



RHODOS

Special Graduation for Tony O'Reilly

For only the second time in the University's history, a special graduation ceremony was conducted to confer an honorary doctorate on Dr Tony O'Reilly.

Dr O'Reilly received the degree of Doctor of Laws (LLD) *honoris causa* at a ceremony on Wednesday night.

During his Graduation address, Dr O'Reilly, Chairman of the Irish-based Independent Newspapers plc, said that the group has become a world class company through responsibly reporting all the news in a fair and impartial way.

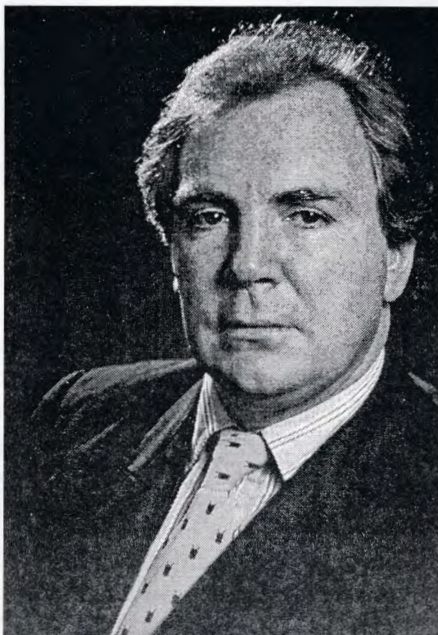
"We are not right wing and not left wing - we are for the people and for the country.

"... Of all the countries in the world in which we do business ... South Africa is by far the most exciting and in a curious way has got the most opportunity for a truly dramatic increase in living standards.

"It will not be achieved by loose talk or shallow thinking, but a miracle has been achieved in this land at a political level, and it is up to all of us, and to you, to ensure that it is matched by nothing less than an economic and personal Mount Everest."

Amongst his many portfolios, Dr O'Reilly is also the Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of HJ Heinz Company, one of the world's leading food processors and marketer of nutritional services.

O'Reilly played rugby for Ireland 29 times and for the British and Irish Lions teams ten times. He was a member of the British Lions tour of South Africa in 1955 and of the tour of



Dr Tony O'Reilly

New Zealand and Australia in 1959. He established scoring records on both tours that have remained unbroken.

The first special graduation ceremony conducted by the University was on 27 March 1996 in Oranjezicht, Cape Town where the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the Faculty of Arts was conferred on Susan Imrie Ross. Her thesis was entitled "The Inner Image: An Examination of the life of Helen Elizabeth Martins leading to her creation *The Owl House* and *A Camel Yard* as Outsider Art."

Sue was held in high regard by all who knew her and no less by the staff of the university who arranged this special ceremony so that she could graduate at home. After a courageous battle against cancer, Sue died three weeks after graduating.

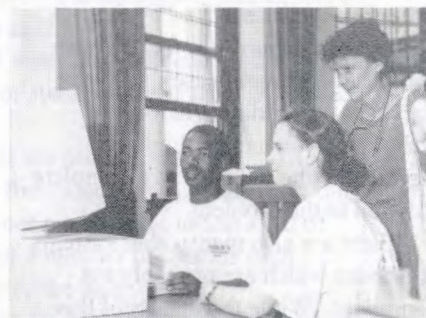
81% "High Flyers"

Despite the bad matric results in 1997, the quality of undergraduate students who have accepted offers to study at Rhodes University this year has improved considerably.

Statistics released by the University's Admissions office indicate that 81% of the students who have paid their Minimum Initial Payments (MIP) got more than 30 Swedish points. 36.9% of the applicants obtained more than 43 Swedish points. 31.1% got between 37 and 42 points, while 13.3% were in the 31 to 36 bracket.

The Registrar, Dr Stephen Fourie said he was pleased with the quality of the University's first-year intake. He said more students were likely to succeed in their studies "and thus find the University experience a happy and fulfilling one".

"The University can look forward to a greater number of students winning external awards" he said.



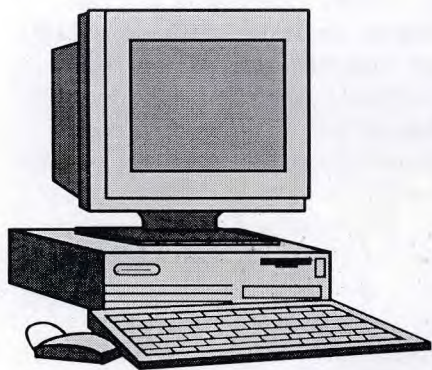
High flying students. The new registration process is far more accessible, and a pleasing feature was the number of parents who came as interested observers. (Picture: Sirion Robertson)

The Year 2000

Dave Wilson

An article in the previous issue of Rhodos gives the impression that all computer systems at Rhodes are fully Year2000 compliant, and that there is no reason to worry about problems at the date changeover to the year 2000 (the final year of the 20th century). While there may be some systems which pass muster, this is definitely not the case for all, and there is no room for complacency in this regard.

If dates are stored without the inclusion of the century, ie. 98 instead of 1998, computer systems assume that the year following 1999 is 1900. Compliancy essentially means that systems will rollover dates correctly to 1 January 2000, and also recognise the year 2000 as a leap year.



Fortunately, the University's administrative systems were recently converted from the old mainframe system, and the Y2000 problem was taken into account in the conversion. For this reason, most of the systems are compliant. However, there are some which are still being worked on, either by Rhodes staff, or by the vendors of the hardware or software concerned. In some cases, software packages use a "date windowing" technique, which is not highly regarded in the industry as a complete solution to the problem.

There are also many other systems at Rhodes which are probably not compliant. While the effects of this may vary, there must be a recognition of the problem, and an assessment of its potential consequences and costs of repair should be made. For example,

most server systems at Rhodes are run on either Sun Microsystems hardware and SUNOS/Solaris software, or PC hardware and Novell Netware software.

Older versions of hardware and software in both instances are known to be non-compliant. SUNOS versions prior to SUNOS 4.1.3_U1 are non-compliant, and later versions require patches to be installed. Solaris versions prior to 2.6 are non-compliant, and require patching. Early versions of Netware are also non-compliant, and again there are patches required for versions 3.12 and 4.11.

This is not to mention the many hundreds of older (and even some newer) PC systems on campus which are definitely not Year2000 compliant. Of course, the effects of a desktop, single-user system failure is likely to be minimal, but all potential failures taken together could be significant. Programs most likely to be affected are spreadsheets, or any programs using date fields for calculations or storage. Because many programs simply rely on the PC hardware clock, many will fail because the hardware control program itself is non-compliant.

Many custom programs have been written over many years for research analyses. Some have been written decades ago, and modified over the years as requirements have changed. It is a safe bet that many use date calculations which do not use full 4-digit year fields.

Even if all important University systems are compliant, account also needs to be taken of interactions with agents outside the University.

For example, suppliers of goods and services, financial institutions, and telecommunications suppliers. If any of these agents is affected by their own non-compliant systems, the supply of their services to the University could be disrupted, which would have a negative effect on our own operation. The potential ripple effects of non-compliance are enormous.

The government under the direction of Minister Jay Naidoo has recently convened a working committee to examine the potential impact of the Year2000 problem in all sectors of the economy, and report back early in 1998.

It is generally accepted that all the necessary system changes must be implemented by the end of 1998 (not 1999) in order to allow for sufficient time for testing. This will basically leave approximately 8 months for the implementation of any fixes, which is not much when one considers the time taken to deliver even moderately sized IT systems.

While alarmist talk also does not achieve much, the biggest danger is inadequate recognition of the problem and resultant complacency. The IT division is currently assessing and correcting all central systems. If departments running their own servers require assistance they should contact us as soon as possible.

Departments should **not** set serv experimental dates to test complianc as this can have unforeseen, irreversib effects. If users wish to check their own PC systems without having to experiment with date settings in various packages, the GMTy2000 program is available from the IT Software Library. This program will perform an automatic check of both hardware and software on your PC.

DAVE'S DEN

Dave's Den will be open on Wednesday night (25th) from 17:00. All staff are invited to pop in and have a relaxing drink with colleagues. A special invitation is extended to new staff and their families.

(Dave's Den is in what used to be the "VC's Dining Room" in the Union Building.)

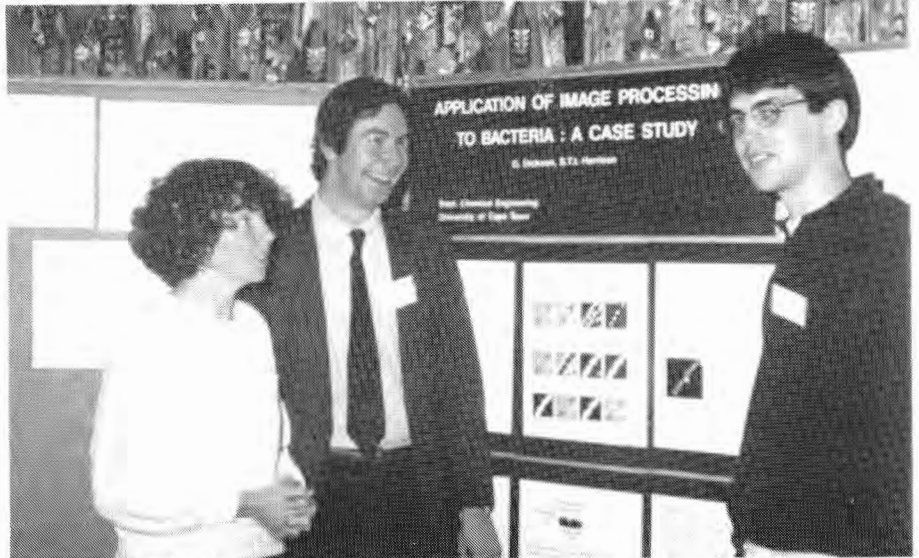
HOIA Hosts Pattern Recognition Workshop

Allon Poole

The Hermann Ohlthaver Institute for Aeronomy (HOIA) devotes much of its resources to the development of temporal and spatial model of the ionosphere over Southern Africa. For this purpose, HOIA receives substantial funding from Grinaker Systems Technologies and the FRD. The model is required in order to trace the origin of shortwave radio transmissions that might be hostile or at least criminal in their purpose.

In the pursuit of this objective, Allon Poole and Lee-Anne McKinnell have become involved in the use of Neural Networks to predict the behaviour of the ionosphere. This interesting research brought them into contact with a group of enthusiastic staff and students of other local

Universities, mainly from Engineering and Computer Science departments, whose common interest is the broad subject of Pattern Recognition. HOIA has now joined the Pattern Recognition Association of South Africa (PRASA) and hosted their Eighth Workshop in Grahamstown in November last year.



Seen at the PRASA 97 Conference at the CEC were, from left to right, Lee-Anne McKinnell; Dr Anthony Maeder, Co-Chairman of the Australian equivalent of PRASA, UCT student Greg Dickson,

The workshop, which was held at the Continuing Education Centre on Campus, was very successful and well attended. Interesting papers included the automatic recognition of car registration plates, face recognition, speech to text classification and automatic detection of malignancies in

digital mammograms.

Recently, Telecommunications Honours student Lindsay Magnus has joined HOIA on a bursary from GST. Lindsay intends to pursue his studies with an MSc in 1999, which will continue the ionospheric modelling work.

FISH PROJECT ENTERS SECOND PHASE

The Department of Ichthyology and Fisheries Science (DIFS) has implemented the second phase of an exciting project through which top-level research and lectures, complete with graphics, videos and sound, are available on compact disc and the Internet to postgraduate students throughout the world.

The project, maintained and managed by DIFS and the Information Technology (IT) Division at the University, is expected to benefit students in the Southern African region.

Initiated by Professor Tom Hecht, Head of DIFS, and Professor Patrick Sorgeloos of the University of Ghent, Belgium, the project is funded by the Flemish Ministry of Education, Rhodes University and the Liberty Life Education Foundation in Johannesburg.

An excited Prof Hecht said that a report on the pilot project's first phase, which he and IT Director Dave Wilson recently submitted, was favourably received by the University of Ghent and Flemish Department of Education, Belgium.

He said: "The funders have given us the green light to implement the second phase which runs from the beginning of this month (November) until the end of March".

In this phase, he said they would develop a course on small-scale aquaculture in Africa South of the Sahara. Secondly, they would expand on course work on the legal aspects of fisheries management in the SADC region.

"It is very important for students to understand the huge and complex legal implications between the countries within the SADC region regarding management and export of marine resources," he said.

When the course work has been completed, it is put on the world wide web for students and staff in other SADC countries.

"Since the start of the project, we have had a tremendous response from students and staff from other universities, who did not have access to this kind of information because of a number of aspects such as lack of infrastructure," he said.

He added that Rhodes had already established links with leading institutions such as the Edward Mondlane University (Maputo), universities of Zimbabwe, Malawi and Zambia.

He said at the completion of the second phase, they hoped the project would proceed to the next phase.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor

As Registration Officer for the last three years, and therefore having some experience of old and new systems, I believe it is appropriate that I call for a round of applause for those many people and sections involved in Administrative Registration '98. Although individual citation is always dangerous, those perhaps centrally involved were the Registrar and his staff, the Finance Division, and Computing Services, plus a battery of student helpers, co-ordinated by the SRC.

Registration '98 differed substantially from its earlier forms, and although debriefing and dissections have yet to be performed, it seems to have been in all respects better. The new system is largely the brainchild of Dr Fourie, and he and his cohorts implemented it with foresight and efficiency.

The proof of any pudding is of course in the avidity with which paying customers consume it. Here are two separate remarks I overheard

from family groups leaving the registration venue:

(Father to daughter): "Registration in five minutes. Unbelievable!"

(Mother to rest of family): "Well, that was very straightforward..."

As always, the exercise involved a closely co-ordinated effort by various sections and individuals, and, as in the past, Rhodes showed the necessary cohesion in high degree. One of the benefits of the new system - and a further proof of its greater efficiency - is that it has removed the need for one (paid) position - that of Registration Officer.

I have enjoyed my three years working with the Registrar's Division in this capacity, and I congratulate Dr Fourie in steering the process to a level of development at which the position is redundant. While the initiative and the innovations are entirely Dr Fourie's, the natural demise of my position is something I suggested to him soon after I took up the post.

Sirion Robertson
(Registration Officer - outgoing)
School of Pharmaceutical Sciences

Dear Editor

Bravo, Gary Barkhuizen (*Rhodos*, 10 December 1997)!

It is not my intention to rush into the streets of Grahamstown (or anywhere else for that matter) on the night of 31 December 1999 to quash everyone's turn-of-the-century/millennium celebrations. However, I am pleased that someone else agrees that these celebrations are a year premature!

Yours etc
Patrick Phillips
Personnel Division

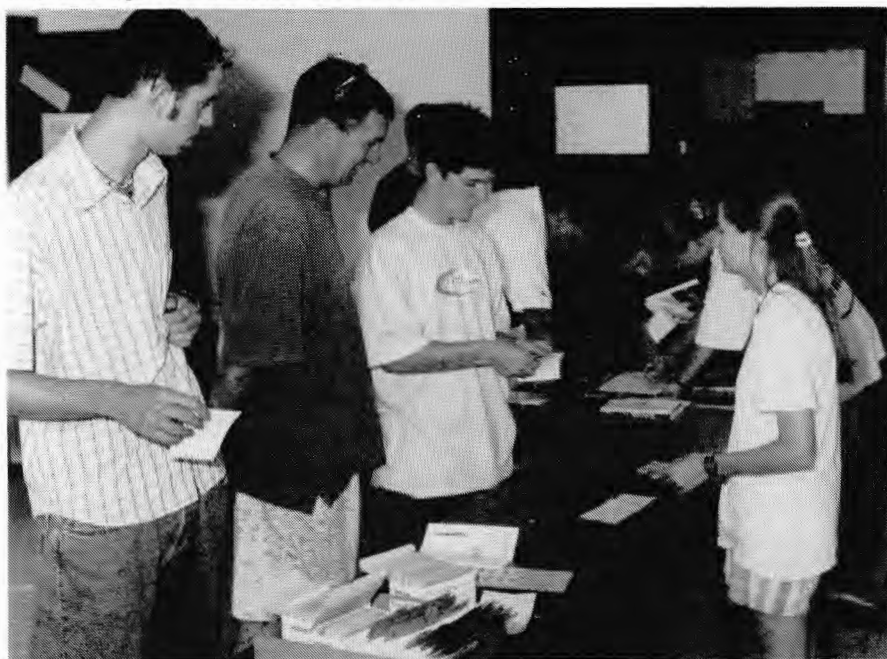
Dear Editor

The university has been squealing about a shortage of accommodation since the latter part of last year, but seems incapable of taking one logical step towards its resolution.

There are many establishments in Grahamstown, as well as private homes, which would house students for bed and possibly breakfast but not provide other meals or catering facilities. My suggestion that every student should be registered with a hall of residence for all meals (if required) and for accommodation (where available) - which would make the no-catering option viable - has fallen on deaf ears. I am told that our caterers would not be able to cope with the possible demand on dining halls.

In the days before microwaves and computers, I was attached to a college (hall of residence) which had 500 students of whom about half could be accommodated. The rest of us lived in licenced lodgings - mine had one indoor tap and an outside lavatory, so hot water was brought by the landlady in a jug to our bedroom door each morning. Apart from breakfast, we ate, showered and socialised in the hall.

As numbers had grown rapidly at the



"Is there any point to which you would draw our attention?"
"To the curious incident of the crowds at Registration."
"There were no crowds at Registration."
"That was the curious incident", remarked Sherlock Holmes
(From *Silver Blaze*, heavily adapted)

Photograph and quotation courtesy of Sirion Robertson

College, three sittings of dinner were necessary between 6:30 and 8pm, and lunch was served from about 12:15 to 1:45pm. If Rhodes had the will it could do the same.

Last year I also suggested that Rhodes institute a proper lodgings bureau rather than make vacuous appeals if it is serious about the shortage. When last I heard word on that, somebody was "thinking about it".

Yours etc
Michael Whisson

Iain L'Ange, Assistant Dean of Students replies:

Dear Editor

In response to the great demand for residence accommodation from both returning and new students, the University *appealed* to townsfolk and University staff for assistance. Very few offers of accommodation were received from town, whereas the response from staff members was more positive. I have been contacting staff members who made such offers in an attempt to place new postgraduate students who do not have a place in a postgraduate residence.

Prof Whisson's "lodging bureau" is thus operating in a fashion. The Vice Chancellor has agreed that the University will administer the placing of students in the homes of staff members. This means firstly that the University will screen the students concerned and, should their credit record be acceptable, the University will pay the student's rent directly to the staff member. Secondly, in such cases the staff member will be able to refer any problems which may arise from housing such students to the relevant University authority. In other words, the lease agreement will be

between the University and the staff member concerned.

One of the proposals which emerged from the Admin Review process recommended that the Oppidan Board should "find a home" within the Dean of Students Division. However, until the re-structuring process has been completed, the full implementation of a "lodging bureau" is sitting on the back-burner.

Regarding access to the Dining Halls, I have been informed by the Catering Division that Oppidans are being placed on waiting lists, and will be admitted to Dining Halls as table boarders on a first-come first-served basis should their facilities and staffing situation permit.

Finally, whilst the impossible may be possible for anthropologists, miracles do take a little longer for theologians!

Dear Editor

The report in a recent *Rhodos* that Rhodes "will soon have its own astroturfed hockey field at the cost of R1.65 million" mentions Pete Andrew as saying that the university had been trying to get funds for the artificial surface for the past five years. I would be interested to know the source of this astronomical amount of money and would also appreciate some justification of such expenditure by an academic institution in these stringent times on sporting facilities and, specifically, on hockey, which is a minority sport.

Yours sincerely
Margot Beard

Pete Andrew, Director of Sports Admin replies:

Dear Editor

Thank you for affording me the opportunity to respond to Dr Beard's

letter wherein she questions the justification of the building of an artificial hockey surface at Rhodes.

As in the case of Dr Beard, there seems to be considerable confusion, particularly amongst academic staff, as to the means of funding this particular project. The facts are that the University has managed to raise a lone facility with a commercial bank for the full cost of the project. The Sports Council has then undertaken to service this loan in full over a period of ten years through income generated directly from the project itself.

The project entails the laying of the artificial hockey surface on the inside of the Prospect athletics track, the upgrading of the floodlights, the fencing of the area and the development of a sports clubhouse on the balcony of the Old Mutual Pavilion.

Income will be generated through the hiring of the facility to local schools and clubs for practices and league matches, through the hosting of tournaments, through the selling of advertising boards around the ground, through profits generated from the clubhouse and through donations received.

In addition, considerable savings will be realised through the low maintenance costs of the field, through transport, subsistence and hiring of the artificial surface in PE where all Premier League hockey has been played for the last 6 years. Not to mention the enormous saving in time to the students who have not played a home game in 6 years due to the fact that all competitive hockey is now played on artificial surfaces. We are presently the only hockey playing tertiary institution who does not have direct access to a facility.

On the issue of hockey being a minority sport, I must correct your perception. Hockey is played at boys and girls schools throughout the

country and amongst all race groups. In boys schools it is gathering particular momentum to the extent where at a school like Grey High School in Port Elizabeth, there are twice as many boys playing hockey than rugby.

Due to its very even and hardwearing nature, the surface will also form the centre for our extensive development programme as it will provide an ideal surface for the teaching of basic skills in hockey, cricket, soccer, tennis, basketball, etc.

The Sports Council firmly believes that the project is not only a viable one, but one that will prove to be a strong recruiting tool. It will revitalise the Prospect Field area and the sportsclub will provide an amenable and friendly atmosphere for students, staff and the Grahamstown community to enjoy each others company.

I trust that these facts allay not only the concerns of Dr Beard but of any other members of the Rhodes community who had similar misconceptions. The intention is to provide a very valuable asset to the University at little or no cost to the institution itself.



Mr Jules Langenberg, executive of Fidelity Bank in Port Elizabeth (left) handed a donation to Professor Hugo Nel of the Department of Economics and Economic History.

The funds will be used to support a research project in the Department which will look into monetary and interest rates in South Africa. The results of the project will be shared with the Bank on a regular basis.

The level and structure of interest rates, which largely determine banks' assets and liability management, have been a key element of monetary control since the implementation of De Kock's Commission findings in the late 1980s.

Focus areas of research will include the effects of changes to the monetary control procedures currently under consideration by the monetary authorities. It is expected that these will be implemented together with the proposed new National Payment System in March this year.

Ergonomics Seminar

In response to several queries, Professor Pat Scott will run a short seminar on the basic principles of ergonomics. She will address any questions and, should you feel that you have a specific problem at your site, arrangements will be made to conduct an on-site analysis to assist you in improving your particular work station.

The Seminar will be held in the Continuing Education Centre from 4.30pm to 5.30pm on Monday, February 23.

Library Display

Visit the library to see their display of "1997's Most Popular Books", with reviews of some of the books. This will be up until Friday 27th February.

Election of Trustees: Rhodes Provident Fund

The following were elected to serve on the Board of Trustees of the Rhodes University Provident Fund:

Professor IA Macdonald, Professor H Nel, Mrs L Palmer, Mr LM Reynolds and Professor DA Sewry.

Interested in House Sitting?

The Fulcrum Forum, established to look after certain aspects of the university community, is looking into the possibility of drawing up a list of referenced and recommended house sitters that members of the university community could use when needed.

If you are interested in house sitting, please forward your details in writing to Linda Haschick in the Marketing & Communications Division, or via email to adlh@giraffe.ru.ac.za

US Scholars Study SA's Land Reform Process

The South African government's land reform programme is the focus of study for two American scholars attached to the Rhodes University Institute for Social and Economic Research (ISER).

Ms Eva Jensen from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, United States and Derick Fay from Boston University in Boston, United States are both doing their PhD studies.

In her dissertation, Ms Jensen looks at group schemes under which people are getting access to land. She says she is particularly interested in studying how groups get formed and how they get access to that land. "I want to examine communal ownership of land and the kinds of decision-making mechanisms and management structures that are created, and how they work," she said.

This is not Ms Jensen's first visit to South Africa. She first came to the country in 1985/6, while working for the Lutheran Church. Then she lived in Sekhukhune in the former Lebowa homeland (and now part of the Northern Province). "It was then that I realised the importance of land in the people's lives," she said. In 1987, she worked for the US/SA Sister Communities project. The purpose of the project, according to Ms Jensen, was to partner American cities with South African

communities that were either losing land or under crisis.

"Because of my involvement in that project, I became aware of certain communities and their struggles. Now that there is a new dispensation, I am more interested in how those communities are getting back their land," she said.

Ms Jensen has already started with her studies. Earlier this month, she was at Isidenge, near Stutterheim, where a group of farm tenants has applied for a piece of land under the government's redistribution programme. She will also work in Thornhill, where people are getting land rights under the redistribution programme.

Mr Fay, on the other hand, is studying the collective land holding. "I am looking at the continuity and change in institutions responsible for land," he said. Mr Fay plans to work in the communities of Dwesa and Cwebe forest reserves in the former Transkei. "I think it is going to be very interesting because traditional leaders in that area still appear to enjoy the support of their respective communities".

He also said that Dwesa and Cwebe are two of the few areas in South Africa where the process of land reform has already taken off.

Mr Fay's interest in South African land affairs started while he was doing South African history and economic anthropology at Boston University. During the course of his studies, Mr Fay will initially stay at the cottages near the game reserves but will later make arrangements to move to one of the nearby villages.

MBA Funds Rhodes Students

Leading Information Technology firm, Mike Bergen and Associates (MBA), has awarded scholarships to the amount of R250 000 to 10 Information Systems (IS) Honours students.

MBA's Mike Bergen presented the cheques to Dr David Woods during a function held at The Lodge last month.

Each of the 10 students will receive R20 000, while the remaining money will be used to buy hardware and software that will support the software development toolset that MBA had previously donated to the Department.

The students are expected to take up employment at MBA for at least the same period that they have held the scholarship (one year).

The relationship between the IS Department and MBA began in 1991 when Mr Bergen sponsored staff members to attend a conference.

The company also sponsors the Best Honours Development Project Award which includes an award and a cash prize to each member of the winning team.



Present at the handing over of the MBA scholarships were (from left to right): IS Lecturer, Ms Lydia Palmer, Mike Bergen of Mike Bergen and Associates, Dr David Woods, and IS HoD, Professor Dave Sewry.

¼ Million for Fundamental Studies on Animal Reproduction

Professors Ric Bernard and Alan Hodgson of the Department of Zoology and Entomology, received research grants from the Foundation of Research Development (FRD) which totaled over R250 000. These funds, for studies on animal reproduction, are in the form of bursaries, running expenses, travel, and science liaison.

The invertebrate research, led by Alan Hodgson, is part of the FRD Marine and Freshwater resources programme which aims to provide information which can be used to help manage biological resources on a sustainable basis. The invertebrate team are examining how environmental factors and man-made perturbations, as well as the micro-environment, affect

reproductive patterns and fitness.

Studies led by Ric Bernard on the role of environmental variables in the control of reproduction of small mammals at subtropical latitudes has local value, since in some cases the small mammals are pests of agriculture.

This research has drawn a number of top scientists from the USA, UK, Germany and Russia to Rhodes. These collaborative projects would not have been possible without the availability of the excellent light and electron microscope facilities which are located in the EM (electron microscopy) unit at Rhodes. In the last five years the FRD has awarded grants totaling R800 000 towards the purchase of the state-of-the-art JEOL transmission electron microscope and an Olympus photomicroscope system.

The value of the research grants is particularly pleasing as it indicates that the FRD is committed to supporting fundamental research.

Welcome to New Staff!



1998 has seen a number of new staff members joining the team. At a function held at The Lodge at the beginning of February, Dr and Mrs Woods welcomed the new staff members into the Rhodes community. Seen at this function were (from left to right): Eric-John Harris, Psychology Dept, East London campus, Ms Gill Smulders, and Clifford van Ommen, also of the Psychology Dept, East London campus.

SMALLS

COMPUTER FOR SALE - BRAND NEW

Mecer desktop Plug&Play Pentium MMX 166Mhz 16Mb RAM 1.7Gb HDD computer. Comes with sound card and speakers. Windows 95 Enhanced keyboard, S. Trio64V+video card, 140 VGA monitor, 24HCDROM and Mecer TechnoEdition 3 button Bus/Serial mouse. Software includes Windows95, Grolier Encyclopedia 1999 Edition, ChessMaster 4000, Novell PerfectWorks suite, PrintMaster Gold, US Atlas and World Atlas. Original CD-ROM included. Factory 2-year Warranty. Price: R6400 or O.N.C.O. Tel:6223781 or E-mail: ssym@hippo.ru.ac.za

BED and BREAKFAST

Self-catering, private entrance, off street parking. R80 single. R140 double. Contact Gill Collett. 6361496 (w) 6222746(h).

BED and BREAKFAST

EAGLES NEST. Two self-contained flats with private entrance, kitchenette, TV, pool. From R60-00 per person per night. Contact Sheryl-Anne Drennan 6038298/9 (w) or Cell 082 6570359.

JENNY'S BED and BREAKFAST

Superb accommodation in tranquil surroundings at available rates. Tel Jenny 083 2703150.

PRICE'S ECONOBUILD

For all your building, painting, decorating and waterproofing serves at the right price. Contact Ernie Price. Tel 6222572.

CANYON - high quality natural products containing Seaweed. No land plant contains such a high proportion of these minerals and trace elements. Excellent for arthritis, asthma, stress, skin problems and much more. On special this month: Free facials with superb "Essence" Skin Care Range. For more information phone Marion on 8590 (m/o) or 6223816 (h).

RHODOS is produced fortnightly by the Marketing and Communications Division of Rhodes University. The views expressed are not necessarily those of the Editor, Rhodes staff, or the University. The Editor welcomes all contributions but reserves the right to edit these. E-mail rhodos@ru.ac.za