



We are
RMIT

Udderly Fabulous

From the moment you step inside Dr Caroline Tan's office in the Swanston Academic Building, her obsession is loud and clear. Her zany cow collection is drawing national attention.

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City Hub staff are among those who have just helped to answer more than 83,000 student queries from January to March.

Highlights

Marathon Man

Running in the open is a simple yet dangerous pleasure Angel Calderon did not know growing up in Guatemala. Now he is making up for lost time.

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Heroes of the Hub

They are the human face of RMIT. After answering 83,000 student queries between January and March, Hub staff are finally able to breathe a collective sigh of relief.

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Heroes of the Hub

Spare a thought for the staff at RMIT's Hub, who are breathing a collective sigh of relief as first semester gets into full swing.

The first three months of the year saw a total of 83,093 student queries come through their ticketing and contact centre systems at the City, Brunswick and Bundoora campuses.

At the City campus alone, a team of staff working from 13 computers served 27,500 students and handed out about 35,000 diaries from January to March.

That's a whole lot of questions, requests, demands, queries, and more questions about all matters relating to students at RMIT.

The Hub, in many ways, is the human face of RMIT. It is the first point of contact for all new students with questions about academic life.

Acting customer service co-ordinator at The Hub, Philip Donkin, said the Hub's 35 permanent staff are boosted by a team of casuals during this peak period – taking the total number of staff to 55.

"We also employed nine temporary staff at the City Hub to produce student cards and transport concessions forms," he says.

"These temps used clickers and they served 26,068 from their clickers but a staff member during a busy period will deal with 50 to 100 students a day."

Census day on Monday 31 March was also busy with 713 students served at the City Hub, with an average wait time of 26 minutes.

"Across the entire three months, the average wait was 13 minutes and very few people waited over an hour," Mr Donkin says.

That is a significant improvement on previous waiting times, according to

Melinda Munday, manager of customer service student administration, when compared to last year.

"In the previous year students waited up to two hours and we would be stopping people entering the queue at 4pm," Ms Munday says.

"We haven't had to do that at all this year because we focused on queue management so we had people walking the queue with iPads, serving students and also making sure students were there for the right reasons and referring them to self-help options where possible."



City Hub staff take a breather.

Staff Successes

In this edition of *We Are RMIT*, we are celebrating the achievements of staff inside and outside the University.

Entrepreneurship lecturer Nthati Rametse was part of a US Consulate Q and A panel discussion last month.

It put Dr Rametse in good company, with Laura McKenzie, CEO of Scale Investors, and Antony Simmons, Founder of Do Water, also on the panel.

Entrepreneurship issues discussed included taxation compliance issues for enterprises, the investor's perspective, and personal insights from a successful young Melbourne entrepreneur. The US Consulate currently hosts three RMIT University interns in its public affairs and communications sections.

Jane Ter Kuile from Chancellery appeared at the head of this year's Moomba parade.

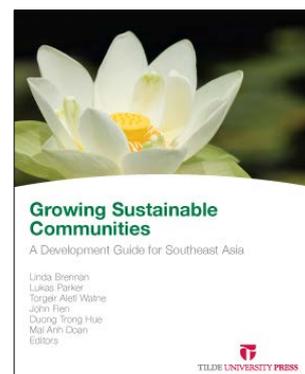
Ms Ter Kuile, who learns belly dancing, was part of the troupe escorting the Spirit of Moomba on her journey along St Kilda Road.

The *Growing Sustainable Communities: A Development Guide for Southeast Asia* book was launched last month.

It presents a practical, yet academically sound, manual for community development practitioners, NGOs and community groups developing sustainable lifestyles in Southeast Asia.

The editorial team includes Professor Linda Brennan (RMIT Australia), Dr Lukas Parker (RMIT Vietnam), Dr Torgeir Watne (Victoria University), Professor John Fien (Swinburne University), Hue Duong (RMIT Vietnam), and Mai-Anh Doan (RMIT Vietnam).

More information on the book can be found on Amazon, Barnes & Noble, and the Tilde University Press website, with pre-order options available.



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Moo Mania

We all have quirky passions but few can say they love cows as much as Dr Caroline Tan.

To say she is obsessed is a slight understatement.

With a cow collection of 3,320 – and counting – she has earned a place in the Australian Book of Records for owning the greatest number of cow related items in the country.

Now Dr Tan, who teaches entrepreneurship in the School of Management, is aiming for the world record.

From the moment you step inside her office in the Swanston Academic Building, her obsession is loud and clear.

Her cows come in all shapes, sizes and colours and are crammed into the nooks and crevices of her office and her home, aptly named Chateau de Moo.

There's even a stash of cows – it is really a dedicated cow room – at her parents' home in Malaysia.

Her extensive collection includes a cow couch, shoes, figurines, soft toys and even a “cowculator”.

It's hard to avoid her cow obsession but each and every one is special to her.

“I love all my cows,” she says. “It's the spots, the black and white spots.”

The cute creatures make an appearance in her teaching, too.

“A lot of my examples in class are cow related,” she says. “It changes the environment in the class because cows are fun, it opens up my personality and students relate to that.”

She often taps into marketing guru Seth Godin's purple cow theory – be different to stand out among the monochrome – to show students how to be remarkable in business.

Dr Tan can't remember when or why she started collecting cows but thinks it began when she heard the phrase “How now, brown cow” at 17. She didn't see her first real cow until she was 20.

“I have cows from all over the world... I found a cow bell in Capri, have lots of bulls from Barcelona, Murano glass cows from Venice and even found a cow shop in Paris,” she says.



Dr Caroline Tan at home, aptly named Chateau de Moo, with some of her cow collection.

Her best find, however, was right here in Melbourne where she picked up a solid timber rocking cow, lovingly made by a grandfather, on ebay for \$10.

Check out her collection at moomoolah.com

Can you beat Caroline's cow collection? What do you collect? Let us know at wearermit.edu.au.

Know Your RMIT

How much do we really know about where we work? Know your RMIT aims to shine a light on the people, the history and the buildings that have made RMIT University what it is today.

What part of RMIT's City campus is this?



Answer: It is Bowen Street, looking down from La Trobe Street.

Marathon Man

There's only one thing Angel Calderon feels as he pounds the pavement on his regular long-distance runs and that is freedom.

The confession comes with a mix of gratitude and sadness. Running in the open is a simple yet dangerous pleasure he did not know growing up in Guatemala.

"I often run along the beach. I think of the beauty of living in a country like Australia where there is peace and you feel safe," he says.

"In Guatemala, you cannot go running or cycling because you could be shot. Running is a reminder of how blessed and lucky I am to be living here."

Growing up in the middle of the Guatemalan civil war, which lasted 36 years and saw more than 200,000 people killed or disappear, Mr Calderon experienced his fair share of turmoil.

He received his first death threat, in an anonymous letter, when he was in year 8 and was forced to leave the country at 19.

Two years before he arrived in Australia as a refugee in 1985, aged 21, his brother Vinicio was kidnapped. He still does not know what happened to him.

For someone who has experienced such sadness and turmoil in his life Mr Calderon,

a principal advisor in planning and research, is a modest man.

He is also a man of many talents – a natural artist and a skilled marathon runner.

The focus and determination that fuels his marathon running also inspires his work at RMIT and his vibrant artwork.

"Running gives me the discipline and the structure to do the many things I am able to do," he says.

He has completed 11 marathons and is currently training for the Traralgon marathon in June. He will also run in the Melbourne marathon in October.

"My goal is to become a spartan for the Melbourne Marathon and to do that I have to complete 10 Melbourne marathons. So far I have completed seven," he says.

He has also taken part in two Oxfam Trailwalkers, a 100km trek in teams of four, and several half marathons over the years.

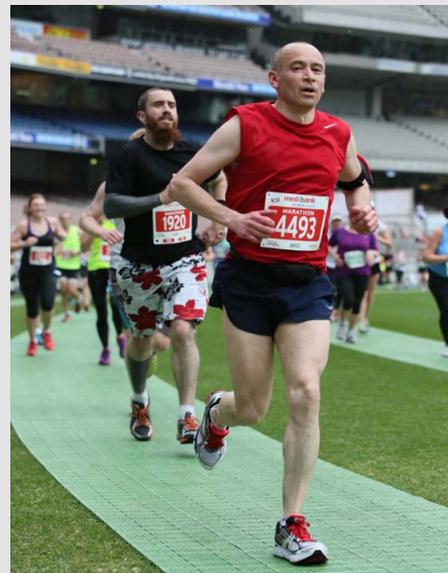
"I find it easy to do 20km runs because mentally I am prepared and my legs have the ability... you put in the time and effort and you reap the reward."

Mr Calderon tapped into his hidden talent of painting accidentally. Finding it difficult to write about his experiences, he picked up a paintbrush.

Painting has allowed him to blend the cultures, heritage and common grounds of the two countries.

He has also written poems and essays and is currently working on a new exhibition "As it happens..." focusing on the dynamics of relationships.

His work can be seen at www.angeljcalderon.com



Marathon man: Angel Calderon.

Vale Jack Clancy



Professor Jack Clancy.

Tributes have been flowing for larger than life bon vivant Jack Clancy — a valued friend and long-time colleague to many at RMIT — who passed away after a long illness last month, aged 79.

A gifted teacher, communicator and scholar, Professor Clancy was regarded as an institution himself at RMIT where as head of humanities he pioneered courses in media, cinema, communications and semiotics.

Friend and colleague Professor Mike Berry, from the School of Global, Urban and Social Studies, said the University had lost a great source of knowledge, a sparkling wit and a talented mentor with his passing.

"Jack was an institution at RMIT," he said. "His contribution to the humanities and communications studies was foundational.

"He created the first course in media studies in the early 1970s, helped raise the journalism course to degree status, and later introduced new postgraduate programs in public relations and editing and publishing."

Professor Berry said he was amazed by the range of Professor Clancy's interests and talents.

"This made being with Jack, whether on or off the cricket field, a joyous occasion. Sport, music, literature, history, wine, current affairs and all things to do with the media – Jack could discourse knowledgeably on all of this and more," he said.

Born in Melbourne, John (Jack) Clancy attended the University of Melbourne and, as a 191cm forward, played for University Blacks in the Victorian Amateur Football Association until recruited by Fitzroy in 1957.

He made his senior debut for Fitzroy in round one that year – spending the whole game on the bench. He was dropped to the reserves when he injured his knee and returned to the

University Blacks where, two years later, he injured his other knee.

That put an end to his senior football career, though he continued to coach and play with the Blacks and to serve in other roles at the club until recently.

Professor Clancy's love of cricket was legendary and he played cricket well into his fifties.

Long-time friend and colleague Adjunct Professor Judith Smart, from the Centre for Applied Social Research said Professor Clancy was a gifted communicator, with an enviable ability to speak without notes, to digress without losing his train of thought, and to involve students or members of his audience in a dialogue.

His Cup Day parties were legendary, and he never missed the annual celebration of Karl Marx's birthday. When he retired from RMIT, a lecture was instituted and named in his honour.

Professor Clancy is survived by his wife, Patsy, sons David and Rob, their partners Nicola and Sophie and four grandchildren.

How to Contribute

Contribute to **We Are RMIT** – if it's global, urban or connected we want to know about it. Do you have a colleague whose passion is competing in marathons, has volunteered for charity for many years, or has received a community award? Do you have a colleague whose contributions to RMIT and the wider community have gone unrecognised? If so, let us know at wearermit@rmit.edu.au.

If you have any comments or queries, please email wearermit@rmit.edu.au.

We Are RMIT is produced by Engagement.

For more information [click here](#) or visit www.rmit.edu.au/id/communications.