

UniSA News

June/July 2007

A newspaper of the University of South Australia



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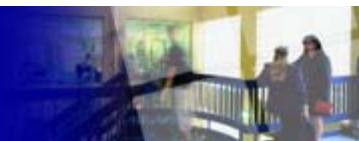


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A fresh eye for the future

by Michèle Nardelli

For UniSA's new Vice Chancellor Professor Peter Høj a new workday pleasure will be returning home to his family most evenings. And the potential to cycle to work once or twice a week rather than having to catch a flight to Canberra is a psychological and physical plus - he likes to keep fit.

The former Australian Research Council (ARC) chief has been a commuter between Adelaide and Canberra for the past two and half years and understands the sharp end of trying to maintain work/life balance.

"Even though my kids are technically adults, it will still be nice to feel a bit more like a regular family again," he said.

Educated at the University of Copenhagen, majoring in biochemistry and chemistry, Prof Høj has a Master of Science degree in biochemistry and genetics and a PhD in plant biochemistry. He arrived in Australia in 1987 and first worked as a lecturer and senior lecturer in biochemistry at La Trobe University before moving to the University of Adelaide and a professorial role in viticultural science and oenology.

Given that background it would be easy to assume his eye will be fixed on research alone – but you'd be wrong.

Prof Høj has a much broader view of the increasingly competitive and complex higher education environment and some pretty firm ideas about what lies ahead.

"One of the key aspects of the current environment is competition – maintaining and further enhancing position and reputation will be vital for UniSA," he said.

"Since I arrived in Adelaide in 1995 I have witnessed from the outside, UniSA's growth from a new university with a clear equity mission, to a vibrant, modern, institution making a difference in the community at many levels.

"There is a real sense of shared vision for what the University can do in the community – for service, teaching, research and for the international engagement that is so much a part of its character."

Prof Høj believes UniSA has the capacity to grow as an institution with the right mix of teaching, learning and research.

"A good university has all those elements in the mix – a great university will find ways to build a vibrant nexus between research, teaching and learning that offers a dynamic environment for students and staff.

"It is about aspiring to quality in what we do, but also about creating an educational environment that attracts the best minds – educators and students – and helps them to flourish.

"I want UniSA to be a brilliant place to work, learn, teach and research in more than the colloquial sense.

"I believe the most inspirational environments are ones where creativity is encouraged, where there is a strong sense of shared commitment to achievement and where optimism prevails."



Prof Høj says improvement at the individual and organisational level is a must for any university committed to success and delivering value.

"Right now we need to embark on a path of further improvement with vigour," he said.

"We need to build an institution at which we can say every staff member is enthusiastic and proud to be employed and at the same time I want to be able to say I'm proud of our people. It is a two-way proposition that will require focus and determination at all levels."

Prof Høj says these are his personal and organisational goals.

"I believe we can look forward to great rewards," he said.

"If we can say collectively, as individuals and as a university that we are making a contribution to Australia as a country, which is among the best educated and most competitive in the world, that will indeed be satisfying."

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From the Chancellery

I am delighted, on behalf of the University staff, students and wider community, to welcome Professor Peter Høj as the next Vice Chancellor and President of the University of South Australia.

Professor Høj, who was chief executive officer of the Australian Research Council (ARC) – the peak funding body for research in Australia – from October 2004 to May 2007, brings a unique mixture of experiences, energy, intellect and entrepreneurial flair to the institution at a time of profound change in the higher education sector. I am delighted to welcome such an outstanding leader.

Professor Høj has been a teaching academic, a professor engaged in high quality research in biochemistry and viticulture, an industry leader in his former role as the managing director of the Australian Wine Research Institute and, as chief executive of the ARC, one of Australia's leading policy makers in the national research scene. It is a powerful and impressive combination.



Educated at the University of Copenhagen, majoring in biochemistry and chemistry, Professor Høj has a Master of Science degree in biochemistry and genetics and a PhD in plant biochemistry. He speaks several languages and has received fellowships from Denmark and Australia for postdoctoral studies in biochemistry.

Since arriving in Australia in 1987 he has worked as a lecturer and senior lecturer in biochemistry at La Trobe University and Professor of Viticultural Science and Professor of Oenology at the University of Adelaide.

In 1992, he was awarded the Boehringer-Mannheim medal by the Australian Society for Biochemistry and Molecular Biology and in 2003 the Centenary Medal for his contribution to research and wine science. He is also a Fellow of the Australian Academy of Technological Sciences and Engineering.

He served as a private member of the Prime Minister's Science Engineering and Innovation Council from 1999 to 2004 and as an ex officio member in 2006-2007. He is a former member of the Australian Institute of Marine Science Council, the Cooperative Research Centres Committee, the National Collaborative Research Infrastructure Strategy Committee, the Industry and Technology Council of South Australia, the Premier's Science and Research Council, and the South Australian Wine Industry Council.

We expect Professor Høj will make a dynamic contribution to the next phase of UniSA's development. He brings a unique understanding of the modern university environment at a critical time in the sector's history.

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Classifieds

For sale

Nintendo Wii, includes 2 games, hardly used. \$350 ono, Phone 0422 350 476.

Holden Astra, one owner since new, ex condition, full service history. \$12,750. Phone 0407181977.

Playstation 2, includes 2 controllers, memory card and 3 games \$150 ono. Phone 0412 102 662

Garden Trimmer, Like new, handy electric garden edger and trimmer \$20. Phone 0412 102 662

Accommodation

Beulah Park, furnished bluestone house for rent Sep 07 – Feb 08. Suitable for visiting academics, comes with 3 adorable cats. \$240/wk. Phone 0402 309 942 or email karen.hughes@unisa.edu.au

Walkerville, 3br furnished townhouse. Available July to Nov 07. Phone 0417821509.

Cudlee Creek, 4br house, Available June to Dec 07. 32 min to Mawson Lakes, 42 min to City. \$225 p.w. Phone Alex (08) 8302 3874.

Mile End, 1br available, part-furnished or unfurnished. Wireless internet access. Weekly rent neg \$130 + expenses + bond. Phone 0409 280 456 or email Wendy.Keynes@postgrads.unisa.edu.au

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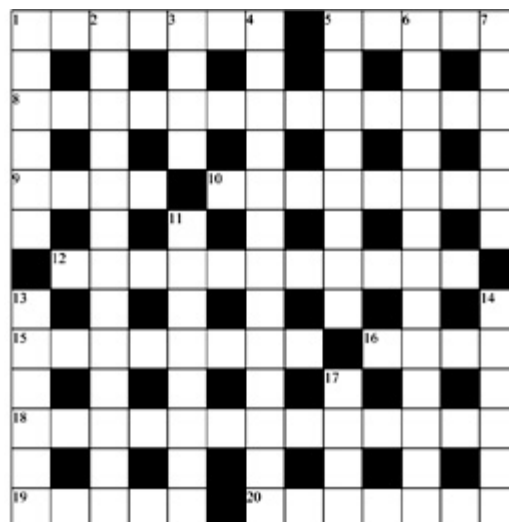
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Colgan's Cryptic Crossword

Across

1. To gain unauthorised access, got cutting tool (7)
5. Let's tour my county towards the west part of Wales! (5)
8. Fish is after insect from Bangladesh, say (7,6)
9. Tilt, without beginning to topple (4)
10. It's hardly suitable for this reptile! (8)
12. Following religious teachings of saint, richly embellished (11)
15. Just released, searched endlessly for courts identity (8)
16. Prohibited nothing to be taken from retired submarine (4)
18. In essence, it is the lady of pleasure who gets new score (13)
19. One going up on flight (5)
20. Upon returning, delinquent's hanging around spot for lively social gathering (5-2)



Down

1. Intimidate legendary figure (6)
2. Checks the aspirations of a flyer? (5,3,5)
3. Drink for benefit (4)
4. Continuously avoiding escapes (7,1,5)
5. Many have difficulty at conversation (8)
6. Shabby male-only slob. They include me, you and him (13)
7. Free to relax (6)
11. For Athenians, the leader of Troy filled a secondary figure in mythology (8)
13. Informer is upset, upset about Brutus, say (6)
14. Does mythical creature roll over bark? (6)
17. Reportedly, an awful sight for sore eyes (4)

Wine to win

For your chance to win a bottle of [Whistler wine](#), fax your completed crossword to (08) 8302 5785 by Friday, July 20. Solutions published on July 23.

Solution

H	A	C	K	S	A	W		C	Y	M	R	U
E		L		A		I		H		O		N
C	R	I	C	K	E	T	M	I	N	N	O	W
T		P		E		H		T		O		I
O	U	S	T		M	O	C	C	A	S	I	N
R		T		M		U		H		Y		D
	C	H	R	I	S	T	I	A	N	L	Y	
K		E		N		A		T		L		B
N	E	W	C	O	M	B	E		T	A	B	U
I		I		T		R		S		B		N
F	U	N	D	A	M	E	N	T	A	L	L	Y
E		G		U		A		Y		E		I
R	I	S	E	R		K	N	E	E	S	U	P

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Our people - Dr Graham Dodd

For as long as I can remember I have been passionate about human movement and play, and it's probably why I pursued a career in health and physical education (PE) and exercise science.

Many early influences – parents, teachers and coaches - enhanced my understandings of the development of identity, personal confidence and self-esteem through the medium of physical activity. This led to my lifelong passion to make and promote learning as a moving experience.



I strongly support the view that our development is a dynamic, interactive process that begins with our genetic endowment and unfolds over time as a result of experiences with the social, spiritual and physical environment unique to each of us. I have always been interested in how human motion specifically contributes to learning, healthy growth, motor development, personal health, wellbeing, and building strong positive individual and group identities.

I am honoured that the Carrick Institute citation "for sustained commitment and innovative leadership in the development and implementation of student-centred programs in human movement and physical education" has acknowledged my commitment to develop courses, programs, teaching and community resources that reflect my passion for, and understanding of, learning through human movement over a career spanning some 40 years to date.

Before joining UniSA in 1990, I was a PE teacher, PE curriculum adviser and writer in the SA Education Department. Then as national coordinator and principal writer, I developed daily PE programs for all primary school grades.

I also co-founded the first Kindergym and Physical Education Week in Australia, and set up the company TriSkills.

My focus on active learning continues at UniSA, having been a program director of the double degree in health and physical education, and the human movement and health studies programs.

Job satisfaction for me is the glow on the faces and enthusiasm that I try to engender in students by helping them to connect with the role of human motion in healthy wholesome human development.

I believe that being interested in, and having an affinity for, students is fundamental to teaching. It is important to enjoy what you do and to make learning relevant and engaging for them.

By getting students involved in movement, they learn better because they use more of their senses that enrich learning.

I live the way I teach, by trying to be active and exercising every day to stay grounded with myself and life.

Dr Graham Dodd is in the School of Health Sciences.

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New leaf

Handbook of Islamic Banking

Hassan, M K and Lewis, M K, (editors)

Edward Elgar Publishing, UK

From its foundations 30 years ago, Islamic banking has grown rapidly to become a distinctive and fast growing segment of the international banking and capital markets. Despite this expansion, Islamic banking still remains poorly understood in many parts of the Muslim world and continues to be a mystery in much of the West. The Handbook of Islamic Banking addresses this gap.

This comprehensive volume, published in April, contains 25 expressly commissioned studies by leading international experts on the topic. Islamic banking offers, as an alternative to conventional interest-based financing methods, a wide variety of religiously-acceptable financial instruments and investments based on profit-and-loss sharing arrangements.

These techniques are explored in detail, along with other subjects such as the system of religious governance, Islamic bonds (sukuks), Islamic project finance, economic development and globalisation.

Professor Mervyn Lewis is Professor of Banking and Finance in UniSA's School of Commerce and the book's co-editor.

For more information visit: [Edward Elgar Publishing, UK](#)

Russell S Ellis – Pioneer Modernist Architect

Bird, L

UniSA Architecture Museum Monograph Series, Adelaide

Louise Bird, the inaugural recipient of the SA Built Heritage Research Fellowship at UniSA's Architecture Museum, focused her research on the domestic architecture of Adelaide-based architect Russell Ellis (1912-1988).

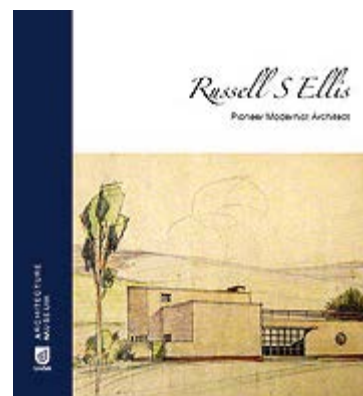
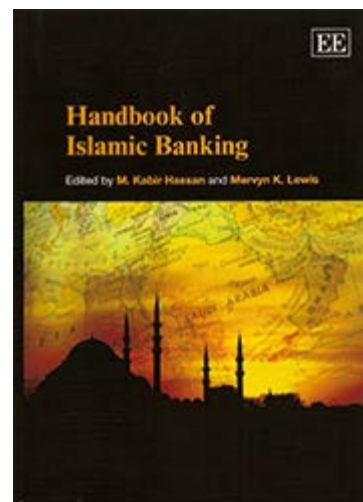
This book draws from the three-volume report on her investigations. The publication is an addition to the literature on modernism in South Australia and profiles Ellis' distinctive contribution to the introduction and promotion of the modernist idiom in this State.

Russell S Ellis - Pioneer Modernist Architect is the first in the Architecture Museum Monograph Series, which will include publications derived from the Department for Environment and Heritage's SA Built Heritage Research Fellowship program.

Copies of the publication are available from the Architecture Museum (open Mondays and Tuesdays, 9am to 5pm), or via the order form available on the [museum's website](#).

For more information visit: [UniSA's Architecture Museum](#)

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In brief

New moves at the top

Dr Anna Ciccarelli has had her position as Executive Director of International and Development elevated to Pro Vice Chancellor. The new title acknowledges Dr Ciccarelli's achievement, dedication and significant work in the international and development area, and her positive standing both nationally and internationally for her role in raising the international profile of UniSA. At the same time former Director of the Institute for Telecommunications Research Professor Andrew Parfitt has been appointed Pro Vice Chancellor for the Division of Information Technology, Engineering and the Environment. Prof Parfitt joined UniSA in 2004 and has been an active member of Research Policy Committee and Academic Board. He chairs both the Cooperative Research Centres Engagement Group and the e-Research Implementation Group. In 2006 he acted as Head of the School of Electrical and Information Engineering, and led the strategic planning that resulted in the formation of the new Defence and Systems Institute and a closer cooperation between electrical and electronic engineering related disciplines. He will take up his new role in August 2007.

Successful links

UniSA won strong support for industry linked research that will contribute to domestic energy savings and more efficient wine production, as part of a package of Australian Research Council (ARC) funding announced in May. The total allocation of Linkage grant funding for the seven successful projects is almost \$1.8 million from the ARC, matched by almost \$2.5 million from industry. UniSA was successful in winning support for 58 per cent of its research applications under the Linkage grants scheme. Environmental projects include the development of more cost efficient airconditioning products and systems, and an investigation into the potential of high powered ultrasound technology in the disinfection and cleaning of wine barrels and improving and enhancing wine fermentation and the extraction of flavours and colours. Projects in the areas of nutritional physiology, work and life balance, industrial relations, forensic IT, and particles research were also successful. More information about the grants is available at the [ARC website](#)

West end education partners

The Minister for Education and Children's Services, Dr Jane Lomax-Smith and UniSA's Emeritus Professor Denise Bradley AO signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) last month designed to build cooperation and capacity in education in the west end of the city. The MOU underpins the development of a university foundation program for international high school students studying at Adelaide High in 2008 and will see the 100-year-old public school expand its teaching spaces into the City West precinct. Dr Lomax-Smith said the collaboration would expand the role of SA's oldest high school and the city's reputation as a high quality, safe, education destination for international students. Principal at Adelaide High, Stephen Dowdy said working in partnership with UniSA to create a collaborative learning community would support the State's Strategic Plan and provide a new opportunity to pilot a framework for students to access university courses as part of their senior secondary education.



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Models for modern manufacturing

by Vincent Ciccarello

While the international community is coming to grips with the impact of climate change on the environment, those economies that also anticipate its effects on manufacturing, will have a competitive advantage.

Switching SA manufacturers on to this concept is one of main themes of the new Mawson Institute for Advanced Manufacturing, according to Institute Director Professor Robert Short.

"One of the opportunities for SA manufacturing is to recognise that global manufacturing is changing in response to the fact that there is now an accepted awareness that the climate is being affected by human activity," Prof Short said.

The Mawson Institute also aims to tackle the implications for manufacturing of two other societal challenges – a population that is not only ageing, but ageing in an unhealthy way.

"The incidence of obesity and diabetes, for example, have escalated over the past 20 years," he said. "And there are all kinds of problems associated with these conditions: cardiovascular disease, blindness, organ failure.

"An ageing and unhealthy population presents a challenge for society and a challenge for manufacturing."

Prof Short, who comes to UniSA after 18 years at the University of Sheffield, most recently as Chair of Material and Biomaterial Chemistry in the Department of Engineering, said the Mawson Institute has been created at a time when the nature of manufacturing is changing globally.

"There are some very significant challenges for any regional country that is a traditional manufacturer with a developed economy. First, wages in Australia, as they are in Europe or the US, are higher than in the developing world. Second, a lot of profit drive is through cost reduction and off-shoring is a significant way to reduce costs."

While SA manufacturing – which relies on a handful of large companies and their suppliers – may be exposed to these challenges, Prof Short believes it also has opportunities to respond by creating products with high added value that make use of new platform technologies.

"The SA Government has put a significant amount of money behind the Mawson Institute and they have a number of requirements – to create new jobs, to create export opportunities, and I think there would be an element also of safeguarding existing manufacturing jobs to offer the potential for manufacturers in SA to diversify their current product offerings," he said.

"Growth and jobs are going to come through high added value products and a high value-added product pipeline – by starting small companies, or by taking small companies and nurturing them until they can each take on a number of new employees."

Prof Short has a special interest in the commercialisation of technology and was responsible for the spin-out of two technology companies in the UK: CellTran and Plasso Technologies.



"CellTran, a vehicle for developing a bandage that carries cells to a wound bed, merged with Xcellentis, a division of Belgian multi-national Innogenetics. It employs just over 20 people and is at the exciting stage of significant ramp up in turnover and profitability. Its products are used in the United Kingdom, there are distribution deals for other markets, and clinics are being established associated with the technology.

"Plaso Technologies, which develops tools for life science research, was created purely through venture capital and after four years of significant internal growth was sold last month to US-based BD Biosciences," Prof Short said.

The Mawson Institute will be a launch pad for similar spin offs through its own research and through links with existing UniSA research activity.

"There's a requirement for the Mawson Institute to create a new body of high quality, RQF-returnable research. I see that to satisfy this, the Mawson Institute has to concentrate on basic research and applied original research, and it has to develop fundamental understandings behind platform technologies," Prof Short said.

"There is the real potential here for the Mawson Institute to link together activities of the Advanced Computing Research Centre, the Centre for Advanced Manufacturing Research and the Ian Wark Research Institute."

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A new focus for the Arts Degree

by Michèle Nardelli

The general arts degree sometimes comes in for tough criticism, and it's true that for some students undertaking Australian Studies, Indigenous Studies or a general BA, their goal is often more about studying at uni than where they might work after graduation.

In an effort to bring BA degree skills into sharp focus for students, Dr Tangi Steen and Syd Sparrow, in conjunction with UniSA's Careers Services, have developed a special one semester course to help students to refine career goals and "sell" their skills effectively in the employment market.



The Australian Workplace: Policies and Demands course covers work ethics and organisational work structure, the history of Australian workplace policy development, implementation and evaluation, the global workplace, and managing cultural diversity. Four weeks of the course are dedicated to topics such as making the right career decision, searching for a job, preparing for interviews, and assessing and presenting students' skills in a framework that matches workplace requirements.

As part of the innovative approach in developing the course, Career Services advisor Tony McAvaney is a key contributor, giving students the benefit of practical and current expertise in the job market.

According to the David Unaipon College's Teaching and Learning Portfolio Leader, Dr Jenny Baker, the course is especially important to the College.

"We are helping our students to identify where their skills can be applied," Dr Baker said.

"As part of this course, we have also looked at UniSA's important graduate qualities and modified them to include a specific Indigenous perspective as something students can measure their learning outcomes against.

"We hope to give arts graduates from the College and students engaged in generalist degrees from other schools, a set of skills that will help them to work with Aboriginal communities as well as others."

For business student Antonia Aristomenopoulis, who has taken on the course as a Broadening Undergraduate Education course, the study has been invaluable.

"It has really helped me clarify my career goals and to nail down how my education has real application in the working world," she said. "The course offers a relaxed environment but an invaluable workplace perspective. I really feel more focused and I have a more realistic understanding of how I can apply my expertise."

The course is open to third-year students at the College but may be introduced as a second-year option depending on course evaluation feedback.

Course coordinator Dr Steen says she intends to evaluate the course and make it available to more students across the University as an important part of preparing graduates for the knowledge and skills demands of the modern work environment.

"We are hoping that this course will go a long way to improving employment outcomes for graduates of arts and similar generalist degree programs, by giving them confidence in their skills and how they can be applied," Dr Steen said.

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Iron man on top of the world

Since deciding to compete in a half-triathlon in 2004, Facilities Management Unit asset planner Nathan Warburton has come a long way. Or should that be he has run, swum and ridden a long way?

If qualifying for the legendary Hawaii Ironman competition is your benchmark, then the answer is a resounding yes.

In April at Pt Macquarie, in his third full-length triathlon – which comprises a 3.8km swim, 180km bike ride and 42km run – Warburton finished an impressive 93rd from a field of some 1600 in just under 10 hours. The finish earned him a place at Hawaii's Kona this October.

"I changed my diet and worked out intensively in a gym over winter for that race," he said. "It must have worked."

The nine before and after work training sessions every week, with the fortnightly competitive State series triathlons wouldn't have hurt either.

"Most triathletes dream of Kona," Warburton said. "In Australia we normally swim in a wetsuit but we won't in the warmer waters of Hawaii. The bike ride through lava fields is pretty treacherous. And, during the run, the humidity and heat will be the biggest challenges."

Which begs the question: why put yourself through it?

"You can't beat the feeling of getting to the finish line. Over the last 500m, hundreds of people are urging you on. That feeling, and the very healthy lifestyle, are great motivation."

But for all the physical punishment of training and race day, Warburton said the most physically demanding thing he has ever done was trekking Nepal's 6476m Mera Peak last April. After taking eight days to get to the base camp at 5000m, altitude sickness forced Warburton to abandon the trek.

"I was pretty sick from the effects. The only way to describe it is extreme lethargy," he said.

Warburton was airlifted by helicopter back to Kathmandu where he quickly got well enough to be able to join two safaris.

"They were a highlight of the trip. Although being chased up a tree by a rhinoceros during the walking safari was frightening."

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Going with the flow

by Vincent Ciccarello

It didn't take visiting Fulbright scholar Sara Hughes long to sum up the taste of Adelaide water.

"It's gross!" she said.

You'd expect someone born and bred on the shores of Lake Michigan ("we have tons of water") to be less than impressed by the quality of our drinking water. But when it comes to how Australia manages its precious water resources, Hughes couldn't be more complimentary.

"Australia is pretty advanced in water trading and water markets," she said. "When you read the literature, it still sounds like an emerging concept people are thinking about. Australia already has it in place."

Hughes, a PhD student from the University of California, Santa Barbara, is here until March 2008 to study the social, political and economic debates surrounding water policy in Australia and then compare them with those in the US.

"I'm interested in how we go about securing urban water supplies, the institutional mechanisms for that, and the idea of environmental water allocation," she said. "Also, I'd really like to compare that with the social discourses that are happening – the way it's talked about in newspapers and in other kinds of public forums. How do people talk about urban water supply – is it about conservation, is it about finding new supplies, is it about equity, is it about how expensive it is?"

Hughes is working alongside the Director of the Centre for Comparative Water Policies and Laws, Professor Jennifer McKay, looking at how this social discourse affects water policy and its implementation.

"I want to do that broadly for the State, and then to look specifically at the Wellington weir debate. The major argument for the weir is to secure the supply for Adelaide, but the loser is environmental flows. I'm really curious about the institutional economics surrounding that decision and also the discourses it has evoked among different groups."

Hughes said there were parallels in northern California where a series of weirs and levees manipulated water in the San Francisco Delta which supplies more than 40 per cent of the state's water, but was suffering from negative environmental effects.

"They've gotten to the point where some fish are endangered and so they've implemented an environmental water allocation requirement," she said, adding that water management is not just about dealing with water scarcity.

Her interest in water policy was sparked by a dispute in her home state of Michigan, where the impact of a new bottled water plant on streams and groundwater ended in a bitter court battle.

"Groundwater, in particular, tends not to be very well monitored – how much we have, where it is and who's using it – it's sort of the last thing to get regulated," Hughes said.



She refers to other parallels between Australia and the US, citing the similarity between the Colorado River Compact, a 1922 agreement between seven US states to oversee water allocation, and the Murray Darling Basin Commission. And while water will become an important global issue, Hughes believes water sharing agreements like these may serve a bigger geopolitical purpose.

"Projects on sustainable water technologies and the relationship between exporting and importing countries relates to so many other issues," she said. "As people work out how to share water, such as with the Danube or the Nile, which run through a number of countries, it can be a source of peacemaking and negotiation. Water can be a focal point for a lot of different kinds of political, technological and environmental advancements."

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New options for Indigenous workers

UniSA hopes to welcome 12 new Indigenous staff members over the next 15 months as part of a memorandum of understanding with the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations (DEWR).

UniSA will participate in DEWR's Corporate Leaders for Indigenous Employment project and the Structured Training and Employment project (STEP). The goal is to employ one apprentice, six professional and/or academic staff and five trainees.

The partnership with DEWR will strengthen employment and career development opportunities for Indigenous Australians at UniSA.



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Acting and the academy

by Vincent Ciccarello

Bringing to life an historical local figure, one who left a significant legacy to the nation and whose relatives are still living, is not the kind of thing one leaves to chance.

And so in preparing to play the role of Charles Todd in the ABC documentary, *A Wire through the Heart*, Rob MacPherson sat in the SA State Library for days on end, poring over historic letters, speeches, journals and other documents.

Todd was the pioneering engineer who, with explorer John McDouall Stuart, built the overland telegraph from Adelaide to Darwin in the 1880s, connecting Australia to the world. The Sir Charles Todd building at the Mawson Lakes campus was named in his honour.



"Here's a real human being, whose personality is well-known and documented throughout Adelaide. There are still living relatives of his here. Now, you can't just 'wing it' when you play Sir Charles Todd," MacPherson, a lecturer in drama, communication and media in the School of Communication, said.

As for his professional acting commitments, this year will be especially busy for MacPherson. In addition to *A Wire through the Heart*, he directed the fight scene in *Hamlet* for State Theatre Company. He also plays roles in their productions of Woody Allen's *Central Park West*, Caryl Churchill's *Hot Fudge* and Tom Stoppard's *The Real Thing*.

He has also recently embarked on a PhD in stage combat, a specialty he developed through his involvement in the sport of fencing at university in the US.

"It's a field that is craftsman-like but not scholarly. There hasn't been scholarly rigour applied much to the history, mechanics and phenomenology of staged violence," he said.

MacPherson graduated with majors in English and Philosophy and undertook formal acting studies at London's Royal Academy of Dramatic Art.

"I've been bouncing back and forth between acting and the academy all my life," he said. "I've either been teaching it or doing it. I've taught writing, communication, public speaking, drama courses – rhetoric in all its forms is kind of my area.

"I'd hate to think of myself as someone who could only do drama, because it really limits you. And it limits itself, really, because there is a lot about dramatic training that applies to lots of other fields.

"And life's been far too rich and interesting to limit myself to just waiting by the phone for the next gig."

Acting is nothing if not unpredictable. In the space of a few days this month, MacPherson auditioned in Sydney for Steven Spielberg's World War II miniseries, *The Pacific Wars*, and did a voice-over as a French-speaking parrot for a Montreal bank machine.

"Sometimes it's hard not to have an existential crisis," he laughed.

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Bullying behind the screens

by Michèle Nardelli

UniSA researchers are about to embark on a bullying research project that will employ some of the same technologies modern bullies are using to harass their victims.

With funding support from the Federal Government, Dr Barbara Spears from UniSA's School of Education will be working with a team of UniSA and Flinders University colleagues to complete an innovative podcasting project that will deliver real stories about bullying to the Internet environment.

The \$70,000 project feeds into a national bullying survey being undertaken by researchers at Edith Cowan University.

"The growing role of the Internet in mediating bullying behaviours is of real concern," Dr Spears said.

"The kind of bullying we are looking at is covert and essentially social or relational. It can be the nasty notes or text messages, the social exclusion of an individual, the criticism and lack of acceptance by the 'in groups'. It is this behind-the-scenes bullying that has now graduated to a behind-the-screens presence through the Internet.

"What we are finding is that sites like MySpace and Facebook, as well as chat rooms and blogs are being used as platforms for bullying and it can get pretty nasty. In some instances whole 'hate sites' have been constructed as a means of getting at the victim.

"The transition of bullying into the cyberworld creates a kind of parallel universe for both the victims and perpetrators where the behaviours can go undetected by others."

Dr Spears said the project will bring bullying scenarios to light by recording the experiences of real people – students who have been bullied, teachers trying to deal with issues, and parents and counsellors.

"The aim then is to collate an online storybook, where their stories can be podcast by anyone wanting better insights into the impacts of bullying," she said.

"As researchers we will undertake a narrative analysis of the stories to develop a more comprehensive understanding of covert bullying."

The project is being carried out with strong support and engagement from the Coalition to Decrease Bullying Harassment and Violence in SA schools, a body established to look at the issues across the whole education sector.

Initial stories have been gathered from 10 schools in South Australia, half of which were Catholic or independent schools.

Students will then train others in recording stories digitally, and gather more stories, almost as roving reporters. The stories will be assessed by an expert reference group and many of them will be made available for the podcasting project, which will be completed later this year.

"Cyberspace is opening up as a very real and expanding environment for covert bullying," Dr Spears



said.

"We suspect what we know about it so far is really just the tip of the iceberg. We need to learn more about the problem. We need to make sure that information is available to others and trying to do that where the action is, in the cyber-environment, is probably a good start."

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