

ductory lecture are all in a day's work for University of Melbourne Asian Studies scholar, Associate Professor Charles Coppel.

Associate Professor Coppel, based in the Department of History, is noted for his research, expertise and publications in the areas of Indonesian studies and ethnic Chinese in South-East Asia and broader issues of race and identity over more than 35 years.

A University of Melbourne law graduate who left the Bar in 1965 to take up Indonesian studies, Associate Professor Coppel has played a leading part in the

New Books

general development of Asian studies across the University.

He was appointed Associate Professor in 1992 in connection with his joint roles as Coordinator of Asian Studies in the Faculty of Arts and as Associate Director of the Asian Business Centre from 1989 to 1992.

The program for his recent 'busy day' included a symposium on The Chinese in Indonesia, hosted in the Sidney Myer Asia

Centre, the Institute of Asian Languages and Societies (MIALS) and Asialink. After the symposium came the launch – by MIALS Director, Professor Merle Ricklefs – of Associate Professor Coppel's book: *Studying Ethnic Chinese in Indonesia*, which has been published in Singapore by the Singapore Society of Asian Studies.

Associate Professor Coppel's valedictory lecture, immediately following the book launch, focused on the theme, *From the Margins: Indonesian Studies and the Study of the Ethnic Chinese*.



Leading role: Associate Professor Charles Coppel (holding a copy of *Studying Ethnic Chinese in Indonesia*) with, from left, participants in *The Chinese in Indonesia* symposium Professor Leo Suryadinata, Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, Singapore; Dr Jean Gelman Taylor, History, University of NSW; Professor Arief Budiman, Indonesian Program, MIALS; and Ms Jemma Purdey, History, University of Melbourne. Photo: PAUL RICHARDI

German and Swedish Studies marks 40 years at Melbourne

THE DEPARTMENT OF GERMAN AND SWEDISH STUDIES recently celebrated 40 years of offering a Swedish program at the University of Melbourne.

Among the 70 guests at the celebration were Swedish Ambassador Lars-Erik Wingren and his wife Margita and board members of the Melbourne University Swedish Studies Foundation, which raises funds for the Swedish program.

Other guests included supporters of Swedish Studies in the wider community, members of staff and many of the department's Swedish students.

Head of the School of Languages, Professor Colin Nettelbeck, told guests the University was unique in being the only tertiary institution in Australia and New Zealand offering a Swedish program.



From the Faculties

Melbourne was also the only university in the southern hemisphere at which students could study at postgraduate level with the possibility of obtaining a PhD in Swedish, he said.

Key speaker of the evening was Associate Professor John Martin, head of the department's Swedish Section between 1969 and 1995.

Associate Professor Martin spoke of the past 40 years of Swedish Studies at Melbourne and the many committed teachers and gifted students who have helped to foster the section's "friendly, open and intellectually stimulating climate".

New Professorial Fellow has a wide environmental brief

WILLING TO WADE THROUGH WASTEWATER, newly appointed Civil and Environmental Engineering Professorial Fellow David Fox is hardly your average desk-bound statistician.

Professor Fox (right), seconded from CSIRO for up to three years, is here to help identify, develop and conduct multi-disciplinary, multi-agency environmental projects of joint interest and benefit to the University of Melbourne and CSIRO.

His appointment is sponsored by CSIRO's Division of Land and Water, the University of Melbourne departments of Civil and Environmental Engineering and Anthropology, Geography and Environmental Studies, and Melbourne University Private.

Professor Fox's expertise is in environmental statistics, a statistical discipline devoted to environmental monitoring, sampling and assessment.

He is also outspoken on where the problem of declining interest in statistics as a discipline lies, believing it is not entirely due to lack of funding. He suggests the profession needs to take greater respon-



Photo: PAUL RICHARDI

sibility for and ownership of its own destiny.

"The enormity and pervasiveness of environmental issues confronting Australia should have mathematicians and statisticians overwhelmed by work associated with environmental measurement, modelling and monitoring. Unfortunately, this is not the case," he says.

"It is disturbing that much of this country's critical statistical analyses underpinning major natural resource management decisions is being compromised by a lack of



People

access to robust and contemporary statistical methodology.

"To overcome this, statisticians need to improve coordination, communication and collaboration between themselves and environmental scientists. For their part, the statisticians need to adopt a more 'hands-on' approach.

"It is possible to sit in an office and run computer software to help design a water quality monitoring strategy, but the broader appreciation and understanding of an environmental problem comes from actually getting out there in the field," he says.

Professor Fox can attest to the value of this type of fieldwork having flown down river gorges in Papua New Guinea, snorkelled in seagrass meadows in Western Australia and waded in the murky waters around the Boags Rocks sewage outfall on Victoria's Mornington Peninsula

to achieve the understanding necessary to deliver a robust statistical analysis of the problem.

"Statistics has a bright future as long as we start communicating better with other scientists, industry, government and the public about the role we can play in managing the environment," he says.

During his secondment, Professor Fox will help develop a Masters stream in environmental statistics as part of the University's Graduate Environmental Program, the first such course of its kind in Australia. He will also offer undergraduate courses in environmental statistics and supervise graduate students.

Professor Fox is Director of the new Adelaide Coastal Waters Study, for which most of the research and technical services will be provided by South Australian universities and research organisations, although he is seeking to use expertise from the University of Melbourne.

"These activities give immediate effect to the recently signed Memorandum of Understanding between CSIRO and Melbourne University," he says.



Ego Seeman wins top international osteoporosis

The award recognises Associate Professor Seeman's outstanding clinical investigations into disorders of bone and mineral metabolism and his lifetime commitment to groundbreaking osteoporosis research.

Associate Professor Seeman's studies in osteoporosis in men were among the first to

David Solomon awarded the RK Murphy Medal