

Adelaidean

Vol 6 No 7

NEWS FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF ADELAIDE

MAY 5, 1997

Repromed allies with Indonesian hospital

Specialists from Indonesia are to be taught the world's latest reproductive medicine techniques by the University of Adelaide's infertility unit, Repromed.

Repromed, which is recognised internationally for its expertise in assisting couples with infertility problems, last month signed an agreement with one of Indonesia's major private women's hospitals, Rumah Sakit Bunda Jakarta.

Under the agreement, Repromed will act as a technical consultant to the hospital, providing training and ongoing support for its reproductive medicine programs.

Infertility is a major problem worldwide, with about one in seven couples having trouble achieving pregnancy. The solutions to these problems are many and varied, ranging from the low-tech (such as simple lifestyle advice) to the hi-tech (such as the latest in IVF technology and micro injection).

Repromed is a wholly-owned University of Adelaide company operating at The Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Wakefield Clinic and Darwin Private Hospital. The company has remained at the cutting edge of reproductive medicine techniques and technologies by reinvesting surplus funds into research. Over the past 10 years

more than 3000 babies have been brought into the world thanks to Repromed.

"Infertility is painful, whether in Australia or Indonesia, and infertile couples deserve the very best management using modern medical technology," said the head of the Reproductive Medicine Unit at The Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Professor Colin Matthews.

Professor Matthews said the arrangement with Rumah Sakit Bunda Jakarta would generate funding for further research in Adelaide, providing a benefit to specialists both in Adelaide and Indonesia, as well as

to couples who were trying to realise their dreams of having children.

Dr Rizal Sini, an obstetrician and gynaecological specialist who is also president/director of Rumah Sakit Bunda Jakarta, said he was very pleased with the hospital's association with Repromed, which would secure much-needed expertise in reproductive medicine programs in Indonesia.

The agreement between Repromed and the Indonesian hospital was announced last month by the South Australian Premier, Mr John Olsen.

—David Ellis

Alternative to methadone to be trialled

Drug researchers at the University of Adelaide are seeking heroin users who want to 'kick the habit' to take part in a trial of a possible alternative to methadone.

Methadone is currently the only legal alternative to heroin in Australia. However, there are some drawbacks to methadone treatment. It is not suitable for all users, it can be an addictive drug, and there is still some risk of overdose and death.

The new alternative drug being studied by the University's Department of Clinical & Experimental Pharmacology is buprenorphine, which until recent years has been used only as an analgesic for things such as post-operative pain.

Buprenorphine has a number of suspected benefits over methadone. It is believed to be less addictive, and therefore easier for users to end their addiction, and it has a much lower risk of overdose. The drug is widely used in France as an alternative to methadone treatment.

The research into buprenorphine, being conducted jointly by the University of Adelaide and the National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre in Sydney, is the first of its kind in Australia.

"It's estimated that there are at least 60,000 regular heroin users in Australia, and about 5000 in South Australia," said Dr Jason White, who is heading the study in Adelaide.

"About 400 Australians die from heroin overdose each year, and the number is increasing. We also know that people who use heroin are often involved in a considerable amount of criminal activity, so heroin use is still a major problem in the community.

"Methadone has been shown to be the most effective treatment, but it's not perfect. We're trying to improve the treatment, and to make options available.

Continued Page 5

Historic science relic returns to Adelaide

A microscope originally belonging to one of the University of Adelaide's first Nobel Prize winners, Sir William Henry Bragg, has finally returned 'home' to the University.

Discovered by an Australian science historian at an auction in England, the microscope was graciously donated to the Department of Physics & Mathematical Physics at a ceremony on 1 May.

Sir William Henry Bragg was Professor of Mathematics and Physics at the University of Adelaide from 1886 to 1909.

In 1898 he spent a year on study leave in England, and during his time there he purchased equipment for the University's physics laboratory and the new engineering school.

He also purchased a small brass microscope for his own use and the amusement of his family. Professor Bragg occasionally used this instrument in his research into x-ray

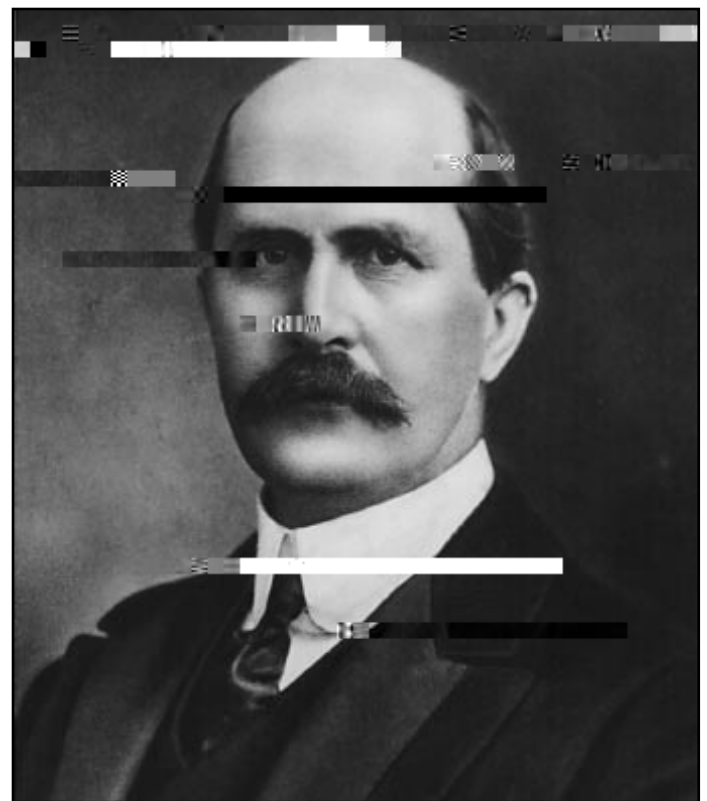
crystallography, for which he shared the Nobel Prize in 1915 with his son, William Lawrence Bragg.

The instrument remained with the Bragg family until it was donated in 1989 to the British Science and Technology Trust, to raise funds for the promotion of science.

Science Historian Dr John Jenkin (an Adelaide physics graduate now at La Trobe University, Melbourne) spotted the instrument at an auction in England in 1990.

Dr Jenkin is the author of a book on the Bragg years and has an extensive collection of Bragg memorabilia. The brass microscope was one of the collection's main prizes. The microscope is housed in its original wooden case, with a handwritten label by Professor Bragg bearing his name and address in Adelaide.

Dr Jenkin travelled to the University of Adelaide on 1 May to personally



Sir William Henry Bragg

hand over the microscope, which will go on display at the University. Dr Jenkin also presented a talk on the history of physics at

the University of Adelaide under Bragg's predecessor, Sir Horace Lamb.

—David Ellis

Internet teaching under way in Medical Physics

The University of Adelaide has become one of the first Australian universities to teach a subject over the internet.

"Radiation Biology, Protection & Epidemiology", comprising 25 lectures spread over 16 weeks, is being offered over the internet as part of the Master of Science (Medical & Health Physics) degree.

The subject is aimed at giving medical and health professionals an understanding of radiation biology, and involves lecturers from the

University of Adelaide's departments of Physics, Chemistry and Public Health, as well as the Royal Adelaide Hospital's Medical Physics department, Flinders University and the South Australian Health Commission.

Using a password, students access the subject's internet web site and either download a copy of that week's lecture, print it out, or read the whole lecture on-line. Interaction with the lecturers can be conducted via email. There are also face-to-face tutorials for local students, to provide a 'human element'.

The medical physics subject was launched on the world wide web in March, in the same week as a subject in marketing by the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology and Open Learning Australia.

Associate Professor in Physics John Patterson, who is one of the course coordinators, said the idea for the internet subject was inspired by Dr Dale Spender's address last year to the University of Adelaide's Senate.

Continued on page 6

INSIDE

Commentary: Reclaiming Education, p.2

Half-century no bar to newest PhD, p.4

Interview: visiting librarian Anne Marie Hoffmann, p.6



University and YAA to give new graduates the edge

The University of Adelaide's Enterprise Education Group has joined forces with Young Achievement Australia to run a series of seminars, workshops and business skills programs for South Australian university students and graduates.

The programs are aimed at helping students and graduates from any year level and discipline develop a range of practical, business-related skills and abilities.

These include: business planning, negotiation, team work, initiative, self confidence, problem solving, financial management, project management, creative thinking, decision making, marketing, customer service, communication and networking.

"University graduates, irrespective of their chosen career, need these skills if they are to succeed in today's work environment," said Ms Joanne Pimlott, Coordinator of Enterprise Education at the University of Adelaide.

"Participants in our programs can give themselves 'the edge' when it comes to finding work. And we enable students to develop the confidence and ability to create work for themselves by establishing their own businesses."

Ms Pimlott said the programs offered by the University's Enterprise Education Group and Young Achievement Australia (YAA) would add value to graduates' qualifications

by providing them with practical knowledge of business management.

She said demand for the programs, which are supported by organisations such as Bank SA, the South Australian Centre for Manufacturing, Australia Post and Mutual Community, was expected to be high.

The YAA Business Skills Program starts Wednesday, 7 May. Places are still available — for more information phone (08) 8231 0548.

Small Business Management seminars and workshops will be held at the University of Adelaide's Thebarton Campus in June and July — phone (08) 8303 3098 for details.

—David Ellis

Landscape students at work in Strathalbyn

A group of University of Adelaide landscape design students has been using the historic township of Strathalbyn as a 'laboratory' for their landscape design ideas.

The students are reviewing the physical character and ecological possibilities of the Strathalbyn township towards the formulation of a draft Agenda 21 policy and potential landscape design ideas.

Hosted by the District Council of Strathalbyn, the students arrived to a well attended town meeting and a briefing by local councillors, environmental representatives, and the Town Planner, Gordon Stidston.

As part of their Strathalbyn trip, the students visited prominent envi-

First PhDs graduate in Women's Studies

The first PhD graduates from the Department of Women's Studies received their degrees during the Arts Commemoration Ceremony on Thursday 24 April.

They are Dr Jyanni Steffensen and Dr Barbara Pocock. Dr Steffensen's PhD thesis was entitled "Queering Freud: Textual (Re)configurations of Lesbian Desire and Sexuality", while Dr Pocock, who is on the staff of the Centre for Labour Studies, wrote a thesis on "Challenging Male Advantage in Australian Unions".

The Department also had 9 graduates in the MA (Women's Studies) and 11 in the Graduate Diploma in Women's Studies at the same ceremony.

Pictured L to R: Dr Jyanni Steffensen, Head of Women's Studies Dr Margaret Allen, and Dr Barbara Pocock. Photo courtesy of Women's Studies.



The News IN BRIEF

SPECIAL CENTRE LAUNCHED

The \$3.6 million Special Research Centre for the Subatomic Structure of Matter has been launched by the Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education, Mrs Dorothy Kotz.

Last month's official launch coincided with an international workshop on Symmetries in the Strong Interaction, jointly hosted by the Special Research Centre and the National Institute for Theoretical Physics.

The centre, under the leadership of Director and Elder Professor of Physics, Professor Tony Thomas, is assembling a world-class research team to probe subatomic matter — one of the keys to discovering a unifying 'Theory of Everything'.

The centre also aims to link researchers with international laboratories and provide postgraduate training.

DANCE COLLABORATION

A composition by Mr Graeme Koehne from the Department of Music Studies will be featured in a collaborative project between the Australian String Quartet and Adelaide dance company Leigh Warren & Dancers in the Norwood Concert Hall next month.

Graeme Koehne's String Quartet no. 2, "Shaker Dances", performed live by the Australian String Quartet, will provide the musical core for the first of two new works choreographed by Leigh Warren in the program, "Quiver". The Quartet will be integrated into the dancing space to form part of the work in a visual sense.

The second new work involves the high-energy percussion group Pablo Percusso, which has just returned from its first North American tour and recently performed at Take Over 97, the Australian Festival for Young People.

LAW STUDENTS RECOGNISED

The achievements of more than 60 students in the Faculty of Law were recognised at the Faculty's annual prize-giving ceremony in Elder Hall on 15 April.

Outstanding winners included Matthew Rubinstein, who was awarded the Roy Frisby Smith Prize, the South Australian Bar Association Prize for Evidence, a Stow prize, an RW Bennett Prize, the National Environmental Law Association (SA) Prize for Conservation and Heritage Law, and the Dean's Certificate of Merit.

Former Students' Association President, Haroon Hassan won the University of Adelaide Law Students' Association award for the Finlaysons Trial Advocacy Competition, while current President Amrita Dasvarma received the Dean's Certificate of Merit for the top performance in the subject International Law A.

The Hon. Justice HC Williams presented the prizes, assisted by the Dean of the Faculty, Associate Professor Rob Fowler.

WRITER IN RESIDENCE

Poet Diane Fahey will be Australia Council Writer in Residence to the Departments of Women's Studies and English from 29 April to 5 June and from 28 July to 6 September 1997. She will be located in Room 118 of the Napier Building, telephone 8303 3675. For appointments and consultations regarding writing, telephone 8303 5267.

Ag Science graduation: keeping it in the family

Dr John Matthews isn't the only member of his family graduating with the University of Adelaide this year. His son, Nick, has completed his Agricultural Science degree with Honours at the same time John has completed his PhD in Agricultural Science.

They conducted their study and research in the same department (Crop Protection) and shared the same supervisor (Dr Stephen Powles, Director of the Cooperative Research Centre for Weed Management Systems).

One of the few things they couldn't share at the University was the same graduation ceremony — John Matthews received his doctorate on Thursday, 1 May, while Nick Matthews, who has been working overseas, will graduate in October. Nevertheless, the Matthews family has something to celebrate.

"It would have been good to graduate together," said Dr Matthews, "but for me, finishing my PhD thesis and Nick finishing his Honours thesis is reward in itself. A lot of hard work has gone into that, and

we're happy to have finished it successfully."

Dr Matthews, who is now a Research Fellow based at the Roseworthy Campus, was a farmer at Bordertown until the age of 39 when he decided to undertake the tertiary study he never had the chance to do.

Completing a science degree at Flinders University, he then went on to do Honours at the University of Adelaide's Waite Campus, followed by his PhD.

As a weed ecologist, Dr Matthews is currently involved in research which looks at the influence of weeds on crop production and the environmental influences on weed competition. His PhD thesis dealt with the population genetics of herbicide resistant rye grass, while Nick's Honours thesis dealt with the mechanisms of herbicide resistance in barley grass.

Dr Matthews said he thoroughly enjoyed his time as a student with the Department of Crop Protection's weeds research group.

"I've always found it a real delight to be at university, and I've appreciated the opportuni-

ties available to me," he said.

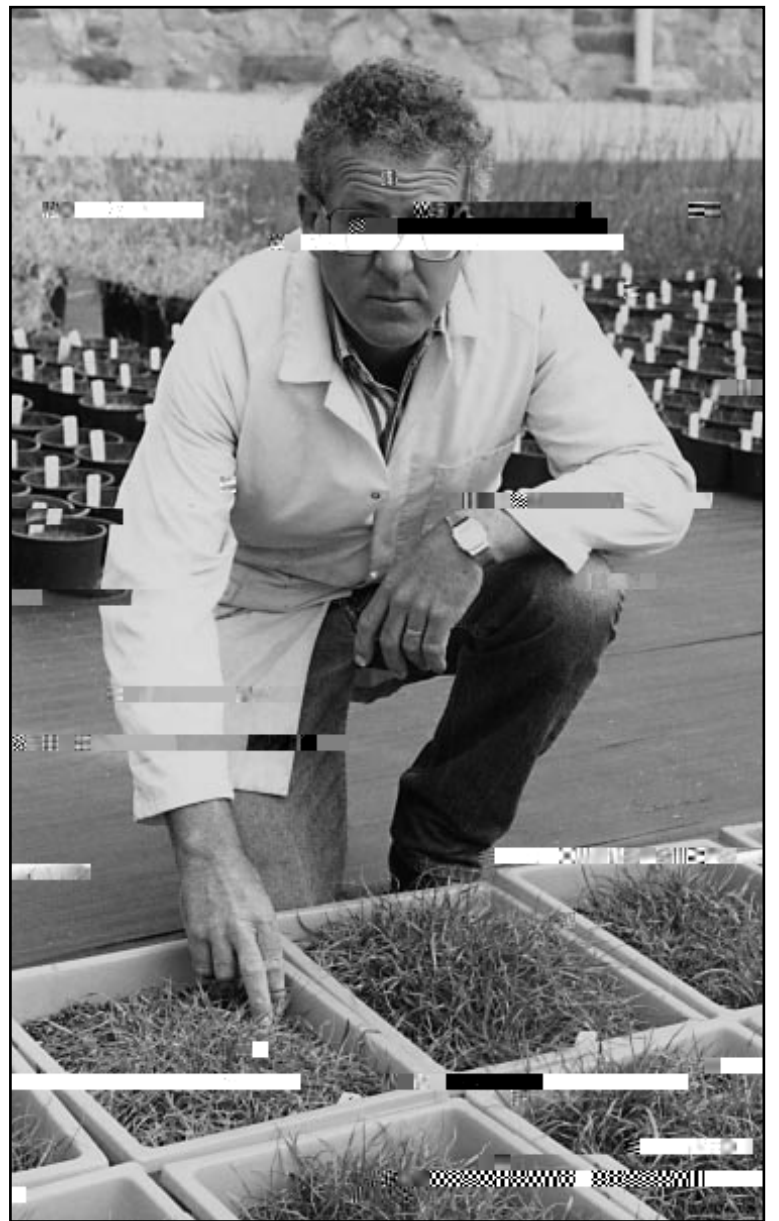
"University is a great experience, and anyone who has an inkling to do it should. The learning, the interaction with people that are involved in research and teaching — it's marvellous. And once you get out of the undergraduate program and undertake a higher degree it becomes a whole different challenge."

Dr Matthews said he was glad his experience was shared by Nick, who was strongly involved with a number of university organisations, including the Students' Association. There is also another uni student in the household — Dr Matthews's daughter, Amelia, is studying journalism with the University of South Australia.

"Two university students is a bit of a worry. Three is even worse," joked Dr Matthews.

"Actually, it's pretty good. After tea everybody goes and switches on their computer and starts to work. It's been a very interesting time for all of us, and we've all enjoyed the experience."

—David Ellis



Dr John Matthews. [File photo, 1993. Photo by Andrew Dunbar]

Tests for methadone alternative

From Page 1

"At the moment we only have one drug available, so if a person is not suited by methadone because their body doesn't react in the normal way, for example, then there's no alternative. If we have buprenorphine then we at least have some alternative to methadone. It gives us a wider choice for treatment."

Dr White said 80 heroin users were needed to take part in the Adelaide trial of buprenorphine, and another 120 were being sought in Sydney.

The initial stage of the randomised study will require participants to visit an Adelaide clinic and take either methadone or buprenorphine over a period of 13 weeks. The effects on each user are recorded, with researchers not knowing until the end of the study which users were taking methadone and which ones were taking buprenorphine.

Dr White said results of that first stage of the trial were expected to be known by the end of this year, with the study continuing over the next two years.

"We hope, although it's something we'll be evaluating with this study, that buprenorphine will prove to be a satisfactory alternative to methadone, and that it will become an option for heroin users," he said.

"It might cost a bit more than methadone to provide, and it'll cost the user more, but compared to the cost of taking heroin, and the cost to the community of heroin use, it'll be worth it."

The study is supported by the South Australian Drug and Alcohol Services Council, the Commonwealth Department of Health, and the drug company that produces buprenorphine, Reckitt & Colman.

Heroin users who would like to take part in the study should phone Warinilla Clinic on (08) 8364 0055 for more information.

—David Ellis

Advertisement

How to get a credit in conference organisation without having to do any study

The Adelaide Convention and Tourism Authority (ACTA) is hosting an educational seminar covering the key considerations of hosting a conference. This seminar is designed specifically to address the needs of the academic market.

We do the work. You get the credit.

The complimentary seminar will present guest speakers from the meetings industry who will provide accurate, up to date and relevant information on a range of topics including —

- securing the event to Adelaide
- winning presentations
- negotiating with a venue
- what to expect from a professional conference organiser (PCO)
- developing a social program.

Meet with industry suppliers at our trade exhibition.

The seminar will be held on Tuesday 27 May 1997 from 4.00 to 6.15pm.

For further information contact Anne-Marie Quinn on ext 33011 or at ACTA on 8212 4794.



ADELAIDE
Convention & Tourism Authority
AUSTRALIA

Annemarie Hoffmann of the University of Stuttgart has just completed a year as a Visiting Scholar at the University of Adelaide, where she has spent her time in the Cataloguing section of the Barr Smith Library. Annemarie, who is

Adelaide's International Spirit



Dr Paul Chan, CEO of Sepang Institute of Technology (S-I-T), the University of Adelaide's twinning partner in Malaysia, and his wife Ms Low Kam Yoke (President/CEO of the HELP Institute) were in Adelaide recently with other family members to watch their son Adam graduate with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Bonython Hall on Thursday 24 April. This year's ceremonies saw the graduation of several students from the first group of S-I-T students to come to Adelaide to complete their degrees, 17 of whom will be attending the University's fourth graduation celebration in Kuala Lumpur on Sunday, 25 May. L to R: Juliet Chan, Mrs Chan, Adam Chan and Dr Paul Chan.

Yang-Fung Li and Corina Ngaire Jolliffe (Bachelor of Health Sciences)



L to R: Medical graduates Fabian Matthews, Chi Kang Gooi, Seong Lin Khaw, Juling Ang, Eng-Siew Koh and Sheryl Sim. Dr Gooi was President of the Overseas Students' Association in 1995. Dr Matthews will be among the 73 Malaysian graduates of the University attending the graduation celebration in Kuala Lumpur on 25 May 1997.



Centre: Paminder Kaur Khaira and family (Bachelor of Dental Surgery)

AVAILABLE: An honest