

IFS & Bits

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9 May 2005

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**Deadline for Next
Issue**

8 July 2005

Editor

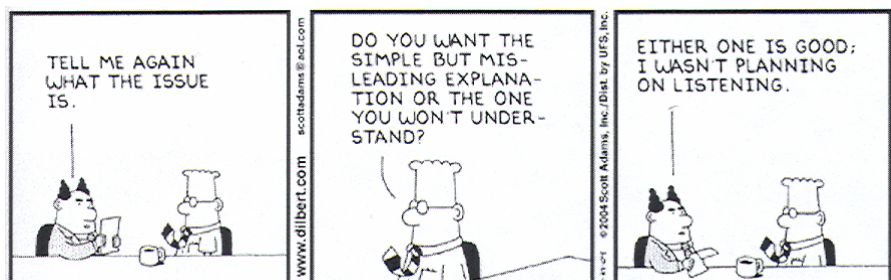
Tracey Royds

Messages from the Head

Marsden Grant Success in the Preliminary Round

I believe that 2005 has seen a record number of our staff members being involved in Marsden applications that have successfully manoeuvred their way through the first round. In toto, IFS staff members are involved in 12 of the 35 grants that are still alive for Massey University. These are Matthew Perlmutter, Tammy Smith, Paul Plieger, Peter Schwerdtfeger, Barbara Holland (two), Bruce van Brunt, Steve Pascal, Bill Williams, Emily Parker and Mike Hendy (two).

Of course, there is still another round to go but with the quality of applications emanating from this Institute there must be an excellent chance that all will be funded. My commiserations go to those staff who were unsuccessful on this occasion, noting that their projects were still excellent ones. If the Marsden Fund had the monies available, it is clear to me that we would have had many other successes. Again, congratulations to these on getting this far and we look forward to celebrating your success in September.



Kee Teo Massey University Teaching Award

It was a great thrill for Kee and indeed all his many friends and colleagues in the Institute that his brilliant contribution to first year teaching at this university has been recognized at the highest level. Kee has sustained a particular interest in first year teaching over a long period and in developing ways in which student performance can be given every opportunity of succeeding. We all know that students often find mathematics a real challenge but Kee, in conjunction with many of his colleagues, has been innovative in finding ways of assisting students to achieve at ever-increasing levels. It is great for the Institute for one of its staff members to be recognized again and few can doubt that IFS values quality teaching and those staff that put so much into making the teaching experience in our three subjects such a rewarding one for students.

Albany Meeting

A few weeks ago the Pro Vice-Chancellor Professor Robert Anderson chaired a meeting at Albany of senior College of Sciences staff. This included the Academic and Programme Directors, the Heads of Institute and professorial staff at Albany. A wide-ranging discussion was held about future prospects for Albany and the development of a full suite of academic offerings on the Albany campus. Follow-up work is currently ongoing and I expect that there will be significant developments in the coming months. There can be little doubt that IFS must be heavily involved in developing new courses within the BSc that relate to our areas of expertise. These discussions relate very closely to the point that I made in our previous IFS & Bits which asked for input from staff members on future directions for both the Albany and Palmerston North campuses.

Gero Schmidt, Associate Professor



Gero Schmidt plans to arrive at Albany in August and will take up his appointment on 1 September. He is married, and has one child though another one is due in July. He comes to us from Friedrich-Schiller University in Jena as Head of the Computational Materials Science Group. He plans on bringing Andreas Hermann with him as a PhD student, and we hope an additional two postgraduate might come too. Gero has gained in excess of \$7 million Euros in external research grants and has nearly 100 refereed publications to his credit in the international refereed literature. At the age of 37, this is a phenomenal record by any standards and will provide the Physics enterprise at Albany with a real star around whom our research activities can be based. His research area includes numerical simulations of structural and spectroscopic semiconductor surface properties and the development of efficient, massively parallel algorithms for calculating many-body effects in electronic and optical excitation spectra. We are delighted to have attracted him to New Zealand and his presence will give a major boost not only to IFS but to the Albany campus in general.

Welcome to New Staff

A warm welcome to Dr Robert Krawczyk (Research Officer with Peter Schwerdtfeger), Dr Fiona Cochrane (Postdoctoral Fellow with Emily Parker), Philip Zhang (Graduate Assistant in Mathematics), and Adam Stephenson (Research Assistant in the NRC). I am sure that you will all make our new colleagues very welcome and I trust that they too will enjoy and profit from their employment with us. We wish all our new members every success.

Farewell for Udo von Mulert

There was a good turnout to farewell Udo. He has been with the University for 23 years and has provided outstanding leadership for Electronic Services, and, indeed, for IFS Specialist Services as a whole. His ability to “fix” scientific gear and get both research and teaching staff back on line has been quite exceptional and there is no question that he will be a hard act to follow. His in-depth knowledge of all things electronic, allied to his practical skills, has provided IFS with a level of expertise that was the envy of those outside our Institute. As you know, Peter Lewis has kindly agreed to take on Udo’s responsibilities and I know that he will continue to provide an excellent service for all members of staff, both within the Institute and beyond.

all our staff, who have been wrestling unsuccessfully with the previous system.

PBRF Guidelines

A near-final draft of the Massey University Generic Guidelines for PBRF Evidence Portfolio Presentation has been prepared which indicates the level of detail that staff members will have to incorporate within their EP. It also indicates the large workload that your HoI will be involved in with checking that everyone has met 18 standards. It is clearly going to be a long and difficult 2005 with a culmination on 14 June 2006 (the census date). Work is afoot to appoint a College Champion and also to identify leaders in various subject groupings listed by TEC. This is all going to be challenging and very time-consuming but I hope that we may have the template on which the EP is to be prepared before too long. Draft completion is scheduled for mid-December.

Physics and Maths Tutors Appointed

I am delighted to announce that we have appointed Stephanie Wayper as Tutor in Physics at Albany and Rob Krausz as Tutor in Mathematics at Palmerston North. Stephanie started her duties about a month ago and is settling in well by all accounts. Rob expects to start work on 16th May. We are delighted by the quality of both applicants and I believe that our students will gain significantly from their interactions with our new tutors.

Room Bookings

Staff will be well aware that it has been incredibly difficult making room bookings for lectures, tutorials and seminars under the new computer-based booking system. After what has clearly been a series of problems right across the university, the sensible decision has been taken to devolve responsibility of small local teaching spaces back to the Institute concerned. This is a great relief to our administrative staff and indeed to

Laurie Taylor



"Hefce burdened by Freedom of Information requests and censoring" — The Times Higher, March 4.

To: The Higher Education Funding Council for England

Dear Sir,

I understand that under the new Freedom of Information Act, I can ask you to provide me with the reasons for the rejection of my 1986 application for a grant of £2 million to study the handbag industry in Florence. I look forward to receiving full documentation asap.

Yours in anticipation,
Doctor Piercemüller

From: The Higher Education Funding Council for England

Dear Doctor Piercemüller,

We enclose a copy of the relevant minutes relating to your grant application. Please note that the blacked-out sections are those which are deemed to be exempt from the Act's conditions of disclosure (see separate sheets for detailed explanations).

Yours sincerely,
G. Rehnquist (Disclosure Officer)

Minute 23a/17/05/86.
Research Application 67821.
The Handbag Industry in Florence:
Comparative Perspectives.
Applicant: Dr. Piercemüller

The committee recognised that studies of manufacturing in the EU were timely and relevant. There was, however, a strong feeling that Dr Piercemüller's wish to spend three years and £2 million in Florence had more to do with his [redacted] lying on his back in the [redacted] drinking [redacted] than with any empirical wish to learn more about the leather industry.

The committee also took the view that the candidate's research record lacked any sign whatsoever of either [redacted] or [redacted]. His previous work on the decline of the St Tropez fishing industry was described by one referee as a complete and [redacted] [redacted].

After a show of hands it was agreed that the application should therefore be rejected and that a letter be composed which made it plain to Dr Piercemüller that his chances of obtaining funding in the near future were about as good as a snowball's [redacted] [redacted].

Voting details:
For the application [redacted]
Against the application [redacted]

Teaching Awards 2004



*Trevor Kitson
Chemistry*

It is always great to recognize teaching excellence. This year we selected our best 200-level teachers and the winners were:

Chemistry Trevor Kitson
 Paul Buckley

Mathematics Kee Teo
 Tammy Smith

Physics Bob O'Driscoll
 Tony Signal
 Uli Zuelicke



*Uli Zuelicke
Physics*



*Paul Buckley
Chemistry*

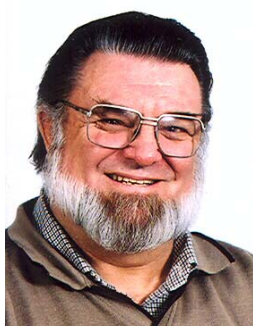
In addition, a special award was made to Peter Kelly recognizing his lifetime of achievements in the area of mathematics teaching. He has dedicated his career to helping students in so many ways and his talent in aiding students on an individual basis, as well as those studying extramurally, have been one of his key attributes that has made him so popular and effective amongst the student population. It was certainly a highlight for me personally to be able to recognize Peter in this way. Congratulations Peter – you really have made a wonderful contribution to teaching mathematics at Massey University.



*Bob O'Driscoll
Physics*



*Tony Signal
Physics*



*Peter Kelly
Mathematics*



*Kee Teo
Mathematics*



*Tammy Smith
Mathematics*

Al Nielson – Fellowship of the Royal Society of Chemistry



Congratulations go to Al Nielson on his recent election to Fellowship of the Royal Society of Chemistry. I am always delighted when staff members receive recognition from their professional bodies and I know that in Al's case his elevation to the Fellowship is a very well deserved honour. This is truly excellent news.

David Parry

IFSGRF

Congratulations to the following students in successfully obtained funding for the Institute's Graduate Research Fund.

Adrian Kitson	\$2,250
Fabio Lodato	\$1,500
Brett Ryland	\$1,500
Yvonne Ting	\$1,500
Scott Walker	\$1,800

RSNZ Travel Grants

Congratulations to the following students in successfully obtaining RSNZ travel grants which will enable them to attend an overseas conference.

Adrian Kitson - IFS Physics
Celia Webby - IFS Chemistry
Amy Pietersma - IFS Chemistry
Scott Walker - IFS Chemistry
Ben Mulchin - IFS Chemistry

Congratulations to the following successful Scholarship Recipients

Freemasons University Scholarship
Karl Shaffer

NZ Forest Research Institute Physics Scholarship
Anthony Fullard

Magnetic Resonance Scholarship
Jonathan Hunt

Chemistry Staff-Student Dinner

On March the twenty third
A grand event occurred.
The chemists held a party,
Full of fun, and hearty,
For students and staff
To have a bit of a laugh,
To let down their hair
And good company to share,
To listen and chat
About this and that,
Staff and students responding
To 'Chemical Bonding.'
Beer and wine were enjoyed,
And spirits were buoyed,
For generous libations
Lubricate conversations.
Excellent food was ingested
And dreadful jokes jested.
Thanks girls and guys
Who went for supplies.
And a big thank you to Mark
For generously sharing his home and not
kicking us out until well after dark.
I guess that line didn't scan
And I can't seem to get this one to rhyme
either.
I'll stop now.

Trevor Kitson

Web Pages

Now is a timely reminder for staff to look at their individual staff web pages. If you feel that it is in need of an update please discuss your requirements with Judy Edwards (BestChoice@massey.ac.nz or extn 3546).

Silly A-Z Story

Abstracting Beacon's camaraderie dispenses Esprit de corps for gammy-legged hedonistically inspired juxtaposed kings. Longingly making noticeable oxymorons (~ something that counteracts itself) phylogenetic sensationalism titillates underlying vortexes with Xircom yielding zones...

Institute Colour Laser Printer

A colour laser printer has been installed in the Institute Office (PN) and is available for staff use. This printer will replace the old colour inkjet printer in the outer office. The new printer is postscript enabled and capable of duplex (two-sided) printing. It can also print overhead projector transparencies on the special sheets provided.

In order to use the printer staff should contact Electronic Services to have the appropriate software installed on their computer. Users of the colour laser printer are asked to record their use in the book alongside the printer.

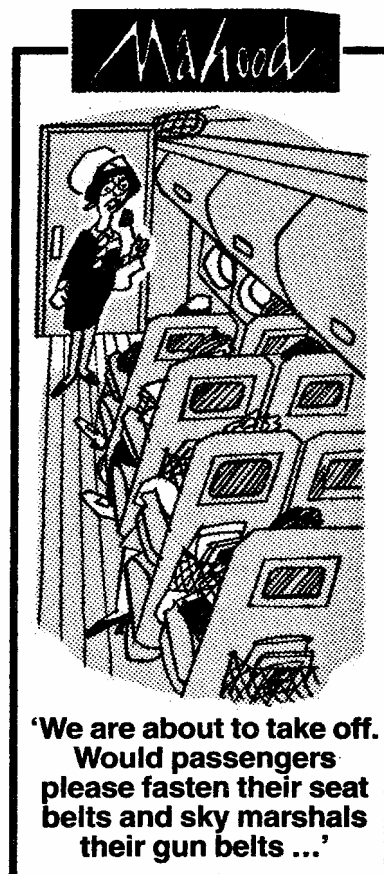
R O'Driscoll

Albany PhD Completions

Ivan Lim has now graduated as a PhD and is now in Daejon (Korea) on a postdoctoral scholarship.

Nicola Gaston waits for her oral examination and has been offered a prestigious Max-Planck postdoctoral scholarship at the Max-Planck Institute of Complex Systems in Dresden (Germany).

Peter Schwerdtfeger



Welcome

The Institute of Fundamental Sciences welcomes *Stephanie Wayper*, who has recently started work at Massey in the position of Tutor in Physics. Prior to this, Stephanie was at the University of Auckland working part time in physics and maths while completing her MSc in experimental quantum optics. Her areas of interest are optics, teaching, writing computer code, and playing the clarinet.

Geoff Dingley

Emily Parker's research group continues to grow. *Dr Fiona Cochrane* joins us as a MURF Postdoctoral Fellow. Fiona is a returning New Zealander. She is a Waikato graduate who completed her PhD in Vancouver, Canada studying aspects of plant secondary metabolism. She also has spent time at Washington State University as a Postdoctoral Fellow, studying chromophore biosynthesis. *Leonardo Negron* is starting a PhD programme. He comes to Palmerston North from New York and has a pharmacy background. We are also pleased to welcome *Hemi Cumming* and *Jeff Yeoman* who will start work on their MSc projects later in the year.

Linley Schofield

Bits and Bobs

Safety Issues

With the advent of CoP and SMoU it seems appropriate that I take some pre-emptive steps and advice staff and graduate students in teaching and research laboratories that I will on a sort of regular basis do a safety walk thru the Institute. The object of this is to ensure that the accumulation of chemicals and general items does not exceed the guidelines in the regulations. This is not intended as a witch-hunt, but a positive approach to ensure safe working practices.

Sorry, in case you have forgotten what CoP and SMoU are, Code of Practice for exempt laboratories issued by ERMA under Section 33 of the HSNO Act and Safe Method of Use for teaching and research laboratories soon to be issued by Massey University. SMoU is to be used in conjunction with the CoP and supplements the Institutes Information for Staff and Research Students booklet.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE); this means the wearing of a lab coat, gloves if necessary, safety glasses and sensible footwear. For workshop and chemical services staff this could also include steel capped safety shoes.

It is a requirement that PPE is worn at all times when in a hazardous situation. Recently, a 100 level Chemistry student who was not wearing safety glasses received an acid solution in one of his eyes. It is the responsibility of the laboratory supervisor to ensure that the proper PPE is worn at all times.

Assessment of Research Projects while not really my territory is one of the issues that staff who supervise postdoctoral fellow and graduate student projects have. This is to ensure that the post doc or grad student completes an assessment of the hazards associated with the project before they start. These are rather obvious for a chemistry project, chemicals; therefore all the chemicals to be used should have a SDS available in a yellow folder. Other procedures eg such as using FTIR spectrophotometers also need to be written down. For mathematics projects the danger could be Occupational Overuse Syndrome (OOS). Physicists have similar problems of both the two previous subject areas.



Moron: Using an electric tool, in a pool, with a metal ladder. Stupid Moron: Standing barefoot on the ladder while doing it.

But, at least he is wearing safety glasses.

OFN

Oxygen Free Nitrogen gas cylinders, recent changes to the Australian/New Zealand Standards for OFN gas cylinders means that the local supplier has changed the valve heads. Effectively this means that only nitrogen regulators should be used for nitrogen gas. IFS Engineering Services have available adapter kits so that existing regulators can still be used.

ACC

It is extremely important that if you suffer an accident at work you complete an Accident Report Form. This is a Statutory Requirement. Do this whenever possible before going to see your GP. Your GP will lodge the ACC Claim and give you a copy for yourself and for Massey.

Cyclists, it does pay to watch where you are going otherwise you may come to a sudden stop. Barrier arm!

TDU & ITS Courses

TDU and IT Services arrange and conduct courses for University staff. A number of IFS staff take advantage of these courses, which are designed to enhance our working environment at Massey. The problem is when a staff member enrolls for a course then fails to turn up. The Institute is liable for the cost of the course when this happens. Please, if you make a commitment to attend a course then do so.

Annual Leave

For those who do not read the IFS Newsletter, tough. For those that do then I wish to advise that Grant Platt will be taking annual leave for the period 17 – 25 June 05 and attending a Glass Symposium 5 -17 October 05.

Brian Ford will also be taking annual and long service leave from October 05 – Feb 06. Bob P will also be taking annual leave from 7

– 24 June 05.

Travel

Some snippets from the April Orbit Travel Newsletter.

Singapore Airlines are to drop its morning flight from Auckland and re-schedule it as an overnight flight to Singapore, departing at midnight, effective 27 March. This means passengers arrive in Singapore in the early morning and are able to connect to virtually their entire route network with only a very short stopover time. It is a great improvement for travel to London as there are more morning and midday flights from Singapore to London.

Pacific Blue has announced 'Blue Plus' fares, which are designed to appeal to the corporate traveller. The fares are effective for sales immediately. This new class features spacious seats; 32kg baggage allowance; a 'no questions asked' refund policy (less a \$30 administration fee); plus the ability to change flight time, date or name of the traveller without penalty. The free access of the Blue Room lounge and priority check-in counters are also available but only on Virgin Blue Australian domestic sectors.

Air New Zealand's replacement for its current First and Business Class long-haul product will be known as "Business Premier" when its first refitted 747 aircraft goes into service later this year. The fleet of Boeing 747-400 aircraft and eight new Boeing 777-200 aircraft will be configured in a three class layout of Business Premier, a new class for the airline called Pacific Premium Economy and Pacific Economy.

The refit of the first 747 aircraft is expected to begin in April and be flying by July, with the rest of the fleet progressively refitted and rolled out over subsequent months. The Auckland-San Francisco route will be the first to offer a guaranteed refitted 747 service on a return trip from 07 August. To follow, flights NZ1 and 2 to London (via Los Angeles) will be guaranteed refitted from 05 November 2005.

PC Gone Mad

This sign was seen on the Western Bays Road, Lake Taupo recently.

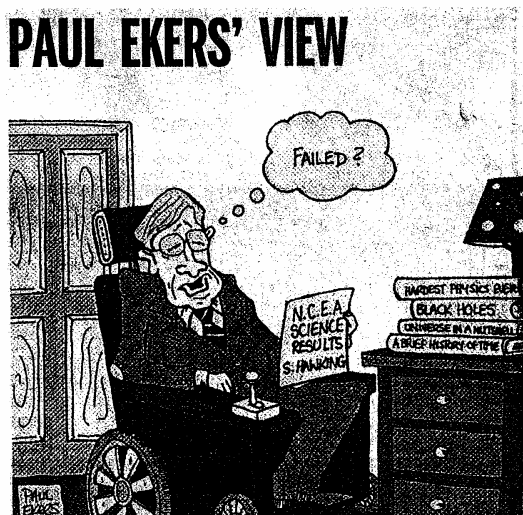


I think it means – Road Works.

Visitors

Just a gentle reminder to academic staff that have invited colleagues to visit IFS that it is necessary to let the HoI and Secretarial staff know before they turn up. Why? So that an induction pack can be prepared for longer stay visitors and other arrangement can be made such as office space if required.

Given all the aggro over the NCEA examination results thought this cartoon adds to the flavour.



Buildings

A small group of staff are preparing a case to present to the University for the conversion of a Chemistry Laboratory into a PC2 Laboratory.

The Science Towers have recently had their Annual Building WOF; Means of Escape check by an Independent Qualified Person (IQP), as required by Section 108 of the Building Act 2004, Building Warrant of Fitness check. This was carried out in February. As a result of the checks IFS is required to correct any defects asap. These mainly refer to blockages of access ways. Please keep all access ways clear especially in front of Fire Escape Doors. Regional Facilities Management will be attending to those areas, which they are responsible for.

University Orders

Reminder from the University Registrar regarding purchasing goods and services etc.

“It has been a long-standing policy of the University that an official purchase order must be provided to a supplier or anyone (e.g. consultants, contractors) who intends to submit an invoice for payment by the University in return for goods and/or services supplied. If you are incurring costs payable by the University and settlement is not by Massey Visa credit card, then without exception a Mass-e-Mall purchase order must be generated and communicated to the supplier. This order number must appear on their invoice to allow payment to be actioned. Where non-official Massey ‘orders’ are made (e.g. using an individual’s name or made-up numbers), no payment will be made until an official Mass-e-Mall number has been issued by the department responsible for the charge”.

MacDiarmid Young Scientists of the Year Awards

A number of IFS Post Graduate Students have entered the 2005 Poster Competition. Massey has a total of 36 posters entered which were delivered to the Foundation for Research, Science and Technology in Wellington on Friday 22 April. I understand that all entrants will be invited to attend the award function in Auckland.

ATM

A Kiwi Bank ATM has been installed by the Foyer Science Link A-B. It accepts a range of cards.

Bob Parsons

IFS Happy Hour

A successful happy hour was held on 6 April. Congratulations to **Brian Ford** who won the lucky draw and got to take home a bottle of wine.

The next Institute Happy Hour is to be held on:

Thursday 16 June 2005

A mid-winter dinner is being planned for:

Friday 1 July 2005

QuickTime™ and a
TIFF (Uncompressed) decompressor
are needed to see this picture.

Glass Annealing Oven

The new glass annealing oven recently arrived in the Institute. This new oven, once connected up, should provide a more efficient replacement for the old fire-brick oven from the 1960s. The old oven has written on it "by appointment to King Nebuchadnezzar" so we might be talking about 1960BC. In any case the old fire-brick oven takes a lot of power and is slow to heat.

The new annealing oven, from Furnace Engineering Pokeno, is constructed with ceramic fibre layering and has rapid heating cycles and an electronic racking system. Of a bell-shaped design the oven top moves up and down, assisted by a counterbalance, on to the bed of the oven (the heating is within the top.).



Grant Platt, Scientific Glassblower

Udo von Mulert, the Manager of IFS Electronic Services, retired on the 31st of March this year. His farewell the following day was very well attended by friends and colleagues. The enormous respect held for Udo by the people with whom he worked was reflected both in the number of expressions of concern after his retirement was announced, and also in the frequently repeated “you will be missed” on his farewell card.

Udo came to the then Department of Chemistry, Biochemistry and Biophysics in 1982 and impressed from the outset, both as a person and also with his skill at the job. He worked for a short time in the Department of Psychology before coming back to Chemistry, Biochemistry and Biophysics to be in charge of the Electronics Workshop.



There were to be significant changes in the years that followed. First Chemistry, Biochemistry and Biophysics was split into a Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry and a Department of Physics and Biophysics with the Electronics Workshop belonging to both. Then, following the establishment of Colleges, came the formation of the Institute of Fundamental Sciences. The Electronics Workshop was re-established as Electronics Services with a focus on providing specialised electronic instrument service throughout the College and beyond.

As Manager of Electronics Services, Udo coped well with the changing environment and had a profound effect on raising the quality and broadening the range of services delivered by his team. Under Udo’s guidance the culture of the workshop evolved to meet the times. Casualties of these changes included: the always blaring radio, the collection of TV sets awaiting repair and the distinctive art that once adorned the walls. He improved job management by creating software that is now used throughout Specialist Services in IFS and elsewhere in the College of Sciences. Enhancing the skills of the Electronics Services team was always a priority.

Udo has a wide range of talents. He is highly skilled, not just in electronics, but also in the repair of precision optical and mechanical systems. It was these skills that led to him being head-hunted to be the service agent for Malvern Instrument devices in new Zealand. This involved the repair, maintenance and calibration of a range of sophisticated particle size measuring instruments used for critical applications ranging from the manufacture of pharmaceuticals to the smelting of aluminium.



Udo is known for his excellent people skills and over the years he has helped academic staff in particular by providing support for the research, teaching and administration in the Institute. His practical approach to problem solving has saved the University a great deal of money.

Udo’s farewell gifts reflected his enjoyment of tramping and his passion for photography. He is also a dedicated family man and his friends and former colleagues all wish him a long and happy retirement.

NZ Mathematics Colloquium 2005

This will be held at Massey University, Palmerston North, from 5 to 7 December. The annual Colloquium is the longest-running general mathematics conference held on a regular basis in New Zealand, the first occurring in 1966 at Victoria University of Wellington. Covering all aspects of mathematics and its applications, the Colloquium is hosted by NZ universities in turn, and on six occasions it has been incorporated in the Australasian Mathematics Convention run jointly with the Australian Mathematical Society. Massey University has been the venue on six previous occasions and is again the host this year. An Organising Committee of fourteen is well advanced with the planning.

There will be five invited speakers, three of whose plenary talks are sponsored by outside groups, and three parallel sessions of contributed papers. A highlight of the Colloquium will be the award of the Aitken Prize by the NZ Mathematical Society for the best student talk. An additional afternoon session on Mathematics Education is expected to attract teachers, especially from around the lower North Island. The Colloquium Dinner and an afternoon excursion will be the main social events of the programme. HoDs of NZ university mathematics departments will use the Colloquium to discuss academic or administrative issues. The programme also provides for business meetings of the NZ Mathematical Society and the NZ Branch of ANZIAM (Australia & New Zealand Applied Mathematics).

For further information, contact Toni Wilson (Secretary) or Dean Halford (Convenor).

Dean Halford

Italian Journey

QuickTime™ and a
TIFF (Uncompressed) decompressor
are needed to see this picture.

Guest house
(Palazzo Puteano)

QuickTime™ and a
TIFF (Uncompressed) decompressor
are needed to see this picture.

Library
(Palazzo dell'Orologio)

QuickTime™ and a
TIFF (Uncompressed) decompressor
are needed to see this picture.

Main building
(Palazzo della Carovana)

Many German artists have gone on an Italian journey to find inspiration. Now I know why and can highly recommend the trip. As embarrassing as it is, I have to admit that I visited Italy for the first time just four weeks ago! Somehow I had to move to the other side of the world first to get the chance... The visit was motivated by an urge to make progress on several joint projects with an Italian colleague of mine who is currently working at the Scuola Normale Superiore in Pisa. We

both had previously been post docs in Karlsruhe (Germany) and collaborated quite a lot already then. In the end, we did some nice physics, and I learnt a few tidbits of Italian culture.

Pisa is home to a very old university: the Università di Pisa dates back to 1343. However, the institution I visited was founded much later (in 1810) by Napoleon when his army occupied most of Europe. It is the Italian counterpart to the French Ecole Normale Superieure – and as such the country’s elite university. Its students have a hard life: they have to take introductory courses at the University of Pisa, pass the exams above a high cut-off mark as a precondition to further enrolment, and take advanced courses at the Scuola in addition. In return, they have a good chance to get excellent jobs – and the Scuola takes care of many of their earthly needs for the duration of study. This includes free Lunch and Dinner at the Mensa that provides excellent meals. Talking about food: in my ignorance, I was quite shocked to find that the ‘typical’ Italian dishes eaten at restaurants in Germany or the US are not at all genuinely Italian. For starters, a real Italian meal always has two courses: pasta or risotto first, and a meat or fish dish afterwards. Cappuccino is served only with breakfast – no Italian would order any after 11am! Espresso (i.e., an extremely *Short Black*) is synonymous with coffee; it is rather cheap (€0.80≈NZ\$1.60) and consumed quite often during the day. Hence, being in Italy was *coffee-aholic’s heaven*. Finally, real pizza has mozzarella cheese as a topping – not Gouda or Edam, and believe me: you can taste the difference!

Besides experiencing culinary delight, I found it very enchanting to live and work for a time in an environment where basically everything is elaborately decorated and historically meaningful. Certainly, I am basically used to beautiful historic German city cores, but the Italian ones I saw were quite different – and largely unaffected by world wars. The main buildings of the Scuola are located at the Piazza dei Cavalieri – named after the templar knights who used the premises (including the marvelous Stephen’s church) as a spiritual and organisational centre. The three palaces pictured above are situated adjacent to each other at that plaza. All of them date back to the 16th century. The guest house has been stunningly renovated and presents itself as a modern building in an ancient shell. Interestingly, the library building is associated with a rather gruesome story. Apparently, the clock tower used to serve as a hunger prison in former times, which came to fame because of its mention in Dante’s Divine Comedy. One of its famous inmates was a traitor who sold arms to Pisa’s foes. The man was jailed for months, together with his family, members of which died during the incarceration. Extreme starvation caused surviving family members to feed on remains of their deceased relatives! Sometimes history is not pretty, but Pisans nevertheless love to tell this story to visitors. But there are certainly even more associations with enlightenment. Galilei lived in Pisa, and the huge candelabra in the cathedral is said to have inspired his studies of pendulum motion. And the Leaning Tower must certainly have been quite useful for doing experiments with massive bodies in free fall. Quite an oddity it is... Usually the results of faulty design from earlier ages do not survive to be examined today (hence we may think the architects and builders were perfect back then!). Unstable ground caused the Leaning Tower (which is the *campanile* for the cathedral) to sag already during its construction, prompting builders’ attempts to correct for this when they added its higher stories. As a result, the tower’s shape resembles that of a banana quite closely. Tourist are having fun getting their picture taken from a perspective that makes them appear to hold up the tower with their hands...

Going to Italy was an inspiration for me - but don’t expect any poems to be published in *IFS & Bits* anytime soon!

Diary from Steve Denby - March 2005

The weather is definitely getting colder as the sun goes down, we are getting the most spectacular sunrises and sunsets at present. We are busy trying to get all our outside work done before it gets too bloody cold, its no fun trying to hold and do up nuts and bolts when you have three layers of gloves on!



Fog Over Pressure ridges



Steve all wrapped up



Fog Over Pressure ridges



Sunrise



Steve chilling (or is that thawing) out!



Sunrise over Willy's field

Unless otherwise specified guidelines for contract applications under this programme are available from Marcia Baker on extn 5942 or e-mail your request to M.J.Baker@massey.ac.nz.

INTERNAL RESEARCH FUNDS:

1. Massey University Research Fund (MURF)

Available to all academic staff of the status of Assistant Lecturer and above, who are PBRF eligible, to support casual/temporary assistance, consumables and domestic travel to a total value of \$15,000. Tenable 2006.

Deadline: 1 July, 2005 / Interviews: 27, 28, 29 July, 2005

2. Massey University Research Fellowship (URF)

Provides support for senior academics, who are PBRF eligible, to complete a particular project. Up to \$20,000 is made to the Department/Institute/School to enable relief from some normal teaching and administrative duties. Tenable 2006.

Deadline: 1 July, 2005 / Interviews: 27, 28, 29 July, 2005

3. Massey University Research Award (URA)

Available to Lecturers and Senior Lecturers, who are PBRF eligible, in all Colleges except Sciences. Up to \$10,000 in casual assistance is made to the Department/Institute/School to enable relief from some normal teaching and administrative duties to complete a current research programme or undertake a new one. Tenable 2006.

Deadline: 1 July, 2005 / Interviews: 27, 28, 29 July, 2005

4. Massey University Technical Assistance Award (UTTA)

Available to Lecturers and Senior Lecturers, who are PBRF eligible. Up to \$10,000 in casual assistance is made to the Department/Institute/School to enable provision of some technical assistance for a specific research project. Tenable 2006.

Deadline: 1 July, 2005 / Interviews: 27, 28, 29 July, 2005

5. Massey University Technicians Award (UTA)

Technicians Award provides a salary of up to a maximum of \$35,000 to employ a Technician for a specific research project. Tenable 2006.

Deadline: 1 July, 2005 / Interviews: 27, 28, 29 July, 2005

6. Post Doctoral Fellowships (PDF)

Provides two years' funding for an appointment that will enhance a specific research programme. Researchers, who are PBRF eligible, from all academic departments are eligible to apply.

Deadline: 1 July, 2005 / Interviews: 27, 28, 29 July, 2005

7. Massey University Women's Award (UWA)

Available to women Lecturers and Senior Lecturers, who are PBRF eligible. Up to \$10,000 in casual assistance is made to the Department/Institute/School to enable relief from some normal teaching and administrative duties to complete a current research programme, write up a completed programme or undertake a new one. Tenable 2006.

Deadline: 1 June, 2005 / Interviews: 8 June, 2005

Guidelines (including submission instructions) and application forms for all of the above funds are now available on the University web site and may be downloaded from the following Research Services web page: http://research.massey.ac.nz/rs/research_funds.htm

MASSEY UNIVERSITY RESEARCH MEDALS

Massey University has recently instituted a number of research medals to recognise outstanding contributions and promote research excellence.

1. Massey University Research Medal - Individual

Recognises outstanding research contributions in a particular discipline. One medal awarded annually, together with \$20,000 research grant.

2. Massey University Research Medal – Early Career

Recognises completion of PhD or equivalent with past seven years, plus research potential and high leadership calibre. Up to three medals awarded annually, together with \$10,000 research grant.

3. Massey University Research Medal - Supervisor

Recognises outstanding record of research supervision at Masters or Doctoral level. One medal awarded annually, together with \$10,000 research grant.

4. Massey University Research Medal - Team

Recognises outstanding research contributions by a team. One medal awarded annually to each full-time academic or research team member, together with \$25,000 research grant to team.

Further information, including application procedures, for any of the above medals is now available at:

http://research.massey.ac.nz/rs/university_medals.htm

SIX (6) copies of each nomination must be submitted to the Office of the Assistant Vice-Chancellor (Research) by 1 July, 2005.

UPCOMING RESEARCH TDU SESSIONS

Places are available in the following seminars in the Research Management Skills Programme. To enrol, please email Joan <mailto:J.Forester@massey.ac.nz> or go to the TDU web page and enrol <http://tdu.massey.ac.nz/forms/EnrolFormResearchManagement.htm>

Obtaining Internal Research Funds

<http://tdu.massey.ac.nz/html/RMInternalFunds.htm>

Albany - Friday 13 May - 9:30 a.m. to 1:15 p.m. - QA2

Palmerston North - Friday 6 May - 8:45 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. - TDU 1.08 (Kura Awa, Hokowhitu campus)

Obtaining External Research Funds

<http://tdu.massey.ac.nz/html/RMResearchFunds.htm>

Albany - Friday 20 May - 9:30 a.m. to 1:15 p.m. - QA7

Palmerston North - Wednesday 25 May - 8:45 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. - TDU 1.08

Managing Team Research Projects

<http://tdu.massey.ac.nz/html/RMTeamProjects.htm>

Albany - Friday 20 May - 1:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. - QA7

Palmerston North - Wednesday 25 May - 12:45 p.m. to 4:15 p.m. - TDU 1.08

Dilemmas in Research Supervision

<http://tdu.massey.ac.nz/html/RMSupervisionDilemmas.htm>

Albany - Monday 23 May - 9:30 a.m. to 1:15 p.m. - QA2

Palmerston North - Thursday 19 May - 8:45 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. - TDU 1.08