

THE ANU EMERITUS FACULTY
CHAIR'S REPORT TO THE 2017 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Introduction

The ANU Emeritus Faculty has celebrated another full and eventful year. We have endeavoured to uphold the values of the University in our lecture series and in the dedicated engagement in teaching and research by individual members. In doing so, we place particular emphasis on collegiality, which is a core value of our Faculty and the basis of our success as an institution. Our many gatherings have been both convivial and intellectually engaging. Our membership has continued to increase. We now list over 280 members. This report recounts our activities for the year.

Collegiate Lunches

Adrian Gibbs and Craig Reynolds were in charge of organizing the various talks at our collegiate lunches. These began with the launch of two books by members of our Faculty and concluded with our annual discussion of Nobel and IgNobel Prizes for 2017. Midway through the year, we used the occasion of our lunch gathering for a wide-ranging discussion organized by Bob Douglas on the issues raised in Julian Cribb's book, *Surviving the 21st Century*.

Feb 1st Book Launch

Field Guide to Useful Native Plants from Temperate Australia by J.M. Caton and R.J. Hardwick launched by Brian Lees, School of Physical, Environmental and Mathematical Sciences, ADFA.

Surviving the 21st Century: Humanity's Ten Great Challenges and How We Can Overcome Them by Julian Cribb launched by Bob Douglas.

March 1st Josephine Flood: "Moth Hunters of the ACT revisited."

April 5th Keiko Tamura: "The Soldiers Who Died Twice: Japanese Prisoners of War and the War Cemetery in Cowra."

May 3rd Discussion of 'Human Survival' issues organized by Bob Douglas: "Should the ANU establish a teaching and research 'Centre for Human Survival?'"

Aug 2nd Anthony Reid: "Neighbouring the 'Ring of Fire'".

Sept 6th Dorothy Horsfield: "Russia in the wake of the Cold War; perceptions and prejudices".

Oct 4th Terry Hull: "Just Sex".

Nov 1st Mike Rickard: “Tectonics: the history of work on rock deformation and continental drift”.

Dec 6th Annual discussion of the Nobel/IgNobel Prizes organized by Fyfe Bygrave and Adrian Gibbs.

Lectures

Adrian Gibbs and Craig Reynolds also organized our lecture series. A good number of these lectures, which are open to all members of the University and to the general public, were given by members of our Faculty as part of our continuing contribution to the intellectual life of the University.

Feb 15th Judith Caton: “Monkey Guts.”

March 15th Hans Kuhn: “Footloose Germans: A 17th century Silesian emigrant and an early 18th century Saxon emigrant.”

April 19th Brian Walker: “Transformational change and resilience.”

May 17th Rod Little, Co-Chair National Congress of Australia's First Peoples: “Reconciliation.”

Aug 16th Adam Broinowski: “The Fukushima Nuclear Crisis: Responses to Neoliberal Disaster Management.”

Oct 18th Prame Chopra: "Dangerous eruptions: Volcanoes in the Past, Present and Future."

Nov 15th Patrick De Deckker: "The 1897-99 *Belgica* expedition that first overwintered in Antarctic waters - A tale of extraordinary scientific achievements and of human endurance/"

Projects Symposium

Ian Keen organized our annual ‘Projects Symposium’ on the 21st of June. We began this activity in 2013 as the ‘Research in Retirement Forum’. It provides an opportunity for members to present their current projects and allows for considerable discussion on a great variety of topics. The symposium highlights the diversity of interests within our Faculty.

Malcolm Whyte: “Rio Olympic Medals in relation to Population and Affluence.”

Debbie Argue: “Homo floresiensis – the surprise from Flores – but what is it and where does it fit on the human evolutionary tree?”

Adrian Gibbs: “Tobamoviruses are aboriginal.”

Ian Keen: “Variation in Aboriginal systems of land tenure.”

Campbell Macknight: “F. D. McCarthy’s diary, 1937–8.”

Alan Roberts: “Writing the life of a convict woman (Esther Julian/Johnston) with ambiguous data.”

Hugh Tyndale-Biscoe: “Memories of Geoff Sharman, 1925-2015.”

Mark O’Connor: “How Shakespeare became international.”

Nights at the Opera

We have held two marvellous ‘Nights at the Opera’, organized by Colleen Grafton-Green. ‘Nights at the Opera’ is an ongoing activity of the Emeritus Faculty featuring operas performed by the ANU School of Music between 1995 and 2003 that were filmed by the late Michael Grafton-Green and have now been remastered to Blu-ray.

May 2nd An evening showing of Benjamin Britten’s “Albert Herring”

This production was originally performed at the ANU Arts Centre Theatre on the 23rd of October 1997. Colin Forbes who produced this opera was able to attend the showing and speak about the performance.

Sept 19th An evening showing of Mozart’s “The Magic Flute”

This production was originally performed at the ANU Arts Centre Theatre on the 2nd of August 1997. The producer of this performance, Angela Giblin – a member of our Faculty – spoke about the performance.

Dec 9th A repeat showing of Mozart’s “The Magic Flute”

The showing of “The Magic Flute” was so successful that a second Saturday afternoon showing was held, which allowed two members of the original cast, Sarah Shalders and Kent McIntosh, Pamina and Tamino, to attend and see themselves perform.

We are conducting these ‘Nights at the Opera’ as an historical research project and for this purpose, Colleen has produced superb research programmes for both showings that provide insights into the cast and production at the time. Many of the performers in these Operas have gone on to national and international stardom.

Special Lectures

Colin Steele arranged two outstanding special lectures for the Emeritus Faculty this year. The first of these was a joint ANUEF-Oxford Society lecture on the 25th of July:

July 25th Professor Maggie Snowling, President of St John's College Oxford:

“Dyslexia and Children's Learning”

The topic of this lecture was of considerable public interest and attracted a record number of attendees.

Colin also coordinated and arranged our ANUEF Annual Lecture:

October 31st Professor Glyn Davis, Vice-Chancellor of Melbourne University:

“The Australian Idea of the University”

This lecture by Professor Davis was given in anticipation of the publication of his book of the same name, a copy of which he has donated to the Emeritus Faculty Library. Although he altered his topic somewhat, Professor Davis posed some serious questions about the future of universities in general and universities in Australia in particular.

The Vice-Chancellor, Professor Brian Schmidt as well as former ANU Vice-Chancellors, Dean Terrell and Ian Chubb, were able to attend Professor Davis’ lecture and the dinner in his honour afterwards in the Stanner Room.

The recording of this lecture is available at the ANU ‘Soundcloud’ site:

https://soundcloud.com/experience_anu/australian-idea-of-university

Colin Steele put quite a considerable effort into the arrangements for these lectures and a third lecture, which had to be postponed when the speaker fell ill. Colin was also responsible for all the “Meet the Author” lectures held at the University this year. As the University’s remarkable impresario, Colin has, this year, been awarded the *Chancellor’s Award for Outstanding Service to the Campus Community*.

Vice-Chancellor’s Talk to the Emeritus Faculty

The Vice-Chancellor, Professor Brian Schmidt spoke to our Emeritus Faculty on the 15th of September this year. He focused his talk on developments in the University and then answered questions from members. It was a good and informative gathering. We are hoping that these talks will become accepted as a tradition for our Faculty.

East Coast Project: John Molony

John Molony has written the following on the East Coast Project:

“The East Coast Project met regularly throughout the year and continued its research into the pre-Cook charting of Australia. John Molony’s *Captain James Cook: Claiming the Great Southland* was published by Connor Court.

The Project would benefit if a member of the Faculty with an interest in Dutch or Portuguese charting were inclined to participate in its research and writing. Some knowledge of the contemporary language in each instance would be valuable.”

A review of John’s book by Iain McCalman was published in the October issue of *The Emeritus*.

On the 19th of April we held a gathering in the Molony Room to celebrate John’s 90th birthday.

Poets' Lunch

Following a tradition established by Giles Pickford, the Emeritus Faculty again hosted the 'Poets' Lunch on the 7th of December. It was a convivial gathering in the finest traditions of the ANU.

Oral History Project

Fyfe Bygrave has taken over from Peter Stewart in conducting the Oral History Project. Fyfe interviewed 1) Colin Groves, 2) Colin Steele and 3) Campbell Macknight. Fyfe also conducted an interview with Dick Johnson, Don Anderson and Larry Saha on education at the ANU. Don is producing the transcript of that interview.

Existential Risk

On the 3rd of May, we held a discussion organized by Bob Douglas on issues of human survival and existential risk. This discussion initiated a series of further meetings and developments. Bob Douglas has written the following to brief the Faculty on these developments:

“In the first half of 2017, Bob Douglas and Julian Cribb worked closely with the Emeritus Faculty to develop a national initiative on existential risk. The work grew out of discussions at a faculty luncheon on a book published in 2017 by ANU Emeritus Faculty member Julian Cribb, entitled *Surviving the 21st-Century*.

This stimulated a three-hour roundtable event among a group of 37 academic leaders and students at the ANU on 27th of June 2017. The report of the discussion was jointly published by Australia21 www.australia21.org.au and the ANU.

The report was entitled “*Pathways Past the Precipice: Flourishing in a Mega-Threatened World*”. It addressed the question of how ANU and the Australian University Sector could most effectively contribute to the mitigation of existential risk.

Two extracts from the report follow.

“Humans are facing our greatest test in the million-year ascent of our kind. But this isn't a single challenge like a famine or disease outbreak. It is a constellation of 10 huge human-made threats which are now coming together to imperil our stability and future existence.

Society often regards these 10 threats – ecological collapse, resource depletion, weapons of mass destruction, global warming, global poisoning, food insecurity, population and urban expansion, pandemic disease, dangerous new technologies and self-delusion – as separate issues. In reality they are deeply intertwined and each affects the others. This means they cannot be dealt with one at a time, but must be addressed in conjunction and at species level”.

The group recognised that serious efforts to ameliorate the interacting existential risks are everywhere fragmented and poorly coordinated. It was agreed that the University could play a valuable role in developing the case for a national agency that might be called a "Commission on Global Futures". This could be the coordinating body to develop and oversee implementation and coherent action to reduce existential risk across Australia.

Such a Commission would need to be supported by governments, business, philanthropy and civil society and could also provide a mechanism for engagement of the university sector across

Australia in this endeavour. The report proposed the appointment of an ANU working group to develop the case for such a Commission.

In response to the report, the Vice-Chancellor of ANU appointed a working group chaired by Professor John Hewson and including former Vice-Chancellor and Chief Scientist Ian Chubb and senior ANU academics and students who were invited to act on the recommendations of the Roundtable.

The working group, of which Bob Douglas is Secretary, has now developed a draft proposal for such a Commission, that is being discussed with key national stakeholders and potential funders.

In late November a group from the Emeritus Faculty led by Bob Douglas and Julian Cribb, agreed to develop a website around the subject of “Humans for Survival” that could become a trusted source of information and policy development aimed at dealing with existential risk. A group of volunteers have agreed to initiate this development, which will need to mobilise modest funds and ultimately employ a web manager who can give the website the ongoing attention it will need.”

Website

We were informed by IT experts in the University that our website is an ‘antique’ and therefore, we decided to renovate and redesign it. We hired two excellent web designers from within the University to do this redesign outside of hours. Although these designers have since left the University, this work has continued to progress. We are expecting to be able to mount our Redesigned website in the new year. We also expect that there will be teething problems with the site initially, but we will work through these problems as they arise.

If there is any member among us, who has the appropriate IT skills and would like to assist us in these web developments, the Emeritus Faculty Committee would be grateful for assistance.

The Emeritus Faculty Banner

For some time now, Larry Saha has been liaising with ANU Marketing to design an appropriate banner for the Emeritus Faculty. After considering various possibilities, the Emeritus Faculty Committee agreed on a banner that will be displayed at our Annual General Meeting. The image selected for the centre of the banner is an attractive photograph of the statue of *Saraswati*, the Hindu goddess of learning and of the arts represented as an adolescent girl. The statue, which is located at the entrance to the Chancelry building, was created by students at the Academy of Fine Arts in Yogyakarta and was given by Indonesian government to the University in 1969.

Summations Series and Publications Bursary

As in previous reports, I once again wish to call attention to the ‘Summations Series’ which the ANU Press has established to allow senior academics at the ANU and, in particular, Emeritus Faculty “to re-address their own work and present the best of this work with retrospective insight”. The series is also intended to publish substantial work that has been produced over a long academic career. The Press is prepared to receive manuscripts that present collected works based on long-standing research (including previous published papers) by

ANU academics. Anyone interested in preparing a manuscript can contact me at james.fox@anu.edu for further information.

This year, the Emeritus Faculty Committee has established an ANUEF Bursary Scheme of up to \$1000.00 to assist members to defray the costs of their academic publishing efforts. Our new website will have the details of the relatively simple application process required for this bursary. In the meantime, members can contact Craig Reynolds at creynolds697@gmail.com who has agreed to oversee the application process.

The John Molony History Prize

The 2017 John Molony History prize was awarded to Alexis Bergantz for his PhD thesis entitled: *The articulation of Frenchness in Australia in the late nineteenth century*. This thesis is a cultural history of ideas about France and the French in Australia during the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. It examines some of the processes at play in the on-going definition of Australian culture and character in the early Federation era and brings to light a range of political and personal meanings that France had in people's lives.

The Emeritus

Ian Mathews has produced 11 issues of *The Emeritus*: February to December. This year's issues include the announcement of many of the publications of the ANU Press with various relevant book reviews. The December issue has a new and attractive design and format. To produce this design, Ian has worked closely with Kimberley Gaal who works at the ANU Press and has now joined *The Emeritus* production team.

Obituaries

The Emeritus Faculty has been tasked with producing obituaries of our distinguished colleagues. This year we published obituaries for the following colleagues in *The Emeritus*:

Colin Plowman	Howard Bradbury	John Mulvaney	Des Ball
Ken Campbell	Bryan Furnass	Thelma Hunter	Jacqueline Mayrhofer

Next year we plan to publish a collection of the obituaries that we have so far produced as an *ANU eView* publication. For this reason, we are attempting to fill gaps in the present collection. We have therefore belatedly retrieved and published an obituary for Ralph Elliott written by Colin Steele.

New Members for 2017

Michael Coper	ANU College of Law	Constitutional Law; Legal Education; High Court Legal Biography
Donald Gardner	Visiting Fellow CASS	Archaeology & Anthropology
John Giacon	School of Literature, Languages and Linguistics	Indigenous Languages; Language Revival

Hongli Jia	Menzies Library	Information Resources
Peter McDonald	Public Servant	European & Pacific History & Politics
Robin Nair	Visiting Fellow APCD	Foreign Policy; International Relations
Kathryn Robinson	Anthropology CHL	Anthropology of Indonesia
Xiaoying Shi	IT Services	Information Systems

Special Thanks

As Chair of the Emeritus Faculty, I want to thank all the members of our Committee who have worked hard to make our collegial activities possible, interesting and engaging: Robert Burne, Fyfe Bygrave, Prame Chopra, Dorothy Horsfield, Brian Lees, Craig Reynolds Di Riddell, Verna Rosling, and Peter Scardoni. In particular, I would like to thank Adrian Gibbs and Craig Reynolds for their efforts in putting together a cast of excellent speakers for our luncheons and our lectures. I want to thank Larry Saha for sitting in for me as Deputy Chair during my travels and for managing to come up with a banner for our activities; Jan O'Connor for her work as our Secretary and for the numerous other tasks she has undertaken; Fyfe Bygrave for taking over and running the Oral History Project; Di Riddell for keeping our membership records intact and up-to-date; Ian Keen for organizing the annual Projects Symposium; Colleen Grafton-Green for arranging our 'Nights at the Opera'; Colin Steele for organizing our special lectures; Ian Mathews for his work in producing *The Emeritus*; Kimberley Gaal for the new look to *The Emeritus*; Ailsa Solley for attending to our library; Nic Fominas for responding skilfully to our minor crises; Bob Douglas for engaging us in interesting and important pursuits; John Molony for his continuing wise guidance; and, Michael Cardew-Hall for his unwavering support of the Emeritus Faculty. We are fortunate in having a talented membership who have collegially committed themselves to the Emeritus Faculty and thus contributed to making this a most successful year.

James J. Fox
Chair, Emeritus Faculty
11 December 2017