Celebrating 60 Years of our Medical School
MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR IN CHIEF

In the lead up to the School of Medicine’s 60th anniversary in 2017 we take the opportunity in this edition of Uniview to celebrate some of the many stories and achievements we have seen over this time. I hope you enjoy reading them as much as we enjoyed researching them.

If, as you read through this magazine, you find a story that you particularly enjoy or one that sparks a thought, question or comment, I encourage you to send these to us at uniview@uwa.edu.au. We will then publish a selection of feedback in a new ‘Letters to the Editor’ section in future editions of Uniview.

Uniview is as much your magazine as it is the University’s and as such it is important that the voices of our graduates, friends and supporters are represented.

I look forward to hearing from you.

David Harrison
Editor in Chief
Wendy Martin talks at PIAF 2017

PHOTO: Frances Andrijich

How much sleep is enough?

Crusader Dr Annie Sparrow wants us all to find heart

PHOTO: Olivier Bercault
Revolutionary door for ‘Blue House’ kids

It’s known as the ‘Blue House’ but Number 18 Parkway generates anything but the blues for the many children that have come through its doors as an after school care centre for children of UWA staff.

In fact, the building, which began its life after the Second World War as one of the few built by UWA to provide short term accommodation for staff members, is so popular that a cohort of kids who attended it as primary schoolers have returned. First as volunteers while at secondary school and then as paid assistants while they completed their own university degrees.

Director of the UWA Out of School Care Program, Connie Van Rooyen, says it’s a case of full circle for siblings Stephanie and Thomas Murphey, Isaac Krauss, Julian Keller, Vivienne Horley and Sarah Hodkiewicz who originally attended the Blue House between 2004 and 2007.

“Most had connections to UWA in some way,” says Connie. “With Steph and Tom for example, mum Dr Susan Barker was on the UWA staff at the School of Plant Biology and dad Benjamin Murphey was our centre bus driver.

“Julian Keller’s mother Alice Vrielink was and still is at the School of Chemistry and Biochemistry, as is Sarah’s mother Melinda Hodkiewicz who works within the School of Mechanical and Chemical Engineering,” she says.

“Most of the gang-of-six are now getting ready to embark on new adventures, leaving behind the familiar surrounds of both UWA and the after school care centre.

Tom who completed a Bachelor of Science in Exercise and Sports Science dreams of working in Physiotherapy for the NFL, Steph who did Honours in Anthropology is completing a thesis in Local Government and Sustainable Housing and Vivienne is now studying a Bachelor of Nursing after switching from Zoology.

For Bachelor of Science graduates Isaac, Julian and Sarah, travel beckons in the short term with all three having plans for further study.

“We’ve come so far”... reuniting in the playground of the UWA Blue House
Mentoring program for novice teachers is a winner

A mentoring program for novice teachers has won the UWA Alumni Fund’s first ever People’s Choice Award, and $30,000 prize money.

Deputy Dean at the UWA Graduate School of Education Professor Vaille Dawson said Alumni Fund grants kick-start and support innovative ideas aimed at enhancing and expanding the student experience at UWA.

“We are thrilled to be able to set up a program which will help not only current students, but also future generations of young people in WA,” she says.

“The mentoring program is one example of how donations to the Alumni Fund are re-invested in UWA students and the broader community, bringing transformative ideas to life.”

Madeleine makes her mark

Former UWA Perth USAsia Centre staffer Madeleine King MP would have recognised a few familiar faces in Canberra as she made her maiden speech to Parliament on October 11, with family and former colleagues among those who turned out to cheer her on.

The new Federal Member for Brand spoke fondly of her time at UWA and the value of higher education for individuals and the wider community as a way of “ensuring young people enjoy a diversity of choices in how they build their future”.

NOMINATIONS FOR THE PEOPLE’S CHOICE AWARD WERE:

• One Button Studio; and
• Enhancing Learner Autonomy within LOTE Contexts.

In addition to the People’s Choice Award, grants were awarded to six projects selected by the Alumni Fund Grants Committee from a shortlist of 24.

Read more: alumnifund.uwa.edu.au/peoples-choice
More information: alumnifund@uwa.edu.au
IN FOCUS

IN FOCUS IN FOCUS

Richard Nelson

THE GABRIELS
ELECTION YEAR IN THE LIFE OF ONE FAMILY
HUNGRY • WHAT DID YOU EXPECT? • WOMEN OF A CERTAIN AGE

Sat 11–Sat 18 Feb
Subiaco Arts Centre | Tickets $75–235
Bookings 08 6488 5555 | perthfestival.com.au

Supported by International Excellence Partner Chevron Australia

The most resonantly topical and emotionally engaging play of this election year.
NEW YORK TIMES

In a newspaper cutting from the Kalgoorlie Miner in 1899, Ithaca is described as ‘the place to stay’ in Busselton ‘the summer seaside resort and pleasure grounds at WA with tennis and croquet lawns, boating, bathing and fishing all available for guests’.

Now the the once-proud property at 110 Adelaide Street, known both as Ithaca and Villa Carlotta, is to be restored to its former glory thanks to UWA graduate Allen Gianatti.

The environmental scientist and entrepreneur who bought the Queen Anne Federation style home in 2012, describes the project as a ‘major challenge’ but one he is clearly enjoying.

“The roof is leaking, the ceiling has collapsed, the brickwork is fretted and the tower looks terrible but we are making progress,” Allen says of the property which once also belonged to former WA Treasurer Troy Buswell.

A $100,000 grant from the State Heritage Grants Program is assisting with the works on the historic home originally built by prominent engineer Frank W Backhouse, which stands on a plot of land sold for the princely sum of three pounds back in 1891.

New Chair to pioneer next generation eye disease treatment

Professor Ian Constable’s landmark contribution to saving sight is being recognised with the creation of new senior academic roles at UWA.

The Ian Constable Chair in Discovery and Translational Ophthalmic Science will focus on new treatments for major blinding diseases such as cataract and macular degeneration.

The new positions also include a postdoctoral fellowship and continuous PhD program to attract leading international research scientists.

“The announcement recognises Professor Constable’s legacy during a medical career spanning almost 50 years,” UWA Vice-Chancellor Professor Paul Johnson said.

Lions Eye Institute (LEI) Managing Director Professor David Mackey said the creation of a science-based Chair and support team will boost eye research in WA.

“The LEI has a long history of translating scientific research into improved treatments for people with blinding eye disease,” he said.

“There have been some major advances, such as the world’s first artificial cornea, gene therapy for macular degeneration and dissolving tubes for the treatment of glaucoma.

“But the goal of saving sight continues and we need to constantly strive to develop new treatment pathways.”

“See 7 things you didn’t know about… Professor Ian Constable on page 23.

Restorations underway at historic Ithaca

USA

New Chair to pioneer next generation eye disease treatment

Professor Ian Constable’s landmark contribution to saving sight is being recognised with the creation of new senior academic roles at UWA.

The Ian Constable Chair in Discovery and Translational Ophthalmic Science will focus on new treatments for major blinding diseases such as cataract and macular degeneration.

The new positions also include a postdoctoral fellowship and continuous PhD program to attract leading international research scientists.

“The announcement recognises Professor Constable’s legacy during a medical career spanning almost 50 years,” UWA Vice-Chancellor Professor Paul Johnson said.

Lions Eye Institute (LEI) Managing Director Professor David Mackey said the creation of a science-based Chair and support team will boost eye research in WA.

“The LEI has a long history of translating scientific research into improved treatments for people with blinding eye disease,” he said.

“There have been some major advances, such as the world’s first artificial cornea, gene therapy for macular degeneration and dissolving tubes for the treatment of glaucoma.

“But the goal of saving sight continues and we need to constantly strive to develop new treatment pathways.”

“See 7 things you didn’t know about… Professor Ian Constable on page 23.

Restorations underway at historic Ithaca

USA

New Chair to pioneer next generation eye disease treatment

Professor Ian Constable’s landmark contribution to saving sight is being recognised with the creation of new senior academic roles at UWA.

The Ian Constable Chair in Discovery and Translational Ophthalmic Science will focus on new treatments for major blinding diseases such as cataract and macular degeneration.

The new positions also include a postdoctoral fellowship and continuous PhD program to attract leading international research scientists.

“The announcement recognises Professor Constable’s legacy during a medical career spanning almost 50 years,” UWA Vice-Chancellor Professor Paul Johnson said.

Lions Eye Institute (LEI) Managing Director Professor David Mackey said the creation of a science-based Chair and support team will boost eye research in WA.

“The LEI has a long history of translating scientific research into improved treatments for people with blinding eye disease,” he said.

“There have been some major advances, such as the world’s first artificial cornea, gene therapy for macular degeneration and dissolving tubes for the treatment of glaucoma.

“But the goal of saving sight continues and we need to constantly strive to develop new treatment pathways.”

“See 7 things you didn’t know about… Professor Ian Constable on page 23.

Restorations underway at historic Ithaca

USA

New Chair to pioneer next generation eye disease treatment

Professor Ian Constable’s landmark contribution to saving sight is being recognised with the creation of new senior academic roles at UWA.

The Ian Constable Chair in Discovery and Translational Ophthalmic Science will focus on new treatments for major blinding diseases such as cataract and macular degeneration.

The new positions also include a postdoctoral fellowship and continuous PhD program to attract leading international research scientists.

“The announcement recognises Professor Constable’s legacy during a medical career spanning almost 50 years,” UWA Vice-Chancellor Professor Paul Johnson said.

Lions Eye Institute (LEI) Managing Director Professor David Mackey said the creation of a science-based Chair and support team will boost eye research in WA.

“The LEI has a long history of translating scientific research into improved treatments for people with blinding eye disease,” he said.

“There have been some major advances, such as the world’s first artificial cornea, gene therapy for macular degeneration and dissolving tubes for the treatment of glaucoma.

“But the goal of saving sight continues and we need to constantly strive to develop new treatment pathways.”

“See 7 things you didn’t know about… Professor Ian Constable on page 23.
When exercise physiologist Graeme Wright first began studying at UWA he jokes that computers hadn’t even been invented.

“Put it this way, my student card from back then starts with 75, so it must have been just after decimal currency kicked in,” he says of coming to the Crawley campus to complete his Masters after growing up and beginning his career on Australia’s east coast.

He couldn’t have guessed then that studying at UWA would become a family affair and he would eventually share a graduation ceremony with two of his three daughters.

This September, Graeme graduated with a PhD in Exercise and Health Science, youngest daughter Rosie Bahen-Wright a Bachelor of Commerce with a major in Business Law and middle daughter Louisa also a Bachelor of Commerce, majoring in marketing.

“My wife Amanda is also an alumni, as is my eldest daughter Suzannah who has just come back from a placement in Hong Kong after majoring in politics and law at UWA,” says Graeme, who runs the West Perth-based Optimum Health and Management Services and describes the graduation ceremony as ‘excellent’.

“My 87-year-old mum Coral flew in from her tiny hamlet on the east coast joining Amanda, Suzannah, Louisa, Rosie and me for a real family affair. I’ll forever be grateful to UWA for agreeing to combine what was originally scheduled to occur across three different schools on three different nights.”
Neil cooks up a storm at the Culinary Olympics

A University Club chef who came to Australia from the Philippines to pursue his culinary dream has represented WA on the Australian Junior National Team at the 2016 Culinary Olympics held in Erfurt in Germany.

The competition, run by the World Association of Chefs Societies (WACS), is the number one event for young chefs across the globe and attracted stiff competition from the top 24 youth culinary teams from around the world. Held every four years, it was originally conceived by a group of German chefs in 1896.

Neil, who has worked at UWA for four years, got his first taste of competition by competing for the University Club team in WA Oceanafest and says he was delighted when his chef nominated him for the National Youth Team.

“It was a great honour to be selected as part of the team and gave me the opportunity to enhance my knowledge, skills and develop a deeper understanding of food,” says the 22-year-old father of two young daughters who is soon to be married.

Neil says working at the University Club was the best possible preparation for the Olympic event as “you have to be versatile; we cover every possible dish here!”

However he says he most enjoys cooking a Filipino favourite – braised pork belly, with soy, onion, garlic and peppers. That’s certainly got our mouths watering!

CSIRO prize for ‘Noisy Guts’ project

It’s probably a little-known fact but one in five Australians suffer from irritable bowel syndrome, a complex gastrointestinal disorder that is poorly understood and has no cure.

Existing management involves invasive and uncomfortable colonoscopies and endoscopies which are limited because they only access 30cm of the digestive track – well short of the roughly 10 metres of gut that every human has inside them.

Now a team at UWA’s Marshall Centre for Infectious Diseases, led by Dr Josephine Muir, has won a place in CSIRO’s prestigious ON Prime pre-accelerator program for their ‘Noisy Guts’ project.

Inspired by acoustic sensing technology that records the tiny munching sounds of termites, the project team is developing a wearable acoustic belt that listens, records and analyses gut noises.

“We’ve been listening to our internal noises for many centuries,” says Josephine. “The stethoscope was originally invented in 1816 by Rene Laennec because he was uncomfortable placing his ear on a woman’s body to listen to internal sounds. “Our unique acoustic belt allows us to collect massive amounts of data suitable for ‘big-data’ analysis, providing insight into the exact location, intensity and nature of gut noises, and how they relate to gut health.

“The end result will be a safe, non-invasive tool that will allow more accurate diagnoses and treatment.”

The project is the brainchild of UWA Professor and Nobel Laureate Barry Marshall and was part of UWA’s Innovation Quarter’s Start Something Program, a series of five entrepreneur-led workshops designed to encourage and foster research enterprise and industry engagement. The McCusker Charitable Donation donated $1 million towards the project.

The team is now calling for volunteers who suffer from irritable bowel syndrome and who are willing to talk to the Noisy Guts project team about their journey to diagnosis in a 10 to 15 minute phone call.

More information:
innovation.uwa.edu.au/researchers-staff/start

CORRECTION

The Winter 2016 edition of Uniview carried a report on two Philippa Maddern awards presented late last year to Greg Accaioli, and posthumously to Geoff Shellam.

There was in fact a third Philippa Maddern award presented, to Professor Jane Long, a UWA alumna, academic staff member from 1986 to 2012, and now Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor at La Trobe University in Victoria.

“As a long-standing friend of Philippa, winning the award was one of the most touching moments of my professional life,” says Professor Long. “Philippa Maddern was an outstanding person of enormous intellectual generosity and remarkable spirit.

“I was very humbled that existing staff had nominated me for the award some time after leaving UWA: I still have a deep sense of connection to the University.”

Our sincere apologies for the error.
Swapping conflict for classrooms in Burundi

The small East African country of Burundi, one of the poorest nations on earth, is a world away from Perth but for UWA alumnus Will Bloxsome it is like a second home.

Mr Bloxsome, who completed a Bachelor of Science in human movement in 2002, was compelled into action after travelling through Africa five years ago which left him ‘questioning humanity and what role I could play in the solution.’

“I travelled overland from Kenya to Burundi and simply could not believe the level of poverty that people were living in,” the former corporate health worker and physical instructor in the police force says.

“The people there had suffered similar atrocities to what had occurred in Rwanda and yet so little seemed to be known about it in the outside world.

“I stayed in a small rural village right on the border with Tanzania and the first thing I noticed was the overcrowding in the schools. There were often 100 students in a classroom with one teacher and yet the children were all so keen to learn.”

Not one to sit idly, Mr Bloxsome came back to work in Australia and started saving. With $10,000 in his pocket he travelled back to Kobero, a small village in the troubled country, and registered a not-for-profit charity Amahoro Inc.

“We began as a home for 11 orphans who were all affected by the conflict in their country and were able to go back to lessons and get healthy again.

“We wanted to help empower local leaders, so we engaged with the community on local issues and helped reunite street children with their families. We also opened a Learning Centre with a pre-primary class and adult trade school,” says Will.

In 2015 when a political crisis lead to further violence in Burundi the operation was moved to Kenya where Amahoro Inc waited until recently to find a new more stable location.

“Having to move again obviously is a setback, but I am excited about the long term opportunities that come with a more stable and safe environment – hopefully it won’t be too long and the Learning Centre can once again open its doors.”

For Mr Bloxsome, who is now a Regional Area Supervisor in the disability services sector, the whole experience has been one he wouldn’t swap.

“For me it’s been about looking for the positives in every situation and I’ve learnt that for children, education is key – to a better life and a better future,” he says.

“We are always looking for donors to come on board so I would encourage readers to go to the Amahoro Facebook page, there is a great video on there and information on how to make a donation.

“Our goal for November is to have 30 new donors committing $30 a month for 12 months so we can rebuild in the new location and have a real impact on not only the Amahoro kids but the local community. We are also collecting old but working smart phones and laptops to generate income for Amahoro Inc, please send us an e-mail if you have any you would like to donate. We know people are doing it tough so we appreciate the support, big or small.”

More information:
amahoroinc@gmail.com
facebook.com/amahoroinc

Will Bloxsome with students and staff inside Amahoro home in Kobero, Burundi, the small village where it all began
Did you know?

10,000
Pounds raised by the UWA Guild in 1955 as part of a public campaign to establish a medical school at UWA.

1957
The year UWA was able to offer a Degree in Medicine

959
Students studying Medicine at UWA in 2016, we have grown!

2
Out of the first 35 graduates in 1962 were women

Six decades of medicine at UWA

Next year will be 60 years since WA’s first medical school opened its doors to an initial cohort of 98 students. Before then, aspiring doctors had to relocate to the Eastern States where they often remained after completing their training. With WA’s population booming, the opening of UWA’s Medical School in 1957 was a significant yet crucial investment to ensure WA could retain enough doctors to support the state.

Ten years earlier a newly established Dental School had also opened at UWA’s Crawley campus, with the grand total of 32 students (see Then & Now, page 38).

Since that time thousands of students have passed through the doors of what was to become the Faculty of Medicine, Dentistry and Health Sciences.

Today the Faculty offers training and research opportunities in a full range of scientific and clinical disciplines and while graduate success stories from across the years would fill a library, I know you will enjoy reading just a few of them here.

When I reflect on what the Faculty has meant not only for our Western Australian and Australian communities but internationally, I am immensely proud of the legacy the Faculty has created and the knowledge it will continue to foster.

From country GPs to city doctors and specialists to the many researchers involved in cutting-edge and life-changing science, all are part of an amazing line-up of UWA alumni.

Personally I will be celebrating this milestone as a life-long friend and supporter of UWA and not as UWA’s Vice-Chancellor, having recently informed the Chancellor of my intention to retire from the Vice-Chancellorship at the end of this year.

It has been an extremely busy and fulfilling decade as a vice-chancellor – first at La Trobe and then at UWA – and I now want to redirect my time and energy. I particularly want to ensure my children see more of me, and that I see more of them, as they move into and through their high school years.

First however, I will be taking leave for the remainder of my term to support my wife, who has recently been diagnosed with a serious illness which will require treatment over the next six months or more.

The recruitment process for UWA’s next Vice-Chancellor has already begun and in the meantime Professor Dawn Freshwater, UWA’s Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor, will be stepping into the role of acting Vice-Chancellor until an appointment is made.

It has been a tremendous privilege to lead UWA and so much has been achieved over the past five years. We have broken into the top 100 of world universities, celebrated the University’s centenary, and launched the New Centenary Campaign, including the enormously generous $65 million gift from Andrew and Nicola Forrest.

I would like to thank the University’s Senate and the many staff, students, alumni and friends who have provided me with exceptional support and guidance throughout this period. We have achieved a lot together and I would like to thank each of you for making my time as Vice-Chancellor such a wonderful and memorable experience.

Professor Paul Johnson
Vice-Chancellor
I recently had the pleasure of addressing several hundred of our valued Convocation members at the Second Ordinary Convocation Meeting held at the UWA Club.

At the meeting I presented some important changes the University will be making in the coming months to better position ourselves for success in the future.

In particular I spoke about the University moving from the current academic structure of eight faculties of various sizes to four faculties as of 1 January 2017. These are the Faculty of Engineering and Mathematical Sciences, Faculty of Arts, Business, Law and Education, Faculty of Health and Medical Sciences and the Faculty of Science and will be headed up by the following Pro Vice-Chancellor and Executive Deans;

- Faculty of Arts, Business, Law & Education – Professor Matthew Tonts
- Faculty of Engineering & Mathematical Sciences – Professor John Dell
- Faculty of Science – Professor Tony O’Donnell
- Faculty of Health & Medical Science – Professor Wendy Erber

UWA’s Schools and Research Centres will all sit appropriately within this structure except for the School of Indigenous Studies, which will remain a separate academic unit to provide cross-disciplinary focus on Indigenous education. The School of Indigenous Studies will continue to be led by Professor Jill Milroy in the role of Pro Vice-Chancellor Indigenous Education and Head of School.

The changes are a bold but necessary step for the University and will facilitate multi-disciplinary interaction and collaboration in research while better supporting our undergraduate degree structure.

I recognise that many of our graduates have a strong connection to the current faculties which saw them through their own years at UWA. I would like to reassure you that while the structure may be changing, our commitment to our graduates remains. We will continue to engage with you, support you and value your ongoing relationship with UWA.

Professor Dawn Freshwater
Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Registrar

‘The changes are a bold but necessary step for the University and will facilitate multi-disciplinary interaction and collaboration in research while better supporting our undergraduate degree structure.’
Dr Sparrow, with husband Ken and son Toto in Paris 2011, on the first anniversary of their marriage PHOTO: Tim Perceval
Humanitarian and public health expert Dr Annie Sparrow is calling for support in her outspoken crusade for refugees of war-torn countries across the globe.

She’s become the unabashed and outspoken poster girl for displaced people – critical care paediatrician, public health expert, and occasional advisor to senior United Nations and World Health Organisation policy makers.

She’s worked in war-torn Afghanistan, Africa and the Middle East. Now her most recent focus, recording first-hand the human toll of the war in Syria, sees her working with refugees and training Syrian doctors in war-trauma medicine in neighbouring Lebanon and Turkey.

And she’s not afraid of a fight – using a highly critical piece written for the New York Review of Books to take on the regime of Bashar al-Assad and help raise the alarm about a polio outbreak in the country torn apart by civil war.

Or more recently, three articles criticising the partisan conduct of the United Nations for what she describes as “siding with the Assad government, responsible for targeting civilians and destroying hospitals”.

However when Uniview reaches Dr Annie Sparrow on the phone in New York she’s most keen to talk about the kindness of her eight-year-old son Toto (Alexander is his real name, the other a nickname) who at an early age has learnt his own hard lesson about the human toll of war.

“Toto will sometimes travel with me, I think it’s good for him to see where I go and what I do and it’s the way he has grown up,” says Dr Sparrow, a professor of global health at Mount Sinai’s Icahn School of Medicine in New York when she’s not moving between combat zones.

“We were hanging out at a refugee shelter full of Syrian women and children who’d lost everything and he’d become friends with many of the kids. Then suddenly I got a call saying we had to move again (it was the third time in a week). Other Syrian refugee friends were kind enough to cram us into their home, but he’d had enough – and told me he wanted to go home.

“I said to him, Oh, darling, that’s why we’re here. Because everyone wants to go home. These people have nothing – their families have been killed, their houses destroyed.

“He has such a big heart, he ended up leaving them some of his own prized toys, things he really loved. I think about that quite often – because how many of us ever give away something we really love?”

It’s perhaps unsurprising Toto has such generosity of spirit. Dr Sparrow’s husband, Ken Roth, is Executive Director of Human Rights Watch, the international monitoring and advocacy organisation, and Dr Sparrow says “most conversations in the house are about people who are suffering, somewhere.”

None of us get anything done alone. We need each other to achieve anything and not let our ego get in the way of asking for help. UWA gave me a kind of ‘grit’ – the ability to get on with it, to bash on regardless.”

She admits life now is a world away from her carefree early years spent riding cycling through the grounds of UWA, where her father worked, before following both he and her older sister into a career in health and medicine.

“We lived nearby so I literally grew up in the grounds,” she says. “We’d visit the peacocks and the Sunken Garden and there were still sheep on the most southern tip of the grounds. To this day, I find it a beautiful haven. There was never any question I would attend UWA.”

Whilst missing the cut for medicine straight from school ("I was slightly devastated but made it in from science and arts after a year"), Dr Sparrow graduated in 1994 with a Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery.

After spending most of her first 10 postgraduate years practicing paediatric critical care in London and Perth, a two-week stint at the Woomera immigration detention centre in 2002 first prompted her fierce public voice.

“The conditions there were horrendous, among the worst I have ever seen and I’ve worked in some dreadful places. The detainees were in utter despair,” she says.

Disgusted, she and friend Dr Paul Carroll went public – making international headlines which, according to Dr Sparrow, provided not only a “crash course in media training” but a lifelong interest in public health.

After turning to her mentor – UWA’s Professor Fiona Stanley – for advice, she enrolled in the Master’s program at Harvard School of Public Health which set her on a new career path.

Harvard was followed by two years at Human Rights Watch and then four years in Nairobi where Dr Sparrow worked as an emergency-response specialist and directed UNICEF’s malaria program in Somalia before returning to New York when Ken, with whom she’d been carrying out a long distance courtship, convinced her to marry him.

It is Syria that now occupies most of her waking thoughts and she has become a specialist in what she describes as the public health catastrophe there, admitting “there’s nothing sexy about public health” and “working in war zones sounds much better on paper than in practice.”

“I track the public health crisis, which is a direct consequence of the way Assad is fighting this war, by attacking civilians, targeting doctors and systematically destroying hospitals in opposition areas,” she says.

“My aim is to put the human face back on these displaced people. I’d love Australians not to see refugees as damaged human beings living in cardboard boxes but as messengers of human rights violations who just want the fundamental freedoms that we have.”

Using nail polish to brighten the lives of young refugees in war-torn Sudan
PHOTO: Olivier Bercault
A rural doctor shortage and lack of access to specialists coupled with high rates of chronic disease and death in the bush were just some of the issues the Rural Clinical School of Western Australia (RCSWA) hoped to tackle when it opened its doors in 2002.

Sitting within UWA’s School of Primary, Aboriginal and Rural Health Care in the Faculty of Medicine, Dentistry and Health Sciences, the original school started with just seven students in four towns (see story on Sarah Moore) building to today which sees 87 students across 14 sites and around 100 academic staff.

RCSWA Head Professor David Atkinson says the Federal Government-backed initiative is having huge success, with a rise in the number of students from urban backgrounds deciding to enter the rural medical workforce after training in country locations.

“Our students spend their entire second last academic year in a rural town, which as well as offering them excellent education opportunities, provides them the chance to develop a real understanding of community and country life,” he says.

“Their clinical placements occur at local hospitals, general practices, community and remote clinics and Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations, so they get the full gamut of experience.

“We find that while students from a rural background often return to the country to work, city-born doctors who gain experience through the RCSWA are also attracted to country practices.”

Following case studies by Brian Rogers

ORIGINAL RCS VOLUNTEER BACK WHERE IT ALL BEGAN

DR SARAH MOORE
GP OBSTETRICIAN/SNR LECTURER & MEDICAL COORDINATOR RCSWA, BUSSELTON

Sarah Moore was at the birth of the Rural Clinical School in Western Australia – one of the original seven volunteers who took part in the pilot program in 2002.

It was an abbreviated program – just three months duration with two rotations, general practice and obstetrics – but it was enough to convince Dr Moore of the career and lifestyle fulfilment that lay ahead in rural and remote medicine.

“It was the people; the mentors and supervisors,” she says. “Having GP and obstetrics mentors during my time with the RCS was really the most important factor in deciding this was the career that I wanted to follow.

“There’s no way a student like me would have got 10 deliveries in three months at
King Edward or any of the city sites; you are at the bottom of the pecking order with the competition for births shared between students, midwife students, junior doctors, senior doctors.

“In the general practice setting, too, we were a very integral part – we were part of the consult,” she says.

Even before finishing her three months at Kalgoorlie, Dr Moore’s commitment to the Rural Clinical School was set.

“We talk about that a lot; that you join the RCS family and never really leave … some people are a bit closer than others, but you always have that connection or bond,” she says.

In her final year of study, Dr Moore returned to the Goldfields to do her rural GP rotation with the Bega Aboriginal Medical Service, completing her internship at Fremantle Hospital after graduating.

With GP obstetrics as her chosen pathway, she completed her Diploma of the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists (DRANZCOG), the GP Obstetrics Mentoring Program and Advanced Rural Skills in Aboriginal health.

Following the birth of daughter Alice in 2011, Dr Moore began work with the WA Country Health Service Postgraduate Medical Education Unit before settling in Dunsborough and beginning general practice in Busselton.

She added teaching at the Rural Clinical School to her schedule just before the birth of baby Sascha in 2013, also finding time to set up the South West Holistic Health Practitioner Network, bringing together GPs, nurses, chiropractors, naturopaths and “anyone with a holistic approach to health.”

FROM TAIWAN TO ALBANY FOR GP OBSTETRICIAN

DR CHIEH CHENG
EX-RCS STUDENT (2003 COHORT)
GP OBSTETRICIAN & RCS MEDICAL COORDINATOR, ALBANY

The Rural Clinical School holds a unique and personal memory for Dr Chieh Cheng.

“When I was a rural clinical student in Geraldton, my obstetric training was intense and incredible. It included witnessing the birth of my supervisor’s first child, which was a real privilege. I went on to become a GP obstetrician. I started officially teaching for RCS in 2012. When I gave birth to my first child in 2014 – one of my own medical students helped to deliver my baby daughter.”

There were other advantages to learning and training in the country as a student.

“Resources were scarcer in the country and the whole health system operated on a smaller scale – hence you saw many examples of health professionals who were multi-functional, resourceful and had all their talents on display,” she says.

“Continuity of care was one of the most important aspects of medicine that helped to consolidate our learning during our year at RCS.

“We were able to follow up patients in the GP and hospital setting throughout the year – seeing them multiple times at different phases of sickness and health – helps you form a better understanding of a person as a whole, and therefore a better understanding of their medical story.”

Dr Cheng was born in Taiwan and raised in Perth from the age of 10. She remembers seeing cows for the first time at age 14, when a friend from high school took her to Bridgetown. She developed a fondness for the beauty of natural landscape.

Happily settled in Albany on the south coast of WA since 2010, Dr Cheng says she has a well-balanced working life.

“The nature of my job allows me flexibility to work part-time in the GP office, part time as a rural clinical school teacher and fulfil obstetric on call duties while still seeing my family.

“My typical working day may involve seeing GP patients at the office, going to the hospital to manage a delivery and then be called to the hospice or a nursing home to review a patient at the other end of the spectrum of life. Its a big variety that I see and its rewarding to be involved in a field of medicine that captures the whole human life span. I am very lucky.”
you were the person in control of your learning; there was nothing spoon fed.

“One of the most significant things I gained from the health professional crew in Esperance was that you had to have confidence and independence in your practice because otherwise it suffocates you. You cannot be always questioning what you are doing, you have to be sure-footed.

As for the patients, Dr Bosenberg found the “continuity of care over the 12 months was really striking; an amazing relationship with some of the patients."

Another relationship has even stronger bonds for him – he met his wife while on his RCS year and, with baby son Ari, returned to live in Esperance in August 2016, where Dr Bosenberg joined a practice after completing his Diploma in Anaesthetics.

Apart from the lifestyle on offer for the family, Dr Bosenberg says Esperance holds many professional challenges.

“It is one of the last frontiers for real generalist medicine with only visiting specialists. It is one of the few places where the GP can experience everything … hospital, anaesthetics, obstetrics, general practice all in one week,” he says.

“When it comes to resources, I think it can be a double-edged sword. It’s nice to have the specialists and support clinics nearby so you can direct patients to them, but without them there is greater reliance in your own skills. It can be exhausting at times, but enriching in the long term.”

---

**HANDS ON PRACTICE FOR COUNTRY GP**

**DR DALE BOSENBERG (2010 COHORT)**

**GP ANAESTHETIST REGISTRAR, ESPERANCE**

Dale Bosenberg always knew what he wanted to do.

Growing up on a farm at Wagin in the Great Southern region of Western Australia, at 13 years of age he went to boarding school in Perth before heading to medical school – but there was never a doubt he would return to the country.

“I was always going back to the country, always had rural GP lined up,” he says.

“Being from a rural background it was initially about where I wanted to live, and then in med school the allure of GP and generalist GP became more appealing.

“The RCS year in Esperance solidified my view. The biggest benefit was the perspective it gave me – putting into context the questions of ‘why am I doing this’, ‘what do I actually want to achieve here’. It is very easy to lose perspective when you are in a tertiary hospital, in the rat race.”

Apart from confirming Dr Bosenberg approach to life and career, his RCS year in 2010 also yielded significant benefits in the practice of medicine.

“It was very, very hands on – you don’t miss out clinically or professionally; much more hands on, confronting and challenging in that regard. And very self-directed as well;
MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN RENAL DISEASE

DR EMMA GRIFFITHS (2006 COHORT)
GP, BROOME

Rural Clinic School (RCS) started as a year of adventure for Emma Griffiths but ended with her on a course to “make a difference” for people racked with chronic disease.

Her time in Karratha in 2006 left an indelible imprint; firstly, her awe at the ability of GPs to manage their patients’ healthcare and, secondly, on a trip to Roebourne she witnessed the disparity of Aboriginal health. It’s an inequality she’s trying to change through a combination of public health policy and face to face treatment.

“When I bring together the big picture and the small picture I feel like I can actually make a difference,” she says.

“The big picture is doing the research, developing policies and implementing change, working in change management, evaluating service delivery; but, I don’t think I could do that part if I was not still seeing patients.

“I never realised the role that public health medicine could have in the country, but I had definitely seen how amazing all the generalists were in rural GP. So for me the balance is seeing patients and reminding myself why it’s important and then working at what I see as the higher level to bring about change.

“It took me going away to do my Masters of Public Health and Tropical Medicine to see how necessary that was, and how much it appealed to me to be able to bring public health or big picture medicine into the region and mix that with clinical care.

“I would never have known that the opportunities to do the kind of work I am doing existed without having taken up the opportunities to try at different points of time – the Rural Clinical School, PGPPP, a community residency at Kimberley Population Health Unit.

“I am currently working as the East Kimberley Renal GP, so I look after patients from Halls Creek down to Balgo and up to Kununurra, Wyndham and Kalumburu – quite a big geographical area.

“Because I am based in Broome I fly out there one week a month, those are my clinical weeks. When I am not actively on outreach I spend part of my time on call for all the renal patients of the region.

“When I am not doing my on-call work for renal, I work in public health in renal medicine including several research projects. When I am not doing any of that I look after medical students with the RCS, and when I am not doing that I am busy with a PhD.”

As Dr Griffiths has found, necessity is the mother of innovation and in 2013 she won the GPET/Otchre Health Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Training Award for her development of software for an e-health medical record system.

“It has really added a lot to our capacity to care for people,” she says.
“I went to the same high school as Elle Macpherson, she was about five years younger. I’ve been told that both our names are up on an alumni board somewhere at the school.’

When Uniview sits down to lunch with Professor Wendy Erber in the tranquil Club Restaurant at The University Club of Western Australia, my first question is about her ancestry.

Erber is an unusual name, at least in Australia. The Sydney-born Dean confirms she is of Austrian background, born of refugee parents who fled the Second World War to come to Australia with their families, her father in 1938 when he was 12 and her mother in 1939 at just seven years of age.

One of three sisters, she grew up on Sydney’s Lower North Shore, attending Killara High School, which was also famously Elle Macpherson’s alma mater, and “thought about all sorts of things” before choosing to study medicine at Sydney University where she graduated with first class honours.

“My father was an engineer but really he was a frustrated neurosurgeon, his brain just worked that way,” she says. “My great-grandfather had been a Professor of Paediatrics at the University of Vienna before he, along with half of the faculty, were forced to flee.”

It was while she was at university that tragedy struck the Erber family when youngest sister Jeannette, a first year science student, was diagnosed with leukaemia.

Her death at just 18 years of age was a profound loss “that still touches us all” and Professor Erber says may have ultimately influenced her interest in pathology and haematology.

After Sydney Uni, a passionate love of hockey paved the way for a Rhodes Scholarship, where sporting excellence is one of the criteria for selection, and she went on to win three blues at the University of Oxford after starring in the varsity match against Cambridge.

At Oxford she undertook her doctorate of philosophy (DPhil) under the supervision and mentorship of the late Professor David Mason, a pioneer in the application of monoclonal antibodies to the diagnosis of cancer, who she says lured her into “the world of disease and the biological process.”
What’s on in the University Club Restaurant?

MEMBERS’ MONDAYS
Start the week in style with a Monday lunch in the Club Restaurant and receive 10% off your total bill.

EXPRESS LUNCH MENU
Join us for lunch Monday to Friday and enjoy a delicious main course and sides for just $25.00. Add a glass of Devil’s Lair Treasure Hunter white or red wine for an extra $5.00.

LUNCH SHARE PLATES
Enjoy your choice of share plate entrées served with the ever popular combination of Garlic Turkish Fingers and Sour Dough Bread, plus Mixed Leaf Salad with Merlot Vinaigrette and Truffle Oil infused French Fries all for only:

Choice of 2 Entrée - $50.00 (2–3 Persons)
Choice of 3 Entrée - $65.00 (3–4 Persons)
Choice of 4 Entrée - $80.00 (4–5 Persons)

Add a glass of Devil’s Lair Treasure Hunter white or red wine for an extra $5.00.

DINE WITH TREASURE HUNTER
Bring four or more friends to the Club Restaurant for lunch or dinner and we will treat you to a delicious bottle of Devil’s Lair Treasure Hunter red or white wine.

DATE NIGHT SPECIAL
Spoil the one you love with a romantic set three-course dinner for two with a bottle of Georg Jensen Hallmark Cuvee Brut for only $150.00 per couple.

BOOKINGS ESSENTIAL
Please book through Club Reception on (08) 6488 8770 or online at www.universityclub.uwa.edu.au

LUNCH WITH MEMBERS’ MONDAYS
Start the week in style with a Monday lunch in the Club Restaurant and receive 10% off your total bill.

EXPRESS LUNCH MENU
Join us for lunch Monday to Friday and enjoy a delicious main course and sides for just $25.00. Add a glass of Devil’s Lair Treasure Hunter white or red wine for an extra $5.00.

LUNCH SHARE PLATES
Enjoy your choice of share plate entrées served with the ever popular combination of Garlic Turkish Fingers and Sour Dough Bread, plus Mixed Leaf Salad with Merlot Vinaigrette and Truffle Oil infused French Fries all for only:

Choice of 2 Entrée - $50.00 (2–3 Persons)
Choice of 3 Entrée - $65.00 (3–4 Persons)
Choice of 4 Entrée - $80.00 (4–5 Persons)

Add a glass of Devil’s Lair Treasure Hunter white or red wine for an extra $5.00.

DINE WITH TREASURE HUNTER
Bring four or more friends to the Club Restaurant for lunch or dinner and we will treat you to a delicious bottle of Devil’s Lair Treasure Hunter red or white wine.

DATE NIGHT SPECIAL
Spoil the one you love with a romantic set three-course dinner for two with a bottle of Georg Jensen Hallmark Cuvee Brut for only $150.00 per couple.

BOOKINGS ESSENTIAL
Please book through Club Reception on (08) 6488 8770 or online at www.universityclub.uwa.edu.au

LIVE MUSIC EVERY FRIDAY AND SATURDAY NIGHT

“I recall one of the first liver transplants in Sydney that required more than 100 units of blood to be transfused,” she says. “Now 20 years on there is minimal blood loss with transplants because there have been so many advances in surgical techniques and the drugs available. “When I think of what medical students are doing today, much of it wasn’t even known when I graduated. It is wonderful to see.”

Professor Erber’s great-grandfather, Professor Rudolf Neurath
PHOTO: Archive of University of Vienna

On the menu
PROFESSOR ERBER – Japanese
Chilli Pepper Seared Salmon,
Avocado and Wakame (pictured)

LIZ MCGRATH (Uniview Editor) –
Grilled Fish of the Day, Charred
Exmouth Prawns, Caper and
Lemon Cream
The urgent PARADIGM SHIFT needed in funding medical research

BY ANDREW WHITEHOUSE
Professor of Child Development at the Telethon Kids Institute and UWA

I first learnt about autism as an 18-year-old during my clinical training. Like most people, I’d heard about Rain Man, and also like most people, I never thought I’d look deeper than this thin caricature. But then I did look deeper, and saw the extraordinary human experience that is at the core of every family touched by autism. A much-loved child develops differently than expected, and a family’s world is changed forever. What struck me most of all is how much we didn’t know, and how much more we could do. It was then that my interest in medical research was born.
Few would quibble with the idea that medical research is among the best investments our community can make. From whatever dominant viewpoint through which you consider the world – economic rationalism, social justice, scientific progression, a happiness index, or any combination of these – medical research has the ability to not only meet objectives, but produce untold human dividends for decades to come.

Just one example of this is childhood leukaemia. In the 1960s, most forms of childhood leukaemia were deemed incurable, and the majority of children passed away soon after diagnosis. Now, survival rates are upwards of 90 per cent. In real terms, this not only means that literally hundreds of thousands of children have been afforded an opportunity for life, but that the existence of millions more have not been devastated by the loss of a child.

There are hundreds of similar examples, all down to investment in medical research. Yet despite the intensely personal benefit derived from it, medical research is in a state of flux, driven chiefly by an imbalance in two supply-demand curves.

The first is the imbalance between our collective desire for the beneficial outcomes of medical research, and the amount that we, the community, are prepared to invest in it.

Our modern world faces constant and at times spiralling health challenges – an ageing population, rising number of children with developmental disorders, more expensive treatments – all of which place an ethical and moral demand upon our resources.

At the same time, there has never been a time when so many worthy, competing requests have been placed on the public purse. While the Government response has been to plateau the level of investment into medical research, the health challenges we face and the public’s appetite for medical breakthroughs have continued to increase. When the survival of our loved ones – our friends, family and selves – is at stake, it is difficult to see how this ‘more with less’ expectation, will end in anything more than bitter disappointment.

In the absence of any short-term change in public policy and exponential growth in private philanthropy, the scientific community must come to terms with a second supply-demand curve that is out of whack: the imbalance between the current level of investment in medical research and the number of medical researchers.

The medical research grants system would profit greatly from a paradigm shift. The collective mass of PhDs spend upwards of one-third of every year applying for grants that will cover their own salary, research, equipment and administrative needs, all of which are essential to make meaningful research advances.

The success rate of applications to each of these separate and mostly unrelated grant schemes hovers between 10 and 20 per cent. Among those that do have grant success, the funding profile is typically either patchy (for example, a discrete-year, once-off grant) or simply impractical (for example, research costs but no salary).

The only way to stop this deplorable waste of person hours and the resultant ineffectiveness in funding is for the research sector to confront a difficult truth: the current funding model is trying to support too many medical researchers with too few dollars.

The achievement of a research vision requires substantial and sustainable funding over a period of years. Cash flow and time quarantined for work (as opposed to revenue raising) are as important to a research team as they are to a business.

In the face of a finite bucket of funds, greater scientific progress can be made through fewer but larger investments in targeted areas, than through smaller investments across the sector.

High-profile research agencies around the world, such as the Wellcome Trust in the UK, have identified this problem and have transformed the way that they support medical research. Instead of dividing investment across thousands of scientists, the agencies identify a select group of teams that are making significant research advances and provide substantial and sustained funding to their research programmes.

The Federal Government’s medical research funding agency, the National Health and Medical Research Council, is also coming to grips with this thorny issue and is redesigning the way that research funds are allocated. All of the hypothetical models currently out for consultation have the same ‘fund fewer with more’ flavour being pursued by the Wellcome Trust.

The onus for facilitating investment in medical research must also be shared with scientists themselves. The ability to communicate with passion the ‘why’ of medical research is critical, as is the need to convey the very real benefits produced, and both must be a part of the toolkit of every aspiring scientist. While this has not been a traditional view of scientific activity, to behave otherwise is to deny the responsibility we have to the community that invests in medical research.

The questions that compelled me into medical research still remain. Why do some children develop so differently? What can we do to help these children reach their full potential?

However, the way that the scientific and broader community come together to answer these questions has changed dramatically and forever. Applicability and communication are the new catch cries.

If history is any guide, medical research possesses unrivalled potential to solve the wicked and urgent health challenges that affect all of us. Challenges that can and will be answered.

The limiting factor is how quickly governments, universities and scientists can adapt.
The power of sleep
Margaret Thatcher famously claimed that she only needed four hours of sleep per night to govern a country. Bon Jovi sang “I’ll sleep when I’m dead.”

When life gets full, we give up on sleep. After all, sleep is a waste of time. Isn’t it? As Allan Rechtschaffen, a pioneer in the field of sleep research, said: “If sleep does not serve an absolutely vital function, then it is the biggest mistake the evolutionary process has ever made.” So, why do we sleep?

While scientists still disagree about whether we sleep to conserve energy, there is general agreement that sleep is critical for restoring the health of the brain and body at the cellular level, and that sleep facilitates learning and memory through changes that occur in our brain cells only during sleep.

What we also know is that depriving individuals of sufficient sleep produces short term deficits (which is why it is used as a form of torture), but that long term sleep disruption may produce permanent effects.

But, how much sleep is enough? The National Sleep Foundation has recently published guidance on the recommended amount of sleep (see graphic).

The first thing you’ll notice is the amount of sleep we need reduces as we age, from two thirds of the day in newborns, to about seven or eight hours in the over 60s.

Your teenager probably needs around nine hours – seven may be okay; fewer could be problematic.

You’ll also notice that oversleeping (sleeping more than the recommended hours per night) is equally challenging, and may be an indicator of an unrecognised disorder such as hypersomnia or depression.

As a clinical neuropsychologist, I am fascinated by how disrupted or poor sleep impacts on brain health: both memory and thinking skills and mood. Over the last 10 years, my work has focused on a common, and often undiagnosed sleep disorder called Obstructive Sleep Apnoea (OSA).

This is where an individual’s throat collapses while they are sleeping, stopping them from breathing properly, which causes loud snoring, gasping and choking. In order to restart breathing, the individual either wakes up entirely, or rises up from deeper into shallower stages of sleep. These arousals disrupt the normal pattern of sleep, and can happen more than 100 times per hour.

As many as 13 per cent of men and six per cent of women have OSA of at least moderate severity. That’s more than 1 million Australians: as many as those with diabetes or asthma. Alarming, however, it is thought that as many as eight in 10 people may not be diagnosed, perhaps because OSA is a nocturnal disorder.

This is highly problematic since OSA both increases the risk of a constellation of health-related issues, including cardiovascular problems, such as hypertension, stroke, heart attack, cancer and type-2 diabetes, and makes it seven to eight times more likely that we will have a car accident. Sadly, prevalence of OSA rises with age.

Our work at UWA has shown that OSA is associated with disturbances in attention, thinking speed, new learning and memory, along with higher level thinking skills known as executive functions.

The good news is that there are treatments for OSA. The most common is continuous positive airways pressure, a device which blows air into the airway through a mask worn over the nose and mouth during the night.

So, whether your sleep difficulties arise from lifestyle or work choices, or an undiagnosed or untreated sleep disorder, improving your sleep health is as important as taking regular exercise and following a healthy diet.

CONTACT:
Associate Professor Romola Bucks
BSc MSc PhD Bristol
School of Psychology
Phone: +61 8 6488 3232
Email: romola.bucks@uwa.edu.au

Recommended sleep durations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>RECOMMENDED</th>
<th>TOO MUCH</th>
<th>TOO LITTLE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>NEWBORN</strong></td>
<td>14–17</td>
<td>16–18</td>
<td>15–16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>INFANT</strong></td>
<td>11–13</td>
<td>12–15</td>
<td>11–14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TODDLER</strong></td>
<td>10–13</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PRE-SCHOOL</strong></td>
<td>8–9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7–8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SCHOOL AGE</strong></td>
<td>7</td>
<td>10–11</td>
<td>7–9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TEEN</strong></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7–9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>YOUNG ADULT</strong></td>
<td>5–6</td>
<td>7–9</td>
<td>7–8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ADULT</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>7–9</td>
<td>7–8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>OLDER ADULT</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>6–8</td>
<td>6–6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Contact: Associate Professor Romola Bucks
BSc MSc PhD Bristol
School of Psychology
Phone: +61 8 6488 3232
Email: romola.bucks@uwa.edu.au
Meeting a boy with cerebral palsy set molecular biologist Dr Sarah Rea on a career path to finding a cure for motor neurone disease, but it wasn’t before she overcame some major challenges in her own life.

It’s hard to imagine Dr Rea leaving school before finishing Year 11 but for the short distance triathlete this was just a small hurdle to what was always going to be a successful career.

The scientist and researcher is currently working as team leader for the ALS (Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis), Dementia and Paget’s disease of bone functional genomics group within the Laing Neurogenetic Diseases Laboratory in the Harry Perkins Institute of Medical Research where she is a NHMRC-ARC Dementia Research Fellow.

“I went back to high school as a way of getting into university after meeting a boy with cerebral palsy through a friend of my brother,” she recalls. “It was clear he was a lovely young man, but he was trapped in a body that didn’t allow him to communicate and that had a profound effect on me.

“I initially wanted to study speech pathology to help kids like him, however I soon realised that speech pathology was not likely to help children like him in the way that I hoped it would.

“I chose to study molecular biology and biomedical science instead because I became fascinated by genetics and wanted to learn more so that I could do my best to actually cure or prevent diseases.”

Dr Rea now focuses on how specific genetic changes cause motor neurone disease (MND) and frontotemporal dementia (FTD).

“I became aware of an overlap between MND and FTD genetic factors with those of another disease that my work focuses on – Paget’s disease of bone which causes bones to grow too large and weak,” she says.

While completing her PhD at UWA, Dr Rea was mentored and encouraged through a UWA Collaboration Award and was given the opportunity to travel and present her research in various forums, while bringing up two children.

Although laughing when she talks about ‘spare time’, Sarah also likes to compete in what she jokes as “very short distance” triathlons and testing her mental skills by playing board games with friends. One gets the feeling she’d be a formidable opponent.

“I think the hardest thing for me was finding a life balance where I wasn’t able to be a perfect mother or a perfect researcher,” she says. “Being a scientist and having a high-stress career has allowed for a huge amount of personal growth. You never know what you are capable of until you push yourself to the limits.

“My aim is to find a cure for motor neurone disease and dementia. I am realistic enough to realise that this is perhaps an impossible goal, but I believe it is one worth pursuing.”

More graduate stories at pursueimpossible.uwa.edu.au
7 things you didn’t know about…
UWA PROFESSOR IAN CONSTABLE

He’s the Foundation Lions Professor of Ophthalmology at UWA, Foundation Director of UWA’s Centre for Ophthalmology and Visual Science and Founder and former Director of the Lions Eye Institute in Perth.

He is also a consultant ophthalmologist to two Perth hospitals and sits on numerous councils and boards. We wanted to find out a little more about one of the world’s leading ophthalmic surgeons who has worked tirelessly to deliver on his premise that healthy eyesight should be available to everyone, so we put to him our own seven questions.

1 FAVOURITE THING TO DO OUTSIDE OF WORK
I like to investigate and collect visual art, both Indigenous and post-modern Australian.

2 FIRST EVER JOB
My first ever paid job was from age eight to 12, trapping rabbits for export on our family farm in central New South Wales.

3 IN MY MUSIC COLLECTION
My collection is infinite as I connect to the cloud; I listen mainly to classical music every day at home and in the operating theatre.

4 IF I COULD INVITE ANY THREE PEOPLE IN THE WORLD TO DINNER
My two daughters-in-law and whichever grandchild was available.

5 IF I WASN’T A MEDICAL SPECIALIST, I WOULD BE
An owner. I have always admired individuals who have been able to invent new technology and build their own business.

6 THE THING YOU’D BE SURPRISED TO KNOW ABOUT ME
I am a long term supporter of the Gija people in the East Kimberley. I also like to restore old cars.

7 TWO MOMENTS IN MY LIFE I’LL ABSOLUTELY NEVER FORGET
In Boston in 1970 while walking with my mentor Charles Schepens, the father of retinal surgery, I ventured to stop him crossing against a red light. He said that I should “understand that rules are guidelines.”

In Perth in 2000 I asked an iconic Indigenous artist, the late Paddy Bedford, to our home for dinner after we arranged an operation for him. After a beer and some “killer” beef, he put his arm around me to tell me that henceforth I would be his skin brother.
‘If we can help kids talk, who previously would never have talked, and help them unlock their full developmental potential, the implications are huge.’

TRIAL COORDINATOR DR KANDICE VARCIN
Sitting down with scientists Dr Kandice Varcin and Professor Andrew Whitehouse at Perth’s Telethon Kids Institute in Subiaco, it’s easy to get caught up in the enthusiasm of their world-first clinical trial of an early intervention program for children with developmental difficulties.

Telethon Kids Institute researcher Dr Varcin, who was recruited from Harvard University in the US to oversee and evaluate the study, describes it as “a massive paradigm shift” in the treatment of developmental difficulties such as autism, a complex neurodevelopmental condition affecting brain and behavioural development.

“Typically with autism, a diagnosis would be made between the ages of three to five, with any intervention treatment starting there,” she says. “We’ve turned that on its head and are working with infants aged between nine and 14 months.”

“It’s the idea that we may be able to catch young brains in very early life and prevent long-term disability,” adds Professor Whitehouse, the Institute’s Head of Autism Research and Professor at UWA. “It’s breathtakingly exciting!”

“Kandice brings to the trial leading expertise in neurological measurement, new ways to look at the neuro-architecture of the brain. She is an out-and-out emerging superstar in this area.”

“We know that the first two years of life are an enormously sensitive period in neurodevelopment, which means that we have the opportunity to intervene when the brain is young and plastic, with the aim of fundamentally changing the way the brain develops,” Dr Varcin says.

Known as the Australian Infant Communication and Engagement Study (AICES), the randomised clinical trial is multisite (Perth, Melbourne) and being conducted in partnership with the Telethon Kids Institute, the Child Development Service of Western Australia, La Trobe University and the University of Manchester.

First developed in the UK, the therapy relies on identifying infants in the first year of life who are showing early delays in social and communication development.

“We are looking for simple behavioural signs such as infants not responding to their name and poor eye contact,” Professor Whitehouse said.

One imagines that once referred to the project team, the initial conversation with parents is a difficult one and Dr Varcin acknowledges they come to the trial with mixed feelings.

“All the families we are working with are doing everything they possibly can to help their children, and this is a naturally very anxious time for them. But despite this worry, parents are invariably willing to participate in this research, for which we are incredibly grateful,” she says.

Once parents agree to take part, infants are randomised to receive either treatment as usual or the experimental treatment. The experimental treatment involves teaching parents a different way of interacting with their infants over a period of five months.

The treatment uses ‘video-modelling’ to help parents understand their infant’s social and communication cues.

“We are seeking to optimise development, by teaching parents how to provide a socially enriched environment for their infant,” explains Dr Varcin. “If we can help kids talk, who previously would never have talked, and help them unlock their full developmental potential, the implications are huge.”

The video-modelling technique is a key element of the therapy, which helps provide parents insight into their infants that can be difficult to obtain otherwise.

“It can be quite confronting for parents to be filmed interacting with their kids and then to watch it back,” says study therapist Michelle Renton.

“But we find that after their initial nervousness they are relieved to be able to better understand and adapt to their infant’s communication style.”

“We have families all over Perth, we’re working up a lot of kilometres. The youngest child we are seeing is only nine months old, so the trial is really breaking new ground in that way.”

Professor Whitehouse says that there is no ‘magic bullet’ in this field. “Therapy for developmental difficulties takes huge courage, effort and persistence from the child, the family and the therapist. The ultimate aim is to reduce long-term disability and whilst it’s incredibly hard work in the trenches, the end game is huge.”

“This is about creating lifelong change by intervening at the youngest possible age,” he says. “In real terms, we think that this therapy might be the difference between having children learn to talk, when they may previously have always struggled in this area. The long-term impact on schooling, employment, independence and happiness is impossible to quantify.”

If the trial yields similar results to the successful pilot, Professor Whitehouse believes this early intervention will be translated into the wider community. And that will have a huge impact on the lives of children with autism and their families.

“Every day we work with the most wonderful families, who display immeasurable kindness and courage,” Professor Whitehouse said. “There’s truly not a day I don’t wake up and think that we have the best job in the world.

“It’s magic, it really is magic,” he says. “You spend 24 hours a day thinking about science and how it might be able to change the world. Then you stand back and realise how close we may actually be to that reality.”

CONTACT:
Dr Kandice Varcin
AICES Trial Coordinator
Phone: +61 8 9489 7916
Email: kandice.varcin@telethonkids.org.au

Uniview The University of Western Australia | 25
1946 was a pivotal year. The student landscape changed virtually overnight with returning servicemen and women rubbing shoulders with fresh-faced teenagers straight out of high school; with one generation battle-weary and the other full of optimism and hope.

In 1945, there were 872 students enrolled at UWA and a year later that figure nearly doubled.

Of the 32 newly enrolled dental students in 1946, only eight went on to complete their studies in minimum time. One lady who stands out among the ‘sea’ of male faces is UWA’s first female dental student and graduate, Dr Sally Joyston-Bechal (née Isaac). Sally lives in London and retired 15 years ago after a distinguished career in academic dentistry. Since the 1970s the number of female graduates has been trending upwards, and by 2014 this exceeded the number of male graduates.

Today, 70 years later 1,662 (1,039 male and 623 female) dental students have graduated.

‘In 1946, the Anatomy Act of Western Australia (1930) did not allow for the dissection of bodies for education. To ensure the newly established Faculty of Dental Science at UWA’s Crawley campus was distanced from the clandestine research, dissections took place in an unnamed demountable building on the campus. It took 10 years from the passing of the regulations of the Act, to legally allow for dissection to take place at UWA’s Anatomy department. And yet no photos exist of this curious demountable building,” says Dr Ted Adler, one of UWA’s first dental graduates.

Dental students today study for their degree at the School of Dentistry’s Oral Health Centre of Western Australia (OHCWA), a facility that is recognised for its state-of-the-art facilities and internationally-recognised research utilising CAD-CAM milling, 3D printing and robotics.

The vast changes in dental practice have been made possible by technological advances and Univeview was keen to learn how this has influenced our ‘frontline cavity crusaders’ of today, with three dental ambassadors and the Head of the School of Dentistry sharing their thoughts and experiences by answering the same two questions:

1. What major advances have taken place in your practice?
2. What are the challenges and how could these be addressed in the future?

Dr David Hallett,
CEO Australian Dental Association WA (BDSc 1982)

1. From the clinicians’ perspective the advances in aesthetic restorative materials, dental implants and digital technology have been remarkable. Baby Boomer patients simply marvel at the significant improvement in the overall patient experience of visiting the dentist.

2. Improving the provision and accessibility of quality dental care to the socially disadvantaged in our community and arresting the decline in the commercial viability of the traditional autonomous private dental practice. Change in all professions is inevitable however it must be understood that contemporary expectations of any reduction in overhead costs and patient fees in the provision of both publicly and privately funded dental care will ultimately negatively impact the high quality of care we have all come to accept.

Dental class of 1946
Dental class of 2016
THEN & NOW

1. New and emerging technologies have transformed my practice in the past few years. Use of tissue substitutes (bone and soft tissue), laser assisted periodontitis treatment and digital planning to construct 3D printed surgical guides for dental implants are just a few of the exciting changes improving patient care.

2. The reality is that providing safe, quality dental care is costly and overheads are only increasing. Our challenges come from multiple angles: health funds, some corporate groups, and overseas dentistry to name a few. Education is the key to addressing these challenges. Hopefully the profession can do better at educating government and the public on the importance of dental health for overall health.

DR JOHANNES YAP
GENERAL DENTAL PRACTITIONER
(BDSc 1994)

1. The biggest one is the introduction of CAD-CAM dentistry. The ability to scan a tooth in 3D, design a restoration in CAD and mill a pre-fabricated porcelain block and insert the restoration at the same appointment; this is obviously a huge advantage and patients love it.

2. The running of any small business is difficult and getting tougher. This is no different in dentistry. There are so many choices out there and patients are now very much in tune especially when it comes to prices. The key is to provide an exceptional level of service that is precise and ethical.

PROFESSOR CAMILE FARAH,
ORAL MEDICINE SPECIALIST,
HEAD OF SCHOOL OF DENTISTRY
(BDSc 1996; PhD 2000; MDSc 2002)

1. Our understanding of disease processes has significantly improved with the advent and use of sophisticated technology that can sequence the human genome, personalise patient care, and allow delivery of more targeted therapy while minimising adverse effects. Technology enhances our clinical approach to patient care, but the latter is fundamentally built on science, evidence and empathy.

2. There is a constant tension between advances in science and technology and their impact on the highest standard of clinical care, and the need for dentistry to remain grounded in empathetic, minimal intervention, and socially responsible and sustainable practices that benefit all members of the community. We must remain committed to the highest standards of patient care while ensuring that technology is used to even the playing field, reduce costs, and open up greater access to clinical services for those in need.

On 24 November UWA dental graduates will meet to swap stories and share tales of student days across seven decades of dentistry, in a platinum anniversary at the University Club of Western Australia.
It’s one of the largest inner-city parks in the world and now Perth’s iconic Kings Park is about to be the subject of a major artistic makeover for the UWA-founded Perth International Arts Festival.

Kings Park will be transformed into ‘a cathedral of light, sound and imagery’ as giant projections light up the eucalypts for PIAF’s opening event, Boorna Waanginy: The Trees Speak in February next year.

Nigel Jamieson, who also directed PIAF’s 2016 opening event Home, is working with WA designers, animators, Noongar storytellers, artists and scientists on the ambitious makeover.

The free walk-through will start in Fraser Avenue as the trees burst into life with 3D projections backed by a blend of lighting effects, music, smoke, water screens, song and dance, with participants invited to delve deeper into the park to explore the six seasons of biodiverse WA.

“Great flocks of birds appear to fly overhead and giant marsupials and other animals lead spectators back to the age of the megafauna,” says PIAF Artistic Director Wendy Martin. “It’s an amazing opportunity for people to experience the park and its natural beauty in a whole new way.

“It’s one of the things that’s very important to me, putting on shows and films that connect our audiences with big ideas… it’s the whole point of having an arts festival.”

The event kicks off PIAF’s 2017 “big bold adventure” with the world’s leading artists from February 10 to March 5.

As the festival launches into another fabulous February, Perth audiences will be the only ones in Australia treated to Tony Award-winning playwright and director Richard Nelson’s new trilogy, The Public Theater’s production of The Gabriels: Election Year in the Life of One Family.

Already hailed an American classic, the Australian-exclusive cycle of plays filter the turbulent drama of the US Presidential election through the hopes, fears and disappointments of a single American family as they cook three meals together.

“It is seeing the politics of the election through the personal prism of a family, with the show being staged at Subiaco Arts Centre the audience will be up close and personal – that’s what is so fantastic, they’ll feel as if they are sitting around the table with them, it’s very intense,” Wendy says.

Another Australian exclusive scheduled for PIAF’s opening weekend is ‘The Dark Mirror: Zender’s Winterreise’, a reimagining of Schubert’s iconic
song-cycle in the style of Weimar cabaret of operatic proportions.

The singing of UK tenor Ian Bostridge – the world’s most accomplished performer of this classic song cycle – and the haunting visuals of director Netia Jones will combine with WA Symphony Orchestra musicians and Hans Zender’s orchestration in this special music-theatre event from the Barbican London.

Water, and all that it means for Western Australians, will be at the heart of a new two-year project for PIAF that will kick off next year over the Perth Writers Festival Weekend, led by PIAF artist-in-residence, sculptor and filmmaker, Amy Sharrocks.

Set to open in 2018, the Museum of Water will be a record of public history at the Western Australian Museum, mapping the story of different cultures and communities, personal experience and our sense of place through the collection of water.

“It’s a vital project for Perth and WA,” says Wendy. “We live on the driest continent on the planet and the story of water is a central narrative of our history. The Museum of Water is about gathering vessels and stories in a series of discussions, performances and public events.

“A vial of tears, water drawn from Antarctica and a plastic bottle of river water – every drop tells a story. Surfing, swimming, desalination, irrigation and thirst – water is significant to all Australians. We’re asking the people of WA to help us uncover what it means to them, by donating to this important project throughout the festival.”

WHAT: PERTH INTERNATIONAL ARTS FESTIVAL

OPENING EVENT: Lotterywest Opening Event – Boorna Waanginy, The Trees Speak

WHERE: Kings Park, entry via Fraser Avenue

WHEN: Friday 10–Sunday 12 February, anytime between 8pm–10.30pm

The Perth International Arts Festival runs from 10 February–5 March 2017
Lotterywest Festival Films run from 28 November 2016–16 April 2017
The Perth Writers Festival runs from 23–26 February 2017

More information: perthfestival.com.au

Photos: Toni Wilkinson
IN THE FRAME

In the frame:

Never a dull moment for our alumni and friends who’ve been snapped at some of the many UWA events recently.

Stay in touch or update your details at: alumni-update@uwa.edu.au

UWA ROAD TO RIO — 7 JULY

UWA alumni Olympians past and present shared their stories and aspirations to keep Australia on the world Sport podium.

WELCOME NEW BLUES FUNCTION — 29 JULY

UWA’s elite student athletes were welcomed into the Blues family.

FACULTY OF SCIENCE RISING STARS — 16 AUGUST

Faculty of Science research trailblazers presented their ground-breaking work for the title of Rising Star and $10,000 in research funding.
SINGAPORE STUDENT SEND-OFF – 15 JULY

Singapore students bound for UWA received advice and tips from graduates in their home country.

40TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE UWA GRADUATE MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION AT UWA – 27 AUGUST

President of the Business Council of Australia, Catherine Livingstone, was guest speaker to a packed house that included the who’s who of Perth’s business community.
UWA RESEARCH WEEK – 5-9 SEPTEMBER

The campus hosted more than 4,300 visitors and participants in over 50 events, including *What makes us happy.*

SENATE COMMUNITY DINNER – 8 SEPTEMBER

University Chancellor Dr Michael Chaney hosted the annual Senate Community dinner where Professor Jessica Meeuwisg, Director of the Centre for Marine Futures, was guest speaker.
CONVOCATION, SPRING ORDINARY MEETING – 16 SEPTEMBER

Nearly 240 members turned out to the Convocation Ordinary Meeting where Professor Dawn Freshwater was guest speaker.

GRADUATION CEREMONIES – SEPTEMBER

Family, friends, staff and volunteers welcomed 2,380 new graduates to the alumni community.
Bachelor of Commerce students Thomas Blaauw and Will Boulden, and Bachelor of Science student David Linehan crossed the line just behind another Australian boat, skippered by Will Dargaville from Sydney University.

“It was a disappointment to go four days undefeated and then come in behind the other Aussie team and was certainly not what we planned for,” says 20-year-old Will, a former Scotch College student who has been sailing competitively around the globe for 12 years.

“We had really fickle weather too, with two of the five days okay and the rest cold and windy, not that we are blaming the weather, we did everything we could possibly could.”

Co-hosted by UWA and Royal Perth Yacht Club, the world-class 8th World University Championship Sailing event attracted 82 student athletes from 42 universities worldwide.

Ten nations including Australia, China, Finland, France, Italy, Japan, Republic of Korea, Singapore, Switzerland and Great Britain took part in the intense week of sailing on Perth’s Swan River.

It’s the second time that Australia has taken first and second place in the men’s open event, having first accomplished this back in 2012.

Galati (Italy) finished in third place this year, with Miller (Great Britain) in fourth, Follin (France) – fifth, Lim (Singapore) – sixth, Yamada (Japan) – seventh, Zhou (China) – eighth and Lee (Korea) finishing in ninth position.

The Aussies were also successful in the women’s category with Sarah Parker (Australia) snatching victory from Bezel (Switzerland) in a tightly contested five race final.

“We expected strong competition throughout the week but it’s good to have close races,” says Sydney-sider Sarah.

The conditions were challenging at times but we are happy to have won the gold.”

UWA sailing team *snare silver in tight finish*

After four days in the lead in the men’s open category at the 2016 World University Sailing Championship held in Perth in September, Australia’s UWA team has taken home a silver medal after being pipped at the post on the fifth and final day on home waters.
The impressive win backs up the Western University Games championship title secured earlier this year.

“The week was full of exceptional performances and the usual highs and lows that come with sport,” says UWA Sport Marketing Manager Rhys Hyatt.

“We had so many students out in the force in the Fan Zone which was an incredible motivator for the team.”

UWA Vice-Chancellor Paul Johnson said the games provided students with an incredible opportunity to compete against some of the highest calibre athletes in the country and represent their university on the national stage.

Mor than 5,000 athletes from 41 universities around Australia took part in the UWA hosted event, the first time in six years the event has been held in Perth.

UWA became the first University outside the big three (University of Sydney, University of Melbourne and Monash University) to win the coveted title when the games were last held in Perth in 2010.

“There were 200 points between Team UWA and our closest rivals which highlights how dominant we were,” says Rhys. “To top it all off, 42 student athletes were awarded green and gold titles at the closing ceremony for their performance and fair play.”

UWA Hockey Club upgrade

It’s one of the best known hockey pitches in the state – the place where many dreams have been made, and some broken.

Now the main Superturf at UWA Sports Park is to be resurfaced with an Olympic grade synthetic turf during the 2016/17 season break.

General Manager UWA Sport Ian Fitzpatrick said the half-million-dollar resurfacing project will ensure UWA Hockey Club continued as a potent breeding ground for some of Australia’s greatest players.

“UWA Hockey Club has built one of the country’s most respected programs and we are pleased to be able to provide facilities that match,” he says.

“Providing our students and the UWA Hockey Club access to cutting-edge facilities is in keeping with this tradition.”

UWA Hockey Club had four players representing Australia in Rio at the 2016 Olympic Games; Daniel Beale, Jodie Kenny, Georgia Morgan, and Kirsty Dwyer.

Club President Michael Boyce said the upgrade would help ensure there are many more in the future.

“The resurfacing of the main turf will ensure that our world-class facilities are maintained and allow us to host regular first-grade games and also elite level fixtures,” he says.
Neil Donaldson joined the University Football Club (UFC) in 1954 when he enrolled in Chemistry at UWA. While studying he was club Secretary from 1954 to 1960, before being elected as the club’s vice president. According to the WAAFL Hall of Champions he was elected University Club President in 1963 and coached the club’s inaugural C Grade team. He held the presidential role until 1965 and coached the club’s new D grade team from 1964 to 1968.

In 1968, nearly 50 years ago, Neil’s 252 games and tireless efforts for University were acknowledged when he was honoured with Life Membership of the University Football Club.

However, his biggest legacy is as coach and mentor. From 1969 to 1971, and again from 1973 to 1974 and 1976 he coached University’s A colts. In 1972, he coached the club’s A grade.

He led University teams to seven consecutive grand finals, winning premierships in 1969, 1970, 1971, 1974 and 1976. In 1975, when taking a year off from coaching, he was an A grade selector and team manager.

His efforts continued to be recognised as he was awarded a National Football Council Merit Award for services to amateur football in 1990. In 2000, Neil was awarded an Australian Sports Medal from the Australian Government, and in 2003 was awarded AFL Recognition to Volunteers of Australian football.

In 2012, Neil Donaldson was honoured with WA Football Commission Life Membership. In 2014, he was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) for his service to Australian Rules football in WA.

The WAAFL thanked Neil for his efforts in 2014, celebrating his 60th year of involvement with WA amateur football by inducting him into the Hall of Champions as a champion.

Throughout all this time he has been the heart and soul of the University Football Club, probably the most successful AFL amateur football club in Australia. He has guided and supported more than 5,000 playing careers, all within the UWA fraternity.

Neil Donaldson was enthusiastically recognised by all attendees of the Spring Ordinary Meeting. Following the presentation there were many personal congratulations, including from Chancellor Dr Michael Chaney; Vice-Chancellor, Professor Paul Johnson; Warden of Convocation, Adjunct Professor Warren Kerr, and Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Community and Engagement, Professor Kent Anderson.
FROM THE WARDEN OF CONVOCATION

Help chart the future of Convocation

When Sir John Winthrop Hackett chaired the Royal Commission on the establishment of a University in 1910, he created Convocation as part of the governance structure of UWA based on his own personal research visiting universities throughout the world.

It is clear he became aware of the concept through discussions at Oxford University where Convocation had been an important part of that university’s governance structure since the 16th century.

In the 1911 version of the UWA Act which he drafted, those who were permitted to be members of Convocation were outlined in great detail, including all members of the Senate, all graduates of the University, all graduates of other universities, donors to the University and senior academic staff.

As members of Convocation, these individuals formed the electorate of the University and were entitled to nominate for and to vote in elections for the Senate and the Council of Convocation. They also had the right to attend General Meetings of the University (known as the Ordinary Meetings of Convocation) and to review any changes to the UWA Statutes.

The arrangements are unique to UWA. The constitutions of many universities state they are legally comprised of staff and students – and view their graduates as external stakeholders. However, from its inception, UWA established its graduates as an integral part of the University.

So why did Sir John Winthrop Hackett create Convocation? One reason appears to have been the stability and continuity engendered through members of Convocation having a life-long connection to the University.

Another reason may be his pride in having established the first ‘free’ university in the British Empire and his desire to ensure that this ‘free’ status continued by giving the graduates, who had benefited from the education, a role in future decisions regarding UWA.

Under the provisions of the UWA Act, these responsibilities are entrusted to a Council of Convocation (comprising 21 members, the Warden of Convocation, the Deputy Warden and the Immediate Past Warden).

Each year elections are held for seven members of Council as well as for each of the leadership positions. All members of Convocation are eligible to be elected for these positions to serve for a three-year term.

If you would like to become more actively involved in Convocation and its activities, please consider nominating for one of these positions. As I will be completing my term as the Warden of Convocation in March 2017, I wish to encourage all those interested to also consider nominating for this leadership role.

Nominations are currently open and close on Monday, 12 December 2016. Nomination forms may be requested from the Convocation Officer, Juanita Perez via email at convocation@uwa.edu.au

A postal ballot will be conducted for the election of members of Convocation Council during the period Wednesday 1 February to Tuesday 14 March 2017 and the outcome announced at the Autumn Ordinary Meeting for 2017 scheduled to be held on Friday 17 March 2017.

I would encourage all members of Convocation to become actively involved and exercise their democratic right by voting in these elections.

Adjunct Professor Warren Kerr AM
WARDEN OF CONVOCATION
The Council of Convocation wishes to invite the following graduates to their 50 year reunion.

Can you help in locating them?

ARTS
- Elmo ABULINS
- Norman ADERSON
- Janet ALEXANDER
- David ANDERSEN
- Jocelyn ARNOLD
- Janet ALEXANDER
- Jennifer JORDAN
- John JENKIN
- John HYMAN
- Joo CHIA
- Janet BELL
- Graham JOHNSON
- Lesley KISS
- Tu-Linh KIEN
- Ildiko KISS
- Marjory KRISTIANSEN (née Silver)
- Faye LEADER (née Daniell)
- Peter FITZGERALD
- Robert EMMETT
- Mervyn DAW
- Lawrence DARNELL
- Ronald DAVIES
- Bernard DAVIS
- Mervyn DAW
- Elizabeth DEVINE
- Helen ELLIS
- Robert EMMETT
- Alan COLE
- John MACLEAN
- John FRASER
- John SHERWOOD

EDUCATION
- Ellen BELL
- Mariam (Sharifah) GHAZALI (née Syed Mansor)
- Linton HAMBLETON
- Philippa HERON
- Ian HODGE
- Bernard HYNMS
- Maxwell KINGSTON
- Gek LIM
- Peter MARSHALL
- Herberwick MBAL
- Doniton MKANDWIRE
- Robert RUDO
- Katherine WILLS

ENGINEERING, COMPUTING & MATHEMATICS
- Nicolas BRADOVSKI
- Mohammed RAHAD
- Mohamed ZAIN
- BIN MOHD NAWAWI
- Raymond COLE
- Kenneth MOORE
- Richard MOUNT
- Hek TAI
- Joo TEH
- Colin VEAL
- Kim WONG
- Jean VICKERY
- Tan YUN
- Ng TAO
- Robyn HARRIS
- Elsie HART
- Rhonda HERBERT
- Elaine HERRINGTON
- Elizabeth HILL
- Robert HOWIE
- John HYMAN
- Terence JACKSON
- John JENKIN
- Graham JOHNSON
- Jennifer JORDAN
- Ildiko KISS
- Marjory KRISTIANSEN (née Silver)
- Faye LEADER (née Daniell)

BUSINESS SCHOOL
- Caroline BRAND-MAHER (née Brand)
- Hock CHEW
- Anuja CHINTAKANANDA
- Kah CHONG
- Patricia DERMODY
- John FRASER
- Sean GLYN
- Barbara GOLD (née Kamen)
- Frank HARMAN
- Shirley HUGHES
- David HUTCHINSON
- Gie KHO
- Chiu LAM
- John MACLEAN

GRADUATE RESEARCH SCHOOL
- Kenneth BETJEMAN
- Abdul (Aflis) BHUHAN

LAW
- Stephen (Chin) CHEW
- John GARDNER
- Peter LALOR
- James MCMANUS

MEDICINE, DENTISTRY & HEALTH SCIENCES
- Gregory DORAN

SCIENCE
- Kok ANG
- Ireneos BELTRAN
- Keith BENNETT
- Ian BIRD
- Jeffrey CANNING
- Chauri CHAPANONT
- Ken CLAYTON
- Rodney COLEMAN
- Paul CREEPY
- Stuart DAY
- Neville DEMESTRE
- Steve DOM
- Geoffrey DUNHAM
- John FARRELL
- Peter FIZZPATRICK
- Ah FOO
- Henry FRANK
- Elizabeth GRAY
- Sara GREEN
- Paul GREGORY
- Ross GUYTON
- David HIGGS
- Cheng HOFFMAN (née Cheah)
- Albert HOWE
- Christina HUPELSCHOTEN
- Peter JAMVOLD
- Rhondda JONES
- Garry KENNEDY
- Catherine LA ROCHE
- Kwok-Che LAW
- Chi LEUNG
- Yong LIM
- Tatt-Tuck LOH
- Michael MANDERSCHEID
- Lee MARTIN
- Peter MARTIN
- Amidu MATTURI
- Janet NEKEL (née MacFarlane)
- Key NG
- Bree ONG
- Siew Quek Siew Kiat (née Khoo)
- Barbara RAMSAY
- Christopher RATHBONE
- Abdul RAZAK BIN MOHD SHARIF
- Richard ROBINSON
- John SCHULER
- Gregory SPENCER
- Frederick STEELE
- Gordon STONE
- Bernard STUIVER
- Kumar SURANDER
- Nachiappan THINAKARAN
- Tam TONG
- June WEST (née Allsop)
- Rodenk WHITTL
GLOBAL TRAVEL FOR POSTGRAD AWARD WINNERS

A student investigating the role of stress and relaxation in regulating appetite and another studying flood adaptation techniques in Brazil are among winners of this year’s Convocation Postgraduate Research Travel Awards.

Convocation Awards Committee Convenor Nee Nee Ong said the awards, originally established to mark the 75th Anniversary of UWA, provide winners with $3,000 each towards travel costs related to their research.

“Tasmiah Masih from the School of Sports Science, Exercise and Health found that 40 per cent of us eat junk food in reaction to stress but that relaxation and yoga can help counteract bad eating decisions,” she says.

“She’ll use her 2016 award to attend teacher training programs in mindfulness based stress reduction in New York and Massachusetts.”

Jelena Rakovic from UWA’s Centre for English Language Teaching is one of a team of five at the University involved in studying leadership at primary school level in societies in transition, often following war or conflict.

“Her travel grant will allow her to conduct fieldwork in Serbia and she’ll also attend a biennial conference hosted by the European School Heads Association in Maastricht in the Netherlands,” Ms Ong says.

“Audiologist Rebecca Bennett will travel to Vancouver to present her work at the World Congress of Audiology and Karen Paiva Henrique from the School of Earth and Environment will study flood adaptation projects in Brazil and how they are conceived and implemented.

“Yue Ming Sun meanwhile is working on plant energy biology with the ARC Centre of Excellence and studying precise gene modification tools with agricultural and therapeutic applications, with her award taking her to a conference on RNA editing in California.

“From the Business School, Manal Shehabi is working on economic policies that reduce the negative impacts of petroleum price volatility in oil exporting economies and she’ll attend two conferences in UK and Kuwait.

The Bryant Stokes Matilda Award for Cultural Excellence was presented to the UWA French Club, recognising its excellence in promoting French culture with plays, radio interviews and publications. The Club’s most recent and notable theatre production was Lysistrate.

FIVE POUND PRIZE WINNERS BACK TO UNI

When the Committee of Convocation introduced prizes for academic excellence back in the early 1950s, the first five faculty prizes were for five pounds each.

“The awards were seen as an acknowledgment and an encouragement, and not necessarily important for their monetary value,” says Deputy Warden of Convocation, Joan Pope.

In best sleuthing style Dr Pope recently tracked down three of those very early winners, managing to convince them back to their alma mater for a get-together.

“One of the earliest Convocation prize-winners was John Wager, who in 1952, shared the engineering prize with K H Maguire,” Dr Pope says.

“Ron Bowyer in 1955 was also the recipient of a shared prize for science with H J W Mueller. Science student Tom Dickson was an awardee in 1956.
November 2016

1930s

PATRICIA (PATSY) MARTINSON (née Palmer) (BSc 1938; DipEd 1940) celebrated her 100th birthday with family and friends last September. One of her special requests on her big day was an afternoon “limo” ride, which Patsy did in a 1926 Ford Plymouth that the owner had since she was 16! Patsy enjoyed a tour of Bunbury, which included a visit to Bunbury Senior High School where she taught for many years. Whilst studying at UWA during the late 1930s, Patsy was chosen to play hockey in the WA team and received a Hockey Blue before travelling to Sydney, Hobart and Adelaide in 1936, 1938, and 1939. She was selected to play in the All Australian team in 1936 and 1938. Patsy retired from teaching in 1976 and then spent leisure time with her husband caravanning around Western Australia. Now in a nursing home, Patsy is pictured here on her special day grasping a hockey stick she got as a memento for not being able to play international hockey due to the outbreak of war in 1939.

1950s

RAY PURDY (BE 1958) is living in Dunsborough while waiting for a unit to be completed at Empire West (part of the redevelopment of the Perry Lakes Stadium area). He is retired, but still keeps active by helping mentor an engineering student. Former classmates can contact him at ray.purdy@bigpond.net.au

1960s

TORIKO CHEN (BA 1969; DipEd 1971; BSW 1978) writes that she would like to make contact with fellow graduates from her student days. She is now retired and enjoys travel, food and making new and old friends. Former classmates may contact her at pototskoi@gmail.com

1970s

BRIAN GAULL (BSc 1971) spent many years as a geophysicist in Papua New Guinea, Antarctica, Japan, New Zealand and Australia, specialising in earthquake hazard assessment. In retirement Brian moved to Bunbury, but has since moved to live on the Fleurieu Peninsula, in South Australia. Brian can be contacted at brian.gaull@westnet.com.au

MARK SAXTON (BA 1978) enjoyed an international career in leadership roles with NYSE and FTSE listed companies working in UK, Ireland, Belgium, USA, Spain and Austria. Now living in the UK, he has a business specialising in executive outplacement and executive performance coaching. Mark is a director of a public hospital and has completed three voluntary charity governance roles. Married with two sons, he happily returns to Australia annually for family visits.

1980s

TREVOR MATTHEWS (BCom 1982) is managing director of an ASX-listed mineral sands explorer and producer.

1990s

MARK PINOLI (BSc 1993; BA 1996; BA(Hons) 2000) is the founder of Logged On, a charity organisation that creates educational opportunities for children in Nepal. Logged On provides technology and resources to schools giving children the chance to learn valuable computer skills. By combining his knowledge of science and social anthropology with his love of the Himalayan region, Mark is working to create a brighter future for children in Nepal. Mark was at UWA last month, where he had shown his short film, Earth-Q, an award-winning documentary about his journey and charity work. He previously worked at UWA as a resident tutor and assistant to the Principal of University Hall. Former classmates can contact Mark at admin@loggedon.org.au
GRAD BRIEFS

Stay in touch or update your details at: alumni-update@uwa.edu.au

2000s

BELINDA CONIGLIO (BA 2004; GradDipLaw 2013) writes that she started her own consultancy firm in 2014, which she called Ideas and Impact. The consultancy focuses on strategic growth, using marketing and campaign strategy. Belinda is also looking at using her legal practice to offer business advisory services. Former classmates can contact her at belinda_coniglio@hotmail.com

PHILIPPA CHAPMAN (née Montgomery) (BMusEd 2008) is an early childhood music teacher and married in 2012. Her first son was born in 2014 and another baby is due this month. Former classmates can contact her at chapman.pn@gmail.com

RUSSELL PORTER (BE & BCom 2008) has been working for WSP Parsons Brinckerhoff, as a senior mechanical engineer since 2015. Russell is a FIFO worker based at Rio Tinto’s Paraburdoo operations.

CHAD SILVER (BCM 2008) studied geographic information systems at Curtin University and served as a member of the Curtin University Council in 2009. Chad is currently working as a lawyer in Perth.

2010s

AUDREY OW (BSc 2012) graduated off campus through the PSB Academy in Singapore. She writes that this was her second degree, the first being in Mass Communications. Audrey previously worked in the Singapore Land Transport Authority and since graduation, has been working in the Corporate Transformation Office. Former classmates can contact her at audrey_is@yahoo.com

LIAM RANDELL (BA(Com St.) 2013; BA(Hons) 2014) worked in a graduate program in Sydney for three months after graduating and travelled through Europe for a following nine months. He now lives in Melbourne and works full-time as a consumer insight and market researcher. Liam has also taken part in various triathlons in New Zealand and Australia. Former classmates can contact him at liam.randell@outlook.com

GIUSEPPE ZAGARI (LLB & BEc 2016) is currently employed as a law graduate at Solomon Brothers on St George’s Terrace. He will be admitted as a solicitor in November.

STEPHEN CHOO (PhD 2005) is Director and Head of Global Productised Services at Korn Ferry Hay Group in Singapore. He partners with the world-leading companies on their talent acquisition, development and retention solutions with best-in-class reward benchmarking, psychometric assessment and data analytics within Asia. In 2006, Stephen joined the Centre for Entrepreneurial Management & Innovation (CEMI) at UWA Business School as a Senior Research Fellow. He lectures, trains and writes extensively on employee engagement, career advancement and the future of work. Stephen is a graduate member of the Australian Institute of Company Directors (AICD) which is keen to work with Australian companies expanding into Asia.

Stephen is President of UWA Alumni Network in Singapore (alumni.uwa.edu.au/networks/singapore). He leads a growing number of UWA graduates and student volunteers dedicated to engaging with almost 7,000 UWA alumni in Singapore. Activities include everything from informal alumni networking events to career mentoring, and student departure and welcome-home initiatives. The network plays a significant role in raising UWA’s profile and international reputation by opening doors for the University to key local government, business and industry contacts in Singapore. Stephen is also Chair of UWA Business School Ambassadorial Council Singapore Chapter, whose key role is to build stronger global business links among its 3,000 business school graduates in Singapore.

Singapore Calling

Ashley Arbuckle entertaining guests at the Convocation 50th Reunion
Sometimes one lifetime just isn’t enough

Donor and bequestor, Mirek Generowicz takes inspiration from the students he supports through a scholarship in memory of his parents, who “overcame extreme hardship through education, thanks to the kindness of strangers.”

“Education is such a powerful enabler. It allows people to achieve so much more of their potential,” says the UWA alumnus.

Meeting the students who have received the Generowicz scholarship has been a moving experience for Mirek and the recipients, including Kelsi Forrest, who is completing a double degree in Law and Arts, with Mirek’s help.

“As an Aboriginal person, I want a career that benefits my people. My ambition is to work in social justice and to protect human rights. I’m truly grateful for Mirek’s incredible support and encouragement,” says Kelsi.

If you would like to help students make a difference in the future, consider a gift in your will today.

To find out more please contact:
Liz Terracini, Development Manager, Bequests on +61 6488 8537 or bequests@uwa.edu.au