', in which the deaf community wanted to keep themselves separate from the hearing world. This made them reluctant to embrace methods of communication and technology that would give them better access to the hearing world, such as the cochlear implant and teaching the deaf to speak instead of relying on sign language.

Dr Carlos said she decided to undertake further study after retiring from teaching at Methodist Ladies College in 1982.

"I had a bit of a flair for writing and I was interested in research - and I had the time then to go back to university," she said.

"I believe that as you get older, you should still keep yourself mentally and physically fit."



Dr Gwendoline Carlos at the St Kilda Road centre. Picture: GREG FORD

Mrs Carlos's interest in deaf education began when she taught deaf children at the St Kilda Road school in the 1940s.

She was among the party evacuated to Marysville during World War II, when the institute was taken over for military purposes.

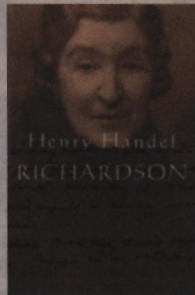
She gave up teaching deaf children when she married her husband,

George, in 1942 but continued to support the school by running dog shows to raise money.

For her service, she was made a Life Governor of the Victorian Services for Deaf Children.

The oldest known man to receive a PhD is Dr Jan Kolm, who last year graduated with a law doctorate at 82.

INPRINT



Henry Handel Richardson

The Letters, Volume 3: 1934-1946

Edited by Clive Probyn and Bruce Steele

Published by Melbourne University Press

RRP: \$88

Henry Handel Richardson, well known for her trilogy *The Fortunes of Richard Mahoney* and *The Getting of Wisdom*, is one of Australia's best-loved writers yet little has been written on the woman behind the pseudonym.

Two Monash academics have assembled the last of Richardson's prolific correspondence, completing a series designed to provide insight into the writer's private life.

This third volume, *The Letters*, sees the widowed Richardson move to the Sussex village where she lived until her death. With World War II dominating this period of her life, her letters portray a strained and weakened woman. Her last letter is a pencilled note to Mary Kernot, her Melbourne-based childhood friend.

Series editors Professor Clive Probyn and Associate Professor Bruce Steele of Monash University's English department have set up the Henry Handel Richardson Project, the largest project ever undertaken on an Australian author.



The Australian Century

Edited by Robert Manne

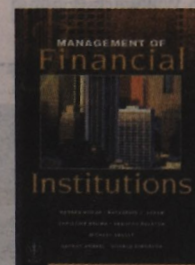
Published by Text Publishing

RRP: \$20.66

At the beginning of a new century and with celebrations marking one hundred years of Australian federation, there is a growing interest in the nation's history.

The Australian Century analyses some of our most crucial political struggles of the past 100 years, from the conscription debates of World War I to the impact of globalisation during the Hawke and Keating governments, highlighting their impact on the development of Australia.

Dr Bain Attwood and Associate Professor Andrew Markus from the Department of History at Monash University co-authored the chapter 'The Fight for Aboriginal Rights', which outlines the battle for the recognition of indigenous rights.



Management of Financial Institutions

By Warren Hogan, Katherine Avram, Christine Brown, Deborah Ralston and Michael Skully

Published by John Wiley and Sons

RRP: \$76.97

Management strategies that worked for financial institutions a decade ago can no longer cope with the ever-increasing range of banking options, such as internet banking and automated call centres.

Management of Financial Institutions is a comprehensive overview of the current Australian financial institutions sector. It looks at a number of today's management policies including the regulatory environment in which financial institutions operate and strategies for control of capital.

The book is an Australian adaptation of the US book *Bank Management* by George Hempel and Donald Simonson. One of the authors, Professor Michael Skully, lecturers in banking at Monash University and is vice-president of the Asia-Pacific Finance Association.

POSTscript

Environmental biologist and ecologist Professor Paul Ehrlich from Stanford University, USA, spoke recently at Monash University as part of the 'World of Science at Monash' lecture series. Professor Ehrlich spoke on issues raised in his latest book *Human Natures: Genes, Cultures, and the Human Prospect*.

If you are a member of the Monash community and have a forthcoming book, contact monashnews@adm.monash.edu.au

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Performing arts take centre stage

BY SUE McALISTER

Large-scale theatre productions from some of Australia's best-known companies are returning to Monash University after a two-year hiatus.

The manager of Monash's Performing Arts Precinct, Ms Jan Clancy, said this year's program would be bigger than ever, with the presentation of some exciting new programs and the reappearance of several familiar ones.

Ms Clancy said the range of programs would cater to staff, students and the wider community, as well as to secondary school students.

There will be free lunchtime concerts every week, top-class drama, literary forums and master classes with leading performance artists.

The program will include The Bell Shakespeare Company's performance of *The Tempest* at the end of July, which will be sponsored by the School of Business Systems.

Ms Clancy said the Australian International Workshop Festival, to be held later in the year, would give local artists access to a range of expertise usually only available overseas. Workshop leaders are still to be confirmed.

"Past festivals have included workshop leaders such as Andrew Wade, head of voice at the Royal Shakespeare Company," she said.

The lunchtime concerts have long been a feature of the precinct's program. Starting on 12 March, they will again include a diverse array of musical styles and performers, with instruments ranging from the organ and saxophone to the harpsichord and koto.

'Booktalkers for Teenagers' is another new program coming to Monash this year. An initiative of the Australian Centre for Youth Literature (based at the State Library), the program, which combines literature with drama, aims to encourage young people - particularly boys - to read.

"These very popular forums consist of talks by well-known Australian authors, dramatised excerpts from the authors' books and question-and-answer sessions which are fascinating and can be quite heated," Ms Clancy said.

Authors will include Gael Jennings, John Marsden and Doris Pilkington.

Booktalkers events are scheduled for 22 May and 23 October at the Alexander Theatre at Monash's Clayton campus, and on 31 July at the George Jenkins Theatre at the Peninsula campus.

Other performing arts events scheduled for later in the year include a film festival in September and the highly successful Schools' Drama Festival in November.

For further information, contact Jan Clancy on (03) 9905 1677/78, email jan.clancy@adm.monash.edu.au, or Jo Stanley on (03) 9905 1673, email jo.stanley@general.monash.edu.au

Evening concert

John O'Donnell Organ Recital
2 March, 8 pm
Robert Blackwood Concert Hall,
Clayton

Free lunchtime concerts

Andrew MacGregor (shakuhachi) and
Saeko Kitai (koto)
12 March, 1.10 pm
Hexagon Theatre, Gippsland
Derek Jones (flute),
Peter Handsworth (clarinet),
Mikhail Solovei (piano)

Concertos by Danzi and Stamitz
15 March, 1.10 pm
Music Auditorium, Clayton

Clarinet(s) on show!
19 March, 1.10 pm
Hexagon Theatre, Gippsland

John O'Donnell (organ)
22 March, 1.10 pm
Robert Blackwood Concert Hall,
Clayton

Duo virtuosos
Joanne and Brian Wallwork (violins)
26 March, 1.10 pm

Hexagon Theatre, Gippsland
8 May, 1.10 pm
George Jenkins Theatre, Peninsula

Synaesthesia
Clarinet quintet
27 March, 1.10 pm
George Jenkins Theatre, Peninsula
28 March, 1.10 pm
Student Lounge, Berwick

Allan Zavod and friends play originals
and jazz standards
29 March, 1.10 pm
Music Auditorium, Clayton

Get the low-down on art

The University Gallery is showcasing its most recent acquisitions in a special exhibition called *Low-down*.

Running until 17 March, the display features works by leading contemporary Australian artists acquired during the past three years. The exhibition features paintings, photography, sculpture, and paper and video works.

Low-down will include two paintings by Archibald Prize winner Adam Cullen and Robert Owen's painted steel works.

Also on show will be Mike Parr's bronze and beeswax sculpture 'Bronze Liars' and James Angus' plaster piece 'Soccerball Dropped from 35,000 Feet', and Louise Weaver's 'Rock Wallaby'.

Artists' talks on 14 March at 1.30 pm include John Meade, Lauren Berkowitz, Vera Moller and Louise Weaver.

Established in 1961, the Monash University Collection aims to provide a forum for emerging Australian artists and comprises more than 1000 works by 33 artists.

The free exhibition is a must for students and school groups.

For more information, contact the University Gallery on (03) 9905 4217.

Left: Guan Wei's 'Sausage Series No. 3' 1994 features at the exhibition.



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