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Universities an Australian success story - but more is needed

A campaign to alert all political parties to the urgent need for taking Australian universities into the future was outlined by Universities Australia Chair, Professor Glyn Davis AC, who is Vice-Chancellor of The University of Melbourne, speaking at the National Press Club recently

He began by pointing out, "In 1970, when Julia Gillard was in primary school and Tony Abbott starting his secondary education, just 3 per cent of adult Australians held a university degree."

He went on: Now we are tracking toward a national target of 40 per cent, with more than a million and a quarter people enrolled in Australian universities this year, on their way to qualifications. In just two generations, going to university has become a familiar part of life's journey. Australians hope to be educated and affluent, moving beyond the school leaving certificate to embrace the lecture and the tutorial, the attitudes and mores of a secure middle class.

Australians understand our national prosperity is more than resources. It requires new skills made possible through higher education. This profound change has encouraged a new Australian outlook. As research released by Universities Australia reveals, an astonishing 88 percent of Australians will encourage their children, and young people they know, to attend university.

88 per cent!

That is an historic journey from the tiny numbers of 1970. For the first time, access to a university education has become the aspiration of an overwhelming majority of Australian families. They choose wisely. As every parent knows, a solid education in trade skills, or a good university degree, is the pathway to economic security.

More than half the jobs created in the Australian economy this year will require a university qualification. High-skilled jobs are growing 1.6 times faster than low-skilled jobs. Graduate incomes, on average, are twice those of school leavers. Working class or middle, country or city, Indigenous or non-Indigenous – it doesn't matter. Going to university is no longer an elite concern, but a plan for the future.

This shift in public outlook is confirmed by research commissioned by Universities Australia. More than 90 per cent of individuals and businesses told researchers that universities make an important contribution to Australian society. A similar proportion believes a well-funded university system is critical to Australia's economy and national growth. Most agree it is important for Australia to increase the proportion of university graduates over the next 10 years. And 90 per cent of businesses and the public agree that research is an essential part of what a university does.

Australians value the advancement of knowledge, even when the pay-off is long-term. They know the high standards we enjoy in medicine, in engineering, in cultural achievement, are made possible by research from the best minds in the nation. Australians see universities as particularly well placed to conduct research, given their independence from business and government. And they see the benefits of higher education up close, especially in regional Australia. University campuses provide contracts for small business, jobs, health services, sporting facilities, art galleries, theatre and the excitement of a community with many young people, lively, engaged, and irreverent.

In short, the nation has turned an important corner. Our universities are now viewed as crucial to our country's future, and vital to the economic prospects of most families. This makes now the right time to focus attention on the future of our university system.

A Smarter Australia

At the start of this election year, Universities Australia has launched a detailed policy statement, *A Smarter Australia*, and announces a campaign to promote universities in building our shared prosperity. Our policy advice is addressed to the next government of Australia, regardless of party. It proposes a partnership through a specific and detailed set of proposals – some to be implemented by universities, others in the hands of the Commonwealth.

This is a call for political leaders to recognise the asset for this nation in the 37 public and two private universities represented by Universities Australia. We aim to make higher education core to the national vision for our economic future. Through the ideas outlined in *A Smarter Australia*, an already strong university system can become truly great.

A Smarter Australia advocates:

- continued growth in Australians accessing higher education by maintaining the demand-driven system;
- supporting the global engagement through expanding the export of international education;
- sustaining Australia's research effort through support for research infrastructure, and an expanded research workforce;

- increasing investment in teaching over the next five years; and
- reducing the regulatory burden on universities.

Universities and prosperity

The arguments for greater investment and more supportive policies for our universities are popular and compelling. The reason is simple: our nation values equality of opportunity and rewards hard work. Universities are the key to maintaining an equitable and vibrant society in the knowledge age. Other countries know this already. Consider the substantial investments in universities in a number of Gulf States made rich from oil. Qatar, which boasts the highest GDP per capita in the world, is pouring billions into its university system.

To quote Sheikh Abdulla bin Ali Al-Thani, a member of Qatar's ruling family and a former university professor: ... the blessing of the oil and gas won't last forever – so focusing on something sustainable is more important. Having been blessed with the wealth, there is no better way of using it than education.

It won't last forever, and there is no better way of using it than education. What other nation, made rich from natural resources, might benefit from such wisdom? This same approach is being pursued with vigour by many of our Asian neighbours, as they build world-class universities and make unprecedented investments in research. We can and must do likewise.

Australia – a talent for higher education

Fortunately, we start with a major advantage: Australians have a talent for higher education. The most recent global survey of national higher education systems ranks Australia number eighth in the world. This is a better performance than Australia achieved at the London Olympics, where we came tenth. There are just nine Australian companies listed in the Fortune Global 500, but there are 19 Australian universities in the world's top 500, five of these in the top 100.

There are so many reasons to invest in universities: they are major employers, often the largest in Australia's regions. They promote innovation and develop social capital. They build capabilities in almost every sphere of national achievement. And higher education is a powerful instrument of soft diplomacy.

To date, the only political debate about education is about schools. That's fine. There is no more important issue than the quality of school education. With speculation the May budget will implement recommendations from the Gonski Review, an important step seems in prospect. An important first step: Ensuring Australian children are well educated in their 13 years of schooling is essential. But waiting for them on graduation must be a quality university system. Their future requires education that carries students seamlessly from school to trades, vocation and higher education. This is the challenge for government and universities: to achieve the best possible university system; to work together to make Australia an even smarter and more prosperous nation, wealthier in every sense.

A Smarter Australia sets out specific initiatives by universities and government, toward four goals: participation, global engagement, research and innovation, sustainable investment and better regulation.

Participation and access

We start with access. Every qualified Australian should have the chance to go to university. Not all will accept the challenge, but high levels of participation in universities are crucial for national success. We have lots of smart people. Their talents are part of our natural resources. The bigger the pool we draw from, the more prosperous everyone will be. That's why we must find university places for qualified students regardless of social background, location or physical circumstance.

Universities Australia strongly supports the national target to lift university participation among students from low socioeconomic backgrounds to at least 20 per cent of enrolments. We must lift participation among students from regional and remote Australia. And we all know Indigenous Australians should be represented in universities in at least the same proportions as other Australians. All these goals are in our grasp. On some campuses, more than half the students already come from a low socioeconomic background. And innovation will expand opportunity. Think of Charles Darwin University, reaching out to students through online education and outreach teachers, deploying satellite-connected mobile classrooms to take education and training to far reaches of the Northern Territory.

To ensure campus reflects the whole of our society, universities will work with government to achieve national participation goals and broaden pathways into university study. Much of the necessary machinery is already in place. The demand-driven system provides places for all Australians, and income-contingent loans ensure cost is no barrier to taking up the opportunity. Yet more can be done, including improved links between vocational education and university study, targeted income support, and better student housing.

A globally engaged university sector

Our second goal is a globally engaged university sector. Australian universities are among the most successful in the world at educating international students. International education has replaced tourism as Australia's biggest source of service exports. International students sustain our universities, create tens of thousands of jobs, and share knowledge across the world. Educating so many of our neighbours is Australia's most significant contribution so far to the Asian century. Australian universities are global and entrepreneurial. More than 20 Australian public institutions have courses or campuses in Asia. RMIT alone educates 6,500 students every year in Vietnam. More than 5,000 people study at Curtin University in Singapore and Malaysia. Monash University hosts campuses in Asia, Europe, India and South Africa. This is a sector of global significance.

Australian universities have now educated two and half million international graduates. In doing so, we create a vast network of alumni connecting Australia with the region. There are champions for Australia in every Asian city and beyond. The Asian Century is the University Century. We can build further on this success. By adopting the five year strategy recommended by Michael Chaney and now released, we can more than double international student numbers to more than 700,000 a year by 2030. Our present \$14.76 billion a year education export industry will grow even larger, bringing benefits to every Australian. This ambitious plan requires Australia to maintain a reputation for quality education, with an approach that welcomes international students through thoughtful policies on visas, access to work, safe and affordable accommodation, health care and transport. Get this right, and university graduates throughout the region will speak firsthand about Australia as a friend.

A powerful research and innovation system

The third goal of *A Smarter Australia* is a powerful research and innovation system. Our universities are central to the national innovation effort, collaborating closely with industry, government and the community. Over the next decade, Australia should be recognised as a leader in the OECD world for the creation and practical application of knowledge. This requires outstanding fundamental research and strengthened capacity for research training. We have a way to go. Australians do great research, producing breakthroughs that find quick application in vital fields such as medicine and public policy. But national investment in research remains modest, and industry take-up of research lags at the bottom of OECD measures. Only 3.1 per cent of innovating Australian businesses source their ideas or information from a higher education institution.

Thought is needed on both sides, because great things happen when researchers and industry work together. Think of the bionic ear, which has improved the lives of people around the world. What began as a research project led by Professor Graeme Clark at the University of Melbourne eventually gave rise to Cochlear, a global research-based company with an annual turn-over approaching \$800 million, and impressive new facilities at Macquarie University.

Universities across the country are working hard to improve enterprise links. **The University of Wollongong's** Innovation Campus co-locates commercial and research organisations to promote an exchange of ideas. **The University of Sunshine Coast's** Innovation Centre has helped entrepreneurs raise \$26 million in capital for more than 90 local businesses. But we need a national research infrastructure program, an expanded research workforce and long-term commitments to the Australian Research Council and the National Health and Medical Research Council. These ambitions are detailed in *A Smarter Australia*.

Investment and regulation

The fourth and closing goal of the Universities Australia policy statement is public investment and smarter regulation. Universities Australia sees substantial scope for reform in higher education to provide universities with autonomy to innovate, lift efficiency, cut costs, and improve quality. Our universities are already among the world's most efficient, ranked in the top five by the OECD for teaching and research. They outpace productivity growth in most other sectors of the Australian economy. Australian universities are markedly entrepreneurial, whether going off-shore or exploring the potential of online technology.

We have long-established but innovative distance courses from institutions such as **Deakin** and the **University of New England**. More universities are using web-based delivery to expand access. In the past year, for example, Professor Chris Mackie and his team at **La Trobe University** have welcomed almost 200,000 students from around the globe to subjects on Ancient Greece and Ancient Rome delivered through iTunes U.

Universities are also looking beyond traditional public funding. Australian universities lead the world in attracting international students, who support the finances of every institution. And philanthropy is an aspiration, greatly encouraged by recent generous donations to the **University of Sydney** and the **Australian National University**. *A Smarter Australia* advocates matched funding programs and other proven incentives to unlock further philanthropy. But the Commonwealth government must play a direct role through funding and regulatory reform. *A Smarter Australia* seeks to maintain indexation for funding per student, and a timetable to address funding shortfalls identified by recent external reviews.

Let us be clear – there has been a notable and welcome increase in public funding over recent years. Schemes such as the Education Investment Fund are without recent precedent in Australia. They have supported the construction of superb new facilities on campuses across the nation. And despite cuts at the end of 2012, overall public investment in research has improved markedly over the past five years, to the benefit of national innovation, but spending on teaching remains low. Twice in the last five years government-appointed review panels have identified specific shortfalls in funding for university teaching. In terms of GDP, Australia now ranks just 25th out of 29 advanced economies for public investment in higher education. Better-funded institutions in our region are pressing hard. Now is the right time to act.

Recognising difficult financial times, *A Smarter Australia* proposes an incremental response to the funding shortfall, with indexed base funding to increase by 2.5 per cent annually over the next five years. This would draw Australia closer to OECD averages for public investment, and address deficiencies identified by both the Bradley and Lomax-Smith reviews. *A Smarter Australia* sets out a blueprint for investment and regulatory reform, but acknowledges the technical complexities involved. These will be addressed during the year by a series of policy papers from Universities Australia.

Pre-election campaign

So four vital policy goals – participation, global engagement, research, and investment with smart regulation – provide the way forward. We hope the people of Australia will embrace these ambitions. Our research confirms that Australians are keen to know more about universities, and to ensure places on campus for their children. To quote the newly fashionable Abraham Lincoln, “With public sentiment, nothing can fail. Without it, nothing can succeed.”

So **Universities Australia** announces a \$5 million national campaign to promote policy reform and encourage wider awareness of higher education. The campaign is funded entirely from dividends earned by a company owned by Australian universities. Let me emphasise, not one cent of student fees or Commonwealth grant money will be spent on this campaign. We will engage Australians in a conversation about how universities can contribute to a more prosperous and intellectually vibrant Australia.

Australia boasts one of the best and most accessible higher education systems in the world. We do great research. We earn billions for the nation in export dollars. Around the region and the world, Australia is seen as a source of knowledge, a country that takes its place among the great education centres. Our campaign will share these stories. But Universities Australia is not a political organisation. We support no party. When the writs are issued, the campaign will stop. Our job is to advocate ideas as political parties prepare policies for the 2013 election. We want support for investment in universities to be bipartisan wisdom.

Conclusion

In the 2010 election campaign higher education was all but overlooked. Liberals, Labor and the Greens alike issued brief policy statements about higher education just days before the poll, long after the horse race overwhelmed any discussion of ideas. This was desultory and disappointing. We are determined 2013 will be different.

The future of Australia’s universities – and the hopes of that 88 percent of Australian families who want their children to have a chance for university education – demand more considered debate. The electorate should know, long before polling day, where every party stands. Through *A Smarter Australia*, the members of Universities Australia make clear our

aspirations. And we have shared this vision with our communities. Vice-chancellors across the nation have sent emails launching the campaign to the 110,000 people who work in the sector, to the 1.25 million local and international students who study at an Australian university, and to the many millions more alumni who remain proud members of their university community. No matter where they live – in the suburbs or the city, remote communities or right near campus – young Australians look to the political leaders of this nation to ensure a tertiary education is available to everyone. It is a responsibility everyone in this National Press Club must share.

A Smarter Australia – a goal and a plan, released to spark a national conversation. Since 1970 this nation has undertaken a remarkable journey. Children in school then are now our national leaders. They know, first hand, that university education can contribute powerfully to the prosperity and wellbeing of the Australian people.

So do you. Be part of the policy argument. Help spread the message – in a world where resources run out, there is no smarter investment in the future than a great university system for Australia.

Two publications

A Smarter Australia: Policy Advice for an Incoming Government 2013-2016
and

An Agenda for Australian Higher Education

Which contains Universities Australia's Vision, Policy context, and details of:

1. Increase Australians' university participation
2. Develop Australia's globally engaged university sector
3. A powerful research and innovation system that drives economic and social progress
4. Efficiency, investment and regulation and
5. An appendix: Development and consultation process as well as copious tables and statistics.

For more information about both publications access www.universitiesaustralia.edu.au

Current Affairs

Got a computer price problem? Now's your chance

The House Committee on Infrastructure and Communications has summoned the following organisations to appear before the Committee at Parliament House, Canberra, on March 22 at 9.30am as part of its inquiry into IT Pricing:

- Apple
- Microsoft
- Adobe

The Committee is looking at the impacts of prices charged to Australian consumers for IT products – Australian consumers often pay much higher prices for hardware and software than people in other countries. The Committee has been examining claims made by organisations such as CHOICE, and the Australian Communications Consumer Action Network.

A full program is on the committee's website (at www.aph.gov.au/itpricing).

For inquiry information: including the terms of reference and submissions, go to: www.apph.gov.au/itpricing, or contact the secretariat on (02) 6277 2352.

Referendum recommended

The final report of the Joint Select Committee on Constitutional Recognition of Local Government was presented on March 7 in Canberra. The Committee has recommended that the Australian people be asked to vote on a referendum question on September 14, 2013, the day of the federal election.

The Committee's recommendation follows from its major finding, that:

- there is a strong case for recognition;
- lessons from the history of referenda support a 2013 referendum;
- the prospects for success are good, due to existing bipartisan support at the federal level and the readiness of the Australian Local Government Association (ALGA) and local governments to campaign in support of change;
- the prospects for success will rely on the strong commitment and campaigning by ALGA and its member bodies; and
- the prospects for success will be greatly improved by the support of state governments.

If a referendum is held, Australians would be able to exercise their right to amend the Australian Constitution. The proposed amendment would guarantee the ability of the Commonwealth Government to continue to directly fund essential community infrastructure, such as building and upgrading regional roads, through programs like *Roads to Recovery*.

"Local government bodies in the 21st century take responsibility for much more than 'roads, rates and rubbish' and local communities rely on this high level of service being maintained," said Committee Chair Michelle Rowland MP.

"The Committee has carefully considered the difficult question of 'the likelihood of success' of a proposed referendum, and the Committee's major finding reflects the evidence that we received during the inquiry. We have found that the referendum has a good prospect of success, and we note that the support of state governments would greatly improve that prospect," Ms Rowland said. "Based on this finding, the Committee believes that this referendum should go ahead in 2013."

The Committee found that there is strong support for this change from all sides of politics at the federal level; from constitutional experts; peak bodies such as the ALGA; local government bodies and from several state governments. The Minister for Regional Australia, Regional Development and Local Government has commenced negotiations to secure the support of the majority of state and territory governments for the referendum.

A national civics education program, created under the guidance of a panel of referendum experts and key public figures, would contribute to the success of the referendum.

The full report is available on the Committee's website:

http://www.apph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/House_of_Representatives_Committees?url=jsclg/localgovt/finalreport.htm

For information on the inquiry: contact the Secretariat on (02) 6277 4044 or, by email: jsclg@aph.gov.au

When is a vote not a vote?

Federal Parliament's Electoral Matters Committee released its advisory report on 27 February on the Electoral and Referendum Amendment (Improving Electoral Administration) Bill 2012.

The Bill implements the government's response to seven recommendations in the committee's report entitled *The 2010 Federal Election: Report on the conduct of the election and related matters*.

The committee recommended that Parliament pass the Bill after introducing a savings provision to reinstate votes if ballot boxes are handled unlawfully but ballot papers are not tampered with. The committee also recommended that the Bill clarify the penalties for an official who unlawfully tampers with a ballot box or ballot papers.

The Bill currently provides that prematurely opened ballots must be excluded from scrutiny. Following incidents at 2010 federal election legal advice was provided to the Electoral Commission that it would be prudent for such votes to be excluded. The Commission subsequently recommended that this be clarified in the *Electoral Act*.

The Bill has no vote savings provision and the committee did not support one previously. Having considered the evidence to this inquiry, the committee now recommends that votes be reinstated if no tampering of ballot papers has occurred. The committee's view is that this balances voter enfranchisement and electoral integrity.

Other amendments, recommended in the 2010 federal election report of the committee:

- remove the requirement for a pre-poll ordinary voter to complete a certificate;
- move the commencement of pre-poll voting back by one day to allow sufficient time to print ballot papers;
- move the deadline for postal vote applications forward by one day to reduce late ballots;
- provide further fixed periods of time to inquire into objections against a proposed electoral boundary redistribution; and
- allow the Electoral Commission to use certain taxpayer information to update the electoral roll.

A dissenting report by Coalition members also forms part of the report. The Coalition opposes the pre-poll provisions in the Bill and the use of taxpayer information to update the electoral roll.

The report is available on the committee's website: <http://www.aph.gov.au/em>.

The Bill, Explanatory Memorandum and information on the inquiry are available from the committee's webpage: <http://www.aph.gov.au/em>

For more information: Contact the secretariat on 02 6277 2374 or jscem@aph.gov.au.

Education inquiries

On 14 February 2013 the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Education and Employment was referred the **Higher Education Support Amendment (Asian Century) Bill 2013**. The bill proposes amendments to expand eligibility for OS-HELP assistance and

provide additional incentives for university students to undertake part of their course of study in Asia from 1 January 2014.

The Committee has called for submissions to the inquiry to be received by 14 March 2013.

For information on the inquiry: contact the Secretariat on (02) 6277 4573 email ee.reps@aph.gov.au or visit the Committee's website at <http://www.aph.gov.au/ee>

At a public hearing in Melbourne on February 6 the Federal Parliament's Education and Employment Committee heard views from the Australian Parents Council, Foundation for Young Australians and Australian Youth Affairs Coalition, Australian Federation of Disability Organisations, Centre for Research on Education Systems, Melbourne University, Australian Council of State School Organisations, and Academic Panel on the **Australian Education Bill 2012** which sets out three goals for Australian schooling:

- to provide an excellent education for all students;
- for Australian schooling to be highly equitable; and
- for Australian schooling to be placed in the top five countries in reading, science, mathematics, quality and equity in recognised international testing by 2025.

The Bill commits the Commonwealth to work collaboratively with states, territories, the non-government sector and other partners to meet these goals through developing and implementing a national plan for school improvement and needs-based funding and arrangements.

The Committee has called for submissions to the Education Bill inquiry to be received by February 15, 2013.

For information: contact the Secretariat on (02) 6277 4573 email EducationBill.reps@aph.gov.au or visit the Committee's website at <http://www.aph.gov.au/ee>

Australia offers 2,300 tertiary scholarships

The Australia Awards Scholarships for 2014 will give some 2,300 students from more than 90 countries the opportunity to study in Australia.

In announcing the scholarships, Foreign Minister Bob Carr said, "The 2014 Australia Awards Scholarships will offer the chance for potential future leaders to strengthen their knowledge and leaderships skills, with the goal of contributing to development in their home country.

"These Awards strengthen the Australian Government's commitment, as outlined in the Australia in the Asian Century White Paper, to strengthen our engagement with Asia. Over five years, 12,000 awards will be offered across Asia – our commitment to Asia sees around half of all awards going to people from that region.

"Ultimately Australia Awards are about continuing friendships with future leaders from around the world and supporting links to Australia."

Australia Awards Scholarships provides applicants from eligible developing countries with the opportunity to obtain a tertiary qualification through Australia's universities and vocational education and training institutions. They also provide applicants the chance to experience life in Australia and build friendships with Australian people. Around 100,000 international

students have studied in Australia since the aid program first brought Colombo Plan students to Australia in the early 1950s.

The Australia Awards Scholarships opened on 1 February 2013, and close on 30 April 2013.

For more information visit www.aisaid.gov.au/australia-awards

Australia-Thailand education link

Eight Australian high schools will participate in the Australia-Thailand school partnerships BRIDGE (Building Relationships through Intercultural Dialogue and Growing Engagement) project, Foreign Minister Bob Carr has announced.

Senator Carr said the Australia-Asia BRIDGE program establishes cultural exchange partnerships between schools in Australia with those in China, Indonesia, Korea and Thailand.

“School students in Australia are connecting with students across Asia to learn languages and gain knowledge about our respective cultures and they are using the latest digital technology and professional learning tools for teachers,” Senator Carr said.

The eight Australian schools to participate in the project are:

- Bundaberg State High, John Paul College (Daisy Hill) and Redcliffe State High School in Queensland
- Doncaster Secondary College, Manor Lakes P-12 College and Wanganui Park Secondary College in Victoria
- Cressy District High School in Tasmania
- Canberra Grammar School in the Australian Capital Territory

These schools will be partnered with eight Thai high schools.

Senator Carr said participating Thai teachers will travel to Australia for a week in March this month to engage with their partner schools and Australian teachers will travel to Thailand in June this year.

Since 2008, 136 schools across metropolitan and rural Australia have established partnerships with schools in China, Indonesia, South Korea and Thailand. The Thai BRIDGE program is funded by the Australia -Thailand Institute (ATI) within the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and managed by the Asia Education Foundation.

Senator Carr also welcomed the ATI's Discover Thailand Scholarships. “These top-up scholarships encourage young Australians to study in Thailand as part of their degrees,” Senator Carr said.

“I am encouraged by the demand for this initiative with nine of the 11 scholarships on offer already awarded to students for 2013 with three of the students having started their studies in Thailand in January.”

The ATI established this program to provide support for Australian tertiary students to study in Thailand for a semester or more in a broad range of disciplines.

The pilot program funds 11 scholarships of \$4,000 each.

Scholarships for Lao students

Seventy Lao students have successfully obtained Laos-Australia National Scholarships at a ceremony in Vientiane attended by the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Senator Bob Carr with Laos Minister of Education and Sports, Dr Phankham Viphavanh.

Senator Carr said the four-year scholarships, provided by the Australian Government, support students from remote and educationally disadvantaged districts of Laos to undertake bachelor degree study at the National University of Laos.

The Lao Australian National Scholarships program aims to support young men and women to obtain professional qualifications in areas that are a focus of the Australian aid program in Laos, including education, rural development, trade and natural resources management. The program is also working with The National University of Laos to build their skills to manage and deliver scholarship programs and comprehensive student services.

This is the second year of the program with 70 students having already commenced their studies in 2012.

New home for National Archives of Australia

Representatives of National Archives of Australia (NAA) and the Department of Finance and Deregulation (DoFD) appeared before the Public Works Committee in February for the inquiry into the proposed new National Archives Preservation Facility (NAPF) for the National Archives of Australia at Mitchell, ACT.

NAA's existing storage facilities will be filled to capacity by 2015. The new NAPF will provide increased storage capacity for archives from Australian Government agencies. This will enable NAA to fulfill its legislative responsibility to properly maintain these archives.

The Committee conducted two public hearings in 2012. The Committee's report recognised the need for the project but was not convinced that the works provide value for money for the Commonwealth. The Committee agreed to NAA's request for an additional hearing to fully explain the model proposed for the delivery of the project. A further report will be made to the Parliament.

Full details on the NAA's proposal and previous public hearing transcripts are available on the Committee's website: www.aph.gov.au/pwc

More land for diplomatic missions?

The ANU has always taken a keen interest in the development of Canberra. In recent months, the allocation of land to diplomatic missions in the Australian Capital Territory has become a controversial issue, with the proposal of the National Capital Authority to reallocate part of Stirling Ridge to a new diplomatic estate. Residents groups have highlighted the loss of open space and impacts upon the local community of this proposal, while government agencies have emphasised the need to allocate land for new diplomatic missions.

The Parliament's National Capital and External Territories Committee held a public hearing on February 15, as part of its inquiry into the allocation of land to diplomatic missions in the ACT.

Appearing before the Committee were representatives of:

- National Capital Authority (Submission 12)
- Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (Submission 10)
- Australian Federal Police
- Save Stirling Park Group (Submission 8)
- Yarralumla Residents Association (Submission 11)
- Deakin Residents Association (Submission 13)
- Walter Burley Griffin Society (Submission 4)

Committee Chair Senator Louise Pratt noted that the allocation of land to diplomatic missions had become a vexed issue in the ACT community, given the increased development of, and limited open space within, central Canberra.

Further information: contact the Inquiry Secretary (02) 6277 4355, email jscncet@aph.gov.au or visit the Committee's webpage at <http://www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/ncet>

Health risks assessed after Fukushima nuclear accident

A comprehensive assessment by international experts on the health risks associated with the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant (NPP) disaster in Japan has concluded that, for the general population inside and outside of Japan, the predicted risks are low and no observable increases in cancer rates above baseline rates are anticipated.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) report '*Health Risk Assessment from the nuclear accident after the 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami based on preliminary dose estimation*' noted, however, that the estimated risk for specific cancers in certain subsets of the population in Fukushima Prefecture has increased and, as such, it calls for long-term continued monitoring and health screening for those people.

Experts estimated risks in the general population in Fukushima Prefecture, the rest of Japan and the rest of the world, plus the power plant and emergency workers that may have been exposed during the emergency phase response.

"The primary concern identified in this report is related to specific cancer risks linked to particular locations and demographic factors," says Dr Maria Neira, WHO Director for Public Health and Environment. "A breakdown of data, based on age, gender and proximity to the nuclear plant, does show a higher cancer risk for those located in the most contaminated parts. Outside these parts - even in locations inside Fukushima Prefecture - no observable increases in cancer incidence are expected."

In terms of specific cancers, for people in the most contaminated location, the estimated increased risks over what would normally be expected are:

- All solid cancers - around 4 % in females exposed as infants;
- Breast cancer - around 6% in females exposed as infants;
- Leukaemia - around 7% in males exposed as infants;

- Thyroid cancer - up to 70% in females exposed as infants (the normally expected risk of thyroid cancer in females over lifetime is 0.75% and the additional lifetime risk assessed for females exposed as infants in the most affected location is 0.50%).

For people in the second most contaminated location of Fukushima Prefecture, the estimated risks are approximately half of those in the location with the highest doses.

The report also references a section to the special case of the emergency workers inside the Fukushima NPP. Around two-thirds of emergency workers are estimated to have cancer risks in line with the general population, while one-third is estimated to have an increased risk.

As well as the direct health impact on the population, the report notes that the psychosocial impact may have a consequence on health and wellbeing. These should not be ignored as part of the overall response, say the experts.

This is the first analysis of the global health effects due to radiation exposure after the Fukushima NPP accident and is the result of a two-year WHO-led process of analysis of estimated doses and their potential health implications. The independent scientific experts came from the fields of radiation risk modelling, epidemiology, dosimetry, radiation effects and public health.

The WHO *Health Risk Assessment from the nuclear accident after the 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami based on preliminary dose estimation* can be viewed at www.who.int/ and www.who.int/phe

A gnashing of teeth

The House of Representatives Health Committee is holding an inquiry into adult dental services to identify priorities for Commonwealth funding.

It will consider the National Partnership Agreement (NPA), which from July 2014 will provide funding directly to state and territory governments to expand services for adults in the public dental system.

Committee chair Jill Hall, MP, said the committee is determined to get grassroots views on the dental health needs of communities across Australia. "People in need should be able to access affordable dental care, regardless of what state or territory they live in, or whether they live in a remote community, a big city or a country town," she said. "We are especially keen to learn from service providers themselves. Their experience is invaluable for developing policies that will deliver the best possible outcomes."

The committee intends to hear from representatives of all states and territories during the inquiry and will focus on:

- demand for dental services across Australia and issues associated with waiting lists;
- mix and coverage of dental services supported by state and territory governments, and the Australian Government;
- availability and affordability of dental services for people with special dental health needs;
- availability and affordability of dental services for people living in metropolitan, regional, rural and remote locations;

- coordination of dental services between the two tiers of government and with privately funded dental services; and
- workforce issues relevant to the provision of dental services.

Full terms of reference and further information on the inquiry are available on the committee's website at www.aph.gov.au/haa.

For all other enquiries: contact the Committee Secretariat on (02) 6277 4145 or visit the Committee's website: www.aph.gov.au/haa.

Sorry, say that again...

More than 360 million people in the world have disabling hearing loss, according to new global estimates on prevalence released by the WHO, for International Ear Care Day (3 March).

As the population ages globally, more people than ever before are facing hearing loss. One in three persons over the age of 65 years – a total of 165 million people worldwide – lives with hearing loss. Although hearing loss from ageing can often be helped with hearing devices, there are not enough produced to meet the need.

“Current production of hearing aids meets less than 10% of global need. In developing countries, fewer than one out of 40 people who need a hearing aid have one.” says Dr Shelly Chadha of the WHO's Department of Prevention of Blindness and Deafness, “WHO is exploring technology transfer as a way to promote access to hearing aids in developing countries”

Another 32 million affected by hearing loss are children under age of 15. Infections of the ear are the leading cause of the disability, especially in low - and middle - income countries. Prevalence of disabling hearing loss is highest in South Asia, Asia Pacific and Sub-Saharan Africa, according to the latest WHO review of available studies.

Infectious diseases such as rubella, meningitis, measles, mumps can lead to hearing loss. Most of these diseases can be prevented through vaccination. Other common causes include exposure to excessive noise, injuries to the ear or head, ageing, genetic causes, problems during pregnancy and childbirth (such as cytomegalovirus infection or syphilis) and the use of medications that can damage hearing.

“About half of all cases of hearing loss are easily preventable while many can be treated through early diagnosis and suitable interventions such as surgically implanted hearing devices. Individuals with hearing loss can also benefit from sign language training and social support.”

WHO encourages countries to develop programs for preventing hearing loss within their primary health care systems including vaccinating children against measles, meningitis, mumps and rubella, screening and treating syphilis in pregnant women, and early assessment and management of hearing loss in babies.

For more information, contact:
Tarik Jasarevic
WHO Communications Officer
Email: jasarevict@who.int

Additional links: <http://www.who.int/pbd/deafness/en/>

Launch of the 2013 Human Development Report

The 2013 Human Development Report – "The Rise of the South: Human Progress in a Diverse World" – will be launched on March 14 in Mexico City by President Enrique Peña Nieto of Mexico and UNDP Administrator Helen Clark.

The 2013 Human Development Report examines the profound shift in global dynamics driven by the fast-rising new powers of the developing world and its long-term implications for human development. China has already overtaken Japan as the world's second biggest economy while lifting hundreds of millions of its people out of poverty.

India is reshaping its future with new entrepreneurial creativity and social policy innovation. Brazil is lifting its living standards through expanding international relationships and antipoverty programs that are emulated worldwide.

But the "Rise of the South" analysed in the report is a much larger phenomenon: Turkey, Mexico, Thailand, South Africa, Indonesia and many other developing nations are also becoming leading actors on the world stage. The 2013 Human Development Report identifies more than 40 countries in the developing world that have done better than had been expected in human development terms in recent decades, with their progress accelerating markedly over the past ten years. The report analyses the causes and consequences of these countries' achievements and the challenges that they face today and in the coming decades.

The 2013 Human Development Report identifies policies rooted in the new global reality that could promote greater progress throughout the world for decades to come. The report calls for far better representation of the South in global governance systems and points to potential new sources of financing within the South for essential public goods. With fresh analytical insights and clear proposals for policy reforms, the report helps charts a course for people in all regions to face shared human development challenges together, fairly and effectively.

[For more on the Human Development Reports access Website](#)

International experts explore access to justice for Indigenous peoples

Leading indigenous rights activists and transitional justice experts from around the world met at Columbia University; in New York on February 28 to discuss how best to use truth commissions, courtrooms, and other forums to strengthen indigenous peoples' rights to truth and justice. The discussion was hosted by the [Indigenous Peoples' Rights Program at Columbia University](#), the [U.N. Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights](#), and the [International Center for Transitional Justice](#).

The goal of the three-day gathering was to collect and share the experiences of indigenous peoples in designing, using, and advocating for truth and justice processes in countries as diverse as Australia, Canada, Colombia, Guatemala, Greenland, Malaysia, New Zealand, Russia, and the United States.

These calls for justice coincide with growing movements by indigenous rights groups, like Idle No More in Canada and the United States, which are drawing global attention.

“Indigenous peoples are among the most affected populations in times of violence,” explains Eduardo González, director of ICTJ’s Truth and Memory program. “Even in places that have not experienced dictatorship or internal conflict, indigenous peoples are affected by systemic, structural violations.”

Against this backdrop of both abuse and silence, some first nations and governments are charting new ground on ways to uncover the truth about the past, redress abuses suffered by indigenous peoples, and begin to heal as part of official truth-seeking policies.

“Around the world, great hopes are pinned on transitional justice measures,” said Pablo de Greiff, UN Special Rapporteur on the promotion of truth, justice, reparation and guarantees of non-recurrence. “In practice, we are still trying to see how transitional justice measures actually work holistically.”

In North America, two recently established institutions stand out: the [Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada \(TRC\)](#), and the [Maine Wabanaki-state Truth and Reconciliation Commission](#). Both institutions examine violations committed by the state against indigenous peoples, and both were established by indigenous peoples themselves in coordination with government.

Chief Wilton Littlechild, who helped open the expert seminar, is one of three commissioners of the Canada TRC and chair of the UN’s Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. He is also a survivor of Canada’s Indian residential schools, where, for more than 150 years, Aboriginal children were often forbidden to speak their own languages or practice their own faiths, in an attempt to assimilate them into mainstream Canadian society. Many children were separated from their families and communities and sometimes forcibly removed from their homes.

“Justice necessarily involves considering the role of truth and reconciliation,” said Chief Littlechild, “the right to truth for victims and the right to truth for states.”

Each country’s unique historical and social circumstances will shape how groups and government can work together to address and redress historic injustices against native populations.

In Guatemala, the Historical Clarification Commission completed its work in 1999, finding that over 200,000 people had been killed in Guatemala’s civil war from 1960 to 1996. Approximately 83% of victims were Mayan.

Through its investigations, the commission laid the groundwork for a [landmark case](#) against former Guatemalan General Efraín Ríos Montt, who will now stand trial on charges of genocide.

Alvaro Pop, one of the international attendees and a Mayan activist who assisted with preparations of the Guatemalan Peace Accords, knows how hard it can be for indigenous peoples to raise their concerns. Although Mayans represent nearly 50 percent of Guatemalans and are a stronghold of the economy, they still live “like strangers in their own land,” remarked Pop.

As the UN [reports](#), “The free expression of Mayan religion, language and other factors continues to be hampered by a shortage of resources and a lack of political will to enforce laws.”

Looking ahead, fundamental questions will need to be answered, including how truth commissions can address violations against indigenous peoples when they are still ongoing. The expert seminar ended on March 1, but discussions will continue, resulting in a report to the UN Human Rights Council exploring these issues.

“Because indigenous peoples have experienced violence in several areas of the world, under conflict, dictatorship, or as a result of structural injustice,” said ICTJ Vice President Paul Seils, “we anticipate that there will be a need to adapt the instruments of transitional justice to these situations.”

About ICTJ

The International Centre for Transitional Justice works to redress and prevent the most severe violations of human rights by confronting legacies of mass abuse. ICTJ seeks holistic solutions to promote accountability and create just and peaceful societies. For more information, visit www.ictj.org

New York contact: Refik Hodzic, ICTJ Director of Communications

E-mail: rhodzic@ictj.org Phone: +1 917 975 2286

Protection for American Native Women

(Helena, Mont.) – Native women advocates in the United States are praising lawmakers for passage of an inclusive, bipartisan *Violence Against Women Reauthorisation Act* that would afford protection to all women and victims of domestic violence. The bipartisan bill, S. 47, passed by the Senate in February 2013 and now by the House, 286 to 138, includes critical provisions to restore and strengthen tribal authority to protect Native women from violence in Indian country. The hard-fought passage comes over 500 days after VAWA expired and the legislation stalled during the 112th Session of Congress.

“This bill is a major stride forward in fixing longstanding jurisdictional gaps in United States law that threaten the safety and lives of Native women, violate their human rights daily, and allow perpetrators of crimes on tribal lands to evade prosecution” said Jana Walker, senior attorney and director of the Indian Law Resource Centre’s Safe Women, Strong Nations project. “We hope that today’s vote will help end the epidemic levels of violence against Native women in Indian country and lead to justice for all victims, including Native women who are among the most vulnerable in this country.”

Once signed into law, the bill will restore concurrent criminal jurisdiction to tribal governments over non-Indians having ties to the tribe and who commit domestic violence and dating violence against Native women in Indian country or violate protection orders. Non-Indian offenders commit vast majority of the violent crimes against Native women. “In many cases, these non-Indian perpetrators make a deliberate choice to live on our reservations, whether in connection with marriage to a tribal member or to avoid accountability for violent crimes committed against Native women,” said Terri Henry, Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians Tribal Councilwoman- Paint Town Community and Co-Chair of the National Congress of American Indians’ Task Force on Violence Against Native Women.

Current United States law creates a criminal jurisdiction gap for tribal governments over non-Indians, and the federal and state officials who have authority to prosecute these crimes are failing to do so at alarmingly high rates. "This bill would strengthen the ability of tribal governments to protect Native women locally from domestic and dating violence," Henry added.

The long overdue reauthorisation of VAWA comes at a critical time. "One in three Native women will be raped in her lifetime, and six in ten will be physically assaulted," said Lucy Simpson, Executive Director of the National Indigenous Women's Resource Centre, Inc. Simpson added that, "even worse, on some reservations, the murder rate for Native women is ten times the national average."

"Native women have endured violence since colonization, and their blood continues to be shed due to the unjust and unacceptable jurisdictional loopholes in United States law," said Juana Majel, 1st Vice President of the National Congress of American Indians and Co-Chair of its Task Force on Violence Against Native Women. "We are pleased that Congress has finally stepped up to address the unchecked violence against Native women by freeing the hands of Indian nations--the most appropriate entities--to protect Native women in their own communities from rapists and batterers," she added.

The Indian Law Resource Centre, the National Congress for American Indians' Task Force on Violence Against Women, Clan Star, Inc., and the National Indigenous Women's Resource Centre have been working diligently both domestically and in the international arena to restore safety to Native women and to protect their most basic human right, the right to be free of violence.

Got a view on NBN Rollout?

The Joint Committee on the National Broadband Network (NBN) has commenced its next Six-Monthly Review of the NBN Rollout and invites submissions relevant to its terms of reference from interested individuals and organisations. A public hearing will be held in Sydney on 19 April 2013. The committee's terms of reference are available at: www.aph.gov.au/jcnbn

Submissions are due by Friday, 12 April 2013 and may be sent to:
The Secretary
Joint Committee on the NBN
PO Box 6021
Parliament House, Canberra ACT 2600
Email: jcnbn@aph.gov.au

Fourth NBN rollout report presented

The Joint Committee on the National Broadband Network presented its Fourth Report on February 28 on the Six-Monthly Review of the Rollout of the NBN. The report includes information detailing the progress of the NBN rollout over the period from 1 January to 30 June 2012 in addition to other current issues reported after this period.

The committee's report on its visit to New Zealand under the Australia New Zealand Parliamentary Committee Exchange Program is also included within the report.

Matters reviewed in the Fourth Report include: the rollout of fibre, fixed wireless and satellite services, performance reporting, regulatory issues, national uniform pricing under the NBN, the potential of private equity to fund the NBN, and Telstra workforce issues associated with the Retraining Funding Deed under the Telstra Agreement.

In its Fourth Report, the committee has recommended that:

- the government's Six Monthly Performance Report be reformatted so that NBN rollout results are listed alongside NBN Co Corporate Plan targets.
- audited financial statements and accompanying explanatory notes be included in the government's Six Monthly Performance Report.
- the government's Six Monthly Performance Report be provided to the committee no less than one month before the scheduled biannual review hearing.
- the government support NBN Co to continue to explore the synergies between fixed and mobile telecommunications networks, and facilitate shared use of NBN Co infrastructure to improve mobile telephony for regional and remote Australia.
- the government and NBN Co continue to work with stakeholders concerning the operation of medical alarms for aged and at-risk persons under the NBN, with a reporting back request to the committee.
- the government seek to gauge investor interest in the NBN and investigate the optimum capital structure for NBN Co.

The Department of Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy provide an annual statement to the committee on progress concerning a range of matters under the Telstra Retraining Funding Deed.

Copies of the report are available at:

http://www.apb.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/House_of_Representatives_Committees?url=jcnbn/.report4.htm

Carers share stories at dementia hearing

The needs of those who care for someone with dementia were a focus of a parliamentary hearing held in Adelaide on March 4.

The House of Representatives Health and Ageing Committee held a public hearing for its inquiry into dementia, to consider a range of issues including the role that a carer plays in a person's journey with dementia.

Life Care and Southern Cross Care, who offer aged care services including accommodation and respite care in the Adelaide region, gave evidence to the committee about their models of supporting people with dementia and their families. The committee also heard from representatives of the Repatriation General Hospital and the Older Persons Clinical Network, which links in clinicians, consumers, care providers and other stakeholders to plan and implement best practice aged care services in South Australia. Alzheimer's Australia (South Australia) took part in the hearing to share their knowledge about the dementia care support and treatment offered in Adelaide and the surrounding region.

For more information contact the Committee Secretariat by phone on (02) 6277 4145 or visit the Committee's website: www.apb.gov.au/haa

2013 ANUEF activities - Lectures and diary dates

Imaging the Dynamic Earth

The first ANU Emeritus Faculty Lecture for 2013 with a focus on current ANU research was given by Professor Brian Kennett on February 21.

Abstract: Earthquakes are one of the symptoms of the internal activity in the Earth. The seismic waves they produce can be used to develop images of internal structure (akin to computer tomography) that help us understand the way in which the Earth works. With good knowledge of Earth structure, imaging can be used to examine the nature of large earthquakes, which turn out to be much more complex than we had realised.

Biographical Note: Brian Kennett, FAA, FRS, is Professor of Seismology at the Research School of Earth Sciences where he was Director from September 2006 to January 2010. He received his Ph.D. in Theoretical Seismology from the University of Cambridge in 1973. He was a Lindemann Fellow at IGPP, University of California, San Diego and then a University Lecturer at the University of Cambridge. He moved to Australia in 1984,

His research has covered a very wide range of topics in seismology. He has received recognition through numerous awards: the Gold Medal in Geophysics from the Royal Astronomical Society, the Gutenberg Medal from the European Geosciences Union, the Murchison Medal from the Geological Society of London, and the Jaeger and Flinders Medals from the Australian Academy of Sciences. He is a Fellow of the American Geophysical Union, the Australian Academy of Sciences and the Royal Society (London) and was President of the International Association of Seismology and Physics of the Earth's Interior from 1999-2003.

Health on a heating planet

Bryan Furnass was discussion leader at the ANUEF's collegiate lunch on March 6 on the subject "Health on a Heating Planet". In his preliminary notes, he stated: The scientific evidence for human-induced global warming is now well established. In the last century, Australia's average temperature rose by 0.9 degree centigrade over the preindustrial average, the number of record hot days having doubled since 1960, most of them over the past decade. Much of the Australian bush is now in flames, many properties destroyed or threatened. The Bureau of Meteorology has extended its temperature colour charts to 54c, and local councils have changed their highest warning on roadside pie charts from extreme to catastrophic. Between the months September to December 2012, the average recorded Australian maximum temperature (40.33c) was the highest since 1910, when reliable records were first kept. The first seven days of 2013 were amongst the top-20 hottest days on record with, for the first time, six consecutive days over 39c.

As might be expected, at the personal level, excessive environmental temperatures cause the greatest mortality and morbidity rates amongst the elderly, the very young, and in those with chronic physical and mental illness who are on medication or high alcohol intake. Normally, body temperature is kept constant at around 37c through a combination of metabolic heat production (increased by exercise) and radiative and evaporative cooling through sweating. Sweating becomes ineffectual when environmental temperature reaches 38c (lower if humidity is high) and may be manifest as irritating prickly heat, particularly in children.

Prolonged exposures to temperatures above 35c, and particularly above 40c can lead to heat exhaustion, heat stroke and death, particularly if (non-alcoholic) fluid intake has been inadequate. Extreme heat has taken more lives than any other direct environmental cause in

white Australia's 200 year history. During the 2009 Victorian bushfires, 173 people perished as a direct result of the bushfires and another 374 lost their lives to extreme heat during the same week. More than 2,000 people were treated for heat-related illness in the fire's aftermath.

According to the Climate Institute, severe weather events have an adverse effect on mental health, as many as one in five suffering from the debilitating effects of extreme stress, emotional injury and despair. An increasingly hostile climate will spell a substantial rise in post-traumatic stress, anxiety and depression, which can linger for months, even years. Incidence of lack of sleep, tiredness, loss of productivity, domestic disputes, anti-social behavior, accidents, violence, self-harm and suicide increase during heat waves. Global warming will impose severe organisational and economic stresses on emergency and medical services and on the nation's economy as a whole.

Adaptive measures to local heating

Household adaptations can do much to minimise the effects of heat waves and fires. Air conditioners or evaporative coolers are the mainstay of keeping cool in affluent households, but become ineffective if power supplies fail, as they often do during heat waves. Curtains or blinds should be drawn and windows closed during hot days, and windows opened during night time. Fluid intake from tap water should be increased to several litres per day until urine becomes pale yellow. If heat inside the house becomes excessive, wet towels, fans and tepid showers can be helpful. Exercise should be restricted to cooler times of the day.

Outside the house, flammable materials such as dry vegetation should be removed to recycling dumps, and grass kept short. Since most house fires are started by embers, gutters should be cleared of leaves and hoses and wet brooms made easily available for dowsing spot fires. If a catastrophic fire looms, early evacuation is essential.

Global warning

At the global level, the most dangerous impact of the present unprecedented rate of warming is disruption of the Earth's climate control mechanisms, leading to massive species extinction, threats to water and food security and extreme weather events, including severe storms, floods, droughts, heat waves and fires, which have occurred throughout the world over the past two decades, more frequently and intensively than previously experienced weather patterns.

Without concerted action by all countries, including Australia, the world is on a path to exceeding 4 degrees increase in temperature by the 2060s, which would have a catastrophic effect on the environment and human health. Unfortunately, most world governments are not aware of the urgency of the situation, being pre-occupied with avoidance of falling over the fiscal cliff and neglecting the immeasurably more catastrophic and irreversible consequences of falling over the climate disruption cliff. As the world's greatest per capita greenhouse gas emitter, it is incumbent on the Australian government and community to follow best practice, politically, economically and socially to mitigate the impending disaster which faces our planet. (See www.climateandhealth.org)

(Bryan Furnass is a retired physician, a member of the Strategic Council of the Climate Institute, Doctors for the Environment, Australia, and Nature and Society Forum, from whose reports much of this information is derived).

The End of the Ancient World

The ANU Emeritus Faculty co-sponsored a talk on March 5 by the British historian and commentator, Tom Holland, who visited Canberra after attending the Perth and Adelaide Festivals.

In 2007, Holland was the winner of the Classical Association prize, awarded to 'the individual who has done most to promote the study of the language, literature and civilisation of Ancient Greece and Rome'. Holland's first book, *Rubicon: The Triumph and Tragedy of the Roman Republic*, won the Hessel-Tiltman Prize for History and was shortlisted for the Samuel Johnson Prize. His second book, *Persian Fire*, a history of the Graeco-Persian wars, won the Anglo-Hellenic League's Runciman Award in 2006. Holland has recently completed a third book: *In the Shadow of the Sword: The Battle for Global Empire and the End of the Ancient World* that covers the collapse of Roman and Persian power in the Near East, and the emergence of Islam. Books are available at the University Co-op.

The Classical World: Triumph and tragedy

Renowned Classicist Tom Collins gave a public lecture on *The Classical World: Triumph and tragedy* when visiting Canberra on March 5 for an ANU Literary Event, supported by *Supported by the Friends of the ANU Classics Museum, The ANU Co-op Bookshop and the ANU Emeritus Faculty*

Propose a Topic

If you have suggestions for the topic(s), or the TED talk(s) we should view, to lubricate the neurones, please contact Adrian (adrian_j_gibbs@hotmail.com) and/or Shirley (pipitone@grapevine.com.au) ASAP

ANUEF Room Bookings

Requests for booking the Molony Room should be addressed to Judith Caton via email, and these will be forwarded to the committee for approval, and then entered into the diary. A return email will be sent to the organisation confirming the booking. The diary will be held in the office rather than being left on the table in the meeting room. Conditions for the use of the premises will be emailed to users and a copy is on the ANUEF website.

Contact Judith Caton on judith.caton@anu.edu.au

What's On at the ANU?

What's On at ANU is a fortnightly email for staff and students that aims to highlight many of the interesting, enlightening and engaging public lectures, seminars and events happening around the university. All of these events are open to the public. Please check if reservations are needed.

For more information on any of the events listed, or to see a calendar of upcoming events, go to <http://billboard.anu.edu.au/events.asp>

Next edition of *Emeritus*, the ANUEF Newsletter, will be published in April 2013.