

Late arrival graduates with flying colours



FAMILY AFFAIR:
The university pulled a few strings so siblings Alexandra and Andrew George could graduate together. Photo: MELISSA ADAMS

By Stephanie Anderson

For Andrew George, his graduation was both a memorable occasion and a momentous near-miss.

Only a week before accepting his Graduate Diploma of Legal Practice yesterday, the ANU student was in the Middle East on RAAF duties.

"I was actually released to be able to come here," he said. "I was meant to be coming back today so that was very nice of the chain of command."

Along with his sister Alexandra, Andrew took part in the university's largest set of graduations yet as one of the 2494 students receiving 1163 undergraduate, 583 graduate and 94 research awards this month.

Despite yesterday being his fourth graduation - which with Alexandra's newly acquired PhD brings the count between them to 10 - Andrew said it wouldn't be the end of his studies.

"I've got a Master of Arts which I'm also finishing off so that might make it 11," he said.

Andrew said the university had pulled a few strings so he could graduate alongside his sister, however that didn't mean it was an occasion for the entire George

family. "We've got a brother at University of Western Australia who's undertaking a medical degree and a sister-in-law who's graduating with a medical degree in about two hours," he said.

As the students marked the end of their studies, Ian Chubb was also sitting through his last set of graduations as vice-chancellor.

"They're a huge celebration for people and they reflect the outcome of all their hard work and energy and commitment," he said.

"They help remind me and my colleagues of an important part of why the ANU exists. There will be a lot of parts of the job I'll miss..."

"This is an important part but it's one of them... I think it's a great privilege to be the vice-chancellor of the ANU, one of life's great privileges."

The graduation ceremonies continue today with 709 students receiving awards from the College of Asia and the Pacific, the College of Engineering and Computer Science, the College of Medicine, Biology and Environment and the College of Physical and Mathematical Sciences.

ANU graduations list - Page 24

Too much weight given to low-carb beer myth

If you prefer the taste of low-carb beers then go ahead and drink them. But if you think they are healthier than other beers, you're kidding yourself.

That's the message from health experts after research showed that many Australians have been fooled by the myth that low-carbohydrate beers are not as harmful as other varieties.

A national survey conducted by the Victorian Health Promotion Foundation found that more than 60 per cent of low-carb beer drinkers believed the beverage was healthier than full-strength beer. More than two thirds of respondents believed that low-carb beer was healthier than low-alcohol beer and 44 per cent thought it was less fattening than other beers.

About 15 per cent consumed more beer when drinking low-

carb products because they believed that they were healthier.

Foundation chief executive Todd Harper said low-carb and full-strength beers contained the same amount of alcohol, which was high in kilojoules.

"Beer doesn't contain a lot of carbs to begin with," he said. "For example, a can of soft drink contains four times more carbohydrates than a stubby of full-strength beer. It's the alcohol that contributes most to weight gain from drinking beer..."

Some people drank more in the false belief that low-carb drinks were better for weight control.

"Carbs or no carbs, alcohol can still be harmful for your health," he said. "The more you drink, the greater your risk of accidents and injuries, and developing liver disease, cancer, stroke, brain damage and dementia."

Jobs da 'Goldi'

By David McLennan

Australia's unemployment rate is back on track to drop below 5 per cent next year, but the rapid jobs growth could add pressure on the Reserve Bank to resume lifting interest rates, economists say.

Australian Bureau of Statistics data published yesterday showed the unemployment rate fell 0.2 points to a seasonally adjusted 5.2 per cent in November, effectively reversing October's surprise rise.

But despite a 600-job increase, the ACT's unemployment rate was 0.1 point higher than reported a month ago, meaning it lost sole possession of the lowest level in the country.

The ACT had 3.1 per cent unemployment in trend terms in November, and October's rate was revised up to the same level. This matched the rate in the Northern Territory.

The fall in the national rate was caused by a 55,100 increase in full-time jobs, which was only slightly offset by a 400-person decrease in part-time positions. It also came despite another record labour force participation rate. The proportion of the population that is either working or actively looking for work in-

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