



*Better Leaders,
Better Collegiate Life*

President's Report to 2015 AGM

Our 2014 Conference in Adelaide, while somewhat down in attendance, was nevertheless a successful gathering of members and associates who particularly appreciated the governance sessions conducted by **AICD**. Many thanks again to **Rose Alwyn** and her Adelaide colleagues for a very enjoyable and rewarding program, and to our Executive Officer, **Deborah Pugh**, and Conference Organiser, **Dr Bob Cope**, for all their operational efforts. Of special note was the work done with our **sponsors** and the contributions that they made. Overall, we were able to make a small profit on the Conference.

Governance:

Our partnership with AICD has been helpful and appreciated, and a further '**In the Boardroom**' workshop was held at The Women's College UQ on Saturday 30 May this year. Good governance is critical to all that we do, and revised *Guiding Principles for the Employment of Heads of Colleges* are published on our website. This year we collaborated with AACUHO in the publication of a '**University Student Housing Professional Standards**' document which was launched at the AACUHO Conference in Brisbane last April, and we are currently considering a draft Governance Policy for our Association.

National Census:

This comprehensive survey of the Australian university student accommodation sector, published at the end of May this year, was jointly initiated and co-funded (with the Commonwealth Department of Education and Training) by UCA. Along with representatives from the Department and AACUHO, Carla Tromans and I reviewed the draft over the summer vacation. Prepared by 'Tertiary Balance' (Peter McDonald), the survey clearly indicates the increasing trends and challenges in our sector, especially **the growth of commercial entities** who now own and/or manage some 43 per cent of places in purpose built student accommodation.

On 1 May I attended with Peter McDonald a meeting in Canberra, organised by **Universities Australia**, of **DVCs International** at which Peter gave a preliminary presentation on the findings of the Census, especially in relation to international students. It was good for UCA to be 'showcased' in this way!

Research Papers:

In preparing the National Census Report, Peter McDonald cited some research papers/ theses written by members and/or related to our work. These are now available for reference on our website under Members - Research Papers. We would love to see the list grow!

UCA Representation:

It was very satisfying to represent UCA at **the first Government Roundtable on the Draft National Strategy for International Education**, held at Parliament House, Canberra, on 18 June last. UCA made a submission about the draft on 5 June. About 80 or so delegates, including a number of Vice-Chancellors and other senior representatives of international education providers, heard initial speeches from the Hon Christopher Pyne, the Hon Julie Bishop and the Hon Ian MacFarlane. My table, chaired by the Hon Phil Honeywood, CEO of IEAA, focused especially on the student experience. The Draft Strategy refers to the value of “college style” accommodation!

I was invited by Phil Honeywood to join a panel discussion at an **IEAA Symposium on International Student Accommodation** at Sydney University on 15 May. UCA has been invited to take part in a follow-up project, sponsored by ‘Study NSW’, to develop policy in relation to international student accommodation quality and affordability. Our concern, of course, will very much be for the quality of the residential community experience!

Executive Visits:

In May this year, the Executive visited **Mannix College** at Monash University and the **La Trobe University Colleges**, Bundoora. We greatly enjoyed the hospitality of Barbara Green and St Hilda’s College, Melbourne, in meeting with other **Melbourne University Heads**; and that of Sean Brito at Mannix and Adam Campbell at La Trobe. The **La Trobe Colleges** are now under a centralised university management, with managers having across accommodation responsibility for particular aspects of living and learning in the Colleges, such as AACUHO President, Laura Burge, being Manager, Residential Education. There are now no senior live-in staff.

In August, members of the Executive visited **UNE**, meeting with Ashwin Bhutani (Director of Residential Services), Heads of Colleges, and the Chief Services Officer (Professor Peter Creamer). It was also a pleasure to catch up with the Acting Master of **St Albert’s College**, Dr David Daintree (former Rector, St John’s College University of Sydney, and Principal of Jane Franklin Hall University of Tasmania), and at dinner with the Chairman, Karl Schmude, and the Master-elect, Jason Lincoln.

While noting different arrangements and challenges for both independent and university-managed colleges and halls, these visits emphasise how much leaders in our sector need support, encouragement, professional development and networking/ sharing opportunities.

AACUHO & ACUHO-I:

Last April I attended part of the **AACUHO Conference in Brisbane**, at which the Professional Standards Guideline was launched and at which I gave a brief overview and report on UCA. I had the opportunity to meet with the President of ACUHO-I, Tom Ellett, and, with Colin Marshall (Director Campus Life Federation University Vic., and ACUHO-I Globalisation Director) we discussed the **affiliation of UCA with ACUHO-I**. Such affiliation had been ‘flagged’ by Marie Leech on her visit to the ACUHO-I Conference in 2014. Along with our MOU with AACUHO, affiliation has opportunities of conference attendance and the sharing of research and programs, and also positions UCA in partnership with professional bodies

providing a range of living and learning experiences for students. Our Vice-President, Rose Alwyn, attended this year's Conference in Orlando, Florida, and signed the affiliation agreement on behalf of UCA.

Future Leaders Grants:

While recognising the various paths that are taken to positions of leadership in our colleges and halls, the encouragement and support of deputies and deans in collegial life is a way of **promoting the value of collegiality in residential communities and the importance of broader community leadership than just 'management'**. UCA, in the spirit of its 'tag' line *Better Leaders, Better Collegiate Life*, may provide two grants in any calendar year, each of up to a sum of \$2,000, awarded to current deputies or deans of residential colleges and halls, and who qualify for Associate Membership of UCA, for the purpose of undertaking a project, program, course and/or visits that will in some way contribute to better collegiate life.

Applications for these grants will be made in the same way as for our Conference and Research Grants, the value of each of these having been increased to a sum of up to \$1,000 and up to \$2,000 respectively. Further information is available on our website.

Collegiate Way International Conference 2016:

The first *Collegiate Way International Conference* was held at **Durham University UK** last November, with a number of our members attending. The aim of the Conference, as expressed by the Chancellor of Durham University, Sir Thomas Allen, was in part "to explore 'the collegiate way' – to exchange ideas, thinking and best practice, and to celebrate our common purpose"; it was very much a "conversation among colleges", representing a variety of collegiate arrangements across the globe.

Those attending were keen for the conversation to continue. An International Advisory Committee, chaired by Dr Michael Eamon of Catharine Parr Traill College, Trent University, Canada, has been formed, and an offer from **ANU to host the second conference** has been accepted. The 2016 conference will be held in Canberra from **Sunday 13 to Thursday 17 November**, and our **UCA Conference 2016** will be aligned with it. The Executive has therefore approved the appointment of Ms Alicia Watson, *'What'sOn Consulting'*, as Conference Organiser – in the same way as Dr Bob Cope was the organiser for our 2012 and 2014 conferences. This will be a marvellous opportunity to represent the value of collegiate life to our universities and to engage with like-minded colleagues from universities around the world.

Challenges and Opportunities:

As reflected in the National Census, the nature of provision and leadership of university residences in Australia is significantly changing. There are few if any new 'traditional' colleges and halls; **centralisation and the outsourcing of headship and staffing** are increasingly common in universities where, albeit with the realities of 'fiscal constraints', **corporate rather than collegial culture** appears to give pre-eminence to the cutting of costs over considerations for close community and care; reference is often made to student accommodation as non-core business rather than as an integral part of the business of learning and an enhancement of the student academic experience; and a growing number of

commercial providers seeks to capitalise on the need for building bathrooms and beds but at the risk of by-passing **communities of connection, collaboration and character** that involve both students and staff. University residence is more frequently referred to as part of the student accommodation or housing 'industry' rather than as part of the university sector; landlords and tenants, managers and clients, rather than educators and students, heads/deputies, staff and residents **living and learning together**. My own university (ANU) is building a new Hall of Residence for some 500 students to open in 2017 – what it refers to as a 'traditional' Hall, but with a decision to have it managed/operated by UniLodge on the 'argument' of balancing 'traditional' arrangements (whatever that now means) with commercial viability.

Our challenge and opportunity are however to be a representative voice for collegial community and care as we too explore **what, in this changing context, and that of our universities more generally, it means to be 'college'** and a residence of 'college style'. We can and do, of course, embrace good tradition, but our purpose goes much further in being places of good **transition and transformation**. We can contribute positively to the development of new purpose built student accommodation, including for graduate students, as both universities and external providers come to see the need beyond just 'beds' to thinking about the nature of support, supervision, programs and reputational risk. **Our Association can be a 'go to' reference**. We need, I believe, to grow our collegiality as Heads and, while still promoting the enormous value of what our colleges and halls offer, to be seen as collaborative with our universities as they seek to meet the accommodation demands, expectations and needs of both local and international undergraduate and postgraduate students.

Appreciation:

I cannot thank enough my colleagues on the **Executive Committee** – Ms Rose Alwyn, Dr Carla Tromans, Dr Marie Leech, Mrs Barbara Green and Adjunct Professor Iyla Davies – a committed team, wise, energetic and great fun to work with! Ms Deborah Pugh continues to give great support as **Executive Officer**, always thorough and proactive with reminders and 'behind the scenes' details. I also want to acknowledge the support given to me by my staff at Toad Hall ANU; my ANU Heads of Colleges, Halls and Lodges colleagues; and by my more immediate supervisors, Ms Lynda Mathey (Registrar, Student Life) and Professor Richard Baker (Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Student Experience).

It is an enormous privilege to serve our Association as President, conscious of those who have served in the past as well as of the challenges and opportunities that face us for the future.

Dr Ian Walker

President