Welcome to 2010 - a milestone year for the School. SVS is going through a period of rapid and dramatic change, which has culminated in this month’s move to the UQ Gatton Campus. During this eventful first year at the Gatton Campus, our challenge is to establish, then fully utilize the fantastic new facilities provided for us. These new facilities have set a new standard and we have a wonderful platform from which to grow our clinical and diagnostic services which underpin the School’s learning and discovery activities.

During the 3 years from 2007-2009, 28 enthusiastic academic staff will have started a new career with SVS. This represents both staff turnover and an absolute increase in staff numbers from 32 in 2007 to 50 at the beginning of 2010. Our professional staff numbers – clinical, technical and administrative – are also on the rise. This provides a unique opportunity in the School’s history to capitalize on this growth and create a financially stable and sustainable veterinary school.

For those of us who inhabited the Seddon Building at St Lucia it is a parting tinged with some sadness at leaving the School’s home of nearly 50 years. However, the School retains strong ties to the St Lucia campus through the Veterinary Teaching Hospital which remains fully operational, as well as offices to facilitate cross campus collaborative activities. It sure feels good to be on the home straight of the moving process, with most of our furniture and equipment now in place. The builders, Laing O’Rourke, are still applying the finishing touches to laboratories and teaching spaces, but these minor inconveniences are well worth it. Overwhelmingly, the verdict on our new accommodation is very positive. It’s wonderful to see the Gatton Campus so vibrant, and the upgrades to campus teaching spaces, including the new Gatton e-Learning Lab will provide the best available learning environment.

The freshman group – the Class of 2014- have arrived and I thank them for choosing UQ and for the confidence shown in our program. The first year is a class of 126 (27 males & 99 female) students. We welcome the 33 international students from 10 countries, with Singapore topping the tally (8), followed by Hong Kong (7), Malaysia (5), USA (4), Japan & Canada (2), with a single representative from New Caledonia, Norway, South Africa and the UK.

The President of the Australian Veterinary Association, Dr Mark Lawrie was on site to help with the Veterinary Leadership Experience and to re-present the copper plaque bearing the image of Chiron, the most famous of the centaurs, that has adorned the Seddon Building since 1961. The plaque was a gift from the AVA QLD division and the transfer to the new veterinary science building symbolizes the continuity in relationship between the AVA and UQ.

---

**Practitioners Symposium**

To mark the opening of the new University of Queensland School of Veterinary Science at Gatton, the School is holding its Inaugural Practitioner Symposium. Faculty and clinicians will present cutting edge clinical advances and research in small and large animals, production animals, virology, epidemiology, marine animals and wildlife. Guided tours of the new Veterinary Teaching Hospital and Veterinary Science buildings will be held. Come out and enjoy a weekend of good science, good food and good company in the beautiful rural surroundings of the new School of Veterinary Science.

When: Saturday 24 July 2.00 pm to 4.45 pm and Sunday 25th July 8.30 am to 5.00 pm.

Where: Gatton Campus

To Register your interest go to the Vet School Webpage: [www.uq.edu.au/vetschool](http://www.uq.edu.au/vetschool)
The new teaching laboratories and tutorial rooms are now in full use, with the last areas on line in late March (anatomy and pathology areas). The latest in audio-visual aids have been incorporated into the ‘dry’ labs – the Multi Purpose Lab, and Gatton e-Learning Lab, whilst improved a/v has transformed the teaching of anatomy. Fitting into lecture theatres has been a bit tight due to delayed renovations to 3 existing lecture theatres and for some lectures, students have been obliged to adapt to less than ideal conditions in the interim. Other issues where there has not been a perfect transition to the new location have arisen and while they are important, such as transport and accommodation, solutions will soon be identified. The research and office spaces for academics and professional staff are almost fully functional and by the April mid semester break in April we should be again productive. Diagnostic services are on line and ready to take in samples.

Contractors are finishing off most of these areas in March so that by April this effort will have been transferred to the Veterinary Medical Centre which is due for completion at the end of May. Recruitment of veterinary and support staff for the equine and companion animal hospitals is on track with a notably high quality of applications already received. Fourth and fifth years will continue to utilize the St Lucia Veterinary Teaching Hospital which has remained fully operational during the relocation. Professor Grant Frazer continues to fine tune the St Lucia practice in readiness for the influx of final year students. Final plans have been drawn up for the UQ specialty hospital which will be located on the RSPCA Animal Care Campus at Wacol. The entity that will oversee operations in this veterinary hospital will shortly be established and this company will oversee construction and fit out of the new facility.

“The new facilities in Gatton are impressive, we have access to some world class technology and I’m very excited about starting my career as a vet out here. We are so lucky to be studying in such a beautiful location.”

Sarah Kaye (2nd Year student)

New Small Animal Surgery Specialist

Cameron Broome graduated from the University of Queensland in 1993. He was employed as a surgical intern at the West Chermside Veterinary Clinic (now QVS) for 2 years. He then undertook residency training at Massey University in New Zealand. Whilst at Massey University, he also attained a Diploma in Veterinary Clinical Science. Cameron then spent the next 2 ½ years in private practice in the United Kingdom before returning to Massey University as a Lecturer in Small Animal Surgery. Cameron became a Fellow of the Australian College of Veterinary Scientists in 2005 before returning to private referral practice in the United Kingdom. He has now returned to Australia to work at the University of Queensland. His surgical interests include portosystemic shunts and limb deformity correction.
Research News

US $9.5m awarded for a behavioural study on humpback whales

Congratulations to Dr Mike Noad and Dr Rebecca Dunlop. More than AUD$10 million over 4 years has been awarded to their Behavioural Response Study (BRS) on Australian humpback whales. Drs Mike Noad and Rebecca Dunlop will receive $2.8m in direct support from the E&P Sound and Marine Life Joint Industry Programme (JIP) supported by the International Association for Oil and Gas Producers and the US Mineral Management Service. Collaborators with UQ in the project are Curtin Uni, the Defence Science and Technology Organisation, the University of Sydney and the Australian Antarctic Division. This is a great reward for the intensive efforts in seeking this funding and illustrates the high regard for the quality of research performed by Mike and Rebecca.

$2.4m awarded to study the control of sex ratio and fertility

Professor Michael Holland has been awarded $2.4m over 3 years by the CSIRO Flagship Collaboration Fund to lead a Research Cluster, which includes 4 Universities, to study ‘Sex ratio and sterility for commercial animal production’. Professors Michael McGowan and Michael Holland have $550k in direct funding from the Cluster for their project ‘Immuno-castration as an alternative to surgical spaying of heifers and cows’. Other collaborating institutions in the Cluster are the University of Newcastle, Simon Fraser University and Central Michigan University.

Destination Beef - Sophia Butler

After commencing my 3rd year in my PhD working on the development of oestrous synchronisation protocols for fixed-time artificial insemination (FTAI) in Bos indicus (Brahman) heifers in northern Australia I applied and was a successful applicant of the Graduate School Research Travel Grant. My sights were set on South America where Beef cattle artificial reproduction technology is at the forefront. I had been doing some collaboration in Australia with Professor Gabriel Bo and decided that a trip to Argentina to meet with him and his group would be a good idea to improve my quality of my PhD. Visiting the Instituto de Reproducción Animal Córdoba (IRAC) facility where Gabriel is based was a real eye opener to the scope we have in Australia to improve out artificial reproduction technologies in our commercial and stud cattle environments. Gabriel has been successfully working with Bos indicus cattle in artificial insemination and embryo transfer and is now one of the world leaders in this work.

After visiting the largest beef consuming country of the world, the largest beef producer and beef exporter, Brazil, was next on the list. I was able to spend time at the University of Sao Paulo with Professor Pietro Baruselli and his students. With the large Nelore based herd in Brazil majority of their research is based on the Bos indicus animal and therefore quite relevant to our Brahman cattle that dominate northern Australia. Approximately 3 million cattle per year are artificially inseminated in Brazil to FTAI; this is more than the total number of cattle artificially inseminated per year in Australia. With this wealth of knowledge I was able to tap into information and share my results to return to Australia equipped with knowledge to complete my PhD. I thank the graduate school for awarding me the Graduate School Research Travel Grant to make this trip and learning experience possible.

New Postgraduate Students Commencing in 1st Semester

Ameera Koya (Supervisor: Dr Gry Boe-Hansen) - Vaccine development using analytical techniques to protect against Australian bovine genital campylobacteriosis

Erica Lovas (Supervisor: Prof. Lucio Flippich) – Semen collection and manipulation in the cockatiel (Nymphicus hollandicus) - a model for investigating rare and endangered Australian parrots. (Transferred from School of Animal Studies).

Andres Ardila (Supervisor: Dr Gry Boe-Hansen) - Biology and Epidemiology of Campylobacter foetus subsp venerealis in rangeland beef cattle in Northern Australia

Eunju Choi (Supervisor: Dr Caroline O’Leary) - Molecular causes of haemangiosarcoma in dogs and development of diagnostic biomarkers

Leigh Schulte (Supervisor: Prof. Malcolm Jones) - Role of dynein light chains in surface biogenesis and renewal in human schistosomes
Dr Catherine Schuetze recognised for her International Achievements.

Dr Catherine Schuetze has been awarded The University of Queensland 2009 Young Alumnus of the Year for her achievements in founding Vets Beyond Borders (VBB). Dr Schuetze graduated in 1993 with a Bachelor of Veterinary Biology and in 1995 with a Bachelor of Veterinary Science.

Dr Schuetze travelled from her home in India to accept her award which recognises her outstanding contribution to veterinary development. VBB has played a pivotal role in successfully controlling rabies in the Indian Himalayan state of Sikkim, as well as providing post graduate surgical training to Indonesian, Indian, Bhutanese and Chinese Veterinary personnel.

"It was an honour to receive this award and a humbling experience to be able to fly home and accept this in front of family, friends, colleagues and peers. For the University of Queensland to recognise VBB’s work in this way is a wonderful recognition of the hard work and dedication shown by our volunteers over the last few years” said Dr Schuetze.

VBB is an Australian-based, not-for-profit, incorporated organisation established by veterinary volunteers in 2003. VBB establishes and runs canine population and rabies control programs according to the World Health Organisation guidelines and recommendations, which are proven to be the most effective and humane method of controlling rabies in human populations. Another important focus of the organisation since its inception is the recruitment and placement of volunteer veterinarians and nurses in animal welfare programs in Asia and the Pacific with a focus on animal welfare, stray dog health, population management and rabies control often collaborating with local, state and national governments.

"The future vision for VBB is to continue to provide veterinary and volunteer assistance wherever needed, promote the spirit of volunteering amongst the veterinary profession, and encourage more vets to engage in cross-cultural dialogue expanding experiences with their international colleagues in developing communities” said Dr Schuetze.

Class of 1959

Capital Campaign Director Janice Wilson supported the organisation of a three day reunion for the Class of 1959 in November 2009 – a highlight of which was a tour of Gatton. They were joined by Warren Kerswill, Relocation Project Manager for the School of Veterinary Science, who gave a wonderful description of the activities going on with the construction, while Janice covered other aspects of the campus.

After morning tea in the Foundation Building, the class of 1959 and their wives were shown around the campus by bus and saw first-hand the new facilities which were nearing completion. Warren and Janice both were guests of the 1959’ers at a winery for lunch before bidding this somewhat noisy, boisterous and totally delightful group farewell.

A lasting tribute of their reunion is their donation of a gold brick to the virtual wall of the Capital Campaign. This virtual wall will be displayed on plasma screens in the Veterinary Science Building.

For assistance with organizing your reunion, please contact us at vetenquiries@uq.edu.au.

From left back row: Randolph Winks, Ronald Peebles, Douglas Little, Middle row, James Marks, lan Steffert, Robert Southin, William Royal, Robert Davidson, Ralph Swan and Frederick Mayo in the front.

New Staff Appointments

Tanya Banks - Lecturer & Specialist in Small Animal Surgery
Tamsin Barnes - Lecturer in Veterinary Epidemiology
Cameron Broome - Small Animal Surgery Specialist
Rebecca Dunlop - Lecturer in Veterinary Physiology
Justine Gibson - Lecturer in Veterinary Microbiology
Joanne Harris - Receptionist
Brett Teale - Laboratory Manager (Diagnostic Services)
Leah McDonald - Finance Officer (Clinics)
Tonya Stokes - Clinician Educator
Donations

Buy a Virtual Brick and Help us Build a Wall of Honour

Provide a lasting tribute to your beloved pet/s, family member or yourself.
This will be the last chance for The University of Queensland’s School of Veterinary Science to invite you to donate a virtual brick. All funds raised will go towards equipping the new School of Veterinary Science facilities, which are being building at the UQ Gatton Campus. Veterinary Science Students have already begun the 2010 academic year in the School’s new purpose-build facilities.

More than 70% of all vets practicing in Queensland are UQ graduates. It is very likely your vet trained at UQ.
When you own a pet, your vet becomes part of your family. Regardless of whether yours is a valuable working or farm animal, or just the best, most loved companion in the world, your vet is totally committed to its wellbeing. He/she will ensure that your pet has the latest technology available to help diagnose treat and prevent diseases and in doing so, protect your health and that of the wider community.

Border and biosecurity are vital to Australia and your vet is at the front line of our defence.
In making this important donation you will play a vital role of in the development of this exciting project and help secure the education of the next generation of vets. Your brick can honour the pet you love, a family member or yourself. Your brick will be cemented into our virtual honour wall that is being constructed on our website, where you can watch it grow or shine!

CONTACT DETAILS
Title/Name of person making the gift
Name the gift is to be acknowledged to
Preferred mailing address
Postcode
Telephone
Fax
Email Address

I am a graduate of The University of Queensland
☐

GIFT DETAILS
My gift will be paid as follows:
Total Amount $ __________________

Please issue a reminder in __________________________
My gift is to be directed to __________________________
Signature _______________________________________

☐ Please do not publish my name in the list of donors

PAYMENT TYPE
Cheque (Crossed not negotiable and made payable to The University of Queensland)
☐ Visa ☐ MasterCard ☐ Diners ☐ Amex

Card No. ____________________________ ____________ ____________ ____________ ____________ Expiry date /

☐ Direct Deposit
Bank: ANZ
Account name: University of Queensland No.1 Account
BSB: 014 281 Account number: 8371 965 27
Reference: Donation
Please send a remittance advice to: donations@uq.edu.au

Attn: Pro Vice Chancellor (Advancement) Ms Clare Pullar
Advancement Office
The University of Queensland
BRISBANE QLD 4072

The University of Queensland thanks you for your support and generosity

Payment Timeframe - Please complete the below table

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Amount to be Paid</th>
<th>Month to be Paid</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Veterinary Services**

**Animal Genetics Laboratory**
The Animal Genetics Laboratory (better known as the AGL), is internationally recognised for its DNA typing and parentage verification services to the livestock industries.

The AGL was the first laboratory in Australia to scientifically validate and develop a commercial DNA-based parentage testing service for cattle over 15 years ago and remains committed to excellence in quality, accuracy and customer service. Although the team (www.uq.edu.au/vetschool/agl) at the AGL is small, it brings together over 50 years experience in molecular genetics and parentage testing to the forefront of Australia’s livestock industries.

The laboratory has always maintained strong ties with similar Australian and international laboratories. These collaborations have led to the AGL’s current suite of diagnostic tests for cattle as well as parentage testing.

The AGL has taken part in the International Society for Animal Genetics’ international comparison test every two years since its inception and has continually scored a 100% in this test. This means that the AGL can seamlessly interpret results from and exchange information with laboratories around the world.

The AGL is committed to genetic research and teaching, supporting and advising many postgraduate students and academic staff in SVS. It is self-sustaining and directs any proceeds back into research and test development. For more information on the AGL please contact Dr Emily Piper or visit www.uq.edu.au/vetschool/agl

**Diagnostic Services Laboratory**
The Diagnostic Services unit includes Anatomic pathology, Histopathology, Microbiology, Clinical pathology (haematology and biochemistry) and Parasitology. Now that the labs are relocated into these new state-of-the-art facilities, they are working to provide an exemplary service to SVS clinics and private veterinary practices.

Bedding in of services has taken additional time following the move, due to minor delays in the completion of the laboratory. Diagnostic services would like to thank its clients for their patience during this transition and we are looking forward to recommencing services in April. Further information on accessing the services will be distributed to clients and interested parties shortly.

The new multi-million dollar facilities and equipment at the UQ Gatton Campus now offer the opportunity for the Diagnostic Services Laboratories to help meet the needs of The University of Queensland, the State of Queensland, and the entire country by operating at the cutting-edge of biotechnology, biosecurity, animal health and welfare. For more information please contact Dr Brett Teale, Laboratory Manager, Diagnostic Services.

---

**Sabbatical - Paul Mills**

I was fortunate to receive a Carrick (now ALTC) Teaching Excellent award in 2007 which I used to confer with colleagues in Europe and the UK to observe veterinary science teaching methods.

The first destination was London and the Royal Veterinary College. The Lifelong Independent Veterinary Education (LIVE) centre (http://www.live.ac.uk/) was really worth a visit to see the virtual cow and the enthusiastic team supporting learning initiatives. I also observed a round of their Objective Structured Clinical Examinations (OSCE), which had a great team to run each student through a range of stations containing different species, problems and situations, which is great training for clinical outcomes.

I then travelled to Paris for the OIE International conference on veterinary education. The OIE started as the Office International des Epizooties and is now known as the World Organisation for Animal Health. The ‘Conference of Deans: evolving veterinary education for a safer world’ ran from the 12th-14th October and was attended by representatives of the majority of veterinary institutions throughout the world.

A number of recommendations were made (http://www.oie.int/eng/press/en_091014.htm) to enhance veterinary curricula throughout the world.

I visited veterinary schools in Milan (accredited), Padua (applying), Bologna (accredited), Perugia (accredited) and Pisa (applying). I was most impressed with preparation of anatomical specimens at Bologna which was undertaken by drying/desiccation. I observed an entire horse gut preserved in a dried form, which was a very useful learning tool. While in Bologna, I also visited the main University of Bologna, which is the oldest university in the world. The photo below shows me in the original medical anatomy laboratory.

Bologna is also famous for food and rightly so! I almost got lost in the food shops with fresh pasta, hams and chocolates!!! The outcomes from my sabbatical included creating or enhancing collaborations all over Europe, and I also hope that I have opened the door for return visits from European academics.

---

Teaching with excellence in world-class facilities visit: www.uq.edu.au/vetschool
Unlike terrestrial animals, marine animals live in an environment where light travels poorly but sound travels very efficiently, and cetaceans (whales and dolphins) in particular are masters of the use of sound for foraging, navigation and finding mates, sometimes over vast areas of the ocean. Recently, however, there has been a lot of concern about the amount of noise pollution generated by humans and how this might affect whales. Sources of anthropogenic sound include shipping, naval and non-naval sonar, blasting, drilling, dredging and oil and gas exploratory activity. The effects of sound could be at many different levels from physical injury and deafness at high levels (e.g. very close to blasting activity) to noise masking sounds of importance at comparatively low levels.

In 2002 I started a project called HARC, the Humpback whale Acoustic Research Collaboration, together with researchers from the Defence Science and Technology Organisation (DSTO - Australia), the Scripps Institution of Oceanography, the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution (WHOI -both in the US) and the University of St Andrew (Scotland). The program was initially designed as a way of looking at how humpback whales interacted with each other, particularly how they used sound to mediate these interactions. Humpback whales are a good candidate for this sort of work, particularly in southeast Queensland, as they migrate close to the coast making them accessible. They are also famously acoustic, the males singing long songs during the breeding season, probably to attract females.

HARC was based at Peregian Beach on the Sunshine Coast. We tracked the whales visually from the top of a hill using a surveyor’s theodolite and, at the same time, we moored three hydrophones (underwater microphones) offshore and used these to locate and track singing whales. By mapping these visual and acoustic tracks onto each other we were able to look at how passing whales were affected by the singing whales. We extended this work in 2003 and 2004 by performing a small number of experiments where we positioned an underwater speaker hanging from a boat in front of approaching whales and played some whales’ sounds or some short artificial tones at the whales to try and elicit a reaction.

(It was during this time that Rebecca Dunlop from Belfast joined the team as a research assistant but soon began her own research as a post-doctoral research fellow on non-song social sounds produced by the whales. Bec is now a physiology lecturer in SVS.)

After a hiatus of a couple of years, we went back into the field in 2008 and 2009 to attempt to build on our abilities to detect subtle behavioural changes in the whales. This involved the use of ‘Dtags’, special suction cup tags for gathering ultra-high detail behavioural information on whales. The tags contain a hydrophone and so record effectively what the whale can hear as well as every vocalisation of the whale the tag is on and the other whales with which it’s travelling. The tag also records depth and 3D movement (pitch, roll and yaw) so that you can reconstruct in great detail the movements of the whale and
correlate them perfectly with the sounds to which the whale is exposed.

Although the tags are very useful, the trick is getting them on. We had to have a 12m long carbon fibre pole built in the States. The pole sits in a custom made mount bolted to the bow of our boat. The far end of the pole carries the tag while the pole operator ‘steers’ the pole around to get the correct placement of the tag on the back of the whale. The boat has to be within 10m of the whales which is daunting when you consider that the whales are usually around 14m long and weigh at least 30 times more than the boat! Once the tag is on the whale, the whale is tracked by a separate ‘focal follow’ team on the hill with a theodolite as well as by the tagging boat (at a discrete distance). The tag is programmed to fall off a few hours after deployment, and once off, has to be retrieved by the boat and returned to shore for the data to be downloaded.

While we had limited success in 2008, 2009 was a much better season in terms of being able to get tags on, getting them back and downloading and analysing the data. This has set us up nicely for future experiments that will involve playing sounds to whales fitted with the Dtags.

O r i e n t a t i o n  W e e k

By Guyan Weerasinghe, UQVSA President

On Thursday, 25th of February 2010, the SVS and UQVSA welcomed our historic new first years for 2010. This cohort will be the first group to complete their veterinary degree within the Gatton campus and we are extremely excited to see what kinds of contributions they can make to our school and student body. The first years were introduced to their first year academic mentors: Mike Noad, Dee Whitworth and Jenny Seddon. The Veterinary Leadership Experience was introduced by Sasha Laws-King (Vet III) and Danara Blom (Vet IV and AVA student rep) spoke of the benefits of joining the Australian Veterinary Association.

The following day was the Hill’s Veterinary Leadership Experience for the new first years and an introduction to their Hogget Buddies (2nd year guides for the 1st years). This event was co-hosted by Hill’s Pet Nutrition and our own Vet for Life team. The students were introduced to the importance of the non-technical skills such as communication, team work and collaboration, whilst also creating space for them to get to know each other. The first years had a great time and are now ready to jump into the next 5 years of study. The 2010 academic year has got off to an exciting start and looks to be another year of growth and expansion of interest within our student body.

A Thank you to Janice Wilson

This is the last Vet Connect for the Director of the Capital Campaign, Ms Janice Wilson. Janice has raised the School’s profile over the past 3 years through innovative events and communications. These activities have provided introductions to new business and industry contacts whilst renewing contact with our alumni, friends and supporters. Thank you Janice!

To update your contact details, receive Vet Connect electronically or be removed from our mailing list, please advise us via our new contact details.

New Contact Details:
School of Veterinary Science
The University of Queensland
Gatton QLD 4343

Ph: (07) 5460 1834
Fax: (07) 5460 1922
Email: vetenquiries@uq.edu.au

“The move out here to Gatton has opened up a myriad of possibilities for our development as future veterinarians.”

Guyan Weerasinghe (4th Year Student)