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### Tsunami disaster Boxing Day 2004

**Forensic Odontology staff of the Oral Anatomy and Maxillofacial Surgery section were once again involved in providing their expertise following a major Asian disaster.**

*"Soon after the tsunami struck Professor John Clement from Dental Science found himself organising the work of forensic experts to assist in identifying victims ..."* (Extract from an email forwarded to all staff in January 2005 from Professor Glyn Davis, Vice-Chancellor, The University of Melbourne).

Not only were our staff involved, some of our former students also played a part. Dr Narisha Chawla, a BDSc graduate from 2004, is currently living

in Bangkok where she is undertaking postgraduate studies at The University of Bangkok. Dr Chawla wrote to Dr Pamela Craig:

*"Hi Dr Craig, I just got back from Phang-Nga, the province most affected by the recent tsunami down south of Thailand. I travelled with my father and a few of his friends to assess the damage and to decide how to help them rebuild the infrastructure. I've never seen anything like it—a 20 meter fishing boat slammed into a house 2km from shore; a car literally wrapped around a coconut tree like wrapping paper—whole villages were flattened.*

*During our meeting with the Deputy Governor, he mentioned that they were looking for dentists to help with forensic identification—so I went to the temple where they kept the unidentified corpses. There were already about 20 or so dentists there, mainly from Universities in Bangkok. There were hundreds of bodies kept at the temple, preserved by dry ice and*

*Narisha Chawla found herself involved in more than postgraduate study in Thailand—called to assist in the post-tsunami cleanup. Narisha was able to assist with forensic identification.*

*whatever formalin they had—which was limited. I can't even begin to describe the smell but it's the images that will stay with me for a long time. The bodies were a week old, mainly children, which made it twice as hard. There were maggots EVERYWHERE on the bodies. They had to be washed out of the mouth before we could do anything. The dental unit was divided into three stations – exam and charting, radiology, and extraction. I worked at the first and third station. At the first one, we had to first identify their gender, then dissect from corner of the mouth to the ramus, brush the teeth, estimate the child's age based on their dentition, as well doing the*

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## A word from the Head

PROFESSOR ERIC REYNOLDS

The building works for the School's space at 720 Swanston Street are proceeding on schedule. The information technology and audio-visual requirements for the School are now being finalised and it is anticipated that the new School with all teaching areas fully functional will be ready by the non-teaching period in second semester. Therefore we are planning to relocate the dental school to the new site in the period 19th - 30th September. School staff should be congratulated on the design of the new teaching laboratories which will include a fully equipped, computer-

based teaching laboratory and 'virtual microscope'. The new laboratories and the comprehensive IT and AV fitout promise to provide a state-of-the-art new facility for undergraduate and postgraduate teaching and for research.

When the dental school relocates to the new site at 720 Swanston Street, we will leave behind a group of researchers that will ultimately relocate to the Bio21 Institute of Molecular Science and Biotechnology. Plans for the fit-out of the School's space at the Bio21 Institute have been signed off and it is expected that staff involved in the move to the Institute will be relocated at the end of 2005.

The School was planning to hold an open day in June this year to bid farewell to the old building but that has had to be postponed until later in the year, so more of that in the next edition.

With the School's move, the Dental Museum is also being relocated and we are very pleased that DHSV and the current CEO of the Royal Melbourne Dental Hospital, Ms Robyn Batten, are most supportive of finding locations around the hospital where we can display some of the museum's unique dental artefacts.

The construction of the new dental clinic at Goulburn Valley Hospital is expected to be completed early in 2006 and we are looking forward to sending our students there for what we expect will be, not just an experience in the practice of dentistry in a rural community, but also a comprehensive and stimulating look at rural life and the interdependent role of all health care professions, particularly in country towns.

With the move to the new building we expect to be able to modestly increase our student numbers thereby

doing our bit to alleviate the dentistry workforce shortage. Additional student numbers however, have the potential to place increased strain on DHSV clinical facilities where students currently receive their clinical training. With the way the undergraduate programs are currently structured the School will have to be innovative in finding alternative ways of providing clinical training and, of course, an obvious source is Community Health Centres. The School will be working further with all interest groups to find a solution to this perennial problem. Another avenue we wish to explore is rotations of final year BDS students to private practices for observation to learn more about private dental practice before they graduate. If you are in private practice and would be interested in hosting student visits to your practice we would be very happy to hear from you.

# Bio21

## Research News

### Bio21 Research Institute

Report from Dr Stuart Dashper  
Head of the Oral Biology Section  
and Director of Research

**In 2005 some researchers from the School of Dental Science will be moving into the new Bio21 Institute of Molecular Science and Biotechnology Building located on Flemington Road.**

The Bio21 Institute is a vibrant, catalytic, health-research and biotechnology cluster drawing together the unique strengths and potential of its internationally recognised research teams. Shared resources and expertise in

biomolecular and other biomedical research, education and healthcare will deliver for Victoria a unique platform for innovative discovery, spanning the range from basic science, through translational research, to delivery of community outcomes.

Bio21 is the brainchild of Professor Dick Wettenhall and brings an outstanding collection of research groups together in a state of the art research institute.

Represented in the Bio21 Institute will be researchers from The University of Melbourne's Biochemistry Department and The School of Chemistry as well as the Departments of Medicine, Genetics, Pharmacology, Pathology, Physics and

Engineering and the School of Veterinary Science.

### Some of the objectives of the Bio21 Institute are;

- to create a synergistic environment which encourages interactive, collaborative research and the cross-fertilisation of technologies through sharing of expertise and access to the Bio21-supported facilities and projects

- the creation of a financially viable biotechnology precinct and facilitation of the development and commercialisation of biotechnology research.

- the development of the expertise and human resources to underpin

Bio21 brings an outstanding collection of research groups together in a state of the art research institute.

future innovation in the Australian biotechnology industry, increasing the skills base and generating new jobs.

- in co-operation with universities and others, will support education in both research and in the business of biotechnology, leading to a variety of biotechnology-related career options. Bio21 will also involve the promotion of community awareness and provision of community education on new and emerging biotechnologies.

The inclusion of The School of Dental Science researchers led by Professor Eric Reynolds into Bio21 will offer unprecedented and exciting opportunities for an expansion of the research that is currently being conducted at The School. More information on Bio21 can be found at <http://www.bio21.com.au>



(continued from front page ...)

normal charting. At the last station the medicos took samples of flesh for DNA matching and we extracted three intact teeth from each body, two incisors and a molar.

I never thought that I would EVER do anything like this—I fainted in anatomy dissection class! When you see something like that, people so desperate to find the bodies of their loved ones, it's hard to stand back and just watch. If any student ever complains about dissection and learning eruption/calcification dates, you can tell them that I had to put all that to use within a month of leaving school".

Dr Chawla later wrote to the School that, "...after my first trip to Phang-Nga, I went down on my own—I was only involved in one part of the identification process. I've just come back from a four day trip organised by the Central Institute of Forensic Science in conjunction with Chulalongkorn University. In addition to doing what I did last time, I was also in charge of "reporting missing people". I took descriptions and details from dental records from relatives of their missing loved ones. This was by far the hardest job. The relatives would literally go down on their knees and beg that we do everything we could to find their loved ones. Many had lost their entire

extended families—they only survived because they were "lucky"—certainly not how they felt.

In addition, I had to try and match ante-mortem to post-mortem dental records. During the four days I was there, we matched three cases, out of a total of six cases matched since this started a few weeks ago. I can't describe the excitement and joy we shared with the relatives each time a match was found. The relatives had all given up on finding their loved ones alive, as it had been almost three

weeks since the disaster. All they wanted was to take them home. It was a tough job, but also the most rewarding. I felt like a dentist, a psychiatrist and a detective, all at the same time!

While I was there, the head of the Thai team approached me and asked if I wanted to stay on to work with DVI as a representative from Thailand to do the actual DNA testing of the teeth. The reps from other countries are forensic experts, but there

are very, very few in Thailand. I was the only real bilingual person there and they were willing to give me a crash-course in it. However, as I had not started working at the time, I wasn't registered with any Dental Councils—Australian, Singaporean, or Thai—and it was crucial that they be able to track me down in the months to follow, in case any of my investigations needed any clarification so unfortunately that didn't happen.

Prof Clement and Pam Craig will be staying in much better conditions than we did, although even the Thai dentists have now had their accommodation upgraded to a resort. While we were there, the international team and Thai team worked in separate areas. The international team

had a proper set-up with air-conditioning (it's 30+ degrees all day, everyday) and those metal tables they use in real morgues. At the Thai site, we had a few fans, and we used coffins for everything, from dissection table to

"office desks". We were put up in a military tent, 25m x 50m. We showered in the toilets — using the water that they use to pour down those floor toilets (no such thing as modern mechanical flush!). A few dentists left and booked themselves into hotels after the first night, but it didn't bother the rest of us.

When we thought about why we were there, things like dirty toilets or no proper showers just seemed trivial, you know? Many of us worked from 7am till 9pm, with a couple of hours in between to eat and shower. Despite that, we woke up each morning feeling fresh and ready to go—only when we got on the plane coming back to Bangkok that we realised how physically demanding it was—I think I slept for half a day when I got back."

NARISHA CHAWLA



OPPOSITE PAGE: Where the volunteers stayed. THIS PAGE — TOP LEFT: The process of dental exam and charting. TOP RIGHT: Noticeboards, with posters of the missing photos of the deceased. RIGHT: A boat washed up next to a house about 1km from shore. ABOVE: Narisha Chawla

45th Annual Meeting of the Australian/ New Zealand Division of the International Association for Dental Research

Sunday 25th to Wednesday 28th September 2005

Millennium Hotel, Queenstown, New Zealand

#### Keynote Speakers:

Prof Jimmy Steele, University of Newcastle upon Tyne, UK

Prof Lakshman Samaranayake, University of Hong Kong

#### Symposia:

- Oral health of older adults
- Oral microbiology: novel approaches to preventing oral microbial diseases
- Dental education and AASD symposium
- Fluorosis/enamel defects in child populations in Australia and New Zealand
- Craniofacial biomechanics
- Oral implantology
- Periodontology
- Orthodontics
- Biomaterials

#### Important Dates:

Registration opens: 1 February 2005

Early-bird Registration deadline: 26 August 2005

Abstract submission opens: 1 February 2005

Abstract deadline: 12 August 2005

#### Contact:

richard.cannon@stonebow.otago.ac.nz

See you there!

## Education News

### Selection of undergraduate and postgraduate students for 2005 entry

#### Undergraduate

A total of 1371 applications were made through VTAC for Commonwealth Supported, Australian Fee Paying and International Fee Paying places in the Bachelor of Dental Science.

A total of 349 applications were made through VTAC for Commonwealth Supported, Australian Fee Paying and International Fee Paying places in the Bachelor of Oral Health. The ENTER range in the Bachelor of Dental Science was between 99.95 and 96.70. The ENTER range for all VTAC school-leaver offer of places for regular places in the Bachelor of Oral Health was between 99.65 and 70.05.

For the Bachelor of Dental Science, including the offers of places made to direct international applicants, 70 students enrolled in First Year 2005.

For the Bachelor of Oral Health, including the offers of places made to direct international applicants, 31 students enrolled in First Year 2005.

Of the total 101 enrolments, 13 were selected through Access Melbourne which is the University's new combined special entry and access scholarships scheme. This replaces the former Targeted Access Program (TAP) and includes the former Aboriginal Entry Scheme. Access Melbourne is available to Australian or New Zealand citizens or Australian permanent residents or holders of a

permanent Humanitarian Visa who have not been awarded results in a degree course at a tertiary institution in Australia and have demonstrated the capacity to undertake successfully the course of their choice.

Eligible applicants includes those who are:

- indigenous Australians;
- who experience difficult family circumstances;
- suffer hardship caused by socio-economic circumstances;
- have a disability or long-term illness;
- come from a non-English speaking background;
- have undertaken Year 12 at a Victorian school that is under-represented in the tertiary sector, and
- those who have completed school in a rural or isolated area.

#### Postgraduate

The first cohort of students graduated in 2004 from the new Doctor of Clinical Dentistry and in 2005 fourteen students have enrolled in the first year of the program. These students are undertaking the following specialties: Endodontics, Orthodontics, Pediatric Dentistry, Periodontics and Prosthodontics.

Seven students have enrolled in the Postgraduate Diploma in Clinical Dentistry undertaking Restorative Dentistry and Implant Dentistry specialisations and two students have enrolled in the Graduate Diploma in Forensic Odontology. A further two students have enrolled in the Postgraduate Diploma in Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery.

Of the total 101 enrolments, 13 were selected through Access Melbourne which is the University's new combined special entry and access scholarships scheme.

## Postgraduate Programmes

### Beyond the comfort zone - postgraduate study

Why would someone who has finished an undergraduate degree in dentistry want to keep studying? Are they crazy?

Perhaps they're just afraid to get into the "real world".

Or, do they just have more money than sense? Anecdotally, there seems to be as many reasons for studying longer as there are students. Ultimately, postgraduate study is a very personal pursuit.

While it seems a daunting task to return to study having already spent five years at university, many wish to return after working in general practice for a while. They have had time to breathe, get married and/or divorced, have children, travel even - in short, live a "normal" life. But, importantly, they have had time to think carefully about who they are and where their career aspirations might lead.

At heart, they seem to want more from their work. More challenges in their practice, more career options and, it must be said for some, more money. But without knowing it until they get there, they also become part of a select group of dental graduates who aspire to greater things.

However, about one third of our postgraduate students are not dentists. Most of our research higher degree students (Masters and PhDs) have a Bachelor of Science with Honours in one of the biomedical subjects such as microbiology, immunology or genetics.

Postgraduate students sacrifice a lot personally due to the heavy workload that they assume in order to succeed. They also sacrifice financially—everyone by way of lost income—but, clinical coursework students have to pay fees as well. There are no Commonwealth Supported Places (CSPs) in our clinical coursework programs, so all students are full-fee payers. In 2005, the average course fee for one year full-time study is approximately \$24,000 for local students (Australian citizens/ permanent residents and New Zealand citizens) and approximately \$35,000 for international students (everyone else!). Local research students do not

pay a course fee as they are allocated a Research Training Scheme place that, in effect, is a fee-free CSP. International research students, however, still incur the \$35,000/year fee.

The School runs two very different types of courses - clinical coursework and research programs. Clinical coursework programs involve approximately 50% clinical training, 20% seminars and assignments and 30% research project and thesis. Research programs, either the masters by research or PhD, are 100% research. Students are required to produce a substantial body of work that advances knowledge in their field and to write a thesis on this work

Importantly, they have had time to think carefully about who they are and where their career aspirations might lead.



## Dental Museum information needed

#### Mary and Kathy - Identical Twins

The Museum holds two sets of coloured acrylic models of the above twins with their names scratched on the back and is searching for further information as there are no written records.

It is believed that in the mid 1960's, shortly after entry to the present building, the twins were brought to the School by a member of the Orthodontic Department for demonstration purposes, photographed and impressions taken. This was a unique occasion and much talked about. Dr Clive Dennis may have made up the acrylic models. Any information will be of value in bringing the catalogue up to date.

H.F. Atkinson MBE. Hon. Curator, hfa@unimelb.edu.au



ranging from 35,000 (masters) to 80,000 (PhD) words, by the conclusion of their candidature.

We have 107 postgraduate students enrolled in 2005 - 44 are enrolled in the new Doctor of Clinical Dentistry, 27 are enrolled in PhDs. The rest are enrolled in Graduate Diploma programs, Masters and Honours. Overall, they are an extremely diverse and talented group.

In spite of my aim not to write an advertisement for postgraduate study, it has been pretty hard to avoid. So, I say to you, if you are not afraid to go beyond your comfort zone (and even if you are!), why not think about it for a while. You could always check out the web site. Couldn't hurt, could it?

KIM HANSON  
POSTGRADUATE PROGRAMS OFFICER

In 2004, the first cohort of students graduated from the Doctor of Clinical Dentistry coursework program.

These students (pictured above with Professor Louise Brearley Messer and Professor Eric Reynolds) are now specialists in their field.

Left to Right -  
Dr Nigel Souter, Dr Kurien Mamootil, Dr Chankrit Sathorn, Dr Amanda Law, Dr Po-Ching Lu, Dr Saraswati Jusuf and Professor Eric Reynolds.

## Staff news

#### Matt Hopcraft

Dr Matthew Hopcraft was awarded the Australian Army Dental Corps 2004 Colonel MGT Kenny Award which is awarded every two years to publicly recognise exemplary service to members of the RAADC. It is a single award, outside the Australian system of Honours and Awards and Commendations for service.



#### David Manton

Dr David Manton was awarded the Australian Dental Research Foundation/Australian Dental Industry Association Research Award as the highest ranked primary applicant for a 2005 research grant application submitted to the Australian Dental Research Foundation this year.





### Associate Professor Victor West

It gives me a great deal of pleasure to write about my good friend and colleague Vic West. I have known Vic since our undergraduate days and we worked together for many years as academic staff members in the School of Dental Science at The University of Melbourne. Vic first worked in general dental practice before specialising as an orthodontist. He also has a qualification in law and at one stage seriously considered taking up a career in singing. His CV is so long that one really cannot do more than simply scratch the surface. Vic retired from the Dental School some years ago with the position of Associate Professor and Reader in Orthodontics, but like me, until relatively recently, he still undertook teaching commitments and held an appointment as Principal Fellow with the title of Associate Professor. He was also a visiting professor in orthodontics at Loma Linda Dental School in California, USA. Over his working life he published over 35 papers in refereed journals and supervised more than 80 post-graduate student research projects. Vic held various important administrative posts over the years, having been President of the Australian Dental Association Victorian Branch in 1981, and at other times President of Melbourne University Staff Association and President of the Australian Society of Orthodontists (Victorian Branch). He was a member of the Specialist Qualifications Committee of the Dental Board of Victoria for many years. He has served on the Committee of Management of the Royal Dental Hospital of Melbourne, and was Chairman of the House Committee of Manvantara Rehabilitation Hospital and Daycare Centre (Peter James Centre) and is now a Life Governor of that body. In 1998, he was made a Member of The Order of Australia, for "Service to Dentistry in the field of Orthodontics as an educator and administrator, and to the Community". Vic was not a golfer or bowler, but he did play a mean game of tennis. He has a charming wife Denise, and three grown up daughters, Prani, Sharna and Tamsin.

In 2003, Vic was awarded the Australian Society of Orthodontists (Victorian Branch) Distinguished Services Award.

DR JOHN HARCOURT



### Dr Joseph Palamara

Joseph Palamara was initially appointed as a Research Fellow in 1996 within the restorative unit of the School of Dental Science. He obtained a PhD in 1983 in physics from Monash University, investigating the Ultrastructure of Macropodidae and Human Enamel. He was appointed as Lecturer in 2001 and Senior Lecturer in 2003.

He received the Ernest Joske Research Award for 2003 and, although involved in the teaching of dental materials to the undergraduate BDSc and BOH students, a considerable amount of his time is involved in undertaking and supervising postgraduate research projects. His initial academic career started by lecturing to physics students on magnetism, waves and optics and conducting research into the ultrastructure of marsupial teeth and normal and carious human enamel aided, at that time, with the use of electron microscope facilities.

Since coming to the School of Dental Science, his research interests have proceeded in a number of different areas diversifying into the detailed testing of dental materials and investigation of biological hard tissues (dentin and bone) and the development of biomimetic materials. He has a multidisciplinary background and has also worked in less familiar biomaterials areas, collaborating with people from the Royal Children's Hospital, Department of Orthopaedics (investigating muscle lengthening), Department of otolaryngology (development of the electrode array in the cochlear implant), Department of paediatrics (characterizing the ultrastructure of types of osteogenesis, dentinogenesis and amelogenesis imperfecta). Presently, he is supervising Masters and PhD students on a variety of projects involving investigating the physical, chemical mechanical and biological properties of dental materials and hard tissues namely; fluid flow in dentine, thermal properties (conductance and diffusivity) of dentine, the enhancement of dental cements with CPP-ACP, the strain/stress concentration throughout the jaw and around teeth and implants due to mastication load. Investigation of the formation of non-carious cervical lesions using finite element analysis of tooth models and validated by experimental studies was work conducted with one of the first PhD dental students he assisted, Darunee Amagarn, who later on became his wife.



### Associate Professor Andrew Smith

Andrew graduated in 1977 with a BDS from the University of Sheffield UK and trained in Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery and Oral Medicine by rotation through various positions within the United Kingdom and was appointed as Senior Registrar on the Nottingham/Sheffield Rotation. He was appointed as Lecturer in Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery, The University of Melbourne in 1990 and promoted to Senior Lecturer and Associate Professor. He is Head of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery, Austin and Repatriation Medical Centre and Principal Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeon, The Royal Melbourne Hospital. The School of Dental Science recently awarded him the JJ Marks and TC Adamson Prize for his work in development of the new third and fourth year BDSc curriculum.

Andrew's principal research area is in Oral Cancer, most particularly in the area of outcome assessment for quality of life and in the development of more accurate data collection. In addition he has interests in Laser and he is the Director of Information Technology in the School and is a Member of the Executive and Planning Committee.

He directs the Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery Training Programme in Victoria. This is a joint project of the School of Dental Science and the Royal Australasian College of Dental Surgeons (RACDS). He is currently president of ANZAOMS (Australian and New Zealand Association of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons), a member of the Board of Studies for Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery at the RACDS, chairing the Accreditation Committee) and for the last few years has been the Convenor of fourth year BDSc and Undergraduate Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery Education. He is the Director of Information Technology in the School and is a Member of Executive and Planning Committee.

Andrew is also actively involved in community memberships. He is Chair, Medicare Approved Dental Practitioners Appeals Committee and sits on the Medical Products and Devices Panel for the Federal government. He is also a member of the Head and Neck Cancer Committee of the Cancer Council, Victoria.



### Professor Harold Messer

Professor Messer graduated with both BDSc and MDSc degrees from The University of Queensland. He then received a PhD and a Certificate in Endodontics from The University of Minnesota. He was first appointed Assistant Professor in the Department of Oral Biology at The University of Minnesota in 1974. He was later promoted to Associate Professor and then to Professor and Head of Endodontics in that University. He held that position until 1989.

In 1990, Professor Messer was appointed Professor of Restorative Dentistry at The University of Melbourne, later becoming Head of School. His research has included studies related to the biomechanical properties of endodontically treated teeth, the measurement of dentinal fluid flow, the use of rotary nickel-titanium endodontic instruments and contemporary clinical issues in endodontic practice. His current projects have focussed on dentinal fluid flow during restoration and thermal pulp testing, the role of the dentinal tubules in dentine fracture, factors influencing root fracture susceptibility and the properties and efficacy of various endodontic sealer cements.

Throughout his career, Professor Messer has also been a very active member of many Committees for such organisations as the International Association for Dental Research, The American Association of Endodontists, The Australian Society of Endodontics, The Australian and New Zealand Academy of Endodontics and the Australian Dental Association.



### Postgraduate Profiles

#### Donna Lim, Rachel McLellan and Jonathan Skilton

Third Year Graduate Students in Orthodontics

Donna, Rachel and Jonathan were all born in New Zealand and graduated from The University of Otago in Dunedin. They are now in the third year of the Doctor of Clinical Dentistry programme.

Following dental graduation, Donna worked in private practice in Auckland and London. She travelled extensively throughout Europe before moving to Melbourne to work within DHSV while undertaking the RACDS Primary examinations before commencing her orthodontic graduate training. She has been working on the detailed assessment of the functional characteristics of mandibular muscle specimens taken at the time of routine orthognathic surgery.



Rachel also worked in private practice in Auckland, London, Nottingham and Bristol. While in the United Kingdom, she undertook the first part MFDS examinations to prepare her for formal graduate training. She has been working on methods for the practical measurement of space available for the placement of maxillary lateral incisor implants.



Jonathan worked in private practice in Cairns and for The Royal Flying Doctor Service, also undertaking the RACDS Primary Examinations. He has been working on the assessment of the efficacy of various surface treatments for bonding of orthodontic brackets to amalgam restorations.

All three students have been involved in a comprehensive programme of academic seminar and literature review work, research and wide-ranging contemporary clinical practice, supervised by visiting specialist clinicians. They have already presented the findings of their research projects in poster form at a national meeting. All their work will also be submitted, as usual, to high-impact peer-reviewed journals. Final examinations will be taken in October. It is expected that they should all complete their requirements in time to graduate in December.



### Dr Luan Ngo PhD Student

Dr Luan Ngo is one of the School's many talented PhD students, but this was not where he thought he might end up! His original involvement with the School of Dental Science was as an undergraduate student. He spent five years in the Bachelor of Dental Science completing this with honours in 1999. That same year he won the Australian Society of Endodontology Prize and was on the Dean's Honours List. While this is all wonderful, none of it should come as too much of a surprise when you consider that Dr Ngo finished high school on the Academic Honour Board at Melbourne High School!

In case you had assumed that Dr Ngo must have few outside interests due to his obvious dedication to academic achievement, here is some evidence to the contrary:

Committee member, team manager and player with the University of Melbourne Renegades Volleyball Club since 1996, and has played and coached with the Melbourne University Intervarsity team in 2004; plays indoor soccer socially; and is an enthusiastic member of the Peugeot Car Club of Victoria.

But why did he give up practising as a dentist to live in the lab under the supervision of Professor Eric Reynolds, Dr Ivan Darby and Dr Paul Veith to write a PhD thesis on the development of site specific predictive assay techniques for periodontal disease progression based on mass spectrometry? The answer was for an exciting change. Having spent a couple of years in clinical practice during which he completed his Royal Australasian College of Dental Surgeon primary exams, Dr Ngo was offered the opportunity to do research at the University of Melbourne. After a few months thinking it over, Dr Ngo decided that he would welcome a change to something that would provide more of an academic challenge, break up the monotony that clinical practice can become, and also open up future doors to an academic career.

Dr Ngo's research is hoping to find out more about the biochemical markers of periodontal disease in gingival crevicular fluid. This will provide a better understanding of the host/parasite interactions and further understanding of the pathogenesis of periodontal disease. The results from this study will hopefully allow researchers to distinguish between

periodontally-inflamed but non-progressing sites and those sites which will undergo attachment loss. Dr Ngo is also optimistic that more effective (ie. more appropriately targeted) treatments will be developed.

Dr Ngo expects to complete his thesis by mid-2006. He claims self-discipline as one of the most challenging aspects of his PhD course. In fact, he puts it up there with applying for grants for degree of difficulty! Dr Ngo is also the Postgraduate Student Representative for 2005 and inaugural president of the Melbourne Dental Postgraduate Group. In this role, he represents both clinical coursework students as well as his research-oriented colleagues on School and Faculty committees plus takes on the responsibility of social director organising trivia nights and Friday night drinks.

Of his experience as a research higher degree student, Dr Ngo says "It's all been good - all the equipment and knowledgeable people on hand. I even enjoy the quietness of the dingy old hospital."

# Profiles



## 10 Year Reunion of the Class of 1994

BY DR ANDREW PEPICELLI

On Saturday December 4th 2004, a ten year reunion was held for the dental science graduating class of 1994. The reunion was well attended with thirty of the fifty members of the graduating class gathering at University House for a cocktail party. For many of us, this was the first time that we had seen each other for ten years and therefore the first real opportunity to catch up and share stories about what we had all been doing during that time. While much of the conversation focussed on this and the present and future plans of each of us, it seems that none of us could resist the temptation to reminisce about the 'golden years' studying dentistry and the events that occurred during that time. There was the usual speculative discussion about several classmates and how they might be going at the moment since it appears that several of our colleagues have failed to keep the lines of communication open with anyone from our year. Conversely, several people made a concerted effort to attend the reunion; Britt and her husband came from Dubai, Grant from Brisbane, Som-Ling from northern NSW, Patrick and his wife from Hobart, Fiona and her husband from Sydney, Oscar and Jemi from Sale, and Stuart and his wife from Benalla.

There is no doubt that we all had diverse stories to share. The most gratifying aspect of the night was that everyone seemed happy both in their professional and private lives. We all had the opportunity to interact with each other and speak to everyone who was present. Perhaps the other pleasing element of the night was that none of us looked a day older than the day we graduated ten years earlier!

Our sincere gratitude must be extended to Matthew Hopcraft and Susan Wise for organising the evening and providing the forum for every one of us to share our experiences over the previous 10 years.

## 20 Year Reunion of the Class of 1984

BY DR DAVID MANTON

On a Saturday evening in early December last year, around 40 people (1984 graduates and spouses) gathered in Carlton to celebrate 20 years of life after BDSc graduation. The venue was Jimmy Watson's in Lygon Street, considered a suitable venue as many of us were familiar with the inside during our five (or six) year stay at the University of Melbourne.

After an extended period spent catching up, remembering who that person was after twenty years, and reminiscing, we sat down to a good meal served with great wine. The meal was punctuated with a raffle of donated goods from GC Corp and Ivoclar that raised money subsequently donated to the dental school, with Brian McMillan and Tony Burke the winners of the prizes. The unspent drinks money (we must be getting old) was also added to this donation.

Long held opinions were challenged when people told of their lives, with several people working in

diametrically opposed areas to what would have been considered likely in '84. There was the usual mix of generalists and specialists, public and private, although there was a surprisingly strong showing of maxillo-facial surgeons. A few made special efforts to attend, with Petrina Bowden coming from Queensland and Danny Player from Tasmania. Others, due to the proximity to

Back L—R; Raymond Khong, Tom Byrne, Oscar Husodo, Patrick Oxbrough, Arun Chandu, Danny Goldman, Andrew Pepicelli, Nischal Singh, Stuart Jones, Herman Tokatlidis, Julia Boecksteiner, Fiona Bell, Britt Shearn, John Fagiarone, Angelo Pacella, Grant Hamilton-Ritchie, Livia Naharnowicz, Asha McIlwaine, Steven Mustica, Georgia Poulos, Maria Petricevic, Kurien Mamootil. Front (Sitting) L—R; Jemi Roberts, Susan Wise, Amanda Charlesworth, Jamie Taylor, Matthew Hopcraft, Richard Zylan, Som-Ling Leung, Nick Trevlopoulos.

Christmas, had prior arrangements and their absence was noted (as Mr Jones used to do in pre-clinic).

At the end of it all a few reluctant leavers were finally escorted from the building after midnight having spent a halcyon evening wondering why we don't do this more frequently. A similar function will be organised in a few years.

Thanks must go to Trish Hogan (GC) and Ian Crawford (Ivoclar) for donating the raffle prizes and the staff at Jimmy Watson's for putting up with the noise.

Pictured below at the 20 year reunion are: (left to right) Meredith Proposch, Denise O'Callaghan, David Manton, Tim Proposch and Meredith Manton.



## Comments from the editors

As we start packing up in preparation for our move many memories are evoked as old papers, plaques, photos and other evidence of the School's past are uncovered and many instances of philanthropy and recognition come to light. In the current building as many of you will know, lecture theatre seats have been endowed in the past and this is a tradition which could well be retained in the new building. Of course, possibilities for supporting the School and having that recognised well into the future are wide and varied and can include such things as supporting our unique Dental Museum either financially or through acquisitions; support for Chairs, dental student financial aid, student prizes or dental research. For information about bequests and ways to support programs within the School, the University's Director of Development can be contacted in the first instance, tel: +61 3 8344 4409, fax: +61 3 8344 6895, e-mail w.lawler@unimelb.edu.au. The University of Melbourne is a deductible gift recipient (DGR no. 900283197) under Section 30 of the Australian Income Tax Assessment Act 1997.

The School would like to thank the Class of '84 for their very kind donation. They can be assured it will be put to good use.

We hope you enjoyed reading this third edition of Dent-al, the School of Dental Science's newsletter for alumni. We would be very pleased to have your feedback on this issue and if you would like to contribute in any way, or have any suggestions for future issues, we would be very pleased to hear from you.

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