



# Sir George Currie

## The jolly doctor lives on



**2011 sees the 50th anniversary of the naming of the Hall after Sir George Currie, an Agricultural Scientist and the second ever Vice-Chancellor of The University of Western Australia, known affectionately as the 'jolly doctor'.**

Born into an agricultural community on August 13, 1896 in Scotland, the young Sir George quickly distinguished himself academically, and through his farm chores fostered a life long fascination for all things that grow. Immediately after school in 1915 Sir George served in World War One witnessing first hand the horror of the battle of the Somme. Upon completing his service, he gained a Bachelor of Agriculture with Honours and a Doctor of Science from the University of Aberdeen.

Sir George Currie came to Australia in 1923 to manage a sugar plantation in Queensland before joining the Queensland Department of Agriculture in 1926. In 1929 he

joined the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research. Sir George came to UWA in 1939 as Professor of Agriculture and Director of the Institute of Agriculture. In 1940 he was elected part time Vice-Chancellor and changed to full time in 1945 when he was replaced as Director of Agriculture.

Highly popular with the student population due to his affable nature and fondness for engaging in discussions with them till they "tired the sun with talking and sent him down the sky"\*<sup>1</sup>, Sir George was instrumental in the creation of the then University Hostel, asking the Minister for the Army to set aside the bachelor officers' quarters for use of the University when the war ended.

The decision in 1961 by the UWA Senate to transform the University Hostel to a Hall of Residence was a controversial one. However there was some unity of sentiment when it came to naming the Hall after Sir George Currie, an honour for which his expressed his delight several years later in a letter in response to the official opening of the Hall:

*'After a quarter of a century of close association with students in Australia and New Zealand I have never ceased to enjoy their company ... It gave me a great deal of satisfaction to know that, when the Hall was given its name, the students had been associated with the decision to call it Currie Hall. That is an honour I treasure more than most ... My wife*

*and I believe that students who live in such halls of residence have an unparalleled chance to develop in mind and spirit, and to enjoy life to the full". \*\**

Sir George Currie left UWA to become Vice-Chancellor of the University of New Zealand in 1952. Upon his resignation he was awarded Doctor of Letters from UWA. He was knighted in 1960 and retired in 1962, moving to Canberra with his wife to be near his children. Active in retirement, upon his death in 1984 Sir George Currie had collected a host of honorary degrees from Universities in Aberdeen, Melbourne, Dalhousie (Canada), Western Australia, New Zealand and Papua New Guinea. He is remembered as a man of remarkable and varied capacities and achievements, possessing qualities which made him a leader who could inspire and challenge.

*\*Catherine Blakers, Sir George Currie, Canberra Times, Thursday May 8 1984.*

*\*\*Margot Clifford, While we live, let us live, From University Hostel to Currie Hall 1942-1999, University of Western Australia Press, 2002.*



**CURRIE HALL**  
THE UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

# Principal's Note



Principal Chris Massey with resident Jasen Wee

**As we reach the milestone of 50 years since the naming of Currie Hall after Sir George Currie, the second Vice-Chancellor of The University of Western Australia, we enter into an exciting period in the Hall's development.**

**Construction has begun on 24 new rooms, the first since the existing building constructions were commenced in the late 1960s.**

In addition to this, the federal and state funded National Rental Affordability Scheme provides us with an opportunity to undertake further developments to assist in meeting the strong demand by students to live at Currie Hall. At present, the severe shortage of affordable accommodation, including college beds, means that an ever-decreasing proportion of the University student

population is able to enjoy the benefits of the collegiate experience. Vice-Chancellor Professor Alan Robson has for some time been an advocate of the residential experience, stating that ideally, he would like to see all first year university students have a residential experience.

As Principal, a considerable part of my role has included managing the disappointment of the hundreds of applicants I am forced to turn away each year, as well as their concerned parents. The new developments at Currie Hall will improve not only the number of prospective students we can accept, but also provide greater choice by catering to contemporary standards for residential living and taking into account issues such as sustainability and accessibility. I hope to have more detail regarding

exciting news about some future developments at Currie Hall in the very near future.

On another note, it was a great pleasure to once again enjoy the company of a number of you at the alumni and students dinner on 11 April. It was also very pleasing to hear the number of comments about the improvements in meal quality since your time at the Hall! The Hall is planning a celebration later this year for the 50th anniversary of its naming and we welcome all past residents. We hope to have finalised dates and details shortly and will be in touch.

I encourage you to please contact us at any stage if you have any suggestions, comments or ideas on ways in which we can connect with past residents. In addition, if you know of any past residents who do not receive this newsletter please ask them to contact us at the office on +61 8 9273 3333 or [chbookings@curriehall.uwa.edu.au](mailto:chbookings@curriehall.uwa.edu.au)

## Reconnect with Currie

We at Currie Hall would love to hear from past residents.

Contact Marie Knights at [chbookings@curriehall.uwa.edu.au](mailto:chbookings@curriehall.uwa.edu.au) or on +61 8 6488 8336.

## Lately at Currie Hall:

- Currie Hall's Community Service raised \$331 in their charity carwash for Ronald McDonald House
- Second in men's Inter College Swimming
- First in men's Inter College Tennis
- Second in men's Inter College Touch Rugby
- New Inter-College sporting event launched: Ultimate Frisbee
- Lawn Bowls introduced into the O Week calendar
- Global cafes on Scotland/Ireland and Zambia held with great success and record turnouts
- New equipment purchased for the Hall (Foosball table, Air Hockey table and new Table Tennis table) through the collaboration of the Resclub and Hall Administration.
- New Barbecue and sail shade set up in the Barbecue Area, launching the very popular Barbecue Night on Wednesdays.

## Alumni dine with students



Alumni and current residents enjoying dinner



Hall Council Chair Alan Brien with residents

**Monday 11 April saw over 80 of the Hall's former residents take a trip down memory lane and join the current students for their evening meal in the John Leader dining hall. Collecting their trays and cutlery, alumni from the University Hostel days to recent graduates, chatted with residents while waiting for their dinner of roast lamb, potato mash and garlic beans and/or seafood marinara.**

Dinner was enjoyed as alumni shared stories from the Hall's past with current residents. Many were impressed with the improvements in the Hall since they last dined there, commenting on the improvement in both the food and facilities.

After dinner, alumni joined current Residents' Club members and Resident Advisors in the Blue Room to hear presentations from the current President Kyle Atkins, Principal Chris Massey and from alumni Charles Johnson. With a number of guests not leaving until well after the evening's scheduled finish, the event highlighted to current residents the fondness many of the ex-residents have for their Hall.

Currie Hall is planning a second alumni event later this year to celebrate 50 years since the naming of Currie Hall. If you, or anyone you know is interested in attending the event please contact the Hall at [chbookings@curriehall.uwa.edu.au](mailto:chbookings@curriehall.uwa.edu.au) or on (+61 8) 9273 3333.

## Wong – Blumer family makes Currie Hall a tradition

**First year Engineering student David Wong has continued a family tradition by becoming the sixth family member in three decades to take up residence in Currie Hall. David jokes that in many ways he owes his existence to the Hall, as that is where his parents, Bernard and Caroline Wong (nee Blumer), met.**

Bernard was a resident on and off from 1981 to 1985 while studying Commerce and acting as a tutor at the Hall. Although not an international student, Bernard's parents were living in Hong Kong at the time he was undertaking his studies. Bernard's father Meng San Wong, while not a resident at the Hall, was in regular attendance during the University Hostel days and sent both his sons Bernard and Nick to the Hall.

Caroline undertook a Linguistics degree and resided at the Hall between 1983 and 1985. While the Blumer family lived quite close to the University, they believed that the collegiate experience was highly beneficial and all three of the Blumer siblings; (Caroline, Amanda and Charlie); were residents of the Hall while completing their studies. Caroline has fond memories of the camaraderie and the social events at the Hall, particularly the Dinner Dances.

The family now resides in the south-west in Denmark and when David Wong obtained entrance to UWA to undertake a Bachelor of Engineering, Currie Hall was the natural choice. Although David knew nobody when he arrived at the Hall, he has quickly made many friends. It is a relief to his family to

know he is living in a community with so many benefits, most important of which for an active young man is the certainty of knowing a meal will be placed in front of him three times a day.



Left: David Wong dressed for PROSH with fellow resident Caris Blayney

# Alumni Profile –

## Jerald Justin Ko, Producer Presenter Power 98FM



Jerald Justin on air in his Power 98FM studio

**This issue of Currie Connects' Alumni Profile is on Jerald Justin Ko, resident from 2005 to 2007. Jerald Justin has since returned to his native Singapore to take up a successful career as a Producer Presenter with Singapore radio station Power 98 FM.**

### **What made you choose to stay at Currie Hall?**

My mum had actually registered me at St. Thomas More college, but when I went on a tour of the grounds and drove past Currie Hall along the way, I knew exactly where I was going to spend my University days.

Besides the fact that it was the closest college to UWA, as well as having the best looking buildings and grounds (kudos to John and Claudio!), I remember watching a bunch of mates having fun playing football on the field behind the tennis court, and immediately thought, that's what I want my college life to be like!

### **What are your fondest memories of living at Currie Hall?**

Where do I begin?! I guess meeting people from around the world, all walks of life and different sorts of backgrounds has got to be the main highlight of my stay at Currie Hall.

I used an application on facebook recently which draws arrows on a world map to where all your friends are, and it showed that I knew people from every single continent (barring Antarctica of course)!

The fact of the matter is that I met most of them at Currie Hall, and that in itself, is beyond amazing.

The Norwegian couple I had dinner with in the dining hall every night are now married with kids, that American girl I had a crush on in my first year has tied the knot with a hockey star and the Mauritian guy I played football with at the tennis court is still one of my very best friends. All this, thanks to Currie Hall.

That fantastic fact aside, the memories I hold of Currie Hall are mind-blowing. Having meals with people from anywhere and everywhere around the world. It was like a geography and history lesson every night during meal times. Playing football at the tennis court, using ten cent coins for the dryer in the laundry room, getting overly passionate at Inter college sports events, making new friends at River Cruises, going to the other houses (A, C, D, E) to borrow indo mee or meat pies from friends in the middle of the night, so much more!

### **Can you share with us what you have done since leaving Currie Hall?**

Having always been passionate about hosting and presenting; what with all the events I've organised and hosted at Currie Hall! I started out my career at Power98 FM here in Singapore as a Producer Presenter.

My on-air duties include hosting the Beat (9pm-12am weeknights), which is currently the highest rated show (number of listeners, AC Nielsen Survey) in the station.



Jerald Justin interviewing Pop Star and former Spice Girl Mel B



Jerald Justin's world map of friends

I've also been engaged to host a string of high profile external events, such as Total Defence Day 2011, Singapore Bay Run (70,000 people in attendance), and National Day Dinners.

In terms of highlights, being a DJ does have its perks! Besides of course playing great music every night, we get invited to movie premieres, product launches, concerts, restaurant openings, giving school talks and more. I'm also proud to say that I recently had a childhood idol on my show, Melanie Brown of the Spice Girls! But the harsh reality though, is that our take home earnings are way below those people holding the "real jobs" in life, like the Engineers, Doctors, Bankers, Lawyers and Oil traders! But still, being happy is important, and I'm glad to say that I am! (Well I try to be!)

### What are your future goals?

A personal dream of mine is to be one of the host's of our country's National Day Parade, which is a massive event to celebrate our nation's birthday.

Also to branch out to other platforms of media perhaps? I've recently had a small cameo on TV so that might be a possibility, but then again I've heard people say that I have a perfect face for radio! :)

And oh yes, to send my kids to Currie Hall one day!

**Catch Jerald Justin (JK) on Power98 FM Singapore every weeknight from 9pm-12am. Tune in via [Power98.com.sg](http://Power98.com.sg)**

## Do you remember your room?

**We are looking for former Currie Hall residents who remember their room number and who would be willing to participate in an interview for the next edition of Currie Connect. Interviews can be conducted by phone, email or post correspondence if you prefer.**

**If you are interested in participating please contact Marie Knights at [chbookings@curriehall.uwa.edu.au](mailto:chbookings@curriehall.uwa.edu.au)**

# Donnybrook student wins Ralph Pervan Scholarship

**The 2012 Ralph Pervan Scholarship has been awarded to 17 year old Brianna Bourke. Brianna hails from Donnybrook in WA's south-west and is a first year double degree Arts/Science student, majoring in Japanese and Human Biology. An active and highly accomplished leader within the Scouting movement, Brianna was selected for the prestigious scholarship for the enthusiasm and dedication she has displayed in contributing to her community.**

The scholarship awarded to Brianna was created to honour the memory of Dr Ralph Pervan, a distinguished and well-loved member of the Hall. Before his untimely death, he was the first Commissioner for Multicultural and Ethnic Affairs in Western Australia. A man of wide academic and human concerns, he worked for unity and understanding between people of different cultural backgrounds.

Brianna's future goals include completing her undergraduate course and undertaking post-graduate qualifications in law and travelling to Japan to become a fluent Japanese speaker. She also aims to become a Venturer-Scout Leader in order to give back to the movement in appreciation for the opportunities it has given her.

Brianna describes living at Currie Hall as the 'best decision I've made. People are friendly, caring and understanding of us 'freshers' and of each other. At Currie Hall, you're never lonely or left out.'

Winning the Ralph Pervan Scholarship has meant a great deal to Brianna and her family. The cost of moving to Perth with travel costs, university and Hall fees placed strain on the family finances. The financial support offered by the scholarship has made the opportunities presented to Brianna living the hall more attainable, something for which both Brianna and her family are grateful.

# From the Summer of '71

**Thanks to the kind donation from Currie Hall Alumni Kees De Hoog, we are able to share a direct extract from the 1971 year book Joshua Judges, reflecting on the introduction of women to Currie Hall.**

## All these women – An introspective overview

They came in the summer of '71, and being a collection, or random sample – possibly approximating a normal curve (or two!) – they were looked upon by some with expectation, and by others with reticence, but always by all, with interest (about 100% at first, but soon leveling off to a stable 4.5%). It was allotted the job of some of the “veteran” members to start rumours, of others to elaborate and dissipate the same, of still others to rank the new comers in order of preference and/or possible availability, etc. The new males, being no doubt traumatised by so many

bosoms arrayed beyond their toast at breakfast, and we “veteran” males being no worse disposed to alleviate their sufferings (?), were left to their own devices, which soon proved to be just as effective as ours. Which just goes to show something.

However, misled, being one year short of my quarter century, and being less impetuous about these things, was went to solitude with guitar and pipe and did ask myself?

1. Is the whole thing worth it?
2. Will it be worth it in the future?
3. Am I enjoying it?
4. Will I enjoy it in the future? and another thing: what is this large turnover of women that I have been hearing so much about?
5. Should I be enjoying myself more?

Finding no pleasure in solitary introspection I went forth in pursuit of my quest – a quest which has,

to some extent been interesting, to some extent been uninteresting; to some extent fruitful, to some extent fruitless; but not I am happy to say productive. It was during this time that I noticed among other things:

1. The beds are extremely narrow
2. Makeup can work wonders
3. The walls have ears
4. Engage a close acquaintance in confidence, and immediately the whole Hall knows.
5. Etc.

But to whom can I complain? To whom do I go for advice without revealing my folly (to the entire Hall)? Is there a quick solution I can offer my eager juniors? Nay, it remains for me to sit with my cronies, reflecting the year over a good glass of red, and to ponder the question. In du affair, should love be Frank and Ernest, or should one be a girl!!

Merty

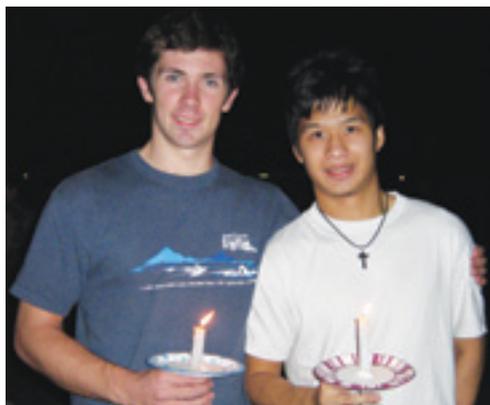
## Earth Hour at Currie Hall

**Currie Hall first started celebrating Earth Hour in 2009. Residents' enthusiasm for the event has grown since then. March 26, 2011 saw a record crowd turn off their lights and join together in the Currie Quad to mingle, toast marshmallows and listen to the music provided by talented Currie musicians.**

The lead organiser for this year's event was Yannick Ha Kong, Residential Advisor (RA) at Currie Hall and 2010

UWA graduate. Yannick was ably assisted by a team of RAs and Billy Jerry, exchange student from Wapping in England. Billy suggested the community organise a display in the Quad, using the two initials of the Hall (C for Currie and H for Hall) to commemorate the event.

The Currie spirit was in full swing as the residents formed the letters and held their Earth Hour candles high.



Residents Billy Jerry and Yannick Ha Kong



Currie Hall residents celebrate Earth Hour

# Currie Hall resident's Antarctic summer



Natasha Barrett collecting samples for analysis and study

**Second year Bachelor of Science student Natasha Barrett had a summer break of a different sort to her fellow Hallers, leaving Perth's record heat for Antarctica. Natasha participated in a University of Ottawa glaciology field course, learning how to take ice-core and snow density samples as well as studying several glaciers observing how they have been receding over time and looking at icebergs, snowfall, ice shelves and sea ice.**

In addition Natasha also participated in many activities which were part of the four other university courses being conducted on the boat that became her home. This included looking at 65 million year old fossils at Seymour Island, visiting Deception Island- one of Antarctica's active volcanoes- taking water samples analysing temperature and salinity, taking plankton samples and watching some of the spectacular

wildlife interact in their natural environment.

The lengthy return journey from Australia to Antarctica saw Natasha head to Ushuai in Argentina, the southern most city in the world as well as four days travelling through the Drake Passage, some of the roughest seas in the world. Natasha was taken aback by the sheer variety and abundance of wildlife in the region and was even fortunate enough to be joined on board briefly by a visiting Leopard Seal.

As the youngest participant and only Australian, Natasha made up part of a very diverse contingent of adventurers including students from 29 different universities and 16 countries. The experience has meant much more than simply an additional credit towards her degree:

"Visiting a place like Antarctica really puts into perspective how you view the world, it is easy to think that because the Antarctic is so far away



from where we live, our impacts are minimal but when you're standing on a glacier that is melting right beneath your feet, things like global warming become real and very personal."

Taking part in the expedition and learning about glaciology in Antarctica has sparked an interest in Natasha to continue studying the Polar Regions in the future.

"Travelling to Antarctica has opened my mind to many career pursuits, especially those related to the geosciences. Sometimes it is good to know that there are many more career pathways besides just mining and exploration."

# Introducing Currie Hall's new staff

## Senior Resident Advisor, Ann-Marie Baker



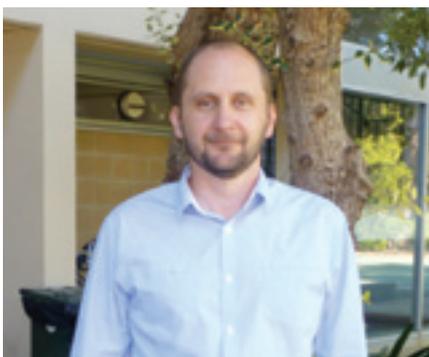
Ann-Marie has travelled extensively with her studies and her professional career. She obtained a Bachelor of Science (Psychology) from the University of Newcastle and Masters of Counseling Psychology from Queensland University of Technology. Ann-Marie has been working as a Psychologist since 2000 in child protection, mental health, and prison services and for the last 5 years in education in Townsville. She has also worked overseas including in the UK with asylum seekers and youth and adults with disabilities.

Ann-Marie will be studying post-graduate medicine and is looking forward to the hands on nature of clinical rotations as well as the challenge of studying again.

Ann-Marie was drawn to Currie Hall by its beautiful campus and lovely gardens. She also found the demographics of the college a big draw as working with a culturally diverse community provided her with the opportunity to learn.

Ann-Marie sees her role as an opportunity to influence and improve the quality of young people's experience of college and to help the Resident Advisors develop their skills. Her immediate plans include learning all the students names and running successful events around the college.

## Facilities Manager, Neil Mason



Neil has been employed by UWA since 2004 and has worked in a variety of supervisory Facilities Business and Administration roles. Neil was most recently employed as the Business Coordinator in Facilities Management at UWA. In this role, Neil was responsible for managing construction, refurbishments and maintenance projects across the whole UWA campus. Prior to this appointment, Neil was the Administration Supervisor for a business unit which managed the financial, human resources, assets, records, facilities, security and logistics across the UWA Libraries.

Neil will oversee areas of facilities which comprise maintenance, refurbishments, IT systems, new buildings and the House Attendants, Maintenance and Grounds staff.

## Enrolments Officer, Joan Manalip



Joan's background was as a Corporate Travel Specialist prior to entering education, initially as a Student Advisor/Admissions Officer with the Australian School of Tourism and Hospitality Management

(ASTHM), now known as Australian College of Applied Education (ACAE). Joan looked after both domestic and international admissions to the college as well as working closely with different government bodies to ensure student admissions were compliant.

Joan is looking after enrolments at Currie Hall and is enjoying getting to know the Hall's residents.

## Accounts Assistant, Linlin Cheng



Linlin comes from an accounts background, having obtained a Bachelor of Commerce (major in accounting) from Curtin University of Technology.

Linlin is providing support for the Hall's accounting needs and assisting in all aspects of financial processing, reporting and analysis.

## Contact Us

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CRICOS Provider Code: 00126G