

# NEWS & NOTES

February 2012

## *Master's Message*

Despite difficult trading conditions in the hospitality sector generally in 2011 we managed to finish the year in a good financial position. Even allowing for the costs of management restructuring we were still able to transfer significant funds to our reserves and to maintain our postgraduate research scholarship donations to the University. As many of you know, between Graduate House and University House we fund six postgraduate research scholarships. The three from Graduate House are called Hohnen scholarships after the Registrar of the University at the time Graduate House was formed. The three from University House are called Trendall scholarships after the first Master. The scholars are chosen by the University during the normal scholarship allocation round towards the end of each year. Those who are awarded scholarships are also given free membership of the House and free Wednesday evening dining rights. It is very pleasing indeed to see some of those scholars join us regularly for dinner.

To the end of 2011 we had run ten years of monthly after dinner talks on Wednesday evenings. In discussions with my successor, Professor Cram, we have decided to finish that program and replace it by a smaller number of talks to be held during dinner. Professor Cram will advise details once he takes over the position of Master. I have, however, already scheduled the Vice-Chancellor's lecture for Wednesday 21st March. Please note that date in your diary. It is an occasion when the Vice Chancellor generally talks about his plans for the forthcoming year and reflects on the role of the Australian National University generally.

Please also note that the Opera in the House evening is to be held on Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> May. The Opera night is one of the highlight events of our calendar, in which students from the Voice Department of the School of Music perform for us.

The minor upgrade of Boffins Restaurant is nearing completion. At this stage, we anticipate opening the refurbished facility on Tuesday, 14<sup>th</sup> February. The exercise has been a delicate one, balancing the need to freshen up the restaurant and rearrange the reception area, and the desire to maintain as much of the original style as possible, given the sentimental attachment to Boffins held by many of our members and customers.

Earlier this year we are undertaking a substantial refurbishment of the bathrooms in the South Wing. The major users of those bathrooms are postgraduate students, along with hotel guests who choose the shared facility option. The bathroom upgrades should be finished in April.

My last date as Master will be Friday 13<sup>th</sup> of April.

John Richards



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*Our Featured Student*  
*Lina Tan, University House*



I am a 3rd year PhD (marketing) candidate at the School of Management, Marketing & International Business in the College of Business and Economics. My research looks at the formation and impact of stakeholders' perceptions of an organization's corporate social responsibility strategy and the press coverage that it elicits. Issues of organizations' corporate value chain delivery and community engagement are increasingly taking centre stage in media reporting and stakeholder decision. At the same time, research has suggested that stakeholders' expectations are an important determinant of decision-making, consumer satisfaction, and post-choice response. My PhD project seeks to develop insights into the influence of stakeholders' expectations on their beliefs, attitudes and behaviour in the context of Australian commercial aviation. By understanding how expectations moderate how stakeholders interpret news, the focal organization can shape communications which lead to a favourable interpretation of that news, and stakeholder goodwill. I believe that a stakeholder approach contributes to our understanding of marketing practices by helping us to appreciate the qualitative and quantitative dimensions of consumer lives as well as managerial decisions.

Having lived in different parts of the world, one of the things I love most about Canberra is this city-capital is cradled by stunning mountain ranges and surrounded by cold-climate wineries. As a nature lover, I am especially drawn to bushwalking in this rugged ranges country. Here, I can follow the meandering gully that carves through bushland covered hills, traverse some really challenging boulders or climb steep hills to look out in any direction at the expansive wilderness of the Namadgi National Park. The native flora and fauna are a major delight and nothing gets better than to be accompanied by wallabies, reptiles, kangaroos and echidnas along the way.

*From the Operations Manager*

We are well into February and I am pleased to report that business is moving along quite strongly especially in the accommodation division. We are confident that business trends will increase, despite the economic woes of Europe affecting the economy here. I have come to believe over the years that the major assets that we have and keep us moving forward are, location, well-appointed facilities, our great staff and our valued members. All these, combined with the "word of mouth" practice bringing more new guests to the House, create an environment that we are proud of. We work to provide better financial results by showcasing our service and dedication in what we do. I can report that the House did produce a good financial result for 2011.

Many of you during your visit to the House in the past few months will have noticed that the painting is ongoing. As part of our maintenance program, painting is progressing steadily. All student rooms are complete, most of the Function rooms are done and the hotel rooms are now on target to be finished in the next few months. The entire exterior of the House has also been completed.

Boffins, as most of you are aware, is experiencing an in-house refurbishment and is nearing completion. It is our intention that, by the time you receive this newsletter, Boffins will already be trading again providing a fresh new image and the service that matches its reputation. As it is a minor refurbishment, no drastic changes have been made as we did not want to take away the unique atmosphere and ambience that Boffins has always projected. Valentine's Day, 14<sup>th</sup> February 2012 is the day we envisage to recommence lunch and dinner trading.

Our decision to create a "little" Boffins in the corner section of the Fellows Café during this renovation period, has proved to be a successful one. I would personally like to thank everyone who has continued to support us during this disrupted period; Boffins really is a special place.

Student bathrooms in the South Wing (including the shared facilities on the ground floor that service the six single rooms) are set to go for refurbishment. This project has been on my agenda for years even when I held the position of Rooms Division Manager and I am pleased, together with the Master and the students of course, that finally we will move on this project. Tenders are being organised at the moment and we should have the first works taking place late February into early March 2012.

With the departure of the executive chef, Ian Farnsworth in January, we received an overwhelming response to our advertisement for his replacement. We held interviews on February 1<sup>st</sup>. It is always difficult when it comes to the point of choosing someone from a group of professionals that did so well in the interview. I am however pleased to announce that we have selected our new Chef Manager who will be commencing at University House on Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> March 2012. Presently at the Westin Hotel in Sydney, Mr Anshul Chandra will be joining our team and will be introducing many new ideas and dishes to our valued members and guests. I must add here that Mr Chandra also held the position of Head Chef at the National Gallery of Australia during July 2010 and May 2011. I hope that all members will visit Boffins and meet Mr Chandra in person.

I need to express my sincere thanks and gratitude to Mrs. Kerrie Johnson who has been acting in the position of Executive Chef since Ian's departure and will continue to do so till the day the Mr Chandra arrives to take up his post. She has provided a fantastic choice of menus throughout this period and has amazed management, students and staff with her ideas and presentation of meals, especially through House Dinners. Working with her is such a delight and together with Mr Chandra, I truly believe the results to be had in the kitchen will be something absolutely outstanding.

Tony Karrys  
 Operations Manager

## Ron Coleman



We are saddened to report the death in October 2011 of Ron Coleman, a long time member of University House. Ron Coleman was a founder member of an informal group called Dad's Army that meets for lunch at University House every Thursday without fail to enjoy fellowship and the food and wine of the Fellows Café and Bar. It has been doing so for many years and is now part of the history and fabric of University House. Its members are mostly retired engineers and technical officers who came to Canberra when the Department of Supply was transferred here from Melbourne in 1968, but now include others including a past Master of University House. Ron was perhaps the senior member of the group and will be missed by the Group and by the staff of University House who have got to know Dad's Army well over the years.

Robin Stanier

### *From the Accommodation Division*

I am pleased to report that this year has started off very well in the accommodation sector. Our first quarter results will surpass those of 2011 in occupancy and revenue. One segment which has shown the most growth is the Group sector; when projected it has already surpassed 2011 in both room nights and revenue. Congratulations to Julie Farnham, Maria Mason and our Front Office team!

I would like to welcome Mr Jerry Cakau who has joined our Front Office team as a casual Night Auditor. Jerry has had previous experience in the hospitality industry, and we wish him a long and happy association with the House.

We are looking at a few additions to our hotel rooms to take place during the year starting with new Guest Information Compendiums which are currently on order. These will have more information about our guest services including up to date menus and tourist information.

A reminder that Annual Membership renewals are currently underway. If you have not received a renewal form, please call us on 61257467 and we will be more than happy to send one out or even take payment over the phone.

Michael Zaja  
Rooms Division Manager (acting)

## Our Featured Staff Member

*Maria Mason*  
*Membership Secretary*



I was born and raised in England until the age of 19 when my parents and I had the opportunity to immigrate to Victoria, B.C., located on the West Coast of Vancouver Island, Canada. Tourism is one of the main employment opportunities on the island and I secured a position with Air Canada as a customer service agent.

In 1996 I had my first child Liam and at that stage I was lucky enough to be able to give up work and stay at home full time to take care of him, and my daughter Emma who was born in 2001.

When Emma turned a year old I felt the urge to return to work and was offered the opportunity to come to Australia and take over a tour operating company that my mother-in-law had started 15 years earlier, so it was in 2002 that we arrived in Canberra just before the fires (what a welcome that was!). I attended CIT that year, gained my travel agent's licence and in 2003 took my first group of engineers to Greece. The 2003 tour was a great success and over the following years I escorted groups to China, India and South Africa where I saw amazing engineering achievements and met interesting people.

In 2006 I started part time work at University House in the reservations department and over the years I have taken on more days, more hours and recently the title of Membership Secretary. As Membership Secretary you will often see me out on the reception desk, so next time you are at the house to renew your membership or needing assistance please drop by and say hello and I would be happy to help or you can call me on 6125 7467.

### **News from Functions and Catering**

A whole new year and with it brings new challenges and opportunities both old and new! Welcome to 2012.

We are all looking forward to the re-opening of Boffins on 14<sup>th</sup> February, with our fresh new décor. Our chef has put together an exciting summer/autumn menu; please phone to make your luncheon/dinner bookings so as we can serve you well.

The Fellows café/bar staff are looking forward to your continued patronage throughout the year. This year we will be promoting all significant events i.e. Shrove Tuesday, 21<sup>st</sup> February, St Patricks Day, Mother's Day, Father's Day, and Floriade, with menus to suit each event.

Chris, our Fellows Manager and our chef Joel will have spot specials for luncheon each day. We are looking at commencing a facebook page where menus will be updated daily. Luncheon packages will also be available for those who are far too busy to stay and eat with us.

Do not forget your coffee/toasted sandwiches and cakes on your way to work, just in case you have missed breakfast, or just for food on the run.

Special inexpensive dinner menus are available each week night from 1800 hours. Do not forget our Thursday "pie night"; also our Trivia evenings commence again on Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> February. I guarantee a fun evening. Bookings on 61255289.

The Fellows Garden rocks on Friday evenings until the end of the daylight savings period – great bands, food and beverages available at hard to beat prices. Come along and try us out; you will not be disappointed.

Our Wednesday House Dinners have commenced, and have been well attended. On the 25<sup>th</sup> January, we had our pre-Australia Day House dinner, such a lovely evening with all in attendance thoroughly enjoying themselves. Cost for House dinner is \$35.00 for members and \$45.00 for non-members. For this you receive pre-dinner drinks and a three course served meal and beverages. Should you wish to book please do not hesitate to phone either Lyn or Alex on 61255270 or 61255269.

Music at Lunch recommences on the 20<sup>th</sup> March, with further dates being 24<sup>th</sup> April, 29<sup>th</sup> May, 24<sup>th</sup> July, 21<sup>st</sup>, August, 25<sup>th</sup> September and 30<sup>th</sup> October, 2012.

We welcome any feedback you may have, all suggestions will be considered.

Lyn North  
Functions and Catering Manager

### *The Ladies Drawing Room*

The first luncheon for 2012 is on 22<sup>nd</sup> March, at which our guest speaker will be the new Master, Professor Lawrence Cram. Letters will be coming out shortly. Glenda Richards will be continuing in the role of Convenor until the end of the year.

### *New Members*

We are delighted to welcome new Members:

Miss Seyedeh Afzaly	Dr Gabrielle Persley
Mr Greg Anderson	Mrs Mary Pollard
Mr Johannes Binder	Ms Jill Catherine Roberts
Mr Garry Brereton	Dr Declan Roche
Mr Michael Case	Mrs Zahra Sabouri
Mr Gregory Currie	Mr Marcel Schroder
Mr Daniel Dallas	Ms Robyn Singleton
Mr Ivan Franceschini	Ms Cecilia Nancy Spence
Mr Joshua Gordon-Carr	Mr Tsz Kai Jack Tsang
Mr Hamid Khodakarami	Dr John Woodall
Mr Philip Laird	Miss Seher Yekenkurul
Mr William McCarthy	Miss Asefeh Zeinalabedini
Ms Helen Moore	
Ms Barbara Payne	

### *Our Housekeeping Staff*

*keeping the House in order!*



Back row from left to right: Boya Susic, Tuya Narmandakh, Toma Arbalis, Sala Aviga, Val Scanlon  
Middle row: Slavka Parancin, Cvija Zarak, Slavica Lukic, Vesna Sporicic, Milica Miletic, Onny Simatupang, Nada Matic  
Bottom row: Ivanka Pavic, Millson Baby, Neta Laufili



Gaki Lhaden, Mei Jiang, Nenita Dimabuyo, Silvia Matirinna-Burn, Anka Vucak; away on leave Mira Scaramuca & Tejal Bhesaniya.

### *The ANU Club for Women*

The ANU Club for Women Inc. welcomes new members and visitors to the ANU to join in its program of wide ranging activities. The program for 2012 will commence on Monday, 19<sup>th</sup> March, with a Coffee Morning at 10.00am in the Molly Huxley Room at University House. There will be a speaker and information about various group activities within the Club. In April members will enjoy a Walkways Tour of ANU Architecture led by a guide from the ANU Heritage Staff. Our full program with contact information will soon be available and will be on our website - <http://clubforwomen.anu.edu.au>