

Wealth in talent, but problems loom

The wealth of a university resides principally in the intellectual talents of its members, and the skills and levels of determination they display in finding solutions to human problems whether they be medical, technological, scientific, social or in management.

Ability, enthusiasm, drive and a sense of service . . . they're the qualities in staff and students which ensure that the university sector's limited and diminishing financial resources are used to their best advantage.



Prof. Ray Martin

I believe there is no doubt that people associated with Monash possess those creative qualities. The University has achieved international standing in a remarkably short period — little more than two decades.

Articles in this 1982 in Review supplement demonstrate the ingenuity of Monash staff and students. Most of the stories are based on current research projects of which, of course, there are hundreds underway in the University.

Monash's emphasis on research has always been based on a conviction that this activity above all others distinguishes a great university and that there is a close relationship between scholarly research and quality of teaching.

So much for what we have achieved — and this supplement aims to capture the flavor of Monash today — but what then of the future?

Monash's financial health is largely determined by the generosity or parsimony of governments. Although the present Federal Government is more or less maintaining a constant level of funding of universities, the income received takes no account of the increasing and inescapable running costs each year due to the ageing of an institution at the end of a period of sustained growth.

Salary increments, promotions of staff, increasing superannuation contributions all impose a massive financial burden on our universities.

Monash suffered a large cut of 2.2% in its level of funding in 1982 and urgently needs a restoration of financial resources to attain an adequate staffing level. This is the single most important request we will be putting in our submission to the Universities Council for funding in the 1985-87 triennium.

Monash currently has the worst student/staff ratio amongst all Australian universities. Because of the cuts, in the last year we lost 150 positions: if they are not restored our teaching standards and quality of research will be threatened.

To return, however, to some of the achievements of which this University can be proud.

This year has been an important one for publications by Monash authors in diverse fields.

One which may be of particular interest to Monash graduates is the first full biography of the man whose name this University bears, written by Dr Geoffrey Serle, Reader in History. Last month Sir John Monash: A Biography (Melbourne University Press) earned the author first prize in the 1982 National Book Council Awards.

In his portrait of Monash, Dr Serle reveals that, through our name alone, we were off to a flying start in acquiring those attributes of "ability, enthusiasm, drive and a sense of service" of which I wrote earlier.

Professor Ray Martin
Vice-Chancellor

A four-page supplement in November Reporter for graduates: Reports from Information Office publications Monash Review, Sound and Monash Reporter.

1982
in Review



How do you remember Monash?

If you're a recent graduate, this aerial photograph taken mid-1982 will hold few surprises. But if you were acquainted with Monash in the '60s or early '70s you'll appreciate how the campus has "come on".

New this year is Monash's indoor pool complex, financed from the Union Development Fund and located adjacent to the Sports and Recreation Centre. The pool and associated facilities such as spa and sauna are open seven days a week to Monash students and staff and the general public. If you're in the neighbourhood why not drop in sometime, so to speak?

These issues are of concern

Problems currently affecting university-government relations in Australia were given a thorough airing at a Conference of University Governing Bodies held at the University of Melbourne in August.

The conference was organised by the Australian Vice-Chancellors' Committee and was one of a number of forums at which matters of concern to universities were discussed during the year.

It was held, in the words of the AVCC Chairman, Professor David Caro, against a "background of financial stringency brought about by reductions in Government grants . . . and at a time when it appears to the universities that the Government is eroding their traditional autonomy — through such actions as forced amalgamations, discontinuation of courses and unnecessary interference in their day-to-day activities."

These words drew a sharp response from the Federal Minister for Education, Senator Peter Baume, who suggested that universities should "consider whether their selection criteria, their conduct of courses, their range of options and other factors are responsive to Australia's needs during the last two decades of the 20th century."

Senator Baume maintained strongly that, far from reducing grants to the universities, the Government had steadily increased funding in real terms over the past two years.

And he suggested: "If universities are to avoid having dramatic changes imposed on them by governments through control of the purse strings, they should embrace fully the principle and practice of 'continuous assessment' and review of their role, structure and function to achieve internally controlled evolutionary changes within the constraints of public funding and public expenditure."

Mr John Ralph, Deputy Managing Director of CRA Ltd, told the conference that, as a response to the challenges of "tough times", universities like businesses must learn to use their resources more cost effectively to raise their "productivity".

"It may seem offensive to many educators to talk of productivity within universities but I believe there will be greater questioning of how well resources are being used as their scarcity becomes better recognised."

Autonomy, research funding, 'relevance' to name a few

Other speakers cautioned, however, on trying to tailor university teaching and research to the "national need". Professor Noel Dunbar, chairman of the Universities Council of the Commonwealth Tertiary Education Commission, was one.

He said: "If such a policy had prevailed in, say, 1900 what would universities have been studying?"

- Breeding horses appropriate to local conditions.
- Design of river boats.
- Production of telegraph wires, etc.

"Nothing would have been done on aeronautics, or electronics or the radiations which eventually led to the atomic age. I suggest that we need to approach the question of relevance with very great caution."

Mr Ranald Macdonald, managing editor of David Syme, spoke on the "vexed question" of the degree to which universities should be required to provide job skills rather than their traditional role of helping students in the getting of wisdom.

"It is unrealistic to believe it is possible to rearrange university structures so they respond to the will o' the wisp of political pragmatism. If universities have got any wisdom from the unemployed graduate back-lash of the past few years, it must be that they should resist resolutely any attempts to manoeuvre them into the same corner again."

Another topic of concern to universities has been support for research.

Mid-year the AVCC launched a booklet which makes a strong case for the reinvigoration of the nation's research program.

The publication describes a number of recent and current research projects illustrating something of the nature and breadth of the work being done in universities.

It carries an introduction by Professor David Caro, chairman of the AVCC, and Professor Ray Martin, chairman of the AVCC's research committee. In it, they say:

"Research in Australia today is at risk. The amount we spend nationally compares unfavourably with that outlaid by the developed countries with whom we like to identify ourselves.

"There is no single reason for this state of affairs, and no single answer: Governments are not entirely to blame; nor are those companies — local and overseas-based — which find it more convenient, or cheaper, to import their know-how than to encourage Australian inventiveness and initiative.

"But between them — government and private enterprise — answers can and should be sought."

* * *

The problems faced by universities was also the subject tackled by Bob Hawke, Opposition spokesman on industrial relations, in an address to the 16th annual meeting of the Australian University Graduate Conference held at Monash early in the year.

Mr Hawke said that universities would not begin to understand the nature of the problems they faced unless they looked at them in relation to the broader issues confronting society.

He said: "In 1982 we are a significantly less compassionate society than we were in the '60s and early '70s.

"People are uncertain . . . they are not sure whether they will be able to retain their own jobs — not certain whether there's going to be a job for their children. They are tending to turn in upon themselves much more; the 'I'm all right Jack' syndrome is more evident.

"We are a much less cohesive and stable society than we were a decade ago.

"This is affecting our universities, and we will not begin to understand the real nature of the problems of the universities — what are the right paths we must take to meet those problems — if we think of them as being just the problems of universities, if we see them in isolation from the broader problems of society."

'82 in Review

The crime victim loses out— researchers

If you're going to be injured by a criminal (and, more to the point, if you have any say in the matter!) you may be better off in the long run if it happens at work or while you're helping a policeman.

In such cases the victim of a criminal act may attract compensation in excess of \$45,000 under the Worker's Compensation Act or Police Assistance Compensation Act.

In ordinary circumstances, however, the victim can seek compensation under the Criminal Injuries Compensation Scheme established in Victoria in 1972. Here the ceiling is \$10,000.

It all goes to highlight the inadequacy of provisions for compensation of victims of crime according to Monash lawyers, Mr Richard Fox and Mr Arie Freiberg. They are conducting research into sentencing law in Victoria under a grant from the Australian Criminology Research Council. Work so far completed includes a study on the law relating to fines and restitution and compensation arrangements for victims of crime.

Irony

The irony is, say Mr Fox and Mr Freiberg, that compensation was a much more significant feature in the early history of the criminal law than it is now.

A further irony is that the modern fine — which has its origins in compensation payments — now enriches the State often to the detriment of the victim.

Those who suffer injury, either to person or property, as a result of the criminal acts of others find themselves confronted by a legal system which separates criminal and civil actions, the theory being that the former is concerned with punitive goals and the latter with compensatory ones.

The victim seeking compensation is told to look to the civil law, but the remedies it offers are illusory because many criminal offenders are "men of straw" with no assets worth pursuing.

If a fine has been exacted by the State the offender will have even less in assets available for victim compensation.

The schemes set up to provide benefits from public funds provide a level of compensation "far below what might be obtained for an equivalent injury in an award of damages made by a civil court," the researchers say.

They suggest that one step to remedy the present inadequacy would be to inject a "sizeable portion" of the \$20m raised in fines each year in Victoria into the Criminal Injuries Compensation Scheme. They propose further that the Scheme's base be extended to include property loss or damage as well as injury.

What is a graduate worth?

How much is a new graduate worth in the marketplace?

A survey conducted by Monash's Careers and Appointments Service among 88 graduate recruiters in the private sector reveals the following profile as at April 30 this year:

- Chemical engineering graduates are at the top of the ladder with an average starting salary of \$16,774.
- Other engineers can expect to earn in the \$16,000s when they start work.
- New graduates in Arts, Science (including computing) and most fields of Economics have average salaries in the low \$15,000s.
- At the bottom of the ladder are accounting graduates who begin on \$14,657 on average.

The honours graduate can expect to earn from \$300 to \$900 above his pass degree counterpart, depending on discipline.

Starting salaries have risen 10 to 20% in a year, depending again on discipline, with Arts graduates in the social sciences recording the highest increase (20.4%).

However, the C & A report says it is more realistic to look at percentage increases over a two-year period and that Arts graduates this year have been in a "catch-up" position in relation to other graduates.

The report says that an increase in starting salaries in the order of 15% is likely in the year to April 30, 1983.

The Careers and Appointments Service has also conducted several surveys of graduates in particular disciplines (or students about to graduate) which throw light on their career destinations.

Such a survey was conducted among a sample of final year accounting students at the four Victorian universities and Swinburne Institute of Technology.

As at early third term last year only one in five of the sample was still looking for employment for 1982.

The other 80% either had a job organised or were not eligible for employment in Australia (overseas students with visas were in this group along with students intending to continue studies in 1982).

Little evidence of unemployment was found either among 1981 graduates who majored in geography.

It was the first time that C & A had specifically surveyed graduates who majored in a discipline available as part of an Arts degree. Geography was chosen because it is a discipline which poses some prospect of eventual employment for which the academic training is directly relevant.

Of the 48 graduates surveyed only one was still looking for work as at April 30. Some 31 were continuing with further study.

A report on the survey makes the comment that respondents seemed to have almost no perception of how the skills they have developed during their course might be useful to potential employers.

"If there were many jobs for which geography was directly relevant then these graduates had little success in locating them. Only two applied for jobs for which geography was a preferred requirement and one for a job for which it was prescribed."

Biochemists clone interferon genes

A Monash research group, led by Professor Anthony Linnane and his colleague Dr Graeme Woodrow, has succeeded in cloning three interferon genes. Interferon is a key to the body's natural defence against virus infections.

The research, which is being jointly supported by the Commonwealth Serum Laboratories and Monash University, involves the use of recombinant DNA (genetic engineering) techniques, and puts Monash in the forefront of world interferon research.

Only a handful of laboratories, mostly owned by private companies, throughout the world have cloned interferon, and much of the work is clothed in secrecy.

The Monash success was announced on the eve of a three year trial by the Commonwealth Serum Laboratories of interferon as a treatment of multiple sclerosis, which may be a viral disease. The Commonwealth Serum Laboratories are using "a mixture of partially purified interferons" in their trials. The Monash work opens the way for the eventual large-scale production of "purified, defined" interferon species, which could be much more effective as an anti-viral agent.

Professor Linnane says interferon has also been shown to slow the growth of tumour cells and may be of use in the treatment of cancer. However, cancer trials



• The Monash Interferon team — Dr. Graeme Woodrow (left), Professor Anthony Linnane (second from left), Dr. Paul Hertzog, Dr. Gabrielle McMullen and Dr. Mark Murphy.

have so far only used unpurified interferons, and so it is not surprising, he says, that the results have been inconclusive.

Interferon was discovered in 1957, but it was not until the advent of gene cloning in the 1970's that biochemists had the technology available for its isolation, production and purification. The problem was made more complicated by the fact that each animal species produces its own type of interferon and the human body produces a number of different types of interferon,

which differ in their "virus killing" power.

Professor Linnane says it was at first thought that there were three different types of human interferon, whereas it is now believed there are at least 16.

The Monash group has cloned three of these human interferon genes.

Professor Linnane believes the inconclusive results reported so far in cancer trials with interferon may be due to the fact that the right interferon is not being used.

Are these men fit to lead?

What do characters as diverse as Churchill, Roosevelt, Stalin, Hitler, Johnson, Kennedy, Reagan, Dayan, Nehru, MacArthur, Brezhnev, the Shah of Iran, Charles de Gaulle, Amin, Franco, Mao Tse Tung, Begin, Tito, Nixon and Pompidou have in common?

They held (or hold) office when the state of their health — physical or mental — should dictate otherwise, according to Monash medical graduate Michael Tronson, now Director of Anaesthesia at Prince Henry's Hospital.

Writing in an issue of *The Newsletter of the Association of Monash Medical Graduates* (later reprinted in *Reporter*), Dr Tronson catalogued the illnesses that bedevilled leaders at times when they were making decisions of extreme significance.

He argued the case for the routine assessment of leaders' mental and physical fitness while they hold office, similar to checks on commercial pilots.

Dr Tronson wrote: "There seems to be a naive but frightening belief in the community that the minds and bodies of our senior statesmen, politicians, military and church leaders are so special and so superior to that of mortal men that they will

continue to function with brilliance and foresight long beyond the time when the rest of us would be declining with age or illness . . .

"Public office should neither be taken nor maintained without basic mental and physical fitness.

"The necessary power should be discreetly invested in an advisory board to

keep a check on the medical and mental health of our country's leaders and with the power to suspend them from duty should it become necessary.

"I do not believe that politicians and leaders should have the right to decide on their own health any more than an airline pilot has the right to decide whether he is fit for his job."

Monash plans aboriginal orientation course

Monash plans to introduce a special orientation year for mature-age Aboriginal students who could then proceed to undergraduate study.

The scheme has been described as an attempt "to break out of a cycle of educational disadvantage at the tertiary level".

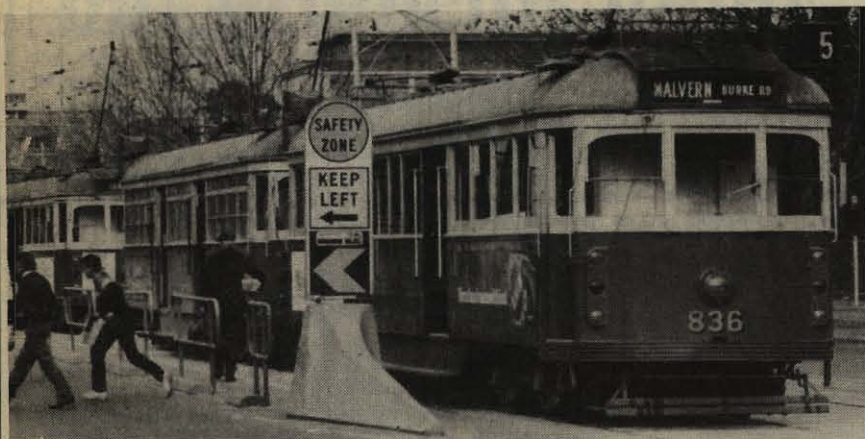
The orientation year will operate alongside Monash's Early Leavers' Scheme as paths by which Aboriginal students can enter the University.

The purpose of a special year, however, will

be to improve the likelihood of Aboriginal students ultimately gaining a first degree "by ensuring good skill levels in English, by accustoming intending undergraduates to the procedures, styles and expectations of a university, and by giving them confidence in their abilities."

Students who pass the year at levels which are as high or higher than those required for admission to the faculties of Arts and Law will be offered places in first year in those faculties.

Tracking trams by computer



strategies in the operation of tram routes using a sophisticated variety of performance measures.

Mr Upali Vandebona, a Ph.D. student, and Dr Tony Richardson, a senior lecturer in transport, have developed a computerised model of Melbourne tram routes. For initial demonstration purposes they are studying the no. 75 route which runs between East Burwood and the City, although the model can be adapted to realistically represent any tram route.

Associated with the model is an animated display which allows the researchers to watch on a visual display unit a mini-portrayal of the movement of vehicles along the route.

Appropriately enough the model is known as TRAMS — Transit Route Animation and Modelling by Simulation.

Dr Richardson says that recent tests in the field have confirmed the model's realism. Now, he adds, it is at a stage where it can be used to quantify the effects of changes in strategy — say, of changes in tram design or of introducing co-ordinated traffic signals.

The model allows the evaluation of change using a wide range of performance measures, including average unit travel time, the average passenger waiting time at tram stops, the average bunch size of tram

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Most forms of public transport in Australian cities are in a bind.

On the one hand, they face the problem of containing rising deficit levels. On the other, they are under increasing public pressure for generally improved services.

In attempting to meet this demand, the provision of major new services — requiring a massive injection of funds — is usually out of the question. The remaining option, then, is to secure a better performance from the existing system.

But here again public transport

authorities face a major problem: it can be a costly business experimenting with changes to a system — and risky when the price of failure can be inconvenience for thousands of people.

Clearly there has been the need for a tool enabling comprehensive evaluation of a proposed strategy before its implementation in the field.

Researchers in Monash's department of Civil Engineering believe they have now developed such a method, specifically designed for the testing of different

platoons and the probability of a passenger not obtaining a seat in the tram.

Already TRAMS has been used in a study on right-turn traffic strategies in relation to the movement of trams.

The study confirmed the obvious: right-turning traffic at signalised intersections delays trams.

But it also turned up another, surprising result which the researchers say should be considered in the case for or against permitting such right turns: as the volume of right-turning traffic increases above a moderate level there is a decreasing tendency for trams to "bunch" and then run together.

Controlling anxiety without drugs

Biofeedback techniques are an effective way of controlling chronic anxiety without the aid of drugs.

But just as effective, it seems, is learning how to relax, or simply sitting quietly in a room for 20 minutes each day.

These surprising findings have emerged from a series of studies on anxiety conducted in the department of Psychological Medicine at Prince Henry's Hospital by Dr John Tiller, research assistant Nola Biddle and senior technical officer, Suwan Opaskornkul.

Taking part in the studies were people who had suffered from chronic anxiety for many years — in some cases more than 14 years. Most of them were taking anti-anxiety drugs at the time of interview.

techniques. The training consisted of learning to control anxiety by modifying a tone that reflected muscle tension in the forehead.

The second group were prepared as if they were to receive biofeedback, but they did not hear the tone. They sat quietly in the room and were simply measured for the physiological accompaniments of anxiety.

The third group simply sat quietly in a room with their eyes closed for 20 minutes. After the 20 minute session patients in all groups were asked to go home and practise sitting quietly for 20 minutes each night.

Progress

The patients' progress was measured by clinical assessment, self-reports and further physiological testing at the end of the five-week program.

Seventy per cent of the patients in all groups showed a sustained reduction in anxiety, both by self-report and physiological measurements.

The improvement was not a temporary one as is the case where it is due to a placebo effect, Dr Tiller says. The patients in the Monash study were followed up at intervals over two years, and in most cases the improvement continued.

Symptoms

In the first of the 10-session studies, Dr Tiller chose 59 people whose symptoms filled the criteria for long-standing generalised anxiety. They were divided randomly into three groups.

The first group were measured for physiological symptoms of anxiety, such as heart rate, forehead muscle tension, skin temperature and skin perspiration level, and were then trained in biofeedback

A novel way of ageing insects

Monash zoologist Dr George Ettershank has developed a promising new method for determining the age of animals as diverse as flies and shrimps.

His method, which involves measuring the level of fluorescent pigments, called lipofuscins, which gradually accumulate in cells as a by-product of metabolic processes, could be of enormous ecological importance when perfected.

Dr Ettershank points out that entomologists, at present, are handicapped in their attempts to control insect pests, such as the blowfly, because they have no satisfactory way of determining the insect's age.

CSIRO scientists estimate the age of the female insect by studying changes in the ovaries, he says. But this method of age determination is of value only for the female.

The reason for this gap in our knowledge, Dr Ettershank says, is that, unlike humans, insects do not live their lives at a relatively constant rate.

Because of our relatively constant internal environment, metabolic changes in our cells (a measure of physiological ageing) can be related to a chronological time-scale.

This is difficult to do with insects (and many other animals for that matter) because their metabolism fluctuates with



• Dr George Ettershank

changes in body temperature. They live their lives at different rates, depending on the environment.

Dr Ettershank believes he has solved the problem of age determination in the insects by using the level of lipofuscins as a metabolic marker. This cellular "garbage", which consists of granules composed of oxidized proteins and lipids (fat), accumulates gradually in the cells of all organisms as they grow older. As the lipofuscin in tissue is easily extracted using a solvent system, and quantified in a spectrofluorimeter, it should be a good indicator of physiological age.

Breast feeding — a 'push button' contraceptive

What has come to be regarded in the West as an old wives' tale is true.

Breast feeding has the potential to be a form of contraception — one of particular importance in the developing world.

This is according to an international authority on human reproduction, Professor Roger Short who this year was appointed to a chair in the departments of Physiology and Anatomy. Professor Short comes to Monash from the British Medical Research Council's Unit of Reproductive Biology where he was Director for 10 years.

He says that a new appreciation of Nature's way of controlling the spacing of births (by up to four years) is the single most important contribution that could be made towards containing the world's population explosion in the immediate future.

The key to the link between lactation and contraception lies in sensory nerve endings in the nipple itself. These are connected to the brain. When a baby suckles, a message is transmitted from the nipple to the brain, triggering reflex responses. One of these inhibits the pituitary gland which in turn controls the ovary. Ovulation will not occur if the breast is suckled frequently enough.

Professor Short says: "The breast is a superb push-button contraceptive. But it only works provided that you keep pushing the button. Now we have to discover just how often that is."

A study including new mothers in Melbourne, being conducted in association with the Nursing Mothers Association of Australia, could provide the answer.

In the hunter-gatherer societies and

among apes in the wild — groups in which "lactational amenorrhoea" is maintained for the longest periods — offspring will feed up to four times an hour with each feed lasting only one or two minutes.

Most importantly, in these groups the mothers sleep with their babies at night when frequent suckling may occur even though the mother does not wake.

Night-time feeds

In the West, night-time feeds are given up as soon as possible. The contraceptive effect of lactation in such circumstances has been minimal.

Professor Short acknowledges that breast feeding as a birth control measure might hold only limited appeal in developed countries where artificial contraception is freely available.

But anything which can regulate the fertility of women in developing countries who have no access to artificial contraception should be of overriding significance, he says.

Traditional practices of suckling children should be encouraged in these countries, Professor Short says. At the same time he advocates the restriction of sales of feeding bottles and powdered and condensed milk in less developed countries (as is the case in New Guinea where they are available only on medical prescription).

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A 3-way attack in syphilis research

Three approaches are being explored in a Monash research project on syphilis, one aim of which is development of a vaccine against this dangerous venereal disease.

The work is being carried out at the Alfred Hospital by a team in the Microbiology department under the supervision of Professor Solly Faine.

Although syphilis, once diagnosed, can be cured relatively easily with penicillin it is

considered important that a vaccine be developed.

This is because symptoms of the disease can go undetected or be mistaken for those of other complaints in its primary and secondary stages. Syphilis can then lie seemingly dormant for many years but, in its tertiary stage, cause severe damage to many parts of the body leading ultimately to death.

The Monash team believes that the bacterium which causes syphilis, *Treponema pallidum*, produces a substance — an immunosuppressive molecule — which inhibits the immune response in some way.

One of the approaches being tried is the removal of that component from the bacterium, opening the way for the remainder of it to be used in a vaccine.

The second arm of the research involves attempts to grow *T. pallidum* in a test-tube. At the moment, samples used in research are obtained from rabbits but there are several drawbacks to this.

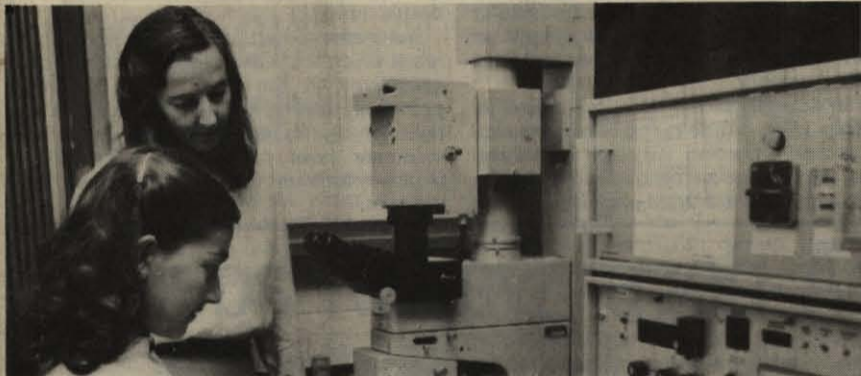
For a start, it would be desirable to avoid using experimental animals. Furthermore it has not enabled researchers to work with the huge quantities of bacteria needed for full-scale experimentation or to manipulate the organism in ways which may render it useful as a vaccine.

Also, a vaccine produced from bacteria grown in a rabbit may cause an adverse reaction on injection into humans because of the foreign protein that would be present.

The difficulty in growing *T. pallidum* in vitro lies in it having lost certain biosynthetic functions. Because the organism has existed for so long as a human parasite it appears to have lost the ability to produce enzymes for detoxifying oxygen, relying on enzymes from the host for this task. Away from the host, oxygen kills the bacterium.

The third tack being taken in the project is development of a vaccine from a bacterium akin to *T. pallidum*. This approach has yielded other successes in immunology such as the use of a virus derived from cowpox to give protection against smallpox.

Promising cancer test developed



• Ph.D. student Katy Dimitropoulos (seated) and Dr Jennifer Rolland.

Researchers in the department of Pathology and Immunology have developed a promising new method of screening patients for cancer.

They hope, with further research, to develop the test into an effective means of diagnosing early cancer.

At this stage, the test is non-specific. It shows that cancer is present but not where the tumour is located.

The diagnostic test, established by Professor Richie Nairn and Dr Jennifer Rolland, in association with Associate Professor E. A. V. Pihl and Ph.D. student Glen Hocking, is quick and simple.

It involves the use of a polarisation spectrofluorimeter to detect subtle changes in the polarisation (direction) of fluorescent light emitted by lymphocytes (white blood cells) isolated from the patient's blood and labelled with a fluorescent cell probe.

The changes in polarisation, when they occur, indicate that the lymphocytes have been exposed to cancerous cells in the body.

The test is now being used at the Alfred Hospital to diagnose and monitor the progress of patients with cancers of the colon and rectum. It is also being used as a diagnostic aid in cases of breast and skin cancer.

Graduates' Association

The Monash Graduates' Association were hosts this year to the annual Australian Universities Graduate Conference, which was held at Monash from February 11-14.

A disappointing feature of the conference was the poor support of Monash graduates.

Appealing for more interest from graduates in their organisation, the MGA committee points out that once students graduate and leave campus life there is an immediate dispersion of the common interest on which popular attendance at regular meetings depends. The committee sees its role as an important inter-communication link agency if the Association is to develop effectively.

The committee says a more general type of interest focus has become

apparent amongst Monash graduates in some country areas.

In Albury and surrounding centres from Corryong to Wagga Wagga there are about 130 Monash graduates. Several are working on or supporting important community projects: a successful drug re-habilitation centre and an impressive youth hostel are two examples.

In June this year Professor John Swan organised a meeting of the Albury district graduates and interested community leaders and arranged a weekend visit to Albury by Monash staff members and the committee of the MGA.

"This served very successfully to promote the collaborative efforts of the graduates and stimulate the local community reaction to them," the committee says.

Around the campus

EARLY this year Monash's Centre of Policy Studies was designated a Commonwealth Special Research Centre under the Federal Government's Program for the Promotion of Excellence in Research.

It was one of 10 centres so nominated at seven Australian universities.

The Centre, directed by Professor Michael Porter, was established three years ago to study key economic, social and political issues facing Australia.

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PROFESSOR William Angus Sinclair, professor of economic history at Flinders University, has been appointed Dean of the faculty of Economics and Politics. He will start the job early next year.

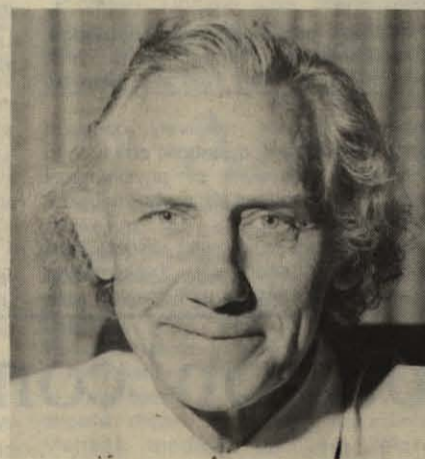
Professor Sinclair succeeds the founding Dean, Emeritus Professor Don Cochrane, who retired late last year through ill health after 20 years in the post.

Professor Sinclair is no stranger to Monash. He was appointed senior lecturer in Economics here in 1963. He has also taught at Melbourne and La Trobe universities.

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THERE were changes at the top at Monash in 1982.

Professor Kevin Westfold, a mathematician and astronomer and one of the original members of the Monash academic body, was appointed Deputy Vice-Chancellor, succeeding Emeritus Professor W. A. G. Scott who retired at the end of 1981.



• Professor Kevin Westfold

Professor Mal Logan, of Geography, was appointed part-time Pro-Vice-Chancellor, a position previously held by Professor Bruce West who returned to full-time scholarly work in the Chemistry department.

Next year Monash will have a new Chancellor when Sir Richard Eggleston, who has held the post since 1974, retires.

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THIS YEAR three new professors joined departments in the Arts faculty.

Professor Graeme Davison took up a Chair in History, coming to Monash from Melbourne University. Professor Davison's



• Professor Margaret Plant

best-known work perhaps is "The Rise and Fall of Marvellous Melbourne". He is now helping prepare a book which will give an insight into the less marvellous Melbourne of the late 19th, early 20th centuries.

Also from Melbourne University came Professor Margaret Plant to a Chair in Visual Arts. Her predecessor, Patrick McCaughey, took an appointment as Director of the National Gallery of Victoria. Professor Plant's research interests range from frescoes painted by Italian artists in the 14th century through to Paul Klee, a key artist of the early 20th century, and Australian artists.

Professor Clive Probyn, formerly head of the department of English literature at the University of Lancaster, took up the second Chair in English left vacant by the death of Arthur Brown.

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MONASH professor of Law, Professor Louis Waller this year took up a two-year appointment as Victorian Law Reform Commissioner.

Since the office was established nine years ago the Commissioner has reported on a number of matters chiefly to do with procedure and evidence in criminal law.

One of Professor Waller's first tasks was to chair a committee of inquiry on in vitro fertilisation set up by the Victorian Government. The committee's first report, released last month, gave qualified approval to IVF techniques in overcoming infertility.

Last month Professor Waller left for China as part of a five-man delegation of experts on Australian criminal law and procedure. Heading the delegation, which held discussions with members of the judiciary, the procuratorate, the legal profession and law schools in Beijing, Wuhan and Shanghai, was Mr Justice McGarvie of the Supreme Court of Victoria. The other members were Judge Peter Rendit of the County Court of Victoria, Mr Richard Fox, Reader in Law at Monash and Mr Mark Weinberg, Reader in Law at Melbourne University (and a Monash graduate).