

Education has taken fear from dentist's chair

By TONY WRIGHT

Dr Jean Currie recalls that it was difficult to find a child's tooth that was not riddled with caries and decay when she joined the ACT School Dental Service in 1950.

Today, about 76 per cent of children are free from caries, and the remainder have had "to work hard at drinking [soft drink] and eating biscuits constantly to offset the benefits of fluoridation and general dental education".

Dr Currie, of Red Hill, retired last week from her position as area dentist — effectively second-in-charge to the chief dental officer — of the school dental service.

She left her retirement party last Friday night feeling privileged to have worked for such an organisation, and considers the service "the most successful preventative-medicine project ever undertaken".

Indeed, dentistry has proved so successful in preventing tooth decay that it is possible to wonder whether a school dental service is still required.

Dr Currie has no such doubts. "Dentistry has simply become more complex," she said. "If you have more teeth in your head, then there will be more growth anomalies to deal with. The service is still needed, but it will change to meet the new demands."

Dr Currie has the reputation of being a hard-working, highly competent woman in

what was — when she began her career — largely a man's profession.

She regards her attitudes as having been brought up as a child of the Great Depression. She was born in Melbourne in 1923, and because her mother was a teacher at the prestigious Fribank Church of England Girl's Grammar School, she was educated free of charge at the school.

The family budget would not stretch to university fees, so she strove for — and won — a free scholarship to Melbourne University. Though her natural bent was to the humanities, she chose medicine initially, because it promised more solid job opportunities. She switched to dentistry in second year.

Dr Currie recalls that she was one of only two women among 25 men in her year at the university. She graduated in 1946.

She married in 1950 Dr Ian Currie, a young dentist she had met at university, and who was working at the Canberra Hospital.

The ACT School Dental Service had been set up in 1949, and Dr Jean Currie took a job when she moved to Canberra with her new husband.

The rest, as they say, is history.

She believes the most significant date for dental care in the ACT was 1964, when the water was fluoridated. Another significant date was 1967, when the Hobart School of Dentistry took its first dental-therapy students from the ACT. Dental therapists study for two years, and today make up the core of the ACT



Dr Jean Currie... dentistry more complex

school dental service. They are able to give injections, extract teeth, do fillings, undertake preventative procedures and educate children in dental care.

"Heaven help us if we didn't have the therapists," Dr Currie said. It has become increasingly difficult to recruit fully qualified dentists because of the greater financial rewards in private enterprise.

Dr Currie said she had so enjoyed her years with the service that she would have worked for nothing.

She clearly loves children, and rejoices in the changed attitudes of children to dentists.

Once, a visit to the dentist was a frightening experience.

"Fear is a concept that belongs to the surgical age of dentistry," Dr Currie said. "Obviously if a child's introduction to the dentist was having a big-rooted tooth pulled, they would experience fear. Today, with preventative measures like the toothbrush, fluoridation, fissure sealants and so on, it is rare for a child to go through fear-inducing experiences."

Dr Currie now plans to learn typing, undertake a course or two at the Australian National University, and pursue the loves of bushwalking and bird-watching with her husband.

More names for war-crimes list

An Israeli researcher in Jerusalem has uncovered a new list of alleged Nazi war criminals living in Australia and has handed it to a special Australian government investigator.

The special investigator, Mr Bob Greenwood, said yesterday that his deputy, Mr Keith Conwell, had been given the new names during a visit to Israel late last month.

Mr Greenwood declined to say how many names were on the new list or what crimes the people were alleged to have committed. It was his policy not to discuss operational details. But he did say it was a "relatively small number".

He told a Senate committee last month that he was investigating

450 alleged war criminals, with at least 15 cases being considered serious, involving allegations of mass murder.

It is believed the new list contains names, birth dates, alleged crimes and the ships that brought the people to Australia.

A spokesman for the Attorney-General, Mr Bowen, who is responsible for Mr Greenwood's unit, said that any prosecutions against alleged Nazis in Australia would be based on thorough research by Mr Greenwood and the Director of Public Prosecutions, Mr Ian Temby, QC.

Legislation allowing prosecutions has yet to be passed by the Senate.

The new list of names is believed to have been compiled by the head of the Simon Wiesenthal Centre research division, Mr Ephraim Zuroff, of Jerusalem, who unearthed the additional names from migrant-ship details rescued from European and Israeli archives.

The centre compiles evidence against suspected Nazis around the world who fled under false identities in 1945.

The new Australian list is part of a world-wide list of 299 names.

A list of names given to Canadian authorities on Monday included alleged Lithuanian and Byelorussian collaborators accused of persecuting and killing Jews during the German occupation.

Fiji students in Australia forced to run up debts

SUVA, Wednesday (AAP). — About 20 Fiji students in Australia have been running up debts because their allowances have been nearly two months late arriving from Suva.

The students' plight came to light after some of them contacted the Australian International Development Assistance Bureau in Canberra last month.

Under an aid scheme not affected by Australia's suspension of development assistance to Fiji last year, the Australian Government

pays the fees for a number of Fiji students at colleges and universities in Australia.

The students are also paid a quarterly living allowance under scholarships awarded by the Fiji Affairs Board in Suva.

An Australian embassy spokesman said today that the students had not received until late February their allowances due early in January. They had been unable to meet rent and other expenses.

The AIDAB advised the embassy in Suva, which alerted the Fiji

an Affairs Board to the situation.

A ministry official admitted the delay and blamed it on the system of payments involving the Department of Finance, the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and the Fiji Embassy in Canberra, which actually paid students.

The method was under review, the official said. Students on similar scholarships in New Zealand and Britain have also been affected.

According to *The Fiji Times*, one student in Auckland owed \$NZ3000 (\$A2770) in back rent.

Police prevent Aboriginal from hanging

Police have prevented an Aboriginal from hanging himself in a police lock-up at Broome, in the north-west of Western Australia, according to a police spokesman.

The spokesman said the 25-year-old Aboriginal had been detained for drunkenness and put in a cell shortly after six o'clock on Tuesday night.

Almost two hours later, police officers had found him hanging from the bars of his cell, with a noose made from strips of a mattress cover around his neck.

"He was still conscious and it appeared that he had only just made the attempt to hang himself," the spokesman said.

The man was uninjured and released soon after.

Braidwood school work 'long overdue'

By ROBERT HEFNER

The deputy president of the NSW Teachers' Federation, Mr Ray Cavenagh, said yesterday that the redevelopment of the Braidwood Central School was long overdue and that "the sooner they get on with it the better".

After visiting the school last Friday, Mr Cavenagh said it was "the worst school that I've seen for some time". Most country schools had been redeveloped years ago, and he was surprised that it had taken so long for any action to be taken at Braidwood.

The school has about 350 students from kindergarten to Year 12, and was used as a set for the film *The Year My Voice Broke*.

Braidwood teachers and parents are angry and upset about a letter from the NSW Minister for Education, Mr

Cavalier, informing them that plans to redevelop the school — which they say is dilapidated and often dangerous — have been scrapped.

That letter contradicts assurances from the NSW Department of Education that the redevelopment plan is proceeding on schedule, and that department officials will present the plan to community representatives today.

Mr Cavenagh said he understood that the department was looking to finalise the project today, and that "it seems somebody in the minister's office has got it wrong".

The *Canberra Times* attempted again yesterday to contact Mr Cavalier for a clarification, but was unable to get in touch with him.

Hunt on for person leaking documents

A hunt is on for the person or persons who have leaked Department of Finance documents which are critical of proposals contained in the Government's Green Paper on higher education.

Two documents have been leaked and members of the Department of Employment, Education and Training are blaming someone in Finance who they believe is mounting a rearguard action against the Green Paper, after having lost the argument in Cabinet.

The leaked documents were prepared before Cabinet decided on the Green Paper. A spokesman for the Minister for Employment, Education and Training, Mr Dawkins, said that the documents were there-

fore superseded by the Cabinet decision.

Mr Dawkins is understood to have told a meeting of Labor education ministers in Adelaide last Friday that the Department of Finance was trying to torpedo the Green Paper.

The leaks involved a Department of Finance submission to the committee headed by the former NSW Premier, Mr Neville Wran, which considered alternative methods of funding the restructuring proposals outlined in the Green Paper. The submission canvassed the option of tertiary fees of up to \$12,000 a year for each student and challenged the Green Paper's view that a big expansion was needed in higher education for economic reasons.

Rangers lift bans

Rangers employed by the ACT Parks and Conservation Service have lifted bans imposed on several duties at national parks and nature reserves. A meeting has been arranged between the rangers, the ACT Administration and the Department of Industrial Relations tomorrow morning to negotiate a settlement on career structures.

Free firewood

Free pine firewood will be available, without licence, this weekend at Kowen Forest, off the Sutton Road.

The wood is in piles scattered throughout the area. Collectors are advised to wear long pants, strong boots and safety equipment. The Forests Branch said pine was easily split, dried quickly and burned well.

Dutch builder joins ship-project team

One of the consortiums formed to bid for the \$5 billion Anzac ship project, Australian Warship Systems, announced on Monday that it had signed an agreement with the Dutch naval shipbuilder Royal Schelde to offer the M Type frigate.

The AWS consortium comprises ANI, Carrington Slipways, AWA and the New Zealand engineering and construction project management group McConnell Dowell. Royal Schelde will take an equity share in AWS.

The consortium plans to build

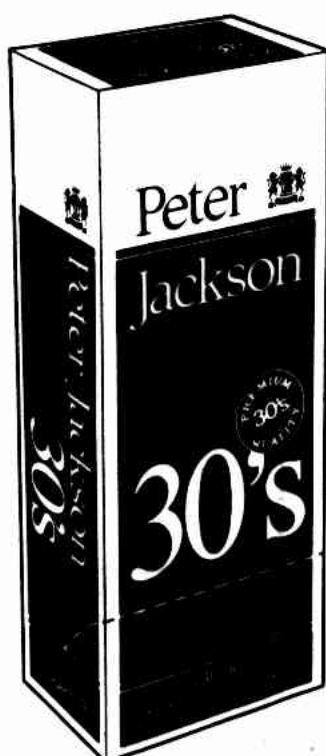
all 12 frigates — eight for the Royal Australian Navy and four for New Zealand — in Newcastle, a proposal which has the full support of the NSW Premier, Mr Unsworth.

"AWS has reached agreement with Royal Schelde because their Type M design in the most advanced and best suited to Australia's needs," he said.

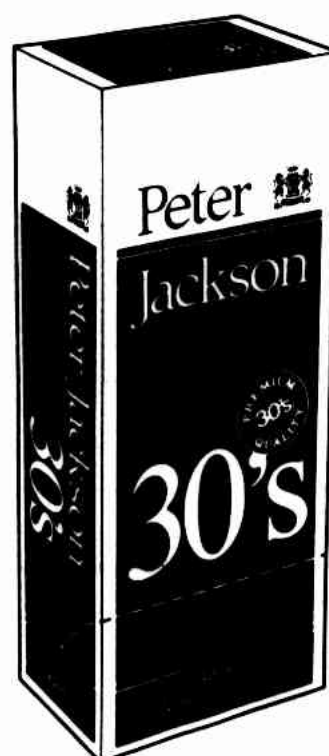
"Royal Schelde recognised the strength of AWS's track record in defence and shipbuilding and we hope that together they become a winning team."

SPECIAL

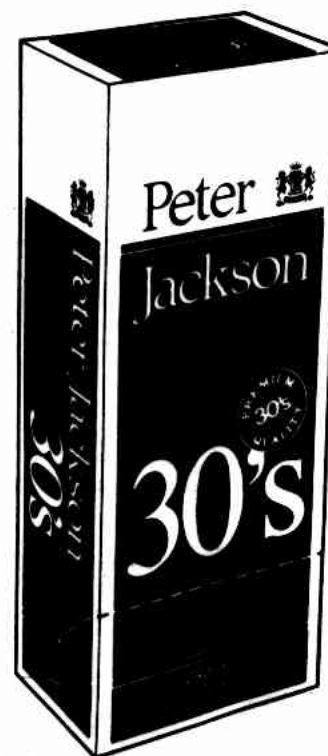
PETER JACKSON 30s



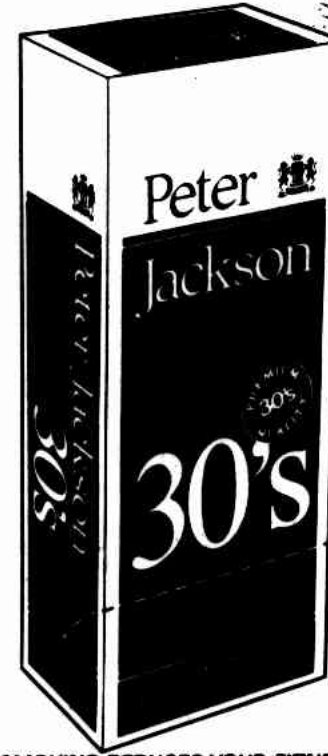
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